

25 years of the Postgraduate Program in Social Work

25 anos do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Serviço Social

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This issue is made public when the Postgraduate Program in Social Work at UERJ (PPGSS/UERJ) turns 25 years old and the celebration of this historical process takes place through this publication, dedicated to the dissemination of academic production from sister postgraduate programs, members of the initial stratum in the evaluation by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), classified with a rating of 3. This scientific dissemination collaborates with the collective effort of the Social Work area at CAPES (area 32) to boost the qualifications of Brazilian social work postgraduate courses, increasing the number of programs with high evaluations. We dedicate this special issue of the journal to postgraduate programs with a rating of 3, enabling greater circulation of academic production in a reputable editorial vehicle with the aim of causing a positive impact for them in the CAPES evaluation, at the conclusion of the present four-year period (2019-2024), when all programs will be evaluated.

In this sense, the initiative responds to the challenge of enabling acts of solidarity that can favor the correction of asymmetries in access to Qualis A journals, in the counter-trend of the managerialism that today also encompasses the production of knowledge and the universities. Paradoxically, amidst the excess of productivism initiatives in the scientific environment, with this special issue, we seal our effective willingness to maintain the ties that entangle us in the critical intellectual project, sustained in collective sociability, involved with others.

The PPGSS/UERJ was created in 1999 – with a master's degree course and since 2005 also with a doctorate course –, in response to the request of the political situation to expand postgraduate qualifica-

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tions in the country and the continued education movement of professionals in the area. Since then, it has received graduates and masters in social work and other areas interested in critical social theory regarding studies on “Work and Social Policies” (the program’s area of concentration), from which it offers its activities, guiding teachers and students in their research. The program’s orbit of influence is not negligible, after all, PPGSS/UERJ has graduated around 308 masters and 170 doctors, coming from different regions of the country, as well as from different countries in Latin America, Central America, and Africa. Through the graduates and with them, PPGSS/UERJ has shaped an intellectual movement of excellence that has reached many different places through the lives of our former students, whether in teaching, in the profession, or in political engagement. Therefore, today, it would not be possible to celebrate this 25-year anniversary without *courting* those who made our program possible and capable of now supporting initiatives to overcome academic asymmetries.

Over this time, PPGSS/UERJ has established itself in the training of researchers and qualified professionals to work in higher education and in institutions within the scope of social policies, in parallel with engagement in struggles against social fractures that permeate capitalist sociability. It is a free, public academic project aimed at the three lines of research that structure it: a) Work, Social Relations, and Social Work; b) Social Issues, Public Policies, and Social Work; c) Identities, Culture, Public Policies, and Social Work. Around them, the program brings together an important portfolio of research and scientific dissemination devices that feed academic training in its courses. As part of the national postgraduate system alongside 36 other programs in the area of Social Work, it gradually progressed to a score of 6, which characterizes it as a program of academic excellence (PROEX), according to the assessment by CAPES/MEC.

This 25-year trajectory, however, was not marked by academic endogeny. On the contrary, it was highlighted in the itinerary of struggles for a qualified public university, with the affirmation of an intellectual and professional training project articulated with the scientific and political entities of social work, as well as the agenda of insurgencies of students, technical professionals, and teachers, and more general social movements. A trajectory that adds to other actions of the School of Social Work at UERJ, which completed 80 years, reverberating a public, secular, qualified, and inclusive higher education project.

The consolidation of PPGSS/UERJ as a training center of excellence is also not the result of isolated action by the teachers, but rather the result of the combined and dedicated work of countless teachers, students, and technical professionals who have been and are part of the program today. This can be seen in the continuous qualified performance of teachers, students, and graduates in national and international scientific events; in the fruitful collaboration of renowned intellectuals who acted as visiting professors; or even in the volume and quality of publications in books, articles, theses, and dissertations, which,

together, boost the dissemination of science to society, revealing the social relations behind apparently isolated practices, provoking and challenging debates about work and social policies.

With this perspective, the special issue – Em Pauta 57 – welcomes academic productions on three thematic axes representing the core foundations of Brazilian social work that, in truth, outline a field of formative and investigative knowledge of relevance to the profession: “Social Issue, Work, and Social Policy”. These articles trigger reflections in this context, comparing aspects of concrete reality and critical theoretical resources about the era of capitalism in crisis and its barbarizing devices for compulsive and heartbreaking valorization of value, while contradictorily architecting negative solutions that deepen the internal limits of its social metabolism, with severe hardships on human life and nature.

We open the dossier with an important appreciation of the advances and challenges in the area of Social Work in the Brazilian postgraduate system in the context of austerity, with the contribution of Hamida Assunção Pinheiro, Mônica de Castro Maia Senna, and Ricardo Lara, representatives of Social Work in CAPES. The collaboration shows that, even in this socially regressive framework of neoliberalism, the Social Work area has advanced qualitatively and quantitatively towards expanding postgraduate programs, increasing both the number of graduates and the quality of training and scientific research. Based on academic indicators from the period 2021 and 2022, the article offers us a rich panorama for reflections and debates. In turn, it also equips the reader to understand the place of other articles presented by the rating 3 CAPES programs, as part of this more general trend of qualification of postgraduate studies in Brazilian social work.

Next, the article “State counter-reform and dispute over the public fund: reflections in contemporary Brazil” focuses on the precariousness of public policies due to defunding, when the state is called upon to respond more robustly to the drop in the profitability of capital. For the authors – Ingrid Lydiane de L. S. Miranda, Márcia da Silva Pereira Castro, Maria do Perpétuo Socorro R.S. Severino, and Rivânia Lúcia Moura de Assis – in the neoliberal context, fiscal adjustment instruments are implemented that favorably address economic interests, capturing larger shares of the public budget.

Afterwards, the precariousness of the work of social workers is problematized in the article “The labor market for social workers in Paraíba (Brazil): expansion and precarization”, authored by Bárbara da Rocha Figueiredo Chagas, Maria Clara Ezequiel Marinho, Moema Amélia Serpa, and Mônica Barros from Nóbrega. The text presents an analysis of the configurations of the labor market and the repercussions on working conditions and relations, highlighting the expansion of social assistance policy, which has increased the job supply in Paraíba since the beginning of the 2000s, and that this occurred, however, while deepening the process of precarization of labor.

This theme is revisited in the article “Precarious work of social workers in health care: analysis of challenges and resistance strategies”, which complements the debate by exposing a specific study on the health care area. The authors Denise Carmem de Andrade Neves, Carla Agda Gonçalves, and Francisca Bezerra de Souza address how the topic is treated in the journals consulted, stating that the contemporary trend of outsourcing, low wages, and work overload negatively impact the working conditions of social workers of the health sector.

The racialized colonial domination over black women is the focus of the article “The social (un)protection of black women: strategies and resistance” by Tânia Maria Ramos de Godoi Diniz, and Thais Helena Modesto Villar de Carvalho, bringing light to little-known organizational practices of women insurgents against slavery, who enlisted peculiar protective mechanisms. The authors suggest the importance of giving visibility to these reminiscences, moving the history of social protection in Brazil to well before the Eloy Chaves Law of 1923.

In the article “The attack on management councils as a de-democratization strategy in the Bolsonaro administration”, by Nilo Carlos Bandeira Honda and Maurício Ferreira Silva, they show us the consequences of the dismantling of the federal public administration collegiate bodies by Decree no. 9,759/2019, exposing the scope of the action and, at the same time, its selectivity, in that the emphasis was greater on the councils in the social area that were in conflict with the government. The measure reveals itself to be an authoritarian maneuver by government administration that goes against the provisions of the Federal Constitution, as it causes de-democratization in the country.

Subsequently, the problematization of labor regulation is addressed in the article “Labor counter-reform and the situation of the working class in Brazil”, presenting important dimensions of the repercussion of Law no. 13,467 of 13 July 2017. César Albenes de M. Cruz, Janice Gusmão F. de Andrade, Carlos Gabriel Arpini, and Ricardo de Lima Soares demonstrate that the aforementioned legislation profoundly altered the status of salaried work in the country, causing the degradation of working conditions and relations.

The form of work in the neoliberal context is the axis of the article “Work and social issue in the consolidation of the neoliberal prescription in Brazil”, written by Alfredo Aparecido Batista, Cleonilda Sabaini T. Dallago, Cristiane Carla Komo, and Marize Rauber Engelbrecht. The text presents the intensification of capitalist exploitation in the current historical period, with uncertain occupations, low coverage of rights and social protection.

The historical perspective of human rights is the direction of reflection by Kannanda Emilly P. da Silva, Cecília Nunes Froemming, and Eliane Marques de M. Amiucci. The authors emphasize the relationship between social classes and the institutionalization of rights, as a field of conflict and political dispute.

The free theme section is made up of three texts. The first is a cross-border contribution entitled “La mercantilización del sufrimiento psíquico”, written by Mariana Paulin Devallis. The commodification-medicalization of psychological suffering is the key to the problematization of capitalism today, in a phase of terminal original residual accumulation. The reflection uses the list of economic policies in Argentina to situate the expropriation of ways of life in the Alto do Rio Negro region, the cause of psychological suffering and corresponding medicalization, which favors the pharmaceutical industry.

The second article “Technology, capital, and work” takes the domain of time as immanent to the capitalist mode of production, a condition of the form of value itself, and therefore inexorably the reason for the permanent improvement of the forms of domination and appropriation of time, known today, above all, as technological innovations, automation, and microelectronics. This scenario places capital in the face of the compulsive need to reduce live labor in the production process, impacting the expansion of relative overpopulation, manifested in unemployment.

The last article in this section, entitled “The ‘insecurity of existence’ of the Brazilian working class after the 2016 coup”, by Caroline Magalhães Lima, addresses the losses suffered by the working class as a result of the measures adopted by the State in a context of deepening neoliberalism, regression in the field of labor rights and forceful threats to liberal democracy.

In the Interview section, the journal publishes in this special edition the emblematic dialogue with Moishe Postone about the scope of Marxist criticism and the challenge of repositioning the value category in Marxian theoretical elaboration, previously reproduced in another editorial vehicle. As we know, Moishe Postone, who passed away in 2018, presented a scathing critique of ideas based centrally on income distribution in capitalism, contrasting with the debate on the centrality of abstract domination (value) and the fetish of merchandise over the bowels of social life. The new publication aims to bring this intellectual’s concerns to social work and expand reflection on Marx’s work.

The journal presents, in the section dedicated to reviews, two texts that problematize bibliographic titles around the environmental issue and the atrocities caused by capitalism, one written by Javier Blank and the other by Carla Alessandra da S. Nunes. Reading the reviews allows you to see that the *desert of the real* knocks on our door and it seems, only now, that it is possible to think about the socio-environmental destruction of capitalism, in its compulsive drive for value, exactly when exits are increasingly blocked. The reviews disturb thoughts about whether or not there is still time to reverse the climate situation, for example.

Life Homage presents a beautiful text by Ivanete Boschetti about the master Vicente de Paula Faleiros, capturing scenes from his political and academic career within the scope of social work and comprehensive social life, both in the country and abroad when

he lived in exile due to the business-military dictatorship. Faleiros's scientific production is a milestone in Latin American social work and the journal recognizes his role in fundamental debates on social policies and the profession. This is a relevant tribute to our historical archives, especially because the text allows us to associate the human figure with the intellectual and politician tormented by our social ills.

In the “Photographic Exhibition” session, the journal presents the elegant work of Maria Perdigão. Born in Minas Gerais, she lives in Rio de Janeiro and takes the composition of its mountains as inspiration. We came into contact with the artist's work based on Alê Silva's beautiful photographs. Maria Perdigão offers us “Cosmic Mountains: desire for a Deep Ecology”, a sensorial experience combined with deep and necessary reflections on life, nature, and the threats inherent to the current condition of the societal metabolism of capital, addressed in this edition.

The journal's projection in the academic and professional scenario guided our editorial work to make the scientific productions of these postgraduate programs reach a larger audience, solidifying the purpose of PPGSS/UERJ in supporting the qualification of Brazilian social work and critical thinking. As the text is a thread, we hope that a good reading will lead us to weave other lines in order to better arm criticism.