

REFORMA DO ESTADO BRASILEIRO E A EXPANSÃO DA EDUCAÇÃO A DISTÂNCIA NO BRASIL (1996-2016)

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REFORM OF THE BRAZILIAN STATE AND THE EXPANSION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN BRAZIL (1996-2016)

Stela Galbardi de RESENDE¹
Maria Luisa Furlan COSTA²

RESUMO: Este artigo tem como objetivo refletir sobre as políticas públicas para a Educação Superior a Distância no Brasil no atual contexto socioeconômico, com recorte temporal de 1996 a 2016. Utilizou-se como procedimento metodológico a pesquisa bibliográfica e documental com abordagem qualitativa. As transformações no cenário nacional, no que tange às exigências e interferências dos organismos internacionais na reforma do Estado brasileiro, refletem na expansão desta modalidade no ensino a partir da LDBEN (lei nº 9.394/96). Viuse que o campo da Educação Superior no Brasil se transformou com aumento significativo na expansão e conseqüentemente ao acesso a esse nível de ensino, resultado da adoção de políticas direcionadas à utilização das Tecnologias de Informação e Comunicação, indispensável no processo de democratização da educação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Políticas públicas. EaD. Reforma do Estado. Ensino superior.

RESUMEN: Este artículo tiene como objetivo reflexionar sobre las políticas públicas para la Educación Superior a Distancia en Brasil en el actual contexto socioeconómico, con recorte temporal de 1996 a 2016. Se utilizó como procedimiento metodológico la investigación bibliográfica y documental con abordaje cualitativo. Las transformaciones en el escenario nacional, en lo que se refiere a las exigencias e interferencias de los organismos internacionales en la reforma del Estado brasileño, reflejan en la expansión de esta modalidad en la enseñanza a partir de la LDBEN (ley nº 9.394 / 96). Se vio que el campo de la Educación Superior en Brasil se transformó con un aumento significativo en la expansión y conseqüentemente al acceso a ese nivel de enseñanza, resultado de la adopción de políticas dirigidas a la utilización de las Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación, indispensable en el proceso de democratización de la educación.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Política pública. Educación a distancia. Reforma del Estado Educación más alta.

¹ Maringá State University (UEM), Maringá – PR - Brazil. Master's degree in Educations. PPE/UEM. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5119-6603>. E-mail: stela.galbardi@gmail.com

² Maringá State University (UEM), Maringá – PR – Brazil. Professor at Education Fundaments Department, Maringá, PR. ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7838-0459>. E-mail: luisafurlancosta@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: *This article aims to reflect on the public policies for Distance Higher Education in Brazil in the current socioeconomic context, with a temporal cut from 1996 to 2016. The methodological procedure was the bibliographical and documentary research with a qualitative approach. The transformations in the national scenario, regarding the demands and interferences of the international organisms in the reform of the Brazilian State, reflect in the expansion of this modality in the education from the LDBEN (law 9.394 / 96). It was seen that the field of Higher Education in Brazil has transformed with a significant increase in the expansion and consequently the access to this level of education, result of the adoption of policies directed to the use of Information and Communication Technologies, indispensable in the process of democratization of education.*

KEYWORDS: *Public policy. Distance education. Reform of the State. Higher education.*

Introduction

Regarding the reform of the Brazilian state and the expansion of Distance Education (EaD, Portuguese initials) in Brazil, the temporal cut begins in 1996 due to the promulgation of the Law of Guidelines and Bases in National Education nº 9.394, which in its art. 80 establishes Distance Education and ends in 2016, when the new Distance Education Guidelines were prepared (BRASIL, 2016).

When discussing the expansion of Distance Education in Brazil, it is necessary to reflect on the democratization of access to higher education that involves an understanding of what is really happening, because it addresses the increase in the number of people who initiate but, do not necessarily complete higher education.

The National Education Plan (PNE, Portuguese initials) 2001-2010 established that by the end of this decade the goal was to reach 30% of the net enrollment rate of 18 to 24 years old in higher education. However, data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics / National Household Sample Survey (IBGE / Pnad, Portuguese initials) of 2014 show that the percentage of students enrolled in this age group was only 16.5% of the population (ARRUDA, 2015).

These data therefore demonstrate a percentage far from the previous objective and the goal of the new National Education Plan 2014-2024, which is to reach the percentage of 33% of the net rate and 50% of the gross enrollment rate in this age group, this expansion would be around 40% for the public segment. This percentage of existing enrollments would mean an increase of four million places, with about 1.6 million only in the public segment (ARRUDA, 2015).

In order to compare the possibilities for expansion, according to data from IBGE / Pnad (2016) and Census prepared by the Education Statistics Board (DEED, Portuguese initials) of Inep (2016), while enrollments in Higher Education in the classroom increased from three million in 2001 for just over six and a half million in 2016, distance enrollment in higher education has jumped from just over 3,000 in 2001 to about 1.5 million in 2016, with almost 2 million enrollments being offered by public institutions of higher education (BRASIL, 2016b) and the others by private institutions. As stated by Dourado (2002):

The changes caused by educational policies in Brazil cannot be understood without understanding the historical and economic contingencies that mark the current scenario of the current world's societal transformations (DOURADO, 2002, 245).³

In this expansion, it is important to identify and verify to what extent expectations are actually met and the historical, economic and social context in which these transformations were engendered.

The neoliberal influence in the Higher Education expansion

In order to understand the public policies that led to the expansion of higher education, especially in the distance modality, we investigated the influence of neoliberal ideology⁴ on educational policies in Brazil, which emphasized quality, adequation to market demands, competitiveness and the continuous professional qualification, inherent traits of neoliberalism:

In addition, it proposes the reduction of the state machine and privatization of goods and services in which state reform is understood as overcoming "past visions of an assistentialist and paternalistic state" through the transfer

³ As alterações provocadas pelas políticas educacionais no Brasil não podem ser compreendidas sem o entendimento das contingências históricas e econômicas que balizam o cenário atual das transformações societárias do mundo atual (DOURADO, 2002, p. 245).

⁴ In this view, neoliberalism designates a contemporary hegemonic tendency ... "The neoliberal perspective is, as a reformulation of the management model of the development of capitalism, present in the conception of the Keynesian interventionist liberal state, in force in the section called Welfare State, or Social Welfare State, characterized, among other aspects, by the implementation of the public sphere through the increase of social policies, postulating the guarantee of minimum living standards in order to maintain the stimulus to the development and consolidation of market economies; in this case, it is a question of strengthening the role of the State, through the adoption of an interventionist feature in the economy" (DOURADO, 2002, p. 247, free translation).

of production of goods and services "to society, to private initiative" (DOURADO, 2002, p.236).⁵

The neo-liberal ideology dictates that the market must manage socio-economic activities, reducing the "power" of the state in economic and social matters. This "model" of economics seeks its global hegemony, meaning, it aims to maintain the social position of the ruling class, but also seeks more "power" - profit (GENTILI, 2007). About this, Mendonça also writes:

Neoliberalism, influenced by the World Bank and international organizations, intervened in the elaboration of the public policies of most countries in the 1990s, being implemented differently in each country, according to the socioeconomic and political structure in force there. In Brazil, neoliberalism was introduced through the Master Plan for the Reform of the State Apparatus in the period when Fernando Henrique Cardoso was in the Presidency of the Republic (1995-2002), whose guidelines inspired a set of reforms invested in his administration and which remain until the present day (MENDONÇA, 2016, pp. 101-102).⁶

According to the diagnosis presented at the PNE (2010), the State considers the importance and necessity of consolidating Education in a general and specifically in the case of Distance Education as a modality of public education policy, in the process of universalization and democratization of education, especially in Brazil, where educational deficits and regional inequalities are so high. Existing educational challenges may have, in Distance Education, an auxiliary means of undeniable effectiveness. Moreover, educational programs can play an invaluable role in the cultural development of the population in general (BRASIL, PNE / 2010).

About this Arruda says:

The PNE 2001-2010 reflected two distinct and complementary approaches to the Distance Education, on the one hand a commercial approach, with indirect allusions to the expansion of supply and the reduction of costs in the development of courses in this format. The Distance Education, from this perspective of the PNE 2001-2010, seems to be the answer to the evils that

⁵ Consubstanciando essa lógica, propõe, ainda, o enxugamento da máquina estatal e privatização de bens e serviços em que a reforma do Estado é entendida como superação de "visões do passado de um Estado assistencialista e paternalista" por meio da transferência da produção de bens e serviços "à sociedade, à iniciativa privada" (DOURADO, 2002, p. 236).

⁶ O neoliberalismo, influenciado pelo Banco Mundial e pelos organismos internacionais, interveio na elaboração das políticas públicas de grande parte dos países na década de 1990, sendo implantado de forma diferente em cada país, de acordo com a estrutura socioeconômica e política ali vigente. No Brasil, o neoliberalismo foi introduzido por meio do Plano Diretor da Reforma do Aparelho do Estado no período em que Fernando Henrique Cardoso estava na Presidência da República (1995 – 2002), cujas diretrizes inspiraram um conjunto de reformas investido em sua gestão e que permanecem até os dias atuais (MENDONÇA, 2016, p. 101-102).

have affected Brazilian education over the last few centuries. The other look is of an instrumental and technical character. It is assumed that, in addition to the previously discussed view, the quantitative presence of equipment (computers, televisions, etc.) alone would guarantee the improvement of education and the possibility of offering distance learning courses (ARRUDA, 2015, p 325).⁷

In this sense, it is perceived that the state bets on the Distance Education as an effective mechanism to reduce the problems that constitute the crisis in the education of the country, accumulated throughout the implementation of educational programs that did not solve the problems pertinent to the educational deficits and the regional disparities regional. However, there are many challenges to overcoming educational inequalities, as Edith Litwin points out:

Therefore, in the future, Distance Education should be considered as part of the policies implemented to reduce inequalities, not as a tool to deepen them. This is his challenge (LITWIN, 2001, 22).⁸

The challenge seems to remain the same, since neoliberalism is based on the assertion that higher education appears more like a market-regulated consumer commodity:

[...] the great strategic operation of neoliberalism consists in transferring education from the sphere of politics to the sphere of the market, thus questioning its character of law and reducing it to a condition of property. It is within this framework that the notion of citizenship is reconceptualized through a revaluation of the action of the individual as owner, as an individual struggling to conquer (buy) different commodities [sic], with education being one of them. The model of the neoliberal man is the privatized citizen, the entrepreneur, the consumer (GENTILI, 1996, pp. 20-21).⁹

Regarding education as a consumer good, it can be seen that Brazilian legislation has changed over the years, since the specific law that dealt with the deregulation of educational

⁷ O PNE 2001-2010 refletiu duas abordagens distintas e complementares acerca da EaD, de um lado um olhar mercantil, com alusões indiretas à ampliação da oferta e à redução de custos no desenvolvimento de cursos nesse formato. A EaD, sob essa perspectiva do PNE 2001-2010, parece ser a resposta para os males que acometeram a educação brasileira ao longo dos últimos séculos. O outro olhar é de caráter instrumental e técnico. Tem-se a impressão de que, em complemento à visão anteriormente discutida, a presença quantitativa de equipamentos (computadores, televisores, etc.) por si só garantiria a melhoria da educação e a possibilidade da oferta de cursos à distância (ARRUDA, 2015, p. 325).

⁸ É preciso, portanto, que no futuro, a Educação a Distância seja pensada como parte das políticas implantadas para reduzir desigualdades, e não como instrumento para aprofundá-las. Esse é o seu desafio (LITWIN, 2001, p. 22).

⁹ [...] a grande operação estratégica do neoliberalismo consiste em transferir a educação da esfera da política para a esfera do mercado, questionando assim seu caráter de direito e reduzindo-a a sua condição de propriedade. É neste quadro que se reconceitualiza a noção de cidadania, através de uma revalorização da ação do indivíduo enquanto proprietário, enquanto indivíduo que luta para conquistar (comprar) propriedades-mercadorias diversa índole [sic], sendo a educação uma delas. O modelo de homem neoliberal é o cidadão privatizado, o *entrepreneur*, o consumidor (GENTILI, 1996, p. 20-21).

services was published by Decree No. 2.306, dated August 19, 1997. This was revoked by Decree 3.860, of 2001; also revoked by Decree No. 5,773, of 2006 and last revoked by Decree No. 9.235, of 2017 which is in force at the moment. It provides for the exercise of the functions of regulation, supervision and evaluation of higher education institutions and of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the federal education system. The whole history of changes in legislation pointed to the consolidation of neoliberal actions for Higher Education in Brazil.

So, for a better understanding of the influence of neoliberalism in the policies of Distance Education, it is necessary to unveil the project that founded it. The world scene of post-Great Depression economic instability, crisis 1929, culminated in the Second World War and it is in this context that the new ideology arises in the early twentieth century - Neoliberalism - with Ludwig von Mises (1881-1973) and Friedrich von Hayek (1899-1992):

[...] neoliberalism, [...] is the ideology of capitalism in the era of maximum financialization of wealth, the most liquid wealth era, the era of volatile capital - and an attack on the forms of economic regulation of the century such as socialism, Keynesianism, the welfare state, Third Worldism and Latin American development (MORAES, 2001, p.4).¹⁰

This new doctrinal ideology proposed by these and other French, German, and American economists in the first half of the twentieth century, turns to the adaptation of the principles of classical liberalism to the demands of a regulatory and assistentialist state, which should partially control the functioning from the market. As Moraes points out:

Classical liberalism had attested its batteries against the mercantilist state and corporations. The neoliberals sought to construct a parallel with that situation, to justify their struggle and present it as the continuation of a respectable anti-absolutist campaign. According to them, the enemy now wore other costumes, but revealed the same tarnished and perverted ones. One of these enemies was the institutional set composed by the welfare state, the planning and the state intervention in the economy, all identified with the Keynesian doctrine (MORAES, 2001, p.13).¹¹

¹⁰ [...] o neoliberalismo, [...], é a ideologia do capitalismo na era de máxima financeirização da riqueza, a era da riqueza mais líquida, a era do capital volátil – e um ataque às formas de regulação econômica do século XX, como o socialismo, o keynesianismo, o Estado de bem-estar, o terceiro mundismo e o desenvolvimento latino-americano (MORAES, 2001, p. 4).

¹¹ O liberalismo clássico havia assestado suas baterias contra o Estado mercantilista e as corporações. Os neoliberais procuraram desde logo construir um paralelo com aquela situação, para justificar seu combate e apresentá-lo como a continuação de uma respeitável campanha antiabsolutista. Segundo eles, os inimigos vestiam agora outros trajes, mas revelavam as mesmas taras e perversões. Um desses inimigos era o conjunto institucional composto pelo Estado de bem-estar social, pela planificação e pela intervenção estatal na economia, tudo isso identificado com a doutrina keynesiana (MORAES, 2001, p. 13).

These principles gained momentum after the great capital crisis of 1973 with the growth of commercial competition and the need to sustain the supposed supremacy that capitalism was demonstrating over the socialist system. About this process Pablo Gentili claims to be an ambitious project of ideological reform:

In fact, neoliberalism expresses the double dynamic that characterizes every process of building hegemony. On the one hand, this is an extremely powerful alternative of power, constituted by a series of political, economic and legal strategies aimed at finding a dominant outlet for the capitalist crisis that began at the end of the 1960s, On the other hand, it expresses and synthesizes an ambitious project of ideological reform of our societies, the construction and diffusion of a new common sense that provides coherence, meaning and a pretended legitimacy to the proposals of reform propelled by the dominant block (GENTILI, 1996, p. 9).¹²

In Brazil, due to the Military Regime that happened between 1964 and 1985, this process of reforms and adaptations began a little later. The reformulation of the ways of engendering Brazilian public education began in the late 1980s, with the promulgation of the new Federal Constitution, State Constitutions and municipal Organic Laws.

In investigating the historical context of public policies for Higher Education in Brazil and elsewhere, Carvalho states that:

In the 1990s, the entire spectrum of social and economic policies came under the influence of the so-called Neoliberal Agenda. The set of proposals assumed a broad character, with implications beyond national borders, which confers specificity to the decade (CARVALHO, 2007, p. 85).¹³

In the perspective of Luiz Carlos Bresser Pereira, State Reform ideologue, in the mandate of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, state reform can be conceptualized as a process of "creation or transformation of institutions in order to increase governance"(BRESSER-PEREIRA, 1998, p 61). For the author, reform would be a way to define the role of the state, to give the private sector and the non-state public sector much of

¹² Com efeito, o neoliberalismo expressa a dupla dinâmica que caracteriza todo processo de construção de hegemonia. Por um lado, trata-se de uma alternativa de poder extremamente vigorosa constituída por uma série de estratégias políticas, econômicas e jurídicas orientadas para encontrar uma saída dominante para a crise capitalista que se inicia ao final dos anos 60 e que se manifesta claramente já nos anos 70. Por outro lado, ela expressa e sintetiza um ambicioso projeto de reforma ideológica de nossas sociedades a construção e a difusão de um novo senso comum que fornece coerência, sentido e uma pretensa legitimidade às propostas de reforma impulsionadas pelo bloco dominante (GENTILI, 1996, p. 9).

¹³ Nos anos 90, todo o espectro de políticas sociais e econômicas esteve sob a influência da chamada Agenda Neoliberal. O conjunto de propostas assumiu um caráter abrangente, com implicações para além das fronteiras nacionais, o que confere especificidade à década (CARVALHO, 2007, p. 85).

the activities that were the responsibility of the state. Neoliberalist politics points to the need for educational reforms as a way of responding to social crises:

The Reform in the 1990s was influenced by the advent of the neoliberal model in the political and economic spheres. Despite the strengthening of progressive social forces in the process of democratic transition, the neoliberal model was imposed by widespread dissatisfaction with the continuity of the serious economic and social problems inherited from military governments. The Educational Reform in Brazil began in the second half of the 1990s with the aim of consolidating a new form of education and school management, and at the same time, reversing the low attendance of elementary and secondary education as well as high rates school failure (KRAWCZYK, VIEIRA, 2010, p. 10).¹⁴

At the end of World War II in 1944 a conference was held with 730 delegates from the 44 Allied nations who gathered in the city of Bretton Woods in the state of New Hampshire to lay the foundations for postwar capitalist functioning in the United States of America (USA). This event became known as the Bretton Woods conference which, before the end of the war, was confident that victory would establish the US as the dominant empire. Since then, the International Organizations have been created, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), with the formal objective of financing the reconstruction of the economies destroyed by the war and guaranteeing monetary stability (OLIVEIRA, 2010).

These same Bretton Woods institutions were organized in 1989 to begin their intervention in the Latin American countries, with the discourse on the need to overcome the external debt crisis. These meetings became known as the Washington Consensus (MOREIRA, LARA, 2012).

In 1989, in Latin America, in view of the external debt crisis and in compliance with the Washington Consensus, adjustment policies were developed, that is, economic strategies with strict fiscal discipline, privatization, reduction of public spending, reforms (tax, social liberalization, etc.), trade liberalization, deregulation of the economy and flexibilization of labor relations, among others (MOREIRA, LARA, 2012, p.65).¹⁵

¹⁴ A Reforma na década de 1990 foi influenciada pelo advento do modelo neoliberal nos âmbitos político e econômico. Apesar do fortalecimento das forças sociais progressistas no processo de transição democrática, o modelo neoliberal impôs-se pela insatisfação generalizada frente à continuidade dos sérios problemas econômicos e sociais legados dos governos militares. A Reforma educacional no Brasil iniciou-se na segunda metade da década de 1990 com o intuito de consolidar uma nova forma de gestão da educação e da escola e, ao mesmo tempo, reverter o exíguo atendimento do ensino fundamental e médio bem como os altos índices de fracasso e evasão escolar (KRAWCZYK; VIEIRA, 2010, p. 10).

¹⁵ Em 1989, na América Latina, em vista da crise da dívida externa e em atendimento ao Consenso de Washington, foram elaboradas políticas de ajustes, ou seja, estratégias econômicas com uma rigorosa disciplina fiscal, privatização, redução dos gastos públicos, reformas (tributárias, previdência etc.), liberalização comercial,

Regarding education, UNESCO held the world education conference in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, which resulted in the Education for All agreement involving several countries. This conference pointed out the need for education to form a flexible and enterprising man, emphasizing it as a way to contribute to the economic and social development of these countries (GAJARDO, 2000).

As a result of this international agreement, the Brazilian Educational Reform that took place in the 1990s occurred concomitantly with the changes in the economic and political sphere that radicalized the implementation of neoliberal measures initiated in the military dictatorship, which institutionalized the minimum state. As Krawczyk and Vieira:

The reconfiguration of the State's role with the institutionalization of the minimum state has resulted in a process of centralization - decentralization, which has not only changed the country's historic relationship with the state, but has also given a new role to the state, private enterprise and to the individual in education. Decentralization was a constituent feature of formal education in Brazil, but with the Educational Reform, which was strongly regulated, affecting the distribution of responsibilities and attributions between the different levels of government - states and municipalities - and the redistribution of resources in each state of the federation (KRAWCZYK; VIEIRA, 2010, p.12).¹⁶

About this decentralization, Gajardo highlights:

In Brazil, for example, education has always been a shared responsibility between federal, state and municipal governments, with the coexistence of two public education networks: state and municipal. Although the federal government is responsible for administering Higher Education, in practice the distribution of competencies between different levels is strongly influenced by a resource allocation model in which the government of the Union uses multiple channels and maintains responsibility for the execution of large projects and programs at the national level (GAJARDO, 2000, p. 16).¹⁷

desregulamentação da economia e flexibilização das relações trabalhistas, dentre outras (MOREIRA; LARA, 2012, p. 65).

¹⁶ A reconfiguração do papel do Estado com a institucionalização do Estado mínimo resultou, no caso da educação, em um processo de centralização – descentralização pelo qual não só mudou a histórica relação federativa no país como também atribuiu um novo papel ao Estado, à iniciativa privada e à pessoa física na educação. A descentralização era uma característica constituinte da educação formal no Brasil, porém, com a Reforma Educacional, sofreu uma forte regulamentação que afetou a distribuição de responsabilidades e atribuições entre os diferentes níveis de governo - estados e municípios - e a redistribuição de recursos em cada estado da federação (KRAWCZYK; VIEIRA, 2010, p. 12).

¹⁷ No Brasil, por exemplo, a educação sempre foi uma responsabilidade compartilhada entre os governos federal, estaduais e municipais, com a coexistência de duas redes de ensino público: a estadual e a municipal. Embora ao governo federal caiba administrar a Educação Superior, na prática a distribuição de competências entre os distintos níveis sofre forte influência de um modelo de alocação de recursos em que o governo da União utiliza

It can be observed that the reforms that occurred after the Washington Consensus (1989) and the Jomtien Conference (1990) aimed to attend the neoliberal ideology which, in turn, seeks to deregulate, reduce as much as possible, the participation of the state in the economy and markets, that is, decentralization. A deregulated state points to the commodification of social services with the ideas of privatization and outsourcing in the execution of state services. All these changes, reforms and adaptations were part of the capitalism restructuring at universal level, demanding structural adjustments in economic policies and, in turn, in public policies in general, which include educational policies (LARA, DIAS, 2008). On this, Dourado says:

These policies have resulted in an intense process of massification and privatization of Higher Education in Brazil, characterized by the precariousness and privatization of the scientific agenda, neglecting the social role of Higher Education as a space for research, discussion and diffusion of projects and models of life organization social, with the guarantee of social rights as its guide (DOURADO, 2002, p. 246).¹⁸

In this sense, when thinking about access to quality education, which is markedly emancipatory, not only what is basic and necessary for social integration, but also involves broad and citizen education, one must speak of the democratization of education.

Distance Education policies: Higher Education democratization strategies

According to Faria (2006), the democratization of education is understood as the possibility of universalizing and socializing access to education, so that education can reach all. Thus, attending geographically dispersed students, shortening distances, is only possible through the use of technologies that allow Distance Education to give a new meaning to the social function of education with equal opportunities. To Mendonça:

However, we cannot conceive Distance Education only by the neoliberal logic, that is, as a commodity that is sold to satisfy the yearnings of the formation of labor for the labor market. The Distance Education has been implemented as a strategy for the democratization of access to quality public education, but idealizing it in a different way does not match the struggles

múltiplos canais e mantém a responsabilidade pela execução de grandes projetos e programas em nível nacional (GAJARDO, 2000, p. 16).

¹⁸ Tais políticas têm resultado em um intenso processo de massificação e privatização da Educação Superior no Brasil, caracterizado pela precarização e privatização da agenda científica, negligenciando o papel social da Educação Superior como espaço de investigação, discussão e difusão de projetos e modelos de organização da vida social, tendo por norte a garantia dos direitos sociais (DOURADO, 2002, p. 246).

and the historical trajectory that this modality of education has faced in order to have a public education of quality for all (MENDONÇA, 2016, p. 103).¹⁹

The Distance Education is an educational modality that uses information and communication technologies (TIC, Portuguese initials) as tools, which are transformed into didactic materials (resources), as long as they are applied intentionally to the educational process, promoting the construction and socialization of knowledge (BOLSONI, 2015). Loing believes that:

It is initially necessary to distinguish two complementary but different paths: that of teaching with technologies and that of learning from technologies.... For years, one has learned to be supported by machines, but one still does not know how to teach with it (LOING, 1998, p. 41).²⁰

The Distance Education goes beyond the use of technologies in the classroom, because it involves a broader view that requires interactivity, the relationship between teacher and student, presenting as gain the acquisition of knowledge (NISKIER, 1999).

When analyzing the Quality Referential for Distance Education²¹, one can understand that this modality, above all, is education and that regardless of the modality of teaching, the term "distance" is just the way of teaching. Therefore, both Decree No. 5,622 / 05 (BRASIL, 2005) and the recent Decree No. 9,057 / 17 (BRASIL, 2017), as well as the Quality Referentials, contributed to standardize what already indicated LDBEN No. 9.394 / 96 (BRASIL, 1996). It is possible to state that Distance Education is an important teaching possibility for the democratization of education and for the minimization of many inequalities, specifically the lack of qualification of the country's teachers.²²

¹⁹ No entanto, não podemos conceber a Educação a Distância somente pela lógica neoliberal, ou seja, como uma mercadoria que é vendida para satisfazer aos anseios da formação de mão de obra para o mercado de trabalho. A EaD foi implementada como uma estratégia para a democratização do acesso à educação pública de qualidade, mas idealizá-la de forma diferente não condiz com as lutas e a trajetória histórica que essa modalidade de ensino tem enfrentado para que de fato tenhamos uma educação pública de qualidade para todos (MENDONÇA, 2016, p. 103).

²⁰ É inicialmente necessário distinguir dois caminhos, complementares, mas diferentes: o de ensinar com as tecnologias e o de aprender com as tecnologias [...] Há anos que se aprende com o apoio de máquinas, mas ainda não se sabe bem como ensinar com elas (LOING, 1998, p. 41).

²¹ The Quality Guidelines for Distance Education were prepared by Education Department (MEC) in 2007. This document is the result of successive discussions between experts, universities and society. The first official text was released by the MEC in 2003, which makes these References available as quality indicators for the Distance Education courses (BRASIL, 2007 *apud* OLIVEIRA, 2014, free translation).

²² Regarding the importance of Distance Education, especially in places where there is a low supply of higher education courses: Distance Education (EaD, Portuguese initials) is a teaching modality used in order to expand the possibilities of access to knowledge. Its combination with technological advancement and communication comes to equate the difference between the low supply of vacancies in the higher education network and the demand for social inclusion to a larger part of the population, thus promoting the democratization of access to knowledge (FILATRO, 2007). In addition to democratization, distance education has notable advantages from

Distance Education emerges to follow this demand, because it is characterized as a modality of education that transmits knowledge without the physical presence of teachers and students, with the interaction made possible by the use of information and communication technologies. In this modality, higher education can reach places where face-to-face access is difficult, a fact that, in theory, democratizes and expands the offer of this level of higher education in the interior of Brazil as well (COSTA, LOZANO, 2013).

According to Oliveira (2014), the modality is not new, although there is no consensus on when it began and so few significant records of the experiences performed in Distance Education in Brazil. Edgard Roquette-Pinto's experiments in the 1920s and 1930s, with the creation of two radios and the proposal of educational radio, are marks used in the books or textbooks of History of Education. On this, Oliveira affirm that:

Advocating the need to provide education to the Brazilian people, Roquette-Pinto proposes educational radio, since this instrument would promote the integration of the nation, build national identity, and enable the education of those who did not have a school (OLIVEIRA, 2014, p.25).²³

In the same intent, a little later, two institutions were set up with the specific objective of promoting Distance Education: Radio Monitor Institute (1939), connected to the electronics sector; and the Brazilian Universal Institute (1941), which offered vocational training at the elementary and middle level. The latter offered vocational technical courses by correspondence (OLIVEIRA, 2014).

This was only the beginning of the lengthy Distance Education history in Brazil. From the 1950s until the middle of 1998, many initiatives, proposals and projects of education through the use of radio and television, among them stand out, in the 1980s, some concrete initiatives of higher education triggered by the University of Brasília distance education program, aiming to offer university extension courses. It is noteworthy that these attempts were fundamental to the official recognition of Distance Education, covered in the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education, promulgated on December 20, 1996 (OLIVEIRA, 2014).

About this course, Costa affirms:

efficiency and quality point of view, even when there are large numbers of students or short-term growth in the demand for enrollments" (NUNES, 2009, free translation).

²³ Ao defender a necessidade de se oferecer educação ao povo brasileiro, Roquette-Pinto propõe o rádio educativo, pois mediante esse instrumento se promoveria a integração da nação, se construiria a identidade nacional e se possibilitaria a educação dos que não tinham escola (OLIVEIRA, 2014, p. 25).

The historical recovery of the creation and development of Distance Education in Brazil shows a considerable growth in the last years, with indications that in the near future the space to be occupied by the courses offered in a modality different from the face-to-face teaching will be even greater. The inclusion of the new information and communication technologies in education opens up numerous possibilities for distance education to fulfill its social function in the process of democratization of public and quality education (COSTA, 2014, p.18).²⁴

In this sense, it can be affirmed that Distance Education enables, in addition to the democratization of knowledge, a unique opportunity for teacher training, continuous formation and a better professional qualification, even when regard to the use of its tools.

At the international discussion tables on Higher Education there are many issues that affect education, among them too much concern for the expansion, "inlandiness" and increase of the offer of higher education; the objectives of Higher Education and its role in the 21st century; the role and place of universities in the virtual age. In the eight years of the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government there was an accelerated expansion of enrollments, since they established as a goal that private institutions enrolled more than 70% of the total number of students in that period (DOURADO, CATANI, OLIVEIRA, 2003.).

Concerning Distance Education, Mendoça highlights:

At the end of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century, there was aa accentuated demand for entry into higher education due to the LDBEN, Law 9394/96, which predicts the education of all education professionals at the higher level, causing the expansion of Distance Education and the accentuation of a prejudice created around this level of education (MENDONÇA, 2016, p. 40).²⁵

After the enactment of LDBEN 9,394 / 96 there was a great increase in the possibility of access to higher education, both in person and distance. Data from the 2015 Census (updated October 2016) show that 1,442 higher education institutions (156% growth) were opened by the year 2015. This increase allowed the opening of another 26,857 courses (a

²⁴ A retomada histórica da criação e desenvolvimento da Educação a Distância no Brasil mostra um crescimento considerável nos últimos anos, com indícios de que em um futuro próximo o espaço a ser ocupado pelos cursos ofertados em uma modalidade distinta do ensino presencial será ainda maior. A inserção das novas tecnologias de informação e comunicação na educação abre inúmeras possibilidades para que, cada vez mais, os cursos a distância possam cumprir sua função social no processo de democratização do ensino público e de qualidade (COSTA, 2014, p. 18).

²⁵ No final do século XX e início do século XXI, houve uma acentuada demanda de ingresso em curso de nível superior devido ao disposto na LDBEN, Lei nº 9.394/96, que prevê a formação em nível superior de todos os profissionais da educação, o que causou a expansão da EaD e a acentuação do preconceito criado em torno deste nível de ensino (MENDONÇA, 2016, p. 40).

growth of 404%) allowing 6,158,768 more enrollments in higher education during these 19 years.²⁶

In the Distance Education, in terms of enrollment in higher education, growth went from "zero" in the year of the enactment of the Law 9,394 / 96 to 212,246 new entrants in 2006. The Census reveals that enrollment in 2015 was 1,393,752, of which 1,265,359 were enrolled in private higher education institutions. But when comparing to the last 10 years of the Census (2005-2015), the increase in the enrollment of students in distance education increased from 127,014 to 1,393,752 enrollments, corresponding to a growth of 997% (BRASIL, 2015b).

The growth and expansion of Distance Education was possible only because some government programs were implemented at federal, state and municipal levels, aiming to increase the supply of courses and the population's access to higher education. In this context, it is worth mentioning the creation of the Open University System of Brazil, through Decree No. 5,800 of June 8, 2006 (MENDONÇA, 2016, page 45).²⁷

Faced with the gradual process of resistance and questioning of the bases that support the research university model, the process of commercialization of higher education and its consequent institutionalization in the market have generated many discussions (CALDERÓN, 2000). As far as concerns to Distance Education, these discussions intensify even more. According to Demo (1995), starting with a dialectical approach, it is necessary to question the "thesis", that is, to question state intervention in guarantee of Higher Education as a social right, which is denied by its antithesis, neoliberal discourse, which encourages the expulsion of the state, which would eventually constitute in practical terms the:

Neoliberal discourse, which preaches non-intervention of the state, would generate, as a synthesis, the negation of negation, which would signal the prevalence of the new, which, in this case, would be the university model recommended by UNESCO: institutions based on public-private partnerships. University institutions that preserve their public character, but managed by private initiative. Non-profit institutions, concerned with the quality and responsibility of Higher Education (CALDERÓN, PEDRO; VARGAS, 2011, p. 194).²⁸

²⁶ Data raised by the author herself with reference to Censuses 1996-2015 (BRASIL, Inep, 2015)

²⁷ O crescimento e a expansão da Educação a Distância foram possíveis somente porque houve a implementação de alguns programas do governo, em níveis federal, estadual e municipal, visando ao aumento da oferta de cursos e ao acesso da população à educação em nível superior. Nesse contexto, cabe destacar a criação do Sistema Universidade Aberta do Brasil, por meio do Decreto nº 5.800 de 8 de junho de 2006 (MENDONÇA, 2016, p. 45).

²⁸ [...] discurso neoliberal, que prega a não-intervenção estatal, geraria, como síntese, a negação da negação, que acenaria para a prevalência do novo, que, neste caso, seria o modelo de universidade recomendada pela Unesco: as instituições públicas não estatais, baseadas nas parcerias público-privadas. Instituições universitárias que

In the 1990s, reform was seen as government educational policy itself, materialized through legislation, funding of government programs, and a series of non-governmental actions involving forums, media exploration of educational initiatives, government divulgation in official publications, among other initiatives marked by the orientation of intellectuals together with national and international organizations (SHIROMA, MORAES, EVANGELISTA, 2011).

The end of the twentieth century marks the rise of a Latin American left (Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, Uruguay, Venezuela, Mexico) in response to this neoliberal movement. The beginning of the twenty-first century brought a new political moment in Latin America with a series of "post-neoliberal"²⁹ governments. In Brazil, this began in 2003, with the Government Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010).

In the book organized by Emir Sader (2013), sociologist and political scientist, about the 10 years of post-neoliberal governments in Brazil, he conceptualizes:

The traits that these governments have in common, which allows them to be grouped in the same category (post-neoliberalist), are: a) prioritizing social policies, not fiscal adjustment; b) prioritize regional integration processes and South-South exchanges, not free-trade agreements with the United States; c) prioritize the role of the state as an inducer of economic growth and income distribution, rather than the minimum state and the centrality of the market (SADER, 2013, p. 138).³⁰

Regarding the scenario of Higher Education expansion specifically in Brazil, it is important to highlight governments that followed to that of FHC, led by President Lula (2003-2010):

For the time being, it is important to note that the government plan introduced in 2002 by Lula, as a proposal for Higher Education, indicated the significant expansion of vacancies in public universities and the reformulation of the current educational credit system as an instrument to

preservam seu caráter público, mas gerenciadas pela iniciativa privada. Instituições sem fins lucrativos, preocupadas com a qualidade e responsabilidade da Educação Superior (CALDERÓN; PEDRO; VARGAS, 2011, p. 1194).

²⁹ The Lula and Dilma governments can be characterized as post-neoliberal, by the central elements of rupture with the neoliberal model - by Collor, Itamar and FHC - and by the elements they have in common with other governments in the region, such as the Kirchners in Argentina, Frente Amplio in Uruguay, Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia and Rafael Correa in Ecuador. These governments represent an anti-neoliberal reaction in the context of the great recessions that shook the continent in the last decades of the last century (SADER, 2013, free translation).

³⁰ Os traços que esses governos têm em comum, que permite agrupá-los na mesma categoria (pós-neoliberalistas), são: a) priorizam as políticas sociais e não o ajuste fiscal; b) priorizam os processos de integração regional e os intercâmbios Sul-Sul e não os tratados de livre-comércio com os Estados Unidos; c) priorizam o papel do Estado como indutor do crescimento econômico e da distribuição de renda, em vez do Estado mínimo e da centralidade do mercado (SADER, 2013, p. 138).

remedy, albeit partially, the issues raised, whose sources revealed a minimum access by poor young people to public higher education (BERTOLLETI, 2017, 115).³¹

And as to Distance Higher Education of this period, the policies adopted in the Lula Government made possible the expansion and democratization:

The analysis of the policies adopted by the Lula government indicates that it has privileged some issues of the Higher Education agenda, such as the expansion and democratization of access, including seeking the equity bias, by looking at historically unmet populations, whether for economic or, allied to these, racial reasons. Another issue that deserved prominence among the implemented policies is the one represented by the quality / massification pair, since there was a reasonable improvement of the evaluation instruments, as guarantors of the quality of the system, along with a great increase in Distance Education, that focused frankly only the expansion (AGUIAR, 2016, 124).³²

With regard to educational policies and the university reform project defended in the two Lula government mandates, including the expansion of access through various governmental programs (UAB, FIES, ProUni, REUNI), the pedagogical ideology of industrial capital (privatizations, commercialization of higher education, among others) also gains strength. About this Antunes affirms:

From Obama to Sarkozy, from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to the Group of 20 (G20), everyone greeted Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, president of Brazil, at the meeting held in London in April 2009 as a politician for integration and conciliation. Lula consolidated his presence in the bloc of emerging countries, the so-called BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China), and also strengthened his position as a *tertius* in the Latin American leadership, an alternative between Chávez and Morales (and, to a lesser extent, Correa), on the one hand, and Uribe and Calderon on the other; its field is closer to the moderation of Bechelet and Vázquez (ANTUNES, 2011, 135).³³

³¹ Por ora, é importante ressaltar que o plano de governo apresentado em 2002 por Lula, como proposta para a Educação Superior, indicava a — ampliação significativa das vagas nas universidades públicas e a reformulação do sistema de crédito educativo vigente como instrumento para sanar, ainda que parcialmente, as questões levantadas, cujas fontes revelaram um acesso mínimo por parte de jovens pobres ao ensino superior público (BERTOLLETI, 2017, p. 115).

³² A análise das políticas adotadas pelo governo Lula indica que este privilegiou algumas questões da agenda da Educação Superior, como a ampliação e democratização de acesso, inclusive procurando o viés da equidade, ao contemplar populações historicamente não atendidas, quer por razões econômicas, quer, aliada a estas, raciais. Outra questão que mereceu destaque entre as políticas implementadas é a representada pelo par qualidade/massificação, uma vez que houve um razoável aperfeiçoamento dos instrumentos de avaliação, como garantidores da qualidade do sistema, ao lado de um grande incremento da Educação a Distância, com enfoque francamente massificador (AGUIAR, 2016, p. 124).

³³ De Obama a Sarkozy, do Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI) ao Grupo dos 20 (G20) todos saudaram Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, presidente do Brasil, na reunião realizada em Londres, em abril de 2009, como político da integração e da conciliação. Lula consolidou sua presença no bloco dos países emergentes, os chamados BRICs (Brasil, Rússia, Índia e China), e fortaleceu também sua posição de *tertius* na liderança latino-americana,

Thus, it can be affirmed that in the years 2003 to 2010 we have in Brazil the presence of a conciliatory government:

Of the measures cited, ProUni and REUNI are part of the public policy framework related to the "democratization" of access to higher education. With ProUni, the federal government has been saving private institutions through the purchase of their vacant positions and with REUNI, it has managed to expand access to public higher education at low cost (NOMERIANO; MOURA; DAVANÇO, 2012, p. 6).³⁴

These conciliatory policies allowed the growth of the private sector, but there were also investments in the public sector. In an attempt to comply with the businessmen, the agents in dispute, and at the same time with a lower social class is given the opportunity to enter higher education; so, the Lula government period was seen as a government of democratization opportunities policies. On this we will deal more deeply in the last section.

With the Brazilian State Reform, social policies, and especially educational ones, come in line with the guidelines suggested by international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Final Considerations

Supported by the reflections on the Brazilian State Reform and the Public Policies for Distance Higher Education in Brazil, it was possible to understand the transformations in the national scenario and from the 90's on the requirements and interferences of the international organisms and also the expansion of this modality after the Brazilian state reform.

After the 1970s, the great crisis in the capitalist states redefined the way the nation-state acted in a new context with neoliberalism; the productive restructuring together with the globalization and financialization of the economy have brought new instances and organizations that increasingly influenced internal policies. In the 1990s this state began to be recomposed in this new neoliberal movement. In a capitalist society, social relations are based on inequality (class struggle), thus producing their contradictions.

alternativa entre Chávez e Morales (e, em menor medida Correa), de um lado, e Uribe e Calderón, de outro; seu campo é mais próximo da moderação de Bechelet e Vázquez (ANTUNES, 2011, p. 135).

³⁴ Das medidas citadas, ProUni e REUNI estão inseridos no quadro das políticas públicas relacionadas à "democratização" do acesso à educação superior. Com o ProUni, o governo federal vem salvando as instituições privadas por meio da compra de suas vagas ociosas e com o REUNI, vem conseguindo expandir o acesso ao ensino superior público a baixo custo (NOMERIANO; MOURA; DAVANÇO, 2012, p. 6)

In Brazil, the educational reform of the state gained significance in 1996 when, even if late, the Law on the Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN) was enacted. In its article 80, when instituting the Distance Education, the field of higher education in Brazil was transformed with a significant increase in the expansion and consequently the access to this level of education, result of the adoption of policies directed to the use of Information and Communication Technologies, indispensable in the process of democratization of education. Since LDB's publication, a long way has been taken until the recent publication of Resolution No. 1/2016, which characterizes this type of education. It can be seen that the field of Higher Education in Brazil has transformed with a significant increase in the expansion and consequently the access to this level of education, result of the adoption of policies directed to the use of Information and Communication Technologies, indispensable in the process of democratization of education.

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