NEWS BULLETIN 24/7
Publicado em 21/06/2023 - 08:07

Opinion - I am Science: Civilization or Barbarism?

At this historic moment in which the future of our country will be decided at the polls next Sunday, we draw in this article a brief comparative assessment of the legacy of the governments of former President Lula and current President Jair Bolsonaro in the areas of Higher Education (ES) and of Science, Technology and Innovation (CTI). From what they did, we may have clues as to what they might do. A comparative analysis of government programs for both ES and CTI we have already presented in the blog earlier.

The development of any country, with equity, sustainability and sovereignty is closely linked to investment in Education and Science. That's why the comparison between the policies carried out in the governments of the two candidates is enlightening (and astounding!) – and presents our possible horizons for the future. We hope that voters, going through the cloud of smoke, lies and accusations that cloud the electoral process, can look at what really matters in the decision to vote.

The first comparison that we propose concerns the strategic vision on higher education and ST&I of each management, in the articulation they promoted between the knowledge production system and the demands of society. Strategic choices represent not only structuring decisions of public policies, but also the vision of the country and the world that is behind them.

Even though Lula did not have more than elementary education, and for this very reason (because he knew the importance of education), he invested, expanded and supported the higher education and research system with expressive numbers (which we will mention later). The level of investment not only made it possible to rebuild the system that was tottering after the neoliberal decade in the 1990s. It also expanded the promotion of Brazilian research, expanded federal universities as new campuses, especially in the interior and in the metropolitan peripheries, almost doubling the number of public vacancies and supporting the expansion of vacancies in private institutions, with scholarship and funding systems, unified the system of admission to universities with ENEM-Sisu, initiated affirmative, permanence and quota policies (consolidated in Law with Dilma) and established an evaluation and quality control system for Higher Education (SINAES).

Since the first month of its mandate, the Bolsonaro government has entered into direct and open conflict with universities and scientists on several fronts. He carried out ideological attacks on public universities, the humanities and the legacy of Paulo Freire, interfered in the choice of deans, threatened the freedom of the professorship, cut funding and investment resources, cut research grants and the purchase of equipment, and made the system reach on the verge of collapse. The result was the reduction of vacancies (loss of 85 thousand enrollments in federal universities) and the "brain drain" outside the country. In science, at the most important moment of defending it and adopting scientific evidence, during the pandemic, what prevailed was denialism and fake-science. As in culture, environment and human rights, the order was scorched earth in the sector.

Let's look at some numbers. With regard to enrollments in the federal public network, in 2003, the beginning of Lula's 1st term, the Federal Institutions of Higher Education (IFES) registered a total of 567,101 students and at the end of the last term (2010) this number rose to 849,727, a 66% growth that would continue under Dilma administrations, until reaching 1.1 million enrollments in 2016. This expansion was mainly thanks to REUNI, a program to create new universities and new campuses for regions lacking public higher education in Brazil – which also brings new pedagogical, epistemological and research questions from these territories, populations and their cultures. Private institutions also increased the number of vacancies, from 2 to 4 million enrollments in Lula's administration (these and other data mentioned here are available on the SoU_Ciência website and on our panels).

During the Bolsonaro government, the number of public places in the federal network shrank for the first time in decades and the behavior of enrollments was the opposite of that recorded by PT governments: in 2019, IFES had 1,114,495 students and in 2020 – the last year available from the Federal Government Census – this number dropped to 1,030,521, reversing the growth trend in enrollments. Enrollment in face-to-face courses at private institutions stagnated in the same period. The growth was on account of EAD, with all the risks involved, related to precarious, incomplete and not applied training, a subject that we have already addressed in another article on the blog.

In the comparison between the measures implemented for access to universities, we highlight that, in the Lula administrations, there was a restructuring of the ENEM in 2009 – the New ENEM -, the exemption of the registration fee for the exam for students from public education, the expansion of the use of ENEM for admission to Higher Education, with ProUni (2005) and SiSU (2010), and the quota policy, which began to be elaborated together with social movements, and ended up being published in 2012, under Dilma's government .

Copyright © Clipclap 2026.

https://newsbulletin247.com/technology/196255.html

Veículo: Online -> Site -> Site News Bulletin 24/7

Copyright © Clipclap 2026.