
The rise and fall of "social neoliberalism" in Brazil

Yonca Ozdemir*¹

¹Middle East Technical University Northern Cyprus Campus – Turquie

Résumé

Brazil is a country which has been endeavoring a special version of neoliberalism since the beginning of the 2000s, which may be referred as "social neoliberalism." The "social" variety of neoliberalism denotes that the government emphasizes macroeconomic stability and redistribution simultaneously by combining some neoliberal economic policies with extensive social assistance programs. Although the Brazilian economy grew in the 2000s and even remained resilient in the face of the 2007-2008 global financial crisis, things started to change rapidly in the 2010s. First, the economy started to weaken with the long-term effects of the global crisis as their economic growth slowed down and vulnerabilities increased. Then, in 2013 a hike in bus fares sparked an unrest in Brazil which soon turned into large scale protests against poor public services, corruption, and police violence. These protests became the starting point for the removal President Dilma Rousseff and PT from power which culminated in the impeachment of Rousseff in 2016, often referred as a *judiciary coup*. Then, in 2018 a far right candidate, Jair Bolsonaro, was elected as president. Therefore, the trial with "social neoliberalism" ended with the demise of democracy in Brazil. In addition, the Brazilian economy is considered in crisis. In short, the social version of neoliberalism seems to have ended with failure.

The purpose of this paper is to understand the kind of forces that brought this case of "social neoliberalism" into place in Brazil and the dynamics that have caused it to collapse eventually. The focus will be on the kind of neoliberal model of development that Brazil has followed, its effects on different classes, and their reflection on the political developments. The main question that this study strives to answer is: **Why has democracy got into crisis in Brazil since 2013, despite the fact that their "social neoliberalism" model seemed successful in the 2000s?**

The purpose is to look at the power and the stance of the capitalist and labor classes in Brazil in order to understand the rise of Workers Party (PT) to power in 2002, its 14-year rule, and then its fall from power with the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff in 2016. The paper will argue that PT has successfully gathered the votes of the lower classes who were supported by the state's social programs, but also middle income people and some national bourgeoisie, but it was fiercely opposed by the international bourgeoisie, especially global financial crisis made the economic growth more difficult after 2008.

Mots-Clés: Brazil, social neoliberalism, PT, Lula, Dilma Rouseff, judiciary coup

*Intervenant