



# The place and role of school sociology in Brazil and the contemporary context of the rise of the extreme right

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## Highlights:

- The Brazilian context has been marked by the advance of the extreme right;
- The extreme right reappears in view of a crisis scenario and is anchored in structural aspects of Brazilian society;
- Education has suffered successive interference from the extreme right, especially school Sociology;
- The teachers have been restricted in their freedom of teaching.

**Purpose:** This article presents the place and the role of Sociology teaching in the current Brazilian context, marked by the rise of extreme right ideologies and practices, more specifically by its ultraliberal economic bias and moral conservatism.

**Design/methodology/approach:** Organized in three parts, it outlines, respectively, the macro political and curricular scenario, and some of its unfolding in school practices. The main effort is to reflect on the ways in which school Sociology has been - ambiguously - understood and instrumentalized in the Brazilian context. The reflections are based, besides the literature review, on the analysis of the conjuncture and political-institutional directions, on curriculum documents and on reports of teaching experiences collected during the year 2022.

**Findings:** We verified that the extreme right advance in the public space is due to the articulation of two factors: 1) scenario of political and economic crisis; 2) structural aspects that guarantee, in the moral field, the predominance of conservatism and, in the economic field, the prevalence of ultraliberalism. With regard to education, the extreme right has had an impact in the definition of legislation that regulates the education system and on boosting surveillance and persecution in relation to teachers who distance themselves from their political ideology.

**Research limitations/implications:** We believe that, despite having brought some data that allow us to glimpse a certain ambiguity with regard to the teaching of sociology, which can occur either in the sense of criticizing the status quo, or in the sense of reaffirming it, we believe that a more systematic research on this is still needed.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout its process of institutionalization in Brazilian basic education, Sociology school<sup>1</sup> has been opposed by several reactionary groups, even when it was characterized by positivist, organicist and evolutionary orientations<sup>2</sup>, which are currently understood as conservative perspectives (Escorsim Neto, 2013; Souza, 2015). Considering the national legislation, its presence in the regular secondary school curriculum, as a mandatory curricular component, can be systematized in three moments: from 1882 to 1900; from 1925 to 1942; and between 2008 and 2017<sup>3</sup> (Bodart; Cigales, 2021). Its presence in normal schools, aimed at the training of literacy teachers, was regular while this modality<sup>4</sup> existed, having been present in a specialized form with the nomenclature “Educational Sociology” (*Sociologia Educacional*).

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, school Sociology suffered extensive attacks from Catholic religious, some having promoted what they called “Christian Sociology”, whose purpose was to replace the “Scientific Sociology” offered in schools (Cigales, 2020). The exclusion of Sociology from regular secondary education, in the year 1942, occurred, in part, for ideological reasons contrary to the scientific knowledge of the social, as Pinto (1947) pointed out. The years of 1960 and 1970 were marked by persecutions of intellectuals and undergraduate courses, including Social Sciences courses and Sociology teachers by the civil-military regime (Hebling, 2013). In the same period, the stereotype of the Sociology teacher was created and disseminated as necessarily marxist or anarchist, a vision widely taken up and reinforced in recent years. In basic education, when it comes to Human Sciences, the provision of reactionary orientation disciplines, such as the discipline called “Social and Political Organization of Brazil” (*Organização Social e Política do Brasil - OSPB*), prevailed between the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1980s, which aimed to promote nationalist ideas in the school environment. It was only after the beginning of the Brazilian redemocratization process that Sociology gradually returned to state curricula<sup>5</sup> (Bodart, Azevedo, Tavares, 2020), until 2008, through Law No. 11.684, when it became mandatory in all Brazilian secondary education<sup>6</sup>.

After 2008, a series of advances regarding the teaching of Sociology were achieved. In 2012 Sociology was included in the National Textbook Program (*Programa Nacional do Livro Didático*, PNLD) for the free distribution of books to students<sup>7</sup>. In the same year, the Brazilian Association for the Teaching of Social Sciences (*Associação Brasileira do Ensino de Ciências Sociais*, Abecs)<sup>8</sup> was created, aiming to strengthen the teaching of social

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sciences, including school Sociology, and to foster research on the subject. Several public examinations, aimed at hiring Sociology teachers for basic education, were held throughout the country - although this did not generate the number of hires necessary to overcome the still predominant presence of teachers not qualified to teach this discipline<sup>9</sup>. It is worth highlighting the development of a subfield of research, marked by the existence of scientific events and specialized journals, expansion of dissertations and theses defended in postgraduate *stricto sensu* programs (Handfas & Maçaira, 2012; Bodart & Cigales, 2017), dossiers published in academic journals (Bodart, Souza, 2017; Brunetta, Cigales, 2018), articles published in journals qualified in the higher strata of the *Qualis-Periodico* system (Bodart, Tavares, 2020), book collections (Eras, 2014) and research groups registered with the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (*Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico*, CNPq) (Neuhold, 2015), a Brazilian public agency for the promotion and evaluation of master's and doctoral programs. Sociology is also included in two programs that promote teacher training, namely the Institutional Program of Teaching Initiation Scholarship (*Programa Institucional de Bolsa de Iniciação à Docência*, PIBID) and the Pedagogical Residency Program (*Programa de Residência Pedagógica*, PRP), as well as the expansion of the number of undergraduate courses in Social Sciences (Bodart, Tavares, 2020b).

However, in 2016, guided by the conservative and ultraliberal wave, secondary education was "reformed" through Provisional Measure 746/2016, which was then converted into Law No. 13.415/2017 (BRAZIL, 2017). Such legal provision withdrew the mandatory provision of a set of subjects, among them, Sociology<sup>10</sup>. From then on, the obligation is limited to the offer of "studies and practices" of Sociology, which makes its offer, as a curricular component, optional. This fact is aggravated considering the ultraliberal basis of the main curricular guideline in force, the Common National Curricular Base (*Base Nacional Comum Curricular*, BNCC).

In addition to the setbacks brought by Law No. 13,415/2017, Sociology teaching has received several attacks from the rising extreme right in the country. Teachers are repeatedly accused of indoctrination and of putting into practice what the Brazilian extreme right calls "cultural Marxism"<sup>11</sup>. We will present examples on this subject later.

In this article we seek to discuss the place and role of school Sociology in the current Brazilian context and how it has been - ambiguously - understood and instrumentalized. The reflections are supported, in addition to the literature review, by the analysis of the conjuncture and political-institutional directions, by curriculum documents and by reports of teaching experiences collected in the year 2022, whose experiences are exemplary to demonstrate the difficulties experienced by Sociology teachers due to the rise of extreme right ideologies and their unfolding in school spaces. These reports were collected between March 5<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022. We made an invitation - published for two days on our Instagram account<sup>12</sup> - to Sociology teachers who had experienced persecution or embarrassment caused by the rise of the extreme right, in order to report the events to us - teachers from other disciplines also sent reports. In this invitation, we asked them to

contact us through WhatsApp. After the first contact, we sent to the teachers, in the form of text, a script containing indications about the structure and minimum information for the development of their reports. These reports were received through an audio file. We collected 10 spontaneous reports in total, of which only some will be mobilized here because they are exemplary of our current repressive political context<sup>13</sup>. To ensure their anonymity, we created fictitious names for these teachers.

The article is organized in three parts, besides this introduction and the conclusion. The first part presents aspects for the understanding of the current Brazilian political scenario, marked by the rise of the right and the extreme right. The second part emphasizes the place and role of Sociology teaching in Brazilian basic education. In the third part, anchored in teaching experiences, we seek to develop a reflection on the impacts of the rise of extreme right ideologies in the Brazilian public space on the teaching practice, especially those teachers who work in Sociology teaching, in order to show how this discipline has been – ambiguously – understood and instrumentalized in this context.

## **2 THE RISE OF EXTREME RIGHT IDEOLOGIES AND PRACTICES IN BRAZIL**

Brazil has been experiencing, especially since the middle of the last decade, the rapid advance of the extreme right, which can be qualified as ultraliberal in economic terms and conservative on the moral plane. We classify it as ultraliberal, among other aspects, for its intransigent defense of the free market, of the destatization of the economy through privatizations, for the dismantling of the welfare state, for its emphasis on state intervention only in the sense of guaranteeing private property, facilitating the free market and maintaining public order (Fonseca, 2005). In what concerns the conservative face of the extreme right, it can be verified, for example, in its vision of the world anchored in religious dogmas, in the distrust it maintains in relation to rational-scientific thought, in the way it naturalizes social inequalities and in the aversion it demonstrates in relation to any type of innovation that goes against the established structures (Duarte, 2021).

In the national scenario, we can consider the "June Days of 2013" (*Jornadas de Junho de 2013*) as a starting point for the "awakening" of the extreme right, which since the end of the Military Dictatorship (1964-1985), had remained to the leftovers in the public sphere. That "cycle of protests", which had as its first motivation the non-increase of public transportation fares in São Paulo, ending up gathering a series of discontent in relation to institutional politics - indicative of a crisis of representativeness -, soon became an opportune moment for the right to return to the streets (Gondin, 2016). In fact, an example in this sense were the protests called for 26 June 2013, by groups that called themselves "neither right nor left", but whose political agendas had a clear right-wing orientation, some even advocating the return of the Armed Forces to command the country. On this occasion, the first signs of a political articulation began to emerge, anchored on the anti-corruption discourse, calling for the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, of the left-wing political party "Workers Party" (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, PT)<sup>14</sup>.

From that moment on, several right-wing and extreme right groups and movements were established in the country: “*Movimento Brasil Livre (MBL)*”, “*Vem Pra Rua*” and “*Revoltados Online*” can be considered the most prominent movements, especially for their direct involvement, as promoters, in the protests that took place in 2015, whose main agenda was the deposition of President Dilma Rousseff, who had been re-elected in a close vote during the 2014 elections. Such movements have in common a strong “anti-Petista” sentiment - which ultimately reveals itself as anti-left -, a marked moral conservatism - especially with regard to the defense of religious and nationalist principles - and an ultraliberal economic orientation - preaching the minimum state and meritocracy (Messenberg, 2017).

The extreme right has not only re-occupied the streets, but has also increased its representation in the national Congress. With the 2014 elections, conservative parliamentarians - military, ruralist and religious, among other segments identified with conservatism - became the majority in the Federal Chamber, while the number of parliamentarians linked to social causes decreased<sup>15</sup>.

If until the end of the first mandate of President Dilma Rousseff there were still no political conditions for the clamor of right-wing and extreme right movements for her impeachment to be heeded, with this conservative reconfiguration of Congress, in the second term of that president, there was a propitious moment for the extreme right uprising against her to succeed in overthrowing the presidency through a parliamentary coup disguised as impeachment, full of procedural irregularities (Silva, Benevides and Passos, 2017). One of the clear indications of the conservative nature of this parliamentary coup can be seen in the content of the speech of a significant number of deputies who voted in favor of opening the impeachment process against President Dilma Rousseff: according to Almeida (2017), among the justifications of the 367 parliamentarians in favour of the impeachment, the reference to “God” appeared 43 times, to the “family” was verified 117 times and to the “nation” accounted for 28 times, while the expression “*pedaladas fiscais*” (fiscal counterfeittings), which presented itself as the formal accusation that grounded the opening of the impeachment process, appeared only eight times. For the author mentioned above:

In general lines, most of the federal deputies who evoked God are politically committed to agendas that point to a more regulatory public morality, to a less statist and more pro-market economy, and to a more repressive and punitive security policy. The description of the impeachment vote scene in the House of Representatives is a view of the current situation with emphasis on the lines of force that configure what has been named in the public debate as “conservative wave”. (Almeida, 2017, p. 78).

Actually, this conservative wave continued in the 2018 election, ensuring the expansion of the right-wing and extreme right benches in the House of Representatives: by way of illustration, it is worth noting that, of the 27 most voted deputies in the country that year,

two-thirds of them (18) came from parties aligned to the right, most of them being police officers, evangelicals, relatives of politicians or leaders of anti-politics and liberal movements<sup>16</sup>.

A quick look at some of the normative proposals brought by extreme right parliamentarians, elected in 2014 and 2018 to the Federal House and Senate, is enough to perceive the turn to the extreme right that had our congress after these two consecutive elections. In the field of public security, we had, in 2019, the PEC 32, which proposes reducing the age of criminal majority to 16 years in the event of committing crimes provided by legislation. In the case of crimes classified as heinous, illicit trafficking of narcotics and related drugs, terrorism, criminal organization and criminal association, the reduction would be to 14 years of age. Such proposal has as its first signatory Senator Flávio Bolsonaro (Social Liberal Party [*Partido Social Liberal*, PSL]), followed by 32 other deputies (Brazil, 2019a).

When it comes to public health, we find, for example, the PL 4931/2016, which, based on a supposed individual right to "modification of sexual orientation", seeks to legitimize treatments and therapies, developed by mental health professionals, aimed at sexual reorientation, specifically indicating the change from homosexual to heterosexual condition (Brazil, 2016). With this, it goes against what advocates the Federal Council of Psychology (*Conselho Federal de Psicologia*, CFP), which, by not considering homosexuality a disease, disorder or perversion, establishes, through the CFP Resolution 001/99, that "psychologists will not collaborate with events and services that propose treatment and cure of homosexualities" (CFP, 1999, s/p). PL 4931/2016 was authored by the deputy Ezequiel Cortaz Teixeira from "National Workers Party" (*Partido Trabalhista Nacional*, PTN), who, it should be noted, is an evangelical pastor.

In the economic field, following the line of predatory capitalism, we find the Proposal of Law (PL) 3509/2015, authored by Deputy Luiz Cláudio from "Republican Party" (*Partido Republicano*, PR), which opens the possibility of exploration and exploitation of mineral resources in indigenous territory (Brazil, 2015).

In relation to education, at least two projects stand out. The first, PL 8099/2014, proposed by deputy Marco Feliciano from "Christian Social Party" (*Partido Social Cristão*, PSC), contrary to a school curriculum based on scientific knowledge, defends the teaching of the creationist religious perspective (Brazil, 2014). The second, PL 246/2019, whose first signatory is deputy Bia Kicis (PSL), followed by 19 other deputies, seeks to institute the "School without Party Program" (*Programa Escola Sem Partido*)<sup>17</sup>, which, among other provisions, denies the possibility of certain topics being discussed in schools, especially those that challenge the patriarchal and heteronormative domination in our society, interfering directly on the definition of the school curriculum, and establishes a series of limits to the teaching practice, hurting the teachers' freedom of professorship<sup>18</sup> (Brazil, 2019b).

Not only the Congress, but also the highest post of executive power, the Presidency of the Republic, was occupied in 2018 by a representative of the extreme right: Jair Messias

Bolsonaro. Anchoring his discourse in moral, divine and nationalist precepts, which can be verified in his own campaign slogan - "Brazil above all. God above all" -, Bolsonaro was elected in the second round of the presidential election with 55.13% of the valid votes<sup>19</sup>.

From his very first year in office onwards, his conservatism in the implementation of various policies was confirmed. Regarding public security, one of the main proposals of his platform of government, the expansion of the right to bear arms, was forwarded through PL 6438/2019 and PL 3723/2019. Among other provisions, these projects extend the right to bear arms to certain professional categories, mostly linked to security, inspection bodies and justice (Brazil, 2019c), and also to hunters, shooters and collectors (Brazil, 2019d). Still in the field of public safety, through PL 6125/2019, Bolsonaro seeks to forward rules regarding the excluder of unlawfulness. Briefly, the referred project aims to eliminate the culpability of illegal conducts practiced by police officers in certain situations, when practiced in Law-and-Order Guarantee operations (Brazil, 2019e).

In the field of education, in addition to Bolsonaro's support for the "School without Party Program" (*Programa Escola Sem Partido*), mentioned above, we can highlight PL 2401/2019, which aims to authorize home teaching in the field of basic education (Brazil, 2019f). The ultraliberal face of its educational policy can be seen, for example, through the "Future-se" Programme (*Programa Future-se*). In general, this program, with the justification of giving greater financial autonomy to universities and federal institutes, advocates entrepreneurship and scientific-technological innovation with a view to attracting private resources, which would occur through management contracts of the "Federal Union" (*União Federal*) and the Federal Institutions of Higher Education with Social Organizations. In this sense, it assumes a privatist perspective, which ends up being the keynote of this government, especially as regards its economic policy.

Looking at this scenario, the question that remains is: how was it possible, after almost 15 years of progressive government<sup>20</sup>, for Brazil to experience such a rapid advance of the extreme right, especially with regard to its conservative agendas. An answer to this question can be glimpsed in the thesis supported by Duarte (2021, p. 16), for whom "the advance of conservative manifestations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century occurs in an unstable economic, political and social context, due to transformations and crises, and has its proportion determined by its level of conformity with the latent political culture (beliefs and values) of individuals"

In fact, scrutinizing the Brazilian political-economic context of mid-2010, it can be seen that it was precisely during this period that Brazil began to feel, in a more significant way, the effects of the global economic crisis that began in 2008. At that time, a political crisis was also taking hold, mainly because of allegations of corruption involving politicians from various parties, especially those linked to the base of the federal government, and the country's largest contractors, the result of a series of investigations launched by the Federal Police and which became known as "Car Wash Operation" (*Operação Lava Jato*) This ended up collaborating to the ongoing crisis of political representativeness (Solano, 2016). Such scenario of insecurity, instability and uncertainty constituted a favorable

moment for the emergence of conservative movements seeking to reestablish order according to traditional patterns.

Despite this conjuncture marked by several crises, the outbreak of conservatism only became effective due to aspects concerning the Brazilian social formation responsible for certain structural elements that defined and, to some extent, still define its political culture: it was a colony of exploitation that, even after achieving political independence, remained economically dependent; it was structured socioeconomically on the basis of patriarchy, sustaining, in this context, for almost four centuries a slave regime; politically, it is still a very recent and fragile democracy, having gone through a democratic rupture that gave rise to an authoritarian regime. The result of this structural formation, as Pastorini and Faria (2020) well summarize, is the constitution of ways of thinking that exalt hierarchy, the maintenance of privileges, the preservation of order and of the status quo, turning against conquered social rights and democratic advances.

In short, this conservative thought, until then latent, manifests itself as a reaction to the crisis scenario in which Brazil was immersed, spreading through all dimensions of social life, impacting politics, economy and culture.

### **3 THE TEACHING OF SOCIOLOGY IN BRAZIL, THE CURRICULAR SCENARIO AND ITS FORMATIVE ROLE**

The movement for the return of sociology in regular secondary education<sup>21</sup> began in the second half of the 1980s - together with the re-democratization of the country - and was marked by the notion of "citizenship". The discourse of social agents who defended its reintroduction was based on the argument that school sociology would contribute to a critical and citizen formation. In this sense, it would be a counter position to the disciplines considered by most social scientists as reactionary, nationalist and non-secular, such as "Moral and Civic Education" (*Educação Moral e Cívica*) and "Social and Political Organization of Brazil" (*Organização Social e Política do Brasil - OSPB*)<sup>22</sup>, predominant during the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship, lasting in the Brazilian school curriculum from 1969 to 1993.

The Law of Directives and Bases of Education (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional - LDB*), approved in 1996, brought in Article 36, Paragraph 1, Item III, the following determination: "[...] at the end of high school, the student must present knowledge of Philosophy and Sociology necessary for the *exercise of citizenship*" (our emphasis). Although citizen education, alongside preparation for the world of work, was placed by this law as a fundamental objective of education, the indication that the discipline of Sociology would contribute to train critical citizens – in a country historically marked by a process of "conservative modernization", in which various forms of social inequality prevail – disturbing the privileged portion of society, especially because it could become locus of issues understood as taboos, such as gender, sexuality, racism, prejudice, religious diversity, bullying, et cetera. The fear of the privileged was that the reflection



around these themes could lead individuals, especially those from the dominated groups, to develop a critical reading in relation to the social and symbolic structures that sustain their privileges, mainly from Marxist and decolonial perspectives.

However, the subject of Sociology ended up not composing, in a compulsory way, the curriculum of basic education due to interpretations, around what was recommended by the LDB, materialized by later curriculum documents<sup>23</sup>, that Sociology did not need to be in the curriculum as a specific curricular component, but only in the form of knowledge that could be presented to students in a transdisciplinary way amid the content of other subjects.

In 1997, in response to the way the LDB was being interpreted by Brazilian states (as non-mandatory), a federal project was presented by Congressman Padre Roque (PT) aiming to make the subject Sociology and Philosophy mandatory in Brazilian secondary education. This project took four years to pass through the House of Representatives (1997-2000) and the Senate (2000-2001), but was vetoed by the then President, Fernando Henrique Cardoso – ironically a sociologist –, who claimed that there were not enough professionals in the country to take on the classes and that it would increase payroll costs beyond the financial capacity of the states.

In parallel to the struggle for reintroduction of Sociology via national regulation, there were mobilizations in the legislative chambers of the Brazilian states that resulted in state laws, which enabled Sociology to be gradually reintroduced into state curricula (Bodart, Azevedo, Tavares, 2020), this under the same discourse that pointed to its importance in citizen training.

Although in 2006 Sociology was already indicated in curriculum documents of many Brazilian states, its provision in education systems was incipient and discontinuous. In that year, the guiding curriculum documents for Brazilian High School - National Curriculum Guidelines for High School (*Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para o Ensino Médio* - DCNEM) and National Curriculum Parameters for High School (*Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais para o Ensino Médio* - PCNEM) had become a point of reflection and problematization, which resulted in the preparation and approval of a new document called Curriculum Guidelines for High School (*Orientações Curriculares para o Ensino Médio*, OCEM). In this document, in opposition to the misinterpretation of the LDB in relation to the status of Sociology in the school curriculum, there is a clear and direct defense of the presence of this discipline as a compulsory curriculum component. Furthermore, the OCEM highlighted as central roles of Sociology strangeness and denaturalization of social reality and reaffirmed its formative function to the exercise of citizenship. According to the OCEM:

The reasons why Sociology should be present in the High School curriculum are several. The most immediate, and that already spoken about, but does not seem sufficient, is about the role that the discipline would play in the formation of the student and in their *preparation for the exercise of citizenship* (Brazil, 2006a, p. 109, our emphasis).

Also in 2006, the National Council of Education (*Conselho Nacional de Educação*, CNE) published the Resolution nº 04/06 (Brazil, 2006b), which established the offer of Sociology and Philosophy as compulsory subjects in regular secondary education. In the case of schools with a curriculum not structured by subject, they should "ensure an interdisciplinary and contextualized treatment, aiming at the mastery of knowledge of Philosophy and Sociology *necessary for the exercise of citizenship*" (Brazil, 2006b, article 1, our emphasis).

In parallel to the discussions that resulted in the OCEM (2006), in 2003, the Project of Law 1641/2003 was presented in the federal sphere by Representative Ribamar Alves from "Brazilian Social Party" (*Partido Socialista Brasileiro* - PSB), which was discussed until 2008, when it was approved and converted into the Law 11.684/2008, making Sociology and Philosophy "compulsory subjects in all grades of secondary education" (Brazil, 2008). It is worth noting that the approval of this law occurred during the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT), having been the result of lobbying by sociologists' and teachers' unions that fought for this obligation. The discourse that prevailed among congressmen in favour of the project revolved around the citizen training of youth (Azevedo, Nascimento, 2015).

It is noted that in the two occasions (1997 and 2003) of nominations of projects that aimed to make the teaching of Sociology compulsory, the proposals were presented by deputies linked to parties of the Brazilian left (PT and PSB, respectively). In the case of the 1997 project, vetoed in 2001, we note a strong movement of the Brazilian right and center right against the compulsory teaching of Sociology and Philosophy, more specifically the "Brazilian Social Democracy Party" (*Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira* - PSDB), the "Brazilian Democratic Movement Party" (*Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro* - PMDB) and the "Liberal Front Party" (*Partido da Frente Liberal* - PFL) (Carvalho, 2015).

From 2009, Sociology began to be offered regularly and widely in Brazilian High Schools; usually with one weekly class (of 50 or 60 minutes) in each of the three grades<sup>24</sup>. In 2012, Sociology was integrated into the National Textbook Program (*Programa Nacional do Livro Didático*, PNLD), enabling students and teachers access to Sociology textbooks, which, due to their structure<sup>25</sup>, are independent to some extent of the teacher's orientation for their understanding – different from what occurs, for example, in relation to French books, which have their use by students conditioned on the teacher's conduct (Maçaira, 2017).

The period following Law 11.684/2008 until the year 2017 was marked by important advances in the Brazilian progressive field, which enabled the development of a critical Sociology teaching, bringing to the classroom topics previously considered taboo, such as gender, sexuality, xenophobia, homophobia, racism, religions of non-Christian matrix, patriarchy, et cetera. It is certain that a reactionary and authoritarian teaching also materialized in the classrooms, since education can serve the most diverse political projects, as highlighted by Mannheim (1950).

The idea that school Sociology has an important political role in a country with so many social, cultural and ethical problems marked the discipline. Sousa, Dias and Costas (2021, p. 131), for example, interviewing 50 students from 5 schools in Piauí (Brazilian state), found that “the idea of citizenship or citizen formation was present in the students' statements” when referring to Sociology teaching. Neves (2015, p. 119) highlighted the presence in articles, theses and dissertations focused on the teaching of Sociology “the conception of the critical student, the critical citizen, formed from the apprehension of concepts and social theories, from the perception of social reality arising from the contents of the subject”.

In the recent trajectory of Sociology, the notions of citizenship and critical science were strongly present in school curricula (Ferreira, 2012), in textbooks (Oliveira & Engeroff, 2016) and in the literature produced in this period about Sociology teaching. Regarding the official documents, it was noted:

[...] a semantic displacement of citizenship in the teaching of Sociology, which goes from a more accentuated emphasis, in which sociology is understood as a science that par excellence prepares young people to exercise citizenship, towards an indication of citizenship as a concept that should be analyzed from sociological knowledge (Engeroff, Oliveira, 2020, p. 37).

The change from a theoretically more homogeneous perspective to a more diversified one becomes evident if we compare the researches of Silva (2016) and Santos (2020). Silva (2016), when analyzing the first two Sociology textbooks distributed for free by the government through the PNLD in 2012, found that the notion of citizenship was limited to the liberal perspective, with no readings that indicate its role in overcoming capitalism. On the other hand, Santos (2020) when analyzing the five Sociology textbooks distributed by the PNLD of 2018, found varied positions of the works regarding the overcoming of capitalism. In Santos' words,

[...] while two of the works articulate the analysis of social inequalities with the possibility of revolutionary overcoming of capitalism towards socialism (Sociology for High School [*Sociologia para o Ensino Médio*] and Sociology for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Youth [*Sociologia para jovens do século XXI*]), the other books align the denunciation of capitalism with the possibility of improvement from within the current social order, whether through experiences of popular solidarity economy (Sociology [*Sociologia*] and Sociology in Motion [*Sociologia em Movimento*]) or through public policies (Sociology in Motion [*Sociologia em Movimento*], Sociology Today [*Sociologia Hoje*] and Modern Times, Times of Sociology [*Tempos Modernos, Tempos de Sociologia*]) (Santos, 2020, p. 2011-2012).

The questioning of the very notion of citizenship and its important role in problematizing capitalism, highlighting the latter's limits and ideological bias, started to compose many of the Sociology teaching practices. Much has been said and taught in

Sociology classes about historically silenced, stereotyped and oppressed social groups, including in the light of Marxism, socialism and anarchism. Criticism of the civil-military dictatorship, for example, is present in the didactic works and, consequently, in the classrooms.

Bodart (2021) discussing the impacts of the notions of estrangement and denaturalization, present in the OCEM (2006), on the teachers' perceptions about the specificities of Sociology teaching, he highlights that, due to the nature of the knowledge and competences they access during the Social Sciences courses, the teachers trained in this area, even if not fully consciously, teach the referred subject seeking to achieve, with the students, something beyond the development of the capacity to estrangement and denaturalize the social reality. Their goal, for the referred author, would be to develop in the students a figurative perception of reality<sup>26</sup>. It is this competence that has made possible a critical thinking that ends up bothering conservative and reactionary sectors of Brazilian society, especially for discussing the power relations present in apparently harmonious phenomena, which has led the extreme right to accuse the teaching of Sociology as doctrinaire.

In this context, the stereotype of Sociology teachers (Marxists and indoctrinators) created during the civil-military dictatorship has been widely taken up by reactionary groups, who organize themselves into movements, such as the "School Without Party Program" (*Programa Escola Sem Partido*), and encourage the control and surveillance of teaching practice. In the context of the attacks launched by the extreme right against teachers, we can highlight the increasing presentation of projects aimed at censoring the teaching practice. By way of illustration, let us see the following figures: in the federal sphere, by 2015, 5 projects were presented with this objective; between 2016 and 2019, there were 12 projects. In the municipal and state spheres, 44 projects had been proposed by 2015; from 2016 to 2019, 186 projects were presented (Moura & Silva, 2020). These figures show the recent escalation of the persecution of teachers, seeking to restrict their freedom of teaching.

As we explained above, the coup of 2016 marked the break with the progressive management of the Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores* - PT) that had been in power since 2003, having opened space<sup>26</sup> for explicit manifestations of ideas of the Brazilian extreme right. Such a blow also affected education and the teaching of Sociology. A relatively broad debate on the ongoing high school reform was aborted and in its place was approved, in 2017, a reform guided by conservatism<sup>27</sup> and ultraliberal ideals<sup>28</sup>. Such reform took place, initially on 22 September 2016 through Provisional Measure No. 746/2016 (reflecting its authoritarian character) and, subsequently, confirmed on 16 February 2017 through Law 13.415/2017. With this reform in secondary education, the compulsory teaching of Sociology, in the form of a specific subject, was removed from the LDB (1996). More precisely, only three subjects remained compulsory, namely: Portuguese, Mathematics and English Language, leaving it up to the states and school institutions to define the offer of other subjects, and these should be grouped by area of

knowledge and under the perspective of interdisciplinarity, which in practice leads to an emptying of school contents and a process of de-disciplinization of the curriculum (Bodart & Feijó, 2020b). On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a new national curriculum guideline was approved and published, called the “Common National Curriculum Base” (*Base Nacional Comum Curricular* - BNCC), that barely mentions Sociology, creating a scenario of insecurity about its maintenance in state curricula (Bodart & Feijó, 2020b).

The BNCC is based on skills and abilities to be promoted among students. Despite the recent uncertainties regarding the provision of Sociology in high school, Bodart and Feijó (2020a; 2020b) highlight its contribution in promoting the skills indicated in this document, which will depend on how it will be taught in schools. One of the major challenges is to advance in the qualification of Sociology teaching, which involves the clarity of its objectives and specificities. This is a difficult task if we consider the conditions of the teaching work, the gaps in training and the scarcity of teaching resources for this subject. Significant advances were achieved in the last decade, which are under threat, more specifically, under the attack of a conservative and ultraliberal agenda. In the next section we will explore more closely the impacts of this agenda on sociology teachers.

#### **4 TEACHING PRACTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RISE OF EXTREME RIGHT IDEOLOGIES**

We begin this section with a posting dated 20 September 2019 on a website specializing in jobs:

We are looking for a professor of Sociology and Philosophy who is not guided by communist or socialist ideology, we are looking for a teacher who can teach this subject without doing ideological indoctrination to the Left or to the Right, we need a professional who is able to demonstrate both the thought of Marx and the biography of Marx.

We want a teacher, young or experienced, may be an academic in Social Sciences or Sociology, but it is essential that he or she has a profound knowledge of British thinkers, and of Margaret Thatcher's speeches on public affairs and public money.

We are looking for a teacher who appreciates how much he/she needed to invest in his/her own education and understands that merit and dedication are always more functional than benevolence.

The above announcement<sup>29</sup>, referring to the availability of a vacancy for a teacher, brings a suggestive situation that allows us to glimpse what has been happening in many Brazilian schools, namely: a) the increased adherence to conservative ideas of “School without Party” (*Escola Sem Partido*); and b) the presence of the ultraliberal bias that guides recent curriculum reforms.

Motivated by the ideology of “School without Party” (*Escola Sem Partido*), there have been recurrent attacks on teaching practice in the country's educational establishments.

This situation has reached such a serious level that dozens of academic, scientific and professional entities have even prepared a "Manual of defense against censorship in schools" (2018)<sup>30</sup>, which is configured as "a response to the attacks on teachers and schools as strategies of attack of reactionary movements to the freedom of teaching and the pluralism of educational conceptions, principles provided for in the Federal Constitution (1988)" (p. 3).

In this section, we will focus precisely on these attacks on the teaching practice, which we understand to be the unfolding, now in the school field, of the rise of the extreme right, which, as we had previously pointed out, has been spreading through the macro political-institutional spaces. In this sense, we will first focus on some exemplary cases of attacks on teachers that have had great repercussion in the media. Then, we will present some reports, not disseminated in the media, of teachers who were victims of repressive actions so that we have a greater dimension of the various ways in which the extreme right ideology has violated the teaching practice.

The ideals proclaimed by "School without Party" (*Escola Sem Partido*) have been generating surveillance and exposure of teachers, both inside and outside the classroom. In October 2018, a Sociology and History teacher at a public school in Fortaleza city, on Brazilian state of Ceará, had his class filmed, disseminated and criticized on social networks for allegedly indoctrinating students. The case happened after he showed the film "Baptism of Blood" (*Batismo de Sangue*, 2006) which deals with the resistance of Dominican friars during the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship. In the social networks where the video of the class circulated, several parents asked for the dismissal of the referred teacher, who, besides several verbal aggressions, was even threatened in his physical integrity<sup>31</sup>. The attacks on the teacher are related to the historical revisionism that the Brazilian extreme right has been promoting, in which it denies that the military committed crimes during the civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985), even going as far as not recognizing that a dictatorial regime occurred in the country.

Another similar case occurred in April 2019 and, this time, was publicized and explicitly approved by the recently sworn-in President of the Republic Jair Bolsonaro. In this case, a student filmed a Grammar teacher during her professional practice when she, while discussing journalistic articles, made some comments regarding the current government more specifically regarding his "guru", Olavo de Carvalho. The student even questioned the teacher, censoring her teaching plan and threatening to continue recording her classes and exposing them on social networks. In clear support of the student and reaffirming his alignment with "School without Party" (*Escola Sem Partido*), President Jair Bolsonaro used Twitter to disseminate the recording with the following caption: "teachers must teach and not indoctrinate"<sup>32</sup>. As can be seen, the actions of the extreme right continue in the sense of censoring any thought that is opposed to its worldview. In this way, classifying divergent discourses as "indoctrination", it affirms the ideas of its intellectuals as unquestionable truths.

The president's son, Senator Flávio Bolsonaro, together with Federal Representative Carla Zambelli and other politicians of conservative orientation, following the example of Jair Bolsonaro, also disseminated on social networks a recording that showed a sociology teacher teaching a class on the theme "Gender and Sexuality"<sup>33</sup>. In the caption written for the video posted on Instagram, Flávio Bolsonaro declares:

Besides your freedom, they also want your children! Militant uses the position to impose their ideas of gender identity INSIDE THE CLASSROOM! The time is unity, this is what we are fighting against! All are in the same boat. President @jairmessiasbolsonaro is the last barrier against this nefarious system that advances like a cancer!

This ideological persecution can also be seen in the case of a sociology teacher, working in a public school in Curitiba city, in the Brazilian state of Paraná, who was removed from her duties for having addressed the Marxist perspective in the development of an activity that involved the production of a parody by students, who developed a funk inspired by the concepts of Karl Marx. The video produced was posted by the teacher herself on social networks as a way to give prestige and value to the students' work. However, it ended up viralizing and generating a wave of hate against the teacher who was accused of "Marxist indoctrination". In view of the great repercussion that the video had on the social networks, the State Department of Education of Paraná decided to remove the teacher with the justification that her methods and the use of funk in the classroom were inappropriate<sup>34</sup>.

Looking at the characteristic aspects of these cases reported by the media, it is possible to see clear signs of the conservative ideology of the extreme right in the violent actions, whether in symbolic or physical terms, taken against teachers: all content that, during teaching practice, problematizes the posed relations of domination, the status quo, is taken by the extreme right as "ideological indoctrination", since what interests them is to delegitimize any kind of criticism in order to reproduce the relations of domination that are posed - domination of the bourgeois class over the proletariat, domination of men over women, domination of white over black, the predominance of heteronormativity to the detriment of dissident affective relations, et cetera. In this context, teachers of Human and Social Sciences are the preferred targets of the extreme right-wing attacks, especially Sociology teachers, considering that a good part of the contents that constitute school Sociology turn to the problematization of the structures that conform the Brazilian society and its inequalities.

As one can imagine, these cases reported by the mainstream media are not isolated events, since, as we have already said, they reveal the reconfiguration of forces in the public space towards the advance of the extreme right in the country. Thus, we will bring, in the next lines, some more examples of repressive actions against teachers, which are an expression of the conservatism that marks the current contemporary context,

extracted from testimonials given to us by Brazilian teachers from several regions of the country.

The first case we would like to highlight involves a sociology teacher from the public school system in Brazilian state of Santa Catarina who we will call Carlos, in order to preserve his anonymity<sup>35</sup>. He experienced a situation in which a certain student attacked the teaching of Sociology based on ideologies shared with his family. Carlos reports that, one day, a student's mother came to the school wanting to learn about the Sociology subject and to question the teacher because her son, until then aligned to extreme right-wing ideas, was questioning it at home and acting contrary to the family's political-ideological position. This is how the teacher Carlos narrated part of the episode:

[...] [the student's mother] revealed the reason for her coming to the school: she said she was scared, because she is from the right ("I value the issues that the right defends: family, freedom, morals" - her words) and her son always has been too. They share the same ideology. However, since he started taking classes with me he has been coming home with "things on his mind", her words. He is asking his mother more and more questions and problematizing issues that involve right-wing ideology. And that all these concerns, according to her son, were arising in Sociology classes [...].

If, on the one hand, the narrative shows the family as one of the spaces of foundation and reproduction of conservatism and ultraliberal ideas embedded in the bases of Brazilian society, on the other hand, it highlights the role of Sociology in promoting concerns and questioning in the face of extremist positions and ideas, even when they come from the family. But it is worth noting that the legitimation of certain ultraliberal and conservative postures of students in the classroom occurs, sometimes, by guidance of the family group itself. Thus, many of the attacks against teachers find some legitimacy both in the public and private spheres. As Carlos pointed out:

There are also national conjunctures: it would be naive to dismiss the legitimacy that these negationist and reactionary people acquire from the rise of Jair Bolsonaro to the presidency of the republic, and his maintenance there. It is clear that Bolsonarism in Brazil, in a way, symbolically "authorizes" the extreme right to "come out of the wardrobe" and vociferate against civilizatory postulates that we had already overcome.

Elizandra, a public school Sociology teacher in the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro, told us that she suffered censorship from the school headmaster, who had an evangelical profile, to work on the themes of racism and gender in the sociology class. However, she did not let herself be intimidated and kept the approach of these themes in her teaching programme. She told us that once, in the context of the discussion on racism, she even took her students to a field class, and managed to make them aware of the importance of the issue, which led them to support her in discussing this content at school. These reports confirm the potential of Sociology as a collaborator for the formation of critical citizenship



and, on the other hand, it highlights aspects that make it vulnerable to the attacks of the Brazilian extreme right.

It's important to highlight that the surveillance of teaching practice and attacks on teachers are not limited to the classroom. Teachers, especially of Sociology, suffer attacks even outside the school environment. In this sense, the situation experienced by teacher Luciana, who teaches the discipline of Sociology in a public school in the city of Fortaleza, in Brazilian state of Ceará, is exemplary: photographed at a demonstration in favour of education, while wearing a red blouse with a caricature of a left-wing leader, she had her image decontextualized, exposed and ridiculed on social networks by a student. According to the teacher's account:

[...] an evangelical student, with a very conservative profile, who bothers with certain discussions that are made in the classroom, but during my classes he never positioned himself. [...] It shocked me, surprised me by the situation. I believe that the motivations were exactly that: the fact that the subject brings more critical discussions that take these conservative people out of their comfort zone [...]. This had an impact on me professionally, in the sense that I felt highly supervised because of this situation. Censored as well. And personally, it was also something that I did not expect, going through the knowledge, the notion, of the growth of these conservative agendas so present in the discourses of adolescents. But in my vision I thought that this might not come so fast, since 2019 was the beginning of Bolsonaro's mandate.

It draws attention to the fact that the student who always maintained a cordial behavior feels motivated, by the political context, to use his social networks to attack the teacher. According to Luciana, we can rule out the existence of personal motivations, since there was no conflict between her and the referred student. What leads us to suppose that, in fact, the student's problem was with the characters, the themes and the ideas that he associates to the left, to Sociology, and that he saw represented in the teacher's image.

The common themes in the teaching of Sociology, which aims to promote citizenship, explicit in the curriculum guidelines, have, in the current Brazilian context, generated confrontation between teachers and the conservative and ultra-liberal part of society. In this context, the same teacher states that some care is important in the teaching of Sociology:

[...] always take this care to say that what we are putting in the classroom is not an opinion in itself, but is in fact a construction of the social sciences that was transformed into knowledge. [...] It is a boring situation, the fact that all the time we have to prove that it is science, that we have a scientific backing, even if many times the scientific discourse is denied.

Luciana's narrative emphasizes two important issues: a) school sociology has its scientificity recurrently questioned in the classroom; and b) science, in general, has often been denied. The denial of the knowledge produced by the Social Sciences does not only

occur among students, but also among teachers of other areas. Cláudia, a public school Sociology teacher in the city of Belém, in Brazilian state of Pará, told us that during a lecture by an anthropologist researcher, one of her colleagues, an art teacher, showed prejudice against the ways in which the Social Sciences have been studying graffiti, recognizing it as a legitimate culture. Another case of denialism, reported by Cláudia, involved, this time, the very management of the school where she works. According to her, the guidance given in her school by the management is that teachers have to be concerned almost exclusively with preparing students for the labour market, which occurs anchored in the BNCC.

Daniel, a Sociology teacher who teaches at a public school in the outskirts in the city of Brasília, in Brazilian state of Federal District, told us about the difficulty of working on issues such as gender and sexuality and the impediment to deal with political issues that may be related to the president, under threat of administrative punishment at school. According to Daniel, the direction of the establishment reprimanded him for discussing the mentioned themes, informing him, in a threatening tone, that if he kept such a content programme, he would be sent to the Secretariat of Education to be allocated to another school in the Federal District. Situations like these have generated fear among teachers who end up censoring themselves in their practices.

The impacts of the rise of the extreme right on teachers are varied. Fabíola, teacher of Science of the public network of the Brazilian state of Federal District, said that due to the various forms of repression experienced, in 2021, in the last school in which she worked, managed by an extreme right-wing director, she no longer intends to return to teaching, having seen the damage that this experience caused to her mental health. She reports that three other co-workers who continue to work at the school are now undergoing psychiatric treatment. She confessed: "I still get a little nervous to talk about these things. I've been teaching my whole life. I have 25 years in education, and these experiences in this school have taken me out of the field".

The same demotivation felt by Fabiola in relation to continuing her teaching activities can be seen in the way Daniel has been questioning his professional choice: "I wonder if I chose the right profession. If I'm not going to be able to wake up and go to school, because the willpower is less and less to continue working in this area... it's getting harder and harder".

It is true that the task of Sociology to form critical citizens has generated resistance and attacks on its teaching. However, it is important to point out that not all Sociology teachers take on, in their classes, the objective of promoting citizenship education in a critical perspective based on sociological knowledge, either to avoid conflicts in the school environment, or because they themselves defend conservative and/or ultra-liberal agendas. Aline, a public school sociology teacher in the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, told us that in the school where she teaches, the other sociology teacher has been using the classes to reproduce nationalist teachings, recovering common approaches in the former OSPB and "Moral and Civic Education" (*Educação Moral e Cívica*) subjects,

emphasizing entrepreneurship and individualism, even defending extreme right-wing agendas.

For better or worse, in Brazil, curricula do not directly and clearly define the contents to be taught or even how they should be addressed, which enables the instrumentalization of Sociology for the promotion of citizenship, as well as to transmit extreme right ideologies. As teacher Aline reported, sometimes the contents taught are the same, but the approaches and perspectives are different. To some extent, this instrumentalization of the subject to the interests of the extreme right can be explained by the educational limitations of sociology teachers and/or by the ideological alignment to political and/or religious groups, an aspect that still needs to be researched. We limit ourselves here to state that although Sociology has in the Brazilian curriculum guidelines a meaning aligned to the notion of citizenship – with all its ambiguity –, it is not exempt from being instrumentalized to deepen extreme right-wing ideas in schools; especially considering the ultraliberal character of the current national curriculum guideline.

The reports presented here exemplify the advances of the extreme right present in Brazilian schools and allow us to relate them to the broader scenario in order to understand their roots. It is worth noting that the advances of ultra-liberal and conservative ideals are to some extent halted in Brazil by the achievements of the last 30 years, which made possible the production of a legislative system of protection of rights linked to citizenship - although this system has been widely attacked in recent years.

## 5 CONCLUSION

Throughout this text, we seek to highlight the advance of the extreme right in Brazil, which has occurred most clearly since the middle of the second decade of this millennium, motivated both by a situation marked by various crises of a social, political and economic nature and by latent structural aspects of Brazilian society itself (patriarchy, slavery, dependent capitalist economy), which are responsible for various forms of inequality (man-woman, white-black, heterosexual-homosexual, bourgeoisie-proletariat) and which reproduce themselves through various ideologies (machismo, racism, heteronormativity, meritocracy).

Then, when we look at the path of Sociology in Brazilian basic education, we aimed to highlight how this subject was being incorporated into the school curriculum according to the educational objectives in vogue, but always in a very ambiguous way, either reproducing the dominant discourse or resisting it. It is precisely because of this ambiguity that it came to be viewed with suspicion by the extreme right, since it could present itself as a risk to moral conservatism and economic ultraliberalism that has been spreading in the public space, with implications for the directions of national education.

In order to give more concreteness to the analyses about the advance of the extreme right on national education, we seek to evidence its practices of surveillance and repression on teaching practice, which aim to eliminate any discourse contrary to the status quo. For this, we rely on cases of violence against teachers widely reported by the

media, as well as on reports collected by us with teachers from different parts of the country, especially those who work with the discipline of Sociology. Looking at these various cases, we can see a very complicated scenario for teaching, in which freedom of expression in general, and freedom of teaching in particular, which are rights guaranteed by the Brazilian Constitution, are clearly threatened by the extreme right. In the particular case of Sociology teaching, its meanings built around the idea of citizenship and its vocation to problematize Brazilian issues make it the centre of attention and attack of the national extreme right.

Finally, the conjuncture analysis carried out and the teaching reports brought allow us to observe an advance of the extreme right in Brazil, especially in the educational field, so that schools have been gaining centrality as a locus of ideological disputes, placing teachers in a state of constant conflict with the school and extra-school communities. In this context, the discipline of Sociology ends up being, in some cases, the target of disputes, in others, of attacks. This condition is related to its potential instrumentalization by teachers as an ideological resource, either for the transformation or for the maintenance of social reality.

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## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> We use this denomination to designate the Sociology subject offered in basic education.
- <sup>2</sup> These currents of thoughts strongly marked the discipline during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Cigales, Franke; Dallmann, 2019).
- <sup>3</sup> The nomenclature of the discipline centered on sociological contents varied between 1892 and 1925. Sociology, during this period, was linked to law and morality, which caused the themes "moral" and "national rights" to be present in the composition of the name attributed to the discipline. Among the known nomenclatures are "Moral and Sociology" (*Moral e Sociologia*), "Moral, Sociology and National Rights" (*Moral, Sociologia e Direito Pátrio*), "Moral Education and Notions of Sociology" (*Educação Moral e Noções de Sociologia*), "Moral, Political Economy and National Rights" (*Sociologia, Moral, Economia Política e Direitos Pátrios*) (Bodart; Cigales, 2021).
- <sup>4</sup> This is the modality of professional formation, aimed at teachers who would work in primary education. In 1996 the Ministry of Education started to recommend the end of this course, aiming to assign higher education to the training of teachers of any stage of education.
- <sup>5</sup> This occurred from the organization of the union of sociologists and teachers of Social Science courses.
- <sup>6</sup> Currently called secondary education (*ensino médio*). School education is called "basic education" (*educação básica*) and consists of three stages: Early Childhood Education (*educação infantil*), Primary Education (*ensino fundamental*) and High School (*ensino médio*). It was in this last stage that Sociology had its guaranteed offer in recent decades, although exceptionally it is also offered, by some institutions, in Primary Education.
- <sup>7</sup> The PNLD is a state program that aims to evaluate and make available, systematically, regularly and free of charge, didactic, pedagogical and literary works, as well as other materials to support educational practice, public schools and those with the Public Authorities. For more information

on this programme, see Book Programs. Available in: <https://www.fnde.gov.br/programas/programas-do-livro>.

<sup>8</sup> More information about this scientific entity are available in: <https://abecs.com.br/estatuto/>

<sup>9</sup> In Brazil, to be qualified to teach the subject of Sociology, it is necessary to have completed higher education in degree courses in the area (see what Law No. 13.415/2017 and Opinion CNE/CES No. 492/2001 indicate) or to have attended a bachelor's degree in Social Sciences and, subsequently, to have taken a pedagogical complementation course (as regulated by Decree No. 8.752/2016). Despite these regulations, "according to the Indicator of Adequacy of Teacher Training for the teaching stage in question, the worst result is observed for the subject of Sociology. Of the Sociology subjects declared in high school classes, only 27.1% are taught by teachers with the appropriate training" (INEP/MEC, 2019, p. 37).

<sup>10</sup> The only compulsory subjects are currently Portuguese Language, English Language and Mathematics.

<sup>11</sup> It is not uncommon to find in the discourses of the extreme right the support of the idea that left-wing intellectuals seek to implant Marxist ideologies and make them hegemonic through political indoctrination and the occupation of state institutions. About that, see GODOI, Rodolfo. *Midiáticos reacionários e o medo de Paulo Freire na escola* [Reactionary media and Paulo Freire's fear at school]. In: BODART, Cristiano das Neves; MARCHIORI, Cassiane da C. Ramos. (Orgs.). *Por que eles têm medo de Paulo Freire na escola?* [Why are they afraid of Paulo Freire at school?] Maceió: Editora Café com Sociologia, 2022, 59-80.

<sup>12</sup> We use the "Coffee with Sociology" (*Café com Sociologia*) account because of its reach - more than 500,000 followers, many of them teachers. Available in: <https://www.instagram.com/cafecomsociologia/>

<sup>13</sup> We do not perform a discourse analysis or content analysis here. The reports were used only by what they recorded of the ongoing events in the country. The same treatment was given to journalistic articles.

<sup>14</sup> See COSTA, Nataly. *Grupos convocam atos anticorrupção e defendem militares* [Groups call for anti-corruption acts and defend the military]. *Estadão*, São Paulo, June 25, 2013. Available in: <https://politica.estadao.com.br/noticias/eleicoes,grupos-convocam-atos-anticorruptao-e-defendem-militares-imp-,1046536>. Accessed on: June 1, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> See SOUZA, Nivaldo; CARAM, Bernardo. *Congresso eleito é o mais conservador desde 1964, diz Diap*. [Elected congress is most conservative since 1964, says Diap]. *Exame*, São Paulo, December 6, 2014. Available in: <https://exame.com/brasil/diap-congresso-eleito-e-o-mais-conservador-desde-1964/>. Accessed on: June 7, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> See QUEIROZ, Antônio Augusto de. *O Congresso mais conservador dos últimos quarenta anos* [The Most Conservative Congress of the Last Forty Years]. *Le Monde Diplomatique Brasil*, n. 136, November 5, 2018. Available in: <https://diplomatique.org.br/o-congresso-mais-conservador-dos-ultimos-quarenta-anos/>. Last access: June 5, 2022.

<sup>17</sup> This program originates from the conservative movement "School without Party" (*Escola Sem Partido*), created in 2004, which has been articulated by extreme right politicians, supporters of ultraliberal ideology and neopentecostal religious fundamentalism and Catholic Charismatic Renewal (*Renovação Carismática Católica*). These politicians advocate a "neutral education" and act in the surveillance of teachers suspected of "indoctrinating" students or transmitting topics considered inappropriate to classrooms, such as gender, socialism and sexuality.

<sup>18</sup> The Brazilian Federal Constitution (1988), in its Article 206, clauses II and III, states that: "Education will be provided based on the following principles: [...] II - freedom to learn, teach, research and disseminate thought, art and knowledge; III - pluralism of ideas and educational

conceptions" (Brazil, 1988). Such definition is replicated *ipsis litteris* in Article 3, clauses II and III, of the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (Law No. 9.394/1996).

<sup>19</sup> See: *Eleições 2018: Justiça Eleitoral conclui totalização dos votos do segundo turno* [Elections 2018: Electoral Justice completes totalization of the votes of the second round]. *Tribunal Superior Eleitoral*. October 30, 2018 (updated in February 13, 2019). Available in: <<https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2018/Outubro/eleicoes-2018-justica-eleitoral-conclui-totalizacao-dos-votos-do-segundo-turno>>. Accessed on: May 26, 2022.

<sup>20</sup> We refer to the four consecutive terms of presidents linked to the PT: Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (1<sup>st</sup> term: 2003 to 2006/2<sup>nd</sup> term: 2007 to 2010) and Dilma Rousseff (1<sup>st</sup> term: 2011 to 2014/ 2<sup>nd</sup> term: 2015 to 2016 - this second term being interrupted by a process of impeachment).

<sup>21</sup> Currently called secondary education (*ensino médio*). Organized in three years and precedes the initial 9 years of schooling, the phase currently called primary school (1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade).

<sup>22</sup> Both instituted by Decree-Law No. 869 of 12 September 1969. Its Article 2 thus highlighted the following purposes of the subject "Moral and Civic Education" (*Educação Moral e Cívica*): "a) the defense of the democratic principle, through the preservation of the religious spirit, the dignity of the human person and the love of freedom with responsibility, under the inspiration of God; b) the preservation, strengthening and projection of the spiritual and ethical values of nationality; c) the strengthening of national unity and the feeling of human solidarity; d) the cult of the Homeland, its symbols, traditions, institutions and the great figures of its history; e) improvement of character, based on morals, dedication to the family and the community; f) understanding of the rights and duties of Brazilians and knowledge of the socio-political-economic organization of the country; g) preparation of citizens for the exercise of civic activities based on morals, patriotism and constructive action aimed at the common good". This provision was revoked by Law 8.663 of 1993.

<sup>23</sup> We refer here to the interpretations expressed in the National Curricular Guidelines for Secondary Education (*Diretrizes Curriculares para o Ensino Médio*, DCNEM), through Resolution CNE/CEB 03/98 (Brazil, 1998a) and Opinion CNE/CEB 15/98.

<sup>24</sup> At this moment, it's important to remember, most of the teachers who started teaching the discipline of Sociology were not qualified in the area, only 12.3% (Bodart & Sampaio-Silva, 2020).

<sup>25</sup> The books content takes the form of explanatory texts that talk directly to the student, as well as suggestions for further information, complementary resources (films, books, music, games, news reports, websites, blogs, glossaries, et cetera.) and activities with appropriate guidance for the student-reader. In the context where most of the teachers are not qualified to teach the subject, textbooks ended up assuming an important role in curricular orientation and classroom activities.

<sup>26</sup> Roughly speaking, this "figurational perception of reality" can be understood as the competence to understand social phenomena in a dialectical way, being marked by power relations, by conflicts, which generate transformations and accommodations. In this sense, the individual is understood as being immersed in interaction networks, influenced and influencing social structures.

<sup>27</sup> The impact of conservative identity on the high school curriculum can be seen, for example, in the disappearance of some topics, such as gender, sexuality, LGBTQI+ communities, communism and socialism.

<sup>28</sup> This reform is based on the Pedagogy of Competencies and the Technician Pedagogy, with great emphasis on individual entrepreneurship and, consequently, on the disengagement of the State.

<sup>29</sup> It is not certain that this advertisement was published by the school that signed the vacancy, since it did not manifest itself publicly about the fact and the advertisement was withdrawn after its repercussion. For more information on this case, see BARROS Douglas Rodrigues. "*Procura-se professor de Sociologia que não seja orientado pela ideologia comunista*" [We search for Sociology

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<sup>30</sup> Available in: <<https://www.manualdefesadasescolas.org/manualdedefesa.pdf>>

<sup>31</sup> See ZARANZA, Gabrielle. *Criticado por exibir filme sobre ditadura, professor de História recebe homenagem de alunos* [Criticized for showing movie about dictatorship, History teacher receives tribute from students]. *O Povo*, 28 Oct. 2018. Available in: <<https://www.opovo.com.br/noticias/fortaleza/2018/10/professor-criticado-filme-ditadura-santa-cecilia-homenagem-estudantes.html>>. Accessed on: 11 June 2022.

<sup>32</sup> See: *Aluna filma professora e vídeo vai parar no Twitter de Bolsonaro* [Student films teacher and video goes to Twitter Bolsonaro]. *Carta Capital*, São Paulo, 28 Apr. 2019. Available in: <<https://www.cartacapital.com.br/educacao/aluna-filma-professora-e-video-vai-parar-no-twitter-de-bolsonaro>>. Accessed on: 11 June 2022.

<sup>33</sup> See: *Professor de Jaguariúna é ameaçado após vídeo de aula sobre gênero viralizar* [Jaguariúna teacher is threatened after a class video about gender goes viral]. *A cidade on*, Campinas, 3 Mar. 2022. Available in: <<https://www.acidadeon.com/campinas/cotidiano/cidades/NOT,0,0,1733505,professor-de-jaguariuna-e-ameacado-apos-video-de-aula-sobre-genero-viralizar.aspx>>. Accessed on: 11 June 2022.

<sup>34</sup> See RATTIER, Rodrigo & ANNUNCIATO, Pedro. *Eu fui punida por debater* [I was punished for debating]. *Nova Escola*, São Paulo, 5 Aug. 2016. Jornalismo. Available in: <<https://novaescola.org.br/conteudo/8125/eu-fui-punida-por-debater?q=cache:Ak4on3gsFVYJ:https://novaescola.org.br/conteudo/8125/eu-fui-punida-por-debater+%cd=18&hl=ptbBR&ct=clnk&gl=br>>. Accessed on: 11 June 2022.

<sup>35</sup> The same procedure was carried out in relation to the other teachers who contributed their reports to our research.

## AUTHORS BIOGRAPHIES

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