PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO
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Trabalho, educação e capitalismo: reflexões necessárias

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Resumo
Este ensaio teórico ampara-se nas perspectivas epistemológica e ontológica do método do materialismo histórico-dialético, com vistas ao investimento dialógico do trabalho e da educação como frutos da história humana, e oriundos de suas necessidades e adaptações sociais. Circunscreve-se a seguinte problematização: de quais modos, trabalho e educação, imbricam-se nos/pelos meios de produção capitalista da manufatura até o sistema de acumulação flexível? Nosso recorte investigativo, para o desenvolvimento deste artigo, centra-se na perspectiva histórica capitalista como um modo de produção gestado desde o início da Idade Moderna, e que fundamenta a organização da vida humana até os dias atuais. Desse modo, objetivamos justamente compreender de quais modos ocorrem essa imbricação do trabalho com a educação nos/pelos meios de produção capitalista. Nesse caminho reflexivo, visualizamos um processo evolutivo de alienação da classe trabalhadora, esta que detém cada vez menos domínio sobre o que é produzido e, consequentemente, controle e conhecimento sobre a própria realidade.

Palavras-chave: Educação. Formação humana. Produção capitalista. Sociedade de classes.

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Work, education and capitalism: necessary reflections

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Abstract
This theoretical essay is supported by the epistemological and ontological perspectives of the method of historical-dialectical materialism, with a view to the dialogical investment of work and education as fruits of human history, and arising from their needs and social adaptations. The following problematization is circumscribed: in what ways, work and education, are intertwined in/by the means of capitalist production from manufacture to the flexible accumulation system? Our investigative approach, for the development of this paper, focuses on capitalism as a mode of production gestated since the beginning of the Modern Age, and which underlies the organization of humanity until the present day. In this way, we aim precisely to understand how this imbrication of work and education occurs in/by the means of capitalist production. In this reflective path, we visualize an evolutionary process of alienation of the working class, which has less and less control over what is produced and, consequently, control and knowledge of reality itself.

Keywords: Capitalist production. Class society. Education. Human formation.

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Resumen
Este ensayo teórico se sustenta en las perspectivas epistemológicas y ontológicas del método del materialismo histórico-dialéctico, con miras a la inversión dialógica del trabajo y la educación como frutos de la historia humana, y derivados de sus necesidades y adaptaciones sociales. Se circunscribe la siguiente problematización: ¿de qué manera, trabajo y educación, se entrelazan en/por los medios de producción capitalista desde la manufactura hasta el sistema de acumulación flexible? Nuestro enfoque investigativo, para el desarrollo de este artículo, se centra en el capitalismo como modo de producción gestado desde el inicio de la Edad Moderna, y que subyace en la organización de la humanidad hasta nuestros días. De esta manera, apuntamos precisamente a comprender cómo esta imbricación de trabajo y educación ocurre en/por los medios de producción capitalista. En este camino reflexivo, visualizamos un proceso evolutivo de alienación de la clase trabajadora, que cada vez tiene menos control sobre lo que se produce y, en consecuencia, control y conocimiento de la realidad misma.

Palabras clave: Educación. Formación humana. Producción capitalista. Sociedad de clases.

Introduction

The formulations and conceptual constructions, as parts of a formative process of language, are subordinated to the possibilities of realizing life itself. Before producing a concept, it is necessary for individuals to exist, to be alive, since "the first condition of all human history is, naturally, the existence of living human beings" (MARX; ENGELS, 2001, p. 10). Human existence is, therefore, subordinated to the organic materiality of the body and, as it is distinguished from animal life, it begins to produce its means of life.

To sustain itself, human existence, as a natural body, minimally requires "[...] drinking, eating, housing, dressing, and some other things" (MARX; ENGELS, 2001, p. 21). The first historical act will, thus, be the production of means that allow for the satisfaction of these needs, that is, the production of material life itself through labor. The organization and existence of human life are fundamentally based on the operations of labor and learning, on the modes of production of life and history.

This understanding demonstrates that human existence is not a guarantee of nature but a product of human labor itself. This means, as Saviani (2007) highlights, that individuals are not born human; they become human by learning to produce their own existence. "Therefore, the production of man is, at the same time, the formation of man, that is, an educational process" (SAVIANI, 2007, p. 154).

This process of existing and forming oneself is conditioned by the material modes of production (what and how they produce) and, according to Marx and Engels (2001), determines who the individuals are, how they organize, and how they identify. Historically, this production first appears with the increase in population, which leads to exchange (defined by the mode of production) among individuals within the same nation and between different nations. The level of development of a nation's productive forces will thus be demonstrated by the degree of development achieved by the social division of labor: the higher the degree of social division of labor, the more developed the productive forces are. The division of labor within a nation leads, first and foremost, to the separation between agricultural work and industrial/commercial work and, consequently, to the separation of town and country. Through the division of labor within these different branches, distinct subdivisions develop among individuals engaged in specific work, with the position of these subdivisions conditioned by the manner in which work is performed: patriarchy, enslavement, estates, and classes.

For the development of this theoretical essay, based on the epistemological and ontological foundations of the historical-dialectical materialism method, we seek to operate isochronically on labor and education as products of human history and arising from its social and natural needs and adaptations, questioning: in what ways do labor and education interweave through the means of capitalist production from manufacturing to the system of flexible accumulation? Our investigative focus centers on the historical perspective of capitalism as a mode of production that has been gestating since the beginning of the Modern Age and that underpins the organization of human life to this day. We understand capitalism, in this perspective, not only as a system for producing commodities but also as a system in which labor power transforms into a commodity, a mode of production "[...] whose means are in the hands of capitalists, who constitute a distinct class in society" (CATANI, 1980, p. 17).

Our intention is not to discuss the process of capitalism's development, but to understand how labor and education interweave through the means of capitalist production from manufacturing to the flexible accumulation system. As Saviani (2007, p. 152) reminds us, "labor and education are specifically human activities. This means that, strictly speaking, only humans work and educate." In this sense, understanding these two phenomena, seeking a correspondence between form and content in research, is not done separately, but rather in their historically coexisting constitutions.

In the context of the didactic-chronological organization, the study traverses relevant theories on education and labor and their modes of production, starting from the establishment of manufacturing, the genesis of capitalist means of production, moving through the establishment of large industry and the Industrial Revolution, the scientific organization of labor with Taylorism, mass production and consumption with Fordism, up to the system of flexible accumulation present in contemporary society.

We understand that comprehending the historical-material configurations of cooperation based on the division of labor into classes and its relationship with education, knowledge, and human formation is essential for unveiling our reality (a synthesis of multiple determinations), as it involves an awareness of the processes that subjectivize us and produce us as subjects constituting a society. This path, which examines the relationships between labor and education in capitalism, will demonstrate an evolutionary process of alienation of the working class, which increasingly holds less control over what is produced and, consequently, less control and knowledge over its own reality.

Manufacturing, Knowledge, and Organization of Work in the Production Process

A characteristic of cooperation based on the division of labor and a precursor to capitalist modes of production, manufacturing developed between the 16th and 18th centuries from artisanal means of production. On one hand, it is established through the cooperation of artisans of the same craft, and on the other hand, through the combination of diverse crafts. In the first case, the craft is decomposed into different specialized operations; in the second case, it loses its independence and becomes merely partial operations in the process of constituting the same commodity. Thus, manufacturing operates both in the introduction of the division of labor in a production process and in the combination of previously distinct crafts. “Whatever its starting point, however, its final result is the same: a production mechanism whose organs are human beings” (MARX, 2012, p. 393).

Complex or simpler, the activity developed in manufacturing remains manual, dependent on human labor. However, the production process becomes more specialized, and the workforce solidifies as a partial organ of production. We see the transformation of the worker, who once dedicated their entire life to learning (forming) and developing a craft, into a mere agent of their body as a component, operationalizing an automatic specialty of production. “Manufacturing was the first form of capitalist cooperation. It inaugurated a system that, on the economic level, is based on generalized cooperation and collective labor” (MOTTA, 1986, p. 26).

This decomposition of the craft into specific and exclusive functions for a worker also enhances the work method through the continuous repetition of a limited action, focused on greater attention. “Manufacturing truly produces the virtuosity of the mutilated worker [...]” (MARX, 2012, p. 394), reproducing and systematizing the technical skills acquired and accumulated by different individuals and generations who simultaneously occupied the same space. “This process implies a strong system of integrative functions that deal with planning, coordination, and control of the workforce “(MOTTA, 1986, p. 27).

The manufacturing period consciously established the regulatory principle of production as a reduction in the time required for the production of goods. The specialization of operations within the same craft also allowed for greater control over the amount of time necessary and spent on its development and, as a result, the number of workers needed in a manufacturing setting for the development of a particular craft/product.

The differences in specialized functions and their time expenditures also led to comparisons and classifications of activities, now hierarchically arranged, divided into superior and inferior tasks,

requiring varying levels of training. “Manufacturing thus develops a hierarchy within the workforce, to which corresponds a scale of wages” (MARX, 2012, p. 404). The differences in tasks established in this production hierarchy are adapted to the skills (natural or acquired) of the worker. “In accordance with this hierarchization, organizational techniques are developed to maintain continuity and connection between the parts of the work” (MOTTA, 1986, p. 27).

Manufacturing, by expertly developing the aptitude for executing work operations, transforms specialty into a lack of training. Alongside specialization and hierarchical grading, classifications of workers emerge as skilled or unskilled. For the former, the cost of learning is reduced to the expenses necessary to train a craftsman; for the latter, there are no learning costs, as there is no training. In both cases, the value of labor decreases due to the elimination or reduction of learning costs. This factor returns to capital as an immediate increase in surplus value, “[...] for everything that reduces the time necessary to reproduce labor power increases the domain of surplus labor” (MARX, 2012, p. 405).

In the pedagogical field, Comenius provided the foundations for modern school organization, equating teaching activities and the interior of schools with the prevailing order in manufacturing (ALVES, 2006). The school establishment should be envisioned as a human workshop, a reproduction of the organization of work in manufacturing. The approach of the idea of a “treatise on the universal art of teaching everything to everyone” establishes art as a work parameter, a reference to overcoming medieval craftsmanship and the new productive force made viable through the division and specialization of manufacturing work. “This clarification is important insofar as, in advocating the necessity for the school to elevate itself to the plane of the arts, Comenius had in mind the organization of manufacturing and not craftsmanship” (ALVES, 2006, p. 72, author's emphasis).

In his work “Didática Magna,” the educator explicates the value of order and fragmentation through the metaphorical image of a clock:

> 14. But what hidden force animates the clock? None other than the force of order that manifestly reigns in all its parts, that is, the force stemming from the arrangement of all its pieces, which, together with their number, dimensions, and order, creates a configuration such that each piece has a specific role and means to perform it, or rather, the exact proportion of each piece to the others [...] (COMENIUS, 2015, p. 8).

Comenius's conception brings the school and the training processes closer to the system of division of labor and the time necessary for executing the tasks and stages involved in the production process, now no longer under the responsibility of a single worker in the manufactory. As Alves (2006) notes in his analysis of Comenius's work, the school and methods began to be shaped by the arrangement of the gears of a machine.

The "art of teaching everything to everyone" emerges at a time of increasing need for training and instrumentalization for work. Thus, we see the organization and systematization of schools in a manner similar to the organization of work in manufacturing and the creation of a didactic and methodological proposal for reproducing this training.

Work in the manufactory indicates the beginning of a necessary generalization of the training process; education becomes an increasing collective concern, as it also provides tools for capitalist labor. The growing demand for students implies a greater demand for teachers, which could not be met by the previous individualistic model, centered on the figure of the teacher, with their library of references and extremely costly. The didactic manual, therefore, emerges as the solution to this need for expanded and cheaper training. As a working tool for the teacher, it required less knowledge from this professional, as they only needed to be capable of replicating and reproducing what had already been constructed and determined (ALVES, 2006).

By simplifying pedagogical work, the didactic manual also allowed for a reduction in the costs of public instruction (a requirement for universal education) and specialized in levels of schooling and areas, reproducing the process of specialization of work instruments within the workshops. The specialization of work in the manufactory, in addition to the consequent hierarchization, domination of life, elimination of learning time, and alienation from the means of production, also led to the specialization of tools and the genesis of machinery.

By focusing on a single operation, the worker concentrates their attention and efforts on developing the best way to perform their function. "The intellectual forces of production only develop in one direction, as they are inhibited regarding everything that does not fit their unilaterality" (MARX, 2012, p. 416). The manufacturing division of labor imposes intellectual forces on the development of work, which includes the adaptation and development of new tools that better fit that partial mode of production. The specialized development of new tools for mediating and producing work, along with the intellectual mutilation that reduces the worker to a fraction of themselves, created the necessary material bases for the existence of machinery, the modern industry that captures knowledge and uses it in its interest (capital) to dominate forms of production and knowledge.

Table 1 - Summary of the Relationships Between Knowledge and Work in the Manufactory.

KNOWLEDGE AND WORK IN THE MANUFACTORY
The worker knows the object produced, the result of their work, but does not possess the means of production. Hierarchization of tasks.
Mastery in the use of tools, the worker refines their instruments.
Exclusive products, even while seeking standardization.
Despite the introduction of task specialization, production is still low and costs are high.
Systematization of learning and its decomposition into levels and strata. Worker specialized in certain stages of production.

Source: prepared by the authors.

Education and the Development of Machinery and Large Industry

The use of machinery from the mid-18th century, in light of the Industrial Revolution, did not result in greater access to products through the corresponding increase in production or relief from the labor of workers due to theoretically reduced working hours (MORAES NETO, 1986). The purpose of using machinery in a capitalist production system is to lower production costs by shortening the part of the workday that the worker needs to perform, thereby increasing the portion of time that they will work for free for the industrialist, automatically generating surplus value[4].

If in manufacturing the revolution of the mode of production occurs through means and labor power, in modern industry, the revolution takes place through the instruments of work, which shift from the use of manual tools to the use of machinery. In this model, the instruments used by artisans and manufacturing workers reappear in a modified form, no longer as instruments of human labor, but as tools of mechanical equipment. Machinery is a mechanism capable of performing (with its own tools) the operations that were previously carried out by humans. The difference lies in the limitation of the human body in operating a certain number of instruments (MARX, 2012).

In many cases, the worker has become merely a driving force for the machines; they are completely expropriated of their know-how, ceasing to work with the tool on the object of labor. In

[4] Marx refers to surplus value, succinctly, as the extra value appropriated by the capitalist in the exploitation of labor, that is, all forms of surplus labor that generate profit for the owners of the means of production. As Sandroni (1985, p. 82-83) highlights, "[...] surplus value is unpaid labor. It is the time of labor that the worker gives freely to the capitalist after having worked enough to reproduce the value of their own labor power".

this sense, their labor can easily be replaced by other, less exhausting, more uniform, and continuous sources, such as the use of a steam-powered machine.

> The advent of modern industry led to an increasing simplification of trades, reducing the need for specific qualifications, facilitated by the introduction of machinery that began to perform most of the manual functions. Through machinery, which is nothing more than intellectual labor materialized, the process of converting science, a spiritual power, into material power became visible. This process deepened and generalized with the Industrial Revolution carried out in the late 18th and early 19th centuries (SAVIANI, 2007, p. 158).

The tool of labor is transformed into a machine and demands the suppression of human force by natural forces and, of routine, by the conscious application of science, with a production system that is entirely objective, collective, and separate from the worker. The entire production organism is already prepared and finished and is independent of the worker, who now monitors and works to make the machine function. With muscular force rendered superfluous, machinery allows for the employment of workers with less physical development, now employing not only men but also women and children in factories. According to Hobsbawm (2000), for example, in 1838, women and children represented 77% of the workforce employed in England's textile factories. With the loss of the value of labor power, the capitalist employs the entire family for the cost that would previously have been paid to just one of its members. Previously, the worker sold the labor power they possessed; now, they sell their entire family (MARX, 2012).

The material and moral degradation caused by the capitalist exploitation of child labor led to the intellectual obliteration of youth. Very different from natural ignorance, as Marx (2012) calls it, through which the subject does not lose their capacity for development, children and adolescents were robbed of any knowledge and transformed into mere cogs in the machine to produce surplus value. This intellectual destruction forced the English Parliament to mandate compulsory elementary education as a condition for children under 14 to be employed in factories subject to factory laws (MARX, 2012). Adam Smith himself, a liberal thinker of English political economy, as Alves (2006) points out, even warned about the need for the education of individuals and the state's commitment to addressing this urgency. However, his concern was directed at the harmful effects that the division of labor, as it was carried out, led to the degeneration and corruption of workers and, consequently, posed a risk to the very development of the capitalist system.

In the English context, according to Vigário (2004), the first educational measure was only seen in the reform of the factory law of 1833, which painstakingly established that children should

spend a few hours of the day confined in a small room called school—as long as it was not incompatible with their work in the factories.

> The law stipulated that children should attend school for two hours a day, with the exception of Sundays. The good intentions of Parliament in enacting this legislation are not denied. However, requiring a child to work nine hours a day and still attend school for an additional two hours in the evening proved to be excessively demanding for a growing child. Most children were too tired to study after a hard day's work, and some were often found sleeping in the middle of class. Those working in shifts in factories were practically prevented from attending school, as they worked from five-thirty in the morning until eight-thirty in the evening (VIGÁRIO, 2004, p. 73).

School attendance was practically impossible; however, at the same time, as there was no system of basic education until 1870, for a large portion of the population, the only way to access any form of instruction was to start working in a factory. Dissatisfied with the manner in which education occurred following the 1833 Act, inspectors began to advocate for a system where children could only work for part of the day if they studied for another part (VIGÁRIO, 2004). This measure was adopted by the 1844 Act, whereby employers received a weekly certificate signed by a person acting as a teacher regarding the child's attendance. Often, prior to the amendment of the factory law in 1844, the certificates were marked only with a cross, as the teachers themselves could not read or write. Following the 1844 amendment, teachers were required to write out, in their own handwriting, the number of the school certificate and sign it with their first and last names (MARX, 2012).

In other schools, even with competent teachers for their roles, their efforts became futile in the face of a disturbing number of children, starting from three years of age, who were assigned to them. Lacking the necessary material and intellectual conditions, these children, for the most part, spent their school time without developing any formative, technical, or scientific activities, and were merely awarded a school attendance certificate (VIGÁRIO, 2004). With this certificate, they would be categorized in official statistics as “educated”.

It is important to emphasize that discussions around public education became a point of interest only when the bourgeois society achieved its sovereignty. Although it had been demanded since the Revolution of 1789, using the French reality as an example, it was only in the second half of the 19th century that social mobilization in favor of universal education and compulsory schooling was observed. However, the new school, obligatory and universal, would emerge in a context different from that of the early schools during the bourgeois revolution, when science and the transmission of historically accumulated knowledge were the revolutionary materialities. Once in

power, the bourgeoisie was no longer interested in transformations in society; on the contrary, there was a desire for the social order to remain as it had been established (GALUCH, 2013).

Public education became effective in the quest to consolidate the social organization of the bourgeoisie's dominance over the working class, containing the conflicts of interest between classes that threatened the very existence of capitalist society. If previously workers and bourgeois had united under the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity to break with the feudal system, the passage of time demonstrated that political and economic dominance in the hands of the bourgeoisie did not result in freedom, equality, and fraternity for all.

Dissatisfied with corruption, with the industrial and financial bourgeois domination, and with the working conditions to which they were subjected, the proletarians organized to confront the bourgeoisie for their rights. "At this moment, science was called into question because it proved ineffective in containing the revolutionary spirit that had formed through it" (GALUCH, 2013, p. 73). Thus, there was a renewed defense of the reconciliation between science and religion, as well as the "good customs," the moral rules of the bourgeoisie. It was necessary to preserve the established order in society, and therefore, citizens needed to acquire a bourgeois morality, a connection to the State.

The school needed to sustain and transmit an ideology that placed everyone in "perfect union," with a minimum of content and with common aspirations. An education based on capitalist civic concepts prevailed, as is evident in Adam Smith's discourse and his concern with the "moral degradation of man." Public instruction needed to prepare individuals for work and life, following the principles of order and morality infused with the capitalist spirit (GALUCH, 2013).

It was necessary to educate the large contingent of the working-class population for consensus. Provisions of the factory law related to education, for example, made primary education an essential condition for employing children in factories. "Its success demonstrated, above all, the possibility of combining education and gymnastics with manual labor [...]" (MARX, 2012, p. 547), which was in line with what was expected of a worker, as what needed to be learned, from a very early age, was merely to adapt one's body to the uniform and continuous movement of the machine. "The introduction of machinery eliminated the requirement for specific qualifications but imposed a minimum level of general qualification, which was reflected in the elementary school curriculum" (SAVIANI, 2007, p. 159).

The global movement of the factory no longer depends on individuals, but on an external objective order that presents itself to the worker, who can be replaced at any moment without interfering in the work and production process. The worker lives in dependence on the factory, relegated to conditions of extreme misery and human degradation, exhausted of their nerves, muscles,

and knowledge. The factory confiscates all activities of the worker, whether physical or intellectual. The machine, instead of liberating the worker, strips them of any interest. The industrial capitalist maxim imposes the instrumental of labor as the employer of the worker, not the worker as the employer of the labor instrumental.

Table 2 - Synthesis of the Relationships Between Knowledge and Work in Machinery.

KNOWLEDGE AND WORK IN MACHINERY
Workers and their labor power are gradually replaced by the use of machines.
Workers only operate the machines; there is no flexibility or enhancement of the tools used.
Standardized Products.
Increased production and also increased working hours lead to decreased production costs for the capitalist, resulting in an increase in surplus value
Massification of ignorance, especially among the youth. The beginning of public instruction aimed at preparing for work.

Source: prepared by the authors.

Taylorism, Expropriation of Workers' Knowledge, and the Organization of Work

The process of constituting the apparatuses of scientific organization of work, a fundamental aspect of Taylorism, as well as the instrumental processes of work production, took place under specific historical and material conditions in the United States, during a time of conflict between the labor force and management. Taylor (2019), initially a worker and later a foreman during the 1870s at the Midvale Steel Company, conducted reflections and experiments on a new method of industrial management. The issue Taylor focused on was how to overcome workers' resistance to work, a problem also raised by various capitalists, particularly in meetings of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

It is about workers' resistance as the main impediment to industrial development that he dedicates himself in the work *Scientific Management*. This resistance, which at the core of Taylorist thought is treated as "lack of diligence," is supported by three phenomena: 1) the workers' attitude of

not working at their maximum capacity, 2) the rejection of the piece-rate pay system, and 3) the absence of a methodologically elaborated and common system for production (TAYLOR, 2019).

The workers' resistance to not working at their maximum productive capacity is a direct reflection of the method of calculating and determining wages, the machinery that continually and massively expelled workers from their jobs, the lack of any wage security, as well as protection against illness and unemployment.

The piece-rate payment system, which at first could lead workers to produce more in hopes of earning more, did not result in a real return for the exertion of their labor. As new production records were achieved, new measures were adopted, lowering the value of the produced item, "[...] in the end, the result for the worker is an increase in work intensity without a corresponding (or almost no) increase in salary" (CORIAT, 1985, p. 85, author's emphasis).

In the variety of operational modes and ways of using tools in each trade lies one of the main reasons for workers' resistance, since those who understand and master all the techniques of management (even if divided and specialized) are still the workers. The organization of work based on the trade, "[...] that is, on the knowledge and the 'know-how' of the worker, allows for the effective development of workers' resistance" (CORIAT, 1985, p. 87, author's emphasis).

Knowledge, at this moment, is the most valuable asset and the strongest weapon in the fight against capital and in controlling the means of production. Aware of this, Taylor (2019) is committed to expropriating workers' knowledge through scientific management of work. Schematically, Coriat (1985) breaks down the stages of scientific management in the process of expropriating workers' knowledge:

> *First phase:* It is necessary, first of all, to reduce the complex workers' knowledge to its simple elements and to proceed with a kind of blank slate of technical knowledge. This decomposition is accomplished through the measurement of gestures and times. The introduction of the stopwatch in the workshop will practically allow this objective to be achieved. 'To each gesture corresponds a time,' such is the directive given to the timekeepers.
> *Second phase:* Once all these gestures are fragmented, this knowledge in 'crumbs' is systematically selected and classified.
> *Third phase:* For each operation, only 'the one best way' is retained, which consists of a single combination of the collected simple elements. The operating method is thus transmitted daily to the workers along with the required times for each simple element (CORIAT, 1985, pp. 90-91, author's emphasis).

Coriat (1985) emphasizes that this process was not only about expropriating the worker of their knowledge but also about confiscating it for the exclusive benefit of capital. What is established

is a massive division between intellectual labor and manual labor, creating a true rift between science and work. “The inexorable consequence of the separation of conception and execution is that the work process is now divided between distinct places and distinct groups of workers” (BRAVERMAN, 1978, p. 112). The places of planning and execution become disparate: all prior concepts of work organization, definitions of functions, methods of production, production control, result analyses, among other aspects of the production process, are removed from the workshop and transferred to an office; within the factories, only blind physical activities remain, controlled, supervised, and monitored by an external force (brain).

The novelty does not lie specifically in the division between physical and intellectual labor, but in the rigor applied to this division and in the concentration of intellect in increasingly smaller groups tied to capitalist management. This process leads to a true antagonism between conception and execution: “[...] hand and brain become not only separate but divided and hostile, and the human unity of hand and brain is turned into its opposite, something less than human” (BRAVERMAN, 1978, p. 113).

As a decisive mark of capitalism, the split between brain and hand in the division of labor finds its strength in the aspects of scientific management of production methods. The majority of the working population is distanced from any content of qualification or scientific knowledge; trades become increasingly devoid of content and knowledge. “Before the confirmation of management's monopoly over science, the profession was the primary repository of technical-scientific production in its then-existing formation [...]” (BRAVERMAN, 1978, p.117-118).

The destruction of the knowledge of trades during the emergence of scientific management did not go unnoticed by workers, who felt and resisted the harsh transformations in their work. Taylorism triggered a series of oppositions, particularly from unions. The criticisms and struggles of the unions were focused less on the system of time measurement and the study of movements and more on the scientific management's attempts to strip workers of their knowledge of their trade, to control them, and to impose a purely mechanical work system. In this struggle, workers unfortunately held the weaker side of the rope in their resistance to the expropriation of knowledge. When, in the 20th century, Ford (1925) proposed a new system for reproducing the workforce, in which mass production would mean mass consumption, the principles of scientific management had already spread radically and solidified across various American industries.

Table 3 - Synthesis of the Relationships Between Knowledge and Labor in the Taylorist Organization of Production.

KNOWLEDGE AND WORK IN TAYLORIST ORGANIZATION SYSTEMS
The worker and their labor force are replaced by the use of machines.
Scientific management creates a deep division between the planning and execution of work. The worker's knowledge is expropriated for the exclusive benefit of capital.
Standardized products.
Production costs decrease for the capitalist, increasing surplus value.
Intellectual and scientific knowledge must remain in the hands of a few (those who plan and organize). The masses need to be equipped only to operate the machines.

Source: prepared by the authors.

Fordism, Mass Production, Mass Society, and Instrumentalized Knowledge

When Fordism emerged in 1914 (a landmark date due to the introduction of the 8-hour workday), capitalism had already reached a significant stage of development. The corporate form of business organization had advanced with the progress of railroads; the principles of administrative management and work technologies were well established, and Taylor's ideas had gained strong support in industrial organization (HARVEY, 2017).

The novelty in Ford's approach lay in recognizing the dual determination of mass production and mass consumption. His proposal to reduce the workday and increase daily wages, for instance, aimed to compel (or coerce through reinforcements) the worker to adopt the discipline required by the high-productivity assembly line system and to have enough free time and income to consume the mass-produced goods from the corporations (FORD, 1925).

Ford proposed a new system for reproducing the workforce and life itself, advocating for a correspondence between the mode of production and modes of ethical, aesthetic, political, and psychological existence, "[...] in short, a new type of democratic, rationalized, modernist, and populist society" (HARVEY, 2017, p. 121). The new work methods became inseparable from the ways of living, feeling, and thinking about life. Desires and the sensory were regulated by the laws of capital. For Ford (1925), society needed to be restructured by corporate power.

However, Fordism initially faced difficulties in spreading its influence. Ford navigated through the 1929 crisis by initially raising employee wages in an attempt to recover the market. When this approach failed, he was forced to lay off workers and reduce wages. Recovery only came through state intervention, with Roosevelt's New Deal accomplishing what Ford had hoped corporations would achieve (HARVEY, 2017).

Among the main reasons for the difficulty in spreading Fordism during the crisis period and between the two World Wars was the state of class relations in the capitalist world, which led to resistance to a production system based on extended routines and repetitive techniques (assembly line) that did not require workers to control production. Additionally, the role and mechanisms of state intervention needed to be restructured to accommodate the demands of the Fordist mode of production (TENÓRIO, 2011). The transformations in the use of state powers, largely driven by the effects of the Great Depression and the near collapse of capitalism, were mostly resolved after 1945. This enabled the consolidation of Fordism as a fully developed accumulation regime and laid the foundation for post-war economic expansion (TENÓRIO, 2011).

Fordism also gained traction with the weakening of radical labor movements after the war, which allowed for greater control over labor and workers. While unions existed and were even encouraged, particularly those that cooperated with the productive system, they reinforced production discipline among workers in exchange for higher wages and, consequently, better social conditions for consuming the vast array of new products (and needs) being created. This established a grand social contract in which corporate power guaranteed increased investment, unions and workers cooperated with management and boosted production, ensuring wage gains and, consequently, increased demand for products and profits for the capitalist (HARVEY, 2017).

Governments also began to intervene more decisively in the economy and social life, exercising power directly or indirectly over wages and labor agreements by providing social assistance programs, salary supplements, social security, medical assistance, healthcare, education, etc., particularly for those not involved in economic negotiations. The State aimed to minimize the inequalities generated by the system and ease tensions from social movements, ensuring “some kind of adequate social wage for all or engaging in redistributive policies or legal actions that actively addressed inequalities” (HARVEY, 2017, p. 133).

Post-war Fordism became more than a production system—it emerged as a way of life. “Mass production meant product standardization and mass consumption, which implied an entirely new aesthetic and commodification of culture” (HARVEY, 2017, p. 131), extending internationally and monopolistically through the economic power of the United States, anchored in military dominance.

A vast global market was developing, where fiscal and monetary policies were grounded in American currency control, coercion, and manipulation.

It is no surprise, given the historical conditions of production during this period, that studies focusing on the science of learning, psychology, and teaching technologies grounded in the control, manipulation, and systematization of behavior began to emerge. “The Ford industry demands a level of discrimination, a qualification, for its workers that other industries do not yet require; a different, new type of qualification” (GRAMSCI, 1976, p. 406). Fordism itself, as a production system, is structured around behavioral stimuli and reinforcements: the worker becomes an obedient machine on the production line (behavior) in exchange for shorter working hours and higher wages (stimulus/reinforcement) to be able to consume (stimulus/reinforcement) the very product they helped produce (FORD, 1925).

Ford succeeded in establishing a behavioral (life) order to sustain and apply the capitalist, monopolistic, and homogenizing mode of production. The school, already solidified as the primary institution responsible for shaping citizens, became oriented toward a pragmatic economic function. "The advance of monopolistic capitalism provides the basic conditions for the development of the technicist character in education" (KAWAMURA, 1990, p. 139), as this capitalist expansion entailed both changes in the processes of work organization and management more technological, automatic, and bureaucratic and shifts in culture, increasingly massified in favor of the development of a cultural industry driven by mass devices and technologies. Thus, it became necessary to form a citizen equipped for work and its automatic technological execution, as well as one embedded in a technological, consumerist culture, perpetuating the cycle of mass production and mass consumption.

Table 4 Synthesis of the Relationship between Knowledge and Work in Fordist Production Organization.

KNOWLEDGE AND WORK IN THE FORDIST ORGANIZATION
The use of machines dominates all stages of production, and the worker themselves must become an obedient machine.
High specialization of labor, each worker performs only a small part of the production process, making them easily replaceable in this chain.
Mass production and mass consumption. Aestheticization of consumption and capitalism.
Increased production with the improvement of machines, reduction in working hours (the worker needs free time to consume). Production costs decrease for the capitalist, increasing surplus value.
Instrumental and technological training to prepare for the labor market and consumption.

Source: prepared by the authors.

School education and the flexible accumulation system

Fordism reached its peak after the Second World War (HARVEY, 2017). The European and Asian markets, which had been major consumers of U.S. products during the post-war period, completed their restructuring, leading to a decreased demand for American imports. A solution at the time, seemingly to offset this deficit through the Vietnam War, proved ineffective. By the late 1960s, the U.S. experienced a sharp decline in productivity and profitability, triggering a severe fiscal crisis. The formation of a Eurodollar market and the adoption of import substitution policies in Third World countries unleashed a wave of competitive international industrialization that challenged U.S. hegemony under Fordism. It became increasingly apparent that both Fordism and Keynesianism were incapable of containing the contradictions and crises within the capitalist system itself.

> On the surface, these difficulties can be best understood by a single word: rigidity. There were problems with the rigidity of large-scale, long-term fixed capital investments in mass production systems, which hindered flexibility in planning and presumed stable growth in fluctuating consumer markets. There were also issues with rigidity in markets, labor allocation, and contracts (especially in the so-called 'monopolistic' sector). Every attempt to overcome these rigidity problems faced the seemingly invincible force of the deeply entrenched power of the working class [...] (HARVEY, 2017, p. 135).

Companies, unable to maintain workers with a legitimate base of secured rights while simultaneously achieving their profits, demanded a more rigid commitment from the State to social assistance programs at a time when production itself restricted the expansion of the State's fiscal expenditures. The flexible solution was monetary policy, which involved printing money in the necessary amounts to cover expenses and keep the economy stable. However, this predictably led to an inflationary crisis, culminating in the city of New York, a major international economic-financial hub, being declared technically bankrupt in 1975 (HARVEY, 2017).

Large corporations, on the other hand, found themselves with many excess capacities, rendered useless by the exhaustion of the mass production system initiated with Taylorism. In this context, a restructuring of production was necessary, taking into account new technological research in the corporate field, which became even more rationalized, further intensifying labor control (CORIAT, 1988). Among the main survival measures for corporations were the following: investments in cutting-edge technology with production automation, the search for new markets and consumer niches, geographic dispersion to areas with more flexible labor controls, mergers between companies, and the acceleration of capital turnover. These measures led to a profound transformation in the Fordist production bases and capitalist accumulation modes. Consequently, the 1970s and 1980s were marked by a tumultuous period of attempts at economic, political, and social restructuring (HARVEY, 2017).

These varied experiments in industrial organization represented the first steps towards the constitution of a flexible accumulation system, supported by the flexibility of work processes, labor markets, products, and consumption patterns. This system is characterized by the emergence of entirely new productive sectors, financial and market services, highly technological, with significant development in the tertiary sector of the economy and the implementation of various industrial complexes in underdeveloped regions.

There was an increase in temporary and part-time jobs, with work hours depending on production demand. Workers were employed during periods of demand, earning lower wages and without labor rights such as unemployment insurance and pension benefits. With the fragmentation of labor and the production system, union organization—which relied heavily on the concentration and unity of workers—became further weakened. Consequently, any remnants of class consciousness and political strength to fight the system for better working conditions were lost.

Within the production system, continuous production continued but was fragmented into various spaces, each with its own characteristics, tools, and inventories. Traditional assembly lines were replaced by small and diverse workstations, composed of small groups of workers responsible

for a part of the production. The number of products to be manufactured weekly was still determined by management, but each group had the "freedom" to manage its own production time to meet certain goals. Work became excessively fragmented and repetitive, producing fewer standardized products but with the ability to manufacture in smaller, more diverse batches to cater to increasingly specific markets (CORIAT, 1988).

Access to technical and scientific knowledge became a key tool in the competition between companies, as the rapid changes in consumer tastes and the heightened demand for the latest and most distinct offerings turned knowledge into a commodity to be produced and sold for greater competitive advantage in the market. Traditional technologies underwent significant automation, optimizing circulation and production times. By programming machinery, multi-activity across different sets of machines was ensured, along with automated management of material consumption, tool changes, and component usage, absorbing numerous tasks previously reliant on human labor (Coriat, 1988).

This potential effect of reduced corporate power due to the decentralization of production with the rise of the service sector, however, did not lead to the demise of large corporations. On the contrary, there was a movement toward mergers between major companies, mobilizing various sectors to introduce different products aimed at heterogeneous markets.

Trata-se de uma recomposição do mundo capitalista amparado pela acumulação flexível e pela constituição de um tecnocapitalismo planetário, marcado pelo excesso de estímulos – efêmeros e da ordem do consumo – e pela formação de uma hipercultura (LIPOVETSKY; SERROY, 2011). Aspirando um mundo sem fronteiras, cuja dominação do tempo subverte a ordem do espaço, a hipermodernidade será demarcada pela era do capital sem fronteiras, das multinacionais, do ciberespaço, do consumismo que finda um *ethos* tecnocapitalista onde a cultura impõe um mundo econômico de pleno direito (LIPOVETSKY; SERROY, 2011).

By concealing history through the constant need for innovation and the dominance of flexible attitudes and rotating activities, the qualities of hypermodern capital demand from the worker an unceasing adaptation to the inevitable changes and instabilities of the system itself and, consequently, to the profession exercised by individuals.

> Life time has become merely an extension of work time. As the company's space became deterritorialized, it simultaneously extended beyond the workplace, with new communication and information technologies contributing to the alienated tasks of work invading the domestic sphere (ALVES, 2011, p. 93).

The hypercapitalist culture has infiltrated every aspect of human life. The individual is no longer just working; they have become the work itself. In this logic, the ideology of the company has extended to the entire social life. There is no shortage, in capitalist culture, of self-help books and entrepreneurship courses that claim to solve humanity's existential questions through the order of life as business in other words, life is business. In the wake of flexible production emerges the culture of entrepreneurship, which demands that unemployed men and women (caused by the system itself) become entrepreneurs of themselves. "The discourse of entrepreneurship, which has the logic of social Darwinism inscribed within it, is a key element in the plethora of fetishized values, expectations, and market utopias" (ALVES, 2011, p. 104).

The individual who becomes an entrepreneur, invests in human capital - through self-development stages - and enjoys "freedom" in their work is highly valued. The narratives endorse the idea that those who manage their own work, providing services as temporary, autonomous, or freelance workers, are not truly "working" but are rather embracing a lifestyle, a free and personal way of asserting themselves in the world. This is positioned in contrast to those who have yet to achieve their "financial autonomy" and, consequently, autonomy in life itself.

In the interplay between work and education in hypermodernity, the flexible accumulation regime deepens class inequalities by shifting a clearly social issue into individual dimensions, framed within the narratives of skill and competency development. In this context, the neoliberal State and international organizations such as the World Bank (WB) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), through the dissemination of educational policies, aim to shape individuals to conform to this system by promoting a market-driven pedagogy aligned with the ideals of flexible accumulation. If pedagogical work is a social practice for human production, in a society divided by classes, the hegemonic power i.e., capital is dedicated to developing subjectivities tailored to uphold its structure, a historically rooted movement since the bourgeois revolution, as we have analyzed.

In the face of the new competencies required by hypermodern social life within the context of flexible accumulation, citizens are subjected to a new form of discipline, specifically designed for conformity within this economic production apparatus. In this regard, schools and pedagogies become effective tools for capitalist valorization and for concealing class contradictions. The project of a universal, compulsory public school, which gained momentum following the economic and political ascension of the bourgeoisie, emerges as the primary means for instilling bourgeois morality and ideology among the masses. However, the transformations brought about by the flexible accumulation system, and the subsequent implications for the organization of life, demand not only

education for social conformity but also the creation of new modes of living and behaviors suited to the new methods of production. This includes the ability to adapt and develop competencies tailored to automated and flexible labor.

If the foundation of this new form of capitalist production and accumulation is flexibility—both in social relations and within the school—knowledge, both scientific and practical, is distributed unequally, educating the worker for adaptation and alienated conformity to this system. The school, influenced by those who hold material power and consequently control the material instruments for knowledge production, expresses and reproduces this alienation through its content, methods, and organizational structures. These principles are evident in numerous international documents and policies, such as the 1996 report led by Jacques Delors, titled "Learning: The Treasure Within," commissioned by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization– UNESCO.

> [...] Education must build a more flexible system, with a greater diversity of courses and more opportunities for transfer between various forms of education or, alternatively, between professional experience and the return to further training. These are valid responses to the issues arising from the mismatch between job supply and demand. Such a system would also help reduce school failure, which - there is clear evidence - lies at the root of the enormous waste of human resources (DELORS, 2010, p. 11).

It is necessary to train the new worker to meet the demands of an emptied mode of production, where the logic of competencies becomes more pronounced, forcing the worker to submit to capital and be aware of their alienation as a result of their own efforts and personal practices. Under the guise of competition, cooperation, and solidarity, educational discourses hide the lack of employment, the public interests of capital, and class contradictions. In the same document, we find the following passage: "[...] we were led to revisit and update the concept of lifelong education, in a way that reconciles stimulating competition with strengthening cooperation and solidarity, which promotes unity among all" (Delors, 2010, p. 9, our emphasis).

The need for an education focused on short courses arises from a flexible, fragmented productive order that demands individuals' ability to adapt and perform any task devoid of critical thinking. The obligation to stimulate competition stems from the structural order of unemployment and the ruthlessness of the capitalist labor market. The emphasis on cooperation serves both as a utility to the public good, meaning what is in the interest of capitalist society, and as a more direct convenience for better adaptation within the production process itself, no longer comprised of assembly lines where each individual performed a specific function, but rather of work islands,

consisting of small groups of workers responsible for a particular part of production. Lastly, solidarity aims at erasing class contradictions through sympathy and compassion for the inherent ills of capitalism.

Pedagogical work and social practice (capitalist) operate in shaping subjects who are resigned to their class positions. In the construction of this disciplinary capitalist history, driven by pedagogical practices that are also social practices, under the regimes of Taylorism and Fordism, the required training was clearly delineated between those who would be managers and those who would be subordinates, meeting business demands. The production system, concentrated in large industrial organizations, followed a linear, vertical, and hierarchical structure. The roles, categories, and trades followed a stable arrangement that demanded and guaranteed specialized training, as workers would likely have the same profession throughout their lives.

In the pedagogical sphere, flexible accumulation materializes in the shift from a focus on abilities to competencies. Discourses around psychophysical skills are replaced by discussions on the development of complex cognitive competencies that can be useful to the new system of production and accumulation, such as multitasking abilities, which in schools are articulated under the guise of multidisciplinarity. However, these often do not produce autonomous and critical individuals but rather task-oriented workers engaged in diverse and shallow activities (KUENZER, 2005).

Science and technology, despite simplifying the production process under flexible accumulation, demand more knowledge from the worker, extending schooling through continuing education programs, while simultaneously hollowing out the content of what is learned. Accumulated knowledge is replaced by constant and new information. The physical strength required during the Taylorist and Fordist periods is replaced by the ability to master higher cognitive skills. Individuals must possess innovative and adaptive qualities to learn (new functions, new information, new organizations, etc.) on their own; however, there is no need for in-depth knowledge in any of these areas because, over the course of their lives, they will likely have to perform functions different from their original training and will inevitably need new training for these new roles.

This hollowing out of accumulated knowledge is evident in another guiding document by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), titled *Learning to Be* and chaired by Edgar Faure in 1972:

> The scientific-technological era implies the mobility of knowledge and the renewal of 'innovations,' and therefore education should devote minimal effort to the distribution and accumulation of acquired knowledge (although exaggerations in this domain should be avoided) and place greater emphasis on learning acquisition

> methods (learning to learn). Correspondingly, since it will be necessary to review and complete knowledge throughout one's life, it can be concluded that reducing the duration of studies is important, as is integrating theoretical initiatives and professional experiences during higher education cycles, which are sometimes too long today (UNESCO, 1977, pp. 29-30, our emphasis).

The search for the reconstitution of pedagogical unity in the flexible accumulation system arises from the principle of flexibility as a condition for demand-driven production. It is no longer necessary to train workers specialized in executing a single trade with well-defined tasks, as was the case during Taylorism and Fordism; instead, it is necessary to train flexible individuals, workers with adaptable behaviors that fit into various work situations. In the same document, we can also read:

> Modern democratic education needs to be revitalized by the natural motivation that leads man to knowledge, and, at the same time, it is necessary to dispel the diploma-employment automatism [...] (UNESCO, 1977, p. 29) [...] the motivation based on employment, while incapable of ensuring true democratization, also presents the enormous drawback of fostering the belief that a diploma entitles one to a job matching their qualification. Thus, graduates who are unable to find work in line with their qualification feel deceived and often prefer to accept unemployment rather than take on a less prestigious position, which, moreover, they were not taught to value (UNESCO, 1977, p. 28, emphasis ours).
>
> The fact that a graduate cannot find a job that corresponds to their specific or optimal qualification is not a scandal. But the fact that they cannot or do not want to take on a role that corresponds to a social utility, and are not accepted in that role, marks a failure of the educational system in itself (UNESCO, 1977, p. 31, author's emphasis).

The flexible accumulation system requires versatile workers who possess distinct knowledge and perform various tasks without, however, understanding the totality of the production system (HARVEY, 2017). This represents a multidisciplinary behavior devoid of meaning, alienated, and presented as an interrelation of fragmented contents. From a pedagogical perspective, this means the denial of historically accumulated knowledge in favor of information articulated between different disciplines and the massification of ignorance. From an ontological perspective, it represents the denial of humanity by erasing its own history and labor. From an economic-productive standpoint, it signifies the ongoing capitalist exploitation of the working class.

Table 5 - Synthesis of the relations between knowledge and work in flexible accumulation.

KNOWLEDGE AND WORK IN FLEXIBLE ACCUMULATION
Cutting-edge technology involved in all stages of production..
Requires few well-trained professionals, investing in research for the technological development of capitalism.
High production capacity, but delivery according to demand. Variety of products and the aestheticization of consumption and capitalism.
Flexibility in work and the end of labor rights. Emphasis on entrepreneurship and the transformation of the worker into a service provider. Production costs decrease for capitalism, while surplus value increases.
Scientific education for the few. "Learning to learn" and the necessity of lifelong education, as individuals will need to perform various professions in the labor market.

Source: prepared by the authors.

Final considerations

The imperative power of capital demands that human formation be a continuation of its own structures. Thus, education can only function as a means to sustain the logic of capital itself. An educational project can only be constructed to the extent that it ensures the survival - in its various forms - of a system that exploits the labor force and the lives of workers. This means that the concept of education, forged within this system, far from the discourses it may profess, becomes yet another strategy for reproducing the working class. This implies not only preserving the working conditions of those currently employed but also maintaining the pool of unemployed individuals, shaping a future for the next generations that ensures the continuity of this system. Capital cannot be halted.

To ensure this, it is necessary to control the working class not only in direct labor environments but also during their free time, in areas involving family, leisure, education, and so on, producing the necessary qualifications for the maintenance of capitalism and for exercising labor within this system. This extends the economic domain of capital into all institutions and social relationships, formalizing a pact of domination in both material and subjective spheres: the individual lives to maintain the system, is educated to maintain the system, works to maintain the system, etc. This cycle requires a position of coercive dependency with almost no alternatives, especially for individuals deprived of the material means of existence - whose barriers are purposefully established by capital to ideologically create criteria of differentiation - from the desirable to the undesirable - under the fallacy of economic freedom and the meritocratic effort narrative.

The causes of poverty and misery are concealed so that individuals believe their living conditions are solely their responsibility. This narrative seeks out "winners" and is also cultivated in schools: a society and an education based on the pursuit of "winners" can only produce far more "losers," and this disparity is essential for capitalism to function. The contemporary capitalist world, marked by flexibility, mobility, and technological development, despite its promotion of endless possibilities for individual achievement and social mobility - where education is often presented as the primary means of salvation - reveals, upon closer inspection, a deep contradiction. The goal of capital is not to grant more people access to the products of human labor; rather, it necessitates that they do not have access.

This is an impossibility of capitalism. People must not possess capital, but they must believe that one day they will be able to. Here, a fundamental instance arises for reflecting on schools, shaped by the logic of capital, as spaces for this ideology of the impossible. Since the early 20th century, capitalists have sought to establish forms of control over time lived outside of workplaces - including, in particular, school spaces and times - to convert them into work spaces and times. It was crucial for capitalists to ensure that control of production remained under the domain of capital, managed by public authority, so that education, although financially free of burden for the capitalists, is conditioned to develop an instrumental intelligence in the children of the working class, ultimately serving the needs of the capitalist organization itself.

Pedagogically, we can understand that in artisanal production, the worker was linked to the theoretical and scientific knowledge of their time through the daily practice of their trade. In the labor system initiated by manufacturing, we observe the beginning of a process of decomposition of trades into specialized and partial operations, gradually depriving the worker of their knowledge. With machinery, we witness the escalation of this struggle for the expropriation and capture of workers' knowledge by capitalist production forces, reaching its peak with the rise of Taylorism, based on scientific management, which enforces the division between conception and execution, making workers not only alienated from the production process but also from their specialized know-how.
This division solidifies with Fordism, when this mass production system becomes not just a system of production but also a way of producing life in all its dimensions ethically, aesthetically, and politically configuring the citizen to produce and consume in mass, without reflecting on what they produce or consumes.

In the world of flexible capital, with the shaping of educational systems according to the expectations of the market and the desires of the world's major economic powers, pedagogical practices increasingly emphasize professional competencies (adaptation, flexibility, innovation, etc.)

required by hypermodernity. Under the banner of multidisciplinarity, this also means ensuring the productive potential of all within the productive realm.

Education is positioned solely in its role as a solution to social problems, addressing both their material and symbolic determinants. Supported by the value of human development, understood as individual development, that is, by relocating universal issues to the individual sphere, educational practices must prepare individuals for the workforce by extracting their competencies while also promoting an improbable utopia with the promise of social mobility through education and individual commitment to personal development.

Education, conditioned by the demands of capital and the labor market, also fuels a discourse of universalization. However, this universalization must be understood as a process of massification that reduces formative processes to the demands of capital reproduction. The massification of education is linked to the flexibilization of training - exemplified by the growing number of distance learning courses and pedagogical mediation through information and communication technologies - along with the need for rapid and versatile training, and the promotion of competency-based pedagogies.

It is necessary for this constantly evolving individual to understand their "productive role" in society and willingly accept jobs below their educational level, since the motivation behind education cannot solely be employment even though education and pedagogical practices prepare and conform the individual for capitalist work because a diploma does not guarantee employment. Unemployment is also a strategy of capitalist domination.

In this context, the pedagogical proposals defended materialize as tools for developing social survival skills: to cope with the harshness of employability, to manage the constant uncertainty and pressure of work, and, above all, to endure a life expropriated by capital. This approach personifies the hollowing out of knowledge and consolidates a reactionary educational project that legitimizes inequality, domination, and counters the movement for human liberation, ultimately supporting the perpetuation of capitalism.

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