



Militarization of public schools. What is this project?¹

Militarização das escolas públicas. Que projeto é esse?

Militarización de escuelas públicas. ¿Qué proyecto es este?

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Abstract

In this article, we present the historical contexts of military schools in Brazil, their objectives and the contradictions throughout the implementation process, in order to understand the program created under Jair Bolsonaro's government. The so-called Civic-Military Schools were created by the National Program of Civic-Military Schools (PECIM) with the aim of increasing educational rates in the country. We point out several factors and facts that demonstrate that the efficiency of military colleges as a solution for public schools is not true. We include facts that show that the presence of military personnel in school is problematic in a free, plural and democratic society. The implementation of authoritarian disciplinary practices, in addition to being inadequate for the public school environment, removes fundamental rights from both teachers and students. We end with theses that oppose government arguments and point to other possibilities for the Brazilian scenario.

Key Words: Military school. Civic-military school. Public policy.

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Resumo

Estudo sobre a militarização das escolas públicas no País, no primeiro momento, avançando-se pelos contextos históricos das escolas militares no Brasil, as primeiras tentativas, sua implantação com seus objetivos e as contradições ao largo da história. O ensaio visou a subsidiar o entendimento do Programa Nacional das Escolas Cívico-Militares (PECIM), criado no governo de Jair Bolsonaro. As chamadas escolas cívico-militares foram instituídas pelo Ministério da Educação, com o fito de aumentar os índices educacionais no País. Apontam-se diversos fatores e verdades que demonstram não ser verdadeira a eficiência dos colégios militares como solução para as escolas públicas. Incluem-se fatos demonstrativos de que são problemáticas, numa sociedade livre, plural e democrática, a existência de militares na escola e a implantação de práticas disciplinadoras autoritárias, além de inadequadas ao ambiente da escola pública, retirando direitos fundamentais, tanto de professores quanto de alunos. Encerra-se com teses indicativas de uma cisão para o sistema das escolas públicas, gerando assimetrias maléficas. Demonstram que parte da solução expressa é creditar mais dinheiro às escolas, isto, ao incluir todas elas, uma vez que, quando acolherem mais dinheiro, as escolas vão melhorar o atendimento. Demais disso, há outras teses que se contrapõem aos argumentos governamentais e apontam outras possibilidades para a realidade brasileira.

Palavras-Chave: Escola militar. Escola cívico-militar. Políticas públicas.

Resumen

En este artículo, presentamos los contextos históricos de las escuelas militares en Brasil, sus objetivos y las contradicciones a lo largo del proceso de implementación, para comprender el programa creado bajo el gobierno de Jair Bolsonaro. Las denominadas Escuelas Cívico-Militares fueron creadas por el Programa Nacional de Escuelas Cívico-Militares (PECIM) con el objetivo de incrementar los índices educativos en el país. Señalamos varios factores y hechos que demuestran que la eficacia de los colegios militares como solución para las escuelas públicas no es cierta. Incluimos hechos que demuestran que la presencia de militares en la escuela es problemática en una sociedad libre, plural y democrática. La implementación de prácticas disciplinarias autoritarias, además de ser inadecuadas para el ámbito escolar público, sustrae derechos fundamentales tanto a docentes como a estudiantes. Finalizamos con tesis que contradicen los argumentos gubernamentales y apuntan otras posibilidades para el escenario brasileño.

Palabras clave: Escuela militar. Escuela cívico-militar. Política pública.

Introductory notations

This study analyses the growing militarization of public schools under the Jair Bolsonaro administration, with a view to identifying the purposes of creating the National Civic-Military Schools Program (PECIM) (BRASIL, 2019) as an educational policy for basic education in Brazil. This research is justified by the considerable adherence of municipalities and states to the model in focus and the need to problematize entrenched - and predominant, in our view - discourses that military schools are better than regular schools, an understanding with which we disagree and will show rational arguments below.

The recent increase in the number of militarized schools makes us wonder: - *Why?* - *What are their political and educational aims?* - *What are the implications for public education?* - *Doesn't this school model produce divisions, cleavages and differences between other public models?* - *Are the investments earmarked for the schools similar or do they differ?* *What elements exist in this type of school that contribute to "satisfactory results"?* - *What kind of person and what idea of education (SAVIANI, 2000) underlies the program?*

It is important to contextualize the historical and political moment in which proposals like these have resurfaced, considering the advance of conservatism in the country, with ultra-right-wing movements. With the accumulation of capital and the global economic crisis (CHESNAIS, 2001), extremism is advancing around the world, threatening rights won in recent years through the use of violence, hate speech, privatization, outsourcing, austerity policies, ultra-liberalism, environmental devastation and attacks on human rights.

The militarization of public schools was created in 2019, by PECIM, with the aim of increasing educational indices. In the government's propaganda, it was touted as "[...] the biggest revolution in education in the country in the last 20 years" (BRASIL, 2020c), as highlighted by the Minister of Education at the time, Abraham Weintraub, in the National Congress. For its part, the Undersecretariat for the Promotion of Civic-Military Schools (SECIM) emphasizes that "The content applied to these civic-military schools is focused [*sic*] on civism, patriotism, hierarchy, discipline, united order"². (BRASIL, 2020d). [*sic*] For education professionals in the progressive field, the questions remain: - *What is this curriculum?* - *What are its pedagogical and philosophical foundations?* The official documents, however, do not contain the necessary answers.

Looking at it from a historical point of view, we find that the proposal for military schools in the country dates back to the colonial period. Characteristics that have been preserved since then are exacerbated disciplining and militaristic pedagogy, with sanctions and control of students' bodies and individualities.

We therefore demand, through this essay, an understanding of Brazilian education based on its social roots: in a colonized, slave-owning, classist, conservative and exclusionary society, in an authoritarian, bureaucratic state, dependent and subordinate to foreign capital (FERNANDES, 1973; FREYRE, 2001, 1961; HOLANDA, 1995; PRADO JUNIOR, 2000), in a dualistic, meritocratic, selective and discontinuous education system (SAVIANI, 2000). For a better understanding, below we outline a historical contextualization of the emergence of military schools in Brazil, up to the current implementation of the model.

² It aims to build discipline, cohesion and standardization of procedures. Available at: <http://www.pm.ba.gov.br/cerimonial/legis/Manual%20de%20Ordem%20Unida%20-%20C%202022-5.pdf>. Accessed on: May 24, 2021.

Contextualization of military schools in Brazil

School institutions in this segment in Brazil date back to the 18th century (ROSA, 2012) - which forms the Colonial Period. On December 4, 1810, with the transfer of the Portuguese Monarchy to Brazil, the Royal Military Academy was created, with the aim of training "[...] artillery and engineering officers, as well as engineering officers, geographers and topographers." (ACADEMIA REAL MILITAR, 2020). According to Santos (2007), this was the only engineering school in the country, where not only army officers but also civilians studied. The creation of the Academy was directly related to educational reforms and, in particular, to the Reform of the University of Coimbra, under the management of the Prime Minister, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the Marquis of Pombal.

Rosa (2012, p. 4) points out that "[...] the construction of a military education system, however, was a long process intertwined with the political, diplomatic, economic and historical issues of the complex construction of the Brazilian state". Since the end of the Paraguayan War in 1870, the ideological and political clashes between the military and the representatives of the Empire have become more heated³. Santos (2000, p. 26) highlights the fact that the idea of the military as saviours of the Fatherland became widespread in the army, as well as being seen as maintainers of national unity and civilizers.

At the time, there were strong interests in setting up schools to educate the children of soldiers in the army and other armed forces. The idea was to guarantee the safety of the soldiers who went to war in the name of the Fatherland. They could die in peace and their children would have the necessary education, even if they were orphans or the children of incapacitated parents. Imbued with this idea, Luís Alves de Lima e Silva, the Duke of Caxias, left the command of the Army and became a Senator of the Empire. In 1853, he presented proposal 148 to the Senate, but it did not prosper. In 1862, Caxias presented the bill again, but once again it failed. It was only at the end of the Empire that the Councillor and Minister of War, Tomás José Coelho de Almeida, managed to approve the institute of the Imperial Military College (in the Brazilian capital, Rio de Janeiro), by means of Decree number 10.202, of March 9, 1889 (CUNHA, 2007). The first article of the decree founding the Military School defines the school's public model:

institute of military instruction and education, destined to receive, free of charge, the children of active, retired and honorary officers of the Army and Navy; and, through a pecuniary contribution, students from other social classes [*sic*]. (BRASIL, 1889).

According to the Decree, there were entrance exams, prioritizing the reading and writing skills of candidates, and preference was given to orphans of military parents killed in combat or in the service of the Army. According to Cunha (2007), the welfare perspective and the need to train military personnel were key aspects in the establishment of Brazil's first military college, although the second purpose mentioned earlier was more important.

A central feature of this school model was the strict disciplinary methods, with rewards and punishments, in order to form a military *ethos* (SANTOS, 2000). Among the incentives, the Imperial College defined: good grades in class books, exceptional excursion leave, praise on the

³ There were many disagreements about the maintenance of the slave regime, the monarchy, anti-lusitanism and republican and constitutional ideals defended by the military, although, after the Proclamation of the Republic, the exclusion of many sectors from social and political life and the conservatism of the republicans became evident (CARVALHO, 1993). It is worth highlighting the fact that "[...] both the Proclamation of the Republic and the tenentist movements of 1922 to 1924 were fomented by the Military Schools". (SANTOS, 2000, p. 30).

regimental agenda, promotion to the various ranks of the student body, gold medals called *Duque de Caxias*, *Almirante Barroso*, *Marquez do Herval*, *Visconde de Inhaúma* and *Conde de Porto Alegre*. According to article 34, the penalties provided for are: bad marks in the class books, deprivation of recreation, with or without work, momentary exclusion from class or the exercise field, deprivation of leave on set days, private reprimand or in order of the day, temporary discharge from the ranks, definitive discharge from the ranks, imprisonment in the General Staff room, attenuated expulsion and ostentatious expulsion (BRASIL, 1889). Regarding the organization and management of the College, article 10 states:

The Imperial Military College will be commanded by a senior officer from any class of the Army, active or retired, who has completed the scientific course of the engineering corps, artillery corps or 1st class staff corps [*sic*]. (BRASIL, 1889).

Rosa (2012) emphasizes the success of the Military School in Rio de Janeiro: such was the importance of the school that its graduates were exempt from entrance exams to study at the Polytechnic School in Largo de São Francisco - a benchmark in engineering to this day.

On February 28, 1912, Decree No. 9,397 created the Military College of Porto Alegre (CMPA) and the Military School of Barbacena. On January 7, 1919, the Military College of Ceará was established. In 1925, for political reasons, the Barbacena School was abolished. Santos (2000, p. 13) explains that, after the Proclamation of the Republic, military training was subject to many influences, based on divergent elements from the various currents in the Brazilian Army. In 1938, the schools in Ceará and Porto Alegre were also abolished, leaving only the one in Rio de Janeiro. It was only in 1962 that they began operating again as military colleges.

The curriculum of military schools has undergone several changes over the course of its history. There were disagreements among officers as to the type of training that should be offered - whether more militaristic or propaedeutic (CUNHA, 2006). It is important to note that these schools have had an intensive influence on the country's politics, from the Proclamation of the Republic to the present day. The feeling of honor and *status* motivated the military. Later, they were also mobilized by economic factors (SANTOS, 2004), as happened during the civil-military dictatorship installed on March 31, 1964.

The militarization of schools

It is important to differentiate between military schools and militarized schools. The former aim to train staff for army careers and primarily receive the children of military personnel, as explained above. The latter do not necessarily have this objective, as they consist of handing over public schools to the Army under the argument of combating violence in schools and with the aim of increasing the educational indices of municipalities and states. By the way, the hegemonic discourses that deal with the "success" of this school model - through the imposition of discipline and the satisfactory results of students in national exams - acquire the *status of truth* and gain the support and adherence of parents who are increasingly interested in enrolling their children (ALVES and FERREIRA, 2020).

Honorato (2020, p. 81) lists four main points in the speeches of those who support civic-military schools: schools located on the outskirts, in "[...] situations of social vulnerability and urban and school violence (...); indiscipline, high dropout and repetition rates; socioeconomic criteria; and poor results in national assessments".

On the subject of the *rise of the right*, in 2015, "[...] Brazil discovered that there was a militant and fierce right in the country" (GALLEGO, 2018, p. 11), and in the 2018 elections, "The right came out of the closet". (MESSENERG, 2017). The Social Liberal Party (PSL), the New Party and the Brazilian Republican Party (PRB) have grown dramatically in Brazil. Codato, Bolognesi and Roeder (2015) report that, in 2014, the right once again grew in Congress, "[...] reversing the steady decline in the number of representatives in the Chamber of Deputies that had been observed since 1998. In 2010, conservative parties won 36.3% of the seats; in 2014, 43.5%." And in the 2018 elections, they managed to make up the second largest caucus in the National Congress. Indeed, there was a large participation of military personnel in the Bolsonaro government⁴ : - more than in the military regime under Humberto de Alencar Castello Branco.

In 2006, when Bolsonaro was a federal deputy, he presented two bills to create military schools in the neighborhood of Realengo, in Rio de Janeiro (city) and in the municipality of Resende, in the state of the same name. The bills, however, were unsuccessful. In 2018, Jair Bolsonaro, the candidate for the Presidency of the Republic, spoke of Brazil's educational problems and promised in his election campaign that he would create civic-military schools in the capitals to solve the education problem. Bolsonaro's Government Plan (2018) aimed to change "the management method" and "modernize the content", given that the amount of resources spent on education was high and had no positive effects: "The amounts, both in relative and absolute terms, are incompatible with our terrible educational performance". (*IBIDEM*).

It is important to illustrate the fact that Jair Bolsonaro is a retired army captain. Likewise, his son, Eduardo, has a military background, is a Federal Police clerk and was elected federal deputy by the Liberal Party (PSL/SP) in favor of the military, using hate speech and the death penalty, possession of firearms⁵, chemical castration for rapists and defense of the civil-military dictatorship of 1964⁶; he is in favor of the *School Without a Party* Program and home schooling, the customs agenda, and disseminates historical and scientific denialism, among other anti-democratic suggestions.

This proposal should not only be attributed to the current government, as this discussion was already in vogue and was being formed by both the military and sectors of civil society, given the fact that the RBS Group (the largest affiliate of Rede Globo, located in Rio Grande do Sul) at the end of 2012, in the "Send a question" section of the Group's own campaign "Education Needs an Answer", already hinted at this discussion for society (RBS, 2012). As recently as 2018, the attempt at militarization was already underway in Bahia, as

Governor Rui Costa's statement in support of an agreement between the Education Directorate of the Bahia Military Police (PM-BA) and the Union of Municipalities of Bahia (UPB), signed for the transfer of 'educational technology' from the PM Colleges (CPM) to municipal schools in the interior, resulted in demonstrations of repudiation by educators. (A TARDE, 2018).

⁴ In the Bolsonaro government, the military reserve occupies the top echelon of the executive branch, especially in the Ministry of Security. We would point out that this is a military government without a coup, or with important characteristics of the militarization of politics or the politicization of the Armed Forces.

⁵ Jair Bolsonaro, even before he became President, defended the right to bear arms. In 2017, he landed with a Taurus rifle. He makes a point of continuing to defend the proposal. There is a Parliamentary Arms Front, made up of 204 federal deputies and two senators, as available at: <https://www.camara.leg.br/internet/deputado/frenteDetalle.asp?id=54004>. Accessed on May 20, 2021.

⁶ Jair Bolsonaro defends the view that there was no coup, but a military revolution against communism in Brazil. The fact that the President won in court the right to commemorate March 31, 1964 is enlightening. On this subject, we highlight the vote on the *impeachment of Mrs. Dilma Rousseff*, when Jair Bolsonaro was a federal deputy, and declared his vote in apology to Colonel Carlos Brilhante Ustra, one of the greatest torturers of the civil-military dictatorship.

As you can see, even in so-called progressive governments - Rui Costa is affiliated to the PT - these proposals are being accepted. These are aspects that help us understand society's acceptance of and agreement with these proposals.

Once elected president, Jair Bolsonaro issued Decree No. 10,004, of September 5, 2019, establishing the Civic-Military Schools Program (PECIM⁷) in Brazil. The Program is a partnership between the Ministry of Education (MEC), linked to the Secretariat of Basic Education, with the support of the Ministry of Defense and will be implemented on a shared basis by Municipalities, States and the Federal District. PECIM states that its purpose is to promote improvements in the quality of basic education in primary and secondary schools (BRASIL, 2019).

The program's creators hope that by 2023 there will be 216 schools operating according to the model launched by the MEC. In Brasília, there are already four schools that have adopted this model. In Brazil, there are almost 120 active military schools. According to PECIM, the criteria adopted for the installation of the new units will be:

A school in a situation of social vulnerability and with low performance in the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB);
 School located in the state capital or its metropolitan region;
 A school that offers Primary II and/or Secondary Education and preferably has between 500 and 1,000 students in both shifts;
 School that has the approval of the school community to implement the model (BRASIL, 2019).

To join PECIM, schools will need to express their interest to the Department of Education, which will make the choice between schools. By October 2019, the Federal District and fifteen other states had adopted the militarized management model in public schools, including the state of Ceará. Incidentally, this was the only state in the Northeast to join the program. In 2020, two more civic-military schools were set up in Ceará, one in Maracanaú, at the Tenente Mário Lima School, and the other in Sobral, at the Jarbas Passarinho School⁸.

Membership is growing, and on March 9, 2021, the PECIM portal announced that 70 more schools had joined the proposal. Another 74 schools are expected to join⁹ in 2021. In 2020, 53 schools joined the program. Even in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, these schools have been implemented as the government's main agenda, as has *homeschooling*, which is on the agenda.

The defence of the model of military schools, which are confused with militarized schools, does not take into account the fact that their supposed success is related not only to the socio-economic contexts of their teaching staff and students, but to the very fact that the generic pedagogical model of reference for school education is authoritarian, mechanical, reproducing the values of social inequality, centred on stimulating competition, individualism and trying to develop uncritical obedience: it is already a militarized model in its basic concepts and conceptions. This justifies the fact that military schools are well evaluated in a crypto-

⁷ The model to be implemented by the Ministry of Education aims to improve the teaching-learning process in public schools and is based on the high level of the military colleges of the Army, the police and the military fire departments. The military will act to support school and educational management, while teachers and other education professionals will continue to be responsible for didactic-pedagogical work (BRASIL, 2019).

⁸ Jarbas Passarinho, who, among other stints in national politics, was retired as an army colonel.

⁹ List of municipalities pre-selected for PECIM 2021. Available at: https://www.gov.br/mec/pt-br/media/aceso_informacao/pdf/Municipiosrelaofinal.pdf. Accessed on May 19, 2021.

militarized model, and are successful in reading common sense, which does not incorporate the aspects of complexity, contradictions and diversity of social reality.

Here we should explain that public schools, before being a place for civic reform, are a plural and diverse space, as is the reality of Brazilian civil society. Data from the 2020 School Census, collected by the National Institute for Educational Research Anísio Teixeira - INEP, gives us an overview of this reality.

More than 224,000 basic education establishments took part in the survey, of which 179,500 were active schools, reporting more than 47.3 million school enrollments. (INEP, 2020, p.15).

On this occasion, we are referring to almost 50 million children and young people, a significant number spread across the country's 5568 municipalities, schools located in realities as diverse as they are unequal.

[the] municipal network, which holds 48.4% of basic education enrollments, 0.3 percentage points (p.p.) more than in 2019. The state network, responsible for 32.1% of basic education enrollments in 2020, is the second largest. The private network accounts for 18.6%, and the federal network has a share of less than 1% of total enrollment (INEP, 2020, p.16).

It is precisely on the basis of these figures that the context of the militarization of schools needs to be analysed. According to the *Manual for Civic-Military Schools*, which contains rules of behavior, students must salute the military and wear standardized uniforms¹⁰. Women are obliged to wear their hair in buns and boys are forbidden to wear beards, caps, tattoos, big hair and props, and must always keep their hair cut short. The practice of control and the docilization of people leads to subservience, non-criticism, the disciplining of bodies, disrespect for individuality, thus acting to generate desirable and homogenizing behaviours for an educational project that goes against the critical and emancipatory training needed for the reality expressed by the School Census and the contradictions of our country.

Mascarenhas and Silva (2020, p. 4) point out that the foundations of this military school model are based on a logic of "standardization, [...] de-characterization of teaching work, regulating subjectivity and identity, bodies, with a discourse centred on morality, appreciating an applicationist and sterile education". The discourse of discipline has been recurrent since the Imperial School in Rio de Janeiro. The school acts to adapt the behavior of students to that of the army, reproducing military discipline and generating symbolic violence (BOURDIEU and PASSERON, 1982).

The article *Student-sheriff, punished kiss, anthem by heart: a day at a military school*¹¹ briefly describes the disciplinary school routine of bodies and minds in rows, standardized and lined up to follow the raising of the flag and singing the National Anthem. You have to march in and out of class. There is the discipline *Continence and Signs of Respect* (CSR) with fifty minutes of class per week (HONORATO, 2020). According to Madeiro (2020), "[...] it covers songs and hymns and the united order - which is learning to march, stand firm commands, parades, [sic] etc". The PECIM guides the choice of head and deputy head students to maintain order and discipline in the classrooms. On May 7, 2021, the Quinze de Novembro Civic-Military School (ECIMQN) held a swearing-in ceremony for the leaders.

¹⁰ In most of these schools, it's the parents who buy the school uniform.

¹¹ Available at: <https://educacao.uol.com.br/noticias/2020/02/05/escola-militar-aluno-xerife-hino-de-cor.htm>. Accessed on May 19, 2021.

Honorato (2020, p. 83) lists some negative criticisms of the school model: "[...] behavior of teachers and students who are more passive and subservient to rules, hierarchy and discipline"; "Military ideology of obedience rather than participation"; "Militarized education represents distortions to the identity formation of children and adolescents. Training and castration of the individual in formation resulting from military logic". The Bahia Public Prosecutor's Office (MPF), through the Regional Prosecutor's Office for Citizen's Rights (PRDC), sent Recommendation 04/2019 to municipal and state public schools that have adopted the civic-military school program. The document states that,

WHEREAS the imposition by the state of uniform aesthetic standards on male and female students in terms of haircuts, clothes, make-up and other adornments has a disproportionate negative impact on individuals from minority groups, marginalized or the target of prejudice, who are prevented from expressing the characteristics of their different personalities and cultures, especially in terms of ethnic-racial, religious and gender identities, in serious violation of the principles of human dignity and equality; WHEREAS these rights to intimacy and private life and to freedom of expression, thought and conscience are of particular importance to children and adolescents, whose process of forming their own personalities must be protected by the State, which must not impose worldviews or demand conformity to unilaterally defined models. (FEDERAL PUBLIC MINISTRY, 2019, p. 11).

The aforementioned recommendation believes that the required standard in no way contributes to the intellectual and civic development of students, explaining that, in fact, it is a violation of the rights set out in the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA). For this reason, our thesis turns to the figures from the 2020 School Census and seeks, precisely on the basis of these precepts expressed by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, to postulate the logical need for the extinction of this National Program of Civic-Military Schools - PECIM.

The Public Prosecutor's Office points out that, in the 2015 National High School Exam (ENEM), the best results came not from military schools, but from the Federal Institute of Bahia, contradicting the notion that disciplining and authoritarianism do not contribute to better academic performance, but rather the structure "[...] socioeconomic level, the presence and schooling of parents are determining factors for the academic performance of public school students". (MINISTÉRIO PÚBLICO FEDERAL/BA, 2019, p. 3).

We corroborate the MPF when it states that it is not authoritarianism that guarantees satisfactory results in schools, but the working conditions of teachers, the structure, the socio-economic circumstances. On the contrary, authoritarianism goes against the autonomy and emancipation of students and educators.

Every school functions as an "ideological apparatus of the state" and the army and armed forces are "ideological and repressive apparatuses of the state" (ALTHUSSER, 1974). We understand that a militarized school is a real aberration, enhancing the repressive character. The former works by creating ideologies, consensus and social acquiescence, while the latter uses physical coercion, through the application of force and weapons (although it also uses ideology). There are several reproduction mechanisms: creating habits (*habitus*) that form acceptance, conformation, domination and naturalization of power relations (ALTHUSSER, 1974; BOURDIEU and PASSERON, 1982); and, in this case, ideals of civic-mindedness, patriotism, morality, adaptation and conformism standardized on a single model, contradicting the constitutional principles of plurality and freedom. The

formation of *ethos* uses symbolic violence, disregarding culture, values and differentiations. As Saviani (2000) points out, the Althusserian perspective is part of "[...] critical-reproductive theory", in that it takes into account the social determinants of education, but does not express an emancipatory pedagogical proposal and remains only at the level of reproduction, a serious fact in an unequal society, such as Brazil.

In Ceilândia (Federal District), an incident at Centro Educacional 7 showed that police officers are unaware of the social function of the school and the work of teachers, according to an article published on November 12, 2019 by G1¹². She transcribed the audio recorded in the classroom:

Teacher: Could someone from the principal's office please come to the 9th D classroom? Sergeant Policarpo is berating me in front of the whole class. He says I have no authority over this room. He came in to give me undue warnings during my class period. So this gentleman is walking around my classroom, he's just deauthorized me in front of my class and that's unacceptable. I told him that the class is mine, the room is mine as long as I'm in it. He's smiling, making fun, being ironic. So please... and I asked him to leave my classroom.

PM: No, you told me to leave the room.

Teacher: Yes, I told you to leave the room.

PM: No, you don't have the authority to tell me to leave the room.

Teacher: Yes, I have authority, it's my classroom, I have authority, Mr. Policarpo.

This case will probably not be unique in terms of the relationship between teachers and the military in the running of civic-military schools. The case was referred to the Human Rights Commission in the Legislative Chamber and SEDUC/DF was asked to investigate the facts. For Mascarenhas and Silva (2020, p. 5), this school model prunes the intellectual protagonism of teachers, generating state control via military pedagogy over teaching work, "[...] subsidizes and promises precarious shared management and with foundations of pedagogical science and didactics based on authoritarianism and mechanism, transforming teaching work into a training of actions". In addition, military managers remove principals elected by the school community, have no training in pedagogy and do not know the school reality (HONORATO, 2000).

Censorship practices by military administrators are not restricted to literary works for study at school or student disciplinary acts, but to teaching practices, both in the classroom and in the political activities of the profession. At Colégio Tiradentes, a civic-military school in Porto Velho-RO, around ten teachers were banned from taking part in a union meeting where issues of interest to the category were to be discussed, such as the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Primary Education and Valorization of the Teaching Profession (FUNDEB) and the Teaching Floor. Both issues are of significant interest and relevant to the debate.

¹² Available at: <https://g1.globo.com/df/distrito-federal/noticia/2019/11/12/professora-e-pm-batem-boca-na-frente-de-alunos-em-escola-militarizada-no-df-ouca-audio.ghtml>. Accessed on January 28, 2020.

The Folha de São Paulo newspaper reported that "[...] the teachers were removed¹³ " and "returned" to the State Education Department so that they could be reassigned to another school. The State Education Workers' Union was called in by the teachers who denounced the situation and asked for intervention in the case. The Union of Education Workers in the State of Rondônia (SINTERO) issued a statement, saying that the school principal's actions "[...] are not consistent with the democratic rule of law". On SINTERO's *website*, we can see how the teachers are working together when they organize themselves to see how interested they are in attending the meeting, how they communicate with the pedagogical director and how they suggest organizing the school term on the day of the meeting.

When he heard about this, the Director General, Captain Pires, disagreed and called a meeting to inform them that if the teachers went to the assembly, they would be returned to the Education Department to be reassigned to another school. Captain Pires said that the regulations were different from other schools and that "[...] civil servants assigned to civic-military schools cannot take part in strikes, as they follow a different regime and must submit to the routine, rules and decision of the officer, as he is the highest hierarchical authority in the school". (SINTERO, 2020). SINTERO mentioned that the teachers felt coerced and understood the case as moral harassment, because even though they work in a military school, they are civil servants and have their own regulations. In turn, according to the union, Principal Pires

classified the attitude as "victimhood" on the part of the teachers. He reaffirmed that the military school does not submit to stoppages or any kind of activity of this kind. He said that the civil servants had only informed him of this decision, not respecting the hierarchy of the organization. The captain also said that he considered the employees' behavior to be disrespectful and rebellious (SINTERO, 2020).

In fact, the Director sent a letter to SEDUC returning the ten teachers who went to the assembly. Reimão (2014, p. 75) states that "[...] one of the first measures of authoritarian regimes is to restrict freedom of expression and opinion; it is a form of domination through coercion, limitation or elimination of dissenting voices". This practice of curtailment was noticeable in Nazism, fascism and dictatorial regimes throughout history.

On the *website* of the Vila Militar School (Rebouças/PR), it is stated that the institution proposes to work "[...] with disciplinary care and conduct". The perspective of militarization is transmuted into schools with the predominant idea that if there is discipline, there will be learning and satisfactory results, in addition to combating the ideological indoctrination of teachers, who are replaced by military personnel, which means replacing those who have a different world view from military ideological indoctrination, that ideological indoctrination has a unique character: the military view of society.

The argument used is that military schools (ECM) have the best educational indices in the country. However, when they make the comparison, they fail to point out that these schools receive far greater federal funding than other conventional institutions, as well as hiding the fact that federal schools, the IFEs, have the highest educational indices in the country. They even disregard those non-civic-military public schools that achieve IDEB 10, precisely because they have a plural project where democratic aspects are exercised by the entire school community. Then, isn't the fact that there is a selection process for admission to these schools, in itself, an aspect that raises educational results?

¹³ Available at: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/educacao/2020/02/escola-civico-militar-em-ro-afasta-professores-que-queriam-ir-a-reuniao-do-sindicato.shtml>. Accessed on February 22, 2020.

Historically, when it comes to drawing up and implementing educational policy, the discourse of government officials and technicians is that they are proposing to improve school indices and results. It's not uncommon for the "blame" to fall on school management, claiming that it can't manage to increase grades and produce satisfactory quantitative data expected by the technical teams in the education departments. Hence the business models applied to education, such as total quality, Odebrecht Business Technology¹⁴ (2015), management by results, strategic administration, among many other "effective" models and fads. It was in this context of criticism of public schools that military schools emerged under the Bolsonaro administration.

One of the most widely used models for efficient and effective school management, from a capitalist point of view, is the outsourcing of educational management, leading them along the lines of a company (ADRIÃO, 2018). According to Paro (2012, p. 19), "[...] administrative activity does not take place in a vacuum, but under specific historical conditions to meet the needs and interests of groups and people". It's not new that school projects and programs are created with the justification of improving educational indices and results. The arguments and justifications are convincingly presented and attract society's attention, usually backed up by vigorous *marketing* and appeals in the mainstream media. After all, who doesn't want to improve their educational indices? What government doesn't have this as a goal?

In addition to the poor "results" of the International Student Assessment Program (PISA), they "[...] show that Brazil has low proficiency in Reading, Mathematics and Science, compared to 78 other countries that participated in the assessment"¹⁵, they support right-wing government discourses that Brazilian education is bad and are justifications for military models, which need greater rigidity, discipline, control and military administration.

In the 2018 election campaign, much was said about education in Brazil, bringing up structural and historical elements and problems, such as absolute and functional illiteracy, the results of external assessments such as PISA, which place Brazil in very low positions compared to other countries. In 2018, Brazil came fifth in the ranking of Latin American countries, which included ten countries from the region. The then Minister of Education, Abraham Weintraub, attributed sole responsibility to the Workers' Party (PT) governments of Lula and Dilma Rousseff. At a press conference held at the MEC to assess the results of PISA 2018, Weintraub said: "We've been stagnating since 2009, because the format we were using is bad. This government has nothing to do with it, put that in the paper" [...] "It's entirely the PT's fault... It wants to teach sexuality and doesn't want to teach reading and writing". (SANTOS, 2019).

Now, PISA needs to be studied technically, and not on a one-off basis, as the results are expressed. China doesn't allow the test to be applied throughout the country, it chooses the three best cities to take part, resulting in first place. Singapore, a city-state with five million nine hundred thousand inhabitants, is a major economic center in the middle of the Far East, with one of the highest GDPs in the world. What does this mean? What is being compared? A country with structural inequalities, territorial extension, with a city-state? For a serious analysis, let's take situations that are close in terms of territory, population and diversity: Russia and Mexico are just above Brazil. The USA in tenth place? The biggest economic power, with 200 years of consolidated education, loses out to China and Singapore, among nine other countries. It's true to say that only Canada is better placed, in fifth place, which would

¹⁴ The management model of the Odebrecht company was applied to Vocational Education Schools in Ceará. "Through TESE/TEO, the school is treated along the lines of a company, in which the clientele is represented by the community, the managers are the leaders along the lines of businessmen, the so-called social investors, business partners". (MONTEIRO, 2015, p. 111).

¹⁵ Available at: <https://www.gov.br/pt-br/noticias/educacao-e-pesquisa/2019/12/ministerio-da-educacao-avalia-resultado-do-pisa-2018>. Accessed on: October 1, 2020.

eventually be a benchmark for assessing whether we're really doing badly. Let's remember the fact that we have just over twenty years of universal primary education and we are still on our way up to 50% attendance for 14 to 17 year olds. Even so, Brazil has won several gold, silver and bronze medals at the World Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics Olympics with its students from public schools. We would emphasize the fact that high school students from federal institutes (public schools) are the best evaluated in the Brazilian system, above any private or military school. Thus, in a more qualitative way, we assert that we have made vigorous progress in the country's public schools, without having to go through the National Civic-Military Schools Program - PECIM.

The new right is massively entering education with moralizing, disciplining and individualizing agendas. The focus on ideologies is just a "smokescreen" to obliterate the real and urgent aspects of educational policies geared towards serving the interests of international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank and others (LAVAL, 2019).

What is quite notorious is the dismantling of public policies that had already been put in place. The Ministry of Education seemed to be at a loss when it came to setting up and running educational policies. In less than three years in office, five education ministers have come in who have shown that they have no understanding of public policy management, let alone public education. The dismantling took place above all with regard to educational funding. In the first year of government, billions were cut from the education budget. Successive billion-dollar cuts have been planned for the department over the course of his administration, which should have an even greater impact on state and municipal education departments and federal universities and institutes, which were then reeling from a lack of resources.

The situation in most of the country's schools is enlightening, especially in times of pandemic. Schools are unable to receive children and adolescents because they lack basic elements such as water, toilets, basic sanitation, soap and paper towels. The government's discourse, however, continues to be technical-administrative.

Final considerations

In summary, we conclude that PECIM is a reactionary proposal, based on conservative principles and the maintenance of the *status quo* and military order, precepts that are not useful for solving the problems of Brazilian public schools, nor are they useful for training citizens with a broad capacity to read reality, in order to contribute to the direction of the Brazilian state and to tackle its problems.

Militarized schools receive students through an entrance exam, regardless of whether their parents are military or not, and the aim is to increase the educational levels of municipalities or states. Although different in purpose, the practices seem to be similar since the creation of the first school in Rio de Janeiro, in terms of disciplining and homogenizing methods. Studies show that the cost of a student in a military school is three times higher and the structure is better than in non-militarized schools. The question remains: - *why aren't all public schools offered access to such a budget and infrastructure, if the aim is to improve educational indices?* The question remains as to whether non-militarized public schools, with such budgets and infrastructure, would indicate better results for education and society than civic-military schools. There is also no answer as to why the IFEs don't feature in these government discussions, since, as well as recording excellent educational indices, their students' contribution to society is much more relevant in several respects: they reduce inequality, they demonstrate a high level of professional

training, providing the market with excellent professionals in various areas, and they cater excellently for the diversity and plurality of the young population. In fact, militarized schools don't even come close to these criteria!

It's worth highlighting the fact that militarized schools produce a split between public schools - on the one hand, there's the structured and well-equipped militarized school and, on the other, the non-militarized school, where students can't even afford to pay for uniforms. This division, taking into account the figures from the School Census, places the majority of students in public schools in a situation of inequality, a factor that only accentuates the gaps between networks and schools in the country. We believe that such polarization makes no sense and we demand to demonstrate, to the extent of the entire matter now concluded, elements to subsidize public policies, with a progressive bias, with the aim of ending such a distortion, conformed in the creation of PECIM.

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