Ferrari Nunes, Mário Luiz; Garcia Neira, Marcos
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Educação & Realidade, vol. 39, núm. 4, octubre-diciembre, 2014, pp. 1209-1228
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul
Porto Alegre, Brasil

Processes of Exclusive Inclusion Present in Private Higher Education

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ABSTRACT – Processes of Exclusive Inclusion Present in Private Higher Education. The local and global pressures for new forms of social organization have focused on public policies aimed at granting access to higher education to a hitherto underprivileged segment of the population. This article deals with the effects that these inclusion processes can produce. The data collected through an ethnographic study in a private institution of higher education (IHE) were analyzed in the light of the concepts of identity and difference as produced by the field of Cultural Studies. The text proposes that the inclusion processes reinforce and validate only the identities that fit the imposition of consumption and performance characteristic of Neoliberalism, and signal this difference through subtle processes of exclusion of those who do not conform to the prevailing social logic.
Keywords: **Social Inclusion. Identity and Difference. Initial Education. Higher Education.**

RESUMO – Processos de Inclusão Excludente Presentes no Ensino Superior Privado. As pressões locais e globais por melhora nas formas de organização social incidiram em políticas públicas que visam garantir o acesso ao ensino superior de parcela da população, outrora desprivilegiada. Este artigo trata dos efeitos que esses processos de inclusão podem gerar. Os dados coletados através de uma etnografia em uma Instituição de Ensino Superior privado foram analisados mediante as noções de identidade e diferença produzidas pelos Estudos Culturais. Considera que os processos de inclusão reforçam e validam as identidades que se adéquam às imposições de consumo e performatividade, características do neoliberalismo, e marcam a diferença por meio de processos sutis de exclusão para aqueles que não se inserem na lógica social vigente.
Palavras-chave: **Inclusão Social. Identidade e Diferença. Formação Inicial. Ensino Superior.**

Introduction

The struggle for the democratization of school access has reached Higher Education (HE). The conditions for the permanence and qualification at this level of education of the representatives of underprivileged social groups suffer from the same problems observed at the level of basic schooling. What is observed are attempts to incorporate difference as if it was the identical, the same, the identity (Skliar, 2002) in situations of a homogenization established upon today's normatized identity: that of the client-subject (Veiga-Neto, 2000).

At the institution where this study was conducted, it was possible to observe the presence of a multitude of strategies and efforts with the purpose of adjusting its client-subjects to the hegemonic forms of thinking and acting, which have otherwise been widely advertised in contemporary society. It becomes important to establish that the strategies formulated cannot be treated as simple commendatory actions that extol both globalization as the dominant form of cultural change, and the presence of cultural diversity within it. They are seen as the result of transformations in global relations brought about by the cultural and information revolutions.

Through its cultural pedagogies, the education offered by the school praised themes such as negotiation; freedom of choice; free initiative; efficiency; innovation; creativity; personal exposition and merit. This all seems to reinforce a mindset tailored to the needs of flexibility and performance, of entrepreneurship and consumerism. However, these issues do not exist in a vacuum. They are permeated by other meanings suffused with power relations that traverse the life of any individual subjected to the asymmetries of social relations and their ensuing representations. The process of commoditization of subjects in contemporary societies, as predicted by Bauman (2008a), is still not that powerful.

The methodological procedures employed here have drawn inspiration from the critical ethnography proposed by Kincheloe and McLaren (2006), using the instruments of observation, of documental analysis and of interview with respondents and informants (Flick, 2009). The empirical material, which is only partially presented here, was analyzed under the conceptual notions of identity and difference as developed in the Cultural Studies and Foucauldian Studies.

The Opening for Inclusion

When entering the institution in which this study was conducted, the client-subject student is presented with the goals established both by the public policies for Higher Education, and by the policies of this particular organization which, by being private and fulfilling a social role that is characteristic of it, display a hybrid character in which the

political, economic, social and cultural aspects are all intertwined. As in any hybrid element, the parts do not cancel each other. They live together in a kind of integration in which there is neither fusion nor suppression. They are there, living under an ambivalence that characterizes the boundary. It is a boundary that is fluid, fragmented, blurred, that allows the transit between the parts. What exists is a permanent tension in which at any moment there may be a resurfacing of conflicts or the dominance of one policy over another (Bhabha, 1998).

This is the landscape in which Higher Education and schooling in general find themselves. The space in which the agents of education are immersed is also permeated by the values and beliefs these agents represent in relation to the process of transformation and appropriation of knowledges and of the constitution of identities. As Silva (1995, p. 205) puts it "[...] the identities and social subjectivities exist in a land of indetermination, in a territory of fluctuating meanings". This may explain the tangle that characterizes the institutional intentions, in which antagonistic aspects are objectivized:

a) Mission:
"To develop and educate people through teaching, research and humanist actions for their professional life and the sensible exercise of citizenship".
b) Vision:
"To be recognized as a center of excellence in professional education, and as an important partner in the sustainable socio-economic development of private enterprises and public agents".
c) Values:
- Transparency and ethics in relations
- Social responsibility and sustainable development
- Humanist and egalitarian principles
- Commitment to the quality of teaching.

Source: Institute's website.

What can be observed here is the heterogeneity of projects, since they try to relate scenarios that manifest different ideological and administrative points of view. Apart from the fact that the institution is not a University (which places it outside the realm of reference studies of this system), it expresses vocations and intentions that represent movements of struggle and resistance on the part of the subjects that work in it, including the management. This occurs even if we take into account the relations of competition that mobilize its strategies of action and the public policies that make them operate. How do its subjects signify the intentions of the institution? What are their possible effects, objective and subjective? Are these subjects mere effects of the machinery of globalization?

As stated by Hall (2000, p. 108), identities are never singular. They are multiple and "[...] constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions". The economic

aspects intermingle with the humanistic intentions enunciated by the institution and acquire materiality in its *mission, vision and values*, in the speeches of its management and in the social practices that take place within it. In the meetings between management, teachers and students, it is frequently heard that the institutional goal and the dream that drove the founder, the entity and its very maintenance are those of allowing students to climb the social ladder. It is literally said that the intention is that of *preparing students to belong to the upper class*. In this enterprise, the goal is that the future alumnus *can be of use to society and that society will have use for him/her*[1]. Expressions that put forward conceptions of man, education and society.

In this muddle of social promotion and promotion of the social, the approximation between management and community takes a relevant role in the relation between the subject-client and the institution. This procedure is emphasized as a distinguishing mark of the institution, along with the preservation of the humanist character in the formation of its students. The Rector, as well as the Adjunct Directors, area directors and coordinators all work in the classrooms as teachers, talk to students and teachers, and answer e-mails, thereby building other meanings for the position they occupy as agents. This practice, according to the agents themselves, aims to show that Education must not lose its idealistic aspect, practiced out of passion and out of the belief their agents have in what they achieve with it. Something that exalts the heroic character of the teaching profession.

Another important aspect in this relation is the affirmation of what it means to be *Human* and the model of inclusion put forward. Silva (2001) explains that Humanism adheres to a set of assumptions affirming that man is born with an essence, an intrinsic quality in which he is the center of the universe, and his trajectory is his search for himself. His identity is fixed, individualistic, universal and totalized. To Hall (1998), this conception of a subject endowed with the capacities for reason, conscience and action, apart from being the carrier of an interior nucleus, is contested based on a series of displacements and ruptures produced by modern knowledge. The human being put forward by Humanism has a date of birth, a given geography and history: he is a 16th century white, heterosexual, patriarchal, and bourgeois Christian European. This becomes even clearer in the institutional goal of inserting its subjects into the upper class, the *locus* constituted and generally occupied by the identities just mentioned.

These conditions open the door to a different dimension of analysis. Despite being "well-intentioned" and, to some extent, contrary to the dictums of the World Bank[2], since the latter wants just a well-qualified workforce, consumer of technologies, the discourse of social insertion reveals that the private IHE conceives industrial civilization as having been created during the last two centuries at one fell swoop. It

overlooks the dynamics that consolidated it and, particularly, the value of the doubts that academic knowledge itself formulated about the certainties of the actions of the so-called civilized man.

Social inclusion displays yet another aspect. Veiga-Neto and Lopes (2007, p. 947) affirm that inclusion policies, particularly school inclusion policies, here expanded to the whole formation trajectory, "[…] are biopolitical devices for the *governmentality* and control of populations". The authors emphasize that by promoting one education for all, we run the risk of carrying out an inclusion that excludes the differences. The result can be the reinforcement of that which we want to remove.

There is nothing wrong with struggling to overcome social inequalities. Promoting the subjects historically deprived of goods and products cannot be seen as something contemptible. That is not the point. Inclusion policies in general treat difference as diversity. The latter is seen under a relativist approach as a conglomerate of multiple identities. In this situation, each identity has to be tolerated for its essence and for the impossibility of comparisons. Diversity affirms the logic in which by our own nature we are all different as subjects, and equal as a species. In this logic, some people manage to advance in life, whilst others, by their own personal or cultural (in)capacity, end up at the margins of society.

Along with Bhabha (1998) and Skliar (2002), we can say that the diverse is another manifestation of the same, for in it are inscribed groups (blacks, women, the elderly, river dwellers etc.) whose meaning-given structure was fixed by an act of power, which produced meanings for their identity through the difference between them and their opposite. And that fails to see difference as something constructed amidst the regulations of the systems of meanings created by the power relations.

Including subjects from the popular segments into the well-off classes means to reinforce that the different, *the stranger in our midst*, has something unavailable to the *normal*. The result of this operation has been that of reinforcing the notions of normality for those who were already there, and of abnormality for those who were included afterwards. Which, therefore, are capable of being normalized by the specialized knowledges. In other words, the inclusion policies differentiate the subjects and disseminate the current standards for normality. To a certain extent they promote what Veiga-Neto and Lopes (2007) call the excluding inclusion. This is what can be extracted from the current discourse that highlights the aspect of social inclusion, only to estrange itself from the discourse of social transformation. For many, the latter is not different from the former.

By saying that the subjects from the popular classes C, D, and E can, via Higher Education, enter the A class, so that they can acquire the means to overcome social inequality, the institution unequivocally brings them into forms of *governmentality* that aim to modify them, re-

inforcing representations that are distant from them. As a form of the government of self, the subjects strive to fit the pattern affirmed as valid – the A class pattern. Seeking to be what they are not, aiming to fulfil the social expectations put forward by the institution, many will fall along the way. These premises lead us to think that the humanist actions that educate *for professional life* and the *sensible exercise of citizenship* will only be achieved when subjects act in conformity with the patterns of the dominant social class, since these seem to be the endpoints of the institutional educative project. This denotes the contradiction with the proposed values of education.

The proposal, it seems, is grounded in historic discourses that associate the commitment to quality to the notion of equality. It is not a tension between recognition and distribution, as presented by Fraser (2007). The impression one has is that it is a struggle for the control of the discourses, and therefore of what it means to lead a better life. After all, *to be of use to society*, and *to make use of it* one must belong to a certain group and have certain knowledge/education. Undoubtedly, a careful observation of the structures of assessment, knowledge and learning that give support to any schooling process, and of the daily strategies that drive the institution studied here, supports the view that the equality announced does not refer to the rights to recognition and distribution, but to performance, production and homogeneity. That is, formation at Higher Education tends to be an assimilating action. To validate the A class as the goal of humanity, and the vision of being *recognized as a center of excellence in professional education, and as an important partner in the sustainable socio-economic development of private enterprises and public agents* implies the production of a dynamics that inserts its subjects in patterns that circumscribe the way in which they narrate themselves and the others. Some of the equal will have the privilege to inscribe the Other in the representation as difference.

This is due to narratives marked by unequal values, since the context in which the goals, missions, visions and values are engendered is constituted by the complexity of the external social relations that influence the institution, apart from the tension between relations of exclusion and inclusion that the daily practices produce. Therefore, the narratives are discourses that constitute regimes of truth, in the description of Foucault (2006), which depend on the position of the speaker. The discourses are not only coercive with respect to positions that are not typical of the A class (humanist, committed to quality, of professional excellence etc.), but are also productive of these forms of being. That indicates once again contradictions with the intentions listed in its mission, values and vision.

If the A-class pattern can be seen as homogenized around the Western, or perhaps USA, norms and conducts, the questioning posed as to the presence of difference in university places encompasses other

tensions: the feeling of belonging to a cosmopolitan identity, the heterogeneous ways of life as an object of desire and consumption; and the fragmented production of new identities within the hegemonic cultural forms, spawning situations of conflict and constructing new identity borders. What can possibly result from this tension?

The ambiguous character of the institutional intentions work as an internal border around which differences are marked, and which, therefore, is the potential locus of contestation as to the meaning of the education proposed. Hall (2003) gives answers to these tensions advocating that when we traverse old cultural borders the result may not be the obliteration of the old by the new, but the emergence of hybrid alternatives that synthesize elements from both, but are not reducible to any of them. The rise of social difference may, perhaps, modify the conditions of existence of the A class, as well as the power games that strive to keep them as the norm. Perhaps, this possibility of change is what gives rise to the practices of contention of the Other through the valuation of sameness.

The Negation of the Other

When it is stated that the institutional goal is that of educating for insertion into the A class, one is saying at the same time that pupils do not belong to such class and that their original position is neither desirable nor adequate. If we consider that the current cultural conditions of existence of Brazilian private Higher Education attract a rather variegated public, it is adequate to say that the conservatism that characterizes the university, as well as its expansion and accessibility, promotes contradictory discourses, both those produced by teachers about students and those produced by students about themselves.

The former pay compliments to the students that endeavor to graduate. The students that attend the early-morning shift[3], for example, are considered by the teachers as more committed and engaged than the others. The justification is the "conscience the group has regarding the need to overcome their social situation". Concerning the other shifts, the highlights are only occasional. On the other hand, the sharper criticism points to students' difficulties with respect to the learning processes, written production, effort etc. They go as far as to comment that classes cannot be too hard, since most students do not respond to the demands. They emphasize that teachers have to understand that the students in this institute come from the lower social classes and, therefore, have had an inefficient basic education.

To these criticisms, we may add teachers' assertions about the living conditions of the students. Some teachers employ derisive expressions such as *on the other side of the river* or *on the other side of the bridge* to refer to the geographical space inhabited by the majority of

the institute's students, or to their inherited situations. The motivational discourses made by the teachers to help students engage with their studies, as well as the criticism to occasional gaps in the students' ideal repertoire, are based on their economic situation and on their family ancestry. The client-subject of this institute is, generally speaking, an inhabitant of the city's outskirts. To a certain extent, this reinforces a conception of conservative multiculturalism (McLaren, 2000) that justifies a poor teaching for a poor person, arguing that that is what can make sense within their culture.

> *Do they want to keep the situation they inherited? A poor man's inheritance? If they want to change it, they have to study to earn more!*
>
> *In the public school, all you get is the children of criminals!*

Source: Field journal – students' testimonies reproducing the teachers' speeches.

In the context of the practice, teachers translate and reinterpret institutional proposals and the official texts, incorporating discourses from various origins, permeated by power relations marked by issues of gender, race, class, body, ethnicity etc.

The impacting discourses for students from the emerging social classes are also forms of subjectivation. The strategies made available by teachers reinforce the instrumental logic of initial education, and attach value to efficiency and to a private/entrepreneurial vision of Higher Education. The focus of the process is not the struggle for social justice, but for better conditions and recognition of all works and professions. What one is doing here is to elect professions with differentiated economic and social status. Class distinctions are marked and prejudices are fostered. The emphasis falls on the devaluation of the profession of family members as something undesirable, even more so for someone who is in Higher Education. If knowledge is not translated into above-average capital gains, earnings or profit, it will be nothing more than a waste of time and opportunity of socio-economic ascension.

What we see here are pedagogies that are materialized in discourses of valuation of individual education in lieu of a participative, collective education. The effect anticipated by the teacher may be only that of making his students engage with his/her course, but the form he/she speaks brings to the fore, or at least feeds back into, the discourses of education as the locus of an investment to obtain a private capital, such as formulated in the Theory of Human Capital. From where and how has this teacher learned to motivate his/her students only by echoing the voices of the market? Why is it that his/her discourses do not conceive education as a civil good? Perhaps this is a strategy to segregate the subjects from a space that has been opened to them, an example of what Neira (2008) called a social counterstrike.

In the conceptions of Foucault (2008), the introduction of the economic framework as the pivotal point of the analyses of every social be-

havior was one of the strategies to implement the neoliberal thinking during the 20th century. It gives rise to the subject of interest that will have as his principle of intelligibility to understand the social relations solely through economy. What counts is then the individual subject, the entrepreneur of himself. Teachers' speeches reinforce the identity of the entrepreneur of himself, constantly stimulated by the institution, whilst marking the class and profession differences. The likely result is the following syllogism: if I do not study, I do not gain; if I do not study and gain, I will be as my father, whose profession is not worth inheriting; if I do not study and do not gain, I will be nobody; my father is nobody.

Giroux (2003) answers with a sharp criticism. Discourses like this make it impossible to speak about public life outside the logic of the market. In his turn, McLaren (1997) would say that teachers, without noticing, end up exercising forms of symbolic violence, imposing a class condition and devaluing experiences and lives of students from minority groups – the largest segment of the institution. This becomes even more problematic when it is said at school that *in the public school, all you get is the children of criminals*. Most students come from the public education system, and the growing presence of subjects in Higher Education whose life histories do not fit under the hegemonic parameters is visible. And what about the child of a criminal, a child that may even be in the classroom, silenced by his/her condition? And what about transgressor subjects, are they not entitled to education?

Amidst the formation of the client-subject of contemporary society, there comes the eruption of the others, of the strangers, of the subjects from the periphery. Quickly, the education turns into a narrative about those that are distant and at the same time very close. Undoubtedly, this causes Higher Education to consolidate as a cultural territory in which one tries to maintain dominant representations and, at the same time, constitute the authority to represent.

The discourses made assume a performative character, and as their enunciation is reiterated, they end up producing the fact. What is produced is the Other, in another way, perhaps in the same place. What is interesting is that, unlike what happened in other times, what takes place in the current socio-historic moment of Higher Education is made in full presence. In the words of Skliar (2002), the historically massacred Other continues to be blamed for his own massacre. By enunciating several times the identity characteristics of a social group or subject, more than describing a situation one is reinforcing the identity. If being in the inferior situation of a pupil was not enough, being *from the other side of the river*, from a school where *only the children of criminals study*, or being the *son of a poor man* are not just simple descriptions. What one is doing here is positioning subjects within a system of significations that reinforces power relations concerning place of abode, family origin, social class or, to sum it up, historic life conditions. To make matters worse, one denies the conditions of existence of these subjects.

The attempts to include the Other in the logic of consumption and entrepreneurship rely necessarily on the elimination of his situation of being homeless, abnormal, and without lineage. It is in this practice of signification that the subject from the periphery experiences the ambiguity of the border, in which the uses of his presence tread between the disguised condition of client and that of being violently fixed in his difference.

At any rate, the subject from the periphery cannot be discarded, because he is central to the organization of the company. Efforts and objectives revolve around him. In an explanation given to orient teachers in the implementation of curriculum changes with the aim of consolidating the process of expansion of the institute, a hired consultant emphasized that classes should be given in line with the public. She noted that that was a space in which to form workers and not leaders and that the competencies that should be developed were those essential to employability[4]. In other words, the place that the client-subject from the periphery will occupy in the world of labor is already determined, just as who will be the buyers of his labor. This explanation also indicates the ambiguous character of private Higher Education. Whilst affirming the social insertion of its subjects into the A class, the institution also hires someone who affirms Higher Education as a form of fixing the identities of subjects in a different class. This only underpins the social function of the school as a space of selection and hierarchization of the subjects, a facet criticized by the sociology of education since the 1960s.

The presence of the subject from the periphery produces more than that. Also well known is the prevalence of the discourses that emphasize the small reflective capacity of the students when it comes to the demands of understanding scientific texts, and of those that attribute to the market the task of selecting the best students. These discourses circulate unceremoniously among teachers of every discipline and, of course, are not unisonous. Both compliments and criticisms refer to the original conditions and inadequate basic formation of the students, highlighting contradictory positions of valuation, intolerance and complacency. This makes it clear that the discourses that underline the goal of inserting students into the A class are often undercut in the educative practice. After all, teachers are also subjected to the confusions between personal goals and goals of educative, economic, social, and political nature.

In the neoliberal logic, the best solution to the educational management would be a reform of objectives, teaching methods and contents that adjusted them to total quality management. The participation of the client-subject should be developed based on their needs and desires. Better saying, to the needs of the market, because teaching represented as a product to be consumed is constructed for the commercial

market. In this operation, specialized workers are necessary to produce and divulge the institutional product, so as to raise the interest of consumers. The hybrid nature of teachers' discourses is no accident.

The Attempts to Regulate the Other

In the in-between of the cultural border, at the center of its ambivalence that, on the one hand seeks to reach its social goal and, on the other hand, tries to maintain itself as a lucrative company, the institution claims to face the question of the students' low quality of schooling, and the problems of external assessment processes. Considering that it might hamper the objective of forming subjects adjusted to the logic of competitiveness, one more road was opened to allow difference to be invented, translated and governed.

Inspired by a regulatory perspective, the institution formulated a project that suppressed the alleged weakness in basic education, offering to their subjects the possibility of the *continuity of studies*, as we can see in the communiqué below:

We hereby communicate that the continuity of the Portuguese and Mathematics Workshops has been approved by the Sponsoring Body of […] from 10 April 2010, observing that:

1- These Workshops will be under the management of the area of Education, coordinated by […], which notes that:

"The Workshops proposed present as their basic characteristic the recalling and effective understanding of the concepts of these two areas of knowledge";

"In the official data of the SARESP Exam – Assessment System of the State of São Paulo Education System, both areas display a huge learning gap, with alarming data that demonstrate that the students finishing Secondary Education (formerly called Colegial) are not able to answer questions about contents from the eighth series of Fundamental Education II (formerly called Ginásio)".

"The Secretariat for Education of São Paulo implemented a specific Capacitation Course for Mathematics teachers with the objective of overcoming this learning gap".

2- We must understand this critical reality in the education of our students, but at the same time, we have to take initiatives or start strategic actions with the goal of overcoming these deficiencies in order to make them apt to continue with their studies in Higher Education and, further on, in their respective areas of professional activity.

3- The Workshops will take place, at first, only on Saturday mornings (from 9 AM to 12 PM) and afternoons (from 1 PM to 4 PM) in order to reach the largest possible number of students.

4- More information and subscriptions will be available via […].

5- We kindly request teachers to inform students in their classes about this proposal.

Source: electronic message sent to teachers.

These words and practices echo the reforms of the Brazilian university system and of education in general. The documents published by the World Bank to implement the educational changes of the 1990s reinforce the need to bring the low-income population into Higher Education as the only possibility for the so-called Third World countries to compete in the global market and, in so doing, participate in the society of knowledge. The publication blames the countries themselves if they fail to reach this goal. To Barreto and Leher (2008), the actions implemented by the World Bank forge realities. They affirm what is best for the world. It will be up to each nation to adjust to the management model imposed. Through asymmetric relations of economic coercion, the World Bank establishes the functional conditions for the national states, especially the peripheral ones, and binds them to the geopolitical interests of the central countries and to the economic interests of large corporations. Among the strategies elected, we should stress the persuasion of society that the solutions presented are the best ones for the current cultural, social, political and economic situation.

Another prominent feature of the project is the disciplines offered at the workshops. It is already well known that great emphasis is given to Mathematics and Portuguese in the external processes of assessment of Basic Education. Such effort to make students acquire good command of these areas of knowledge understood as essential to human formation can be attributed to the close proximity they have to professional activities linked to the service occupations. Any other area of knowledge is subjected to the condition of a mere subordinate in the processes of education. If even other disciplinary knowledges are forsaken, what can be said about subsidiary or non-disciplinary knowledges? There is no interest in bringing these aspects up to standards.

These strategies reverberate quite strongly within educative spaces. After listening repeatedly that his experiences in basic education were precarious, the student may well assume to himself the importance of *going back in time* and investing energy to correct the possible deficit, taking part in this *corrective moment of formation.*

We can observe here the drive for another form of subjectivation of the client-subject from the periphery or otherwise. The negation of self-knowledge is advanced during the whole course, leading the subject to *fabricate* the need for constant investment in his formation. Promotion of the students' insertion into the business and consumption logic also takes place through the erasure of the insufficiencies of Higher Education. The need to improve oneself and find a specialization within the university system – within the institution itself – is publicized very often. Oblivious to the mechanisms and inconsistencies of a reasoning based on disposables, and equally unaware of the machine-like processes that created his insufficiencies, the client-subject learns that the knowledge acquired is outdated. In order to be updated, he will

have to take a further education or specialization course, because the production of new knowledge is extremely fast. With that, the commodification of education and of its subjects is expanded through further education initiatives.

To succeed in life in times of consumerism, the client-subject relies more on the speed with which he gets rid of old habits than on that of acquiring new ones (Bauman, 2008b). He has to be rid of his previous formation, of the beliefs and values he constructed, so as to internalize new manners of doing things, apart from learning that in the current times the habit to be learned is that of living without habits, except, of course, the habit of consuming. At each new course, each new investment, the client-subject from the periphery substitutes new knowledges for the old. Formation in Higher Education needs this logic in other to consolidate itself. In the present situation, the continued education initiatives became indispensable to their subsistence. To all purposes, when it organizes knowledge levelling initiatives, the institution contributes to making the international management of subjects, of which Bauman (2008b) speaks, a natural fact of local education.

The regulation strategies do not stop there. Just as the other practices described, the project presented contributed to empower neoliberal discourses. The State did not help them, gave them a low-quality Basic Education, but the private sector can do it, and do it better. It is likely that this model of studies will strengthen the discursive practices against public education (and against the whole public system), and still collaborate to establish Higher Education. A condition that reinforces "[...] expressions of bourgeois self consciousness disguised as popular discourse produced in the interests of the people" (McLaren, 2000, p, 292), such as the ones disseminated by the teachers.

The discourses made by a segment of the teachers denote that class conditions and hierarchy are not the result of competitions and neutral relations between the beings, but issue from asymmetric social arrangements and power relations. It is in this microstructure of power and privilege that the paradox of contemporary democracy arises, since by ignoring the particular characteristics of the subjects one is reinforcing a certain universalism.

The same process of assimilation and homogenization is perceived in the speeches of students. The identities of the students from the afternoon shift are produced in a negative way. They are seen as *daddy's boys (or girls)* or *bourgeois*, since for many students no one who studies in the afternoon needs to wake up early to work. Identity has long been marked by issues related to professional occupation. The current representations suffer influences from the sociopolitical and economic consequences of a global market in which productivity is the ruling logic. Many students from other shifts say that studying in the middle of the afternoon *is bad for the life rhythm*, *interrupts the day* and

interferes with work. For others, however, it does not matter to study in the afternoon or early in the morning, because what is at stake is improving one's life and for that it is necessary to have a Higher Education diploma. Without, however, forgetting the financial situations that determine the presence of subjects in different school shifts, since school fees have different values according to shift, and it interferes with the possibility to adjust their studying hours to the offer of work in the market. There are also the social situations for the carrying out of studies. For many, what really matters is the certificate.

The clashes between subjects demonstrate how the cultural construction of the processes of differentiation of identity and of difference takes place. The speeches produce border effects that establish the limit between the I and the Other. Between teacher and student, between subjects of different social classes, between capable and incapable subjects, between those who work and those who do not, between those that work at different places or hours, between those that study and those who *just manage to.* These are situations of domination in which the dominant group (or individual) stigmatizes a negative identity for the other, because the power to identify depends on the place one occupies in the relational systems that link together the several groups and subjects. These are expressions of power relations produced in actions that oppress certain segments of individuals and groups, that silence their voices, histories and wishes. These questions imply the maintenance of a superior and colonialist discourse whose characteristic is its dependence on the concept of rigidity, a signal of cultural difference that "[...] ensures its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjunctures" (Bhabha, 1998, p. 106).

The Other as Commodity

The Brazilian private Higher Education system, by taking upon itself the formation of a large contingent of inferiorized identities, displays various conditions of negotiation between the contemporary capitalism, the dominant canon and the identity policies of underprivileged groups. The result may be the transformation of difference into an object. The case of the institution studied here is not an exception; just the peculiarities of its form of action are different.

> *We hereby communicate that ALL classrooms of the […] now have a name "written in Aramaic with its respective meaning ".*
>
> *Strategic actions like this afford a systemic knowledge of other peoples, their uses and customs, and allow us to reflect upon the much-discussed cultural plurality.*
>
> *It is in this context that we shall be implementing from March 2010 the Center for Integrative Research and Complementary Therapies with the following objectives:*
>
> *To be an international Reference Center based on an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary space for integrative studies and complementary therapies.*
>
> *To open up room for readings, reflections, researches, conduction of works and other initiatives in a permanent manner, 12 months a year.*
>
> *The space shall be structured with small office cubicles, similar to medical office or reception cubicles, and with a presentation room with around 15 to 20 seats for specific talks.*
>
> *To set up agreements with formally constituted associations or institutions with a view to research and development of scientific works.*
>
> *These Associations will keep representatives, literature and formal work at the […] for the activities proposed.*
>
> *Initially we intend to encompass: Anthroposophy – Feng Shui – Osteopathy – Homoeopathy – Holism – Rolfing – Acupuncture – Projectiology – Interdisciplinarity, among other areas of research.*
>
> *To launch publications in these areas in partnership with the respective institutions.*
>
> *To keep an academic journal with this diversity.*

Source: electronic message sent to the community.

In the consumer society, the celebration of differences disseminated by the contemporary politics of multicultural citizenship was rapidly absorbed by capitalism, and introduced as a new form of consumption. It is in this sociohistorical landscape that Hall (1997) emphasizes that global culture depends on difference to prosper. However, even with the discursive valuation of cultural diversity, inviting the other to enter your house entails the danger and risks of living with difference. What happens is a struggle between the policy of representation, which aims to find a place for difference within the cultural scenario, and the aestheticization of its images in order to put them for sale in the cultural supermarket of identities (Bauman, 2008a; Hall, 1997).

In the inclusion game of diversity, it seems that not all cultures are interesting or, if they are, neither they are named nor is their presence made public.

> *Dear students, dear Sabbatarian students*
>
> *The [...] has received in the last years a growing number of Adventist students as well as students from other religious backgrounds, which led us to call a special meeting to discuss the following subjects:*
>
> *Planning the academic activities of the first semester of 2010 and definition of a viable schedule.*
>
> *Enrolling of new Sabbatarian students at the [...] via a Selection or Transfer Process with utilization of previous studies.*
>
> *Launching of the Campaign of the Sabbatarian Friend.*
>
> *Detailing of the marketing strategy to attract new students from the same religious background.*
>
> *Development of new specific partnerships.*
>
> *Date: Thursday 10 December 2009*
>
> *Time: We offer three options of schedule so that interested students may come into contact with this new initiative by the [...]:*
>
> *– Morning 11 AM – Afternoon 4:30 PM – Evening 9:30 PM*
>
> *Venue: room A–204, on the corridor leading to the [...] campus Library.*

Source: electronic message sent to the educative community.

Do the therapies suggested or the Aramaic writings allow the learning of the cultures of other peoples and the reflection about cultural plurality? Are these the only existing therapies and expressions? Why is there an effort to attract Sabbatarian students? And what about students from other religious backgrounds? Why are there no campaigns to draw them in? Do not other groups present forms of communitarian organization capable of negotiating the university education of their subjects? There are no precise answers to these questions. Concretely, what can be seen is the client-subject-capturing game superficially involving hot issues in education such as interdisciplinarity and respect to cultural plurality, reinforcing the dialogue between cultures, and between them and Higher Education mediated by private interests.

In this game, the presence/absence of subjects and cultural practices can also be seen as a form of negation of certain subjects and their culture, and the valuation of others, characterizing the antagonistic game of capturing the subjects of education and the production of identity and difference. To some extent, by introducing and exalting the presence of cultural diversity within it, the institution potentializes the creation of a type of cooperating subjection of the individuals to the hegemonic market practices, which, in their turn, legitimize domination structures. From this, it may result that the self-interest of the subjects of the groups remembered may undermine or preclude their coming into contact with the problems and pains of the lives of the forgotten. Through symbolic mechanisms of this type, one promotes the legiti-

mizing of diversity and stimulates its confusion with difference, naturalizing it.

In Conclusion

It has been observed that the discourse of private Higher Education with respect to the subject from the periphery constructs and maintains through several strategies a process that tries to secure and stabilize an identity of the client-subject with, as far as one can see, the intention of being an absolute frame of reference. Besides, Higher Education and its devices work as a subjectivation process that at the same time produces in these subjects a (economic) desire for its presence, and a distrust, if not a positive contempt, for their cultural condition. *Between kisses and punches*, the articulations between the public inclusion policies, the offers made by the institution managers, and the teaching practices towards the client-subjects from the periphery, all reinforce the shifting, fragmentary and contradictory character of the current times.

In this struggle for significations, we cannot deny that the interplay between the regulatory processes of government agencies, the competition between the Institutions of Higher Education, and the presence of subjects from the periphery in private Higher Education engender antagonistic processes in the dynamics of the cultural power game. We can suppose that the higher the risk of dropping out or evasion, the more strategies to avoid them are created. The more distant one wants them to remain, the more their presence is desired. Once there is a chance of presence, be it the remembered or the forgotten, the value or the denied, be it continued education or initial or further studies, the identity of the subjects from the periphery can cross boundaries between different symbolic territories. It may be the opportunity of resistance against any idea of securing identities.

To understand better this possibility, we have extended the analyses of Bhabha (1998). The presence of the subject from the periphery, the Other in education, in Higher Education can be understood as a performative temporality, which for him means denying any reference to a brilliant past. At the same time, Higher Education displays a continuity temporality, represented by the set of legitimized cultural knowledges transmitted in a continual and repetitive movement, just like the project that favors the continuity of the studies. In this game between continuity and performance there emerges an ambivalence zone, a space-time in which it is possible to think the existence of the Other without being represented in the legitimized cultures present in Higher Education by a glorious pseudo-past or by a position of cultural supremacy.

It is there, in the very temporality introduced by the possibility of its presence. A temporality that in the expression of Bhabha (1998, p. 213) is an in-between place that makes the marginal voices, the voices

from the periphery, "[...] no longer need to direct their opposition strategies towards a horizon of 'hegemony', which is conceived as horizontal and homogeneous".

In such temporality, we can conceive that no schooling process will ever be merely the assimilation of the Other, the control of populations in search of a state of social equilibrium. Nor will any schooling process be able to stop the construction of disruptive processes, processes of creation, of opening to the new. That is, nothing guarantees that institutional, mercantile and governmental intentions will be signified by their client-subjects without the occurrence of processes of permanent translation, de-territorialization and re- territorialization, precluding the success of any meaning-fixing process. In the game of inclusion versus exclusion, this becomes evident when the client-subject and the institution negotiate economic interests (strategies for capturing and maintaining clients), academic interests (internal and external assessment processes, the conclusion of the course), professional interests (selection for the work market, internship purses, places at partner companies, indications etc.), and personal interests (personal problems and those issuing from the basic formation that can influence the participation and learning of the client-subject).

The data presented do not constitute simply a process at the level of thought or intentions, but as recalled by Hall (1997) they act upon the regulation of relations and upon social practice itself. To that author, it is through the use we make of things, or of how we integrate them into our daily practices, that we give meaning to the things of the world. In other words, the representation depends on the culturally constructed structure of meanings. The questions are then: how are built the representations of the difference between the groups recalled and forgotten in the recruiting and publicizing campaigns that abound in Higher Education? What are their effects?

Despite the clearly dominant cultural trend of reinforcing globalization processes of political, cultural and market homogenization, it "[...] can no longer control or saturate everything within its orbit" (Hall, 2003, p. 59). The result has been, according to Hall (2003), the coexistence of global systems and local systems that they themselves produce. In general, the result of this process has been the transformation of both. Higher Education and its adaptation processes, as a borderline space-time, and therefore, as cultural hybrids, both reinforce certain groups and potentialize resistances. After all, it is in this movement between the same and the Other that the difference appears in the negotiation with the structures that produce it and that insist in denying its ways of being, thinking and acting, such as described here.

Surely, these analyses stimulate a permanent commitment to empirical research, promoting enquiries about the social and political structures that impact people's lives, their wishes and ideals of fulfilment.

Endnotes

1 Source: Field journal – speeches given by one of the Adjunct Rectors in a meeting with all teachers.

2 As part of the reforms of the 1990s, the World Bank required from the Brazilian government that part of the population theretofore excluded from Higher Education should be thenceforth included in order to face the new demands of the labor market.

3 Classes in this shift start at 5:45 AM.

4 Source: Field journal.

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