



## Article

# Discourses about Human Sciences according to Bolsonaroism: from repetition to practice

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## Abstract

In this paper we analyze discourses about Human Sciences within the social and political movement called *Bolsonarism* (movement in favor of the Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro). Our objective is to relate repetitions of specific truths about this area to practices revealed by institutional attacks that minimize this field of knowledge and the subjects who work with it. Taking it into consideration, we support this work with theoretical perspectives proposed by Michel Foucault about enunciation, discourse, discourse practice, discourse formation, power, knowledge and truth. The *corpus* of this work surrounds a variety of enunciations made by the president Bolsonaro, former education ministers and further supporters, which rebounded on digital medium. The study has a descriptive-qualitative character, with predominating qualitative approaches. Our analysis allows to perceive that the repetition of adverse discourses about Human Sciences reveals a project of unilateral and authoritarian power which primarily aims to hinder a raising of subjects with critical opinions that may counteract the wills of a *bolsonarist* practical discourse. As it conceives this knowledge field as a target to be aimed, as a potential enemy, the *bolsonarist* project proposes to mischaracterize Human Sciences' researches along the public opinion and, therefore, to scrap educational institutions and impoverish scientific research.

**Keywords:** Discourse analysis, Human Science, Political power, Bolsonaroism.

## Introduction

The objective of this article is to analyze discourses about Human Sciences in the mainstay of the social and political movement that emerges with the presidential election of the candidate Jair Bolsonaro, in order to articulate the recurrence of certain truths about this field of knowledge with the government's

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dismantling policy in relation to scientific research in this area. In this text, we consider that discourse is a practice that builds the objects of which it speaks and, therefore, manages certain political choices and attitudes. In other terms, the incisive attack on the area of Human Sciences, a term that extends beyond what is institutionalized in the list of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) and aggregates related fields, materializes in specific actions to dismantle studies carried out in this area, from threats and harassment of researchers, from cuts in resources and financial incentives. In this sense, it is not just a rhetorical and electoral practice in which the candidate Jair Bolsonaro clung to win votes from more conservative sectors of society, but a political project that is based on certain strategies of knowledge and power, meticulously designed to undermine the construction of a historically settled field of knowledge.

Jair Bolsonaro, even after decades as a parliamentarian, has never had any expressiveness in the constitution of approving projects and effective participation in committees. As a deputy was known for polemics, which materialized in personal attacks to colleagues, as in the episode of deputy Mrs. Maria do Rosario (PT/RS), in which the politician asserted "no rape, because you do not deserve", in interviews on television shows, such as Superpop (Redetv), presented by Luciana Gimenez, in which misogyny, racism and homophobia prevailed, in spite of the appeal for torture, While voting in favor of the impeachment President Dilma Rousseff, on April 11, 2016. Add to that a myriad of statements made in other interviews and posts on social media, in which the then deputy, at that time a candidate and today president, let his character flow, considered by many to be sincere and averse to the dictatorship of the politically correct. This path allows us to think about how this politician built an image of himself favorable to those who identify themselves with supposedly anti-system, authentic, and courageous rhetoric.

In the proposal for the government plan of candidate Bolsonaro, submitted to the Superior Electoral Court (TSE), for the 2018 election, one reads, right in the presentation: "We propose a decent government, unlike anything that has thrown us into an ethical, moral and fiscal crisis. A government without give-and-take, without spurious deals "(GOVERNMENT PLAN PROPOSAL, 2018, not paged). The revolutionary tone adopted in the plan ("different from all that") is reiterated by the mimicking that make up Bolsonaroism within a political position allied with the extreme right, such as nationalism ("Brazil Above Everything"), militarism, authoritarianism, conservatism ("God Above Everyone") and combating an alleged leftist enemy, portrayed in the PT image, and a curious flirtation with neoliberalism, based on the maxim "More Brazil, Less Brasília" and the call for privatizations. In relation to education, the government plan shows us that the following is a concern of the partisan ticket headed by Bolsonaro: "Content and teaching methods need to be changed. More mathematics, more science and Portuguese, **without indoctrination and early sexualization**. (GOVERNMENT PLAN PROPOSAL, 2018, emphasis added). In another part of the plan, we come across the passage: "[...] This includes literacy, eliminating Paulo Freire's ideology [...] One of the current evils is strong indoctrination". The repetition of the term indoctrination, accompanied by an aversion to Paulo Freire and the fight against the so-called "precocious sexualization" is located on the same plane of discourse: the danger arising from observations on society, which include the debate on systems of power (Paulo Freire) and the wide discussion on sexuality ("early sexualization"). Such reflections are spearheaded by the indoctrination mantra, through which politically engaged teachers are assumed to

misrepresent children's subjectivities and make them child prophets of perverse ideologies such as communism and socialism.

This last construction, highlighted here, permeates the entire attack on the Human Sciences, notably in the context of higher education, in view of the harmful recognition of the indoctrination they have brought. From that point on, there has been an increasing series of measures that aims to turn school into a supposedly neutral space about themes that are "ideological", as if this were possible, through organized movements like Non-Partisan Schools, the creation of the ghost of "Gender ideology" and, at the same time, the emphasis on civil-military schools as an ideal alternative for the achievement of a power project that prioritizes training unrelated to any issues that may question established truths. Therefore, we see, in this brief resumption, how cut this out Human Sciences, to some extent, constitute the enemy to be fought. The strategies demanded for this purpose will be better described in the subsequent topics.

We shall consider the object of analysis of this study from the perspective of the French thinker Michel Foucault, from the concepts of discourse, statement, discursive formation, discursive practice, knowledge, power and truth. The reflections of this author prove to be useful for thinking about the historical conditions that make certain types of discourse emerge in a certain time and place, as well as the knowledge-power strategies mobilized in the construction of these discourses. From a methodological point of view, it is a descriptive-interpretative study, of qualitative nature.

On the following sections, we pursue the investigative path to, at first discuss, in a more global way, the scenario of education in the scope of Bolsonaroism and later, we analyzed the construction of truths about the Human Sciences and their denial in the constitution of Bolsonaroist discursive practice. In the last section, we tried to weave an end effect to the concerns set out here.

### **On the sign of Bolsonaroism: education as a target**

Brasilia, April 26, 2019. The President Bolsonaro announced through his Twitter account, reported speech: that he would perform cuts in higher education in the Humanities with the justification that "the role of government is to respect the taxpayer's money, teaching young people to read, write and do math and then get a job that generates income for the person and well-being for the family, that improves the society around them", paraphrasing their Minister of Education, Abraham Weintraub. In this statement, the Federal Government demonstrates the seriousness of the project for Brazilian education, that is, what young people need is to learn to read, write, count and find a job to support their families. That is to say, a purely utilitarian formation that generates as a corollary the rapid insertion in the job market. When Foucault (2008) conceptualizes the term discourse, he does it based on the relationship with the notion of statement. According to the French author, the discourse is formed by a set of statements that derive from the same discursive formation. The statement is, therefore, the atom of discourse, the minimum unit of analysis that is expressed in the form of a function crossing different domains. This function is formed by the following properties: i) referential - it refers to the laws of possibility that make the statement emerge as a singular element; ii) subject position - conceived not as the author subject, nor the empirical subject, but as a discursive position that occupies a given statement; iii) associated domain - refers to the

relationship between the statement and the words said before and others yet to be formulated; iv) repeatable materiality - consists of a substance, a support, on a date that allows the statement to come to light.

In the case of Bolsonaro's *tweet*, we understand that the referential refers to the emergency conditions of the statement endowed with a given singularity. These conditions are related to the president's political alignment and, therefore, to a specific conception about education that, in turn, outlines a discursive position, according to which the school must fulfill an essentially instrumental role, which means the erasure of Human Sciences. Such a statement is not new, as it aligns with a network of sayings produced in other historical moments. Just think, for example, of the educational reforms undertaken during the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964-1985), whose social imagery advocated order in a regime with a clear tendency to discipline society (MARTINS, 2014). Finally, the statement is inserted in a repeatable materiality through the Twitter platform, which not only constitutes a support for the enunciative outburst, but a mutation in the ways of the political subject to enunciate in contemporary times, more precisely from the brevity and certain fluidity of political discourse today.

Through a retroactive look, from the examination of some practices and speeches of cut this out Bolsonaro government, we notice that the attack on Human Sciences frames a discursive repetition and starts in specific actions to combat this area of knowledge as an evil to be eradicated, as proposed by the government plan. According to a report from the State of São Paulo, "the Ministry of Education (MEC) presented two new proposals for the area: a bill that provides for the right to home education and a presidential decree that institutes the National Literacy Policy" (O STATE OF S. PAULO, 2019, not paged). In fact, the MEC was more recognized due to the contingency of funds and the exchange of Ministers, who reverberated Bolsonaro's ideological content around this issue, than for projects that effectively improved education. Both Vélez Rodríguez and Abraham Weintraub are part of the Olavist group that believes that Western education is impregnated by "cultural Marxism"<sup>3</sup>

The influence of the writer and astrologer Olavo de Carvalho is very present in the construction of Bolsonarism, as the so-called "new right" or "radical right", according to Santos and Tanscheit (2019), converge neoliberalism and authoritarianism in an unprecedented way. The authors emphasize that this curious symbiosis is nuanced by the emergence of a political moralization of the public debate and the appeal to the market as the preponderant element in the conduct of the economy, to the detriment of the State. To corroborate this moralization, the presence of Olavo de Carvalho, mostly called "Bolsonaro's guru" is a central part. The writer, although residing in the United States, is active in social networks and is

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<sup>3</sup> It is an argument defended by Oliveira (2020) in one of the chapters of the work: From fake to the fact: (DES) bringing up to date Bolsonaro (2020), of that the Olavist is based in a cartesian radicalization of a "epistemological regimen that possess deep roots in the history of the Western epistemology" (OLIVEIRA, 2020, p. 84, our translation). The author reminds that Cartesianism left determinative influences in the history of modern sciences. Therefore, the Olavist negationism is not fruit of a collective insanity that came to disturb the order and, by the way, it is already present in the high echelon of Bolsonaro's government. In its objective to search an internal coherence of this negationist speech, Oliveira perceived that "if we want to understand what is happening in Brazil, we need to point out Olavism in the long temporality, reconstructing the trajectory of the topical and semantic authority of the body throughout the last twenty-five centuries" (OLIVEIRA, 2020, p. 96).

successful with the right-wing Internet users, which is expressed by the dizzying growth in the sales of his books, since the time of Bolsonaro's campaign. In his writings and courses, he speaks frankly on topics such as abortion and homosexuality, as well as endorses the thesis that the left is infiltrated in all sectors of society and is part of a global plan of domination, through the so-called "cultural Marxism". About this, Curcino (2019) analyzes the president's lives and understands that the recurrence of books written by the aforementioned author is situated in the list of books recommended by this politician, as well as the Bible and the memoir of Colonel Brilhante Ustra. In Bolsonaro's first pronouncement, as president, Curcino (2019, p. 486) believes that the manifest anti-leftism and "the conspiracy allusion as to the country's fate confirm this reference to Olavo de Carvalho, essential and of origin, but not verbalized as such, not named by name, not particularly sporting. "

The fight against the "cultural Marxism" that Olavism sees in Western science is based on the "denial of scientific procedure through the overlapping of experience and testimony to methodological mediation [...], as one of the main characteristics of the ideological positioning we have learned to call 'Bolsonarism'" (OLIVEIRA, 2020, p. 82, emphasis added). Thus, according to the Olavists negationist ideas, "direct observation, through which the free thinker experiences reality with his own body, without being conditioned by any type of methodological mediation, is the only possible way of producing true knowledge" (OLIVEIRA, 2020, p. 84)

This perspective becomes possible and gains resonance in contemporary society, among other issues, thanks to the context of the so-called post-truth, a term chosen as the word of the year by the *Oxford Dictionary* in 2016, and designates a movement in which the truth ceases to be true to be produced in the support of legitimizing instances of power and enters the field of personal conviction and the positioning of each one. Thus, it is a desire for truth that, in the "post-truth", is guided by a movement that "would be confused with the truth itself and that would serve, at least in part, to explain the great disposition of the subjects for the dissemination of opinions based on fake news or fragile information" (SEIXAS, 2018, p.124). Therefore, there is an open ground for the dissemination of ideas that, although they do not find methodological and scientific support, are easily applied in the minds of many people, leading to an "alternative" and fragile knowledge of reality.

Therefore, it is this generic and peripheral knowledge that we see in practice in the education project of Bolsonarism, based on an idea of combating the "Freirian ideology"<sup>4</sup> that, according to an article published by Huffpost, would represent, for

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<sup>4</sup> Paulo Freire (1921-1997), Brazilian educator and philosopher, "is considered one of the main thinkers of the history of world pedagogy, having influenced critical pedagogy. His practice was based on the premise that the student would assimilate the object making its own way, and not following one already built. Paulo Freire won 41 honorary doctorate titles from universities such as Harvard, Cambridge and Oxford. The educator was arrested in 1964, lived in Chile during exile and toured several countries, taking his literacy model. In 1979, with the publication of the Amnesty Law, the philosopher returned to Brazil." Available in: <<https://istoe.com.br/bolsonaristas-nao-querem-paulo-freire-patrono-da-educacao/>> "Freire is the only Brazilian author who appears in the list of the 100 most requested books by English-speaking universities. The work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is the third most cited in the field of science. It is studied at the top 20 universities on the planet. At the end of last year (2018), he was appointed as one of the leading educators of humanity by the French publication *Revue Internationale d'Éducation de Sèvres*". Available at: [https://www.huffpostbrasil.com/entry/paulo-freire-energumeno\\_br\\_5df7d8fae4b0ae01a1e51db2](https://www.huffpostbrasil.com/entry/paulo-freire-energumeno_br_5df7d8fae4b0ae01a1e51db2) Accessed: 02 Jul. 2020.

Bolsonaro, the "maximum symbol of the Working Party management failure that started when the tombstone of education was built, which is down there at the entrance of MEC, which is this mural of Paulo Freire. It represents this total and absolute failure" (BOLSONARO, 2019, s.p.). His ideology, therefore, would be part of this scientific universe, driven by this "cultural Marxism" that represents, in Brazil, among other biases, a "Paulo Freire philosophy of life, this energetic, idol of the left" (BOLSONARO, 2019, not paged) and, for this reason, if he were elected President, he would enter the MEC "with a flamethrower to get Paulo Freire out of there" (HUFFPOST, 2019, not paged).

In fact, we see a real project of education within the MEC itself when the president cut spending on Universities and Federal Institutes, when Bolsonaro promised to review the history books in relation to the 1964 civil-military coup and the Military Dictatorship that was installed in the country, when he puts at the head of such an important Ministry, ministers who are ideologically resentful and whose interests are above the Brazilian scientific and school community, when he is totally inept in the face of the role of education in the face of the health crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic, with regard to alternative policies for teaching in the face of this reality and so many other issues that demonstrate a Ministry of Education completely disconnected from reality and from real sector need for the country.

Thus, it becomes evident a political knowledge that leads to a project of power, which aims to outline the gestures, attitudes, behaviors, habits and discourses made by the physical and social body (MACHADO, 1998). These are basic aspects of the birth and exercise of micro-powers that, although they are not creations of the State, depart from it and are constituted from the notions of political actors who are at the top of the state hierarchy and, in a way, they end up determining how, "the powers are exercised at different levels and at different points in the social network even if, in this complex, the micro-powers exist integrated or not to the State" (MACHADO, 1998, p. VIII, emphasis added).

Therefore, the teaching model of Bolsonaroism aims to break with an institutional order in relation to education or, in other words, with a leftist ideology whose main project, according to the Bolsonaroist discourse, is the sexualization of children in basic education, the communist political activism in Higher Education and the ideological bias in scientific research. For this reason, he created the fake news of the gay kit, the resurgence of the Escola Sem Partido project<sup>5</sup> and bet on a pseudo methodological neutrality that, through OLAVISM, aims to lead the subjects to a personal experience, through which their own conclusions are drawn from reality and truth from an individual emancipation, based on a "voluntary action by free thinkers who are able to free themselves from the influence of cultural Marxism, building knowledge based on direct and independent observation" (OLIVEIRA, 2020, p. 84, emphasis added).

Education, under Bolsonaroism, is limited to "liberating" Brazil from communist ideology, disseminated by "cultural Marxism". In this regard, Weintraub's speech at the appalling ministerial meeting of April 22, 2020, at the time, Minister of Education

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<sup>5</sup> "Bolsonaro lies when he says that Haddad created the 'gay kit'", headlined by the newspaper El País, available in: <https: brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/10/12/politica/1539356381\_052616.html=">.</https:> About the School Without Party Project: <https: www.politize.com.br/projeto-escola-sem-partido/">.<https:educacaointegral.org.br/reportagens/especialistas-desconstroem-os-5-principais-argumentos-escola-sem-partido/"> Access: 02 Jul.</https:> </https:> 2020

of the Bolsonaro government, reverberates not only what his management at the head of the portfolio meant, that is, without any important project for the Brazilian education and involved with numerous controversies that only demonstrated its ideological bias, contaminating all the actions of the MEC. Even though, above all, that it was not just a technical lack of preparation, but a conviction that he was doing the right thing, freeing the people from Paulo Freire's ideology; therefore, educational projects were not necessary, since the great cry of the Brazilian population would be for freedom.

Incidentally, contrary to his discourse of militarization of basic education, President Bolsonaro chose, for the Ministry of Education, two names linked to the ideological wing of the Olavist instead of giving preference to military personnel with a curriculum to match the portfolio. Ricardo Vélez Rodríguez and Abraham Weintraub, both former Ministers of the Bolsonaro government, became known much more for the controversies in which they got involved than for educational measures for the country.<sup>6</sup> In this context, the Human Sciences, according to the statement produced by Weintraub, in an interview with the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo*, would be at the base of what he called "babble", when referring to the contingency of funds, in April 2019. According to the ex-minister, "Universities that, instead of looking for academic performance, are making a mess, will have reduced funds" (WEINTRAUB, 2019, not paged). The blackmail of the occupier of the MEC chair is based on a purely political-ideological bias in the distribution of resources, by using a little obscure criterion in the realization of the funds that are necessary to fund universities.

The apparent opacity of the term "shambles" can be linked to the indoctrination plan that Bolsonaro's government proposal spoke of in the 2018 campaign. Cutting resources would be a punitive way of exercising power over institutions, in a horizontal and anti-democratic manner. According to Foucault (1999), every power relationship is nuanced in an effect of knowledge. This is conceived as what can be said within a discursive practice. Understanding that this, according to Foucault (2008), constitutes a set of rules that enables the conditions of existence of the enunciative function, it is imperative to think that the knowledge that guides Weintraub's attack rests on the need to combat the existing indoctrination in universities, place where the planting of marijuana and the production of synthetic drugs prevailed, as pointed out by the aforementioned former minister in an audience at the Chamber of Deputies in December 2019. Thus, knowledge - the university is a pernicious place - brings together power relations - it is necessary to punish them - through a constraint on resources that, as we saw, proved to be a stratagem to generate a hostile and exhausting climate. However, it is a coherent relationship with what must be said within the Bolsonaroist discursive practice and the dread in relation to dissidents, to those who do not agree with this political position.

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<sup>6</sup> Weintraub left the Bolsonaro government under a vast criticism, accusations to have run away from the country to run away from a possible arrest for the STF in the inquiry regarding fake news and without obtaining the Congress approval of his main project for the education, *Future-se*. Available in: <<https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2020/06/25/weintraub-deixa-saldo-negativo-e-projeto-sem-perspectiva-no-congresso.htm>> Access in: 02 jul. 2020.

## The Bolsonaroist truth about the Humanities

The Olavists ideological project, within the discursive practice of Bolsonaroism, has been reverberated by the Bolsonaro government in actions that demonstrate a real disinterest in the Humanities. Thus, "an ordinance from the MCTI (Ministry of Science, Technologies, Innovations and Communications) published in March 2020 [...], excluded the Human Sciences from the priorities of research projects at CNPq (National Council for Scientific and Technological Development) until 2023" (SIMON, 2020, s.p). It is not just an isolated measure, but part of a real dismantling of Humanities promoted by the Ministry of Education and which aims, among other issues, to reduce the "research funding mechanisms in the area" (SIMON, 2020, s.p.). Therefore, following this thought, Capes established a gigantic cut in scholarships distributed in postgraduate courses that, according to the new rules, will "cut benefits even from universities and courses considered to be of excellence in the country" (SIMON, 2020, s.p.) As a dramatic example of this new reality we have the....

Unicamp (State University of Campinas), which, according to the Folha University Ranking (RUF), shares with USP (University of São Paulo) the top ranking of the best universities in Brazil. The electrical engineering program will be the most affected. The course, which has a score of 6 on a scale that goes up to 7 in the concept of Capes itself, will have 40 fewer scholarships: 21 for the doctorate and 19 for the master's (SIMON, 2020, not paged)

The reduction of scholarships for graduate students, in this sense, converges with the removal of Human Sciences from CNPq list of research priorities, as we showed earlier and reveals that "the changes in the agencies are in line with the vision of the government that the promotion of science must give immediate return" (SIMON, 2020, not paged). Now, according to Bolsonaro, this "immediate" return does not concern the areas of Humanities, since the great need of the country, according to his speech, focuses on obtaining seasonal knowledge that guarantees the family's livelihood. There is no concern with quality in relation to critical thinking, considering that, according to their understanding, there is "a certain fetish on the part of the kids to have a diploma. It's good? Yes, we will have our masters, our doctors, yes. But if you put something technical in high school, you improve our economy" (BOLSONARO, 2018, not paged).

In this interview with *Jornal Nacional*, during the 2018 electoral campaign, the then candidate Bolsonaro explains an enunciative position about Higher Education, especially regarding Humanities, considering that, in his "concern" with the economy, the solution would come from technical and vocational courses in basic education. However, given the total lack of projects for this school modality, we can say that his speech was reduced to a purely electoral strategy, which aims to show a project of complete abandonment of Brazilian science by the Federal Government. In other words, there is no interest in higher education and, science is not important for the President of the Republic, especially in the Humanities area, since the intention of Bolsonaro Government is to invest "more resources for real research and not those whose standards teach [...] *promiscuity*" as reiterated the president's son Carlos Bolsonaro, on a *Twitter* post, on September 22, 2019.



Also according to Carlos Bolsonaro, "the militants are losing resources of indoctrination so that the Brazilians who take the studies seriously can give results and take off our country in the international condition of mockery in research". We see, in this statement, once again the repetition of the term indoctrination and the fact that it is necessary to reduce the resources for such an undertaking, the researchers would be militants and the research would be vexing. To corroborate this discursive positioning, the president's son shows a photo of a banner from a work presented at the XVI Brazilian Congress on Human Sexuality, which deals with anal sex. The discursive strategy is nuanced by a moralizing debate that inserts the theme within the scope of the joke, in order to appeal to Internet users for the unrestricted defense of austerity in the area of Human Sciences and investment in other fields, considered priority.

In addition, we track the recurrence around the argument that not supporting a certain type of research, considered irrelevant within the reach of the conservative posture, would be an appropriate way of applying public resources for what this portion considers essential, thus producing the effect that people are participating in the management. In a post on April 26, 2019, Bolsonaro thus commented on Twitter:.. "Minister of Education Abraham Weintraub considers decentralizing investment in philosophy and sociology faculties (Human Sciences areas). Students already enrolled will not be affected. The goal is to focus on areas that generate immediate return to the taxpayer, such as: veterinary, engineering and medicine ". The fact is that the position that President Bolsonaro enunciates, encapsulating decentralization in the Humanities area, under the argument that it is necessary to inject resources in other areas, shows us the junction between knowledge (Human Sciences are dispensable) and a power (we need to reduce them). In this position, the fiscal issue comes as a subterfuge to try to justify the prediction of areas that are potentially dangerous for the Bolsonaroist political project.

Thus, the Human Sciences are so questioned, because they move away from this immediate and utilitarian tonic that other areas can generate, that is to say "[...] knowledge whose essential value is completely disconnected from any utilitarian purpose [...]" (ORDINE , 2016, p. 9). Still in the author's voice, "[...] it is no accident that in recent decades humanistic disciplines have come to be considered useless and have been marginalized not only in school and university curricula, but especially in government budgets" (ORDINE, 2016, p. 21).

These discourses are based on truths, seen by Foucault (1998), not as a transcendental and ineffable entity, but as a historical construction that does not exist outside power relations. In the voice of Foucault (1998, p. 12), "[...] the truth is of this world; it is produced in it thanks to multiple constraints and produces regulatory effects of power in it"<sup>7</sup>. To that extent, a homogenizing effect for a whole area of knowledge is produced, by means of a clipping of the real, for example, to be sanctioned for being outside the scope of a power project that does not deal with the different, with the opposite, with minorities. Even before assuming the Ministry of Education, Weintraub asserted, in a live transmission over the internet, that "[...] instead of universities in the Northeast keep on studying sociology, studying philosophy in the wild, [they should] study agronomy, in partnership with Israel "(WEINTRAUB, 2018, not paged). The focus once again is placed on the exchange of Human Sciences, conceived as useless, for a possible benefit arising from a more

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<sup>7</sup> Our Translation

technical formation and limited to the geographic context of the region, through a vision, at least reductionist, of what "the agreste" means and who might or might not be able to study philosophy and sociology. Therefore, the integral education that can make the subjects leave the technique is diminished, not allowing them to surpass the dominant utilitarianism, in order to find art, literature and other manifestations that give meaning to human existence.

In support of this context of dismantling the Human Sciences, we can mention the Future-se Program, launched on July 17, 2019, which, despite the "objective of giving greater financial autonomy to universities and institutes by promoting the capture of own resources and to entrepreneurship" (PORTAL DO MEC, 2019, emphasis added), it contemplates what Bolsonaro calls "new paths", that is, "a series of measures to increase the number of enrollments in professional and technological education by 80%" (PORTAL DO MEC, 2019, not paged, emphasis added), leaving Humanities outside the text.

In addition to providing investments in rural areas with increased access to the internet, Future-se prioritizes Civic-Military schools and encourages "family literacy, that is, family reading for children; National Literacy Policy: decree with new guidelines for the country's literacy, based on scientific evidence" (PORTAL DO MEC, Jul. 2019), showing a biased stance towards education, bearing in mind that, "when advancing in home education, Bolsonaro prioritizes 7 thousand instead of working for 45 millions"<sup>8</sup> (CAFARDO, 2019, not paged), because, in the evaluation of many specialists, the preference for this theme, besides being absurd, "given the amount of problems in schools, is grounded on a political explanation: homeschooling (family education) has become an agenda of the evangelical group, which helped to elect Bolsonaro" (CAFARDO, 2019, not paged).

According to the Brazilian Association of Political Science (ABCP), changing the rules for accessing public resources for research reveals a very serious situation and demonstrates that "the government has escalated in the pursuit of Human and Social Sciences and seeks to remove our conditions of research in the present and compromise the future, to the extent that they reach precisely those who are in the process of formation" (ABCP, 2020, not paged, emphasis added). By disqualifying the work of the Humanities, Bolsonaro stands up not against a communist militancy that, within the scope of this discursive positioning, believes in a leftist ideological conspiracy against an entire country, but, he disagrees with the purposes and benefits of Humanities and Social for Brazilian society, which in the field of health, for example, carry out research that "allows us to understand the different effects of Covid-19<sup>9</sup> and the public policies adopted on different populations" (ABCP, 2020, not paged). In this specific case, for purely ideological reasons, the Federal Government hinders scientific works that analyze "the consideration of social inequalities, patterns of circulation and vulnerability that demand research and advisory efforts for which Social Sciences and Humanities are fundamental." (ABCP, 2020, not paged).

<sup>8</sup> In Brazil, there are 45 million students in public schools and 7 thousand families prefer to educate their children at home. Available: <<https://www.terra.com.br/noticias/educacao/ao-avancar-no-ensino-domiciliar-bolsonaro-prioriza-7-mil-em-vez-de-trabalhar-para-45-milhoes,90ffd9f6c72da49b96570fc30aaf39f33s9vyad2.html>> Access: 01 Jul. </https:> 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Name of the illness, popularly known as Coronavirus, caused by the virus "Sars-Cov-2", which took the World Health Organization to declare a pandemic state on March 11, 2020. Available: <<https://g1.globo.com/bemestar/coronavirus/noticia/2020/03/11/oms-declara-pandemia-de-coronavirus.ghtml>> Access: 02 Jul. </https:> 2020;

In this way, Bolsonaro government puts its political/ideological interests above the common good of the Brazilian population and, thereby, reveals its political knowledge, forging a reality of national security alert against potential enemies, infiltrating the country to overthrow him from power and install a totalitarian communist left regime<sup>10</sup>, causing a polarization, not as a natural action/reaction between two political specters that face each other, but a necessary engendering for a singular discursive practice to be possible, visible and applicable, capable of echoing in society, guaranteeing the Bolsonaroism, the feeling and the certainty that there is an ideological war and, with that, can constitute a digital army of civilians on the front line, fighting against the robbery, since now the "people" are in power.

These are perceptions that allow us, through an archaeological analysis, to classify Bolsonaroism as a discursive practice based on real data and not based on the memory or conscience of men, but in a real game, where there is a "field of the different practices in which it finds, at the same time, its specification, its functions and the network of its dependencies [...], in which we would have to analyze the formation and transformations of a knowledge "(FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 218). According to Foucault (2008), the problem does not turn to the birth of a revolutionary consciousness, or what were the economic and theoretical influences, as the genesis of that consciousness, but, for "archaeological remains", that make us observe how it is formed "A discursive practice and revolutionary knowledge that are involved in behaviors and strategies, that give rise to a theory of society and that operate the interference and the mutual transformation of each other" (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 218).

In order to understand archeology, it is necessary to go back to the French philosopher's criticism of the history of ideas, allowing Foucault (2008) to delineate his archaeological method, through which a specific way of writing history is sought from four basic points: the novelty in not seeking thought or any abstract form in the discourse, but, analyzing it from itself as a practice which is governed by specific rules; the analysis of the contradictions and not the continuity of the discourse always preceded by a previous one, that is, its specificity and its set of rules are irreducible to any other; the concern with comparative descriptions, which have no reference to the work, nor the premise of a founding subject who outlines it and as a principle of it is unity; finally, archeology seeks to demarcate transformations and "does not seek to reconstitute what could be thought, desired, aimed at, experienced, desired by men at the very moment when they delivered the discourse" (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 158). In fact, Foucault (2008) states that it is not a repetition of what has already been said, as if looking for the origin of the discourse, but it is rather about carrying out a rewriting that, in the form of externality, proposes "a regulated transformation of what has already been written. It is not a return to the origin's own secret; it is the systematic description of an object-discourse" (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 158).

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<sup>10</sup> The book "From fake to the fact: (DES) bringing up to date Bolsonaro (2020)", organized by Bruna Stutz, Mateus Pereira and Valdeci Araujo, brings a collection of articles that approach these questions, detaching the pugnacious tone of Bolsonaro's discourse, the exaltation of the military regime and its practices of State violence, conspiracy as a rhetoric that aims to generate a climate of war, resurrecting communism as the enemy of the country's security through which Bolsonaro seeks to forge himself as a national and patriotic leader that will save Brazil from institutional collapse.

Thus, within it is discursive regularity, Bolsonaroism presents, precisely, a desire for truth which, in Foucault (1998), is a set of procedures that regulate the statements since it is production, law, distribution, circulation and functioning, making the "truth" connect "to systems of power, which produce and support it, and to the effects of power which it induces and which reproduces it. 'Regime of truth' "(FOUCAULT, 1998, p. 14)<sup>11</sup>. In this way, it is understood how the logic of Bolsonaroist knowledge is engendered in the institutions and in the society that it governs, because, in addition to a nation project, what enters the scene is a political practice that often goes against the real population needs. In Bolsonaroism, therefore, it is much more logical to defend Brazilian education against the influences of "cultural Marxism", than to implement public policies that guarantee, in the Bolsonaroist view, the continuity of the leftist logic implanted in Higher Education, especially in the Humanities dominated by communist militants, as Bolsonaro's discourse so often accused.

In his call for us to know the "truth", Bolsonaro rightly invites us to accept his discourse as true and beneficial for our lives and, with this, demonstrates his political bias as a knowledge that must be "known"<sup>12</sup> and lived by society. In this brief analysis of what his statements tell us about the way the President of the Republic deals with the Human Sciences, we must ask whether, in seeking this "truth", that Bolsonaroism intends to show us so that we are free, we would not be working to not knowing the truth and imprisoning us to your ideals.

### **The denial of Human Sciences as one of the discursive regularities of the Bolsonaroist power project**

Through the archaeological method, a positivity has the capacity to form objects, statements, conceptual games and strategies, considering that it is not a science, despite enabling it, but a knowledge (GIACOMONI; VARGAS, 2010). Therefore, "this analysis is not in the search of where knowledge should arrive, or where to start from; but it is rather interested in its historical and concrete production "(GIACOMONI; VARGAS, 2010, p. 128). Thus, we have seen from the inside of Bolsonaroism, as a discursive formation, that is, as a set of discursive regularities interviewed in a dispersion regime.

Understanding the function of utterances in a discursive practice is fundamental to understand the application of the Foucaultian archaeological method, as this analysis allows for a more comprehensive study, capable of orbiting the objects dispersed in their forms of distribution, that is, it describes the systems of dispersal. In this way, "in the case where it is possible to describe, among a certain number of utterances, a similar dispersion system", but also "in the case where among the objects, the types of utterance, the concepts, the thematic choices, can define a regularity [...] we will say, by convention, that it is a discursive formation "(FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 43)<sup>13</sup>. In this sense, "the conditions to which the elements of

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<sup>11</sup> Our Translation

<sup>12</sup> We highlighted this word because our intention was to draw attention not to the real knowledge of Bolsonaroist discourse, but to the way Bolsonaroism wishes to be seen in society, that is, a conservative reactionary force, based on moral values and Christians, in favor of a country free from leftist communist ideologies.

<sup>13</sup> Our Translation

this division are subject (objects, form of enunciation, concepts, thematic choices)" (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 43) will be called, by Foucault (2008), training rules, " which are conditions of existence (but also of coexistence, maintenance, modification and disappearance) in a given discursive distribution "(FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 43).

In the Bolsonarist discourse, we identified that there is a regularity that governs all the statements that are dispersed in it, each exercising a specific function within this formation, thus, the unity of Bolsonarism. For example, around the Military Dictatorship, a whole set of enunciations comes into operation to demarcate discursive limits, that is, what should or should not be refuted, pronounced and replicated, as well as how they should be worked within discourse. If a certain statement guarantees the logic of a war against the "system", corrupted by an enemy of the nation that conspires to install a communist regime in the country and, for that reason, we would need a strong leader and savior of the country, or a "Messiah", the President of the Republic himself, the only one who has not been corrupted in the midst of institutional chaos, so this statement fulfills its function, is in coherence with the law that governs the speech and, therefore, it is part of the Bolsonarist discursive formation. In this way, Human Sciences, specifically History, would have been written by leftist militants who tell what happened without sticking to the "suffocated truth" that General Brilhante Ustra spoke of, treated as "national hero" by Bolsonaro, but conceived as a "cruel torturer" of the military regime, both because of the victims' reports, as well as for all their historiographical knowledge on the subject, carried out mainly by the various research projects on the theme, developed in research groups at universities across the country.

Given that, Human Sciences, for the Bolsonarist discursive practice, constitute the enemy's rest, that is, the formation of a left-wing communist militancy, infiltrated in the higher courses of the Humanities, whose activists are disguised as teachers and students, generating debates, not to know the "truth" about the social situation and our history, especially about the 1964 coup and the military dictatorship installed in the country at that time, but to constitute a true paramilitary group and, with that, seize power, destroy democracy and install a Communist Regime in Brazil.

This makes sense the Olavists fight against "cultural Marxism" in Science in the West and, especially, in Brazil, as well as the aversion to authors like Paulo Freire, who in an issue of "Isto É Magazine"<sup>14</sup>, is considered by scholarship holders, as those who "instituted a 'critical Marxist method' when he introduced a model in which the student 'breaks the master's superior position, rebelling against the one who holds the knowledge'" (ISTO É, 2019, s.p). In the war against Communism, defended by Bolsonarism, it is necessary to "cleanse" the Human Sciences of this nefarious and subversive influence, impregnated in Brazilian Universities, where ...

The Freirean model of education is celebrated for the reversion, for the indiscipline, for the insubordination of the student before the teacher. The terrible situation of Brazilian education alone reveals the

<sup>14</sup> The related substance brought the defense of the Representative, Caroline de Toni (PSL-SC), to a Project of Law that foresees the withdrawal of the heading of Protector of the Brazilian Education, granted to the educator, Paulo Freire, in the year of 2012. The Law was sanctioned in 13 of April of that year, by then President Dilma Rousseff and can be conferred in the following electronic address: <<https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2012/04/16/paulo-freire-e-declarado-patrono-da-educacao-brasileira>> Access in: 02 jul. 2020.

catastrophic results of the adoption of this left-wing teaching platform (AGÊNCIA CÂMARA DE NOTÍCIAS, 2019, not paged).

The aforementioned discourse was held by Federal Deputy Heitor Freire (PSL-CE), author of the referred Bill, filed "in honor of professor' Olavo de Carvalho - Bolsonarist's guru" (ISTO É, 01 May 2019, emphasis added) and it shows us how the performance of Bolsonarism is effective, in the spheres of Power, to combat everything that it believes to be the result of the influence of "cultural Marxism" in Brazilian education, revealing the function of this statement (Human Sciences), which we are analyzing in the Bolsonarist discourse. Currently, and here we refer to the month of June 2020, the reality of the Ministry of Education - in this war that Bolsonarism declared against what it calls the "cultural Marxist" influence, whose main target is the Human Sciences - there is a desolation and an almost generalized ineffectiveness, precisely, in such a delicate moment due to the pandemic of the new Coronavirus, which paralyzed education across the country, harming millions of students. Without defining, for the moment, a name for the portfolio, what can be seen in the news is an arm wrestling between the ideological wing of Olavists, which defends a person linked to it is ideology and the military wing that prefers a technical name, in another chapter of this internal fight, under Bolsonaro government, for the command of MEC.

This context demonstrates that there is a power struggle within Bolsonarism itself. In fact, this is a reality in any government, regardless of the political and ideological spectrum that outlines it. In Bolsonarist knowledge, in addition to the discursive regularity that we have already presented, there is also this desire for truth, but, above all, for power, because, once it reaches it, it is necessary that its ideas are implanted, initiating a real battle, in the midst of society, so that it is legitimized and accepted by the majority of the population, considering that "power is not a natural object, a thing: it is a social practice and [...] historically constituted" (MACHADO, 1998, p. X) and, this constitution is not imposed by force, but by discourse, rhetoric and techniques that use the political moment and the historical context, seeking to link the figure of the enunciating subject to what the population desires at that moment. With Bolsonaro and his power project it was no different, that is, clinging to an anti-corruption discourse that sought to move away from the corrupted "system", to which the Congress and, later, the Federal Supreme Court, which are repeatedly attacked by Bolsonarists, Bolsonarism achieves this political vigor capable of imposing itself and dominating the current power game in Brazil.

The derogatory and denialist discourse around Human Sciences, in turn, is part of this political moment in the country, where Bolsonarism rules the meshes of power, not without resistance, it is true, but, once reaching the reins of this complex game, he manages to engender himself in the social body, spreading his ideas throughout society, obtaining adherence from one side and, as it is the practice of a democracy, repulsion from so many other subjects. It is, in this sense, that power cannot be seen as something that someone takes over, but, something that is penetrated "in everyday life and therefore can be characterized as micro-power or sub-power" (MACHADO, 1998, p. XII).

Thus, the microphysics of power causes an analytical shift in relation to its space and the level at which the study is carried out. For Machado (1998), power exists before and beyond the State as a network of powers distributed in a society

and brings us to the idea of an insurrection against the notion that points to the State as the central and unique organ of power.

In this logic, Bolsonaroism, alone, would not be able to achieve the "dominance" of the rules in the game of Brazilian political power, but, its victory was possible because its discourse found resonance in the social strata or, in other words, in a context of corruption scandals that, influenced by the main national media, pulverized the prestige and image of the political actors that thirteen years ago occupied the Presidency of the Republic. The "post-truth" era in which we live also counts in favor of Bolsonaroist discourse, enabling narratives that are not scientifically proven to be accepted by a large part of society and that deny what has historically been proven. We can mention, in this case, the anti-scientific stance adopted by President Bolsonaro during the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in the frictions created with the former ministers of Health, the failure to comply with the protective measures established by the World Health Organization (WHO), such as the mask use and social distancing. This shows a situation that not even medical knowledge, until then emulated a status of truth, escapes the impacts of the lie instituted by digital media which deny the number of infected, minimize the epidemic and, paradoxically, find miraculous elixirs for the cure.

Therefore, it is in this fertile and promising terrain, that the negationist discourse of science gains meaning, by which the suppression of the Humanities becomes "acceptable", because, once corrupted by the communist ideology, they have nothing good to offer and, therefore, should be excluded from our midst, causing funding cuts, shrinking of scholarship programs, the attacks and accusations made against Human Sciences, which are not only silently assisted by society, leaving out exceptions, but also defended and replicated in the social bosom by thousands of so many other subjects who identify with the discursive positions of Bolsonaroism.

## Conclusion

In one of his last letters to the Ministry of Education, Weintraub revoked the quota ordinance for blacks, indigenous people and people with disabilities, with a view to entering graduate courses. Although this action subsequently lost its validity, it is nonetheless consistent with everything he preached during his time in office. A week earlier, he stated in a video published on Twitter that "[...] I don't want a sociologist, anthropologist anymore, I don't want a philosopher with my money anymore" (WEINTRAUB, 2020, not paged). The use of the first person singular leads us to understand that we no longer have a collective saying, but the personal position of the then minister. The authoritarian character of the discourse derives from this, in view of the fact that the use of the public thing is biased by individual intent, by a tantrum that does not take into account the plural character of society.

This last speech reveals to us the *modus operandi* of Bolsonaroist discursive practice, as demonstrated throughout this writing. There is a repeatability of a discourse that manifests itself in practices that attack Human Sciences, especially higher education, as courses in this area are continually offended, discredited and scorned by public opinion. In this attempt, we call for the argument of a supposed fiscal adjustment, whose focus should reach the courses that give an immediate return to the population. This return is linked to the market and financial issue, according to the booklet of contemporary neoliberal policies. However, it is a

subterfuge demanding the Bolsonaroist discursive practice to build a power project that minimizes the emergence of critical conceptions, which would make the truths of this discursive practice, founded on relatively fragile pillars, creak. As Charlot (2019, p. 178) reminds us, barbarism occurs when we “do not recognize the human being as a singular and collective adventure, when we treat this extraordinary bio psycho cultural and historical organism as an object, machine, computer or religious or ideological puppet. Which a human being is”.

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