

ARTICLE

**EXOGENOUS PRIVATIZATION AND ADVANCES OF ACADEMIC CAPITALISM IN
BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA¹**

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to understand the main political technologies of exogenous privatization of higher education, designed with the guidelines of international funding bodies, which have contributed to the opening and rise of the academic capitalist regime in countries such as Brazil and Argentina. The methodology used was historically critical. The investigation was qualitative, bibliographic, and documentary. To this end, the first chapter deals with the structural transformations of capitalism that supported the new governance model and, concomitantly, the exogenous privatization process of higher education at a global level. This is followed by an analysis of the higher education reforms that have taken place in Brazil and Argentina, especially since the 1980s, which have promoted the rationalization/optimization of public investment and the implementation of privatization policies. Finally, we seek to understand how educational policies, implemented in the context of neoliberal reforms, have contributed to the formation of a capitalist knowledge regime, based on the production of raw material knowledge, directly profitable. The results indicate that the political technologies of exogenous privatization of higher education have stimulated the expansion of the private/commercial sector and the redirection of public investment in favor of research to the interests of the industrial/business sector, to the detriment of “open science” (non-mercantile), favoring the advancement and materialization of academic capitalism in countries such as Brazil and Argentina.

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Keywords: higher education, educational policies, neoliberalism, exogenous privatization, academic capitalism.

A PRIVATIZAÇÃO EXÓGENA E OS AVANÇOS DO CAPITALISMO ACADÊMICO NO BRASIL E NA ARGENTINA

RESUMO: O presente artigo tem por objetivo compreender as principais tecnologias políticas de privatização exógena da educação superior, projetadas em articulação com as orientações dos organismos internacionais de financiamento, que têm contribuído à abertura e ascensão do regime capitalista acadêmico em países como o Brasil e a Argentina. A metodologia utilizada foi a histórico-crítica. A investigação foi qualitativa, bibliográfica e documental. Para tanto, o primeiro capítulo versa sobre as transformações estruturais do capitalismo que deram sustentação ao novo modelo de governança e, concomitantemente, ao processo de privatização exógena da educação superior em âmbito global. Posteriormente, apresenta-se uma análise das reformas da educação superior, materializadas no Brasil e na Argentina, sobretudo a partir da década de 1980, que impulsionaram a racionalização/otimização dos investimentos públicos e a implementação de políticas privatistas. Por fim, busca-se compreender de que forma as políticas educacionais, implementadas no contexto das reformas neoliberais, têm contribuído à formação de um regime capitalista de conhecimento, pautado na produção de conhecimento, matéria-prima, diretamente rentável. Os resultados apontaram que as tecnologias políticas de privatização exógena da educação superior estimulam a expansão do setor privado/mercantil e o redirecionamento dos investimentos públicos em prol de pesquisas aos interesses do setor industrial/empresarial, em detrimento da “ciência aberta” (não mercantil), favorecendo o avanço e a materialização do capitalismo acadêmico em países como o Brasil e a Argentina.

Palavras-chave: educação superior, políticas educacionais, neoliberalismo, privatização exógena, capitalismo acadêmico.

PRIVATIZACIÓN EXÓGENA Y AVANCES DEL CAPITALISMO ACADÉMICO EN BRASIL Y ARGENTINA

RESUMEN: Este artículo tiene como objetivo comprender las principales tecnologías políticas de privatización exógena de la educación superior, diseñadas en conjunto con las directrices de los organismos internacionales de financiación, que han contribuido a la apertura y ascenso del régimen académico capitalista en países como Brasil y Argentina. La metodología utilizada fue histórico-crítica. La investigación fue cualitativa, bibliográfica y documental. Para ello, el primer capítulo aborda las transformaciones estructurales del capitalismo que sustentó el nuevo modelo de gobernanza y, concomitantemente, el proceso exógeno de privatización de la educación superior a nivel global. Posteriormente, se presenta un análisis de las reformas de la educación superior, materializadas en Brasil

y Argentina, especialmente a partir de la década de 1980, que impulsaron la racionalización/optimización de las inversiones públicas y la implementación de políticas privatizadoras. Finalmente, buscamos comprender cómo las políticas educativas, implementadas en el contexto de las reformas neoliberales, han contribuido a la formación de un régimen de conocimiento capitalista, basado en la producción de conocimiento materia prima, directamente rentable. Los resultados mostraron que las tecnologías políticas de privatización exógena de la educación superior han estimulado la expansión del sector privado/mercantil y el redireccionamiento de las inversiones públicas en favor de la investigación a los intereses del sector industrial/empresarial, en detrimento de la “ciencia abierta”. (no mercantil), favoreciendo el avance y materialización del capitalismo académico en países como Brasil y Argentina.

Palabras clave: educación superior, políticas educativas, neoliberalismo, privatización exógena, capitalismo académico.

INTRODUCTION

Privatization has become the keyword of the flexible accumulation mode. Everything is capable of being privatized and urged to become capital; nothing should escape the promises and/or effects of privatization, including natural resources; management and public services (from hospitals to schools); cultural institutions; necessities, such as food and medicine; research institutions and universities; science and knowledge. After all, what is privatization for? Privatize to undertake, increase competitiveness and performativity, improve efficiency, increase profitability, and reduce “unnecessary” expenses, guarantee freedom and autonomy, hold “lazy” people accountable and promote meritocracy. In addition to impacting economic development, privatization is an ally of social development – the neoliberals' ghostly justification for boosting the market economic model and enabling the formation of a business-like subjectivity. In these terms, the State is coerced, by capitalist rationality, to adopt a new governance model, centered on the effective implementation of competitive logic to the detriment of the principle of public law and policies to protect and promote social justice (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2010, 2017). The formation of a business-oriented government, broadly committed to the principles of the economic elite and the international hegemonic project, advocated by the United States, encompassed an intense process of exogenous privatization of higher education.

The “Americanization” of political-economic reforms in Latin America encourages the capitalization of higher education and academic production, forcing research universities to adapt to the New American University paradigm. Based on this assertion, we seek to list and understand the main political technologies of exogenous privatization of higher education, designed in conjunction with the guidelines of international financing organizations, which have contributed to the opening and rise of the academic capitalist regime in countries like Brazil and Argentina. The methodology used was historical-critical. The investigation was qualitative, bibliographic, and documentary. To this end, the first chapter deals with the structural transformations of capitalism that supported the new governance model and, concomitantly, the process of exogenous privatization of higher education on a global scale. Subsequently, an analysis of higher education reforms, materialized in Brazil and Argentina, especially from the 1980s onwards, is presented, which boosted the fusion between public and private in hybrid forms, institutional differentiation, rationalization/optimization public investments and the capture of

new sources of financing by public universities. Finally, we seek to understand how educational policies, implemented in the context of neoliberal reforms, have contributed to the formation of a capitalist knowledge regime, based on the production of knowledge, raw material, directly profitable and in symbiosis with the needs of the business market.

THE “AMERICANIZATION” OF PUBLIC POLICIES AND THE OPENING OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO THE MARKET

The political-economic context of higher education in Latin America has been reconfigured in the face of the effervescence of the educational market worldwide, fueled by the rise of Toyotist/neoliberal rationality. The restructuring of the productive system along Toyotist lines and the neoliberal political-economic reforms, which characterize the logic of flexible accumulation, enabled the formation of a public management model focused on the market, whose actions and strategies aim to stimulate the privatization and commodification of public services, the generalization of competition, the rationalization of national States' resources and the increase in workers' productivity/performance. The capitalist rationality in vogue since 1980 gave rise to the terms “good governance” and “good practices”, making them a kind of mantra for government organization. The intention is to “reinvent government” through the construction of a new mode of rationalization that subjects the production of public services to privatist and economic logic, to meet oligopolistic interests and the recommendations of international financial organizations (World Bank, IMF, WTO, OECD, among others). In the sense of Dardot and Laval (2016, p. 276), “good governance' is concerned with management conditions under the benefits of structural adjustment and, above all, openness to commercial and financial flows, so that is closely linked to a policy of integration into the world market”.

Capitalist rationality, responsible for the formation of business subjectivity and the strengthening of market ideology, made the privatization and commercialization of public services a project of global reach. The process of capitalist re-territorialization (GUATTARI; ROLNIK, 1996), driven by the Toyotist spirit and the neoliberal hegemonic project, expanded the market logic beyond productive and mercantile activities, reaching the public sector and intangible work. The transformations in the productive and political structure of capitalism, established within global society, decisively influenced the construction and materialization of educational policies. In recent decades, privatized and market-based education policies have spread on a regional and global scale, leading to an intense process of reconfiguration of the functions and role of national States in the financing and development of higher education to meet business/hegemonic discourses principles of efficiency, economic growth, and meritocracy. The global and multilateral political structure has transformed higher education into an object of profit and capitalist accumulation, at the service of the industrial and business sector. In countries such as Brazil and Argentina, the reforms established within the scope of higher education enable the expansion of the private/mercantile sector and the pairing of the public and private sectors around privatist and economic principles. The seizure of business capital in the field of higher education redefines the social function of higher education institutions and the academic ethos (SAFORCADA et al., 2019; LEHER, 2010).

Exogenous privatization (visible privatization processes of education) is one of the main political technologies, adopted by neoliberal rationality, to expand the supply of places in higher

education without, however, expanding public spending and to explore new sources of financing with the private sector (industrial/business). The objective is to increase the efficiency of higher education and academic research with a smaller contribution of public resources. Exogenous privatization implies the opening of education to private providers through policies of institutional differentiation and the offering/commercialization of public educational services - including scientific and technological research (knowledge, raw materials) - to attract extra-budgetary resources. The expansion of private providers in higher education is largely due to three political mechanisms: the political/normative liberalization of the educational sector; tax incentives (indirect financing); and, state subsidies (direct financing) granted to private HEIs (FELDFEBER et al., 2019; LUENGO NAVAS et al., 2012; SAURA CASANOVA; MUÑHOZ MORENO, 2016; MOSCHETTI; FONTDEVILA; VERGER, 2017).

The exogenous dynamics of privatization comprise the “transfer” of responsibilities from the State and municipalities for the promotion of public education to the private/business sector for profit, above all, through the contracting of strictly educational/training services, directly reaching the planning and objectives of public education. According to Ball and Youdell (2007, p. 9, our translation), the privatization of “the” public sector (exogenous privatization) “involves the opening of public education services to the participation of the for-profit private sector and the use of the private sector to design, administer or provide aspects of education”. To facilitate understanding, examples can be cited of the purchase, by education networks, of teaching materials, consultancies and continuing teacher training courses from companies, multinationals, and educational conglomerates, in addition to the purchase of places in private institutions with public resources. The transformation of education into a business field, with a view to expanding the participation and profits of the private/business sector, dissolves the social objectives of education, removes autonomy, and financially weakens schools and educational institutions. Regarding the financing of public higher education institutions, the political mechanisms of exogenous privatization advocate the strengthening of public-private partnerships (PPP) to obtain economic benefits and direct research to market needs (FELDFEBER et al., 2019; LUENGO NAVAS et al., 2012; SAURA CASANOVA; MUÑHOZ MORENO, 2016; MOSCHETTI; FONTDEVILA; VERGER, 2017).

The exogenous dynamics of privatization (of higher education) interact dialectically with the endogenous political technologies of privatization (in higher education). Latin American educational reforms, imposed by the new capitalist engineering, encourage the “import of ideas, values, practices and management methods inspired by private companies”, with the aim of making the public sector “increasingly more entrepreneurial and increasingly commercial” (Ball; Youdell, 2007, p. 8-9, our translation). Endo privatization is associated with the implementation of political mechanisms based on increasing performance/performativity, productivity, and efficiency. Among the privatization policies “in higher education”, which focus on the expansion of business logic, it is important to highlight standardized assessments and the “ranking” process through the quantification and classification of production; and payment for performance/productivity to education workers (teachers and researchers). The appreciation for quantitative assessments, the emphasis on worker co-responsibility and the individualization of performance and bonuses, which permeate endo privatization and contribute to the deepening of exogenous privatization, are mechanisms imported from the Toyota production management model. Historically, this adaptation of higher education to the dictates of Toyotist (management method) and neoliberal (politics) rationality gains centrality at a global level, especially from

the 1980s onwards. This period encompassed the process of materialization of the new reformist agenda, based on the reduction of social protection policies and expansion of market logic beyond the sphere of commodity production (SAFORCADA et al., 2019; MOSCHETTI; FONTDEVILA; VERGER, 2017; LUENGO NAVAS; SAURA CASANOVA; 2013; HARVEY, 2014).

Structural transformations and the formation of a business-oriented government received a strong boost after the victories of Margaret Thatcher (1979 – 1990) in Great Britain and Ronald Reagan (1980 – 1989) in the United States - in addition to the government of Augusto Pinochet (1973 – 1990) in Chile, which made the country a great laboratory for neoliberal policies. The Toyotist/neoliberal model was presented as the only alternative to overcome the economic and social crisis of the Fordist/Keynesian regime of capital accumulation, clashing with the policies and social principles inherent to the Welfare State. The rise of conservatism profoundly altered the economic, social, political, ideological, and evaluative conditions, with strong repercussions on the ideology, subjectivity, and constitutive values of the class-that-lives-from-work. The new reformist agenda gave visibility to the adoption of anti-union policies, the reduction of social protection and the privatization and commercialization of public services. The seizure of power by supporters of neoliberalism in central countries and its subsequent dissemination in developing countries resulted in widespread destruction of institutional structures and powers (state sovereignty over political and economic matters), social welfare policies, the structural/contractual relationships of the workforce, ways of life, among others (ALVES, 2011; ANTUNES, 2009; DARDOT; LAVAL, 2016).

The new ideological-political project as an alternative to state interventionism led the reforms of national states towards commercial liberalization, the regulation of competition and the adaptation of political and social spheres to the logic of the market. To reduce social control and open paths for greater market influence on a global scale, international financing organizations (World Bank, IMF, WTO, IDB, among others) imposed a set of recommendations and structural adjustment plans on Nation states in exchange for loans and aid. These reforms were condensed into the so-called Washington Consensus (1989) with the aim of guiding and pressuring the economic restructuring and fiscal adjustment of developing countries towards neoliberal premises, giving rise to a disciplinary system of global reach. For those in global power, the economic crisis in Latin America in the 1980s was related to the State's impossibility and inability to meet the growing demands of the various sectors of the economy. This is due to the excessive growth of the state sector and the inability to control the public deficit. For this reason, structural adjustment reforms, disseminated without apparent space for alternative solutions, imposed, among other measures, budgetary balance via reduced public spending, deregulation of the economy and the indiscriminate privatization of state-owned companies and services (including education, health, retirement, public transport, public housing, among others) (BRESSER PEREIRA, 1991; SGUISSARDI, 2009; TORRES, 2000; BECHI, 2019).

Structural adjustment reforms, imposed by financial organizations located in Washington on developing countries, allowed a broad process of capitalist re-territorialization under the aegis of the United States. International financing organizations include a set of mechanisms that are characterized by the following actions: they express and disseminate the universal norms of a global hegemony, they ideologically legitimize the norms of global capital, they operate by co-opting the elites of peripheral countries and they absorb counter-hegemonic ideas. (AZEVEDO, 2011). The United States, in the face of its economic and military supremacy, suffocates local cultures, at a global level, through the elimination

and/or oppression of political singularities and the formation of a business subjectivity, committed to market values. Capitalist rationality, responsible for the formation of a business-oriented culture and political-economic reordering worldwide, redefines the role and functions of higher education in the context of flexible accumulation. Educational policies and reforms, based on economic guidelines, have caused changes in the financing logic and management model of higher education, with strong implications for academic culture. The exogenous privatization of education gained tremendous momentum in the 1980s, when North American federal agencies, in conjunction with Congress, developed a set of policies with the aim of strengthening links between the world of business and higher education (RHOADES; SLAUGHTER, 1997, p. 24)

The implementation of educational policies in line with economic and business interests pressured universities to develop research with a strictly commercial focus. By intensifying connections between universities and the business sector, the aim was to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of American companies in the global economy. In the interpretation of Rhodes and Slaughter (1997), federal legislative changes, imposed on the field of higher education, called for the fusion between the public and private sectors, in hybrid forms, and the production of scientific and technological knowledge committed to the improvement of products and processes for global markets. The political technologies of evaluation and exogenous privatization of higher education, centered on the principle of scientific and technological innovation and the logic of economic growth, stimulated increased competitiveness among research universities for new sources of attracting financial resources (public and private) and the acceleration and/or adaptation of production to obtain better positions in university rankings. The adaptation of universities to the needs of the industrial and business market boosted the capitalization of intellectual property and academic production. The privatization and commodification of higher education, through the expansion of the private/mercantile sector and the commercialization of academic science, fostered the materialization and expansion of the so-called academic capitalism (RHOADES; SLAUGHTER, 1997).

Capitalist re-territorialization in the field of higher education, characterized by the reduction of public spending and support for privatization, transformed knowledge into a commodity, for sale in the private/mercantile sector to obtain a higher education diploma and adapted to the business world by public universities in search. The rise of academic capitalism and the “knowledge economy”, through the entrepreneurship of education, caused profound transformations in the role of higher institutions and academic work, brought about changes in working conditions and the identity of teaching workers and introduced universities into the new world economy. The education business managed to associate concepts, initially distinct and sometimes considered dichotomous, based on shareable purposes, regarding the neoliberal project: education-market, public-private, academy-capital, university-company/industry, science-technology, teacher-entrepreneur, knowledge-economy, efficiency-money, financing-funding, autonomy-heteronomy, national-international, local-global. With the rise of neoliberal capitalism, scientific research carried out by universities begins to perform a single function: the production of knowledge, a raw material focused on profitability and economic growth. The process of commodifying knowledge, in vogue in recent decades, reduces scientific research to the precepts of efficiency and technological development. For the new cycle of capitalist expansion, academic science, aimed at the development and transfer of knowledge, raw material for industry and the business sector,

constitutes the main driving force of the global economy. Neoliberal capitalist rationality finds in higher education a new source of production and financial accumulation (SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017).

Academic capitalism is gradually transforming the political and economic context of higher education in Latin America. The neoliberal reforms of higher education, implemented in recent decades in countries such as Brazil and Argentina, have highlighted the political technologies of exogenous privatization of higher education, advocated by international financial organizations (World Bank, IMF, WTO, OECD, UNESCO, among others). The document entitled *La Enseñanza Superior: las perspectivas de La experiencia*, released by the World Bank in the mid-1990s, fueled the expansion of an academic-mercantile culture in Latin America. National States were instructed to encourage the expansion of the private sector and guarantee greater autonomy to public higher education institutions, challenging them to diversify their sources of financing and use financial resources more efficiently. Through intense political and economic pressures, neoliberal capitalism, driven globally by supranational hegemonic organizations, aims, at all costs, to adapt higher education management models in peripheral countries, including Latin Americans, to the business management principles of New American University (SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017; SCHUGURENSKY; NAIDORF, 2004). In the context of post-industrial capitalist accumulation, the exogenous privatization of higher education has been one of the main mechanisms, proclaimed by the precursors of neoliberal policies, to enable the opening and intensification of academic capitalism in Latin America. Given these privatist and mercantilist tendencies, we seek to understand how academic capitalism has been constituted in Brazil and Argentina.

THE DIRECTIONS OF EXOGENOUS PRIVATIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA

Capitalist re-territorialization in the field of higher education, underway in recent decades in countries such as Brazil and Argentina, comes from intense structural adjustment reforms, led, and financed by the precursors of the neoliberal/conservative project, in accordance with North American interests. The reforms and modernization of national states, embodied by the Washington Consensus and leveraged by multilateral organizations, enabled the dissemination of privatist and mercantilist policies in Latin America. Contemporary capitalist rationality exerts, through the expansion of business subjectivity and the capture of public decision-making by economic elites, strong pressure towards the replacement of an administration centered on the principles of public law, committed to social protection policies, by public management systematically inspired by competitive logic and government methods used in private companies. The changes concerning the “format” and role of the State, in vogue in different Latin American countries, marked the downsizing of the state machine, the presence of representatives of the private sector in management positions and in the formulation of public policies and the delegation of most of its functions to the private/business sector. The introduction of a new model of public management and the subordination of national strategies to the demands established by the global economy implied changes in the field of public policies, especially social policies, interfering in the logic of management and financing of higher education (BECHI, 2017, 2019; SAFORCADA et al., 2019).

The rise of academic capitalism in Latin America emanates from changes in public education investment priorities, transfers of services, functions and responsibilities to the private sector and the

introduction of public-private partnerships. The exogenous privatization of higher education, leveraged through liberalization and commercialization policies, has imposed on National States the implementation of complex management, regulation and financing models based on hybridization between the public sector and private companies or corporations (MOSCHETTI; FONTDEVILA; VERGER, 2017). Political technologies of “good governance” stimulated, through financial, fiscal, and political incentives, the commodification of higher education, characterized, in general, by the expansion of the private/mercantile sector and the increasing subordination of public universities to market rules. When analyzing and characterizing the emergence of academic capitalism in the United States, in the 1980s – 1990s, Rhoades and Slaughter (1997, p. 16) assume that the advent of the new economy would be placing higher education at the forefront of the fusion between the public and the private in hybrid forms. Capitalist rationality would have incorporated market and pro-market behaviors in the field of higher education to stimulate the commercialization of educational services, the adaptation of university research to market interests and a greater linkage of public resources in private HEIs. This model of management and financing of higher education along neoliberal lines, known for breaking the “public versus private” dichotomy, has proliferated in peripheral countries, taking by storm the educational reforms managed in Brazil and Argentina (COSTA; GOULART, 2018).

Over the last few decades, Brazil has become a hotbed of privatist and economistic guidelines and policies, committed, above all, to making work and production processes more flexible, downsizing and/or (re)directing public investments and the expansion of market logic beyond the productive sphere. National political-economic reforms, designed and materialized according to Toyotist/neoliberal rationality, drove the privatization and instrumentalization of Brazilian higher education for economic interests. As it is being organized and structured, higher education contemplates the transformations promoted by the flexible accumulation regime: reduction in public spending; introduction of management mechanisms inspired by the private sector; consolidation of market logic; openness to foreign capital; flexibility of production and work; prevalence of productivist logic and competitiveness (BECHI, 2019). In Brazil, the pressure exerted by business groups on the elaboration and materialization of educational policies, the attempts to adapt education to economic development projects and market interests and the presence of a “productivist conception of education” can be observed since the University Reform of 1968 (Law 5,540/1968), approved during the Costa e Silva government – the second of the military period (SAVIANI, 2008, p. 297).

Between 1945 and 1965, the federal network expanded greatly, resulting from the process of federalization of private and state institutions, providing an exponential growth in public education, which jumped from “21 thousand to 182 thousand enrollments, in 20 years” (MARTINS, 2009, p. 17). Subsequently, the reforms implemented from 1964 onwards provided advances in the country's higher education and scientific research, including: the expansion of the postgraduate system, with significant investments in modernization and infrastructure; the construction of laboratories; encouraging scientific and technological development, to train qualified human resources; the construction of new university campuses; the expansion of vacancies; improving salaries and teaching career training, among others. Although progress was made, the 1964 coup, organized by business people and the military, gave rise to a set of mechanisms to reverse the logic of growth in higher education to favor the private sector. The expansion of higher education did not prosper in terms of democratization of access, with an education model prevailing that privileges the entry of the wealthy class and/or endowed with cultural capital.

Centered on the argument of lack of financial resources, the 1968 university reform, which came into force a few days before Institutional Act 5 (AI 5), set out to increase demand at a lower cost, with the rationalization and optimization of resources being achieved by encouraging privatization and the development of the educational market. Educational policies, implemented during the military regime, enabled the development of institutions along the lines of educational companies, focused on profit and economic growth. According to Martins (2009, p. 15), “due to the implemented model, which privileged a selective structure, academically and socially, meeting the growing demand for access to higher education began to be carried out by private education, which was organized through educational companies.” Between 1968 and 1976, there was an increase from 129 to 222 public higher education institutions; much lower growth than the private sector, which jumped from 243 to 663 institutions (SAVIANI, 2008, p. 300).

However, the main transformations towards the capitalization of knowledge and academic work occurred, largely, after the Reform of the State Apparatus in 1995. The intense reforming activity, undertaken by the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC/1995 – 2002) in the field of public administration, provided changes in the functions and political and legal role of the State, in conjunction with the demands of the new world economic order. The *Plano Diretor para a Reforma do Aparelho do Estado* (BRASIL/MARE, 1995), by establishing the strategies necessary for the so-called modernization and increase in efficiency of public administration, placed universities and research centers among the non-exclusive and competitive services of the State. In the transition to the managerial model, public universities should be transferred to non-state public ownership, represented by private law foundations or non-profit social organizations. In these terms, the service continues to be of public interest, as it does not aim for profit, but is no longer part of the State apparatus, and can be provided by private companies or civil society organizations. In practice, the process of modernization of the State generated a growing distance from the State about investments and financing of higher education. The retraction of the State forced public HEIs to look for alternative sources of financing, opened space for the entry of capital into the academic field and stimulated the transformation of this sector into a marketable service good, characterized by the predominance of private/mercantile interests. The political and budgetary measures, developed in line with the guidelines summarized in the Washington Consensus, caused changes in higher education towards the New American University paradigm (BECHI, 2013, 2019; SILVA, JÚNIOR, 2017; VILLARDI; OLIVEIRA; 1999).

The exogenous privatization of Brazilian higher education obtained political and legal support with the approval of the *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação* (LDBEN/1996) - a document favorable to the neoliberal policies practiced by the government. Law 9,394/96 (Art.53 and Art.54) grants greater financial autonomy to IFES, authorizing them to seek additional sources of resources from other spheres of the public sector and the private sector. This new university model, as Sguissardi (2009, p. 126) highlights, “in addition to moving in the competitive space of the market or quasi-market to obtain alternative resources, requires the adoption, by these institutions, of a management with a strong corporate-business style”. The valorization of “financial autonomy”, to the detriment of the constitutional principle of “financial management autonomy”, conditions HEIs to the interests of private capital. Furthermore, LDBEN/1996 (Art. 19 and Art. 20) recognizes private for-profit institutions, authorizing them to expand as profitable companies. As a result of this proposition, in the years following its promulgation, decrees 2,207/97, 2,306/97 and 3,860/01 were published, respectively, which

established unprecedented distinctions regarding the legal nature and academic organization of higher education institutions (HEIs). During the FHC octennium, private institutions obtained financial support from the State, through the approval of the Higher Education Student Financing Fund (FIES), created based on Law 10,260/2001. The program, whose social objective is to finance undergraduate students enrolled in non-free HEIs, provided direct incentives (public debt securities) and indirect incentives (social security exemption) to the private sector (BECHI, 2013; BECHI, 2019; SGUISSARDI, 2009).

Regarding the development of political technologies for the expansion of private HEIs in Brazil, the government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003 – 2010), in addition to strengthening and expanding Fies, implemented the University for All Program (ProUni- *Programa Universidade para Todos*), regulated by law 11,096/2005. Higher education institutions, accredited to the program, make their physical structure available by granting full or partial scholarships (25% to 50%) to low-income students, who do not hold a higher education diploma, in exchange for immunity and tax exemption. This process of exogenous privatization of higher education is strengthened in view of the characterization of distance education (EaD) as an educational modality (Decree 5,622/2005). Furthermore, the distance education modality, currently regulated by decree 9057/2017, contributes to increasing the number of places in public HEIs in times of financial downturn in the State in the field of education. The Brazilian State found, through the EaD modality, a way to circumvent its irresponsibility with the educational sector in an attempt to achieve goal 12 of the National Education Plan (PNE/2014 – 2021), which determines an increase in the gross enrollment rate in higher education to 50% and the net rate to 33% of the population aged 18 and 24. In this context of exogenous privatization of higher education, one cannot fail to mention the Technological Innovation Law (Law 10,973), the New Science, Technology and Innovation Framework (Law 13,243/2016) and Ordinance 1,122 of 03/19/2020.

Regarding financing and strengthening the public sector, FHC's government vetoed, when sanctioning Law 10,172/2001, which established the first *Plano Nacional de Educação* (PNE 2001 – 2010) as a State policy in Brazil, the goal that established the “increase in the percentage of public expenditure in relation to GDP, applied to education, to reach the minimum of 7%” (Item 11.3, subitem 1). Although with some reservations, due to important advances in public higher education indicators in the governments of Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff (2011 – 2016), this target was not achieved by any Brazilian government until 2020. In 2014, the government of Dilma Rousseff approved, without vetoes and under strong social pressure, the PNE 2014 – 2024 (Law 13,005/2014), which determines the expansion of “public investment in public education to reach [...] the equivalent of 10% of GDP by the end of the decade” (Goal 20) and “expansion to at least 40% of new enrollments in the public segment” (Goal 12). However, popular, and political optimism regarding the strengthening of higher education was interrupted with the 2016 coup. Michel Temer's government (2016 - 2018) approved the Constitutional Amendment of the Public Spending Ceiling - PEC of the spending ceiling (Chamber - PEC241/ Federal Senate - PEC55), which freezes public investments in education for the next 20 years and initiated a strong retraction of the State in financing higher education. To complete the cycle of neglect with higher education, the government of Jair M. Bolsonaro (JMB/2019 – 2022) disregarded the social goals of education, launched intense attacks on public HEIs, reduced public investments and caused a significant cut in scholarships master's and doctorate courses offered by Capes, with the greatest impact on the humanities areas (BECHI, 2019; BECHI, 2013).

As in Brazil, the exogenous privatization of higher education in Argentina is strictly linked to the (privatist) policies of public financing of education and the presence of the private sector (foundations, companies, NGOs) in the construction and implementation of public policies. The political privatization mechanisms, approved over the last few decades, determined the linking of public resources to the maintenance and strengthening of private education. The consolidation of the State as a source of financing for the private sector occurred, above all, in 1948, with the approval of Law 13,343/48. After the 1955 coup, business and religious groups began to demonstrate in favor of financial subsidies to the private sector and against public education. In 1956, the government of Pedro Eugenio Aramburu Gilveti (1955 – 1958) implemented Decree 6,403/56, whose article 28 authorized private universities to issue titles and diplomas and receive funding from the State. This provision was suspended until 1958, when the government of Arturo Frondizi (1958 – 62) approved Law 14,557/58 (*Ley Domingorena*) and, later, regulatory Decree 1404/59, inaugurating the first regulatory framework for private HEIs in the country. Although it allowed the granting of academic degrees and diplomas by private HEIs, *Ley Domingorena* prohibited the allocation of state financial contributions to the private sector. Privatist policies, implemented during this period, favored the creation of confessional universities, managed by the Catholic Church, and universities linked to private and business interests, opposing the hegemonic, secular, and unitary model of public universities, which had dominated the Argentine educational system since the University Reform of 1918 (SAFORCADA et al., 2019; FELDFEBER et al., 2019).

The Federal Education Ley (LFE/n. 24.195), sanctioned by the government of Carlos Menem (1989 – 1999), in 1993, broke with the dichotomy between public and private by establishing that privately managed education should also be considered public. For the precursors of the neoliberal education reforms, approved in Argentina during the 1990s, the distinction between public and private education boils down solely to the problem of managing the institutions, being characterized as follows: public management education state and privately managed public education. The conceptualization that “all education is public”, defended by the private sector and businesspeople linked to the field of education, gave them the right to participate in educational financing, as provided for by the principle of distributive justice, present in Article 14 of the *Constitución de la Nación Argentina* of 1994. Linking privately managed education to the field of public education would guarantee greater linking of State resources to private education. To justify these adjustments, neoliberal movements in favor of the privatization of education leveraged efficiencyist rhetoric, typical of the business field, which exalts the supposed performativity, effectiveness, quality, and productivity of the private sector and characterizes state education as inefficient, bureaucratic, and not very rational in the use of public resources. In the period between 1990 and 1995, 20 private universities were opened, two of which were religious in nature (one Catholic and the other Protestant) and the others were business in nature or focused on the development of excellent research (SAFORCADA et al., 2019; FELDFEBER et al., 2019).

In 1995, Carlos Menem's government sanctioned the *Ley de Educación Superior* (LES/ n. 24,521) with the aim of reducing public spending and increasing performance, productivity and, simultaneously, the economic and financial autonomy of public universities. To this end, the LES encouraged the development of external evaluation and accountability mechanisms (Art.44) and the capture of additional financial resources through the collection of fees and the sale of services to the public and private sectors (Art.59). Although it increased the economic-financial autonomy of universities, the LES was restrictive to the private/mercantile sector by determining that private

university institutions should be constituted as non-profit institutions (Art. 62) (SAFORCADA et al., 2019; ARGENTINA, 1995).

During the governments of Néstor Kirchner (2003 – 2007) and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007 – 2015), significant advances were made in the creation of state universities, accompanied by an increase in private institutions. The revocation of the *Ley Federal de Educación* (LFE) and the approval of the *Ley de Educación Nacional* (LEN/n. 26.206), in 2006, maintained the conceptualization that includes the private sector in the field of public education and established education as a right social and state responsibility. Although they defended the right to education and increased public funding, Kirchnerist governments enabled, according to Saforcada (2019, p. 117), processes of privatization of educational policy and the deepening of market logic within the scope of higher education. In 2015, at the end of the government, Cristina Kirchner even sanctioned Law 27,204/2015, in which it prohibits state-run HEIs from executing agreements and agreements with the public or private sector for profit purposes, or that trigger forms of commodification (Art .3). Finally, with the victory of Mauricio Macri (2015 – 2019), a faithful representative of the business sector, a “conservative turn” began in Argentina. Macri's neoliberal government supported a broad process of dismantling public universities through budget cuts and the precariousness of teaching/researcher working conditions. Furthermore, government reforms caused a disastrous cut in research grants and a reduction of approximately 55% in the budget allocated to the area of science and technology (CLADE, 2019; FELDFEBER et al., 2019).

Regarding the financing of education in Argentina, Article 9 of the *Ley de Educación Nacional* (Law 26,206/2006), sanctioned in 2006, establishes that resources allocated exclusively to the field of education will not be less than 6% of the Domestic Product Gross (GDP). In 2006, investment in education corresponded to 4.3% of GDP, jumping to 5.5% in 2011 and reaching the target established by Law 26,206/2006, in 2015, when it registered 6.1% of GDP, the highest in Argentina's history. After this period, there was a drop, reaching 5.7% in 2017. This decrease in investment in education is even greater due to the concomitant drop in national GDP. For Claus and Sanchez (2019, p. 7), the drop in investments in education between 2016 and 2019 would be around 19% in real terms. This budget reduction brought great financial damage to higher education, oxygenating exogenous privatization mechanisms. In Brazil, total investment in education in relation to GDP corresponded to 4.9% in 2005, increased to 5.0% in 2011 and reached 6.3% in 2016, maintaining the same percentage in 2017. In higher education, the investment percentages were 0.8% (2006), 1.0% (2011) and 1.4% (2016), reaching 1.5% in 2017.

Regarding the number of higher education institutions by administrative category in Argentina, according to the 2018 – 2019 synthesis, a total of 67 state institutions (61 national and 6 provincial) were counted, of which 52 are universities and only 5 university institutes. In the private sector, there are 63 HEIs, subdivided into 50 universities and 13 university institutes. Among state HEIs, 35% are small (below 10,000 students), 51% are medium-sized (between 10,000 and 50,000 students) and 12.9% are large (above 50,000 students) (ARGENTINA, 2019). Meanwhile, in the private sector the percentages are 76%, 22% and 1.6%, respectively. This is reflected in the number of students by administrative category: 1,640,405 students are in state HEIs (78.2%) and 430,865 students in the private sector (20.8%). Brazil is at a more advanced stage of expansion of the private sector in higher education. In 2018, there were a total of 299 (21.8%) public HEIs (federal, state, and municipal) and 2,238 (88.2%) private HEIs. Regarding the number of universities, there were 107 (53.8%) public and 92 (46.2) private.

Among private HEIs, colleges predominate (86% - 1,929 HEIs). Among the 2,537 higher education HEIs in Brazil, 81.5% are colleges. During this period, 3.4 million students enrolled in undergraduate courses. Of this total, 81% in private HEIs, mainly in distance undergraduate courses. In the period between 2008 and 2018, the private network grew 59.3% compared to 7.9% for the public network (BRASIL, 2019).

THE RISE OF THE CAPITALIST KNOWLEDGE REGIME AND THE ADEQUACY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO THE INTERESTS OF THE MARKET

The rise of academic capitalism in countries like Brazil and Argentina, driven by neoliberal political-economic reforms, has caused profound transformations in academic culture and the role of universities (public and private, non-profit). Among the actions adopted by national governments, the following stand out: the implementation of educational policies with a privatist and economic nature; the redirection of public investments in favor of research linked to the industrial and business sector; the privatization and commercialization of knowledge; and the formation of entrepreneurial universities. The new logic for evaluating and financing higher education and scientific research, based on the principle of competition and economic growth, has been forcing universities to prioritize applied and entrepreneurial sciences, aimed at transferring technologies and strengthening the productive and business sector. National States began to link financial resources to research projects committed to the production of marketable knowledge, compatible with the growth of productivity and profit. Neoliberal educational policies, designed by the North American government and disseminated worldwide, determine the privatization of knowledge, value knowledge as a private good and postulate a science aligned with commercial possibilities (BRUNNER et al., 2019). Faced with the scenario of retraction of nation-states and new educational funding priorities, research universities do not resort to market interests just to compete for private money, but to obtain new sources of public funding (RHOADES; SLAUGHTER, 1997).

In the new phase of capitalist expansion and accumulation, knowledge begins to be seen as an economic factor, capable of boosting innovation and, concomitantly, the competitive spirit of companies on the global stage. The knowledge-based economy, called the “knowledge economy” in economic and political literature, has become one of the main pieces of neoliberal policy. According to Laval (2015, p. 8), the “knowledge economy” is, in fact, the official expression of the underlying political rationality, which legitimizes and drives the current transformations imposed on the knowledge production process. Neoliberal capitalist rationality enabled the widespread and systematic implementation of a market logic within the scientific and academic field. Scientific research carried out by universities is now guided and financed based on the principle of innovation, with the aim of maximizing production and, consequently, intensifying the competition of public and private companies in the national and, mainly, international market. The principle of innovation, recognized by capitalist rationality for reducing the gap between science and technology, strengthened the links between research universities and companies/industries, becoming, for the global hegemonic project, the key to economic and sustainable growth. This directing of knowledge to the core of economic issues results from pressure mostly exerted at a global level, especially since the 1990s, by economic organizations such as the World

Bank, the OECD and, later, by the European Commission (LAVAL, 2015; SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017; OCDE, 2018).

Public research starts to make sense when linked to the principle of technological innovation. Research universities are determined, through a conservative and mercantile political-ideological matrix, to produce directly profitable knowledge and in symbiosis with the business community - the so-called raw material knowledge. According to Silva Júnior (2017, p. 129), “knowledge is ready to be transformed into high-technology products, new production processes and services and is related to the possibility of immediate profits in the economic sphere”. The economic conception of knowledge and the growing pressures to make university budgets self-sustainable have led to the subordination of universities and scientific research to business demands. The capitalization of higher education and academic work requires that universities be transformed into businesses and adopt a business management model. The public knowledge regime, based on academic freedom and the encouragement of an “open science” and disinterested (non-commercial), is gradually supplanted by a model of “closed science” or market oriented. Entrepreneurial universities, initially established in the United States and Great Britain, in place of the old Humboldtian university of the early 19th century, allowed the rise and predominance of capital in the academic world (LAVAL, 2015; BRUNNER et al., 2019; SCHUGURENSKY; NAIDORF, 2004).

The political technologies of exogenous privatization of higher education and the deepening of the knowledge economy stimulate the construction of new personal identities and market behaviors in research universities around the world. In this sense, (neo)researchers become “self-entrepreneurs” (business subjects), committed to capturing financial resources and obtaining salary bonuses. At the same time, students are conceived as “inputs” and “products” of a select group of companies purchasing raw material knowledge, which are configured as (neo)clients, concerned with the exploitation of registered patents by universities (RHOADES; SLAUGHTER, 1997; DARDOT, LAVAL, 2010; LAVAL, 2015).

The New American University has become the world's standard university in the 21st century. The expansion of a capitalist knowledge regime, advocated by international hegemonic organizations, decisively influenced the reforms of higher education in Latin America. In Brazil, educational policies of a privatist and economic nature, materialized in conjunction with fiscal and economic adjustments, embodied in recent decades, led to a broad process of commercialization of academic knowledge and the adaptation of research universities, especially state HEIs, to market interests. It is important to highlight that it was in the context of the military regime, following Opinion 977 CES/CFE, of December 3, 1965 and the University Reform of 1968 (Law 5,540/1968), that strict postgraduate studies sensu “experienced a movement of structuring, standardization and institutionalization, as well as increased promotion, expansion and adoption of an evaluation system, whose guidelines and bases remain today” (ALVES; OLIVEIRA, 2014, p. 352). However, the educational policies implemented during this period already pointed towards a world-class university, taking as a guide the trajectory already consolidated by the American university model. The model of higher education and, consequently, postgraduate education, designed in conjunction with the United States, aimed to facilitate the industrial development and economic growth of the country. For Silva Júnior (2017, p. 197), in the first *Plano Nacional de Pós-Graduação* (I PNPG - 1975/1979) “the rationality and foundations of a postgraduate system aimed at the productive sector were already announced, despite not being its central objective”.

In the 1990s, the reform of the State apparatus, led by FHC's government, established changes in the logic of public financing of higher education by placing universities and research centers among the State's non-exclusive and competitive services. The downsizing of the state machinery and the reduction of public investments in the field of higher education forced public universities to move in the competitive space of the market to diversify their sources of financing. Higher education reforms, established in line with World Bank guidelines (1995), gave rise to a new conception of science and changed the nature of academic work. These changes were in line with FHC's government proposal (1994), for his first term, in which he “affirmed the need to establish a 'true partnership' between the private sector and government, between universities and industry, both in management and in financing the Brazilian system of scientific and technological development” (CUNHA, 1997, p. 33).

In 2001, the last year of FHC's government, the Central Bank and research funding agencies (Capes and CNPq) defined criteria for public financing of scientific research to prioritize the production of knowledge aimed at increasing industrial productivity and of the country's economic competitiveness. The process of capitalizing knowledge and academic work was supported by the approval of Law 10, 973/2004 (Technological Innovation Law), which provides for incentives for innovation and scientific and technological research in the productive environment. The following year, Lula da Silva's government sanctioned Law 11,196/2005 (Lei do Bem), which subsidizes, through tax incentives, the development of technological innovation projects by private companies. In 2007, Law 11,487 (Rouanet Research Law) changes the “Law of Good” by including tax exemption for companies that invest in research carried out in scientific and technological institutions (ICTs), providing a greater rapprochement between productive capital and public universities (SILVA JUNIOR, 2017). President Dilma Rousseff approved Law 13,243/2016, which amends nine federal laws, including the Technological Innovation Law to intensify “cooperation and interaction between public entities, between the public and private sectors and in companies” and stimulate the development of “environments favorable to innovation and technology transfer activities” (BRASIL, 2018).

The “New Legal Framework for Science, Technology and Innovation” also consists of Decree 9,283/2018, sanctioned by President Michel Temer, to comply with some provisions of Law 13,243/2016. Among the regulations, it is now worth highlighting the encouragement of the development of “cooperation projects involving companies, ICT and private non-profit entities” and the “facilities for the transfer of public ICT technology to the private sector [...] and the generation of innovation in the production environment” (BRASIL, 2018). The capitalist regime of knowledge, conceived by neoliberal reason to the detriment of academic freedom and “disinterested” research, spread vertiginously during the government of Jair M. Bolsonaro. On March 19, 2020, the JMB government implemented Ordinance no. 1,122, dated 03/19/2020, which defines research, development, and innovation projects as priorities, within the scope of the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovations and Communications (MCTIC), focused on the following areas of technologies (Art.2): strategic (I); enablers (II); production (III); for sustainable development (IV); and for quality of life (V). Therefore, basic research projects in the humanities and social sciences, which yearn for public funding, need to contribute to the development of these priority areas, defined in Art. 2 of the Ordinance (BRASIL, 2020).

The construction of a new paradigm of knowledge in Brazil, ongoing for more than two decades, was related to the objectives of the National Postgraduate Plans (PNPGs). The I PNPG (1975 – 1979) and the II PNPG (1982 – 1985), formulated during the period of the Military Dictatorship (1964

– 1985), drew attention, even if simply, to the need to institutionalize postgraduate studies articulated with the scientific and technological demands, with a view to enabling the productive, economic and social development of the country (SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017; BRASIL, 2010). The III PNPG (1986 – 1989) postulated the training of high-level human resources, the restructuring of the teaching career, the institutionalization and improvement of evaluation systems and the expansion of research activities linked to postgraduate studies. The “main emphasis of this plan was on the development of research by the university and the integration of postgraduate studies into the science and technology system [...] and the productive sector” (BRASIL, 2010a, p. 26 – 27). In this direction, the IV PNPG (2005 – 2010)² proposed changes in the evaluation and financing of postgraduate studies to expand interaction between universities and the business sector. To this end, postgraduate research should place greater emphasis on the production of knowledge aimed at technological innovation and, consequently, at the competitive conquest of new markets in the globalized world – the so-called raw material knowledge. The IV PNPG constituted the “legal umbrella for developments in the form of laws, bringing the production of applied research closer to economic production”, to “make the university-industry-government relationship organic” (SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017, p. 200). Finally, the V PNPG (2011 – 2020) consolidated and intensified the process of instrumentalizing scientific research in the interests of the market, exploring the need to format the research agenda in a way that favors innovation and intensifies the university-company link. In other words, “academic excellence is the sister of industrial competitiveness. [...] The specific place of the university in the knowledge economy gives it a specific role in the architecture of innovation” (BRASIL, 2010b, p. 192).

Thus, the cuts in public investments destined to the field of higher education and scientific research and the new legal system cause the destruction of the public nature of state research universities and stimulate the production of knowledge, raw material, appropriable by capitalist culture. The search for additional sources of financial resources and the strengthening of the knowledge economy have subordinated Brazilian universities to the specific and immediate interests of the market/business field. According to Silva Júnior (2017, p. 225), the neoliberal mechanisms of knowledge privatization allowed Capes and CNPq to “guide research and production of knowledge in the condition of raw material knowledge, prioritizing innovation for development of new technologies that add value to products, processes and services, and benefit economic interests”. The knowledge economy, driven by neoliberal reasoning, strengthens the construction of an entrepreneurial subjectivity in research universities by providing for the incorporation of additional incentives to professor/researcher salaries through the commercialization of knowledge, raw materials and fundraising from the business sector. The partnerships established between the State and private companies, supported by Law 11,079/2004 (Public-Private Partnership Law) and embodied by the new legal framework, opened space for the

² As can be seen, the IV PNPG was approved 16 years after the expiration of the validity period of the III PNPG (1986-1989). The 90s and the first five years of the 21st century, spanning the presidential mandates of Fernando Collor (1990-1992), Itamar Franco (1992-1995) and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-1998 and 1999-2003), did not have approval of a new PNPG. Postgraduate studies in Brazil went through a period of economic crisis and intense reforms aimed at downsizing and modernizing the State, embodied in the *Plano Diretor da Reforma do Estado* drawn up by the Ministry of Federal Administration and State Reform (MARE), in 1995. The strategies necessary for the so-called modernization and increased efficiency of public administration encouraged the adaptation of higher education and postgraduate studies to the interests of international financing organizations. During this period, the need for universities to finance their Postgraduate programs was defended, through the capture of extra-budgetary resources, and progress was made in the discussions and implementation of a new *stricto sensu* Postgraduate evaluation model and classification system of scientific production (Qualis), with an emphasis on the quantitative results of scientific production.

advancement of academic capitalism in public research institutions, along the lines of the New American University (SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017; BECHI, 2019).

Capitalist re-territorialization in the academic field, embodied by international financial organizations, provoked changes in the ethos of university research in Argentina. The knowledge economy, characterized by a continuous and intense process of “opening to the market” of public research structures, has supplanted the model of university inherited from the University Reform of Córdoba in 1918, based largely on the principle of freedom of chair. According to Schugurensky and Naidorf (2004, p. 997), “Argentine universities experienced a 'golden age' in the post-war period, with very high-quality research, comparable to international standards, a high academic level and a sustained democratic model of self-government that included teachers and students.” This virtuous period, in which public universities were configured as important research centers, was dramatically interrupted by the physical and ideological force, of an aggressive and manipulative nature, of the military dictatorship. The military invasion of the University of Buenos Aires, in July 1966, marked the beginning of a historic process of dismantling the public regime of knowledge. In addition to attacking and arresting students and teachers, the military regime reduced the allocation of public resources allocated to scientific research and cultural production, reprimanded academic debates, and began to control curricula and research agendas. This process of annihilation of university autonomy and academic freedom, which began during the military period, was fueled by neoliberal governments, starting in the 1980s, by encouraging the commodification of academic work and the formation of entrepreneurial public universities (SCHUGURENSKY; NAIDORF, 2004).

Despite the strong budgetary and academic restrictions imposed by military governments in the field of higher education, the model of “open science” and knowledge as a public good - “disinterested” and oblivious to external pressures - managed to survive until the establishment of electoral democracy, in 1983. In the period before the neoliberal reforms in higher education, academic circles in Argentina viewed the utilitarianism of research and the university-company link for marketing purposes with suspicion. In addition to the insecurity and suspicion surrounding technology transfer activities to the private sector, “there was little pressure from external actors, since the company (and the commercial sector, in general) did not lobby universities to demand an approach institutional and promote systemic links” (SCHUGURENSKY; NAIDORF, 2004, p.1005). Researchers who managed research projects to raise extra-budgetary resources, in times of financial restrictions, preferred to keep agreements/partnerships and sources of fundraising confidential. Research activities, carried out with financial assistance from the State and using the infrastructure of national universities, to obtain private profit, were characterized as semi-clandestine and unethical by the academic community. Under these circumstances, only contracts between universities and state-owned companies were acceptable (SCHUGURENSKY; NAIDORF, 2004).

Structural adjustment programs and the formation of a new public management model, designed by Toyotist/neoliberal rationality, led to cuts in the higher education budget and the privatization of public knowledge. The knowledge economy forced the configuration of a new paradigm of knowledge in public universities, with an emphasis on innovation and technological development, epistemologically linked to the interests of the business/industrial sector. In this direction, the government of Raúl Alfonsín (1983 – 1989) created the Technology Transfer Office (OTT/1983), inaugurating a cycle of transferring scientific and technological knowledge to the business sector and

“opening” scientific production to the market. Subsequently, several universities joined this Workshop/OTT, such as the University of Buenos Aires, which implemented the *Dirección de Convenios y Transferencias* (Resolución 1655/87). The centrality attributed to the university-company link aimed to include new sources of financing to the budget of research universities, encourage the development of research aimed at industry and revitalize the national company (SCHUGURENSKY; NAIDORF, 2004; NAIDORF, 2005; UNIVERSIDAD DE BUENOS AIRES, 1987).

Innovation and technology transfer policies, implemented by Carlos Menem's government (1989 – 1999), reduced the gap between science and technology and intensified the process of privatization of public knowledge. In 1990, the Argentine federal government approved Law 23,877, which encourages the promotion of innovation and the linking of scientific and technological research with productive and commercial activity (Art.1). The legislation encouraged official research institutions, including public universities, to create Technological Linking Units, with the aim of enabling a more agile and contractual relationship with the production and services sector (Art.5). It defined tax incentives for companies and the granting of financial compensation to researchers (ARGENTINA, 1990; NAIDORF, 2005).

The transfer of knowledge, in the form of technological innovation, obtained new legal and financial incentives following the establishment of the *Secretaría de Ciencia y Tecnología* (SECYT), in 1993, and the approval of Decree 1660/96, which created the *Agencia Nacional de Promoción Científica y Tecnológica* (ANPCyT), initially composed of the *Fondo Tecnológico Argentino* (FONTAR) and the *Fondo para la Investigación Científica and Tecnológica* (FONCyT). FONTAR was implemented with the aim of financing, through resources from the National Treasury, technological innovation projects aimed at increasing the productivity of private sector companies, as delegated by Law 23,877/90. Meanwhile, FONCyT was created with the mission of “sponsoring S&T research groups that work with non-profit, private or public organizations, whose purpose was to generate new knowledge” from “basic or applied research projects” (SCHUGURENSKY; NAIDORF, 2004).

In 2001, President Fernando de la Rúa (1999-2001) promulgated Law 25,467, which established the so-called Legal Framework for Science and Technology in Argentina. Among the objectives, the legislation intends to develop and strengthen the technological and competitive capacity of the production system of goods and services of small and medium-sized companies (Art.2). In the same direction, Kirchnerist governments created new policies to encourage the transfer of technology and innovation to the productive sector: the *Red de Vinculación Tecnológica de Universidades Nacionales Argentinas* (RedVITEC/2004); the *Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación* (MINCyT/2007); the *Fondo Argentino Sectorial* (FONARSEC/2009), which became part of ANPCyT; and, finally, the *Plano Argentina Innovadora 2020*, in 2011. The Plan drawn up by the government of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007 – 2015) aimed to enhance the capacity for innovation and technological development, both of research institutions and companies, through strengthening human resources, research infrastructure and computerization of the System. The creation of scientific capabilities and the transfer of technology would boost entrepreneurial culture and increase the productive capacity and competitiveness of national companies. Therefore, the production of knowledge aimed at technological innovation is now conceived as the main political strategy driving economic and social development. The process of capitalizing the academic world gained new contours under the government of Mauricio Macri (2015 – 2019) by reducing the budget allocated to the field of higher education and scientific research, while forcing public

universities to seek alternative sources of financing, especially, based on the commercialization of public knowledge.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Capitalist re-territorialization and the formation of a corporate governance model stimulated the development and materialization of a set of political technologies for the exogenous privatization of higher education. In the context of “good governance”, public policies are oriented and formulated for the market – global, business, competitive, financial, capital and labor. The subjection of educational policies to the dictates of the market generates pro-market behaviors, the production of commodity knowledge and the commodification of knowledge – the perfect scenario for the intensification of academic capitalism.

The capitalization of higher education comprises a set of guidelines and measures aimed at reducing the public budget and the principle of privatization/marketization: the expansion of the private/mercantile sector; the optimization of public resources and university infrastructure; the redirection of public investments to prioritize research focused on innovation and aimed at economic development; and the diversification of funding sources for public universities. The knowledge economy causes a blurring of the boundaries between the State and the market; the university and the company; scientific knowledge and business – the so-called hybridization between the public sector and the private sector.

Regarding institutional differentiation, the opening to the educational market has occurred more quickly in Brazil, when compared to the numbers recorded in Argentina. National States intensify the process of commodification and entrepreneurship of higher education while conceiving scientific knowledge as an object of profit and capitalist accumulation. There is no doubt that investment in scientific and technological innovation is essential for economic development and strengthening the country's sovereignty; denying its advantages would be an extremely reckless, authoritarian attitude and averse to the challenges of educational policies. However, science and knowledge cannot be relegated to a mere commodity and public education to a company, managed as such in a market scenario.

The work demonstrated that neoliberal conservatism gave rise to the State's retraction in terms of financing the state university and opening the public research structure to the market. The “Americanization” of higher education reforms in Latin America encourages the privatization and commercialization of knowledge and the reallocation of public resources with an emphasis on research that meets the general competitiveness of the economy (LAVAL, 2015; BRUNNER et al., 2019). Therefore, it is urgently necessary to rescue the public character of knowledge, academic freedom, and the full autonomy of universities, defended by the Córdoba University Reform of 1918 and, also, by articles 206 and 207 of the Brazilian Federal Constitution to revive and strengthen research in social and human areas - marginalized by productivist and competitive rationality - and the democratic character of universities and research centers.

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with this article.