

Neoliberalismo e Estado avaliador: considerações sobre seus desdobramentos nas políticas educacionais

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Resumo

Neste artigo, a proposta é discutir as orientações para a política de avaliação implementadas no Brasil a partir do neoliberalismo e da Reforma do Estado iniciada na década de 1990. Buscamos, com base na revisão de literatura, indicar que a proposição do Estado avaliador é marcada por interesses sociopolíticos articulados à necessidade de superação de um contexto de crise do capital. Indicamos, também, que a Reforma do Estado implementou uma determinada modernização da gestão na perspectiva gerencialista, o que resultou na descentralização, na busca da gestão vinculada a resultados e na mercantilização das principais áreas sociais, tendo como balizadoras deste processo as políticas de avaliação em larga escala.

Palavras-chave: Neoliberalismo. Políticas educacionais. Reforma do Estado. Estado Avaliador.

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Neoliberalism and the evaluation state: considerations about its unfoldings in educational policies

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Abstract

In this article, we discuss the guidelines for evaluation policy implemented in Brazil from neoliberalism and the State Reform initiated in the 1990s. We seek, based on the literature review, to indicate that the proposition of the evaluating State is marked by sociopolitical interests articulated to the need to overcome a context of capital crisis. We also indicate that the State Reform implemented a determined modernization of management from the managerialist perspective, which resulted in decentralization, in the search for management linked to results and in the commercialization of the main social areas, having the large-scale evaluation policies as the cornerstones of this process.

Keywords: Neoliberalism. Educational Policies. State Reform. Evaluative State.

Neoliberalismo y estado evaluador: consideraciones sobre sus desarrollos en las políticas educativas

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Resumen

En este artículo, se discuten los principios de la política de evaluación implementada en Brasil a partir del neoliberalismo y de la Reforma del Estado iniciada en la década de 1990. Se busca, a partir de la revisión de la literatura, indicar que la propuesta del Estado evaluador está marcada por intereses sociopolíticos articulados a la necesidad de superar un contexto de crisis del capital. También se indica que la Reforma del Estado implementó una determinada modernización de la gestión en la perspectiva gerencialista, que se tradujo en la descentralización, en la búsqueda de una gestión vinculada a los resultados y en la mercantilización de las principales áreas sociales, teniendo como faro de este proceso las políticas de evaluación a gran escala.

Palabras clave: Políticas Educativas. Reforma del Estado. Estado Evaluador.

Introduction

Starting in the 1990s, Brazil witnessed significant changes in the direction of social policies, particularly in the field of education. These policies began to be implemented based on neoliberal principles, which required a revision of the role of the State and its regulatory approach, resulting in what is called the Evaluator State.

The concept of the Evaluator State stems from the central role of evaluation in the administrative reform process of the State (AFONSO, 2013), a characteristic that became particularly evident after the 1980s in state reforms in central capitalist countries, especially in the United States and England. Since 1990, administrative reform and evaluation have become hallmarks of the reform of the Brazilian State.

The debate on regulation encompasses different approaches. In our study, we consider regulation as the actions taken by the State to exercise control, adjustment, and alignment (BARROSO, 2005), according to the managerial governance perspective. The aim of this text, therefore, is to discuss the nature of this form of regulation and evaluation and its implications for educational policies.

The primary methodological approach adopted in this study was a bibliographic review. We selected references that could contribute to analyzing the relationship between the State and evaluation policy in the context of neoliberalism. The review of these references highlighted the connection between the notions of the Evaluator State and regulation as the basis for evaluation policies.

To present this analysis, the text is organized into two sections: in the first, we introduce the main characteristics of neoliberalism and the need for the implementation of social policies, albeit restricted and targeted, to ensure the reproduction of the workforce; in the second, we discuss the characteristics of the Evaluator State in relation to its regulatory role as a consequence of neoliberalism, as well as some of its implications for large-scale evaluation.

Neoliberalism and Social Policies

Neoliberal policy emerged as a "viable" solution to the fiscal crisis of the State, which was in a global recession and sought to readjust itself to economic growth. Neoliberalism can be understood as a particular set of economic directives and political programs that began to emerge internationally from the 1970s onwards. According to Sader (1995, p. 146), "the essential is to characterize neoliberalism as a hegemonic model. That is, a form of class domination appropriate to contemporary economic, social, and ideological relations." For Sader, neoliberalism unfolds in the relations and

struggles between classes, ideological values, and a particular model of the State. This form of domination has specific singularities in the current global context. In this model, there is a defense, as seen in classical liberalism, of individualism, which is intended to be formalized and made more scientific, seeking greater solidity in the historical and social reality of the world.

The advancement of capital after World War II favored the proliferation of neoliberal ideals such as individualism, free movement of goods, and equality of opportunity, presenting itself as an almost universally hegemonic ideology, as Fiori (1997) points out. For this author, "[...] new liberalism emerges as an ideological victory that opens doors and legitimizes a kind of savage revenge of capital against politics and against workers." (FIORI, 1997, p. 205).

This neoliberal approach promotes both the increasing deregulation of the financial sector and economic "globalization" based on a financial viewpoint. This financial perspective advocates deregulation as a solution for economic growth and its ability to invest in other sectors. One of the proposed alternatives is privatization, aiming to open national markets to the global economy, reducing the role of the State as a provider of social policies in favor of the market and its varied demands.

As the capitalist system transforms and its movement reveals an imminent "solution" to the problems faced by capital, neoliberalism becomes a prosperous outcome of this confrontation. The financial sector is considered the strong point of this prominence; thus, there is an intensified argument that the market, not the State, should be the driving force behind capital and its demands.

Neoliberal policies brought with them recommendations from central capitalist countries to those on the periphery of capitalism. These recommendations, as Batista (1994) notes, emphasized that in order to resolve the crisis, governments needed to reduce spending, open their economies to imports, allow financial capital inflows, and deregulate their economies—key points linking various sectors.

Petras (1997) refers to this process as a neoliberal transformation of Latin America's socioeconomic, political, and ideological systems. This transformation allowed for a mix of experiences, including political and economic freedom based on liberal democracy in politics and free-market principles in economics. Different forms of implementation were observed, focusing on four main goals: stabilization, privatization, deregulation, and fiscal austerity. These objectives represent the key ideas of the transformations advocated by neoliberals, aligning with different sectors, especially social policies.

According to Faleiros (1991), "[...] social policies are [...] forms and mechanisms of relation and articulation between political and economic processes" (FALEIROS, 1991, p. 33). Social

policies, therefore, are directly linked to the production and reproduction of the labor force, as they act to restore the wear and tear on individuals' labor capacity and assist in maintaining workers' survival.

Social relations are intertwined with the relations of production and the reproduction of labor and capital. In other words, while the worker produces goods or services, they also secure their means of survival through a fixed wage. From this perspective,

The social relations of exploitation are the foundation of capitalist society. Capital increases its value through the exploitation of labor, which does not receive the full value of what it produces. Capital accumulation is this incessant increase in wealth, appropriated by those who own the means of production (machines and facilities), i.e., the capitalists (FALEIROS, 1991, p. 33).

The social relation of exploitation is a key condition in the process of capital accumulation. Thus, the maintenance of the worker's life and labor power becomes essential for this relationship to persist. Collective and social issues surrounding labor become secondary to ensuring the expansion and accumulation of capital, serving as a crucial element for sustaining the capitalist system as a whole. In this perspective, “[...] it becomes necessary, then, to establish a general regulation of the worker's reproduction through state intervention.” (FALEIROS, 1991, p. 34).

The construction of social relations is shaped by the process of capitalist accumulation and expansion, which results from the contradictory relations between classes and the exploitation and domination of capital. This process leads to a clash of interests that materialize through the organization and mobilization of social forces in a given historical context.

The organization of social forces is carried out through the formation of interest groups articulated by the dominant class, whose goal is to ensure social stability, control, and regulation of social relations to maintain the process of capital accumulation and expansion. In light of these interests, the organization of capital evolves from articulations between capital and labor, aiming to reproduce, include, or exclude labor from the productive process. On the other hand, social struggles arise from the historical reality of conflicts between capital and labor, including battles in the arena of social policies.

According to Faleiros (1991), stability, control, and the regulation of social policies can be achieved through mechanisms established within society, with the State being one of the primary agents. From this perspective,

The State organizes power and the economy within a defined territory through the mediation of institutions, apparatuses, or agencies, which embody the materialization of power and economic management. State power and management,

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therefore, represent or appear as the general interest of the nation or society but are exercised through the use of law (consensus and force) and numerous mediations and organizations that constitute the government. The government consists of a coordinated group of individuals who control decision-making positions and guide the principal direction of the State at a given moment (FALEIROS, 1991, p. 60).

The State, as the representative of specific interests, justifies its existence by presenting itself as an arbitrator. However, this regulatory mechanism is intended to establish a certain balance so that social organization can benefit and expand. As a regulatory agent, the State also intervenes in the economic sphere to ensure advantages and minimum conditions for the functioning of the economic segments of society, enabling their reproduction and expansion. Faleiros (2009) illustrates this by stating that the State acts as the principal agent on behalf of civil society, ensuring that it has at least minimal access to individual material protection.

This organization of power and the economy intensifies the struggle between social classes, which are in constant historical motion. The confrontation occurs either in defense of ideas and proposals aligned with the process of capital accumulation or, conversely, to expand social rights. In this context, neoliberalism, as advocated by the dominant class, is fundamentally based on the proposal of "... as little state intervention and policy as possible" (FIORI, 1997, p. 202).

In this process, the State, acting as a "neutral arbitrator," tends to compel the conflicting classes toward negotiation through social contracts. These contracts allow the involved parties to present their problems and interests with the aim of "conciliation" and the possible resolution of social conflicts, ensuring the maintenance of the global market within society. As a result of the negotiations between the classes and the State, new forms of contracts and confrontations emerge, leading to reformulations in capital and its implications for the production of goods and labor itself.

The State, in this case,

[...] is neither a neutral arbitrator nor a guardian of the citizens' welfare. Nor is it merely an instrument, a tool in the hands of the dominant classes to carry out their interests. The State is a social relation. In this sense, the State is a battlefield, where different factions of the bourgeoisie and certain interests of the ruling group confront and reconcile with certain interests of the dominated classes. If we do not consider the State as the result of social consensus to avoid a 'war of all against all,' then it must be situated within the broader context of society. The State is, at the same time, the locus of political power, a coercive and integrative apparatus, a bureaucratic organization, and an instance of mediation of social practices capable of organizing what appears within a given territory as the general interest (FALEIROS, 2009, p. 52).

Thus presented, the State mediates social relations within the capitalist system according to the balance of power in civil society across various ongoing processes. Furthermore, it predominates in

its ability to guide society as a whole toward the "resolution" of conflicts. Therefore, the social relations established within the capitalist production process, at different moments, demand transformation or reformulation. For Alves (2007),

The constant reformulations occurring within the capitalist system converge in the process of capital accumulation and expansion. These reformulations tend to reflect different historical moments in the production and labor process. Regarding this, Alves highlights two key moments: First, the labor process, as constituted by the capitalist mode of production, is not aimed at producing objects that satisfy human needs, or use values, but rather at the production of value, more specifically, surplus value. Second, within this very capitalist labor process, significant changes occur due to the development of the productive forces of social labor, which alter its intrinsic nature (ALVES, 2007, p. 33).

In advanced capitalist societies, regulation operates under the guise of maintaining capital accumulation, championed by the bourgeoisie, which becomes evident through increased productivity, price control, and the socialization of social costs, all facilitated by State intervention. Thus, the State allocates and manages resources derived from accumulation, remaining a key player in the regulation of social forces' conflicts.

In this context, the major driving force behind the transformation of the capitalist system, as discussed by Fiori (1997), was a "victorious marriage" between growing deregulation and a predominantly financial globalization. This "marriage" is closely tied to the material transformation of capitalism, and neoliberal policies were conditioned upon the resumption of "balanced and healthy" economic growth. To sustain this in the face of potential challenges such as economic stagnation and shifts in social policies, it became necessary to alter the rhetoric of neoliberal reforms. According to Fiori (1997), there is a specific reason for this change in discourse:

A nova razão, conforme discutida por Fiori (1997), é que, no mundo agora globalizado sob uma perspectiva financeira, qualquer economia nacional que não possua uma moeda estável, um equilíbrio fiscal garantido e que não tenha implementado o "tripé reformista" carece da credibilidade indispensável perante os novos "mandarins" do mundo: os mercados financeiros. Nesses casos, esses países podem ser sancionados pelos mercados financeiros, sendo forçados a se alinhar ou ficarem em uma situação de risco econômico iminente, [...]. (FIORI, 1997, p. 210).

As políticas neoliberais trouxeram aos "países em desenvolvimento", como os da América Latina, uma série de recomendações, incluindo a redução de gastos governamentais, a diminuição de impostos, a abertura econômica para importações, a liberação da entrada de capital estrangeiro, a privatização e a desregulamentação da economia. No Brasil, o neoliberalismo foi adotado de maneira

mais incisiva a partir dos dois mandatos consecutivos do presidente Fernando Henrique Cardoso (BATISTA, 1994), como ressaltado a seguir.

The reform of the Brazilian State: evaluation and regulation

In the 1990s, the changes and reformulations on an international scale reached the Brazilian scenario, leading to the reform of mechanisms and institutions. Neoliberal policies, in their context, brought recommendations from central capitalist countries to peripheral or developing countries. These recommendations showed that, to solve the crisis, it was necessary to reduce government spending, promote economic openness for imports, allow the entry of financial capital, and deregulate the economy, which became a key point of articulation between different areas (BATISTA, 1994).

Thus, the constant reformulations and changes that occurred in capitalism created a stage of development for the system known as globalization. The era of globalization was, therefore, the result of technological advances that took place in the production and labor processes, the revolution in information, the imperatives of the international market, and, most importantly, the logic of capital.

The implementation of Latin American neoliberalism encompasses a series of changes that have taken place in recent years, considering the export strategy combined with external and internal capital regulated on a global scale. Based on this premise, the current reformulations and directions have extended to social policies shaped by neoliberal intentions, also influencing the educational sphere.

In Brazil, as in other Latin American countries, there have been transformations in the conception and role of the State in response to changes in the capitalist system. Some of these changes can be observed in official documents that present propositions for addressing the crisis, which are heavily used as the foundation for the reforms proposed by the State. One of the main documents responsible for translating the guidelines of the reformulation process is the *Plano Diretor da Reforma do Aparelho do Estado* (State Apparatus Reform Master Plan), drafted in 1995 (BRASIL, 1995).

The Brazilian State Reform of the 1990s encompassed principles of regulation and decentralization, aiming to align the various sectors of the country with the interests and demands of the market economy. According to its proponents, this plan sought to create conditions for the reformulation and reconstruction of the country's public administration, grounded in modern and rational concepts of management, such as the logic of efficiency, with the goal of controlling outcomes and emphasizing ideas of quality, productivity in public services, and professionalization.

We observe, in the following excerpt, some of the goals intended in this process of economic and political change:

The State reform involves multiple aspects. Fiscal adjustment returns to the State the ability to define and implement public policies. Through trade liberalization, the State abandons the protectionist strategy of import substitution. The privatization program reflects an awareness of the severity of the fiscal crisis and the related limitation of the State's capacity to promote forced savings through state-owned companies. Through this program, the task of production is transferred to the private sector, which, in principle, performs it more efficiently. Finally, through a publicization program, the production of competitive or non-exclusive State services is transferred to the non-state public sector, establishing a partnership system between the State and society for their financing and control (BRASIL, 1995, p. 13).

Services related to health and education, considered essential, are necessary to ensure even minimal reproduction of the worker and their labor force, so that the relationship between capital and the State continues to exist, as it sustains the capitalist system and aids in its expansion. This transformation process of the State's role becomes effective in the implementation of reforms through the regulation of the economy, mediated by the relationships between the State and social policies, such as education policies.

The worldwide changes driven by neoliberal ideology after the 1990s helped define the indicators that would support the transformation of the concept of the State and its role in the country's development. The State's relationship with education must be understood through the educational reforms proposed from the 1990s onwards, which are seen as a solution or resolution to the problems faced by the State, exacerbated by the fiscal crisis of that period. It is within this movement that the Evaluative State is configured as an alternative to address the crisis concerning the character and role of the State, shifting from a promoter of development to an encourager and regulator.

The Evaluative State is grounded in the perspective of managerial management, thus adopting for public administration the theory of private-sector-oriented administration. This approach presupposes cost reduction as a justification to increase “[...] values of efficiency and quality in the provision of public services and in the development of a managerial culture within organizations” (BRASIL, 1995, p. 16).

In this context, the reformulation of the State, guided by the *Plano Diretor de Reforma do Aparelho do Estado* (Master Plan for the Reform of the State Apparatus) proposed by Bresser Pereira during the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government (BRASIL, 1995), introduced concepts such as control, regulation, efficiency, and quality, drawing on international guidelines to integrate Brazil into the era of globalization.

According to the *Plano Diretor* (Master Plan), the redefinition of the State emerged as a response to the crisis, highlighting the imperative need to reduce costs under the argument of increasing service quality based on “[...] values of efficiency and quality in the provision of public services and in the development of a managerial culture within organizations” (BRASIL, 1995, p. 16).

Thus, in the *Plano Diretor*, we observe that some criteria used by the managerial perspective of administration and the Evaluative State emphasize the decentralization of functions and decision-making. To this end, according to the analyzed document, managerial management requires the flexibilization and horizontalization of structures, aiming to align systematic evaluation with societal practices by incorporating mechanisms such as performance-based rewards, results-oriented control, and managed competition (BRASIL, 1995).

The document proposed by Bresser Pereira clarifies what this form of management would entail:

Managerial public administration represents an advancement and, to a certain extent, a break with bureaucratic public administration. However, this does not mean that it denies all of its principles. On the contrary, managerial public administration is built upon the previous model, from which it retains, albeit with flexibility, some of its fundamental principles, such as admission based on strict merit criteria, the existence of a structured and universal remuneration system, career paths, constant performance evaluation, and systematic training. The fundamental difference lies in the method of control, which shifts from process-based to results-based, without undermining the rigorous professionalization of public administration, which remains a key principle (BRASIL, 1995, p. 17).

When analyzing the context of these reforms, it is important to understand that they generally occur at macrostructural levels, producing significant strategies and directions, and subsequently implementing them in foundational societal aspects such as state management and educational policies. These strategies are closely intertwined with the process of capital accumulation and expansion, as previously mentioned.

Another important aspect we need to comprehend, especially since it intensified globally from the 1990s onwards, are the proposals from the World Bank regarding state reform. For this international organization, the state is a fundamental agent for driving changes in social and economic processes, as well as a guiding principle for the organization and functioning of the capitalist system. According to the World Bank's perspective, countries would need to integrate into the so-called globalization to receive decisive support, secure their place within the system, and raise the nation's income.

This support had a direct impact on the *Plano Diretor* (Master Plan) and the strategies proposed to carry out the reforms deemed necessary for Brazil, as the document outlines concerning the state's new role in the globalized scenario:

Given the state's crisis and the unrealistic nature of the neoliberal proposal of a minimal state, it is necessary to rebuild the state in such a way that it not only guarantees property and contracts but also plays a complementary role to the market in coordinating the economy and striving to reduce social inequalities. Reforming the state means improving not only its organization and personnel but also its finances and entire institutional-legal system, allowing it to establish a more harmonious and positive relationship with civil society. The state's reform will enable its strategic core to make more accurate and effective decisions, and ensure that its services—both exclusive ones, which operate directly under its command, and competitive ones, which will only be indirectly subordinated as they transform into non-state public organizations—function much more efficiently. Reforming the state apparatus means providing it with greater governance capacity, i.e., a greater ability to govern and better implement laws and public policies. It entails making the state's exclusive activities more efficient by transforming autonomous agencies into "autonomous agencies" and making social services more efficient by turning them into a special type of non-state public organizations known as "social organizations" (BRASIL, 1995, p. 44).

The supposed reduction of social inequalities would stem from fiscal reform, where there would be control over the administration of state resources, such as tax revenues, social spending, privatizations, and the reduction of fiscal imbalances, seeking to achieve this through an increasingly close relationship with the private sector. Xavier and Deitos (2006) indicate that this existing movement arises from a contradiction:

[...] in a capitalist society, and its constantly affirming political state, social policies could never be universalized if we understand them as expressions of contradictions inherent to the established social order. From this perspective, the universalization of social policies would lead to the dissolution of the capitalist state itself and the material determinations that sustain it, anchored in capitalist accumulation and reproduction. Social policy could no longer exist as such because, as it is conceived, it is a constitutive part of the very contradiction to which the capitalist state subjects the dominated classes in the social distribution of produced goods and access to the understanding of needs, which are revealed in a contradictory and ongoing struggle (XAVIER; DEITOS, 2006, p. 69).

In the first section of this article, we position the State as an instrument to ensure and stabilize growth driven by the economy within the framework of globalization, with mandatory directives aimed at supposedly correcting inequalities. According to the model of managerial public administration, the Evaluative State assumes that it should fund results rather than resources or their

distribution; these results then become the parameters for evaluation. To achieve this, the State must adopt and implement strategies for participation, evaluation, and performance measurement, which are often made explicit in the form of rankings.

This regulatory and managerial State begins to emphasize control over outcomes. In the field of education, this culminated in the so-called large-scale assessments. In the relationship between State reform and the centrality of evaluation policies, we thus locate the thesis of the Evaluative State. We also identify that the notion of evaluation, materialized in educational policies, such as the Basic Education Evaluation System (SAEB), has been tied from its inception to the perspective of regulation, that is, to the control, adjustment, and alignment of education with the private logic of State administration, the managerial model.

According to Souza and Oliveira (2003), evaluation as an instrument of educational management aims at the control of results by the State, encompassing actions such as the "[...] establishment of parameters for comparison and performance ranking, incentive through rewards, and the possibility of public control over the performance of the school system"(SOUZA; OLIVEIRA, 2003, p. 881).

The educational reforms implemented from the 1990s onward sought to justify the "[...] evaluative policy as a mechanism of social control by emphasizing outcomes as ends in themselves. The political artifice that supports it can be detected in the proposition and the importance attributed to the decentralization process" (ZANARDINI, 2008, p. 97).

The decentralization of education has been (re)configured in different ways, as the transfer of educational administration

[...] to social organizations places it under their control, insofar as, in the so-called management contracts formalized with social organizations, provisions are made for the control of results and performance indicators, characteristic features of the so-called administered competition or 'quasi-market' spaces. The 'educational quasi-market' is an initiative aimed at spreading management forms anchored in market logic by introducing private management concepts. [...] Educational evaluation, therefore, became one of the strategies for implementing public policies (ZANARDINI, 2008, p. 99-100).

In contrast to the arguments of neoliberalism advocates, Deitos (2011), when analyzing the propositions of the World Bank and its role in the construction and implementation of reforms in Brazil, observes that "[...] in the field of proposing and evaluating social policies, educational policy stands out as a strategy for reducing poverty and inequality in the objectives presented by the World Bank" (DEITOS, 2011, p. 137).

Social policies became fragmented into focal actions designed to mitigate the effects of neoliberal policies without fundamentally altering the structure of society. In this context, there is an emphasis on evaluation processes and the dissemination of results, which are shaped by the commodification of the educational sector, where education and its pedagogical processes are developed based on competencies⁴.

Thus, education and the logic of competency-based training emerge as mechanisms to drive and compensate for the structural changes that have been occurring since the 1990s, based on a perspective that seeks to adapt individuals to the evolving processes of the world of work and modes of production. In this effort to maintain the desired social structure, education incorporates the demands of the productive restructuring process, aiming to shape individuals with the competencies and skills needed to integrate or adjust them to the demands of the prevailing mode of production. As a result, educational policies since the 1990s have been designed to meet the needs of capitalist society by creating a "new man".

The productive restructuring, which serves as the economic basis for the process of State reformulation, under the perspective of results control and a specific formation of the worker based on the notion of competencies, involves, according to Alves (2007):

[...] Social innovations internal and external to capitalist production, [...] in internal innovations within capitalist production, we highlight organizational innovations (Toyotism is, at first, an organizational innovation); technological innovations (new microelectronic production technologies and new telematic, informational, and network technologies); and socio-metabolic innovations (an aspect of the productive restructuring process that is rarely emphasized by the sociology of labor, but which, with Toyotism and its drive to "capture" subjectivity, tends to assume a crucial dimension). The innovations external to capitalist production, which we will not address in this book, but which are important elements in the "concrete totality" of the new complex of productive restructuring, include economic and geo-economic innovations (neoliberal macroeconomics and new territories and spaces in the global market); political-institutional innovations (forms of the neoliberal State); and cultural innovations (postmodernism) (ALVES, 2007, p. 156-157).

The societal project under construction aims to outline a specific model of economic growth. According to Branco (2009), "[...] the achievement of this objective necessarily involves a specific pattern of state intervention in the economy and in the 'social question,' especially regarding the reduction of the inherent uncertainty of capitalist economies [...]" (BRANCO, 2009, p. 75) and the control of results. This is highly relevant to the role and

⁴ According to Ramos (2001), the term competence can be defined as "[...] the set of professional knowledge and skills acquired through training and experience, combined with the ability to integrate, utilize, and transfer them in different professional situations" (RAMOS, 2001, p. 79).

function of the State, which advocates for the construction of a society based on a market economy correlated with it, acting as a political mechanism that provides actions for capital to invest and expand.

Therefore, the State constitutes itself as a complementary mechanism to the market, directing its actions to ensure legal aspects for capital that result in its expansion and accumulation, facilitated by the exploitation of the subordinate classes. We can observe that these changes in the capitalist production process are used to correct some "detail" that deviates from what has been established, adjusting aspects of the economy and social policies, but not substantially transforming the structure, in order to keep social and structural determinations intact and in line with the demands of the markets.

In this process of correcting specific elements of the capitalist system for its maintenance, the exploitation of the subordinate classes plays a fundamental role in whether or not this occurs, as we outlined in the first section of this work. In the capitalist system, within the historical movement, there is a contradiction resulting from the conflicts generated by the process of capital accumulation and expansion. The same State that claims to be a minimal provider implements the necessary structural reforms to ensure the free market. The State begins to intervene by focusing on regulatory functions. In this way, social actions and policies are targeted, embedding the concept of the subject as a client, as if they were a consumer of public goods and services.

Based on these assumptions, there is a reorientation in the process of decentralization by the State in its role as a provider, transferring the power of choice to the citizens, who are now considered consumers of a certain "commodity" social policies. In the case of education, through the evaluation of school performance, the Evaluator State exercises regulatory power in the sense mentioned by Barroso (2005), that is, regulation based on the triad of control, adjustment, and adequacy. Through evaluation policies and their rankings, the Evaluator State promotes competition among schools and individuals, serving as a form of "remote control." Without the direct oversight of a supervisor (the State), the competitive process between schools and individuals has become an efficient strategy for state regulation in the field of school education.

The propositions for large-scale evaluation policies, aimed at identifying and measuring issues within education systems, resulted in the introduction of new techniques and models for educational systems, curricula, funding, and evaluation. Thus, we observe that the redefinition of the role of the State on a global scale places greater emphasis on the characterization of large-scale educational assessments, intending to establish standards in response to new global organizational demands (SOUSA; OLIVEIRA, 2003).

The term "Evaluator State," as indicated by Afonso (2013), encapsulates the global trend, initiated in the 1980s, of linking state administrative reform to evaluation. According to Afonso, the Evaluator State develops through three phases: in the first phase, from the 1980s to the 1990s, there is the initial process of state reform tied to the emergence and growth of large-scale national external evaluations; in the second phase, from the 1990s to the 2000s, there is diversification and increased incidence of national evaluations. In this phase, international evaluation agencies gain more prominence, especially by establishing comparisons and rankings among countries, as exemplified by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). The third phase, called the "Post-Evaluator State (a foresight based on some indicators)," is part of a hypothesis raised by Afonso (2013) based on the diversification of neoliberal logic and the emphasis on privatization, commodification, and the commercialization of education.

The analysis provided by this researcher challenges us, methodologically and theoretically, to observe the Brazilian State and identify the marks of these three phases. If we adopt Afonso's (2013) classification and the discussion outlined in this text, we can identify both the first and second phases of the Evaluator State, while the third phase is also emerging in Brazil.

Considering the elements developed by Afonso (2013), we note the strong advancement in Brazil of a state perspective that retains its evaluative character, continuing to deepen evaluation policies as mechanisms for control, adjustment, and adequacy (regulation). However, it also intensifies its actions to promote the privatization and commercialization of education.

In this regard, Mézáros (2007) highlights that "[...] the impact of the incorrigible logic of capital on education has been significant throughout the development of the [capitalist] system." (MÉZÁROS, 2007, p. 201). Thus, the restructuring prompted by the capital's investments indicates that schooling on a global scale is a necessary tool for the capitalist system to legitimize dominant thinking.

The relationship between capital and the State in the reproduction and expansion of the capitalist system is, however, intertwined with mediations carried out by other social relations, such as schooling, family relations, and the labor process.

In Brazil, we observe that evaluation policies serve as mechanisms to regulate a certain "quality" of education. The results of these evaluations are often presented as evidence of the inefficiency of public schools. Under the logic of managerial governance, efficiency is measured by the number of students achieving "good results" in evaluations; since this has not been achieved with the use of public resources, the alternative proposed is the privatization of public education. In this

way, the Brazilian Evaluator State intensely traverses the three phases outlined by Afonso (2013), or rather, the Brazilian State regulates to justify the privatization of services provided by social policies.

Final considerations

The Evaluator State is based on the process of evaluation, regulation, and control of its policies. In the case of education, from the 1990s onwards, a large-scale evaluation system was developed in Brazil, linked to the ranking of educational networks and the growing need to assess knowledge related to qualifying students' academic performance.

This management perspective, anchored in result-based evaluation concerning educational policies, incorporates the demands of the productive restructuring process, thereby intensifying educational models that prioritize fast-tracked, pragmatic, and classificatory training, in line with the precariousness of job opportunities.

When evaluating students trained under these educational models, what are known as "learning gaps" are observed. However, from a neoliberal perspective, as analyzed earlier in this text, the responsibility for "underachievement" falls on the individual. Nevertheless, we consider that large-scale evaluations, by pointing out the classificatory results between schools and students, reveal their alignment with curricular policies (pragmatic and fast-tracked training) and public education funding. These policies (curriculum and funding), which materialize in the school management process, contribute to an obvious conclusion, as large-scale evaluations, when assessing students individually, reveal the results of the application of the managerial model of governance within the State.

The managerial approach, under an Evaluator State model, confirms the already expected results: the "failure" of schools and individuals. This performance is presented as inefficiency in the use of public resources and serves as justification for the advancement of privatization and the commercialization of education. This leads us to perceive evidence that supports Afonso's (2013) hypothesis: the third phase of the Evaluator State is one of privatization, or, in other words, evaluating in order to commercialize public education.

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