

# From cultural activism to the struggle against the coup in Brazil: visual arts on the streets (2005-2016)

**Marcelo Mari\***

## Resumo

*Esse artigo procura examinar as manifestações culturais produzidas em arte contemporânea por coletivos de arte, mostrando como elas participaram de eventos políticos no Brasil desde ocupações de edifícios em São Paulo pelo direito à moradia no ano de 2005 até as manifestações contra o processo de impeachment da presidenta Dilma Rousseff em o golpe jurídico-parlamentar que agitou o Brasil em tempos recentes.*

**Palavras-chave:** Coletivos de Arte, Movimentos Sociais, Manifestações contra o Golpe.

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## Résumé

*Cet article examine les manifestations culturelles produites dans l'art contemporain par des collectifs d'art, montrant comment ils ont participé à des événements politiques au Brésil depuis occupations de bâtiments à São Paulo pour le droit au logement en 2005 aux manifestations contre la destitution du président Dilma Rousseff dans le coup d'Etat juridique et parlementaire qui a secoué le Brésil, ces derniers temps.*

**Mots-Clés:** Collectifs d'Art et stratégies visuelles, Mouvements Sociaux, Manifestations contre le coup d'Etat.

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## Abstract

*This article examines the cultural contemporary art manifestations produced by art collectives, showing how they participated in political events in Brazil since the buildings occupation in São Paulo by housing movements in 2005 to protest against the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff in the legal process and parliamentary coup that has shook the Brazil lately.*

**Keywords:** Art Collectives and Visual strategies, Social Movements, Manifestations against the coup d'Etat

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Against Neoliberal economy and the fatal march of globalization in the late 1990s, young people worldwide began to organize means to fight and resist to the contradictions created by the state of exception policies and loss of civil and labour rights around the world. In tactical terms, these young people have created alternative vehicles for information and were benefited by the Internet as a debate and mobilization tool. This new form of combat and art instruments meant the emergence of artistic

collectives. These groups of artists or collectives, in addition to the criticism of art production as individualized production, went beyond to the traditional *metier* of the visual arts and denied the traditional definition of status of the visual arts to become combative agents at the political and cultural level.

In Brazil, the names of these collectives marked history and approached social movements such as *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto*, MTST (Homeless

Workers' Movement). Among them: *Coletivo Esqueleto* (Collective Skeleton) and Group *Bijari*. The symbolic power of these collectives work was the joint political action with the MTST in the empty building situated at Julio Prestes Avenue, in São Paulo downtown, Brazil, with direct transmission and dialogue with the 2005 Havana Biennial. After that, Brazilian scenario changed. The political situation seemed better than in the recent past: George W. Bush came to Brazil under protests, also when Barack Obama visited Rio de Janeiro referred to President Lula da Silva saying "He is the man"<sup>1</sup>. Despite certain contradictions, everything seemed to be going well. With the resurgence of disputes between social classes in the cities – given the irreversible crisis of representative politics – in recent years and in particular from June 2013 until nowadays, many political and cultural events or cultural political character took to the streets of main Brazilian cities.



**Image 01** – Group *Bijari* made posters to protest against the visit of President George W. Bush to Brazil, exhibited in Ushuaia - Argentina, 2007. Available in: <http://www.bijari.com.br/por-que-lutamos->

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2013, a protest took place in São Paulo, Brazil, against the increase of bus fare from R\$ 3.00 (*reais*, the national currency) to R\$ 3.20, having the motto "if the rate is not reduced, the city stops". The protest, organized by the *Movimento Passe-Livre*, MPL (Free Fare Movement)] was followed by other events, which, with the intensification of the protests, spread across the country and over 100 municipalities have been forced to reduce the price of the bus

ticket. This initial manifestation and others had the adhesion of many young people and of workers who were severely repressed by the military police of São Paulo Governor's Geraldo Alckmin. Yet, the manifestation was divided between a great number of young people together with the middle class in the city centre, and workers in the suburbs<sup>2</sup>.



**Image 02** – *Homem-placa* (sandwich man/human billboard) making reference to "there are currently no open positions", 2005. Available in: <https://esqueletocoletivo.wordpress.com/projetos-e-acoes/homens-placa/>

At that time, the governor of São Paulo and the Police Chief made an official declaration to justify police actions. The public had been addressing a lot of criticism over violence against the protesters. After the first protests, police action, in the following events, came back with new weapons more repressive to the population. The demonstration of June 2013 was preceded by riots in São Paulo, and especially in the city of Campinas, in 2005 and 2006, and before that, by *Buzu* revolt in Salvador, in 2003 and the Florianopolis *Revolta da Catraca* (ticket gate revolt) in 2004. The MPL movement emerged during a plenary in the World Social Forum, in 2005, mainly demanding for students' right of not paying ticket fare, to have a free pass to public transportation<sup>3</sup>. MPL's proposal, which will drive the manifestations to the radicalization of protests, would be the municipalisation of public transportation and therefore the implementation of its gratuity.

<sup>1</sup> Luis Inácio Lula da Silva was a founding member of the Workers Party in Brazil. Lula was elected in the 2002 and 2006 elections. He introduced social programs such as Bolsa Família and Fome Zero. Lula announced candidacy for presidential elections but he was disqualified. Nowadays, Lula suffers persecution and is Lawfare victim.

<sup>2</sup> About MPL and protests in Brazil: <https://blogdaboitempo.com.br/jornadas-de-junho/>

<sup>3</sup> Brazilian movement that claims the adoption of free fares in public transportation. The movement was founded during the Worldwide Social Forum in 2005 and had important participation in the 2013 Brazilian protests.



**Image 03** – Protest in June 2013, the banner with motto "if the fare is not reduced, the city comes to a stop!" Available in: <https://www.gruposulnews.com.br/grajau-prepara-reuniao-aberta-contra-aumento-da-passagem-no-transporte-publico/>

In order to solve the problem, São Paulo mayor Fernando Haddad tried to negotiate with MPL's leaders with no good results. In a few days of events during the month of June, the MPL was able to articulate a number of intellectuals, actions of occupation of public spaces, organization of cultural and artistic events. These manifestations organized by the MPL are similar to global actions against capitalist system that have occurred since the late 1990s, when activists, intellectuals and young people around the world organized to fight the perverse process of impoverishment, the lack of prospects and social exclusion in late capitalism. Although this happened earlier and very fast in Europe and the United States, however, in Brazil the process starts rather late with the participation of young people. This occurred because, during the years of military dictatorship, the bond between the student movement and the social demands had been cut. The generations that followed the repression produced by AI-5<sup>4</sup> were grown in the absence of information, kept away from social engagement and ideologically controlled by the Brazilian militarized state. The Military Regime in Brazil fought against anything that could hurt the interests of the area of influence of the United States in Latin America or what looked like communist ideology.

In Brazil, social movements that had tradition and fought for the expansion of social rights were linked to unions, worker's association in the cities and countryside and even a few sectors of the Catholic Church who actively participated in the process of

<sup>4</sup> The Ato Institucional Número Cinco – AI-5, Institutional Act Number Five, was issued by the military dictatorship in the years following the Coup d'état in Brazil, 1964, with the suspension of any constitutional guarantees.

redemocratization of the country by mid-1970s until 1985. Over twenty years after the democratic opening, the social movements ended up losing their representation in society and their political strength. From mid-1980's until today, Brazil has entered a new life euphoria as much of democratic consolidation and civil rights as the reality of a globalized market economy. In terms of official policy, governments that followed the opening policy promoted reforms known as "necessary" for dynamizing the market economy of the country.

During the 1960's in Brazilian culture, immediately before and after the military coup, artists interested in political participation occurred. Just remember that the production of *Bichos*<sup>5</sup> of Lygia Clark required the active participation of the public in the work of art; moreover the works of Rubens Gerchman and Antonio Dias opened spaces for the politicization of issues of art, using themes more common to the reality of the cultural industry. In 1970, a group of artists, including Sergio Ferro, from *Atelier Tiradentes* – so called because the studio used to be a cell in the Tiradentes prison during the dictatorship – have developed a dynamic work connected to the same space (a cell) with works built for collective debate and individual expression.

Those artistic interventions were added to a series of Brazilian subversive art of the 1970s. Just to name a few, Antonio Manuel's happening performances; the famous bottle of Coca-Cola with political writings and inserts to denounce ideological circuits of consumption and production, by Cildo Meireles; *Bloody Muggles* by Artur Barrio; the inscription "Made in Brazil" sewed in Leticia Parente's skin in 1974; Carlos Zilio's suitcase with nails in 1975 and others. What we witnessed there was a radical critique of the art system in Brazil and its institutionalization assimilated by the new owners of power. This generation of artists known as *guerrillas*<sup>6</sup> erased the traces left by their action in order not to be identified and made art ephemeral and transitory. The majority of these visual art productions were happening or conceptual art. Despite the desire that the

<sup>5</sup> In the 1950s, Lygia Clark broke away from the Concrete group to start the Neo-concretism in Brazil. The Neo-Concretists were interested in how an artwork could be manipulated by the spectator. The artwork *Bicho* of Lygia Clark promotes the idea that participation is essential for the artwork to produce complete meaning.

<sup>6</sup> Guerrilla in the same meaning as Cuban Guerrillas or the famous happening group, Guerrilla Girls.

mentioned artistic manifestations should have a political impact, the effective connection between artist and audience was missing.

Since 1970 especially, Brazilian art has entered a spiral of appreciation and depreciation of artistic movements, of general schemes and trends that followed one after another in the impatience of the market. The autonomy of art is replaced by the imperious determination induced by the taste obsolescence. Faced with all this, a number of initiatives have tried to impose modifications and alternatives to the logic of approximation of the visual arts with the capitalist market. With the neo-capitalism conversion, in the 1980s, the art joined in the neoliberal logic and paid a very dear price for this: the secondary role in world system was a condition for which Brazilian art could enter the international system of contemporary art (with its museums, magazines and art markets) as art device. Brazilian art has been internationalized over the years ranging from 1980 to the early 2000's, a time when the example to be followed were the international artists as great entrepreneurs in the art world and with an army of labour for their projects as Jeff Koons. One could be either an entrepreneur or a working artist. Because of this, in Brazil, in the last thirty years a deterioration has been noted concerning the debate and the artistic production in general. This deterioration did not appear immediately, because until the end of 1980s there still was a very active intellectual life, linked mainly with the re-democratization and civil and social rights achievement.

The concept of creative industry involves a big number of workers (artists) with very low wages. In recent years, the precariousness gained a new form of collective work or collectivism in the visual arts all over the world and in Brazil. In visual arts, this collectivism contradictorily denies the status of individual artists as creative genius, while incurring the danger of misappropriation of other's work. Even today, in capitalism, the artistic collectivism is more likely to behave like a small business in the creative industry, with added value expropriated, and a poorly-worded socialization of the means of production and its results, to think of art as an aesthetics expression, always socially alternative. So far what we have seen with the Brazilian experience it is that the practices of collectivism in the art are contradictory and show the strength of

assimilation of alternatives by the capitalist logic.

Certainly, in Brazil, Ricardo Rosas stands out for his activism in Neo-conceptualist art. As an artist and agitator of Brazilian cultural scene, Rosas was concerned to show how the aesthetic and political issues were inseparable today, although his position remains between the recovery of the primary meaning of art as transformation of reality and an inability to take political position consistent with social transformation. For him, the achievement of true artistic purposes, values and established power relations in society could manifest as an expression of the value in use, rather than the exchange value. Ricardo Rosas showed in his article on the origin of collective art in Brazil that both the Brazilian art and the social processes in Brazil have a general characteristic of dispersion of initiatives without historical continuity between past and present. Important feature of Brazilian culture, in fact, even if the environment would allow the emergence of these events, had no continuity between the Brazilian conceptual art of the 1970s, the formation of the artistic collectives in 1980 and the current collectivism in the XXI century.

The premature death of Rosas did not allow him to follow the effort of collectivism in Brazil and the power of these artistic expressions nowadays. However, the years of the first decade of the new century were marked by many actions of these collectives, but without putting in focus the definition of class and social conflicts that were the main problem. However, *Coletivo Esqueleto* and Group *Bijari* worked and approached to social movements such as the MTST ('Homeless Workers Movement'). All this production of art occurred from 1990 to 2010 and came, so to speak, in the wake of a number of contradictions generated in previous decades. When it happens, the crystallization process of speculative financial model in the United States, in several other parts of the world triggers the dismantling of the social state of social security and the increase of economic neoliberalism has aggravated disparities between rich and poor countries.

Collectivism in art has emerged from a perspective of profound change of mentality, which, however, has not been confirmed. I have previously written in another paper that collectivism in art had acquired conscience and, in the latest political developments in Brazil, a well-defined position in the understanding of



the social struggles. We can say with a certain optimism that the artists had consciously recognized their position in class society, given the events of recent years, such as the occupation of the building in Prestes Maia Avenue, culminating in the artistic event in the *favela* called *O Moinho* and the manifestations of June 2013<sup>7</sup>.



**Image 04** – Occupation of an empty building in Prestes Maia Avenue, São Paulo, Brazil, on 2005.

It was not exactly what happened, and it seems that a part of these young collectivists was used for sordid purposes or its 'shares' capitalized for self-promotion in the symbolic market. Meanwhile, the majority of the art collectives have been engaged in political activities in recent years and are dealing with contemporary issues (such as gentrification in big cities, the political minority, feminist politics and LGBT rights), but their involvement is ineffective and there is no more a practical action to change the situation or solve the problems. We cannot forget the role of the collectives in the *Favelas*<sup>8</sup>. However, today, with historical distance, it is possible to understand that these events were approaching attempts of artists to collaborate with vulnerable people without actually building the prospect of change in favour of another reality.

Of course, the power to transform the lives of those people was not only in their hands but also in the hands of public authorities. In fact, the artists had an external involvement (which could not overcome social and class barriers), only an expression of solidarity for the cause. After all, the art collectivism benefited much

more of this social approach (social turn) than the people living in the occupation. Poverty was used as a bargaining chip of symbolic importance for recognition in the official art system. Today many of these art collectives that worked with social demand have space in the major galleries in São Paulo, participating in art fairs, etc. Although not all art collectives have had much success in the capitalized art system, they are the small official circle of contemporary art in Brazil and will be included in the Symbolic exchange of the capitalist market. The activity of Brazilian art collectives is considered secondary, if not less by traditional curators. They are especially close to the activity of the creative economy's collectives and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but all of them are identified in their basic points operation in accordance with logic of neoliberal management.

According to the site *Passa-Palavra*<sup>9</sup>, it is a new form of organization of political, social and artistic life that functions as resource management and transfer of resources mainly of government public notes and less resources from the private sector. This form of culture operation in terms of management has meant that all cultural activities have taken on a new business model. The collective *Fora do Eixo*, describe a new management model for the cultural area, which did not fit very well with that called fluid territory of "free culture" in the capitalist world. Alexandre Youssef would say the *Fora do Eixo* is the result of: "a blender where it can be put to left wing politics, with strategies and logical market of advertising agencies, blending rock, rap, visual arts, theatre, a bunch of dreamers and other pragmatists, artist, producer, entrepreneur and the public. (...) (It is a generation that) plunges dramatically in the use of digital culture to do what has to be done" (Abdo et alii, 2013, p. 37-8). And the author continues: "You can use the militants and activists means to expand its political influence and even to expand its consumer market of independent culture, but not cease to be what they are -- a class of managers that aims to reinvigorate bureaucracy". (Idem, p. 37-8)

On the one hand, many collectives were founded to handle creative economy, raise public funds according to the so-called rule of

<sup>7</sup> To cultural analyses about Brazilian context: <https://blogdaboitempo.com.br/2013/07/23/a-situacao-da-cultura-diante-dos-protestos-de-rua/>

<sup>8</sup> Favela is the Brazilian word for slum.

<sup>9</sup> An online journal of anticapitalist orientation, independent of political parties and other economic and political powers, formed by collaborators from Portugal and Brazil. Available: <http://passapalavra.info/>

approaching with power and have available a huge mass of volunteers to work on the other, some collective attempt to survive the appropriation of their work by the logic of unlimited flow of information and process of commodification. The action of the collectives seemed to lurch towards a closer position to the problems of the political life of the country and who should engage in the defense of legitimately elected governments of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT) against right's attacks. That did not happen because much of this above logic is closer to what thinks the former presidential candidate Marina Silva network, which is the logic of class conciliation.



**Image 05** – “We leave the facebook”; Protests gained new causes with the participation of the middle class in Brazil, 2013. Available at:

<http://www.rsdezoito.com.br/blog/facebook-nega-exclusao-de-posts-de-usuarios-e-esclarece-politica-de-conteudo-e-remocao/>

Another case worth of note is the young people who joined the demonstrations called by the *Movimento Passe Livre* and who were mostly from middle class without any vindictory schedule and who do not realize that much of their disbelief in the political system and the defence policy option of individual rights (use of drugs, support demands of minorities etc.) stemmed from a sordid campaign against the government of Dilma Rousseff and Lula's legacy, promoted by US corporations interested in the Brazilian petroleum. In short, these middle-class young people were involved in an ambiguous way with national politics, increasingly defined by the struggle between right and left wings. In Marilena Chauí's review:

Instead of fighting for political reform, many of the protesters refuse the legitimacy of the political party as republican and democratic institution. So, in this respect, despite the use of social networks and critical to the media, most of

the protesters joined the ideological message broadcast for years by the media that the parties are corrupt in essence. As it is known, the position of the media is intended to give them the monopoly of the public space functions as if they were not capitalist enterprises driven by private interests. Thus, the refusal of the media and criticism addressed to them by the demonstrators did not prevent the majority has joined the perspective of conservative middle-class ethics disseminated by the media. (Chauí, 2013)

There was a whole campaign to destabilize the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* government in 2013, because of United States interests in Brazilian petroleum. In fact, President Lula had established rules for the operation of Brazilian oil fields in function to national interests at the expense of operational proposals made by giant petroleum companies. This dispute has led American intelligence trying to sabotage the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* government, causing internal uncertainty and political instability, to help elect the opposition candidate in the presidential race. The coup had been planned to take place when president Lula was re-elected in 2006, when then opposition candidate José Serra has promised to change the rules for oil exploration in the *Santos* oil fields to benefit North American corporations. The WikiLeaks website has published secret information on the lobby of oil exploration in Brazil<sup>10</sup>.

With the resurgence of disputes between social classes in the cities – and taking into account the irreversible crisis of representative politics - in recent years and especially since 2013 June Journeys, many political and cultural events took to the streets of major Brazilian cities. That moment was reflux of art collectives over political collectives. Mainly from the years 2000, the collective term and collectivism was widely renamed as direct action group either in the arts, cultural action and in politics. Also the political demonstrations of June 2013 were used in a series of expedients formulated and conducted by art collectivism with the vulgarization of the procedures and artistic choices, the effects of which can be as diverse as possible. In any case the aesthetic functionality was submitted to the rise of the image in the contemporary world and, therefore, the function

<sup>10</sup> See <https://wikileaks.org/Nos-bastidores-o-lobby-pelo-pre.html>

of eminently exemplary art loses its meaning by settling in the zero degree of indifference produced by excessive sensorality of media and technology today. In a sense, what happened back then in June 2013 was similar to artistic production collectives, photos posted by anonymous people on social medias such as Instagram and Facebook and posters with popular adages. The aestheticized performance of anonymous people on the internet is a reification of artistic expedient? This equivalence aesthetic effect produced by a series of images made compulsively ritual by the crowd says little about art and about space policy, other than the fact that it is an attempt to self-representation of the participants of the June days from their own images. Here it has prevailed spectacle art by the repeated exposure of essentially aestheticized elements, annulling the forming ability of art and indicating the irrelevance not only of itself but also of policy, at a time when the space established by the policy runs the risk of ceasing to exist.

At the same time, it is not difficult to understand that the action of the artistic collectives has also been replaced by more assertive groups in political causes as anarchists and Black Blocs with horizons of political action beyond the institutional policy. The reaction to this state of affairs was, on the one hand, the repressive action of the bourgeois state under the sovereign domain of neo-liberal market economy; on the other hand, the emergence of various paramilitary groups, militias and associations from right-wing extremists, whose main objective is the persecution of the Left, the LGBT, Indian and Black movements. Black Blocs violence was accompanied by state crimes and for the exponential increase of the institutional repression. Accepting the suggestion of the US Embassy and in opposition to the demonstrations that took place, especially in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, repressive measures were taken against terrorist activities. The state strengthens its repressive apparatus and solves the social conflict for the benefit of the dominant groups, and especially to the capital. This is the result of the establishment, in Latin America and in other parts of the world, of Anti-Terrorism Act in the United States. In fact, since September 11, 2001, with the Patriot Act a set of anti-terror laws, has been created to protect the United States against their alleged foreign enemies. It turns out that this legislation came

into force in all parts of the world, as political subjugation of nations. Thus, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism was held in Barbados and signed on June 3, 2002.

In 2005, Brazil ratified the Convention and since then it became the target of the US Embassy to implement the anti-terrorism law in the country. It is not any isolated example since in Argentina the approval of the anti-terrorism law was due to blackmail to disqualify the country as supposedly unreliable for investment. Thus, the law was passed in Argentina in 2007. The law extends the power of the state to the repression of demonstrations and social movements through a system of police and intelligence (including delegates, researchers and judges) to act against all that can be classified as terrorism or terrorist acts. The text of the law does not define exactly who may be a terrorist or what may be a terrorist act and therefore all the manifestations of social movements for just demands could be assigned to this control scheme generated by the United States. What to do? Leftist parties and associations tried to reverse the process by pressing the Brazilian Congress to repeal the anti-terrorism law because the New law served to coerce social movements in Brazil.

The law extends the repression's power of the state over any manifestation and social movements through an apparatus of police forces and intelligence (including delegates, investigators, and judges) to act against anything that may be classified as terrorism or terrorist action. Nowadays these institutions are controlled by Right-Wing politics and the text of the law reflects this situation where the economical elite and middle class is striking against poor people; the Brazilian right-wing has very close relations with the international finance groups and are very aligned to USA foreign politics and intend to solve the Internal Social crises with repression. In this case, the anti-terrorism law that does not define exactly who can be a terrorist or what is a terrorist action and, therefore, the manifestations of social movements for just demands have been framed in this scheme of control generated by the United States. On March 17, 2016, this law had as its reporter the right-wing politician, senator Aloysio Nunes. The justification was just security to the Olympic Games and other mega-events that would occur in Brazil.

The June 2013 manifestations, organized by *Movimento Passe Livre*, were a youth liberty movement for the adoption of free fares in public transportation and later for the improvement of education, health, etc., but they became an instrument to Right-Wing movements that were moving towards the neoliberalist candidacy of senator Aécio Neves for the presidency. All this added to the fact that north american corporations interests were part of an action coordinated by US government to spy on the decisions of President Dilma Rousseff government at that moment. In a very crude summary, the impeachment process was the result of a set of internal and external factors that involved economic interests such as the petroleum oil fields that were recently discovered, the founding of the BRICS Development Bank and also the fall of the price of Brazilian commodities, that made Brazilian businessmen linked to financial capital plus productive sectors withdraw their support to the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* government.

The result of June 2013 was a historic amount of protests against institutional policy and the conditions of what was considered the poor quality of public services, which led in that pre-election year to the fall of popularity of the president and also several governors And mayors. In the case of Dilma Rousseff, her popularity was up that moment, with 55% of excellent and good rating in research published by Datafolha<sup>11</sup> on June 29, 2013.

After a few days of agitation carried out by the free pass movement, the manifestations of Fora Dilma took to the streets of the Brazilian cities, but mainly of São Paulo and Brasília. The strategies were almost the same: to organize the movement of dissatisfied with the social policies of the PT governments based on the use of new social media and mainly for communication through the internet. Today it is known that these movements of dissatisfied with the Dilma government for a moment united on the same side elements of left and right, In part, the left was used as a basis of criticism to gather from the debate the debacle of the PT government. It is famous the episode in 2013 that becomes the trigger of the criticism to the government Dilma, namely the advertising campaign of Fiat, that by unfortunate coincidence was able to regiment a vast number of dissatisfied with the situation of economic stabilization that was lived and with

the Government spending for the construction of world cup stadiums. The "Come to the Street" jingle was part of FIAT's advertising campaign for the 2013 football world tournament to be held in Brazil. After this, there is a series of demonstrations against the holding of the World Cup in Brazil. In general, the criticism made at the time was that both the right and the left complained about the poor application of Brazilian resources for the construction of football stadiums. The argument was the use of middle-class taxes without the direct use of public services offered by the state. This argumentation used by the middle class was in part a subterfuge of new realities, such as paying school and not being able to enjoy it, as well as health and a host of other services.



**Image 06.1 and 06.2** – Right Wing Protester holds poster praising the Deputy Eduardo Cunha who opened Impeachment process against Dilma Rousseff, 2015. Available at: <https://jornalggn.com.br/noticia/como-os-jornais-e-as-redes-sociais-atuaram-na-retomada-do-poder-pela-direita>

A year later, more precisely at the opening of the World Cup, on June 15, 2014, the President Dilma Rousseff was booed by groups that paid expensive tickets to watch the games, an opportunity that was forbidden to the majority of the population who could not afford. Television was campaigning along with the other news media against Dilma Rousseff's

<sup>11</sup> Datafolha is a Statistical research agency In Brazil.



government, but she still wins the election that year, more precisely at 10:27 pm on October 26, 2014.

On February 1, 2015, Eduardo Cunha was elected Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and Dilma Rousseff already sworn in Presidency, she pronounced a speech on March 8, 2015, by television, was booed and happened the first *panelaço* (hitting pans)<sup>12</sup>, ironically International Women's Day. The *panelaços* were organized in two noble districts, Higienópolis in São Paulo and Barra da Tijuca in Rio de Janeiro. On the 15th of that month, the middle class takes to the streets of the Brazilian cities and the manifestation has its epicentre in the São Paulo Avenue with a considerable number of demonstrators. From then on, what happened was exactly an alternation of demonstrations for and against the government of Dilma Rousseff until her removal from office at the beginning of the Impeachment process on May 12, 2016, which ended on August 31, 2016.



**Image 07** - Posters made by many Left wing artists in favour of the Dilma Rousseff government and against the impeachment process, 2016.

It was at the end of 2015 and the beginning of the following year that after many demonstrations of support to the coup were promoted by opposing political parties and probably money of some Brazilian businessmen and conservative foundations from some foreign countries, all of them supporters of the manifestations of impeachment. However, the Left wing precariously organized resistance movement with participation of students, workers, priests and progressive sectors of church in Brazil<sup>13</sup>.

After witnessing a series of demonstrations in favour of impeachment and even

demonstrations openly in favour of the return of the military dictatorship, several artists mobilized and created posters in defence of democracy. On 2016, the artists made a series of posters for the street demonstrations against the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff. It was an art for agitation and propaganda to favour of democracy in Brazil. These posters circulated worldwide. The fact is that despite the efforts of intellectuals, artists, social movements against impeachment, most elected politicians who are populist, corrupt and right-wing, have decided to take Dilma Rousseff out of the presidency, support Temer's illegitimate government and its neoliberal policy. The artistic manifestations continued to be made by artists in the inverse proportion in which violent repression becomes more and more dominant in Brazil.



**Image 08** - Manifestation in favour of Dilma Rousseff and against the coup d'état in Brazil, 2016.

The dispute over Dilma Rousseff's impeachment was settled by a pact between the country's conservative elites and the main mass media. This massified society, precarious workers and freelancers, believed that a Temer's new government did not mean a breach of legal order nor a *soft* parliamentary coup. So along with that the social crisis are creating a space of anomie, a disintegration of the unions. Who would be responsible by the alternation of this social framework? That is the question with few answers and some hope, even with ex-President Lula imprisoned.

<sup>12</sup> The middle class beat pans, better known as Right wing's *panelaço*.

<sup>13</sup> See: <https://jornalgn.com.br/noticia/como-os-jornais-e-as-redes-sociais-atuaram-na-retomada-do-poder-pela-direita>

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## Biographical note

Dr Marcelo Mari, professor de teoria e história da arte da universidade de Brasília. Dr Marcelo Mari teaches Arts History at University of Brasília.