

Lemann Foundation and the Connected Education Innovation program: public-private relations in the field of educational policies¹

Fundação Lemann e o Programa de Inovação Educação Conectada: em pauta as relações entre público e privado no campo das políticas educacionais

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ABSTRACT

The Lemann Foundation (Fundação Lemann, FL), one of the most active private institutions in education in Brazil, is the subject of this paper. In order to unveil the relationships that are established between the public and private spheres, the general objective is to analyze how the Lemann Foundation acted/has been acting in the Program for *Innovation and Connected Education* (ICE). The Program, started in 2017, is coordinated by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communications. Its partners are the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES), the Lemann Foundation and the Itaú Cultural Foundation, with The *Center of Innovation for Brazilian Education* (CIEB) as technical advisor of the Program. The documentary sources consulted are in websites on the Lemann Foundation, the Program, and other partners, both public and private, in addition to the bibliographic related to the topics under discussion. Based on those sources, two elements lead to understand how the FL's interests are articulated in the Program for

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Innovation and Connected Education. On the one hand, the business logic guidelines are reaffirmed as one of the features of the Foundation's work. On the other hand, the materialization of the Program on a large scale, mediated by the State's totalizing command function, gives way for the expansion of capital accumulation, in a historic moment of structural crisis, aggravated by the ongoing pandemic.

Keywords: Lemann Foundation. Program for *Innovation and Connected Education*. Public-private partnership.

RESUMO

A Fundação Lemann (FL), uma das instituições privadas mais atuantes no campo da educação no Brasil, é o objeto deste artigo. Visando desvelar as relações que se estabelecem entre as esferas pública e privada, o objetivo geral é analisar como a Fundação Lemann atuou/atua no Programa de Inovação Educação Conectada (IEC). O Programa, iniciado em 2017, tem como órgãos gestores o Ministério da Educação e o Ministério da Ciência, Tecnologia, Inovação e Comunicações. Seus parceiros são o Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social (BNDES), a Fundação Lemann e a Fundação Itaú Cultural, além de contar com a participação do Centro de Inovação para a Educação Brasileira (CIEB), que fornece assessoria técnica ao Programa. As fontes documentais consultadas estão disponíveis nos sítios da Fundação Lemann, do Programa e de outros parceiros, públicos e privados. Também foi utilizada a produção bibliográfica relacionada às temáticas analisadas. Com base nesses materiais, destacam-se os dois elementos que levam à compreensão de como se articulam, no Programa analisado, os interesses da FL: por um lado, reafirmam-se as diretrizes da lógica empresarial, uma das vertentes do trabalho da Fundação. Por outro, a materialização do Programa em ampla escala, mediado pela função de comando totalizadora do Estado, cria condições para que se efetive, nesse mesmo movimento, a ampliação da acumulação de capital, em um momento histórico de crise estrutural, agravada pela emergência sanitária em curso.

Palavras-chave: Fundação Lemann. Programa de Inovação Educação Conectada. Parceria público-privada.

Introduction

Since 1995, with the creation of the Ministry of State Administration and Reform, led by Luís Carlos Bresser Pereira, the transformations of the Brazilian

State have been intensified, as a way out of the neoliberal constraints. The measures aimed at expanding the participation of private initiatives in the field of public policies. This dynamic, enunciated in the guidelines of the Washington Consensus and widely supported by multilateral organizations, points out that the State should concentrate its action on ‘exclusive’ activities, characterized as

[...] the sector in which services may only be provided by the State. These are services in which the State’s extroversial power is exercised – the power to regulate, supervise, promote. Examples include: tax collection and supervision, the police, the basic social security, unemployment services, compliance with sanitary standards, the traffic service, the purchase of health services by the State, the environmental control, **basic education subsidies**, the issue of passports etc. (BRASIL, 1995, p. 41, emphasis added, our translation).

Based on the purpose of rendering public services more agile and less bureaucratic, with greater flexibility to hire workers, for example, or less State interference in the dynamics of capital transactions, Brazil followed the international policies adopted by the central countries, endorsed by ideologists such as Anthony Giddens, by means of the Third Way’s concepts (GIDDENS, 1996). From that historical moment on, since the 1990s, classical privatizations have been accentuated, and other forms of privatization have gained prominence.

The national and international documents and, later on, the programs implemented to reform the Brazilian public administration include the intention of public services efficiency, based on the need to reform the State, in order to make it more competitive and effective for society (BRASIL, 2009). Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand, and not coincidentally, that the State’s remodeling actions have been occurring as responses to the capital’s structural crisis.

Regarding the latter aspect, the current capital’s structural crisis started in the 1970s, according to Mészáros (1995, p. 680-681; emphasis added by the author). The structural crisis is different from the cyclical crises that occurred previously in capitalism, as “its *character* is *universal*”; “its *scope* is truly *global*” and “its *time scale* is extensive, continuous – if you like – *permanent*”. Thus, given the extent and depth of the structural crisis, the margin for recovery and economic rise narrows. It is permeated, in the long term, by uninterrupted sequences of falling rates of profit. Thus, the central point of the crisis is linked to overproduction and underconsumption, as the goods production circuit

(production, circulation, and consumption) is not fully realized. The market is not only supported by mechanisms inherent to its own dynamics; extra-economic actions are necessary to sustain the accumulation process.

Thus, the State has become even more important, by assuming the role of a major capital-funding agent in the structuring triad of capitalism, namely, capital/labor/State:

[...] It [the state] must always adjust its regulatory functions in tune with the changing dynamics of the socioeconomic reproduction process by politically complementing and reinforcing capital's domination against the forces that might dare to challenge the gross iniquities of distribution and consumption. Furthermore, **the state must also assume the important function of direct purchaser/consumer on an ever-increasing scale.** In this capacity it must cater both for some real needs of the social whole (from education to health care and from the building and maintenance of the so-called "infrastructure" to the provision of social security services) as well as for the satisfaction of largely "artificial appetites" (like feeding not only the vast bureaucratic machinery of its own administrative and law-enforcing system but also the immensely wasteful, yet to capital directly beneficial, military-industrial complex), – **alleviating thereby, even if by no means forever, some of the worst complications and contradictions which arise from the fracture of production and consumption** (MÉSZÁROS, 1995, p. 52-53, emphasis added).

While ensuring the survival of the production system, the function played by the State contradicts the idea of "Minimum State" (required by the restructuring of the State's role, in the various remodeling attempts mentioned before), as its performance is essential to stimulate, strengthen, and enable conditions for capital expansion. We also point out that, for the State to perform this "guarantor" role, among other mechanisms, the public funds are used. These funds, by means of specific legislation, allocate financial resources to the areas of investment in social policies (social security, health, culture, education, basic sanitation etc.). As a result, these financial contributions – by linking a given budget to a specific area – become a field of struggle promoted by various interests, including inter-capitalist ones.

By means of these theoretical and methodological assumptions, which highlight the importance of the State in the capital expansion process, we will address the theme of this paper, namely the Lemann Foundation. The

empirical basis is the Program for *Innovation and Connected Education (ICE)*². The Ministry of Education (MEC) and the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovations and Communications (MCTIC) participate in the program. Its partners include (since its inauguration in 2017) the *Center of Innovation for Brazilian Education (CIEB)*, the Lemann Foundation, the National Council of Education Secretaries (CONSED), and the National Union of Municipal Education Leaders (UNDIME) (BRASIL, 2017). Our general objective is to highlight the intertwining of private and state interests, by underlining the Lemann Foundation's actions in the field of education, mainly the way it acted/has been acting in the ICE. At the same time, while unveiling that fact, it will be imperative to show it as part of a given concrete totality, the capitalist society (LUKÁCS, 1981). Simultaneously, we hope to contribute to the debate on public/private partnerships in the capitalist society of the first two decades of the 21st century.

The importance of studying the Lemann Foundation, its projects and actions, is justified by the great capillarity of the institution in the field of public education. The differential of the institution, when compared to the others in the same segment, as Santos (2018) explains, is the result of a strategy applied to obtain and achieve the expected results, called advocacy:

We understand advocacy as the act of identifying, adopting, and promoting a cause. It is an effort to shape public perception or to engender change by changing the law, but not necessarily. Lobbying is a specific way of doing advocacy and is focused on influencing the legislation [...]. Therefore, lobbying may be understood as part of the advocacy activity (BRELÁZ, 2007, p. 1-2, our translation)³.

The strategy, based on convincing society of the correctness of one's positions, becomes even clearer now, almost two decades after the creation

2 From this moment on, aiming at simplifying the nomination of the Program under analysis, it will be referred to as ICE.

3 According to the author, "Advocacy is a term that involves a set of meanings, which comes from the experience of North American democracy, with no exact translation into Portuguese. It is important to emphasize that there is no theoretical consensus in the construction of a meaning for advocacy. The author adopts Marcia Avner's definition. Avner is a lawyer and a professor of the Master degree course in Law and Political Leadership at the Metropolitan State University (Saint Paul/Minnesota), and founder and director of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (AVNER CONSULTING, 2020).

of the FL, and helps us understand, for example, the wide range of its actions regarding education and, as of 2017, its participation in the ICE.

To survey the actions and, in particular, the FL's actions in the Program, we consulted its annual reports, from 2013 to 2018, in the institution's webpage⁴. We also accessed the ICE webpages and the information on its funders and partners (National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES), CIEB and Itaú Cultural Foundation). Similarly, we obtained information, although partially, on the materialization of the Program, by considering the states of the federation and the public schools that received resources until 2019, as the program will continue until 2024.

The data, which revealed the elements of the program and the relationships established between the Lemann Foundation and the State, will be exposed in the two sections of the paper. The first discusses the FL's trajectory, with special emphasis on its capillarity in the field of education policies. The second brings the discussion on some basic elements to understand the Lemann Foundation's actions in the program under analysis. We do not intend to discuss its results, as the policy is still ongoing.

The Lemann Foundation

The Lemann Foundation was created in 2002, with the aim of developing and financing "projects that contribute to the social and economic development of Brazil, especially those related to public education" (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2002, p. 10; our translation). According to the institution itself, the foundation is "a family-run, non-profit organization" (LEMANN FOUNDATION, 2020), which acts "always in partnership with governments and other civil society entities, in a plural, inclusive, way, seeking paths that work on the scale of Brazil's challenges" (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2018b, p. 4; our translation).

In order to attest to the scope of the actions developed by the institution, the first activities of FL's future members and partners dedicated to public education issues were related to the creation of the Educational Management Institute (Instituto Gestão Educacional, IGE). The IGE was under the legal responsibility of the educator Ilona Maria Lustosa Becskehazy Ferrão de Sousa⁵. Although the

4 <https://fundacaolemann.org.br/materials/temas/relatorio-anual>

5 Ilona Maria Lustosa Becskehazy Ferrão de Sousa holds a PhD in education from the University of São Paulo (2018). According to her Curriculum Lattes, she acted in the "[...] management of non-profit entities with projects in the education sector for different target audiences"

FL reports (2003/2004) did not mention a direct link to the IGE, the Institute Council included Jorge Paulo Lemann, Luis Norberto Pascoal, Peter Graber, Aloysio Meireles de Miranda Filho, Nizan Guanaes, and Paulo Renato Souza⁶ (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2003). According to the FL, the IGE “[...] was created to design and control specific school management projects. Its Council adds, to the original configuration of the Lemann Foundation, experience in social projects and expertise in areas of strategic interest to the theme” (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2003, p. 10, our translation).

IGE’s first project was entitled *Gestão para o Sucesso Escolar* (Management for School Success), an online course aimed at public school principals, with an emphasis on leadership training and the use of assessment instruments as work tools. The FL, by means of the IGE, declared that the choice for this approach was due to the importance of the

[...] consolidation of the culture of management by results, by focusing on the student’s learning as the entire school’s main objective and valuing the use of assessment instruments as work tools. **This is a natural choice for a Council made up of people with experience in the use of quality principles and in the logic that every resource must be optimized in order to get the best results possible with what is available** (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2003, p. 12, emphasis added, our translation).

With the termination of the IGE activities in 2008, the FL continued developing the Project *Gestão para o Sucesso Escolar*, only for school principals, until 2010. In addition, in 2005, specialization courses for school managers were promoted by means of specific FL projects and, in 2009, in partnership with the Anhembi-Morumbi University (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2010).

Besides the programs and projects already mentioned, we briefly point out the long list of actions developed by the Lemann Foundation between 2003

(CURRICULUM LATTES, 2020; our translation). The same source brings a link with the Lemann Foundation, based in Switzerland, where she held the position of executive director between 2001 and 2011. Since April 9, 2020, the educator has been a member of President Jair Bolsonaro’s staff, as Secretary of Basic Education, in the Ministry of Education. (BRASIL, 2020b).

⁶ Peter Graber, a businessperson, and Paulo Renato Souza, an economist and politician linked to the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), were members of both the IGE and the FL Councils (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2003). In order to demonstrate the FL’s capillarity in the Brazilian government, it is important to note that Paulo Renato Souza (1945-2011) was Minister of Education during the two offices of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002). In 2020, Jorge Paulo Lemann and Peter Graber still appear as directors of the Foundation (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2018b).

and 2016: 1 - Teacher education courses: *Projeto Ensina Brasil* (Teach Brazil Project), with the objective of selecting and training talented young graduates to become teachers in Brazilian public schools, even when they are not yet certified teachers; and the *Rede Conectando Saberes* (Connecting Knowledge Network), whose motto is to encourage the exchange of experiences among teachers, in order to promote universal quality education (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2015). 2 - Educational management: *Learning Management* Project, with the objective of training directors and pedagogical coordinators committed to ensuring the schooling success of all their students (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2013); and *Education Policy Seminar*, which gathers leaders and educational managers to exchange significant experiences in education (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2012). 3 - Support to the National Council of Education Secretaries (CONSED) and the National Union of Municipal Education Leaders (UNDIME), by contributing to training managers in state education seminars (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2016). 4 - Development of parliamentary leaders, in the *Program to Support the Development of Public Leaders*, which provides for political representation at all levels (municipal, state and federal), by helping “[...] to train and qualify leaders dedicated to elevate our country based on principles of integrity, sustainability and democracy” (LEMANN FOUNDATION, 2018). 5 - Political articulation, aiming at the approval of bills and laws of interest, in the Federal Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, such as, for example, the high school reform (BEZERRA, 2019). 6 - Structuring and editing of journals, digital educational resources, among others, focusing on education, such as the magazines *Nova Escola* and *Gestão Escolar* (CARVALHO, 2018). 7 - Creation and consolidation of a database on education in Brazil, the *QEdu Portal Project*, which intends to be the largest information platform on educational data in Brazil (FUNDAÇÃO LEMANN, 2012).

Two elements, however, are relevant to understand the broad and significant presence of the Lemann Foundation in the scope of education policies in Brazil, from 2002 on. Oliveira (2019, p. 162, our translation) adopts two categories, which will be exposed and used in the present study “[...] because they help us systematize the nature of the main strategies that have been adopted by private groups in the area of education, both in terms of political formation and school education”: *publicization of the business logic* and *entrepreneurialism of public spaces*. Regarding the two strategies, Oliveira emphasizes that the Lemann Foundation’s actions, together with the conglomerate in which it participates, has been characterized

Both for the valorization and dissemination of the principles of the business world in society, disseminated and implemented by means of education, which results in an efficient “publicization of the business culture”, and in what we understand to be the most decisive aspect of the recent actions by private groups – the “entrepreneurialism of the public fund”, a novelty that harmoniously coexists with the traditional strategies of wealth accumulation (OLIVEIRA, 2019, p. 166, our translation).

Before discussing these categories more deeply, we draw attention to another element pointed out by Oliveira (2019), as well as by Peroni and Oliveira (2019), which we consider very significant. If, on the one hand, the Lemann Foundation declares itself, as previously seen, as “[...] a family-run, non-profit, organization that collaborates and works for quality public education for all people and organizations that dedicate their lives to challenge Brazil’s key social challenges” (LEMANN FOUNDATION, 2020) its action mobilizes elements of the business logic that are present throughout the Lemann conglomerate. This results in the capillarity of the Lemann Foundation’s actions and dynamism, supported by those who are “The most active and powerful agents [in the age of globalism], [...] transnational corporations and conglomerates” (HATTNER, 1994 *apud* MELLO, 1999, p. 250, our translation). Also according to Mello:

They [the transnational corporations] weave the networks (*réseaux*) and weld the knots (the management of simultaneity) of the new modes of action among (productive, market) spaces disseminated worldwide, but synchronously inserted and tied to the same logic of *expanded reproduction of value* (MELLO, 1999, p. 250, our translation).

Thus, through the training/education for hegemony, and underlying all of the Lemann Foundation’s projects, the need for the *publicization of the business logic* is a strategy “of the capital to educate the consensus” (NEVES, 2005, p. 3; our translation), aiming to reproduce and expand the objective and subjective conditions for capitalist accumulation. Among the principles of the business logic that should guide the formation of today’s individuals is a new administrative rationality, focused on the conformation of people prepared to act in a flexible society, who are entrepreneurs, to act in a constantly changing world. This rationality is *vis a vis* with the technology that marks the advent of the so-called knowledge society (OLIVEIRA, 2019).

Or, as Anthony Giddens, the principal intellectual to defend the so-called Third Way, would say, the changes that culminated in a new type of society reveal that, if the social order is restructured, at the same time, there is a restructuring in the way the smallest social units, namely the individuals, behave. Giddens believes that people's participation, such as the engagement of workers in the post-Fordist production model (GIDDENS, 1996), or in the feminist movement (GIDDENS, 2002), represents an advance in the performance of individuals' role in society. It creates, in each person, a reflexive positioning, which induces autonomy: "In a post-traditional society, individuals somehow have to engage with the world if they intend to survive in it" (GIDDENS, 1996, p. 15, our translation). However, such engagement does not correspond to the traditional models of collective or individual participation in the traditional types of society – as was the case with political parties and trade unions; it must correspond to the new dynamics of participation, so that the demands of post-traditional society and its new arrangements may be faced.

Such a discourse, which acts as a manifesto for organized civil society to participate more effectively when addressing public affairs, extends the possibilities for profit or non-profit private entities to manage and conduct public policies (CALEGARE; SILVA JÚNIOR, 2009), thus opening boundaries for the *publicization of the business logic*.

In order to go on dealing with the *publicization of the business logic* and the *entrepreneurialism of the public space*, both guidelines of the Lemann Foundation, we now consider the ICE.

The Program for Innovation and Connected Education

The Program for *Innovation and Connected Education* (ICE) was created by Decree No. 9,204 of November 23, 2017, "[...] with the objective to support the universalization of high-speed internet access and to promote the pedagogical use of digital technologies in basic education" (BRASIL, 2017, p. 1, our translation), an objective in agreement with strategy 7.15 of the National Education Plan 2014-2024. To this end, there have been

[...] efforts from the country's organs and entities, states, the Federal District, municipalities, schools, *the business sector and the civil society* to ensure the necessary conditions for the insertion of technology as a

pedagogical tool for daily use in basic education public schools (BRASIL, 2017, p. 1, emphasis added, our translation.).

Article 8th of that same decree established the Advisory Committee of the Program for *Innovation and Connected Education*, coordinated by the Ministry of Education. Its members represented the following institutions: a) three representatives from the Ministry of Education; b) one representative from the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communications; c) one representative from the National Telecommunications Agency (Anatel); d) one representative from the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES); e) one representative from the National Council of Education Secretaries (CONSED); f) one representative from the National Union of Municipal Education Leaders (UNDIME); g) one representative from the Internet Steering Committee (CGI); i) two representatives from private entities and civil society organizations with recognized participation in the areas of education, technology and innovation, with the capacity to provide financial resources to the program's actions. As previously mentioned, the Center of Innovation for Brazilian Education (CIEB) and the Lemann Foundation were elected as representatives of the latter category. The CIEB acts as technical consultant of the Program (BRASIL, 2018).

In addition, the Management Committee would be in charge of implementing the program's objectives. These are based in four axes: 1) the training of professionals, who would be responsible both for the Local Innovation Plans, in the states and municipalities, and also act as articulators of these proposals in the areas of school management and the organization of didactic work in the "school floor"; 2) the offer of digital content to schools, in which two platforms stand out: the Integrated Platform, which provides digital educational content such as videos, infographics, games and animations, as well as other teaching resources; and the AVAMEC Platform, a virtual environment focused on education courses for educators and support for their needs regarding the Program, such as the elaboration of intervention and research projects, among others; 3) the investment in physical equipment for high-speed internet access, already initiated by means of a BNDES notice, whose implementation phase was in 2019, "[...] testing models and creating learning cases in different Brazilian realities" (BNDES, 2020, our translation); 4) technical and financial support to schools and education networks, by means of resources from the BNDES Social Fund and partner entities, either monetary, or in terms of availability of digital technologies, equipment, maintenance etc. (BRASIL, 2020a).

Its implementation would go through three phases, as stated in the ICE website:

(1) induction (2017 to 2018) for the construction and implementation of the Program, with goals established to reach 44.6% of basic education students; (2) expansion (2019 to 2021) of the goal to include 85% of basic education students and the beginning of result assessment; and (3) sustainability (2022 to 2024), by reaching 100% of basic education students, thus transforming the Program into a Public Policy for Innovation and Connected Education (BRASIL, 2020a, our translation).

For the purpose of implementing the Program, in April 2018 the Public Notice No. 001/2018 was published. It referred to the Public Call “BNDES – Connected Education – Implementation and Use of Digital Technologies in Education”, especially aimed at the constitution of infrastructure for broadband access in the networks and schools selected in the Notice, in addition to professional training and preparation of Local Innovation Plans. In the first group, the schools included were located in the states of Goiás, Minas Gerais, Sergipe and Tocantins, for implementation in 2019. In 2019, the schools from the networks of the states of Bahia and Paraná were added, for implementation in 2020 (BNDES, 2020).

In order to comply with the provisions of Public Notice No. 001/2018, in addition to BNDES and CIEB, the Itaú Cultural Foundation also joined the operational group. Together with the Lemann Foundation, each of the members of the group provided 10 million reais until 2019. They complemented the resources given by the federal government, through the BNDES Social Fund, the latter in the order of 22 million reais (BNDES, 2019). Another significant element to understand the participation of private entities in the dynamics of the Program is the role played by CIEB, provided in item 6.3 of Public Notice No. 001/2018, regarding the Public Call “BNDES – Connected Education – Implementation and Use of Digital Technologies in Education”:

BNDES will receive technical support from the *Center of Innovation for Brazilian Education* – CIEB, for the execution of the Public Call activities provided for in this Notice; monitoring and evaluation activities; and for the implementation of the projects selected, including guidance for the possible allocation of financial resources, goods and services provided from partners of the private sector,

according to the schedule to be defined together with the education networks selected (BNDES, 2018, p. 7, emphasis added, our translation).

The CIEB, as we have already commented, is composed of a pool of companies from the third sector, including the Lemann Foundation and the Itaú Cultural Foundation. These institutions may be seen as partners, with broad participation in decision-making processes regarding the direction and form of implementation of the Program. In addition, item 6.6 of the Notice included the appointment of a “[...] Management Committee for the Public Call projects, with six members, three of them employees of the Bank and up to three representatives appointed by MEC, CIEB, and private entities, respectively” (BNDES, 2018, p. 8, our translation). In other words, this emphasizes the *entrepreneurialism of the public fund*. As Harvey explains:

The main characteristic of the new entrepreneurialism is the notion of “public-private partnership”, in which traditional local demands are integrated with the use of local public authorities, with a view to attract external funding sources, new direct investments, or new sources of employment. [...] that public-private partnership activity is essentially entrepreneurial because its execution and conception are speculative [...]. In many cases, that meant that the public sector took the risks, while the private sector took on the benefits [...] (HARVEY, 1996, p. 52-53, our translation).

Other elements may attest the perspective of the capitalist private interest in the Program design, in order to create new opportunities of access to public funds – despite the disbursement to be made by the partner entities. Heinsfeld and Pichetola (2019) reveal one of these elements, when assessing the vision of technology that permeates the Program for Innovation and Connected Education. With reference to the objectives and guidelines of the ICE, they note the instrumental view of technology with the “[...] use of the word tool [that], once again, goes back to the perception of technology as a technical artifact, uncritically and decontextualized from the sociocultural scenario in which it is inserted” (HEINSFELD; PICHETOLA, 2019, p. 12, our translation). On the one hand, there is an evident concern with the products (goods and services), which are the quantity of equipment and access points. On the other hand, the concern relates to what is considered essential for the pedagogical use of technology,

namely broadband (high-speed internet connection) and the networked operation of computers.

The authors also state that

[...] there is a description of the vision of technology as an agent of education transformation. In addition to a close relationship with a deterministic view, there is the displacement of technology to the subject of action in the formulation: the technology that is capable of transforming education, in place of the relationship between the uses the actors make of the teaching and learning process and their relationship with their society and culture. Thus, it focuses not only on the emptying of these actors' actions, but also on the simplification and reductionism of the formative processes (BARRETO, 2017 *apud* HEINSFELD; PICHETOLA, 2019, p. 13, our translation).

Finally, and trying to understand the elements underlying the possible disputes around the ICE, the authors meet the assumptions developed in this paper, by addressing “[...] the issue of the *commodification* and the *entrepreneurialism of education policies* as a possible explanation for the dispute over space among the perceptions of technology found in [legal] texts” (HEINSFELD; PICHETOLA, 2019, p. 15, emphasis added, our translation), as in the ICE.

Towards a conclusion or providing elements to advance the discussion

As the Program for Innovation and Connected Education is still ongoing – in fact, the first actions were taken, as previously seen, in 2018 – there are still many questions about what will happen in the future. Among other issues, we especially highlight the relationship between the State (including the three governmental spheres) and the private entities, directly involved with the ideological, operational and financial management of the ICE, as is the case of the Lemann Foundation.

If we start by considering the conditions imposed on capitalism from the 1970s on, we observe that we are going through a structural crisis of great proportions, in which moments of economic recovery, generally restricted to specific regions and sectors, merge with the advancement of their historically

known ailments, by emphasizing the structural limits placed on the accumulation process. One of the structural problems of the capital system, as Mészáros (1995) declares, is the contradiction, which is insoluble within the limits of the system itself, between *production* and *consumption*. If, under the baton of capital, we achieve, socially speaking, effective conditions of production on a scale never before reached by humanity, we reproduce, at the same time, social conditions of existence, for most individuals, which prevent them from having access to consumption – therefore, to the process of realizing value.

“In all these matters the totalizing role of the modern state is vital”, says Mészáros (1995, p. 52). At the same time that it assumes its functions as provider of effectively existing needs, such as education for all, the State creates conditions for the consumption of a wide range of goods of material (in the ICE, computers, various electronic components etc.) and immaterial nature (advisories, production of educational software, training courses, among others). If this totalizing function has been exercised by the modern State since its birth, what makes its relationship with capital specific, dialectically established, in a context of structural crisis, particularly when dealing with the Lemann Foundation?

Fundamental elements of the problem are the extension and verticalization of public-private partnerships already established in the educational field, as attested by Peroni and De Oliveira (2019), and which Oliveira (2019) defines as the advance of the *publicization of the business logic* and the *entrepreneurialism of the public space*. We thus believe that the Lemann Foundation is an important component to elucidate, on the one hand, to what extent the extra-economic mechanisms provided by the State become increasingly necessary, in the structural crisis, currently aggravated by a serious sanitary emergency, in the ever-expanded process of capitalist accumulation. On the other hand, we attest, by means of the ICE, once again, the Lemann Foundation’s capillarity and coordinated action, both in the business world and in the broader social scope, by using various mechanisms, ranging from the ‘school floor’ to the most decisive hierarchical spheres of the State. This also leads us to challenge the determinants of this direct and incisive action by the capital, which, in many moments, goes beyond the control of the world of production, finance and programs, such as the ICE. The capital is shown as the *totalizing direction of society*, therefore, as an action that moves towards assuming even more tasks of the State’s exclusive political competence.

In order to complement our views, we should mention the special role that the ICE has been currently playing, given the relevance that information and communication technologies (ICT) have assumed, particularly as of the beginning of 2020, when we were suddenly forced to deal with a pandemic, with

devastating consequences for schooling, especially in public institutions. We would like to pose two questions for further discussions: what may be expected from a program such as the ICE, whose design strengthens the *publicization of the business logic* and the *entrepreneurialism of the public space*, which deepens the contribution to the precarious access to knowledge? At the same time, how may we view a didactic work organization which, mediated by this technological configuration, is an allied in our students' integral formation?

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