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## Higher Education Policies in Brazil: From a Foreign Policy Strategy to the Dismantling

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HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES IN BRAZIL FROM A FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY TO THE DISMANTLING

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# Higher Education Policies in Brazil: From a Foreign Policy Strategy to the Dismantling

Marcela Vitarelli Batista <sup>α</sup>, Roberta Rodrigues Marques da Silva <sup>ο</sup> & Thais Ferreira Rodrigues <sup>ρ</sup>

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## I. INTRODUCTION

From 2003 to 2011, Brazil experienced the most remarkable economic growth since its transition to democracy in 1985. The victory of former factory worker Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva from the Worker's Party (PT) in the 2002 presidential elections represented a historic milestone in Brazilian democracy, inaugurating a period marked by economic prosperity and social inclusion. PT governed the country until 2016, when Dilma Rousseff, the first woman elected president in Brazil, was removed from office in a controversial impeachment process (Singer, 2018). The brief but troubled government led by Vice President Michel Temer represented a decisive step away from the previous model, as he pursued a neoliberal agenda. The dismantling of reforms that occurred during the PT years continued with the election of the far-right Jair Bolsonaro as president in late 2018. Elected on the basis of an anti-PT and anti-left discourse, Bolsonaro has sought to undermine the path traced by the previous governments. Such is the political basis that underlies the analysis of higher education policies and education internationalization efforts, which is the subject of this paper.

Higher education policies were also part of the foreign policy agenda, as the PT's governments aimed to increase universities' internationalization through international cooperation and the creation of universities

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that specifically aimed to promote regional integration. The pluralization of Brazilian foreign policy was a noticeable feature of Lula's agenda, which included diversified policy issues and an increasing number of state and non-state actors (Cason & Power, 2009). Among the new issues on the foreign policy agenda, higher education programs stood out: the emphasis on South-South relations became intertwined with the goal to promote social and economic development. In this sense, amplifying social access to public universities and promoting Science and Technology (S&T) policies - which relied heavily on public universities in Brazil - became a sensitive aspect of the foreign policy agenda.

Brazil shifted from the most dynamic period of educational policies in Lula's period (2002-2010) that remained and were amplified in Rousseff's government (2011-2016) to Bolsonaro's government which has taken the opposite direction. On the one hand, between 2003 and 2016 the PT's governments created 18 universities, 422 technical schools, and 173 new campuses. In this period, 7.1 million young people were admitted to Brazilian universities. On the other hand, Temer's government approved a 30% budget cut for the 63 federal universities under Constitutional amendment n.95/2016. Today, Bolsonaro leads an era of "scientific denialism" and moralism, culminating in a possible loss of countless scientific education and research institutions (Leher, 2019).

The radical changes experienced by the national politics reflected directly on the educational policies. But in what way? The objective of this article is to understand how Brazilian political changes in the analyzed period between 2007 and 2019 affected higher education policies, emphasizing universities' internationalization. Likewise, it aims to identify similarities and differences between four political periods and understand the reason for this dramatic change of direction in Brazilian educational policies.

The article argues that, during the PT's governments, there was a convergence between foreign policy and domestic development goals. The overall goal was to promote development, combining both economic prosperity and welfare policies. The increase of offer in education was inserted in the welfare logic. Particularly, higher education policy was considered key to achieving social inclusion and industrial development, especially in Rousseff's government. At the same time, the educational policies were reflected in the foreign

policy agenda through international cooperation (BRICS; Mercosur and Unasur), programs such as “Science without Borders”, and new universities like UNILA and UNILAB.

## II. METHODOLOGY

We pursued a comparative analysis, conducting bibliographical research of the most prominent authors in the contemporary domains of Brazilian Political Science, Brazilian Foreign Policy, and Brazilian Political Economy. We analyzed political speeches, official documentation, and the budget data available from the “Portal Transparência” (Transparency Portal) – the government platform dedicated to making all expenditures of the federal government public.

The paper is organized by presidential administrations in the following time sequence: Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva second term<sup>1</sup> (2007-2010), Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016), Michel Temer (2016-2018), and Jair Messias Bolsonaro (2019-). First, we conduct an analysis of the foreign policy matrix<sup>2</sup> as it is essential to understand the central role of education in certain foreign policy periods, specifically, Lula da Silva and Dima Rousseff. We also highlight how this relationship was broken during later governments. Finally, we highlight the most important public education policies associated with each government. The result is a broad comparative table detailing policy in every studied period.

We argue that, during the PT’s governments, educational policies were a priority and, more importantly, a part of the foreign policy agenda. On the other hand, during Michel Temer’s and Jair M. Bolsonaro’s governments, the education sector suffered budget cuts and lost its importance. Therefore, a progressive dismantling of higher education policies in Brazil is evident, with a particular impact on the internationalization of the country’s universities.

### a) *Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2007-2010): a step forward*

#### i. *Autonomy, multilateralism, and South-South cooperation*

The idea of becoming an international and regional power is historically rooted in Brazil’s political agenda. According to Soares Lima and Hirst (2010: 21), “since the early years of the twentieth century, Brazil’s major foreign policy aspiration has been to achieve international recognition in accordance with its belief that it should assume its ‘natural’ role as a ‘big country’ in the world affairs”. Therefore, since its military period (1964-1985), Brazil aimed to consolidate its role as a new economic power, but it was only during the 1990s, through Mercosur, that an effort was made to establish macroeconomic openness and regional integration. From 2002, Lula da Silva’s active foreign policy, taking advantage of a favorable external economic situation, achieved a large part of these leadership ideals.

Under the command of a diplomat Celso Amorim, foreign policy was defined by the search for autonomy, increasing the Brazilian presence as a global actor based on the logic of multilateralism through South-South strategic relations. The focus on South American and Latin American relations was clearly mentioned in Lula’s inaugural speech:

“The highest priority of the foreign policy in my government will be the construction of a politically stable, prosperous and united South America based on democratic ideals and social justice. For this, a decisive action to revitalize Mercosur is essential, [as it has been] weakened by the crises of each of its members and often by narrow and selfish views of the meaning of integration. [...] We will deepen relations with major developing nations: China, India, Russia, South Africa, among others” (FOLHA DE SÃO PAULO, 2003)

In the context of the “autonomy for diversification” strategy (Vigevani and Cepaluni 2011), Brazil sought the reduction of economic asymmetries with world powers, forming alliances with developing countries, non-traditional partners, and regional alliances, as well as prioritizing South-South cooperation. Therefore, Brazil pursued more balanced gains among parties, avoiding a hierarchy of domination common in the Northern countries. Unasur was conceived as an institution with strong guidelines, focusing in particular on regional defense, developmentalism, and democracy. Largely created as a result of the Brazilian geopolitical design, Unasur reflected Brazil’s search for autonomy and its willingness to become a regional and global player (Sanahuja, 2012).

The creation of BRICS in 2009 is also worth mentioning for the purposes of this argument. By the end of its first summit in Russia, the group released the joint statement of the BRIC countries’ leaders. The document, endorsed by Brazil, Russia, India, and China, attempted to promote the G20 summit’s decisions in dealing with the financial crisis of 2008, fostering cooperation, policy coordination, and political dialogue. The second BRIC summit held in Brazil underlined the countries’ “support for a multipolar, equitable and democratic world based on international law, equality, mutual respect, cooperation, coordinated action and collective decision making of all States” (2nd BRIC Summit – Joint Statement, 2010). Due to the important differences of the member countries and the non-binding legal character of decisions, the bloc has had limited scope since the beginning (Stuenkel, 2017). Aligned with the universalist and autonomist characteristics of Lula’s foreign policy, the BRIC group was a counterbalancing attempt to promote new power alliances based on non-occidental cooperation.

The emphasis on South-South cooperation paved the way to the pluralization of foreign policy topics. Middle-income countries face similar

development-related challenges in a multiplicity of policy areas, such as education. In this sense, the welfare policies implemented by Lula's government domestically would soon be considered fundamental to the building of strong international leadership. Brazil obtained unprecedented prestige in the international arena, emphasized by the defense of sovereignty and national interests (Louback, 2016). South-South cooperation flourished around central developmental policies, including policies on higher education.

ii. *Educational Public Policies: strong steps*

The Brazilian higher education landscape is characterized by an imbalance in the system, with a high percentage of underqualified private universities and, for a long time, a dubious student selection system in public universities. According to Benincá and Pereira (2016), *"the Brazilian university, like all of Latin America, has always been based on meritocratic and individualistic criteria, which disregard social stratification and antagonistic structural conditions"*. Therefore, the main challenges are, on the one hand, the universalization and democratization of access to higher education, and on the other hand, the improvement of quality and internationalization. That said, the most dynamic period for Brazilian higher education since the 1985 democratization occurred during Lula's rule. His government focused on the expansion of public institutions. Public policies were designed to expand and geographically internalize<sup>3</sup> higher education, as well as to promote the inclusion of socially, ethnically, and territorially marginalized students. Brazil, *"an incomplete elementary education country, started to conceive that the historically marginalized population could partially be seen on university desks"* (Martinez, 2018: 6).

According to Almeida de Carvalho (2014):

*"...the difficulties of the poorest social class in accessing this [higher] educational level and, although the barriers to entry could be overcome, the government's perception that the main challenge was the permanence of those socially vulnerable students in the face of high spending in private establishments. (...) Lula's] governmental agenda was redirected in order to significantly increase [the number of] places at public universities, especially in the federal segment"*.

The Program of Support for Restructuring Plans and Expansion of Brazilian Federal Universities (REUNI – *Programa de Apoio a Planos de Reestruturação e Expansão das Universidades Federais*)<sup>4</sup>, instituted by decree no 6.096 of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2007, relied on the strategic role of the universities, especially the public ones, in promoting economic and social development. The policy had as its starting point the assessment that *"the net education rate of Brazilian higher education was very low and far from the target of 30%<sup>5</sup> proposed by the National Education Plan (PNE 2001-2010)"* (Almeida de Carvalho, 2014).

The expansion of the Federal Higher Education Network began in 2003 with the interiorization of federal university campuses. Thus, the number of cities with federal universities increased from 114 in 2003 to 237 by the end of 2011. The universities created had *multicampi* structures and, not infrequently, were installed in municipalities that had never before hosted higher education institutions (Brackmann 2010; Martinez, 2018).

In his inauguration ceremony, Lula da Silva affirmed: *"We managed to take federal universities and professional education schools from the capitals to the inland"* (Lula da Silva 2010<sup>6</sup>). On the same day, Fernando Haddad, then Minister of Education, concluded that the expansion of the federal network changed the life of the Brazilian people, saying that *"the population now understands the true meaning of education, which is the emancipation of the individual"*.

From 1909<sup>7</sup> to 2002, 140 federal technical schools were created in Brazil. After the implementation of REUNI, 342 new institutions were established. Fourteen new federal universities were created between 2003 and 2010 with the purpose to interiorize public higher education. Other four – University for International Integration of the Afro-Brazilian Lusophony (UNILAB), Federal University of Western Pará (UFOPA), Federal University of Latin American Integration (UNILA), and Federal University of Southern Border (UFFS) – were planned for the regional and international integration (MEC, 2010<sup>8</sup>). These new universities were strategically disposed across the national territory from the Amazon region to southern Brazil. Two of these universities were given an international vocation and specific mission – the Federal University for the Integration of Afro-Brazilian Lusophony (UNILAB) based in Redenção, in Ceará, and the Federal University for Latin American Integration (UNILA) in Foz do Iguaçu, Paraná. Between 2007 and 2012, the restructuring expansion occurred, increasing the numbers of student places in 59 universities. Also, in the same period, the number of enrollments in HEIs grew 46%.

The REUNI also guaranteed financial support for the growth of the number of places, existing courses, or new courses. In return, universities should improve their performance indicators, such as student/teacher ratio, as well as dropout and enrollment rates (Trombini et al 2020). In the period between 2003 and 2011, there was an increase of 111 % in the offer of places in on-campus undergraduate courses in federal institutions. The growth of 91,655 places in the period from 2007 to 2011, going from 139,875 places in 2007 to 231,530 in 2011 (Trombini et al 2020), is particularly noteworthy.

The creation of new universities materialized in the direction of the foreign policy adopted by Amorim, fulfilling an important role in accomplishing the objective of promoting regional integration. In Lula da Silva's government, the African coastal countries were placed



among South-South strategic priorities (Almeida, 2015). UNILAB had the mission to promote human resources to contribute to integration between Brazil and other member countries of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, especially in Africa, including Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, St Thomas and Prince, as well as Portugal and East Timor. UNILAB proposes to promote regional development and cultural, scientific, and educational exchange.

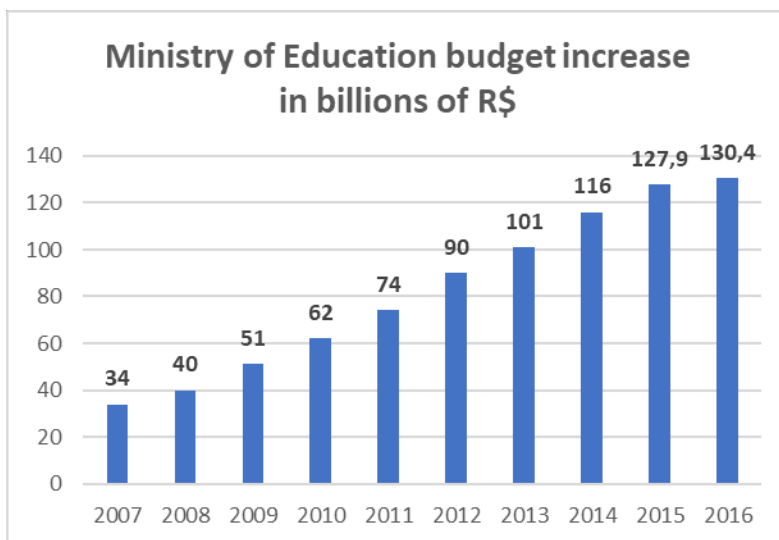
UNILA, created in 2010 had the mission to establish a clear relationship between the university and Mercosur, as well as with the Latin American integration project. At the moment of its foundation, it aimed to create 10,000 places for undergraduate and graduate students from Brazil and the neighboring countries (Almeida, 2015; Brackmann 2010).

Along with the growing number of public universities, Lula's government also aimed to promote social inclusion by facilitating access and permanence in the universities. In order to achieve the first goal, the Unified Selection System (SiSU – Sistema de Seleção Unificada) was established, allowing students to apply

to institutions in various states of the country only using the National High School Exam (ENEM)<sup>9</sup> score. This way, SiSU allowed an increase in the center-periphery flow and the democratization of higher education in Brazil. It gave more options of the universities to apply to a larger group of students with a range of financial backgrounds from small and medium cities. As a result, the number of students enrolled in public universities jumped from 3 million in 2005 to 5,5 million in 2011<sup>10</sup>.

In addition to access, universities were also able to expand their actions aimed at the permanence of students. The resources of the National Student Assistance Plan (PNAES), created in 2007, increased from R\$125 million (USD 23.1 million) in 2008 to R\$304 million (USD 56.2 million) in 2010. With this plan, universities developed their assistance programs by financing various items of expenditure for their students, such as health, transportation, housing, and food. The Ministry of Education's resources for professional education also grew from R\$1.2 billion (USD 220 million) to R\$4.9 billion (USD 910 million) in the same period.

Financing of the expansion of public universities was possible because of an increase of the Ministry of Education budget, which can be seen in the diagram below:



Elaborated by authors, source Trombini et al 2020.

Diagram 01: The expansion of budget from the Ministry of Education

Though the expansion of public universities was substantial, finishing the narrative at this point would tell only part of the story. The private higher education system also experienced a massive expansion during Lula's government. Historically, private universities constitute most of the offer in the country's higher education. In 2007, two-thirds of Brazilian students were enrolled in private institutions (Marques, 2018). In 2017, there were 296 public institutions, against 2,152 private ones.

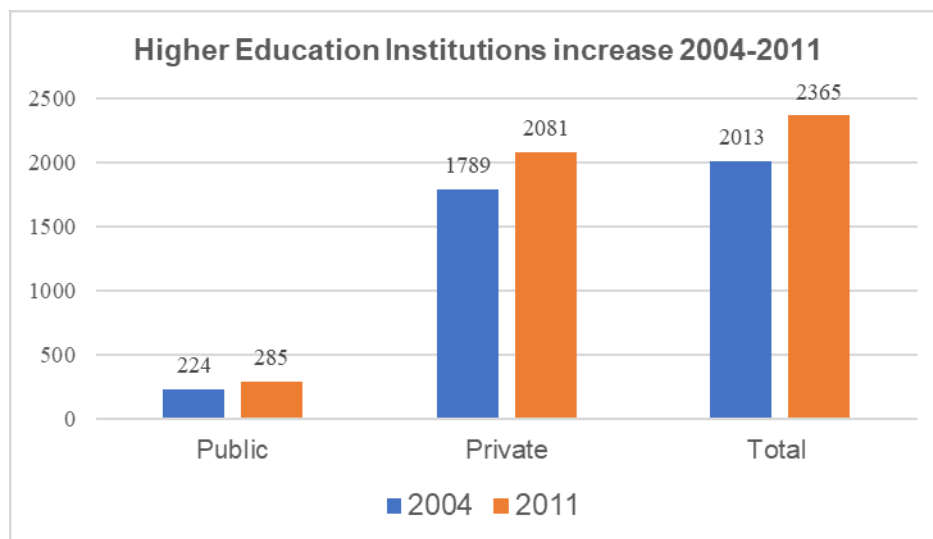
Lula boosted private higher education institutions through public financing of student debt. He

reformed the Higher Education Student Financing Fund program (*FIES - Fundo de Financiamento ao Estudante do Ensino Superior*), created by his predecessor, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Furthermore, his government established the program "University for All" (ProUni), created in 2004 and made official by Law no. 11.096 in January 2005. ProUni granted partial and full scholarships (covering 25% or 50% of the fees) to students in technical degrees and specific training and programmes in private higher education institutions, in return offering tax exemption to the institutions that joined the Program (ProUni<sup>11</sup>, Silveira, 2011). ProUni

focused on “Brazilians who do not hold higher education degrees, whose monthly income per family does not exceed the value of up to 1 (one) minimum wage and 1/2 (half)” (Brasil, 2005<sup>12</sup>). In this sense, the program aimed to expedite the inclusion of socially neglected students in private institutions (INEP, 2017)<sup>13</sup>.

In 2008, by Law no. 11.892, Lula’s government created the Federal Network for Professional, Scientific and Technological Education<sup>14</sup>. As ambitious as REUNI, the Federal Network was aimed at the expansion and geographical internalization of professional federal institutions. These higher education institutes provide technical-level qualifications and several basic-level courses in the industry and service areas. The expansion of the education system during the PT’s government was outstanding: there were created 38 federal institutes, two new Federal Technological Education Centers (CEFET), the Federal Technological

Below, we present a diagram showing the increase of HEIs during Lula’s government:



Source: Elaborated by author, Marques 2018.

Diagram 2.0: The expansion of the higher education institutions during Lula’s government

However, the expansion of higher education was not exempt from criticism. On the one hand, critics highlighted the fact that the REUNI allowed hiring of a limited number of teachers and technical-administrative personnel, which was below the necessities. On the other hand, in the private sector, higher educational institutions, notably smaller ones, lacked systematic research, which might have put its graduates at a competitive disadvantage in the job market (Louback, 2016:62). Silva (2017:9) calls the expansion of private higher education a “fast delivery diploma” with the objective of “increasing public education through distance learning programs”.

In summary, during Lula’s period, higher education was a tool to promote foreign policy, especially regional integration, as well as a drive to promote social programs. Lula ended his government

University of Paraná (UTFPR), 22 technical schools linked to federal universities, and the Colégio Pedro II high school.

According to Marques (2018:2), the expansion of the higher education network was outstanding. In 1996 there were 922 higher education institutions (HEIs), 211 of which were public (23%) and 711 private (77%), with a total of 1,868,529 students enrolled. In 2005, the total number of HEIs rose to 2,165 with 231 public (10.7%) and 1,934 private (89.3%) institutions. In the same year, the ratio was the following: from a total of 4,453,156 students, 1,192,189 (26.77%) were in the public sphere and 3,260,967 (73.23%) in the private sphere. In 2011 (the first year of Rousseff term), there were 284 public HEIs and 2,081 private ones, a legacy left by the Lula administration. Finally, there was a total of 6,739,689 students enrolled in private and public institutions.

with one of the highest popular approval rates in Brazilian democratic history, estimated at 87%<sup>15</sup>. Unlike other governments in the region, like Bolivia and Venezuela, despite his popularity, Lula knew how to respect democracy and the alternation of power. Lulism ended with the transfer of Lula’s political support leading to the election of his successor, President Dilma Rousseff.

b) *Dilma Rousseff (2011-2014/ 2016): restraint in continuity*

i. *Rousseff’s Foreign Policy*

The foreign policy in Rousseff’s government followed the same matrix as did Lula da Silva’s government. Still, there were some adjustments based on the management style and the changing international environment. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Chancellor

from January 2011 to August 2013) maintained the same government objectives as Lula da Silva: development through the diversification of commercial partners in the South-South model and the affirmation of Brazil as a global actor. South America was kept as a priority on the Brazilian external agenda. However, the persistence of the international economic crisis and political instability were defining factors in constraining Brazil's actions and limiting its international leadership (Bastos & Hiratuka, 2020).

Some authors suggest that Rousseff's foreign policy was different from Lula's since she was less active (Cornetet, 2014). Others believe Rousseff's administrative profile and view of international politics was not the same in terms of the international projection of Brazil in comparison to that of Lula. Moreover, it is mentioned by some critics that she prioritized internal politics over external (Stuenkel, 2017; Cornetet 2014; Louback, 2016).

Nevertheless, it was during Rousseff's government that several cooperation projects expanded and flourished. Rousseff reinforced integration projects such as Mercosur (supporting the suspension of Paraguay after the institutional coup against Fernando Lugo in 2012 and Venezuela's accession to the bloc), Unasur, CELAC and BRICS. In 2011, the BRIC group incorporated South Africa. Now BRICS, the bloc gained a global approach, including the African continent. The economic cooperation was reinforced by the creation of the BRICS Investment Bank. With the capital of USD 50 billion, the bank would promote strategic action in several areas including higher education research.

According to Muhr and Azevedo (2019), education was mentioned twice in the BRICS annual summit statements: in 2009 and 2013. Nevertheless, the intra-BRICS educational cooperation developed after the first meeting of the BRICS Education Ministers in Paris in November 2013. This meeting happened at the 37th session of the UNESCO General Conference. The BRICS' agenda sought to highlight the relevance of education as an imperative dimension in South-South cooperation. The objectives were directed toward "*inclusive and equitable quality education*" and "*lifelong learning opportunities for all*"; moreover, education was a "*political project for emancipation, liberation, and a political-economic independence*" (Muhr and Azevedo, 2019).

Though Rousseff kept a low profile in foreign policy, it is noteworthy that her government not only maintained Lula's foreign policy agenda focus on development and welfare promotion but also highlighted education as a central policy issue. If Lula had inaugurated the pluralization of foreign policy agenda and the pursuit of social inclusion in the domestic arena, it was Rousseff government that promoted the marriage between foreign policy and higher education.

## ii. *Expansion and Continuity in Education*

Rousseff continued Lula's project of higher education expansion, aiming to increase the number of universities, remove barriers to the entry of marginalized students, and promote higher education institutions' internationalization.

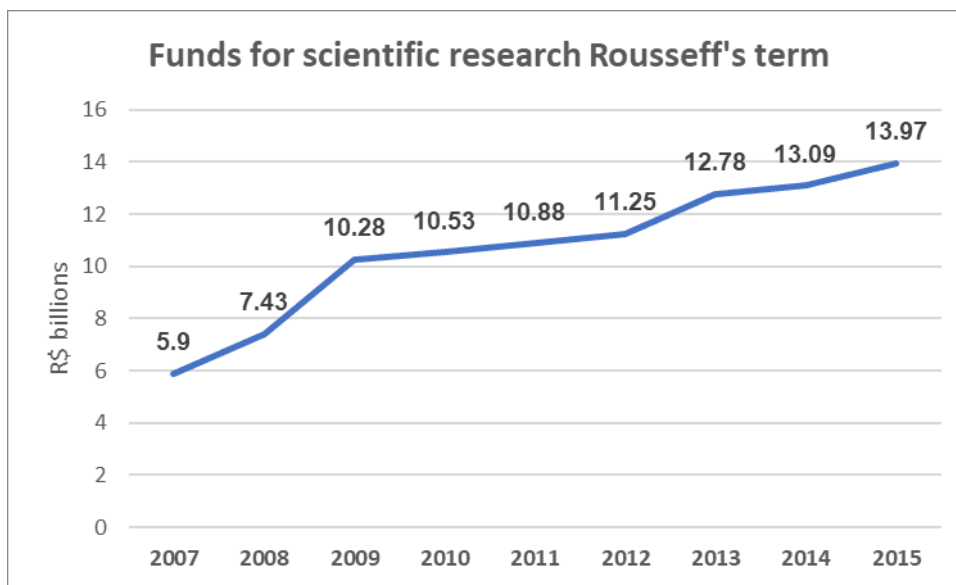
During her government, four new federal universities were created in the poorest North and Northeast regions, in areas with no public higher education institutions: UFESBA and UFOB in the south and west of Bahia; UFCA in Ceará, and the *multi-campi* UNIFESSPA, covering the south and southeast regions of Pará.

Beyond expanding the number of student places in public universities, Rousseff sought to reduce social and ethnic asymmetries in the entry of new students. During her first term, important Law no. 12,711/2012 known as the "Quotas Act" was approved. It was a historical reparation in a deeply unequal country ruled by the decimation of indigenous people since the colonization process. Brazil was the country that received the largest number of enslaved blacks in the world, 4.9 million people, and the last country in the West to abolish slavery. This law determined that federal higher education institutions linked to the Ministry of Education must reserve, in each selective contest for entry into undergraduate courses, at least 50% of their vacancies for students who attended public high schools. The places must be filled by self-declared people of color and indigenous people, as well as by people with disabilities.

After the abolition of formal slavery, no public policies were planned for the newly freed black population to be incorporated as citizens into the society in a dignified manner. As a result of racism which became structural, the black population had lower access to education. Over a century behind, the quota law fulfilled the role of promoting equitable access to opportunities through higher education. Data from IBGE (National Statistics Bureau) show the chance of getting a degree has increased almost by four times among the black population in the country. Since the first experiences of affirmative action in higher education, the percentage of black Brazilians who graduated from universities grew from 2.2% in 2000 to 9.3% in 2017. Although inequalities are still significant, this public policy has a transformative potential, which can be seen from the data released by the National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education (Andifes). The study reveals that, for the first time in the history of Brazil, there are more non-white (51.2%) than white students in higher education institutions. In this group, 64.7% attended public high school and 70.2% came from families with monthly per capita income of up to 1.5 minimum wages (Ribeiro, 2019: 22-25).

Rousseff government also pursued an expansion in S&T. On the one hand, it is worth noting the expansion in financing provided to the National System of S&T, comprised by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTI), the National Council

for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) and Funding Authority for Studies and Projects (Finep).



Source: Sociedade Brasileira para o progresso da Ciência

Diagram 03: Funds on scientific research during Rousseff's period

On the other hand, research and training were boosted by "Science without Borders" (*Ciência sem Fronteiras*), possibly the most ambitious program in the internationalization of higher education in Brazil. Science without Borders was created by the Decree nº 7642 of 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2011 (Aveiro, 2014:17). This international academic mobility program aimed to promote innovation, modernization, competitiveness, and international insertion through the technical-scientific training of young Brazilians in high-ranking international universities (Muller 2013:47). At the same time, the program supported the attraction of recent PhD graduates and senior international researchers to Brazil. The rationale behind the program is the potential to produce a significant impact on the Brazilian industry, the sector in which most of these professionals would be integrated.

The project covered four main areas of knowledge, with four types of scholarships: sandwich degree (SWG), postgraduate and postdoctoral studies, the attraction of young scientists to Brazil, as well as professional and technological education. Scholarships for undergraduate students were prioritized, which was an innovation in higher education policies in Brazil; until then, the focus had always been on graduate studies. According to Sehnem (2019), Rousseff had personal involvement with the program, which seemed to raise its status and guaranteed resources for its execution (Sehnem, 2019). Of 101,446 scholarships awarded in the period, 78% (78,980) were for the Sandwich

Graduate Program (SWG), with an investment contribution of almost R\$10.5 billion (CAPES e CNPq, 2016).

Initially, the program was aimed at the U.S. universities, similar to Barack Obama administration's plan "100,000 Strong in the Americas"<sup>16</sup>. Two international cooperation agreements were signed between the U.S. and Brazil in a short period of time in 2011. Faced with the difficulty of accomplishing this in a limited amount of time, there was the decision to expand the partnerships with approximately 30 countries (Prolo and Vieira, 2017).

However, the project attracted criticism. Schwartzman (2015:35) pointed out that "the universities were forced to expand without enough resources and preparation and could not cope with the new inflow of students and professors hired with working conditions that do not match with the previous standards". In addition, the program sent students and researchers mainly to English-speaking countries in the regions like the United States and Europe.

The impetus towards building both a socially inclusive project and strong South-South cooperation around shared development goals – including higher education policies – came to an end in 2016 when the PT, Rousseff's and Lula's political party, was involved in a corruption scandal. Former president Lula himself faced charges. Furthermore, an economic recession started. Facing severe economic constraints and increasing political isolation, Rousseff was removed



from office on 31 August 2016, as a result of an impeachment process<sup>17</sup>. Her successor, Vice President Michel Temer, facilitated a U-turn in the policy agenda, aiming to promote radical neoliberal policies with profound impacts on higher education.

c) *Michel Temer (2016-2018): beginning of dismantling*

The vice president of Dilma Rousseff assumed the presidency on 31 August 2016. Not only the national politics were in disarray, but the international context of this period was also somehow unstable. The election of Donald Trump in the United States and Brexit in Europe further contributed to this scenario. In South America, the so-called “pink tide” period ended with the Paraguayan coup against Fernando Lugo, as well as the election of Mauricio Macri in Argentina, Sebastian Piñera in Chile, and Pedro Kuczynski in Peru (Pereira, 2015).

In Brazil, Jose Serra was appointed chancellor, promising a disruption with the previous governments. Serra, who was not a diplomat but a politician, proposed 10 action guidelines<sup>18</sup>, in which he criticized what he called diplomacy based on “ideological conveniences of a political party and of its foreign allies”. Serra left office in March 2017 and, despite the plans, none of his projects ended up being implemented.

After Serra resigned, Aloysio Nunes, also a politician, assumed the ministry. He defined a more pragmatic approach to Mercosur, aiming to promote the “deideologization” of relations with Venezuela. Nunes also pursued a new pattern of relations with the United States, negotiating the use of the military base Alcântara in the Northeast by the American army. Through several official lines of communication, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs criticized Latin American countries that supported Rousseff in the impeachment trial<sup>19</sup>. The most notorious case was the relationship with Venezuela. Not only the commercial exchange dropped considerably but also Venezuela was suspended from the Mercosur. Furthermore, the readmission of Bolivia to the group stagnated as a result (Costa Silva, 2019).

In the domestic realm, Temer prioritized the discussion of the unpopular economic reforms. In December 2016 – only four months after Rousseff impeachment – Congress approved Constitutional Amendment no. 55, which significantly compromised the financing of public policies offered by the government, among them, education. Amendment to the Constitution no. 95/2016, thus, instituted a New Fiscal Regime, which would be in place for 20 years. It established for each fiscal year an individual limit for primary expenses of the Executive Power, equivalent to the primary expense paid in the fiscal year 2016. It included the remains to be paid and other operations that affect the primary result, corrected by the variation of inflation the National Wide Consumer Price Index - IPCA. For Carvalho (2018), the approval of this

amendment represents the dismantling of Brazilian social policies inspired by the European welfare states through the suffocation of their financing.

Indeed, it is estimated that the education field will lose R\$45 billion (USD 8.3 billion<sup>20</sup>) by 2025 with the Stability and Growth Program 241 (PEC 241). The freeze is to make several goals of the National Education Plan (PNE) unfeasible. It should be noted that the successive cuts in education funds have already been happening since 2014 and, with the approval of the Constitutional Amendment no. 95/2016, the situation has worsened. In a Technical Report of the Assembly (2019), regarding the primary expenses paid between 2014 and 2018 by the Ministry of Education and the impact the amendment has been already causing, it was noted that the investment in education in Brazil fell by 56% over four years. Between 2014 and 2018, it decreased from R\$11.3 billion (USD 20.8 billion) to R\$4.9 billion (USD 9 billion). There was a drop in the amount spent on the three levels of education – basic, technical and higher –, according to a survey based on the budgets realized in the period and corrected by the IPCA. As a whole, the portfolio budget was reduced by 11.7% between 2014 and 2018, from R\$117.3 billion (USD 21.6 billion) to R\$103.5 billion (USD 19.1 billion).

Regarding the expenses for higher education, there was a drop of 15%, from R\$39.2 billion (USD 7.3 billion) in 2014 to R\$33.4 billion (USD 6.2 billion) in 2018<sup>21</sup>. Most of the resources that were available were used for compulsory expenditure, including personnel and social security charges. In this period, this expense grew by 11.4% from R\$48.8 billion (USD 9 billion) to R\$54.4 billion (USD 10.1 billion). If we consider the 2018 budget, in practice, for every R\$100, the government spent R\$4.70 on investments and R\$52.50 on employees and maintenance. The remaining amount, R\$42.80, was used to pay current expenses (mandatory and discretionary) – in other words, the funding expenses and expenses on various services to maintain the university structures (cleaning services, water, electricity, etc.), as well as student assistance, fundamental to their permanence in the universities (City Hall Newsletter, 2019<sup>22</sup>).

The proposal and subsequent approval of the AC 55 generated several protests and strikes in federal universities against budget cuts. Some critical intellectuals also began to be persecuted by the Education Ministry and the Judiciary that prohibited activities that debated the coup and its consequences. In 2018, political scientist Luis Felipe Miguel, a professor at the University of Brasilia, offered the course “The coup of 2016 and the future of democracy in Brazil,” as a result facing hostility from Education Minister Mendonça Filho. Mendonça Filho publicly declared his intention to appeal to the Public Ministry on preventing the course from being taught but stopped after backlashing due to the negative repercussions the case

took. Sectors of the media and academia accused the government of promoting censorship, a practice largely adopted by the Military Regime in Brazil (1964-1984). In solidarity, more than 10 universities in several states included the course in their programmes.

In spite of the financing cuts, Temer inaugurated five federal universities, which had been planned by Rousseff: Federal University of Jataí (UFJ), Federal University of Catalão (UFCAT), Federal University of Agreste de Pernambuco (UFAPE), Federal University of Rondonópolis (UFR), and Federal University of Delta do Parnaíba (UFDPar). However, Temer promoted setbacks in priorities of Rousseff's agenda. Science without Borders, in the form of an undergraduate interchange program, ended in 2017. The justification behind the decision was the high cost of keeping students out of the country at a time when higher education was undergoing several budget cuts.

#### d) *Jair Messias Bolsonaro (2019-2020)*

##### i. *Bolsonaro's foreign policy: matrix loss*

The Brazilian context in 2018 was defined by great polarization against the PT. Jair M. Bolsonaro, considered an outsider, despite his long political career as a deputy, infamous for his racist, misogynist, and pro-dictatorship rhetoric, was elected president of Brazil with 55% of valid votes. Bolsonaro was elected in the context of an international wave marked by the election of far-right and populist representatives for the executive posts, including American President Donald Trump as the most prominent case.

In his inauguration speech, Bolsonaro affirmed: "we are going to remove the ideological bias from our international relations. We are looking for a new time for Brazil and for Brazilians!" (BRASIL, 2019<sup>23</sup>). His chosen Minister of Foreign Affairs was Ernesto Henrique Fraga Araújo, a career diplomat who, distancing himself from his counterparts, expressed conservative ideas towards what he called "globalism" and demonstrated his admiration to the United States and the ideals of Trumpism. Araújo stated in his inauguration speech that the aim of his government was to "recover the role of the Foreign Ministry as guardian of the Brazilian truth and memory. (...) Brazil will not ask permission from the 'global order' to do whatever it takes to achieve its goals<sup>24</sup>."

Bolsonaro holds a revisionist agenda aimed at removing the legacies of the progressists' governments. In foreign policy, his government rejects the international order and its rules, as well as the advances achieved by minorities in different countries. According to Rodrigues (2019), this is one of the greatest U-turns in Brazilian foreign policy since the military regime, configuring a loss of status in one of the best organized, stable, predictable, and respected areas of the Brazilian state. A country that cared for sociability through diplomacy and international law, started aligning itself with the

policy of constant international crisis. President Bolsonaro, called by North American newspapers "Trump of the Tropics", has pushed the country into a pivotal state for the ultra-right in Latin America, putting in question the whole legacy of the Brazilian leadership in the regional and global contexts (Rodrigues, 2019: 1-8). Authors such as Fuser (2019) and Spektor (2019), have already defined the changes that occurred as "subservience diplomacy" and "rupture diplomacy".

In his first year in office, Bolsonaro supported the creation of the Forum for the Progress and Integration of South America (PROSUR). The initiative was launched in March 2019 at the meeting of the South American presidents in Santiago, Chile. This mechanism was designed as a model for regional dialogue to strengthen relations and cooperation among South American states. In September of the same year, during the UN General Assembly in New York, the operating guidelines were defined by the foreign ministers of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Paraguay. In the released document, the areas of infrastructure, energy, health, defense, security, and fighting crime and disasters were listed as key policy issues. Education was absent. A brief mention of the need for access to quality education can be found in the sessions of the event dedicated to objectives, however, no discussion took place.

The creation of the PROSUR, with the exclusion of several countries in the region, and the loss of space for education in the integration priorities points, in principle, to the dismantling of Unasur and an alignment of the presidents identified in a right-wing political spectrum in the reorganization of policy priorities among public authorities in the region.

Against the Brazilian customary diplomatic tradition, in 2019, Bolsonaro declared, before the elections, his support to Mauricio Macri in Argentina. He affirmed that Argentina could become "the new Venezuela<sup>25</sup>". With the victory of Macri's opponent Alberto Fernandez, Bolsonaro declared that the Argentinians "did not choose well". There was a radical change in the foreign policy agenda that might have affected not only the bilateral relationship but Mercosur as a whole together with other regional arenas.

We can affirm that there is a matrix loss in the foreign policy, involving the reputation crisis due to the change in foreign policy and the conduct of the president of the republic.

##### ii. *Educational Policies: the denialism setback*

The political moment for Brazilian education is being defined mostly by the draconian budget cuts and the symbolic aggression against its communities and academic institutions. Since the beginning of 2019, the Ministry of Education have blocked around R\$6 billion (USD 1.1 million) under contingency policies which, followed by other ministries, have been submitted.

Approximately a third of this amount – around R\$2.2 billion (USD 410 million) – is linked to the budget for the federal universities. Year by year, the government measures are reducing what equates to 0.8% of the GDP from the public spends with social policies and public investments. At the same time, movements for weakening the autonomy of the universities, disrespecting their administrative elections of their directors and deans, seem like the tip of the iceberg of the government's true intentions.

Indicated by Olavo de Carvalho<sup>26</sup>, the first person to assume the Ministry of Education's post was Colombian-born Ricardo Vélez Rodríguez. During his short time as minister, his speeches and ideas have dazed and worried the whole of the academic field. Despite being a professor, his first measure in the ministry would be to rewrite history books. In his words, the military coup in 1964, was a "civic moment": *"There was an institutional change, not a coup against the Constitution at the time"*. Speaking about the universities, he said that *"they should be reserved for an intellectual elite"*. In addition to praising Pablo Escobar for his civic actions in Colombia, the MEC sent a note to schools asking for the children to be in a military formation to sing the National Anthem and for that action to be recorded. Further, it was requested that Bolsonaro's campaign slogan "Brazil above everything, God above all the people" was read during the event at schools (Leher, 2019).

After a short period, Vélez Rodríguez was dismissed. The new minister, Abraham Weintraub, in his inauguration speech, sustained that he would fight against "cultural Marxism" in the universities, showing his alignment with the presidential family's ideology. His bolsonarist argumentation was absurd, using simplistic denominations, which could be compared to a generalization stating that everyone from the political left are communists.

Right before his inauguration, Bolsonaro criticized what he called "the Marxist junk" in schools, announcing that one of his goals would be to remove any trace of Marxism from Brazilian education. He also accused the university community of allowing certain sexual behavior, not compatible with the Christian morality, more specifically, the Pentecostal and evangelical morality. The new minister Weintraub followed the exact same guidelines. According to Leher (2019), his argumentation to disqualify the universities had two main points: the ideological criticism regarding the existence of "cultural Marxism", and the accusation of Brazilian public universities being a high cost to the people and still not being known as institutions of excellence, which equals to not figuring on the rank of the 100 best universities in the world. According to the minister, the federal universities promoted "shambles" and political events, as well as immoral parties.

During the election campaign, some of the electoral judges supported the removal of anti-fascist posters and banners and the interruption of classes that included any electoral debate in several federal universities' campuses. On 31 October 2018, the Brazilian Supreme Court decided unanimously against the police intervention in the universities in favor of the Constitution and of the fundamental rights established by it, including the freedom of professorship, freedom of thought, and freedom of speech. The scientific denialism of the government can be seen in the changes in different bodies and national agency, including the IBGE, the Brazilian Institution for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (Ibama), the Chico Mendes Institute for Conservation and Biodiversity (ICMBio), the Economic Defense Administration Council (Cade); The National Institute of Spatial Investigations (INPE), the Finep, The CNPq, the Capes, the universities; and the Federal Education and Technology Institutes, linked to the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communication (MCTIC) (Leher, 2019:15).

Refusing scientific evidence, Bolsonaro's leaders intended to deny the reality. Brazil could become a country conceived by cults and for capitalists avid to expand their frontiers and to scale their businesses. This group supports the extraction of ore in indigenous territories, promoting fires in the Amazon to clean the path for pasture, disrespecting workers' rights to a level analogue to slavery, or even deviating money from social security to banks and investment funds.

University autonomy, guaranteed by the 1988 Brazilian Constitution, has been threatened by the presidential decrees. The Decree no. 9.794, from 15 May 2019, established that the appointment of the main positions for the direction of the Federal University should be preceded by an analysis of the names by the Federal Government, creating the Integrated System of Appointments and Consultations:

*"The acts of appointment, designation, exoneration and dismissal related to commissioned positions and functions of trust of a federal institution of basic education and higher education, of a federal center of technological education, of a federal technical school and of a federal agrotechnical school shall be carried out as the rules of the institution, except for the position of top manager of the institution and holder of a legal organ of the Federal Attorney General's office installed at the institution<sup>27</sup>."*

In June 2019, minister Weintraub launched a program called "Future-se", the objective of which "is to promote a major financial autonomy to universities and federal institutes through incentives to private fundraising and to entrepreneurship" (MEC, 2020), discharging the government from funding the public institutions. The program was for voluntary accession, which means that only universities and federal institutes interested in participating would be included. Besides

this program, the ministry also suggested the introduction of monthly tuition for postgraduation *stricto sensu*, which is currently free and pointed out that the option for the expansion of Brazilian higher education is private education, controlled by the investment funds.

One of the democratic disruptions under Bolsonaro's administration was the failure to comply with the rector's elections by the academic communities through triple lists. It was customary to abide by the choice of the academic community since it is a name chosen within the institutions by electoral rules, considered fundamental for the university's autonomy. However, Bolsonaro, until the beginning of 2021, chose a different candidate in 40% of the cases. Out of 34, he nominated 15 who were in the 2nd or 3rd positions in the electoral colleges' disputes.

Although not illegal, this recurring attitude of Bolsonaro is criticized for weakening universities' mechanisms of participation and guaranteeing plurality,

seen as a controlling method of federal institutions and a violation of the principles of university autonomy, impersonality, and public morality.

### III. DISCUSSION: HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES FROM LULA TO BOLSONARO

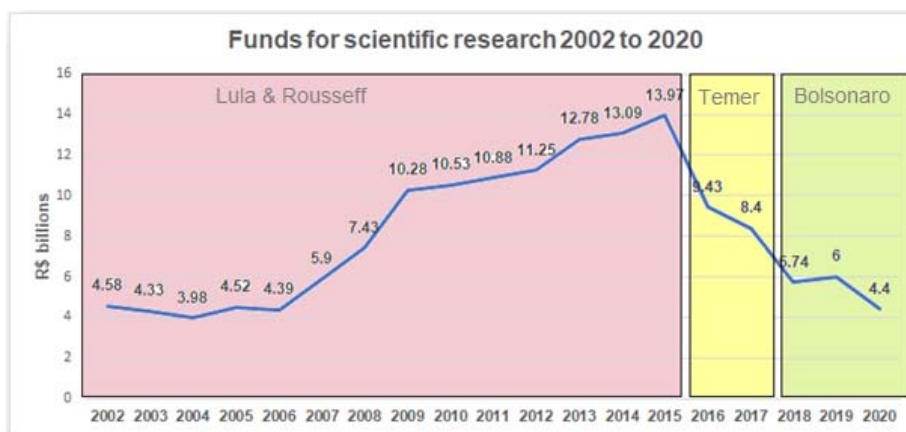
Klein and Schwartzman (1993) affirmed that the analysis of higher education policies produced in Brazil in the period of 1970-1990 showed "patterns of policy-making that are closely related to the nature of the political regimes under which they occurred". After Rousseff's deposition, although Brazil is still a formal democracy, a radical transformation from the PT's governments to Temer and Bolsonaro also resulted in a dramatic change in policymaking. In comparative Table 1.0 below, we outline the main differences among the past four governments in their educational policies.

Table 1.0: Comparative table detailing policy in every studied period.

	Lula da Silva (2003-2011)	Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016)	Michel Temer (2016-2018)	Jair M. Bolsonaro (2019- )
<b>Political view</b>	Central-left - Welfare state	Central left	Central-right - Liberal	Extreme-right - Liberal
<b>Foreign Policy initiatives in Education</b>	UNILA/UNILAB	Science without Borders BRICS	None	None
<b>Educational programs</b>	REUNI Reformed FIES ProUni SISU PNAES	Science without Borders "Law of Quotas"	No new programs. Science without Borders was extinguished. Reduction of higher educational investments.	Future-se (abandoned)
<b>Number of public HEIs</b>	224 in 2004 to 285 in 2011	296 (2016)	299 (2018)	302 (2019) <sup>28</sup>
<b>Number of private HEIs</b>	2,099 (2010)	2,111 (2016)	2,238 (2018)	2,306 (2019)
<b>Students enrolled in HEIs</b>	6.407.733 (2010)	8.052.254 (2016)	8.451.748 (2018)	8.604.526 (2019)
<b>Number of new public universities</b>	14 universities 126 campi	4 universities 57 campi	5 universities	None
<b>Total budget spent on Educational sector</b>	2008: R\$ 66,7 billion	2016: R\$ 109,90 billion	2018: R\$ 114,31 billion	2020: R\$ 110,65 billion

In Diagram 04 below, we demonstrate the variation of the total of funds for scientific research from 2002 to 2020. Since the deposition of Rousseff, the investments drop drastically.





Source: Elaborated by author. Sociedade Brasileira para o progresso da Ciência.

Diagram 04: Funds for scientific research from 2002 to 2020.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The results provided in this article indicate that in the PT's governments, from Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff, higher education policies were a priority on the agenda and universities' internationalization was part of foreign policy strategies. Education was also a tool to promote foreign policy and a drive to develop social programs. Rousseff's impeachment ended the expansion and prioritization of higher education as public policy.

In Michel Temer's and Jair M. Bolsonaro's governments, the education sector has suffered budget cuts and a reduction in importance. Temer's administration approved unpopular bills jeopardizing social rights and budget allocation for education, health, and retirement funds. With Bolsonaro, since it is an ongoing process, we still cannot see the results clearly. However, what we have seen so far presents a denial-driven setback in many sectors, notably, in science and education policies.

Bolsonaro denied the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, adopting an anti-lockdown and anti-vaccination discourse, as well as supporting the use of so-called "preemptive" medication with no support in the literature. His denialist discourse is in direct clash with both the international and Brazilian scientific community. As a result, Brazil is one of the worst-hit countries by the pandemic worldwide, with over 380,000 deceased at the moment that we finish this article.

It is impossible not to mention the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Brazil's higher education *alumni*. All public and private campuses are closed, and the classes are held online. In an unequal country such as Brazil, access to computers and the internet is highly uneven. There was no initiative from the Ministry of Education to support universities. Reports show the institutions have used their own resources to cover emergency support for students. In addition, the economic context of impoverishment, increased income

inequality, and unemployment leads many quota students to search for jobs to support their families. Though there is no consolidated data on schooling evasion, there is a general perception it has increased.

Already functioning under political, economic, and sanitary constraints, public higher education universities will face new challenges in 2022. The Law no. 12.711/2012, the Law of Quotas, establishes that:

"Art. 7<sup>th</sup> - Within a period of ten years from the date of publication of this Law, the revision of the special program for access to higher education institutions for black, brown and indigenous students and for people with disabilities, as well as those who have completed high school in public schools, will be promoted".

Following years of decline in financing, which resulted in a setback in the creation of new student places in the universities, the PT's legacy in education will be faced with a debate on whether or not the inclusion of those ethnically and economically marginalized in the Brazilian society will prevail.

<sup>1</sup> The focus on the second term is justified by the fact that the majority of higher education policies implemented occurred during this period.

<sup>2</sup> According to Senner (2003:36), the foreign policy matrix "concerns the more general outlines of a country's foreign policy and seeks to determine the way in which it conceives the dynamics of the international system".

<sup>3</sup> Historically, most universities were located close to the East Coast or big cities.

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed presentation and discussion of REUNI, see: Silva, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> PNE is a document edited periodically, through the law, which includes diagnoses on the Brazilian education and strategic planning proposals for the development of the sector. The current PNE, guided by Law n°13.005/2014, was approved in 2014 with a validity of 10 years. The National Education Plan (PNE 2001-2010) was based on three pillars: education as the right

for all; education as a factor of social and economic development in the country; and education as an instrument to combat poverty and social inclusion. One of the goals was to “increase the gross enrollment rate in higher education to 50% and the net rate to 33% of the population aged 18 to 24, ensuring the quality”. The REUNI one development from the PNE focusing on public higher education.

<sup>6</sup> <http://reuni.mec.gov.br/noticias/37-noticia-destaque/684-lula-destaca-politica-de-interiorizacao-do-ensino-superior-e-profissional>

<sup>7</sup> 1909 was the year of the creation of the first university, the Manaus Free University School.

<sup>8</sup> <http://portal.mec.gov.br/ultimas-noticias/212-educacao-superior-1690610854/16096-presidente-Lula-da-Silva-da-Silva-entrega-campi-de-universidades-e-institutos-federais>

<sup>9</sup> Created in 1998 during Cardoso presidency, the National High School Examination (ENEM) was a standardized Brazilian national exam that evaluated students' academic performance at the end of basic education. The exam improved its methodology and, in 2009, it started to be used as a mechanism of access to higher education through the Unified Selection System (SiSU), the University for All Program (ProUni) and agreements with Portuguese institutions. ENEM participants can also apply for student financing in government programs, such as the Student Financing Fund (FIES). The results of ENEM continue to enable the development of studies and educational indicators.

<sup>10</sup> The ENEM is also accepted in foreign universities. In Portugal, at least 50 institutions accepted the exam grade to select Brazilian candidates. The United Kingdom, France and the United States are also accepting, but the application involves other processes as well.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.br/pt-br/servicos/obter-bolsa-de-estudo-do-pronuni/> Accessed August 2020.

<sup>12</sup> See in “Brasil. Casa Civil. Lei nº 11.096, 13 de janeiro de 2005”.

<sup>13</sup> [http://portal.inep.gov.br/artigo/-/asset\\_publisher/B4AQV9zFY7Bv/content/dados-do-censo-da-educacao-superior-as-universidades-brasileiras-representam-8-da-rede-mas-concentram-53-das-matriculas/21206](http://portal.inep.gov.br/artigo/-/asset_publisher/B4AQV9zFY7Bv/content/dados-do-censo-da-educacao-superior-as-universidades-brasileiras-representam-8-da-rede-mas-concentram-53-das-matriculas/21206)

<sup>14</sup> <http://portal.mec.gov.br/rede-federal-inicial>

<sup>15</sup> Ibope 2010, <http://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2010/12/popularidade-de-Lula-da-Silva-da-Silva-bate-recorde-e-chega-87-diz-ibope.html> Accessed 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Increase the number of American students in China. The Chinese government supports the initiative by awarding 10,000 scholarships (Bridge Scholarships) to American students.

<sup>17</sup> For a detailed analysis of this period, see Singer, 2018.

<sup>18</sup> For a detailed, see <http://www.funag.gov.br/ipri/images/repertorio/diretrizes-governo-Temer-Ministro-Serra.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and El Salvador, in addition to the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA).

<sup>20</sup> Currency quote R\$ to US\$ of Mayo 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Source: Siafi (Sistema Integrado de Administração Financeira do Governo Federal)

<sup>22</sup> The data take into account the primary expenses of the current budget carried out by the MEC and of leftovers from the previous budgets paid in the financial year, corrected each year by the IPCA for the 12-month period ended in June of the previous year to which the budget law refers, as required by amendment no. 55/2016.

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-plano-lto/discursos/2019/discurso-do-presidente-da-republica-jair-bolsonaro-durante-cerimonia-de-recebimento-da-faixa-presidencial>. Accessed 09/27/2020.

<sup>24</sup> BRASIL, (03/01/2019). <http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/pt-BR/discursos-artigos-e-entrevistas-categoria/ministro-das-relacoes-exteriores-discursos/19907-discurso-do-ministro-ernesto-araujo-durante-cerimonia-de-posse-no-ministerio-das-relacoes-exteriores-brasilia-2-de-janeiro-de-2019>

<sup>25</sup> Using Venezuela as an example of a failure “communist” country.

<sup>26</sup> Olavo de Carvalho is a self-taught philosopher, responsible for the ideological base of “bolsonarism”. Although he did not have a government position, Olavo de Carvalho guaranteed his influence in appointing alumni, known as “disciples”, for important positions in the areas of educational and foreign policy.

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/\\_ato2019-2022/2019/decreto/D9794.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2019-2022/2019/decreto/D9794.htm) Accessed August 2020

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