



INTERVIEW WITH PROF. JOÃO DOS REIS SILVA JÚNIOR

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The interviewee this time in the “*Revista Internacional de Educação Superior*”, is the professor doctor *João dos Reis da Silva Júnior*. Professor João has a degree in Engineering School of São Carlos from the University of São Paulo, completed in 1982, a master's degree in Administration from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo completed in 1988 and holds a doctorate in History and Philosophy of Education from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo completed in 1992. In the Department of Political Sociology of the State University of Campinas, between 1999 and 2000, he completed the post-doctorate internship. He also holds a Post-doctorate in Economics from the University of São Paulo (USP) and the University of London. He is a Lecturer of Education also at the University of São Paulo (USP) and is a full Professor at the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), acting also as the co-coordinator of the research project of ‘Rede Universitas’/Br "Policies, management and law to higher education: new modes of regulation and trends under construction". He was a guest researcher at Mercer University (GA-US) and Visiting Professor as Full Professor at Arizona State University from 2014 to 2015, where he maintains ongoing research with Daniel Schugurensky. He has experience in Education, with emphasis on education and work, state reform, Brazilian higher education, educational policy and internationalization of Brazilian higher education in the context of relations between Brazil and the United States of America.

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A - The new American University / World Class University and the Brazilian University

Considering that the paradigm of the "new American University" is very expensive, since even within the United States it is not generalized, what needs to be done by the Brazilian State and by some Brazilian universities, that may have the pretension to aim to become a "world class university" to contribute in order to improve the quality of the country's higher education and also the development of the country, retaining our best brains and attracting others from abroad, rather than simply exporting these best brains free of charge to the already rich countries?

João dos Reis da Silva Júnior: In the United States, as in Brazil, the system of higher education is very heterogeneous and differentiated. However, what is at stake is all forms of higher education in the world due to the financialization of the world economy, the new global geopolitics and the bankruptcy of the Welfare State and corresponding institutions of higher education. The regime of financial dominance produces a world monetary system which, as a consequence, creates a globalized economy. The main characteristic of this regime, as Claude Serfati says, is the "Money-making vertigo". Money producing money, epiphanically, without the mediation of labor. In Marx's expression instead of an economy based on the D-M-D-D 'equation, we would have only and in an abstract way, but that sets relations and policies in motion, just D'-D, with $D' > D$. That is, the mere ownership of money would make it possible to produce more money in the form of interest. This required the new legal order of the country and imposed the Reform of the apparatus of the State and the way it was specifically made under the coordination of Bresser-Pereira and guidance of the intellectuals of the Chicago School. In the United States there was no need for the Reform of the State Apparatus, since the American economy had always been privatized.

Regarding the journal "*Ensino Superior*" of UNICAMP, by Daniela Klebis, about the changes in the Brazilian university, Luiz Bevilacqua, former coordinator of the structure of the Federal University of ABC, argued that the Brazilian model was behind schedule and defended the model of the New American University. Based on two articles by Terry Eagleton, University of Lancaster UK, very critical to the convergence movement for World Class University, and in an article by Nicholas Dirks, advocate of revival of research university, but applied research, he argues:

Dirks of Berkeley also criticizes the reduction of government funding and the growing belief that (non-"applied") research can no longer be the primary mission of large universities. In his article, he defends the reformulation actions taken by Michael Crow, president of Arizona State University (ASU) since 2002. According to Dirks, the model militates in favor of the idea that the research should be maintained as main characteristic of the University, and 'cannot be left on the road for the mass education'. Like the UFABC in Brazil, the implementation of a new academic model at ASU was facilitated by its discrete - and discredited - performance among the most renowned universities in the United States. In February of 2015, Crow published the book "Designing the New American University", in which he describes the implanted

model, with greater accessibility, regional and national representation. The ASU academic plan closely resembles the Brazilian Bevilacqua project by establishing new ways of combining disciplines, new organization of collaborations based on problem solving projects, new relationships between academic interests, research needs and the imperatives of the private sector, as well as also simplify the admission process. Scientific productivity grew 250% in 13 years. Despite the numbers, their innovative proposals are not always seen with good eyes. Dirks says that, like Crow's vision, Berkeley is also reformulating from a model of interdisciplinary and international collaboration, which, however, keeps the undergraduate teaching central to the project. The rector says that ASU was important to raise the debate in the US on which path higher education should follow. "Today there is a competition between American universities to establish their own new models of higher education. And, as the debate continues, it is crucial that our commitment to research remains firm," he concludes (KLEBIS, 2015, s.p).

Seeking to detail the relevant question presented here. Until very recently, the great problem of capital was to reduce the gap between science and technology, and although there was an approximation between university and industry, there was a considerable delay in solving problems. The intellectuals of the industries were far from the research processes, and the researchers, eager to defend the autonomy of their research agenda, remained far from the industrial and economic front. However, with the bankruptcy of the monopoly production regime and the emergence of financial dominance, this picture is radically altered. It happens that the cycle of interest bearing capital makes money without work. In the Marxist equation, we have $D' > D$. The owner of money invests, lends, and receives interest as a form of payment of this operation by mere private ownership of money. This operation, in addition to being economical, is legal and imposes interest rates and the payment time of what is due, disregarding what will occur in the process of actual production of value and the social and living conditions of the worker. It is a bet with the lowest risk and the highest profitability.

This operation can be done among friends, companies, group of companies, countries and by the main institutional agents that operate worldwide, which are mutual funds, guides to the management of the world monetary system, which are subordinated to pension funds and funds of the Predominantly Industrial Groups (GPI), which characterizes a system of financial predominance. What are the consequences of this? Legally the financial cycle compresses not only the cycle of functioning capital (the social relations of production) but also social relations in general, alters the sociability and subjectivity of every citizen and requires the production of real value in record time of work alive. Therein lies the real problem of capital and the need to remove the gap between science and technology. At this point, the research university plays the most strategic role. How? Redefining science and knowledge, according to said need. In this way, the economic-financial rationality interposes itself in the daily practices of the university life. What the researches, the work of the researcher and the teacher need to present is the raw material knowledge (Knowledge Raw Material). The epistemology of this new type of knowledge brings in its center the rationality and has origin in the demands of the financial capital that, often, the own rector or president of the university

knows who is the subject of the demand. Here we are dealing with the commercialization of higher education in the world, but under the coordination of hegemonic countries, in this case, the United States.

Do you consider that the regime of academic capitalism, speaking of the American case, was demanded only by the new economy (knowledge as a commodity) or was it also the result of the university's own proactive action, that is, the result of scientific creativity, a proposal for solving material problems, economic, social, human (health, cure of diseases etc.) and biological?

João dos Reis da Silva Júnior: The change of place and model of higher education in the United States and Brazil is not only due to financial predominance, although it is the structural factor requiring change worldwide, as Phillip Altbach argues in his *Theory of Convergence*. On the other hand, it is significant to point out that the United States would have transformed the student into consumer by transferring the financing of the institutions to the students. At the same time, it induced the university to market itself, a process that would have been institutionalized by the state through Federal Student Aid - in the Office of the U.S. Department of Education ("Proud and Sponsor the American Minds"). As for the researchers' initiative, there is no doubt that the new demands, even though they deprive them of the autonomy of choosing their research program, generously complement their salary, as well as financing their higher education, which is a characteristic of the American state since ever.

What criticism can be made to the New American University/World Class University model? And on the contrary, what benefits of this new model can come to the country?

João dos Reis da Silva Júnior: As can be seen from what we have argued previously, the benefits to the United States are to move institutions of higher education from a social place where it played a role in favor of the public good to be part of the productive chains local, national and global, under its hegemony. The only question is whether this is good for other countries, specifically for Brazil.

As for the already embryonic criticisms in previous questions, it can well be concluded that the university is at the razor's edge between the state and the absolutely private. Since it is not interesting to cease to be a state, especially since, except for The University of Washington Office of Federal Relations located in Washington, D.C., all others are state and subject to the constitutions of their states. Any legal misconduct, especially in pharmaceutical, genetic, and biology research in general, which can most likely incur a popular jury, cannot go to the United States Supreme Court under the law of a country that is organized by a confederation and not a federation of states, as is the case in Brazil. This situation, in face of the place now

occupied by the university of that country, and now presided over by Wall Street's entrepreneur of the complicated real-estate business, Trump; the resolution of such a problem, attenuates in the states in which the institutions are located.

With the privatization of knowledge, production of closer forms of knowledge, pursuit of profits by the university; choice of rector/presidents, managers and grant seekers, prioritization in attending the interests of corporations, new values are entering the universities, redesigning the boundaries between the public and the private. Faced with this picture, the new intellectuals of the university are the trainers of the new generations of leaders and become entrepreneurs in search of grants. The new form of hegemony is the product of the intellectuals themselves in institutions. Given this scenario, what needs to be done to preserve the relevant historical values of the public universities themselves?

João dos Reis da Silva Júnior: Faced with this picture and this institutionality, it is impossible to do anything. Only the old intellectuals remain, the ones who are still inspired by John Salks, inventor of the first polio vaccine in 1952, Edward R. Murrow, when asked who would own the patent for the vaccine. "Well, society, I would say. There is no patent. Could you patent the sun? "

B - Evaluation of Brazilian universities and their post-graduation

Our universities are being evaluated for productivity indicators related to economic and financial performance, such as in the American counterparts, bringing wealth for the country, registering patents in Brazil and contributing to improve the quality of education, scientific and technical competence of the country and health of the Brazilian people?

João dos Reis da Silva Júnior: It is important to say that this statement is not true. Our production of patents and the contribution to the increase of the economic profitability of Brazil is at insignificant in comparison with other countries. Why is this happening? Because of Brazil's voluntary bondage to the United States. On the other hand, when analyzing the public sector and all efforts to increase the performance of Brazilian industry and the productivity of the country's economy, we find the monetary anchor placed by the International Monetary Fund in 1982.

At this point, it is fundamental to consider, even if briefly, the historical construction of industrial bankruptcy and the absence of increased productivity of the economy, despite all changes in Brazilian higher education as a whole.

According to Bresser-Pereira, following the stabilization produced by the Real Plan in 1994/1995, economic policy demanded a process that was governed especially by the directive "to grow with external savings", which, according to him, would mean to grow "with account deficit, since the external savings is a current account deficit. The only concern was to maintain low inflation by means of an anchor, which could be either the fixed exchange rate or the floating exchange rate, accompanied by an inflation targeting system "(s/p). This would imply strict control of the public deficit "so that the State's ability to pay its internal and external public debt would not be threatened" (s/p; emphasis added). Which consists in the disastrous result for the growth of the Brazilian economy and the continuity of the country's economic vulnerability. It is interesting to note what has been emphasized in this quote from the author. The key is maintaining the ability to repay external and internal public debt, more specifically, maintaining debt and paying interest, which are the profit of our international creditors. That is, the banks, since the model implanted by the IMF in 1982, has oriented the own academic production on the problem of the country. This has been done since the mid - 1980s through the process of constructing the historical conditions of the institutionalization of the rupture with neo-developmentism, which is done with the State 's administrative reform in 1995.

Do you consider that the criteria used by CAPES to assess the quality of graduate programs effectively evaluate the impact of programs on Brazilian education, on the economic, social and cultural development of the country and the well-being of the Brazilian people?

João dos Reis da Silva Júnior: From what has already been said here, Capes became a Regulatory Agency of the National Post-Graduate System in the country. At the same time as it finances, it evaluates the programs and imposes for the graduate programs to become the radiating pole of metamorphoses of Brazilian higher education following the model of New American University. However, servile and subordinate, producing an international division of academic and scientific work. I elaborate in details on this question in my book *The New Brazilian University: the search for marketable results - for whom?* Everything we produce scientifically good in the country does not impact the Brazilian economy, because the Brazilian public fund is destined to pay the public debt. Currently the amount of this payment comes close to 50% of the annual budget of the country. Who wins are the proponents of financial capital. Thus, what we produce scientifically and patents flee the country to the United States and Europe. When the scientist is good, he also goes, like the great Miguel Nicholelis.

Do you consider that the criteria used by CAPES to evaluate the quality of graduate programs, has preserved the autonomy of the Brazilian university in the qualified exercise of its three traditional functions?

João dos Reis da Silva Júnior: I think I have answered this question in the previous one. Do you consider that the postgraduate programs in education that, according to the CAPES criterion (notes 6 and 7), have an international standard, have effectively contributed to the improvement of the quality of training of post-graduate students in education and the country's education? Also, education is moving in the same direction with very few exceptions, the Seminary School Program and the Reform of Secondary Education, that will be done by the Lemann Foundation, show not only the diffusion of raw material knowledge but also the formation of the new citizen. A citizen who becomes an *ECONOMIC AGENT*.

C - Proposal for the preservation of the essential historical characteristics of the university

Do you consider that the academic productivism of Brazilian universities, in order to meet the CAPES quality criteria, has undermined the university's critical and social function, long-term science (usefulness of useless knowledge according to Flexner), usefulness of the useless (humanities, according to Ordine), university autonomy and academic freedom of the teacher and the working conditions and quality of life of teachers?

JR: No doubt and this is clear throughout the interview.

In these last decades, universities, especially the American ones, have assimilated characteristics of the corporations. What proposals should be implemented to preserve the five essential elements of the university: (1) equity; (2) professional growth; (3) collegiality (i.e. management of the academic dimension by teachers); (4) university autonomy and academic freedom of the teacher); (5) flexibility?

João dos Reis da Silva Júnior: Again, here, I come back with my skepticism of analysis. Brazil is a resigned country. The Institutional Coup, and the reforms of Temer that complete what was already present in the Real Plan and the population accepted everything with movements that did not reflect in what happened in the three powers. The legislative, executive and judiciary are fighting each other to do better in a country where six people have capital equivalent to the rest of the population. What hopes can we have? All we can do is resist to maintain our human condition.

Thank you
João dos Reis Silva Júnior

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