

## IMPACTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL REFORM: BNCC AND REPERCUSSIONS IN THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY



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### ABSTRACT

This text comes from reflections that took place in the Graduate Program in Educational and Social Intervention (PPGIES), UNEB DEDC Campus XI, Serrinha, Bahia, in the context of the umbrella project "Theoretical-political dimension of educational practices in the Territory of Sisal-Ba: social movements, Geography and teaching". It also articulates discussions held by PPGIES students, in the discipline Geographic Education and Learning, of the Graduate Program in Geography at FFP/UERJ. It presents some reflections on educational reforms in the context of the teaching of geography. In view of this, it intends to analyze the changes imposed by the neoliberal educational reforms, especially with regard to the fragmentation of the Geography discipline, removing contents that promote the critical formation of students. This is a study with a qualitative research approach, which has a bibliographic base, with analysis oriented to the movement of dialectics and totality. The theoretical discussion dialogues with the works of Santos (2008), Frigotto (2001), Saviani (2014), among others, to reflect on the social relations of production in capitalist society and the unfolding of such relations in education and, particularly, in the teaching of geography in Brazil, having in the context of neoliberal educational reforms, the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) as a driving force for the control of knowledge of geography in public schools in Brazil.

**Keywords:** Geography teaching, Educational reforms, BNCC.

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## INTRODUCTION

Brazilian education suffers from the process of commodification. It has been the target of interests of groups and organizations of an economic nature, which work with the structure of the State, to legitimize its ideology, establishing the direction of the national educational project. We can observe that the new education reforms, such as the Secondary Education Reform and the National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC), translate neoliberal interests and, in this case, education is treated as a commodity.

In view of this, the State, through various actions, enforces in practice an educational project aimed at the interests of the Brazilian bourgeoisie. It is not by chance that in recent years, there has been a great growth of some private organizations (Lemann Foundation, Ayrton Senna Institute, Itaú Unibanco Institute, Roberto Marinho Foundation, among others) developing actions, defining and operating projects and programs in Brazilian public education. What is observed is that the education of the working class is being thought, proposed and formatted by the bourgeoisie. This situation provokes us to question about which education for which subject is intended to be formed? For which society?

This scenario reveals the prevalence of capitalist interests both in public education and in other instances of society. In this sense, the National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC) establishes a process of verticalization and standardization of the school curriculum, outlining the architecture of an educational molding to meet market relations. In the case of the geography curriculum, the offensive of neoliberal capital is notorious, since the orchestrated attack against the socialization of scientific knowledge for the working class is revealed through the denial of important contents of geography in teaching. These are those who promote the inseparable relationship between man-nature-society, aiming at the critique of bourgeois society in this historical time, in order to exercise a conscious and purposeful position in the face of the problems that manifest themselves daily.

Thus, in order to produce an understanding of this reality, we will address the conditions by which the teaching of geography is organized, analyzing the attributes that advocate the rationalization of the contents of the teaching of geography in the BNCC, with the understanding that these do not collaborate for the critical and conscious formation of students. For Saviani (2014), thinking about teaching requires reflecting and understanding, from a theoretical-methodological point of view, those aspects that should value values that make up social practice. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate, contextualize and expand the relationship of the subjects in their space of action and, in view of this, to reflect on the

nature of the contents in the promotion of knowledge of social reality, as an essential condition in the formation of students' critical consciousness.

In this sense, the teaching of geography has an important role in the understanding of social realities, treated through the reading and interpretation of the production of space, materialized in different spatial arrangements. But how to deal with these realities in the teaching of geography, which, once fragmented, prevents the possible and necessary reflections on the understanding of socio-spatial arrangements? This question seeks to signal possible mistakes that compromise education and teaching, since neglecting education is to open doors to further widen socio-spatial inequalities, arising from class relations that reveal scenarios of disputes between the bourgeoisie and workers.

In the theoretical approach, the BNCC document proposes the integration, through school curricula that articulate in a flexible and diversified way, the mandatory and elective contents in dimensions such as science, work, languages, technology, culture, sport and their respective definitions of rights and learning objectives. In practice, the development of this proposal has not yet been clear, since there are a series of difficulties to organize and structure school realities and in them, teaching. In this sense, there are many disparities to be resolved between the structuring relations of the proposal and reality.

Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize that in the face of many challenges to be faced, the reform in the curriculum policy will not be able to promote profound transformations in the educational and social scenario of students. The most significant transformations will only be possible when there is the integration of public policies aimed at guaranteeing the rights of all, including educational policies and policies for youth, especially for black youth, who are in a context of historical marginalization in the country, often absent from the guarantee of the right to school education.

## **THE BNCC AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY**

For Santos (2008), knowledge about space implies the unveiling of the ways in which space is produced, so that the relations of production are established within other relations which make explicit the knowledge between man and nature acting through work, in the production of a given society. Thus, the production of space is a process that develops from the existing relations between the working class and the bourgeoisie. Hegemonic agents, and with it capital, impose the financialization of social relations, expanding inequalities and intensifying the exploitation of workers.

In this field of disputes, we have neoliberal projects acting on different fronts, and in the case of education, an example is the BNCC, whose developments have severely affected public schools, producing situations such as emptying of scientific content, teacher precariousness, standardization of the curriculum in order to strengthen labor relations for the reproduction of capital.

In view of this, instruments that control training are sought, for a certain social and economic purpose. It is a project formatted to maintain control of the theoretical and creative capacity of the subjects, so that the counter-hegemonic formative project is unfeasible, aligned with a theoretical perspective of subjects who understand themselves in the dynamics of the society in which they are inserted and in the forms of production of space. For this control to happen, the subject is removed from any way of broadening his thinking and making him aware of the forms of oppression, alienation and exclusion. For Maar, (2003, p.27):

There is no meaning to education in bourgeois society other than that resulting from criticism and resistance to the current society responsible for dehumanization. Critical education tends to be subversive. It is necessary to break with education as a mere appropriation of technical instruments and prescriptions for efficiency, insisting on learning open to the elaboration of history and contact with the non-identical other, the differentiated.

It is in this sense that we defend a teaching in public schools that is liberating and has in education the resistance and the power of change. To this end, the question is how to teach geography? What to teach and what to teach for? Such questions arise from the need for a geographical awareness and understanding of the articulation of bourgeois society that keeps the working class excluded through existing geographical inequalities. Thus, the problem of the teaching of Geography is at stake, approached from the perspective of the production of geographical science in the context of capitalist society today and the strategies of alignment of teaching and ideological control with the precepts of neoliberal rationality.

This ideological control, under the capitalist mode of production, advances in the precariousness of the working class with the intention of controlling it through educational policies that are implemented by the State, from institutions, banks, and foundations, defining the curriculum and outlining competencies and skills to be achieved. The goal is to pass on the idea of an educational base for all. To create a standard in Brazilian education

to be followed by everyone, when in fact, we know that we live in a country with different realities, which has several problems, including educational ones.

By adapting to neoliberal molds, the school's role is aimed at transmitting knowledge and meeting the interests of the market, selecting skills that fit this logic and capitalist and hegemonic practices. This is one of the ways to maintain control over educational systems, intensify the processes of alienation and camouflage the social reality of students and, subsequently, of society. This favors the continuity of the reproduction and legitimization of existing inequalities, as well as the devaluation of teachers, ranging from poor pay to lack of investment in continuing education.

### **SHAPING GEOGRAPHY TEACHING IN THE CAMOUFLAGE OF SOCIAL CONTRADICTIONS AND OVERCOMING PERSPECTIVES**

The teaching of geography, as part of the school curriculum, is developed within social relations, in the capitalist mode of production. Thus, it carries the contradictions and problems of a teaching that preaches the dominant practices of alienation from society, having as its premise the precariousness of schools and the formation of subjects with difficulties in exercising critical thinking, absent from collective class struggles. As a result of these same relationships, a teaching that goes against this reality is also materialized, seeking the emancipation of the subjects, through the recognition and problematization of reality.

There is a very large gap with regard to the teaching of geography. The lack of specific training contributes to the same happening through the reproduction of content and ideological discourse, in which one of the functions is to mask the strategic importance of space-centered reasoning (Lacoste, 1997, p.13). Taking into account this problematization, Batista (2021, p.10) highlights that:

Geography is a strategic knowledge for humanity to think and act about space, understanding the modes of material reproduction of life. It allows subjects to know the space, to position themselves in it, conforming the spatial arrangement and understanding the dynamics of social relations. Thus, the struggles for domination and liberation are demands of the subjects in socio-spatial disputes (Batista, 2021, p. 297).

By camouflaging teaching, learning does not happen. If geography in the classroom does not instigate the student to think about the imposed ideologies and their reality, its true function is masked, denying what Moreira (2007) wrote, "Geography serves to unveil social

masks". The aforementioned author addresses the way to achieve this purpose, because for him, it is possible to unveil the social masks through the exercise of understanding and analyzing space, seeking to understand what is behind the configuration and spatial arrangement. Thus, masks work as an existing barrier so that the geographical reasoning previously addressed does not happen and the potential of this discipline is not explored.

The process of appropriation of space, given by the unveiling of social masks, requires not only the compression and mastery of geographical contents, but also the mastery of the ways of teaching contents. Task that is assigned to the school. Thus, for Saviani (2022, p.10):

School education is the most appropriate means for the appropriation, by the workers, of the historical achievements of humanity that will sharpen their awareness of the need to intervene practically to give continuity to the historical process, taking it to a new level [...].  
 But this historical formation must be articulated with systematically organized collective actions, as historical-critical pedagogy advocates when considering education as mediation within social practice, having, therefore, social practice itself, at the same time, as a point of departure and point and arrival.

The school and the systematized geographical knowledge as human praxis forms this consciousness, contributing to the formation and development of the subjects, making the path possible for the understanding of a perverse society that excludes and produces socio-spatial inequalities, enabling students to abstract and connect with the totality. In this sense, historical-critical pedagogy brings the importance of the school as an instrument that enables access to elaborated, systematized knowledge, to scientific knowledge. Regarding historical-critical pedagogy, Saviani (2014. p.30) defines that:

In this theory, the pedagogical method has social practice as its point of reference. Education is understood as a mediation within social practice. This, therefore, constitutes itself at the same time as the starting point and the point of arrival of education. The first moment of the method implies, therefore, the identification of the way in which social practice is presented in today's society, being, therefore, common to teachers and students [...]. From there, it seeks to identify, in the second moment (problematization), what are the problems posed by the social practice that the school must work on. Once the problems have been identified, it is necessary to seek the instruments that allow us to face them. We then arrive at the third moment of the method, which is instrumentalization, which involves the appropriation of the knowledge accumulated by humanity throughout history, from which it is possible to respond to the problems faced. To the extent that the teacher assures the students the appropriation of the available scientific knowledge, the fourth moment is reached, which constitutes the culmination of the educational process. I call this moment "catharsis" [...]. This is where the effective incorporation of cultural instruments occurs, transformed into active elements of social transformation. Finally, we arrive at the last moment, the point of arrival, which is social practice itself. [...] At this point, at the same time that the students ascend to the synthetic level at which the teacher was already at the starting point, the precariousness of

the teacher's synthesis is reduced, whose understanding becomes increasingly organic.

The steps mentioned above by Saviani (2014) are a way to conduct the pedagogical process seeking students' awareness so that they can intervene in reality. Therefore, the teaching of Geography has a fundamental role in this process of awareness of society's problems as well as in the search for its transformation. In order to achieve such a result, the strategies used to teach geography are fundamental, because through them it is possible to produce objectives and principles that create conditions to oppose the neoliberal model imposed by capitalist society.

In this sense, it is essential that the teacher works with systematized knowledge in its entirety and not in a fragmented way, for example, as if the content of Unit I that addresses nature had no relationship with Unit II, which brings discussions about economics. For Moreira (2014, p.57)

The N-H-E site-situation-structure model is the standard of science that in the course of the twentieth century is established as a geographical discourse throughout the world. A form of accommodation intended to prevent or minimize the fragmentary pulverization that it contains within itself, this model is sustained, however, by a kind of archetype that comes from the original foundations of Geography.

Thus, when teaching in a fragmented way, systematization and consequently learning do not happen, making it seem that there are no connections between one content and the other. If it intends to be critical, the teaching of geography must encompass the totality, and cannot be plastered only on what is closest to the student's reality. It is necessary that geography classes contribute to the process of understanding space by students and this understanding will only happen if they are able to perceive themselves as social subjects, who are part of a spatial arrangement permeated with contradictions. To understand these contradictions, it is necessary that teaching is a function of education and emancipation.

Therefore, the formation of critical subjects requires that the geography taught in public schools aims at the construction of geographical knowledge, so that students understand reality and seek to overcome it. For this to occur, it is necessary to transform practices and relationships, making popular interests, their struggles and their causes prevail also in the pedagogical field, articulating society and education.

From this conjuncture, it is clear the importance of an education aimed at the working class, which defends an omnilateral education in which the school and teaching focus on the formation of students who are critical of their social reality, committed to their emancipation, so that they understand the situation of socio-spatial inequality and exclusion to which they are subjected.

It is in this sense that we defend a teaching of geography that goes beyond the content-based practice and that is based on the formation and construction of geographical knowledge, understanding the true role of geography because, according to Lacoste (1997, p.09) "if geography serves, in principle, to make war and to exercise power, it is not only for that". This is just one of the functions of geography. In addition, knowledge about space and its interrelations enables geographical reasoning and, consequently, the understanding of power relations and geopolitical interests camouflaged for the control of space through hegemonic agents.

The neoliberal perspective of transferring education to the market field directly influences the teaching of geography since as a science it studies the relations of human beings with nature, the transformations, as well as the contradictions of the capitalist system. The geography taught in school should enable students to have a broad understanding of their realities in a critical way. In this sense, for neoliberalism, a standardized and decontextualized curriculum of the students' experience is of great value, as it is a way of masking realities, and "forming" students within a pseudo reality. According to Batista (2021, p.298),

It has been recurrent in the Geography taught in school, a conception of geographical science endowed with principles that take the socio-spatial reality in its parts and imprison them at this level of analysis. Teaching from this perspective further aggravates this dichotomy, when it is legitimized by pedagogical assumptions that treat the contents and their purposes in teaching, in a light, superficial way and emptied of social criticism. Faced with this issue, students reveal in their learning a unilateral and somewhat naturalized view of the contents studied (Batista, 2021, p. 298).

It is necessary to generate mechanisms for understanding the space and the relationships produced in it, so that students can fight for the current reality based on social practice. To do so, it is necessary to ask questions such as: how to teach? What is geography? Who is it for? Who does it serve? What concepts and contents to work on with a view to the emancipation of the working class, since spatial production is intentional?



Such questions must be answered from a historical-critical geography teaching, seeking to form a spatial awareness, where students understand the reality in which they are inserted, discussing spatial practice. This process also requires the appropriation of space, contextualizing it with socio-spatial relations, so that the student understands the organization of space and can intervene in it. For this to happen, it is essential to work on systematized knowledge in its entirety and to overcome dichotomy in teaching.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Knowing the processes that are camouflaged in the modus operandi favorable to the maintenance of the status quo of the Brazilian bourgeoisie requires a good dose of knowledge and understanding of the functioning of the political space. Thus, it is clear that the reform suffered in Brazilian education is one more of the actions thought out and strategically articulated to keep society hostage to the domination of work by work. In this sense, it is important to recognize that knowledge is the main instrument of social transformation and therefore, the changes made in the BNCC are relevant since we are in a dynamic context with many changes. However, it was not expected that in this structure there would be such abrupt reformulations and adaptations and so biased to the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Thus, the reduction of the workload of important disciplines such as geography that promotes critical analysis of the world around them, the lack of maturity of young people in choosing content that directs them to the social context, among other problems that surround the reality of educational establishments, are challenges. It is already known that the way in which education is structured will cause negative impacts on the conduction and direction of knowledge. It must be said that this fact is worrying, since the critical action of man must be present as an instrument of evaluation of the actions provoked in society.

But what is observed is the logic of capital that promotes the dismantling of public education, and by extension, the teaching of geography, since it is feasible to maintain the interests of large business groups to sell their products, in addition to the control of demands aimed at knowledge focused on the production of cheap labor. Therefore, it is found that the idealized reform carries generalist and abstract skills and competencies and does not dialogue with the historically accumulated knowledge, which puts at risk the condition of humanization of society.

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