



Research in Philosophy teaching: a disciplinary field?

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Abstract: This article questions the consolidation of research in Philosophy teaching in Brazil in recent decades, around the perspective of taking the teaching of Philosophy as a philosophical problem. It contextualizes the field of disputes and debates about the teaching of Philosophy in basic education as a background for this research. Based on Michel Foucault's reflections on discipline and its power to select and organize knowledge, it introduces the notion of "disciplinary field" to argue that there was a good development of research in the country, in the interface between Philosophy and Education, which enabled the emergence and some consolidation of a disciplinary field, which has produced knowledge about teaching philosophy at different school and academic levels.

Keywords: Discipline; Disciplinary Field; Research; Philosophy; Foucault.

Pesquisa em ensino de Filosofia: um campo disciplinar?

Resumo: Este artigo interroga a consolidação da pesquisa em ensino de Filosofia no Brasil nas últimas décadas, em torno da perspectiva de se tomar o ensino de Filosofia como problema filosófico. Contextualiza o campo de disputas e debates sobre o ensino de Filosofia na educação básica como pano de fundo para estas pesquisas. A partir das reflexões de Michel Foucault sobre a disciplina e seu poder de seleção e organização dos saberes, introduz a noção de "campo disciplinar" para defender que houve um bom desenvolvimento das pesquisas no país, na interface da Filosofia com a Educação, que possibilitou a emergência e certa consolidação de

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um campo disciplinar, que tem produzido saberes em torno do ensinar Filosofia nos diversos níveis escolares e acadêmicos.

Palavras-chave: Disciplina; Campo Disciplinar; Pesquisa; Filosofia; Foucault.

Investigación en enseñanza de la Filosofía: ¿un campo disciplinar?

Resumo: Este artículo cuestiona la consolidación de la investigación en la enseñanza de la Filosofía en Brasil en las últimas décadas, en torno a la perspectiva de tomar la enseñanza de la Filosofía como un problema filosófico. Contextualiza el campo de disputas y debates sobre la enseñanza de la Filosofía en la educación básica como trasfondo de estas investigaciones. A partir de las reflexiones de Michel Foucault sobre la disciplina y su poder para seleccionar y organizar el conocimiento, introduce la noción de “campo disciplinar” para argumentar que hubo un buen desarrollo de la investigación en el país, en la interfaz entre Filosofía y Educación, lo que posibilitó el surgimiento y cierta consolidación de un campo disciplinar, que ha producido conocimientos sobre la enseñanza de la filosofía en diferentes niveles escolares y académicos.

Palabras clave: Disciplina; Campo Disciplinar; Investigación; Filosofía; Foucault.

Introduction

Philosophy can be said to be well established in Brazil, at least within universities and, particularly, in graduate education. A glance at the program of any of the national meetings held by the Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação em Filosofia (Anpof) [National Association of Graduate Studies in Philosophy] makes this evident. The number of undergraduate programs distributed across the various regions of Brazil further reinforces this impression. But can we say the same about Philosophy teaching? Has research on this subject become consolidated in Brazil? Did the establishment of Philosophy as a compulsory subject in all upper-secondary schools in the country, approved in 2008, lead to an increase in research on the subject? In other words, can we say that Philosophy teaching has become

constituted in Brazil as a “disciplinary field,” a specific area of inquiry? These are the questions addressed in this article.

To contextualize the problem addressed here, we will revisit certain moments in the movement for Philosophy teaching in Brazilian basic education during the last two decades of the twentieth century and the first two decades of the twenty-first century. In particular, we will seek to understand the political context that led to the approval, in 2008, of Philosophy as a compulsory subject in Brazilian upper-secondary education, with a view to mapping the growth of research in this field.

Next, drawing on the thought of Michel Foucault, we will introduce the notion of a “disciplinary field” in order to examine the consolidation of research on Philosophy teaching and ask whether we can now consider such a disciplinary field to exist in Brazil.

The Struggle for Philosophy Teaching in Brazil

Since the enactment of Law No. 5,692 on August 11, 1971, which regulated the reform of Brazilian basic education according to the technicist principles adopted by the military government and excluded the possibility of Philosophy classes from upper-secondary curricula, a movement began in Brazil for the “return of Philosophy to upper-secondary education.”¹ Philosophy departments at various Brazilian universities began advocating for the inclusion of the subject in school curricula, organizing meetings of professors, teachers, and students, as well as broader debates, and producing materials for publication and circulation. It was in this context that, in 1976,

¹ Law No. 5,692/71 established the guidelines and foundations for primary and lower-secondary education (lasting eight years) and upper-secondary education (lasting three years). Curricula consisted of a general component, which was to be taught in every school throughout the national territory, and a diversified component, which schools could select from among a few available options. None of these provided for the inclusion of Philosophy. On the other hand, two subjects were made compulsory: Moral and Civic Education and Social and Political Organization of Brazil, which became known as privileged spaces for disseminating the ideology of the regime then in power in the country.

the Sociedade de Estudos e Atividades Filosóficas (SEAF) [Society for Philosophical Studies and Activities] was founded in Rio de Janeiro;² it remains active to this day.

The purpose of this article is not to provide yet another exhaustive review of the history of Philosophy teaching in Brazil, something that has already been done in several studies³. Rather, it aims merely to identify certain landmarks in the trajectory of the debates that have taken place in Brazil over recent decades, so as to contextualize the emergence and consolidation of research on Philosophy teaching in the country. This is an admittedly particular and interested perspective, with no intention of presenting the reader with a comprehensive panorama, but instead of highlighting points that are important for understanding the problem addressed here: the consolidation of research on Philosophy teaching in Brazil. Regarding the history of Philosophy teaching, Alves (2002) observes that it is a history of presences and absences, identifying the following periods: from the colonial period to the Proclamation of the Republic, Philosophy enjoyed a “guaranteed presence” in upper-secondary curricula; from the First Republic to the 1964 civil-military coup, an “indefinite presence”; during the post-1964 dictatorship, a “defined absence”; and during the post-1980 redemocratization period, a “controlled presence.”

² See the website of the Sociedade de Estudos e Atividades Filosóficas (SEAF) [Society for Philosophical Studies and Activities], which provides historical and current information: <https://www.seaf.com.br/>. In 1986, SEAF published the book *O ensino da filosofia no 2º grau* [Philosophy Teaching in Upper-Secondary Education], bringing together texts by 21 authors from different parts of Brazil reflecting on the issue. The volume was edited by Professor Henrique Nielsen Neto, one of the prominent voices in this debate.

³ There are numerous studies of this kind; I will limit myself to drawing attention to the chapters by Geraldo B. Horn, “A presença da filosofia no currículo do ensino médio brasileiro” [The Presence of Philosophy in the Brazilian Upper-Secondary Curriculum], and Simone F. S. Gallina, “A disciplina filosofia e o Ensino Médio” [Philosophy as a Subject and Upper-Secondary Education], published in Gallo and Kohan (2000), as well as Dalton José Alves’s book *A filosofia no ensino médio: ambiguidades e contradições da LDB* [Philosophy in Upper-Secondary Education: Ambiguities and Contradictions of the LDB]. Although the latter focuses on an analysis of the 1996 Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional [Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education], one of its chapters provides a history of the subject in Brazil, systematizing and synthesizing information from other studies.

During the 1980s, the academic and political debates calling for the “return of Philosophy” intensified, and a first victory came in 1985: Philosophy was once again permitted to be included in the “diversified component of the curriculum.” In the state of São Paulo, for example, when determining the curricula of public schools at what was then known as *segundo grau* [upper-secondary education], school principals were required to choose, over the course of the three years, two subjects from among Philosophy, Sociology, and Psychology. With this legal provision, Philosophy classes returned to Brazilian schools, albeit unevenly and with considerable variation among the different states of the federation.

Following the promulgation of the 1988 Federal Constitution, debate began over a new regulatory framework for national education. Alves (2002, p. 55) shows that an initiative was undertaken by the “organized educational community,” which gathered at the IV Conferência Nacional de Educação [4th National Conference on Education], held in Goiânia in 1986, to submit proposals to the Constituent Assembly for the chapter of the Constitution concerning Education. Mobilization continued after 1988, with the aim of drafting a *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* (LDB) [Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education] that would safeguard the principles of high-quality public education. Within this context, Philosophy was advocated as a subject in school curricula. A draft LDB, for which Federal Deputy Jorge Hage served as rapporteur, proceeded through the National Congress and included Philosophy as a compulsory subject. What was ultimately approved on December 20, 1996, however, as the *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* (Law No. 9,394/96) [Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education], under the administration of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, was a Senate bill authored by Senator Darcy Ribeiro and supported by the government.

As is well known, the 1996 LDB introduced an ambiguity regarding the presence of Philosophy, which Alves (2002, p. 55) termed an “ineffectual presence”: Article 36 of the law (which concerns the upper-secondary curriculum), paragraph 1, item III, stated that, upon completing this level of education, students should be able to demonstrate “mastery of

the knowledge of Philosophy and Sociology necessary for the exercise of citizenship.”

The vagueness of this provision left matters quite undefined: what exactly would constitute the “knowledge of Philosophy necessary for the exercise of citizenship”? How could such knowledge be incorporated into the education of young students if there was no Philosophy subject in the curriculum that would ensure the presence of a teacher trained in the field in schools? The *Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais para o Ensino Médio* [National Curriculum Parameters for Upper-Secondary Education], published by the Ministry of Education in 1999, offered one possible path: Philosophy was deemed so important to the education of young people that it should not be confined to a single subject, but should instead be addressed as a “cross-curricular theme” spanning all subjects. The document also defined the competencies and skills to be developed through Philosophy. At no point, however, did it explain how Brazilian schools, whose curricula were organized into distinct subjects, could hire one or more Philosophy teachers when there were no Philosophy classes in the curriculum. Nor did it explain how teachers of the various subjects, without philosophical training, could be expected to address this “knowledge of Philosophy” or to work with the competencies and skills defined for the field.

This once again generated enormous inequalities across the country, with different approaches adopted in different states and regions, as well as between public and private schools. The article “O ensino da filosofia no Brasil: um mapa das condições atuais” [Philosophy Teaching in Brazil: A Map of Current Conditions], collectively authored by Altair Alberto Fávero, Filipe Ceppas, Pedro Erginaldo Gontijo, Sílvio Gallo, and Walter Omar Kohan and published in *Cadernos CEDES*, no. 64, 2004 (*A Filosofia e seu ensino* [Philosophy and Its Teaching]), sought to provide a systematic overview of the conditions under which Philosophy was being taught in Brazil, revealing striking disparities but also the multiple efforts then underway to consolidate the presence of Philosophy in Brazilian schools.

What is important to emphasize here is that the ambiguity of the LDB regarding Philosophy teaching brought renewed impetus to debates

and studies, as well as to activism in its defense. Two parallel fronts emerged: on the one hand, political activism directed at the National Congress, aimed at securing the approval of a bill that would make Philosophy a compulsory subject; on the other, an academic movement centered on research and debate concerning the specific features of Philosophy teaching⁴.

On the first front, progress was gradually made, with the successive approval by the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate of a bill establishing Philosophy as a compulsory subject. The bill was vetoed by President Fernando Henrique Cardoso in October 2001, following the Minister of Education's argument that the measure ran counter to the public interest because it would impose "costs on the states, presupposing the need to create positions for the hiring of teachers of these subjects, compounded by the fact that the country does not have a sufficient number of trained professionals to meet the demand" (BRASÍLIA, 2001). Following this veto, new initiatives were undertaken, and the requirement that Philosophy be taught as a compulsory subject was ultimately enacted on June 2, 2008, through Law No. 11,684.

The second front, which is of more direct interest here – although it cannot be separated from the first and depended on the progress achieved there – concerns an intense academic production of reflections, debates, critical analyses, and materials on Philosophy teaching. In the face of the impasses created by the LDB, it became necessary once again to legitimize Philosophy, defend its social importance, demonstrate its purpose, and show the contributions it could make to young Brazilians. More than that, it was necessary to affirm its "teachability" at the upper-secondary level and to propose methodologies and materials through which it could become a reality in the classroom.

⁴ This entire debate concerned both Philosophy and Sociology as school subjects. If I omit the latter, it is merely to avoid repeating this point throughout an article whose focus is strictly Philosophy. It should nevertheless be emphasized that the movement surrounding Philosophy was greatly strengthened by the movement surrounding Sociology, and vice versa. Both communities played an active role in this struggle.

Numerous academic events on Philosophy teaching were held, giving rise to a substantial body of publications in the form of books and journal articles, while research on the subject also took the form of master's dissertations and doctoral dissertations.

Regarding events, at the national level I would highlight the Congresso Internacional de Filosofia com Crianças e Jovens [International Congress of Philosophy with Children and Young People], held at the Universidade de Brasília (UnB) in 1999, which led to the creation of the Rede Latino-americana de Ensino de Filosofia [Latin American Network for Philosophy Teaching], and the Congresso Brasileiro de Professores de Filosofia [Brazilian Congress of Philosophy Teachers], held at the Universidade Metodista de Piracicaba in December 2000. One of the initiatives arising from this congress was an effort to organize Philosophy teachers regionally throughout Brazil, drawing on the proposal of the Fórum Sul dos Cursos de Filosofia, informally established in 1999 (Fávero *et al.*, 2004), which began holding meetings every two years in 2001. The Fórum Sudeste do Ensino de Filosofia [Southeastern Forum on Philosophy Teaching] also held several meetings over the course of that decade, as did the Fórum Centro-Oeste [Central-Western Forum]. Organization proved more difficult in the North and Northeast regions, which does not mean that important efforts were not undertaken there.

As for publications, I would draw attention to two book series that provided important support for the circulation of ideas and the promotion of debate. Beginning in 1998, the publisher Vozes released the “Filosofia na Escola” [“Philosophy in School”] series, edited by Walter Kohan. Several books were published, with a certain emphasis on Philosophy for Children as a school practice, but the series also published *Filosofia no ensino médio* [Philosophy in Upper-Secondary Education] (Gallo; Kohan, 2000), one of the first publications on the subject following the 1996 LDB, and *Filosofia do ensino de Filosofia* [Philosophy of Philosophy Teaching] (Gallo; Cornelli; Danelon, 2003), which brought together texts originating from the 2000 Congresso Brasileiro de Professores de Filosofia [Brazilian Congress of Philosophy Teachers]. Editora Unijuí, in turn, published the “Filosofia e

Ensino” [“Philosophy and Teaching”] series, which included several volumes bringing together texts produced for the events of the Fórum Sul [Southern Forum], as well as other works, such as the 2002 Portuguese translation of Argentine professor Guillermo Obiols’s book *Uma introdução ao ensino da Filosofia* [An Introduction to Philosophy Teaching], among others. Throughout the 2000s, these two series served as important vehicles for disseminating the research and debates surrounding Philosophy teaching in Brazil.

It is also worth noting that, between 2007 and 2014, Edições Loyola published the “Filosofar é preciso” [“Philosophizing Is Necessary”] series, comprising both single-author books and edited collections devoted to the teaching of the subject, for a total of seven volumes. Over the past few decades, a wide range of other individual books have also been published, along with numerous journal articles. The purpose here is not to review or inventory this body of scholarship, but simply to emphasize that there has been a reasonably intense level of production, which has circulated and continues to circulate in various formats: master’s dissertations, doctoral dissertations, articles, books, and edited collections. This highlights a certain vitality and effervescence in the field of Philosophy teaching in Brazil, closely connected with the struggles to implement and maintain Philosophy as a subject in upper-secondary curricula.

A Democratic Governmentality and the Approval of Compulsory Philosophy Teaching

How can we understand the process through which the inclusion of Philosophy in the Brazilian upper-secondary curriculum was advocated and ultimately approved by law in 2008, only to be transformed later, in 2017, by the New Upper-Secondary Education and the Base Nacional Comum Curricular [National Common Core Curriculum]? I believe that this process cannot be understood apart from the democratic principle. If Philosophy teaching is defended in contemporary Brazil, it is within the context of the

country's redemocratization following the end of the military dictatorship imposed by the 1964 coup. Elsewhere (Gallo, 2012), I sought to develop an understanding of this process through the Foucauldian analytical operator of governmentality. Here, I briefly revisit some elements of that analysis solely to contextualize the constitution of Philosophy teaching as a field of inquiry.

In his 1978 course at the Collège de France (*Security, Territory, Population*), Michel Foucault introduced the notion of governmentality as the mode of operation of modern states. The philosopher analyzed the workings of the political machinery first through liberal thought and subsequently through neoliberalism. For these political currents, individual freedom is fundamental, such that governing is constituted not as a relationship of command and obedience, but as a process of conducting conduct. That is, individuals act and conduct themselves; governmental action consists in conducting and guiding these conducts, not by ordering actions, but by accompanying and directing them. The process of governmentalization of European states (Foucault, 2008) occurred alongside the emergence of a new technology of power, biopolitics, which operates through the affirmation and protection of citizens' lives, entailing a power exercised over population groups.

I believe that these basic elements, presented here in highly condensed form, are sufficient to understand governmentality as the political machinery of the state that operates upon citizens so as to conduct their conduct.⁵ In the European context analyzed by Foucault, the governmentalization of the state was closely related to liberal and neoliberal principles and concerned what has conventionally been termed the "democratic rule-of-law state."

How, then, did this process unfold in the Brazilian context? The history of the constitution of the Brazilian state is undoubtedly very different

⁵ Readers interested in exploring this understanding in greater depth may consult Foucault's course itself (2008) or works by contemporary researchers who operationalize this concept in their analyses, such as the German sociologist Thomas Lemke (2017), for example. For the Brazilian case, particularly the analysis of public policies in the field of education, see Gallo (2012; 2015; 2017a; 2017b; 2021a; 2021b).

from that of European states, yet a process of governmentalization of the state also developed here (Gallo, 2021b). I advance the hypothesis that, beginning in 1985, with the end of the military dictatorship and the onset of the redemocratization process, a governmental machinery grounded in the defense of democracy and the importance of exercising citizenship gradually took shape in the country, which is why I suggest calling it “democratic governmentality.” Having been excluded from democratic processes for two and a half decades, the task was – and, as the country’s recent history shows, still is – to implement and consolidate a democratic machinery for the operation of the Brazilian state, fully articulated with civil society. This governmental machinery would deal with citizens as legally constituted and recognized subjects of rights who were expected to participate in the country’s political decisions.

It was within this context that the movement advocating the presence of Philosophy in Brazilian upper-secondary education took shape: initially, by criticizing the technicist educational policy implemented by the dictatorship and defending the presence of Philosophy as a means of “developing students’ critical consciousness” (Silveira, 1991); later, following the LDB, by defending its importance for the exercise of citizenship.

Governmentality is a mode of operation of the state, regardless of which political party holds office. To say that this machinery has been developing within the Brazilian state since 1985 means that successive governments have acted, each in its own way, according to the rationality of a democratic governmentality. From this perspective, we can understand the impasses, advances, and setbacks surrounding Philosophy teaching at the upper-secondary level. A government such as Fernando Henrique Cardoso’s could defend it without, however, committing to making it compulsory; under the Lula administration, compulsory Philosophy teaching was introduced in 2008; under the Temer administration, the establishment of the New Upper-Secondary Education and the BNCC [National Common Core Curriculum] brought a new setback, with Philosophy affirmed as part of the field of Applied Human and Social Sciences, but without any

provision guaranteeing its presence as a distinct school subject. Finally, under the administration in office between 2019 and 2022, a complete disregard for educational issues simply carried forward the implementation of what had been approved under the previous administration, leaving Philosophy in a marginal position.

It is undeniable, however, that the debate surrounding the importance of Philosophy and its teaching over the past four decades in Brazil cannot be separated from the debates and actions surrounding the affirmation of democracy, the subject of rights, and the citizen. It was within this context that the issue took shape and was able to advance and consolidate itself⁶.

The Notion of a Disciplinary Field

We now arrive at the central concern of this article: the question of whether Philosophy teaching has constituted itself as a disciplinary field in Brazil over the past few decades. Before addressing this question, however, it is necessary to clarify the idea of a disciplinary field.

On December 2, 1970, Michel Foucault began his academic career at the *Collège de France*. The inaugural lecture he delivered on that date was published shortly thereafter, in 1971, under the title *The Order of Discourse*; we would have to wait until 2011 for the lectures that followed it, comprising his first course at that institution, to be published⁷. In this course, the philosopher presents a shift in the focus of his investigations into

⁶ Here, a parallel could be drawn with the case of France, where Philosophy has been taught at the upper-secondary level since the late nineteenth century, with its importance affirmed in relation to the maintenance of the country's republican tradition. See, for example, Jacques Derrida's analyses in *Du droit à la philosophie*.

⁷ The course was published in France in 2011 under the title *Leçons sur la volonté de savoir* and translated in Brazil in 2014 as *Aulas sobre a vontade de saber*. The course editors deemed it appropriate to add the word *leçons/aulas* [lectures] before the title to avoid confusion, since the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, published in 1976, bore the same expression as its subtitle: "the will to knowledge."

knowledge, from discursive formations to the question of truth. He takes up two analytical models: one based on Aristotle, which divests knowledge of desire, and another based on Nietzsche, which posits a will to truth. What directly concerns us here, however, is not this intriguing shift in focus from knowledge to truth, but rather the analyses he had already developed in his inaugural lecture concerning the notion of discipline.

Concerned with the “order of discourse,” Foucault discusses the processes through which certain discourses are prohibited and excluded, and it is in this context that he addresses discipline as one of the mechanisms that enable the “legitimate” exclusion of a given discourse. At the same time, discipline is also responsible for the internal processes that limit a given discourse, establishing what may and may not be said. Yet discipline does not merely limit and exclude; it also makes the creation of the new possible, for “for there to be discipline, there must therefore be the possibility of formulating, and of endlessly formulating, new propositions” (Foucault, 1996, p. 30)⁸.

The discipline thus appears as a principle that legitimizes certain propositions and certain discourses, which become possible within a given theoretical horizon. A proposition is not necessarily true simply because it belongs to a discipline; Foucault argues that every discipline contains both true and false statements. What the discipline does is exclude from its boundaries “monstrous propositions” that make no sense within that field of knowledge. One must therefore first accept the theoretical limits of a discipline for a form of knowledge to be recognized, that is, for it to be able – or unable – to attain the status of “true.” The philosopher’s example concerning Mendel’s propositions in botany is illuminating, and I therefore reproduce it here:

A new object, calling for new conceptual instruments and new theoretical foundations. Mendel spoke the truth, but he was not “within the true” of the biological

⁸ Original: “para que haja disciplina é preciso, pois, que haja possibilidade de formular, e de formular indefinidamente, proposições novas”.

discourse of his time: biological objects and concepts were not formed according to such rules; an entire change of scale and the unfolding of an entirely new plane of objects in biology were required before Mendel could enter “within the true” and his propositions could then appear (for the most part) correct. Mendel was a true monster, which meant that science could not speak of him; whereas Schleiden, for example, some thirty years earlier, in the middle of the nineteenth century, denying plant sexuality but doing so according to the rules of biological discourse, formulated nothing more than a disciplined error (Foucault, 1996, p. 35).⁹

Having developed these considerations, Foucault (1996, p. 36) sketches a simple and direct definition when he states: “discipline is a principle of control over the production of discourse. It sets its limits through the play of an identity that takes the form of a permanent reactualization of rules”^{10 11}.

Several years later, in his course *Society Must Be Defended*, in the lecture of February 25, 1976, Foucault returned to the theme of discipline as an element that legitimizes forms of knowledge, now turning his attention

⁹ Original: “Novo objeto que pede novos instrumentos conceituais e novos fundamentos teóricos. Mendel dizia a verdade, mas não estava “no verdadeiro” do discurso biológico de sua época: não era segundo tais regras que se constituíam objetos e conceitos biológicos; foi preciso toda uma mudança de escala, o desdobramento de todo um novo plano de objetos na biologia para que Mendel entrasse “no verdadeiro” e suas proposições aparecessem, então, (em boa parte) exatas. Mendel era um monstro verdadeiro, o que fazia com que a ciência não pudesse falar nele; enquanto Schleiden, por exemplo, uns trinta anos antes, negando, em pleno século XIX, a sexualidade vegetal, mas conforme as regras do discurso biológico, não formulava senão um erro disciplinado”.

¹⁰ Original: “a disciplina é um princípio de controle da produção do discurso. Ela lhe fixa os limites pelo jogo de uma identidade que tem a forma de uma reatualização permanente das regras”.

¹¹ In a different direction, but likewise drawing attention to an organizing and regulatory principle, Deleuze and Guattari (1992) speak of “disciplines of thought” to refer to art, science, and philosophy as distinct and particular ways of thinking, of creating in thought. Without discipline, no creation is possible.

to the role of the university in this process. His analysis now focuses on disciplinary power; it is no longer so much an archaeology of knowledge as a genealogy¹². What we see over the course of the eighteenth century – not coincidentally known as the “Age of Enlightenment” – is a process through which Philosophy gradually loses its role in organizing the order of knowledge. Although there were already “sciences,” different scientific fields, they had in Philosophy an organizational system that enabled communication among the different fields; over the course of the eighteenth century, “Science” was constituted as the new organizing principle.

The process undertaken by the state to reorganize technical forms of knowledge was implemented through four procedures of intervention: a. *classification/selection*, resulting in the elimination of minor forms of knowledge deemed useless and economically costly; b. *normalization* of dispersed forms of knowledge, making them interchangeable; c. *hierarchization*, establishing a scale of importance among forms of knowledge; and d. *pyramidal* centralization, so that the entire hierarchy of knowledge could be controlled. These operations reveal disciplinary power. Foucault (1999, p. 216) emphasizes the role played by the *Encyclopédie*, whose importance lay not only in its political and ideological opposition to monarchy and Catholicism; rather, “its technological interest should not be attributed to a philosophical materialism, but rather to an operation, at once political and economic, of homogenizing technological forms of knowledge.”.

In the ordering of knowledge, however, one institution would assume the leading role: the university, since it has “above all a function of selection, not so much of people [...], but of forms of knowledge” (Foucault,

¹² Foucault called his investigative methodology centered on knowledge an “archaeology” (see, for example, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, published in 1969); when the focus of his investigations shifted to relations of power, he pursued what, under Nietzsche’s influence, he called a “genealogy” (see the 1971 essay *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*).

1999, p. 219)¹³. The philosopher argues that throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we witness the gradual disappearance of the amateur scientist¹⁴, who maintains a laboratory in his own home and conducts research on his own account and at his own risk, since the knowledge produced comes to have value only when legitimized by the university. What is produced outside institutional laboratories, which bear the state's seal of approval, ceases to be recognized within the disciplines. The scientist becomes a professional and, in most cases, a public employee, employed by a university institution¹⁵, to produce knowledge and have that knowledge socially recognized. A scientific community is thus constituted, regulated by its own statutes and administered by a council that, in turn, becomes responsible for the normalization and homogenization of forms of knowledge, henceforth duly regulated and standardized.

We should not suppose, however, that this function assumed by discipline as a kind of “policing of knowledge” operates solely in a restrictive manner. Foucault argues that this disciplinary control of knowledge – which he proposed calling *orthology*, in contrast to the *orthodoxy* that had previously prevailed – also made possible a kind of “unblocking,” allowing new forms of knowledge to emerge:

And we could show, I think, how this disciplining of forms of knowledge brought about an epistemological unblocking, a new form, a new regularity in the

¹³ Original: “sobretudo uma função de seleção, não tanto das pessoas [...], mas dos saberes”.

¹⁴ Perhaps the best references we have for this figure are found in fiction; one of the clearest examples is Victor Frankenstein, from Mary Shelley's novel, but we might also mention Dr. Jekyll, from Robert Louis Stevenson's novella. The two narratives, one from the first and the other from the second half of the nineteenth century, portray the effort to regulate scientific research so that it does not exceed its ethical limits, given the ambitions of these scientists who conduct their investigations independently..

¹⁵ It would fall outside the scope of this article to enter into this discussion, but I think it is important to recall the critical counterpoint offered to this process in the late twentieth century by Deleuze and Guattari (1980), when they distinguish between major (or royal) science, as science instituted and governed by the state, and minor (or nomadic) science, as science that is creative and inventive precisely because it is conducted at the margins of state control and establishes its own protocols.

proliferation of knowledge. We could show how this disciplining organized a new mode of relationship between power and knowledge. We could show, finally, how, from these disciplined forms of knowledge, a new rule emerged that was no longer the rule of truth, but the rule of Science (Foucault, 1999, p. 221-222).¹⁶

The analytical path pursued by Foucault in these two lectures, in 1970 and 1976, thus reveals the twofold effect of discipline on forms of knowledge: it operates both by containing, organizing, regulating, and normalizing their production, thereby exercising a restrictive function, and by enabling new statements to be produced, allowing knowledge to proliferate.

On the basis of this analysis, I propose that we consider the notion of a “disciplinary field,” so that we are not confined to the strict boundaries of a science. That is, within the context of a given science, a particular form of knowledge, or a particular discipline, distinct disciplinary fields may be constituted, operating according to their own rules, articulated with the general rules of that form of knowledge or science. To take two examples that remain within the scope of this article, I believe we can say that, within Philosophy understood as a discipline, there are at least two disciplinary fields organized around educational questions: Philosophy of Education, which operates according to its own rules within the broader rules of philosophical production, articulated with educational questions; and Philosophy Teaching, which is likewise organized according to its own specific rules, subordinate to the philosophical discipline.

While these two disciplinary fields delimit what may and may not be said within their respective domains of inquiry, they also make new forms

¹⁶ Original: “E poderíamos mostrar, acho eu, como esse disciplinamento incidente sobre os saberes provocou um desbloqueio epistemológico, uma nova forma, uma nova regularidade na proliferação dos saberes. Poderíamos mostrar como esse disciplinamento organizou um novo modo de relação entre poder e saber. Poderíamos mostrar, enfim, como, a partir desses saberes disciplinados, apareceu uma nova regra que já não é a regra da verdade, mas a regra da ciência”.

of knowledge possible within these fields, opening up new avenues of exploration and advances in knowledge. The constitution of a disciplinary field produces an epistemological unblocking that, by organizing forms of knowledge and their rules, fosters the creation of new knowledge within the boundaries of that field. We will now examine this more specifically in relation to Philosophy Teaching and the way it has been constituted in Brazil over the past few decades.

Philosophy Teaching in Brazil as a Disciplinary Field

An outline of the scholarship on Philosophy teaching produced in Brazil over the past few decades has already been sketched above, without any claim to exhaustiveness. I now present the results of a strictly quantitative survey conducted through the *Portal de Periódicos da CAPES* [CAPES Journals Portal]¹⁷, which will provide an indication of the extent to which publications in the field have grown. The search was conducted by decade, beginning in 1980, so as to provide an idea of how the transformations that began to take place in 1985 affected the field, and extending through 2022. The search term used was “Philosophy teaching”.

For ease of visualization, the data have been organized into Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 below:

Table 1 – Decade: 1980 – 1990

Type of publication	Number
On-line resources	30
Peer-reviewed journals	19
Articles	23
Journals	08
TOTAL	80

Source: Portal de Periódicos CAPES – elaborated by the author.

¹⁷ The portal is available at: <https://www-periodicos-capes-gov-br.ezl.periodicos.capes.gov.br/index.php?> (Access on: Dec. 28, 2022).

Table 2 – Decade: 1990 – 2000

Type of production	Quantity
On-line resources	101
Peer-reviewed journals	76
Articles	91
Journals	08
Books	06
TOTAL	282

Source: Portal de Periódicos CAPES – elaborared by the author

Tabela 3 – Década: 2000 – 2010

Type of production	Quantity
On-line resources	625
Peer-reviewed journals	418
Articles	602
Journals	08
Books	09
Master's dissertations	08
Conference proceedings	03
TOTAL	1673

Fonte: Portal de Periódicos CAPES – elaborated by the author

Tabela 4 – Década: 2010 – 2022

Production Type	Quantity
On-line resources	3492
Peer-reviewed journals	2004
Articles	3496
Journals	08
Books	07
Master's Dissertations	23
Conference proceedings	01
Book chapters	05
TOTAL	9036

Source: Portal de Periódicos CAPES – elaborated by the autor

A simple comparison of the number of publications found in the Portal de Periódicos da CAPES, organized across the past four decades, reveals the exponential growth of this body of work. It is not the purpose of this article to undertake a critical analysis of this scholarship, refine these data, or carefully examine these entries¹⁸; the aim is simply to gain a sense of the scale of this growth, which is indeed considerable.

In the 1980s, already affected by the introduction of the possibility of Philosophy classes at the upper-secondary level, we find a total of 80 publications. In the following decade, during which this introduction became consolidated and the LDB was enacted, the total rises to 282 publications, a growth of 352%. In the 2000s, with a total of 1,673 publications, the increase is considerably more significant: 593% compared with the previous decade. Two important developments during this decade should be highlighted: the creation, in 2006, of the *Filosofar e Ensinar a Filosofar* [Philosophizing and Teaching to Philosophize] Working Group within ANPOF; and the approval, in 2008, of compulsory Philosophy as a subject in upper-secondary education. Finally, from 2010 through the present period covered by the survey, we find a total of 9,036 publications, representing growth of 540% over the preceding period. The impact of the two developments highlighted in the previous decade continues to be felt during this most recent period, but another important development must also be noted: the creation, in 2017, of the Professional Master's Program in Philosophy, devoted specifically to the field of Philosophy teaching.

The scale of the growth in the number of publications related to Philosophy teaching shows that research in this field has expanded in Brazil, resulting in a significant increase in published scholarship and demonstrating that “new propositions” have been formulated “endlessly” (Foucault, 1996, p. 30). According to Foucault, this indicates that Philosophy teaching has acquired a disciplinary dimension in Brazil. Put

¹⁸ This would undoubtedly be an interesting and welcome undertaking, one that would help us understand what has been produced in the field of Philosophy teaching in Brazil; it would, however, need to be pursued in another article specifically devoted to such an analysis.

differently, the growth in scholarly production provides evidence that the field has become organized, established its rules, excluded what lies outside its boundaries, and expanded the possibilities for thinking about and formulating new propositions concerning the teaching of Philosophy.

As we saw earlier, in Foucault's analysis, the university played a fundamental role in enabling discipline to operate as a "policing of knowledge" and to promote epistemological unblocking. How, then, might the process of institutionalization have unfolded in Brazil regarding the disciplinary field of Philosophy teaching?

First, I would emphasize the role of the university, particularly graduate programs. Research on Philosophy teaching gradually became established especially within graduate programs in Education; in some of these programs, research groups or even specific lines of research in the field were created. Research on the subject has also been, and continues to be, conducted within graduate programs in Philosophy. Most notably, beginning in 2017, with the recognition of the Mestrado Profissional em Filosofia (Prof-Filo) [Professional Master's Program in Philosophy], based at the Universidade Federal do Paraná and operating through a nationwide network of universities that currently comprises 25 centers, the institutionalization of research on Philosophy teaching attained a scale that had previously been unimaginable. According to the program's website¹⁹, 309 master's dissertations have been defended to date.

Another important development was the creation, in 2006, of the *Filosofar e Ensinar a Filosofar* [Philosophizing and Teaching to Philosophize] Working Group within ANPOF. Through its regular meetings, which bring together researchers working in the field, the Working Group was able to establish its horizons and boundaries, legitimizing the research conducted within them, which in turn gained institutional support by being carried out within the context of a national association of researchers. Inevitably, the Working Group also had to exercise its power of exclusion, leaving outside its boundaries research that

¹⁹ The program's website is available at: <http://www.humanas.ufpr.br/portal/prof-filo/>.

did not fall within the domain of research on Philosophy teaching; as we saw in Foucault's reflections, this is a fundamental aspect of the policing of knowledge. Yet while this process excludes and limits, it also enables new ideas and new propositions to proliferate, thereby ensuring the advancement of the disciplinary field, as the quantitative data demonstrate.

On the basis of the considerations presented here – which, I reiterate, make no claim to exhaustiveness – I believe it is possible to argue that the problem of Philosophy teaching, conceived at the intersection of philosophy proper and the educational phenomenon, has gradually constituted itself in Brazil as a disciplinary field. There are indications that this field is now consolidated, particularly when we consider the exponential growth of scholarly production in the area. The question that motivated this article can therefore be answered in the affirmative, although further qualitative research examining this body of scholarship will be important in providing a fuller picture of this consolidation.

Final considerations

As indicated from the outset, this article has sought to revisit Brazil's recent history to understand whether the field of research on Philosophy teaching has undergone a process of consolidation in the country, tentatively advancing an affirmative answer. This has not been an analytical undertaking, but rather an account of the impressions of someone who has witnessed this history unfold. Future studies may undertake such an analysis and thereby provide a firmer basis for affirming the constitution and consolidation of Philosophy teaching as a disciplinary field.

This article has revisited the recent history of Brazil over the past four decades, offering a broad overview of the transformations undergone by Philosophy teaching, particularly in basic education and, more specifically, at the upper-secondary level. Our point of departure was the exclusion of Philosophy from school curricula in the early 1970s, as a technicist educational policy was consolidated by the military government,

which sought to promote the country's development. The protests and debates prompted by this exclusion mobilized the philosophical community, which, in 1985, with the end of the dictatorship, achieved an initial, albeit modest, victory: Philosophy could once again be included in upper-secondary curricula as an optional subject.

The 1990s were marked by the enactment of the new *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* [Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education], which stipulated the need for knowledge of Philosophy in the education of young Brazilians without, however, defining Philosophy as a distinct subject. Further mobilizations and debates intensified, culminating in the approval of compulsory Philosophy teaching in 2008. As a result, new undergraduate teacher-training programs in Philosophy were created to meet the demand for teachers, while research on the teaching of Philosophy proliferated.

Within this context, the article has sought to show that research on Philosophy teaching progressively developed and became consolidated as a disciplinary field. The situation today is very different from that experienced in the 1980s. Political discussion cannot be separated from academic debate, with each sphere reinforcing the other.

We know that the educational reforms implemented beginning in 2017, with the reform of upper-secondary education and the publication of the latest version of the *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* [National Common Core Curriculum], as well as the actions of what the author characterizes as an authoritarian government lacking commitment to education between 2019 and 2022, had a negative impact on the presence of Philosophy in Brazilian schools. Whether a negative impact will also be felt within the disciplinary field of Philosophy teaching is still too early to assess. Perhaps the consolidation of the field is precisely the strength the area needed to confront actions of this kind and reclaim spaces that were painstakingly built over the past several decades.

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