



THE OBSESSION FOR EXCELLENCE: WORLD CLASS UNIVERSITIES IN BRAZIL?

A OBSESSÃO PELA EXCELÊNCIA:
UNIVERSIDADES DE CLASSE MUNDIAL NO BRASIL?

LA OBSESIÓN POR LA EXCELENCIA:
¿UNIVERSIDADES DE CLASE MUNDIAL EN BRASIL?

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ABSTRACT: This article, which is part of a doctoral thesis, analyzes the approximation / convergence of Brazilian higher education to the 'global trend World Class University' or University of Excellence / of World Class considering the outlines of policies, programs and Institutional Development Plans of the universities since the decade of 2000. Some questions that guide the discussion undertaken, beyond the title of this article, are: Brazil, via its HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) or some of them, is in the 'race' to reach the status of excellence or world class in the wake of this global trend? To what or where does this movement indicate? Which universities claim to fit this model? In order to answer these questions, in methodological terms, the collection of bibliography and data and documentary analysis was undertaken, considering the comprehension of the historical and social totality, with its structural and conjunctural constraints. It is concluded that, while on the one hand the merchandising of higher education reaches exponential levels, initiatives to promote 'World Class' status, especially in the context of internationalization and induction of strategic areas, show that the country is also focused in the 'race for excellence', despite aspiring different arrival points compared to prestigious universities worldwide. Thus, although some Brazilian institutions are more advanced in terms of organization and directions to world-class standards, the model is seen as a horizon to all, which has been understood as the propagation of an 'ideology of excellence'.

KEYWORDS: World class university. Education excellence. Higher education

RESUMO: Neste artigo, que é parte de tese de doutorado, analisa-se a aproximação/convergência da educação superior brasileira à 'tendência global World Class University' ou Universidade de Excelência/de Classe Mundial considerando o delineamento das políticas, programas e dos Planos de Desenvolvimento Institucional das universidades a partir da década de 2000. Algumas questões que norteiam a discussão empreendida, para além da que intitula este artigo, são: o Brasil, via suas IES ou algumas delas, está na 'corrida' para alcançar o status de excelência ou de classe mundial na esteira dessa tendência global? Para que ou para onde indica este movimento? Quais universidades afirmam enquadrar-se nesse modelo? No intuito de responder a estas questões, em termos metodológicos, lançou-se mão do levantamento de bibliografia e dados e análise documental, considerando a compreensão da totalidade histórica e social, com seus condicionantes estruturais e conjunturais. Conclui-se que, se por um lado a mercadorização da educação superior atinge níveis exponenciais, as iniciativas em direção à promoção do status de 'Classe Mundial', especialmente no âmbito da internacionalização e indução de áreas estratégicas, demonstram que o país também está inscrito na 'corrida para a excelência', apesar de aspirar diferentes pontos de chegada se comparadas universidades de prestígio mundial. Assim, apesar de algumas instituições brasileiras estarem mais avançadas em termos de organização e direcionamentos aos padrões de classe mundial, o modelo está posto como um horizonte a todas, o que foi compreendido como a propagação de uma 'ideologia da excelência'.

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Universidade de classe mundial. Excelência em educação. Educação superior.

RESUMÉN: En este paper, que es parte de tesis de doctorado, se analiza la aproximación/convergencia de la educación superior brasileña a la 'tendencia global World Class University' o Universidad de Excelencia/de Rango Mundial a partir del delineamiento de las políticas, programas y de los Planes de Desarrollo Institucionales, a partir de la década de 2000. Algunas cuestiones que guían la discusión emprendida, además de la que titula este paper, son: Brasil, a través de sus IES o algunas de ellas, está en la 'carrera' para alcanzar el estatus de excelencia o de clase mundial en la línea de esta tendencia global? ¿Para qué o hacia dónde indica este movimiento? ¿Cuáles universidades afirman encuadrarse en ese modelo? En términos metodológicos, se utilizó del levantamiento de bibliografía y datos, análisis documental, considerando la comprensión de la totalidad histórica y social, con sus condicionantes estructurales y coyunturales. Se concluye, en líneas generales que, si por un lado la mercantilización de la educación superior alcanza niveles exponenciales, las iniciativas hacia la promoción del status de 'Clase Mundial', especialmente en el ámbito de la internacionalización e inducción de áreas estratégicas, demuestran que el país también está inscrito en la 'carrera hacia la excelencia'. De este modo, a pesar de que algunas instituciones brasileñas están más avanzadas en términos de organización y direcciones a los patrones de clase mundial, el modelo está puesto como un horizonte a todas, lo que fue comprendido como la propagación de una 'ideología de la excelencia'.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Universidad de la rango mundial. Excelencia en educación. Educación superior.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2003, year after year, and at various moments along these lines, the media and also some academic leaders, International Organizations (IOs) and think-tanks have reaffirmed, from results of higher education rankings, the peripheral place of Brazil in the world context of academic production.

The questions about what these rankings measure and from which data are produced are generally forgotten, both by a significant part of the media and by a portion of the managers of the HEIs themselves, concerned with institutional marketing. In this way, the place occupied by Brazil in these classification tables is now used as an element that legitimates the defense of the constitution of 'differentiated' universities - the World Class University (WCU), Universities of Excellence or World Class (UCM).

The model currently in vogue refers to the constitution of universities or groups of universities that have a specific purpose, which would be to represent national higher education globally in its capacity to generate economic development and knowledge in the scientific, technological and innovation area. (SALMI, 2009). From this angle, the central characteristics for the constitution of a UCM are: a high level of internationalization (to attract talent); high and diversified investment; flexible management and technology transfer/interaction with the productive sector (innovation), among others.

We understand that the emergency/diffusion of this university model, which is elaborated/induced especially by the IOs and their experts, is reinforced by the rankings,

however, it is part of a broader process of higher education reforms that have been taking place in recent decades and have as central characteristics: the expansion of higher education systems; internationalization from the processes of mobility and cooperation (SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017); the deepening of diversification (differentiation)² and flexibilization of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

A number of individual countries, blocks and groups have organized projects/initiatives of excellence, as we have seen in Germany, France, Russia, China, among others, as well as the European Union itself and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Korea. In general terms, such projects are based on the logic of concentration of resources in some institutions, to the detriment of others, indicating the deepening of institutional / educational differentiation. In Brazil, the outlines of this movement in favor of UCMs also begin to germinate, especially from the 2000s and more strongly from 2010, although this logic is not 'new' in the history of higher education in general, or of Brazil in particular (THIENGO, 2018).

Thus, through the question that calls this article and based on the documents of higher education policy considering the temporal cut 200-2017, we propose the discussion: Brazil, via its HEIs or some of them, is in the 'race' to reach the status of excellence or world class? How does this movement occur in the country, within the scope of public policies and in the institutional sphere? To what or where does this movement indicate? What are some of these universities that claim to fit into this model?

In order to contemplate such questions and objectives, in relation to methodological procedures, we opted for theoretical deepening, mapping and documentary analysis, orienting us by understanding contradictions, mediations and historical totality. (FRIGOTTO, 1991). More specifically, we base our analysis on the contributions/guidelines for the analysis of educational policy documents developed by the researchers of the Study Group on Educational Policy and Work (Gepeto)³, as well as on the elements of Critical Discourse Analysis⁴ (CDA) (FAIRCLOUGH, 2001).

² The term "diversification" has been used by IOs instead of "differentiation". Considering that this exchange expresses an intentionality, throughout this thesis we use the term "differentiation".

³ We particularly emphasize the contributions of Shiroma, Campos and Garcia (2005) and Evangelista (2012).

⁴ The use of the ADC can help in the process of document analysis, since it offers categories to explain the relations established between discourse and hegemony, since discourse itself represents a sphere of hegemony, an instrument of consensus production. Some categories that contributed to the documentation were: intertextuality, interdiscursivity and evaluation (FAIRCLOUGH, 2001).

OUTLINES OF EXCELLENCE (AND THE DEEPENING OF HIGHER EDUCATION DIFFERENTIATION) IN BRAZIL: PROPOSITIONS, POLICIES AND PROJECTS

Historical elements of differentiation and excellence in Brazil

The differentiation of higher education and the construction of centers of excellence are issues raised by IOs, especially the World Bank (WB), since the 1980s, as well as in the movement for the constitution of the Brazilian higher education policy in the same decade, as indicated on the document *A new policy for Brazilian higher education*, prepared by the National Commission for the Reformulation of Higher Education, during the José Sarney government (1985-1990), instituted by Decree no. 91,177, March 29, 1985. (SCHWARTZMAN, 1985).

The committee's report was the starting point for the proposals of the Executive Group for the Reform of Higher Education (Geres), created in 1986 to prepare a proposal for a University Reform, which led to an introductory text, two annexes and two drafts of bills of law. The first preliminary draft provided the reformulation of federal public universities from the autonomy/evaluation binomial and the differentiation of institutions, and the second preliminary draft provided for the reformulation of the functions of the Federal Council of Education (FCE), in order for it to stop having an evaluation function. According to Barreyro and Rothem (2006), although the work carried out by Geres was shelved without being voted in the National Congress, it ended up influencing subsequent documents and actions as the conduction of the process of differentiation and institutional evaluation.

Although it was not formally 'institutionalized', the differentiation of higher education was gradually becoming clearer, as it was in the period marked by what is known as 'conservative modernization', begun with Collor de Mello's government in 1990-1992, persisting in that of Itamar Franco (1992-1994) and intensifying in that of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC) (1995-2002) (SGUISSARDI, 2006) from the State Reform occurred during the 1990s.

The educational reform has become as one of the faces of the reform of the State, with the purpose of making it agile, productive and competitive. Thus, especially since the 1990s, the basic concept present in educational reforms, is that higher education systems must become more 'diversified', or rather differentiated and 'flexible', with a view to greater competitiveness and containment of public 'expenses'.

The idea of 'diversification' - which we refer to as 'differentiation' - will also be part of the higher education reform process, with impacts in areas such as evaluation, university

autonomy and, above all, the model of educational organization. This last one should be differentiated,

creating several types of teaching in different types of HEI. The teaching/research/extension tripod is considered expensive and unnecessary for the population. Its restriction is defended to a few 'HEIs' of excellence, allowing the differentiation of the others, with emphasis on the private sector, considered more 'skilled' and 'competent' to offer education according to the criteria of economic efficiency.

The approval of the Law on Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN), Law no. 9.394 of December 20, 1996, would grant legal protection to this differentiation: in the definition of university the principle of inseparability was not reaffirmed, as well as it was established that this educational level could be administered in public or private institutions, with varying degrees of comprehensiveness or specialization. For Chauí (2001, p. 99):

[...] a common principle to modernization proposals is the clear separation of teaching and research. The more sophisticated proposals go further: they affirm that the inseparability between teaching and research is a myth [...] the separation is not justified by the needs intrinsic to teaching and research, but by the diversity of people who practice them. This is understood as a corollary taken from the rule of separation: those who are only going to teach are not obliged to know the whole field of study in which they work, but only what is necessary for the transmission of rudiments and techniques to students.

In the spectrum of differentiation, private universities have gained prominence in the reform of higher education, resulting in the strengthening of large 'university conglomerates' to the detriment of the viability of institutions committed to the sociopolitical meaning of the university. According to Chauí (2003, p.8), fragmentation uses the argument of specialization as the main strategy and understands by 'research' the strategic delimitation of a field of intervention and control.

For the author, the university of the 1990s can be called 'operational', since it: a) was radically subordinated to market demands, b) reduced to a service provider, guided by management contracts and c) began to be evaluated by productivity criteria. Using the same concept, Neves (2004) affirms that this model of organization sought to reinforce the separation between teaching and research; subordinate scientific production to the development of technology (damaging critical knowledge); strengthen the pragmatic bias of teaching; disseminating the spirit of entrepreneurship and training specialists with an increasingly restricted view of the world.

With the end of FHC's governments and the victory of the PT party in the presidential elections - despite the encouraging expectations of some sectors of society - there were no ruptures with the neoliberal policy that was launched during the 1990s, which also is expressed in the context of educational policies for higher education. We highlight the

expansionist movements (via Reuni, expansion of the Federal Institutes, Fies and ProUni) internationalization that take place in the governments of the Workers' Party (PT) between 2002 and 2016. (LIMA, 2011).

Regarding the time period delimited in this article - specifically from the first Lula government, we corroborate with Lima (2011, p.92), in the understanding that:

[...] the deconstruction of Brazilian public higher education is presented as a "democratization" of access to education for the most impoverished segments of the population. The ProUni, the Higher Education Student Fund (FIES), distance learning, the School in the Factory project, technological "universities", sequential courses, short courses and the Reuni are important policy references of expanding access to education used by the Federal Government to legitimize their actions through an efficient ideological operation that covers them with an illusory democratic-popular veneer.

Thus, at the 'highest' pole of this diversification/differentiation, post-graduation has expanded in a way that is increasingly linked to technology and innovation, essential elements for capitalism to renew itself and increase its wealth margin (MANCERO; VALE; MARTINS, 2015).

Considering the period beginning in 2000, we find that the White Paper on Science and Technology and Innovation (BRASIL/MCTI, 2002) foresees the creation and consolidation of 'world-class' centers of excellence in the frontier areas of knowledge and of new enabling technologies and also links of cooperation with national and international scientific institutions, public or private.

Later in the Blue Book of Science and Technology and Innovation (BRASIL/MCTI/CGEE, 2010), the logic of excellence can be perceived more directly, since they are part of the recommendations made by the publication: Promote the autonomy of 'institutions of excellence in Science and Technology' (S & T); international diffusion of competitions for professors and researchers from universities and research institutes, valuing the search for 'best talent in the world'; establish priorities for the most strategic and/or deprived areas in the country; launching a broad *brain gain*⁵ program, especially for young talents; absorption mechanisms of qualified foreign scientists; as well as the promotion of a special program, on a competitive basis, to support excellence plans of research institutions and universities, with the aim of placing them among the best in the world.

In the period between the publication of the two 'Books', the interaction with the industrial and services sector, aiming at the transfer of technology and innovation - pillar of the model

⁵ Immigration of highly trained or qualified persons considered beneficial to the economy or society of a country.

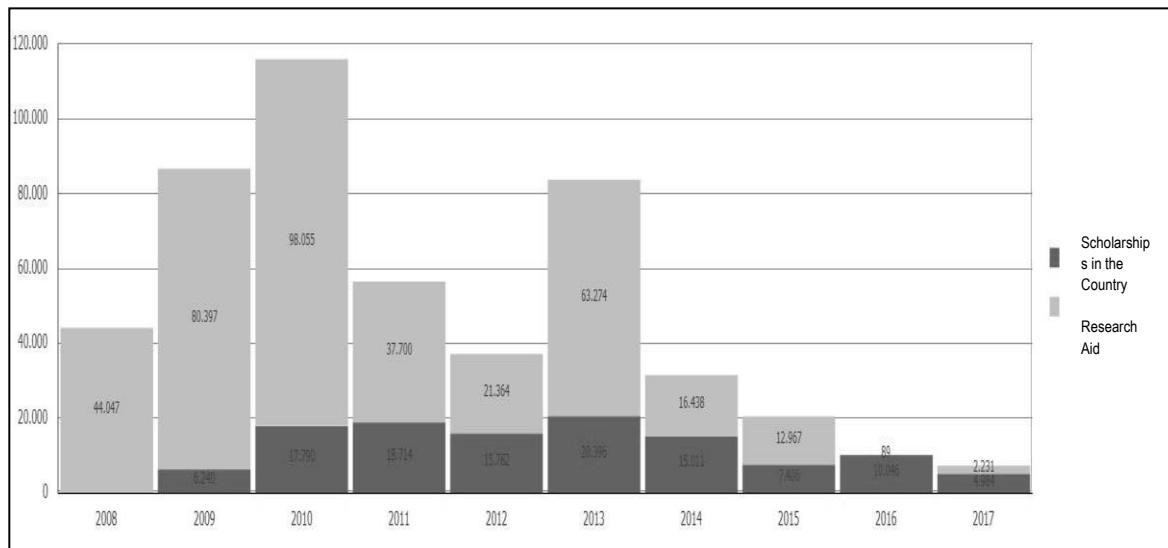
of UCM -, although already in vogue in the educational and scientific policies in the country, gains greater notoriety with the promulgation of Law no. 10,973/2004, the Innovation Law.

Another important movement in this context is the creation, in 2008, of the National Institute of Science and Technology (INCT), whose goals are: to mobilize and aggregate, in an

articulated way, research groups in frontier areas of science and in strategic areas for sustainable development of the country; to promote basic and fundamentally competitive international scientific research; stimulate the development of cutting edge scientific and technological research associated with applications to promote innovation and entrepreneurship, in close coordination with innovative companies in the areas of the Brazilian System of Technology - (Sibratec).

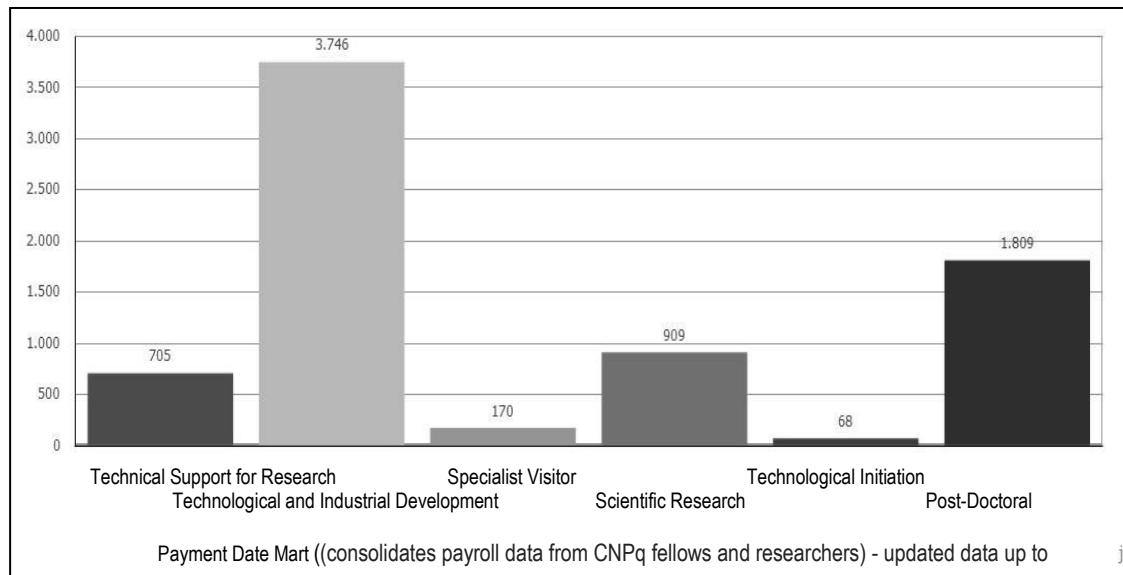
In this way, we understand that the INCTs are based on a logic that enables the promotion of competitiveness and innovation, from investment in strategic areas and university-business interaction, being consistent to global trends in the new purposes of universities and to the direction of Brazil itself in the same vein, especially from the 2000s.

In the Graphs that follow, it is possible to verify the evolution of the financing destined to this Program during the last decade, as well as the allocation of resources in each one of the lines of action of the Program, among which the Technological and Industrial Development line are pointed out, covering more than 50% of the exchanges:



Graph 1. INCT Statistics 2008-2017

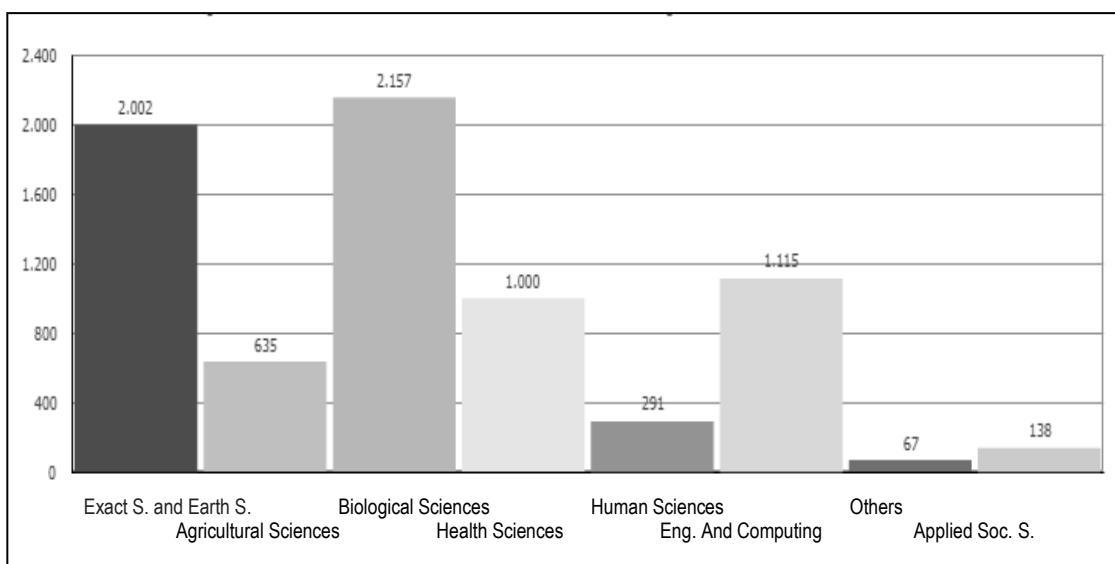
Source: CNPq Investment Panel (BRASIL/CNPQ, 2017).



Graph 2. Statistics of INCT 2008-2017 by modality

Source: CNPq Investment Panel (BRASIL / CNPQ, 2017).

It is not surprising, therefore, that resources are concentrated in the areas considered 'strategic', as can be seen in Graph 3:



Graph 3. Scholarship by area in 2015 (ICNT)

Source: CNPq Investment Panel (BRASIL / CNPQ, 2017).

However, we understand that movement toward the UCM ideology is expressed more strongly in the Top 200 and Science without Frontiers (CsF) Programs, as we present in the following section.

TOP 200 and Science Without Borders Programs

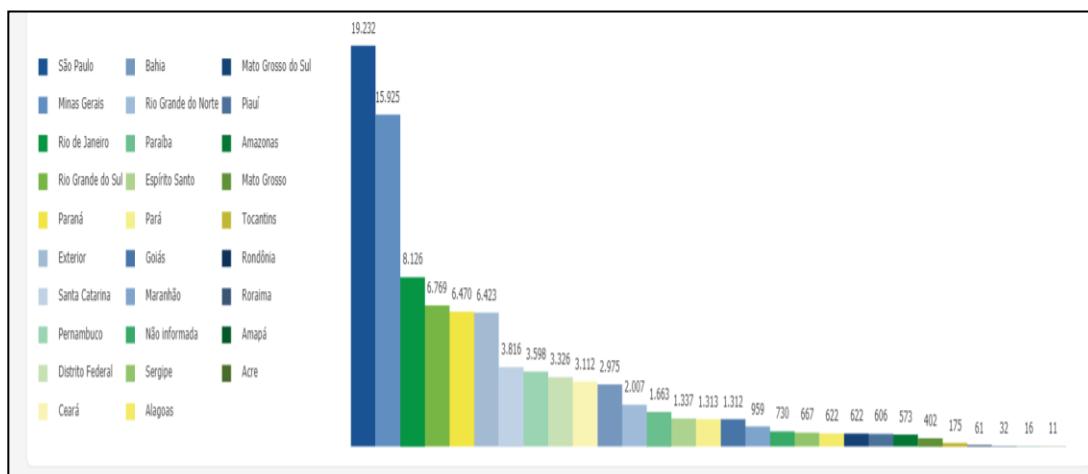
The first Brazilian proposal expressly established in a way directed to the promotion of Universities of Excellence - in the sense of expanding the participation of some HEIs in the international academic rankings - emerges with the Government Program 'Top 200 - Universities of Excellence'. The program was announced by the Secretariat for Higher Education (SESu) in 2012 during the first term of President Dilma Rousseff but did not maintain the form initially proposed.

The Top 200 was similar to the initiatives of excellence promoted by some countries, such as Germany and Spain, among others. The program ranked the five federal universities in which efforts and investments would be concentrated in pursuit of excellence, since one of the goals was for these universities to occupy a prominent place in international academic rankings. The Federal universities of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Minas Gerais (UFMG), Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), São Paulo (Unifesp) and the Federal University of Viçosa (UFV)⁶ were initially selected.

Although the Program has not been carried forward in its initial format, we understand that it represents, simultaneously, the expression of discussions and proposals that were already being debated during the years 2000 and also a 'kick' for this theme to be more forceful in the context of public policy-making.

Unlike the *Top 200* Program, the Sciences without Frontiers Program (CsF) was implemented in the same year, in 2012, with the objectives of promoting the consolidation, expansion and internationalization of science and technology, innovation and Brazilian competitiveness through the exchange and international mobility. We found that even though the CsF was implemented at the national level, so that students from all the country's institutions could compete for scholarships, the majority concentrated in the Southeast region, especially in the HEIs of the state of São Paulo, as can be seen in the Graph, below:

⁶ The initial selection criteria were: IGC 5 and, at least, that each of the HEIs had three postgraduate courses with concept 7 by Capes.



Graph 4. Distribution of Scholarships by State of Origin

Source: CNPq Investment Panel (BRASIL/CNPQ, 2017).

The concentration of the number of scholarships in the southeast region, especially in São Paulo, indicates that, despite the expressive expansion of higher education, there is a strong core of HEIs that differ from the others. Considering the general data presented by the control of the CsF, the scholarships are concentrated in USP, UFMG and UNICAMP. Table 1 lists these and other universities and their number of scholarships:

Table 1. IES who received most CsF scholarships

HEI	Number of Given Scholarships
University of São Paulo (USP)	5541
Federal University of de Minas Gerais (UFMG)	4336
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ)	3093
Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC)	2776
University of Campinas (UNICAMP)	2384
Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS)	2342
State University of São Paulo Júlio de Mesquita Filho (Unesp)	2,173
Federal University of Paraná (UFPR)	2,077
Technological University of Paraná (UTP)	2,071

Source: CsF Control Panel (BRASIL/MCTI/MEC, 2017).

Together, these eight universities represent approximately 30% of the total scholarships distributed in the CsF⁷. The induction of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes) in the sense of internationalization was also quite expressive in this same period, with the Institutional Program of Sandwich Doctorate Abroad (IPSD), replacing the PhD Sandwich Counter and the PhD in the Country with Internship Abroad (PDIA).

Postgraduate: the heart of excellence

The PG can be considered as "the radiating pole of the logic of academic excellence, from the regulation, control and induction of Capes, CNPq, Finep, and State Foundations to support research" (SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017, p.224).

As we have previously pointed out, the National Graduate System (NGS) has been significantly expanded in the last decades, both in terms of number of enrollments and national public and private expenditure on R&D. This level of education has also undergone significant transformations, operationalized by Capes, which can be verified in the VI National Postgraduate Plan (NPGP). The plan has as central axes: the policy of internationalization and international cooperation and the "need for legal flexibility to improve the relationship between university, state and market" (SILVA JÚNIOR; KATO, 2016, p. 147). The recommendations are: send more students abroad to do doctorate; stimulate the attraction of more students and visiting researchers and foreigners; and increase the number of publications with foreign institutions.

The NPGP reinforces the idea of strategic induction in areas and also in themes, "according to their relevance to the country" (BRASIL/CAPES, 2010, p.18). According to Silva Júnior and Kato (2016), the NPGP (2011-2020) presents guidelines for the adoption of a State policy that aims to integrate a national economic and social development plan into a national postgraduate plan. In this context, the university and its academic-scientific, technical and pedagogical structure contributes to the insertion of the country in a world economic system and competitive for markets.

⁷ The initial selection criteria were: IGC 5 and, at least, that each of the HEIs had three postgraduate courses with concept 7 by Capes.

However, in spite of the scholarship potential of these HEIs, it should be mentioned that, especially the three that received most scholarships also have a higher number of students enrolled than the others.

This new scope of the NPGP provides new guidelines for the system, characterized by the institutional differentiation between the programs of PG *stricto sensu*, with recommendations to decrease the enthronement of the Humboldtian university model. Thus, in the logic of the document, Capes would be responsible for encouraging and conducting post-graduate training geared to extra-academic activities, that is, to lead to the creation of professional masters.

Data published by the last quadrennial evaluation of Capes (2016) show that the number of graduate programs increased from 3,337 in 2013 to 4,175 in 2016. These figures express, more specifically, a 77% increase in the number of courses of professional masters, which indicates another form of differentiation within the PG itself, especially considering that this growth occurs more vigorously in the Interdisciplinary, Science Teaching, Applied Social Sciences and Health Sciences areas;

Still according to Capes (2016) data, it is verified that the academic master's and doctorate were also increased, reaching an increase percentage of 17% and 23%, respectively. Currently 465 (11%) PPGs have a performance equivalent to the international standards of excellence, with grades 6 and 7 in the Capes evaluation. Among the areas of knowledge with the highest concentration of courses with international excellence are Microbiology, Parasitology and Immunology (41.4%); Chemistry (34.8%); Astronomy and Physics (33.3%); Mathematics, Probability and Statistics (32.3%) and Geosciences (31.7%). In addition, it is important to point out the recent creation of some Professional and Industrial Doctorate courses.⁸

In addition to the expansion numbers, it is important to consider that there is a significant change in policy for PG within Capes. For Silva Júnior (2005), there is a partial transfer of responsibilities with the consolidation of the Graduate Programs (PGPs), in which there is a hardening of the evaluative and postgraduate evaluation processes; the reorganization of the postgraduate degree with doctorates and masters low and cheap; the instrumentalization and professionalization of science, making it a commodity. According to Catani, Oliveira and Michelotto (2010, p. 277):

The funding agencies for the production of knowledge have been stimulating teacher productivity by means of calls for funding research, exchange of researchers and a kind of salary supplementation through scholarships. Thus, the production of knowledge is increasingly associated with the salaries of teachers/researchers and the provision of services. This higher productivity is also stimulated by the postgraduate evaluation, which associates the evaluation of the programs (masters and doctorates) to intellectual production, especially in journals of greater recognition and academic prestige.

According to Silva Júnior (2005, p. 307), the consequences of this "trend rationality" can be observed from: 1) a process of homogenization of scientific production and prioritization of

⁸ In this article, we will not dwell on this theme, however, it should be noted that the professional doctorate was officially launched by the Ministry of Education in 2017 (see Ministerial Order No. 389 of March 23, 2017).

certain themes for financing; 2) the hierarchization of areas of knowledge and institutions; 3) the institutional differentiation that can be made due to the hierarchy within a homogenization;

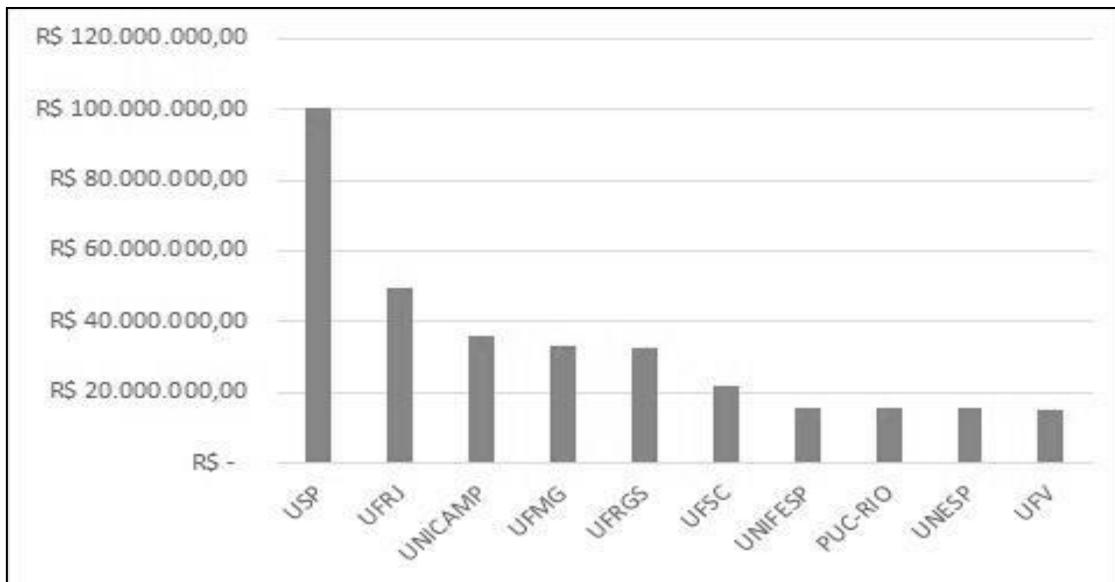
4) the concentration of financing in consolidated centers, increasing the condition of dependence on other courses; 5) of the stimulus to the provision of services in HEIs, among other developments.

In view of this set of transformations, it is important to consider that the expectations of national industrial elites - associated with international capital - in relation to educational policies for higher education (SEKI;2014) have also changed. These changes in the expectations of the industrial sector occurred mainly from 2005 onwards, in which the issues of 'productivity' and 'innovation' in the spectrum of general determinations of capital become more expressive on the national scene.

For Seki (2014), if public universities were interested in a fraction of national industrialists - since private institutions, in most cases, did not train professionals suitable to the sector - from 2010 the demands of industrialists are no longer associated only with the need for a sufficient number of workers trained to form the reserve army and begin to relate to the qualities required by the productive process. Thus, according to the author, the change of material interests resulted in an anti-university conception and in the de-characterization of the broad and public sense of the university formation in the country. Therefore, what is observed is a de-characterization of the high scientific production, this been reserved for small nuclei, and the opening for universities to adjust themselves to the private market, including curriculum flexibilization, management processes and production of services.

Also, in this perspective, it is important to highlight the launch in 2011 of the Program of Academic Excellence (PROEX), with the objective of maintaining the quality standard of PGPs with marks 6 or 7 belonging to public and private HEI. Considering this Program and its most recent adaptations, as well as its elaboration and application context, it is possible to visualize a conducting thread between actions, programs and projects that prioritize the formation of more advanced nuclei of knowledge production in some areas considered strategic, with the expansion and differentiation of undergraduate and PG courses.

According to Capes data on Proex funding, which runs until August 2017, we find that PGPs receive 71.5% of the overall resources of the Program.



Graph 5. Distribution of Proex Resources by Institution until August 2017

Source: Thiengo (2018) elaborated from data obtained in Geocapes (2017).

It can be seen that USP's 'excellence' PGPs received 21.5% of the total resources of the Program, which corresponds to double the second IES, the UFRJ. In this sense, the differentiation of resources for PGPs can be considered a governmental strategy of inducing the formation of centers of excellence in some HEIs and in some areas. In the same vein, the survey conducted by Ribeiro (2016) indicates that, between 2011 and 2014, the HEIs that achieved the highest number of projects approved by CNPq were: USP (1,624 projects approved or 6.6%), UFMG (1,040 or 4.25%), UFRJ (1,036 or 4.22%) and UFRGS (988 or 4%).

From this context, we understand that the predominant trends in the historical path of Brazilian higher education reforms in the last decades can be understood from three axes: 1) Reorganization of the public financing model for higher education; 2) Adequation of educational management to demands for *competitiveness*, allowing the participation of entrepreneurs in the formulation of policies, making more flexible the teaching work and authorizing teachers to provide teaching and research services to the private sector, as a stimulus to *entrepreneurship*; 3) *Differentiation of institutions and diversification of the teaching model*, under the pretext of the need to create public and private universities and non-university institutions, including polytechnics, short courses, cycles, long distance learning and also the poles of excellence and the differentiations in PG, fact realized with the creation of masters and professional and industrial doctorates.

That is, the expansion model seems to be that of system differentiation, relying on diverse academic formats, yet maintaining a set of more prestigious universities - considered research

universities - on the 'front line'. The 'ideology of excellence' (THIENGO, 2018)⁹ that underlies the UCM model, then, is manifested in an expressive way in the direction of educational policies, as well as in the scope of institutional planning and strategies, as presented below.

THE PERSPECTIVE FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS OF THE BRAZILIAN UNIVERSITIES

In addition to educational policies, we can analyze how the conception of UCM has guided (or not) the strategic planning of HEI by observing its Institutional Development Plans (IDPs). With this objective, we analyze the updated POIs¹⁰ of the selected HEIs, based on some criteria.

The selection criteria used were: 1) the mention of HEIs in the international rankings: *Times Higher Education* (THE) and *Academic Ranking of World Universities* (AWRU) as long as they are in the top five positions; 2) the top ten universities ranked by the *Ranking* of "Folha de S. Paulo" (RUF), taking into account that it ranks only Brazilian HEIs; 3) public universities included in the BRICS Network University Program; and 4) universities that made up the Top 200 Project.

The selected universities were: University of São Paulo (USP); Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG); Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS); State University of Campinas (UNICAMP); Júlio Mesquita State University (Unesp); Federal University of São Paulo (Unifesp); Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC); Federal University of Viçosa (UFV); Federal University Fluminense (UFF); State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ); Federal University of Paraná (UFPR); University of Brasília (UnB); Federal University of ABC (UFABC) and also the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ)¹¹.

Based on the analysis of the IDPs of the mentioned institutions, it is understood that the consensus for excellence constituted within the framework of the policies for global higher education also gains force in the institutional scope of the Brazilian HEIs, which constitutes a culture of excellence that starts to operate in the scope management, teaching and research from the notion of competitiveness.

We identified two 'Institutional Profiles' in the analyzed PDIs. The first refers to the universities that outline their missions, goals and strategies from the goal of becoming UCMs. That is, they have pretensions to be among the best universities in the world according to

⁹ We base ourselves in Gramsci (2011) for this formulation.

¹⁰ Each IES is responsible for your POI. So, not necessarily they correspond exactly to the same period.

¹¹ We did not locate updated PDI of the same but instead, some complementary annexes to the document published in 2008. For this reason, we do not analyze the planning of this IES.

international rankings and thus qualify the Brazilian academic and scientific elite. With this profile, we identified USP, UFRGS, UFMG, Unifesp, UFABC, UNICAMP, UnB and UFSC. The second 'Profile' refers to HEIs that seek to promote excellence in various fields, but do not set the horizon for becoming a UCM, even though they are equally concerned with the advancement of internationalization, with increasing the number and qualification of the courses of PG, with more efficient forms of management, among other issues. In these cases, we notice that the concept of excellence is used as a slogan that identifies high quality. In this profile, they are: Unesp, UFV, UFRJ, UFF, UERJ, UFPR and UFC.

Thus, we will focus on the approach to some characteristics and strategies evidenced in the IDPs of the HEIs of *Profile 1*, that is: HEIs that more explicitly state the ambition - on a discursive/strategic level - to become UCMs.

The first question that raises debate, from the analyzed PDIs, refers to the conception of UCM or University of Excellence presented by HEIs in their own IDPs. According to the UFABC PDI (2012-2022), excellence is a relative concept, since it effectively reveals itself only in comparison with the peers. Precisely for this reason, "UFABC must follow and study the most diverse university rankings, from periodic evaluations of undergraduate and postgraduate courses by MEC and Capes, to the international rankings of world-class universities" (UFABC, 2012, p.20). In this way, "UFABC should not hesitate to compare itself with the best national and international universities" (UFABC, 2012, p.19).

We have noticed that the international rankings are evoked, on the one hand, to give credibility to HEIs, strengthening them, and on the other, to argue about the need for Brazil to have some of its universities among the best in the world, since on the document it is pointed out a mismatch between the position of universities in the rankings and the economic development of the country.

In the same sense, the HEIs have structured strategies so that their scientific works have greater international visibility, in order to dialogue with the leading researches that are carried out in the international scenario. Therefore, in all the IDPs, actions are designed to encourage the publication of papers in high-impact journals, as well as to finance translations and revisions into English, the academic language of UCMs, to offer English courses and scientific writing for universities, attracting high-level national and international researchers and stimulating the participation and establishment of international cooperation programs.

In the UFABC PDI, for example, a whole topic is dedicated to the discussion of international rankings. The perspective of advancing the rankings is posed by the institution's leaders as a way to improve the quality of "academic production and public perception of this university" (UFABC, 2012, p.23).

In general, the issue of international rankings raises the emergence of a culture of continuous assessment, which involves, in addition to a specific strategic planning, based on the analysis of indicators, the collection and organization of the institution's own data, monitoring and evaluation, as well as strategies of dissemination and marketing in international scope.

Regarding the World Class design, the UFMG PDI presents an interesting definition among the explanations that motivate the leaders of this IES to establish as objective the reach of the UCM status:

The world-class university is a specific and rare type of institution. There is only a narrow and select group of this category of establishment in the whole world, which stands out due to the standard applied to its teaching and research activities, including, to mark the behavior of other entities belonging to the environment, which serve as motivational reference. The institutions considered to be excellent are those that have unique and differentiated attributes, being recognized for their ability to advance human knowledge, broaden the cultural horizons of society, and expand the collection of techniques in the most varied fields of science (UFMG, 2013, p. 44).

The differentiated character of this institution in front of the others is placed as something natural, positive and fundamental to the scientific and economic advance of the country. Likewise, USP's planning explicitly prioritizes reaching new heights of excellence, as well as ways to improve inclusion programs. However, the latter must occur "without prejudice to academic excellence, since university activity presupposes unforeseen solutions to known impasses" (USP, 2011, p.16).

Another basilar differentiation for the constitution of UCM mentioned in the PDIs is related to the resources, since:

Excellence has a high cost. To achieve and maintain excellence, the University needs abundant financial resources, available continuously, not only during the phase of its creation. To guarantee the availability of these resources, the University cannot depend exclusively on a single source of income (UFABC, 2012, p.25).

According to the UFABC PDI, in parallel to attempts to raise external resources, a political effort should be made to change the formula of the 'Matriz Andifes', used by the MEC to determine the University budget, in order to give greater weight to activities of PG, research and extension (UFABC, 2012).

The issue of resources is also linked to the other characteristic presented as necessary to UCMs: governance, based on a flexible and professionalized institutional management that includes: raising external resources (public and private) and managing software licenses, among other aspects, aiming to "favor the excellence of the tools and instruments that it uses, regardless of whether it is an open or closed product" (UFABC, 2012, p. 118).

We note that in both IDPs the management issue is often mentioned, since several demands of a UCM are administrative. The point of view defended is that each HEI, regardless of size, needs leaders capable of articulating management and governance, since HEIs acting in the global scenario require a leader profile that also understands the academic and administrative functioning, that knows the dynamism of the global higher education market and is capable of making the institution competitive on a national and international level.

The USP's PDI points out that the mission of a UCM is to contribute to the socio-economic and sustainable development of the country, which meets the needs of the conception defended by the IOs that some institutions take on the role of flagship in their countries. The UFSC, which presents a less systematized IDP towards becoming a UCM, aims to "be a university of excellence and inclusive" in order to "reaffirm itself more and more as a center of academic excellence in the regional, national and international scenarios, contributing to the construction of a fair and democratic society and to the defense of the quality of life "(UFSC, 2015, p.22). In this perspective, it is important to emphasize the present arguments in the IDPs in defense of the UCM in Brazil, which is based in general on the need for economic and social development of the country, once the Brazilian higher education system is identified as inadequate to the demands of society.

The IDP of the UFMG, for example, points to several deficiencies in education systems, among them the absence of UCMs in the country - "those singular institutions whose excellence in teaching and research makes them fundamental pillars of the full and sovereign development of their respective societies "(UFMG, 2013, p. 45). However, despite indicating the lack of Brazilian UCMs, the Plan emphasizes that UFMG already has the fundamental elements of a UCM at different stages of development. In this way, the characteristics presented in the Planning of the referred Institution, place it in a superior scale of excellence and in high level, in order to differentiate it in relation to other Brazilian universities, paving the way so that it can become a world-class institution. The projects contemplate substantial advances in several fronts, improving, for example, the policy of management of technological innovation and, at the same time, inserting new equipment that will boost the university's innovative activities, through the implementation of centers of excellence.

In the UFRGS 'PDI' (2016-2026), the search for academic and scientific excellence and national and international recognition are identified, throughout the document, as guidelines for arguments and strategies. In this sense, the vision of the IES for the period up to 2026 is "to be a university recognized by society as being of excellence in all areas of knowledge at the national and international levels" (UFRGS, 2016, p.12).

A discursive strategy found in the analyzed PDIs consists in the use of successful international examples, placing them in comparison with the situation of Brazil or of the HEI

itself. In the UFMG PDI, for example, Brazil is compared to the BRICS countries that are those that promote the most excellence initiatives involving high financing (China and India). According to this PDI, the purpose of using such examples is to demonstrate "projects that go beyond the massification of higher education and also aim at the constitution of world-class universities" (UFMG, 2013, p. 51).

In the PDIs, it is emphasized that, in spite of the heterogeneity underlying the constitution of UCMs, since these HEIs have very singular characteristics and differ from each other, "it is possible to formulate a more general concept to qualify them, from the identification of certain basic attributes that distinguish them from the others. " Therefore:

This category of institution can be classified, in a syntactic way, as one that, in **addition to providing an excellent education to its undergraduate, postgraduate and vocational students, promotes leading research**, is active in disseminating knowledge and sponsors various and varied initiatives that benefit "cultural, scientific and civic life" of large communities at the local, regional, national and international levels (UFMG, 2013, p. 60, emphasis added).

UCMs should be, above all, universities with the capacity to produce cutting-edge research. It is precisely because of this that we understand that it is a common trait in the analyzed IDPs to define goals that aim to increase the number of students in PG, to increase excellence in PG (programs 6 and 7 in the Capes evaluation), to increase postdoctoral collaboration and interaction with the productive sector.

Affirming the centrality of PG in HEIs considered to be UCMs does not constitute an unprecedented one, since the emphasis in PG in the various initiatives of excellence addressed, as well as in the IO guidelines, is explicit. In the PDP of USP it is possible to highlight this directive in some of the institutional goals, namely:

1. Increase the number of postgraduate students, in masters and doctorates - (6%); 2. Expand the excellence of postgraduate programs: programs 5, 6 and 7 of CAPES - (25%); 3. Increase the number of agreements and exchange of students and teachers abroad (30%); 4. Greater articulation with the world of work; 5. Stimulate the creation of courses of Professional Masters and Inter-unit Programs; 6. Increase postdoctoral collaboration in postgraduate studies; 7. Develop and implement its own evaluation system; 8. Incorporate principles of sustainability in graduate programs. (USP, 2011, p.23).

Similar goals can be observed in all analyzed PDIs, since the evaluation of research products (awards, publications with high impact factor) are responsible for a significant percentage of international and national evaluations.

In order to produce excellence research, as well as other teaching and extension activities, the plans also contemplate the concern with adequate infrastructure, funding, up-to-date regulatory framework for the various fields of research, cooperation agreements between the university and various public and private bodies , in order to allow greater transparency in

institutional research partnerships and also to stimulate the assembly/improvement of research groups, laboratories and multi-user research structures.

It is important to highlight that the emphasis on PG is a common and strong feature in the IDPs of HEIs belonging to *Profile 2* delimited. Despite this, Salmi (2016) states that research funding in Latin America ranges from 0.3 to 1% of GDP, while the Nordic countries invest between 3 and 4% of GDP, which generates a mismatch between the GDP of these countries and the position of universities in global rankings

Another important feature, sometimes confused with the conception of World Class, is internationalization, since this represents the main condition to constitute a UCM. UFRGS, for example, considers itself an "International Campus", as it is stated in its PDI (UFRGS, 2016, p.11):

In recent years, UFRGS is the International Campus, platform for the development of integrated and strategic internationalization actions. International mobility has reached significant numbers with the Science without Borders Program, and international visibility and recognition positions UFRGS among the top ten in Latin America and deserves more and more attention from world-class universities. Participation in networks of universities with an international vision, such as the Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities, the Association of Universities of Grupo Montevideo (AUGM) and the newly formed League of Universities of the BRICS, expresses the University's vision and offers numerous opportunities for university community.

The IDPs of all the mentioned institutions show that one of the main values of HEI excellence is internationalization. According to the Unifesp PDI (2016, p. 48), this IES "aims to be a world-class campus, aiming at excellence in research, from internationalization, continuing to invest and improve a differentiated education system and to stimulate and facilitate the development of international research". The central idea underlying these arguments is the global trend towards higher education, which is considered necessary for Brazilian HEIs to be able to adapt to international standards of higher education, as can be seen in the following excerpt, which compose the UFSC PDI:

Internationalization is an irreversible reality of universities worldwide. Nationally, this will become a criterion defining the quality of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, including for the provision of public funds, expansion and evaluation of courses. UFSC has a good track record in internationalization and enjoys a comfortable position in any national ranking on the subject, always among the top ten (UFSC, 2015, p. 100).

In view of the foregoing, it is well known that HEIs aim to strengthen their international relations in order to ensure their transformation into a UCM, through consolidation and bilateral and multilateral cooperation with international institutions, with academic teaching mobility programs, student and technical-administrative staff, as well as political and

academic work together with university groups and in international programs, with the inclusion of new modalities of binational courses. Likewise, they plan to adapt or reformulate the infrastructure of International Relations and invest in the best dissemination of information about the university considering the international scenario.

In this perspective, another issue is the need for language preparatory courses for students and teachers, which is offered through courses in English and Spanish, courses in Portuguese for foreigners and an increase in the number of courses/courses in English, being this last one a focal point for the establishment of an international institution.

The IDPs also report the heterogeneity of internationalization processes within universities, which are focused on some areas or departments. In addition, there are problems related to excessive bureaucracy within universities, poor qualification of technicians in the internationalization process in relation to other languages, lack of information on immigration procedures and ideal conditions for hosting foreigners.

The relationship with the productive sector is rooted in the history of the Brazilian university, although it has acquired more expressive contours in the last decades. Thus, this relationship does not identify a peculiarity of the 'aspirants to the UCM', although tendentially focuses on these HEIs, since they are the main research *loci* in the national scenario. Precisely for this reason, the topic of innovation and technology transfer is one of the characteristics that an IES needs to fulfill in order to become a World Class. This issue can be observed in the analyzed IDPs, for example in the Unifesp Planning (2016, p.48, emphasis added):

[...] the university-business relationship is as essential to **training young and fluent technology inventors** as a hospital school is for the training of doctors. [It is necessary] to connect education, research and students with new areas or emerging industries, always favoring the public interest. In recent years, universities recognized as having the best performance in the different ranking and international evaluations, have placed greater emphasis on supporting companies.

From this excerpt it is possible to verify the discursive logic that permeates all the IDPs: the idea that the students, not the companies, would be the biggest beneficiaries of this form of partnership. The structural unemployment and the increase of the work force with a higher level, in the face of the expansion of the sector, contribute to this speech becoming solid and obscure the interests of the productive sector towards the universities of excellence. The need for 'participatory governance' is identified, which "implies overcoming the dichotomy between the State and the Market" (UNIFESP, 2016, p.50).

In the PDP of the USP, for example, one identifies the 'benevolence' of the companies that set up research centers in some HEIs:

The data show an extraordinary increase in USP's scientific output, but still insufficient due to the country's development needs. Scientific production can still be considered because, in Brazil, research (basic, applied or innovation) is carried out in its largest part by universities and little by companies or other sectors of society. The scarcity of labor for science in the productive sector has led multinational corporations to set up research centers at IES (USP, 2016, p. 24).

On the other hand, public universities are also encouraged to obtain private sector resources as a way of supplementing the amount of funding required to advance and maintain the world-class standard. It is noticed that, while public universities are stimulated to obtain resources other than state financing, companies obtain several facilities to raise public money, either through public notices for conducting research, inserting teachers from public institutions for the development of research of business interest, or relying on state funds for the payment of scholarships to teachers and doctors who want to perform technological research activities and innovation to companies (Ribeiro, 2016).

The university-business relationship is also characterized in the IDPs as an expression of interdisciplinarity, based on the argument that the main problems of humanity and of the country in particular - that is, the private sector - require a general and systemic view of science.

In the same perspective, the arguments for interdisciplinarity focused on entrepreneurship and innovation management are included in the PDI of UFMG (2013, p. 64). It should also be noted that, in addition to interdisciplinarity, the topics of transdisciplinary and reformulation of the curriculum were also mentioned in the PDIs analyzed. These aspects are identified as a way of adapting the university to "paradigm shifts" in order to "meet social demands" (UNICAMP, 2016, p. 24).

In general terms, we understand that the determination to conquer the UCM 'brand' has contributed to the valorization of comparative evaluation methods and to the strategic management of universities, which reinforces the current internationalization process and brings educational institutions closer to organizational logic which regulates corporations. In this context, this 'seal' contributes to legitimize the competitiveness of the university, favor the attraction of international students and the capture of financial resources capable of promoting the strengthening of some areas of research, in view of innovation and the relationship with the productive sector.

In time, it should be pointed out that, in addition to the IDPs and other educational policy documents analyzed, it is still important to organize events and publications can also be considered indicators of how the consensus of the UCM or Excellence model advances in Brazil. In the following table we present some of these events:

Table 2. Events that discussed excellence and world class

Year	Event / Seminar	Organizers
2008/2009	USP 2034. Planning the Future	USP
2010	2010-2020 Colloquium a promising period for Brazil	USP
2012	Table "Academic Excellence: how to define it and how to achieve it"	UFABC
2013	<i>Andifes Seminar - Internationalization of Brazilian universities</i>	Andifes-UFMG
2014	<i>Post-Graduation Building the Future</i>	USP
2014	<i>Global Education Dialogues (Quality and Excellence in Higher Education)</i>	UFRGS e British Council
2014	<i>Excellence in Higher Education</i>	Fapesp e ABC
2014	<i>Which university will suite Brazil?</i>	Andifes
2015	<i>World Class University: challenges and perspectives</i>	USP
2016	<i>4th Internationalization Seminar of UFMG</i>	UFMG

Source: THIENGO (2018)

As we have been able to identify with this survey, the promotion of events was, in the great majority of cases, the responsibility of institutions whose IDPs have the prospect of achieving World Class status or are already considered as such.

We understand, therefore, that although some institutions are more advanced in terms of organization and directions to world-class standards, excellence is set as a horizon, although these institutions have clear differences in several aspects. This would also be the role of the 'ideology of excellence': to standardize, within a global scope, a set of criteria to determine excellence and operate in a way that promotes competitiveness and constant comparison between universities.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

For the moment, we understand that the notion of *World Class University* has been used as an archetype inducing conditions for capital expansion in Brazil and in the world, starting with the promotion of a new institutional culture based on business fundamentals, the selection of strategic areas for innovation and especially for the promotion of internationalization.

In the more developed countries, the UCM model functions as a training *loci* for complex work, with the purpose of preparing specialists who can increase the productivity of the work

under their direction and, simultaneously, the formation of organic intellectuals of the ruling class (NEVES; PRONKO, 2008). In other countries, such as Brazil, the UCM model is induced to create some centers of excellence that can guarantee the technology transfer process and also the mobility of large corporations to these countries, since the economic model adopted by Brazil "has made the country's economy stuck, tied to the trap of the central countries and the country project becomes an appendage of the projects of these countries" (SILVA JÚNIOR, 2017, p. 264).

The mapping and analysis of programs, policies, IDPs and events in the 2000-2017 time-cut allowed us to understand that an 'ideology of excellence' has become an increasingly indicative component of a new academic culture and tends to be perpetuated/naturalized as the number of teachers that meet the established standards of excellence grows, once the university continues to be an important space for producing consensus and for questioning it.

Finally, we point out, based on the discussions presented in this article, as well as on the thesis in which they are contained and deepened (THIENGO, 2018) - from the broader movement of trends and manifestations of the UCM at global, national and local levels - some understandings that are eclipsed from the diffusion of this model and the ideology of excellence, namely:

- a) **The commitment of nation-states to the expansion of capital**, and therefore, to national and international elites, which is why universities must be increasingly linked to the demands of the productive sector, especially with regard to the production of innovation.
- b) **The economic potential promoted by internationalization** as an expansion of markets, which is why the standards of excellence must be increasingly standardized in order to increase the possibilities of mobility and formation of international networks.
- c) **The centrality of the research**, especially in the scope of PG, proposed for the model of UCM, is a strategy of intervention and control of means or instruments for the achievement of an objective previously delimited according to the demands of the market and that should occur in the shortest amount of time possible. The procedural nature of science, as well as its production time, is completely ignored in the sense that it is necessary to study, to think, to fail repeatedly, in some cases, until reaching correctness. In the same direction, the areas of teaching and extension are relegated to a second plan, so that the notion of quality is dismantled from the tripod teaching-research and extension, not counting that in the clash between the areas, Social and Humanities are seconded.
- d) The **proletarianization of intellectual work** as a consequence of the real submission of labor to capital, which engenders various forms of alienation, since the submission of

teaching work to the requirements of the current system engenders mechanisms beyond the control of the teacher-researcher. In fact, the path to resources is distinct from non-market academic logic and to develop it, one must develop entrepreneurial and strategic 'qualities'.

e) **The reduction of academic training** to a bias of science and teaching increasingly narrow and pragmatic, which denies the university as a space for training. As a consequence, a trend that is seen is the formation of professionals capable of practicing modern science, producing innovations, generating patents and a large number of impact publications, but with difficulties to critically reflect the ins and outs of knowledge, the limits of science and the social problems.

f) **The deepening of the institutional differentiation** and of the formative modalities conditioned to each social class. It is important to consider that the criticisms made in this regard are not related to the incoherence of university projects, as well as of educational systems, that are organized in the sense of allowing multiple possibilities training in the strict sense of the term.

However, these criticisms/questions are directed at the way in which this type of differentiation induces the creation of poles, both operating in favor of the market, which implies the emergence of differentiations in the offer of higher education, which reinforce an exclusionary logic, masked by the false democratization of access and meritocracy. If, on the one hand, the level of mass certification is directed to a portion of the working class, so that it can act in the less technically demanding spaces, on the other hand, certification, especially in PG stricto sensu and research, predominantly applied, tends to be at the service of national and international business. This dimension is destined to the best students of the best universities, according to criteria established by the international rankings, in order to corroborate the difference of class from the access to different types of education, as well as by the different roles that these students will occupy in the world of the job.

We insist on this issue, since it is important to emphasize: the UCM model is part of the 'expansion-differentiation' binomial and raises the paroxysm of the class cut in the supply of higher education, creating new ways of ensuring that things remain as they are.

In addition, one can see a deepening of the differentiation between the universities considered as 'research', which are competing for results in the national and international rankings, since these are becoming guides for evaluations at the state level, tendentially measures for allocating funds to institutions and for funding other research.

We then confirm that, in Brazil, the horizon does not look different, but it is in line with the trends of global policies for higher education (BALL, 2014), in order to normalize and adapt to the world educational market, which shows is a culture of excellence that starts to operate within the scope of management, teaching and research based on the notion of competitiveness.

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