

BRAZIL (1990-2010): POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CLASSES IN NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM

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FAPESP Process 2008/57112-7 | Term: May 2010 to Apr 2014

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This research project began in May 2010. It investigates the politics and the sociological issues in Brazil during the period that begins in early 1990 and is marked by the neoliberal phase of capitalism. The general hypothesis of this project is that political organizations, conflicts, processes and political systems are related to the structure of the classes and strata of Brazilian society and to the evolution of this structure. This hypothesis places the project in a theoretical context that is distinct from mainstream Brazilian political science. Although politics, society and economy are considered specific dimensions of the Brazilian historical process of the 1990s and 2000s, are viewed as elements in a unity that demands a unified (holistic) analysis. The themes of the research project are the bourgeois class and its factions, the middle class and its various sectors and the workers in the countryside and in the city. Political parties are viewed as organizations that represent one or more of these classes and factions. The same goes for the dispute between the various proposals for economic and social policy.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS TO DATE AND PERSPECTIVES

Some results have already been achieved:

1. The definition of a faction of the Brazilian bourgeoisie that, despite the new wave of economic internationalization, has conflicts with foreign capital.
2. The characterization of the so-called crisis of impeachment as a crisis caused mainly by social resistance to the neoliberal program.
3. The definition of the nature of some middle-class social movements that present themselves as post-materialist, such as movements grouped in the Forum Social Mundial and in the altermondialism movement.
4. The characterization, in the period under investigation, of a type of economic state of emergence that has promoted several different and unsuspected phenomena, such as financial bondage and inside-out hegemony.
5. A characterization of the political orientation of the Brazilian trade unions against the neoliberal agenda, and an analysis of the action of the outsourced workers' trade unions, one of the typical labor relationships in neoliberal capitalism.
6. A more precise characterization of the social basis and ideological orientation of the movements of the homeless and an in-depth analysis of the struggle of unemployed workers in Brazil. The homeless and unemployed form a contingent of the working population that has grown significantly in the period of neoliberal reforms.
7. The perception of a shift in the composition of capital, both domestic and international, that makes up the agribusiness sector in Brazil, particularly capital related to the agro-export monocultures, such as sugar cane (sugar and ethanol), soybean (cattle feed), eucalyptus (paper) and orange (juice). This shift has substantial consequences for the evolution of the agrarian issue in the country.

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