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**RIGHT-WING COUNTER PUBLICS AND THE ORIGINS OF THE BRAZILIAN NEW
RIGHT**

(Working Paper, please do not quote without permission)

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Abstract

In this working paper we describe how right-wing online counter publics that were constituted during Lula's Presidencies (2003-2010) evolved into Social Movement Organizations (SMOs) that led the pro-impeachment cycle of protests (2014-2016). Based on a qualitative research done with pro-impeachment activists, we demonstrate how these counter publics, born out from Orkut and Facebook, took the streets during two moments that represented two major changes in the political opportunity structure: June 2013, and the re-election of Dilma Rousseff in 2014. At this time, they already were better organized and then managed to become political leaders during the pro-impeachment cycle of protests (2014-2016). We sustain that during this process the counter publics' discourse evolved in order to increase the public adherence to their ideas and values. This evolution is characterized by a rejection of the institutional political connection.

Key words: right-wing movements; counter publics; Dilma Rousseff's impeachment; cycle of protests; political opportunities.

Resumo

Neste artigo descrevemos como contra-públicos de direita virtuais, formados durante os governos Lula (2003-2010) se tornaram Organizações de Movimentos Sociais que lideraram o ciclo de protestos pró-impeachment (2014-2016). A partir de pesquisas qualitativas realizadas junto a ativistas pró-impeachment, nós procuramos demonstrar como membros destes contra-públicos, originados no Orkut e Facebook, passaram a realizar protestos de rua em dois momentos-chave que representaram duas grandes mudanças na estrutura política de oportunidades: Junho de 2013 e a reeleição de Dilma Rousseff em 2014. Nesta época, os ativistas estavam melhor organizados e puderam liderar politicamente os protestos. Nós apontamos ainda que durante este processo político, os discursos dos contra-públicos se transformaram à medida que passaram a enfatizar a rejeição de conexões com a política institucional para conseguir aumentar a adesão de mais pessoas às suas ideias e valores.

Palavras-chave: movimentos de direita; contra-públicos; impeachment de Dilma Rousseff; ciclo de protestos; estrutura de oportunidades políticas

Introduction

It is possible to say that Brazil recently became part of the so-called Latin American Right Turn, a new political wave that started a few years ago as a response to the Left Turn that took place in the region between 1998, when Hugo Chávez was elected in Venezuela, till 2010, when Sebastián Piñera won Chile's Presidential Election¹. From 2003 on Brazil was being governed by the left with high approval ratings, however, since the massive riots that took place in a great number of Brazilian cities in June 2013 and gathered millions of protesters, Dilma Rousseff's approval ratings dropped dramatically and enacted a political crisis worsened by the corruption scandals revealed by "Operação Lava-Jato". Rousseff still managed to get reelected next year, nevertheless, only six days after her victory was announced, on November 1st, a group called "Movimento Brasil Livre" (MBL) organized the first street protest in São Paulo asking for her impeachment that gathered around ten thousand people. From then on new protests were organized on the same basis by MBL and two other groups, an anti-corruption movement called "Vem Pra Rua" (VpR), which organized three small anti-Rousseff protests in São Paulo before the elections, and "Revoltados Online" (ROL), a group named after a conservative Facebook community created in 2010 by military dictatorship enthusiast Marcello Reis.

On the 15th of March 2015 the three groups led a huge mass mobilization that took place at Avenida Paulista, one of the most famous streets in the city of São Paulo and brought together something between 200 thousand (Datafolha) and one million people (according to the Organizers). After this day other three big protests were held in São Paulo, 04-12-2015, 08-16-2015 and 03-13-2016, the biggest being the last one, which assembled something between 500 thousand people (Datafolha) to 1.4 million (according to the Organizers). One month later the pressure from the streets combined with the political turmoil that was set in motion by the "Operação Lava Jato" led to Dilma Rousseff's impeachment and her replacement by Michel Temer, then Vice-President, who rapidly adopted a right wing political program.

¹ Levitsky, S., & Roberts, K. M. (2011). *Latin America's Left Turn*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press

Great deal of attention was dedicated to understand the cycle of protests that led to the impeachment². We believe, though, that this cycle of protests represents only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to unravel the Brazilian Right Turn. To understand why the protests occurred and why they were followed by the emergence of a New Right embodied by a great number of new organizations, movements and political leaders that got greater exposition during the protests, one must go back in time and look into the events that led to the creation of MBL, VpR and ROL: the emergence of online right wing counter-publics ten years before the Rousseff's impeachment took place.

The concept of counter-publics was originally developed to point out problems that arose from Jürgen Habermas theory regarding the process of constitution of the public sphere and its democratic potentials. According to his critics, Habermas's argument was based on a misrepresentation of a unified public sphere based on narrow and exclusive discursive norms that would disregard the existence of alternative audiences formed by groups that would eventually gather around other alternative publics called counter-publics. However this concept soon became indistinct from what Nancy Fraser³ termed as subordinate counter-publics: parallel discursive arenas in which members of groups that share a subordinate status in the social structure create and circulate oppositional discourses (Thimsen, 2017). Attempts to theoretically refine the concept of counter publics began to be carried out, but the most significant change in the redefinition of this category has to do with the understanding that the subaltern condition of its members its not a defining feature of any counter public, and in this sense the contribution of Michael Warner stands out. According to the definition proposed by Warner⁴ a counter publics would necessarily be imbued with an awareness of its subordinate status against a dominant cultural horizon. Its members, regardless of whether they are subaltern or

2 See: Alonso, A. (2017). A política das ruas: protesto em São Paulo de Dilma a Temer. *Novos Estudos - CEBRAP*, 49□58; Tatagiba, L., Andrade, T., & Chavez Teixeira, A. C. (2015). Protestos à direita no Brasil (2007-2015). In *Direita, Volver!* (Editora Fundação Perseu Abramo). São Paulo; Telles de Souza, H. (2015). O que os protestos trazem de novo para a política brasileira? *Em Debate*, 41(2), 7-14; Messenberg, D. (2017) “A Direita Que Saiu Do Armário: A Cosmovisão Dos Formadores De Opinião Dos Manifestantes De Direita Brasileiros”. *Sociedade E Estado*,32(3), 621-647; Pinto, C. R. (2017) “A Trajetória Discursiva Das Manifestações De Rua No Brasil (2013-2015)”. *Lua Nova*, (100); Solano, E.; Ortellado, P.; Moretto, M. (2017) “2016, O Ano Da Polarização?”. *Análise*, (22), 5-20.

3 Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy. *Social Text*, (25/26), 56-80.

4 Warner, M. (2002). Publics and Counterpublics. *Public Culture*, 14(1), 49-90.

not, would share identities, interests, and discourses that are so conflicting with the dominant cultural horizon that they would face hostile reactions if these were unreservedly expressed in dominant audiences, whose discourses and ways of life were assumed as being correct, normal and universal. Warner states that that Christian fundamentalists, for example, could be considered counter publics, the same could be said about the supporters of Donald Trump in the United States⁵ and also, as we intend to demonstrate here, the Brazilian right wing online publics that emerged during Lulas first and second terms (2003-2010).

Since the end of the Military Dictatorship in Brazil in the mid-eighties those who were politically aligned toward the right started to feel ashamed of it because of the immediate association between right wing politics and the Brazilian Dictatorship, so when asked about their political position they would always say that they leaned center. This phenomenon even got its own label: the “ashamed right”⁶ and also happened in Argentina⁷. Rightist parties were often associated by the general public with corruption and at best with clientelism and kept changing their names in an effort to get rid of this bad reputation, the best examples being the heirs of ARENA (the Military Party): Partido da Frente Liberal (PFL), that changed its name to Democratas (DEM), and the Partido Democrático Social (PDS), that evolved into Partido Progressista Brasileiro (PPB), Partido Progressista (PP) and today is known only as PROGRE. Despite that, after Fernando Collor’s impeachment in 1992, the right managed to remain in power until 2002 due to an alliance between Fernando Cardoso’s Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (PSDB) and PFL.

Lula’s election in 2002, despite its orthodox economic program, was a significant change in this sense. Right after the 2005 corruption scandal known as *mensalão*, right wing politics supporters in the civil society started to slowly lose their shame, especially on the internet, where it was possible to loudly voice shared feelings of anger and resentment against the left and a perceived dominant progressive cultural horizon. **The first section** of this article starts exactly at this point, when right wing online communities were created between 2004 and 2006 on

5 Thimsen, A. F. (2017). Did the Trumpian Counterpublic Dissent against the Dominant Model of Campaign Finance? *Javnost - The Public*, 24(3), 267-283.

6 Power, Timothy J., et Cesar Zucco. 2009. « Estimating Ideology of Brazilian Legislative Parties, 1990-2005: A Research Communication ». *Latin American Research Review* 44 (1), 218-46.

7 Vommaro, G., Morresi, S., & Bellotti, A. (2015). *Mundo PRO: Anatomía de un partido fabricado para ganar*. Buenos Aires : Planeta.

Orkut, a Social Network that preceded Facebook and became extremely popular amidst upper class and highly educated Brazilian teenagers and young adults and ignited the renovation and creation of rightist civil society organizations, mainly neoliberal and libertarian think tanks. During the protests that took place in Brazil in June 2013, as we intend to demonstrate in **the second section**, the people gathered under these online right-wing counter-publics and civil organizations were able to publicly demonstrate in the streets their dissatisfaction with the administration led by the former leftist guerrilla member Dilma Rousseff without any shame, and feel empowered to continue to do so later on thru the formation of new right-wing movements. **In the third section**, we aim to point out how these newly formed right-wing SMOs, started to lead the pro-impeachment cycle of protests from 2014 to 2016, exploring how their networks are connected. Lastly, we explain the movements success claiming two main reasons: the evolution of their discourse as they started to become more popular, indicating their consolidation as publics, and their ability to make the most of two changes in the political opportunities structure⁸: the riots of June 2013 and the re-election of Dilma Rousseff in 2014.

The Emergence of Online Right-Wing Counter-Publics

Brazilian, and Latin American⁹, right wing civil movements and organizations in the 20th century were most commonly associated with the triad: Christian values, nationalism and anti-communism. They were especially active during the 30s in Brazil due to a communist coup attempt and as a response to the public policies implemented during the Vargas period, and also during the 60s, right after the leftist João Goulart became the country's president¹⁰. Most of their activities at that time, carried on by businessmen, housewives and the military, were focused on an anti-communist agenda, since communism was perceived by them to be the most dangerous threat both to private property and Christianity, and soon, as the political

8 Tarrow, S. (2007), *Power In Movement. Social Movements And Contentious Politics*. New York, Cambridge University Press

9 Bohoslavsky, E., & Boisard, S. (Éd.). (2016). *Les droites latino-américaines pendant la guerre froide (1959-1990)*. *Cahiers des Amériques Latines*, (79), 176.

10 Motta, R. P. S. (2002). *Em guarda contra o" perigo vermelho": o anticomunismo no Brasil, 1917-1964* (180). São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva.

polarization escalated and Goulart's government became to be seen by the right as a communist friendly administration¹¹, led to the Military Coup on 1964

During the re-democratization, and with communism's presumptive demise, conservative Christian organizations, old ones and new ones, turned their attention to new enemies embodied on the rise of the feminist and LGBT agendas. At the same time, besides the foundation of new patronal entities to protect the interests of rural and urban elites within the new democratic regime¹², a new type of right wing organization was given birth too by the hand of a small group of pro-market businessmen: the neoliberal think tanks. By the mid-90s there were around ten Brazilian neoliberal think tanks across the country trying to spread free-market ideas formulated by economists like Milton Friedman, F. Von Hayek and Ludwig von Mises¹³. However, as the Social Democrat Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1994-1998) started to adopt neoliberal policies under his administration, the businessmen donations that supported the neoliberal militancy began to decline as well as the think tanks' activities. Cardoso also did not make any stronger moves toward the liberalization of abortion or gay marriage, so the "pro-life/pro-family" Christian conservatives spent most of Cardoso's two terms on "stand by".

When Lula was elected in 2002, conservative voters helped to elect him because, at that time, there was a dissociation between being socially conservative (anti-abortion, anti-gay, anti-feminist and pro-social hierarchy) and choosing a leftist candidate for the Presidency¹⁴. So until the end of Lula's second term, in 2010, the ashamed right phenomenon was still an ongoing feature of Brazilian politics, as two leaders of MBL recall:

"Being a rightist in 2004 amongst a College environment was a much greater taboo than it is today, especially considering that we were students of a Law School (at University of São Paulo) that was actively engaged on the struggle against the military dictatorship. So, we tried to show that we politically leaned towards the right making jokes, trying to act like we were independents, anarchists, and it worked,

11 Motta (2002) *Ibid* and Cordeiro, J. M. (2008). A Nação que se salvou a si mesma (Entre memória e história, a Campanha da Mulher pela democracia (1962-1974). Dissertação de mestrado.). Universidade Federal Fluminense, Rio de Janeiro.

12 Dreifuss, R. A. (1987). 1964, a conquista do estado: ação política, poder e golpe de classe. São Paulo: Vozes.

13 Rocha, C. (2017) O Papel Dos Think Tanks Pró-Mercado Na Difusão Do Neoliberalismo No Brasil. Millcayac – Revista Digital De Ciências Sociais, 4(7), 95-120.

14 Nishimura, K. M. (2004). Conservadorismo social: opiniões e atitudes no contexto da eleição de 2002. Opinião Pública, 10(2), 339-367.

because we won the elections for the Student Body” **(Renan Santos, São Paulo, November 21th of 2016)**

“People that are now engaged with the diffusion of libertarian ideas don’t have a clue about how the public opinion was like years ago. I realized that I was a libertarian between 2004 and 2005, and I remember very well how it felt back then. Lula’s approval ratings were something like 90%, it was a time that even after the *Mensalão*, that was a major corruption scandal that happened during his first term, Lula could still manage to get reelected” **(Fábio Osterman, Rio Grande do Sul, August 17th of 2017)**

After the corruption scandal known as *Mensalão*, that took place in 2005 and provoked the ousting of a great number of important Workers Party members, most part of the middle classes stopped supporting Lula, and many mainstream media political commentators were sure that Lula would lose the presidential elections in 2006. It was in awe that many upper-class Brazilians witnessed Lula’s re-election in 2006, which was possible only because of the massive electoral backing he received from the poorest Brazilians¹⁵. At that time, in spite of the middle classes’ growing disappointment towards the Lula and the Workers Party, there was still not enough social energy to insufflate big street demonstrations against Lula’s government and offer public support to rightist groups and social movements. Right after Lula’s re-election, in 2006, a group of upper class young lawyers decided to create in São Paulo a movement called *Endireita Brasil* (Right-ening Brazil) to protest in the streets against Lula’s government, but it didn’t work out because only a few people attended. One year later, in 2007, also in São Paulo, a group of businessmen and elite people created a movement called *Cansei* (I Got Tired) to protest in the streets against Lula’s government after a plane accident that happened in São Paulo’s airport due to its alleged poor maintenance, but the protests assembled only some few hundred people, was mocked by mainstream media’s political commentators and soon *Cansei* faded away. At that time, there were so few active right-wing whistleblowers in Brazil that when they would make any kind of appearance on the public arena they would either be despised or ridiculed, like would often happen with people such as congressman and military dictatorship enthusiastic Jair Bolsonaro and the conservative book writer Olavo de Carvalho.

15 Singer, A. (2012). Os Sentidos do Lulismo, Reforma gradual e pacto conservador. Companhia das letras.

Carvalho was then not only a prolific book writer, but also one of the most active Brazilian right wing whistleblowers on the Internet. In 1998 he already owned his own blog and in 2002 he created a website called “*Mídia Sem Máscara*” (Unmasked Media), that, according to its own description, was made to publish ideas and news that were systematically hidden, despised or distorted by virtue of the leftist bias of the Brazilian mainstream media. So, in 2004, as soon as the Social Network *Orkut* was launched it already hosted not only two communities of his supporters, *Olavo de Carvalho* and *A Filosofia de Olavo de Carvalho* (Olavo de Carvalho’s philosophy), but also two of his detractors, *Olavo de Cavalho nos odeia* (Olavo de Carvalho hate us) e *Eu odeio Olavo de Carvalho* (I hate Olavo de Carvalho). At that time, Brazilians that had access to the internet thru a personal computer or paid internet cafes were mainly wealthy and highly educated teenagers and young adults seeking for information, communication and fun, which were precisely the same things offered by Orkut and probably helped to increase its popularity among Brazilians.

In only a few years Orkut became highly widespread among Brazilian Internet users, and in January 2006 about 75% of all its users were from Brazil¹⁶, signaling an early engagement of Brazilian users compared to people of other nationalities. Within Orkut it was possible to create communities based on any type of subject, interact with all its other members thru public conversation topics and the use of fake profiles was not uncommon. These features contributed to create an extremely free, and sometimes violent, virtual environment and that were able to attract people that felt misrepresented in the dominant public sphere, like Carvalho’s supporters and young college students and businessmen who were enthusiastic about libertarianism, a strain of thought that upholds market freedom as its moral core value:

“Orkut began to grow at that time and there were those old communities of Olavo de Carvalho, True Liberalism. I never joined the Olavo de Carvalho community but I participated on the first Libertarian Community, I am old school.”(**Lourival de Souza, Maranhão, 2016**)

"In 2005 I was in the second semester of the Economics track, and there was a course called 'Evolution of Social Movements', which was basically Marxism I and Marxism II. I had to prepare a seminar for this course on neoliberalism and I decided to read a book from Hayek called “The Road of Serfdom”. This book changed my life

16 Fragoso, S. (2006) “Eu Odeio Quem Odeia... Considerações Sobre O Comportamento Dos Usuários Brasileiros Na ‘Tomada’ do Orkut”. Revista E-Compós, (6).

and made me want to discover more about neoliberalism. Then, at that time, there was Orkut and I started to participate on communities about libertarianism and exchange ideas with people there that were translating books and articles that did not exist in Brazil." **(Cibele Bastos, Ceará, 2015)**

"During my last undergraduate year I began to discover a whole new universe that did not exist in Brazil. Most of the (libertarian) texts were in English so it was very hard to have access to that information. At that moment (2005-2006), some people, out of their own interest, began to set up blogs to translate small texts, articles. There was a need to spread those ideas which we did not have access in Portuguese, and that's what brought people together, "look, let's spread those ideas, we need to do this", and with the help of Orkut you could type the name of one author and you had a community that assembled something like twenty, thirty people. Most of them were not people from Brazil, (but) the Brazilians were also trying to participate on these forums. Orkut, with its communities, made it possible to meet people, exchange information and promote great debates." **(Felipe Celetti, São Paulo, 2016)**

Between 2005 and 2006, when libertarian communities were first created on Orkut, Brazilian libertarians were even more rare and felt much more isolated compared to Carvalho's supporters, after all, despite the efforts of the early neoliberal think tanks, libertarianism was virtually nonexistent in Brazil. In this sense it's possible to say that the Brazilian libertarians that owned blogs, participated in e-mail lists, attended internet discussion forums, translated English texts, and sought to find others who did the same through the creation and / or participation in varied communities on Orkut, as well as Carvalho's supporters, were members of *early online right-wing counter-publics*, early meaning that were created during the Lula's first term (2003-2006). Both counter-publics, Carvalho's supporters and libertarians, had a clear awareness of its subordinate status against a perceived leftist/progressive dominant cultural horizon and were of great importance for the consolidation of new right-wing discourses, audiences, study groups, and political organizations.

Carvalho's supporters were mostly responsible to disseminate his ideas through the internet that were originally formulated on one of his books called *A nova era e a revolução cultural: Frijtof Capra e Antonio Gramsci*. The book, published in 1994, had an "alert" about an ongoing Brazilian leftist cultural revolution inspired by the work of Antonio Gramsci that was able to hegemonize public universities and the mainstream media. Carvalho was not only able to influence a great number of new right-wing supporters and activists but also his website, *Mídia Sem Máscara*, opened

up space for the rise of new right-wing Op-Ed. Columnists, like Rodrigo Constantino, that became himself a prolific book writer:

"When I first discovered Orkut and these communities, where everyone spent the day debating, it was a breakthrough. At that time, I started to write some texts which were more or less like Op-Ed articles and I went to a political event hold by Thomas Korontai, the founder of the Brazilian Federalist Party, and at that event I met a guy connected to Olavo de Carvalho who spoke to me about the website *Mídia Sem Máscara*. And I said, 'Gee, I write some anticommunist texts,' and he said, 'Gee, do you want to send us?' I said, 'Sure!' And then I published some other texts in this website, and then an editor of a book company called *Só Ler* (Just Read) contacted me and *Prisioneiros da Liberdade* (Freedom Prisoners), published in 2004, which is my first book, a collection of articles, many published on the *Mídia Sem Máscara* website, was born." **(Rodrigo Constantino, Rio de Janeiro, 2015)**

"What distanced me from the left, at the beginning, was my religion, because politics was not my greatest interest. But when I was finishing high school I started to look for books that could show me the other side and it was during this period that browsing the internet, I found Olavo de Carvalho's old blog, read some of his articles, found it quite interesting, and decided to read authors such as Hayek, Mises, Burke". **(Lucas Berlanza, Rio de Janeiro, 2016)**"

"I was an undergraduate student when I met some friends that told me about Olavo de Carvalho and Rodrigo Constantino and I started to browse the Internet to read them and it was mind blowing experience for me. When I read them, I had access to whole new world which I had never had access to before, and then I started to look for the books written by authors such as Mises, Hayek, Friedman" **(Fernando Fernandes, Rio de Janeiro, 2017)**

Years later, from 2012 onwards, right wing Op-Ed columnists, like Constantino, would spread Carvalho's theories through mainstream media outlets¹⁷, as well as his warning against an eminent Communist upsurge in Latin America led by an organization known as *Foro de São Paulo*. Nevertheless, despite Carvalho's growing popularity his supporters were never able to organize themselves into formal organizations. In 2008 there was a proposal to create an online conservative forum that didn't take off and in 2010 an *Olavo de Carvalho Institute* was organized, but the Institute only lasted for two years and seven months and ended its activities in 2012, as announced by Emanuel de Araújo on Olavo de Carvalho Orkut community, the same year that the *True Outspcak* broadcast, Carvalho's podcast, was interrupted. The libertarian counter-publics, though, had much more success in formally

17 Puglia, L. (2017). Gramsci e os intelectuais de direita no Brasil Contemporâneo. I Simpósio Direitas Brasileiras: da redemocratização ao Governo Temer. São Paulo, FFLCH USP. Disponível em conferencias.fflch.usp.br/SDB/simposiodireitas/paper/download/2197/507

organizing themselves since they could rely on the financial and organizational help from the neoliberal think tanks' networks that were created during the 80s and 90s.

In 2007, inspired by the American Libertarians, Brazilian libertarians gathered on Orkut communities announced their initiative to create a Brazilian Libertarian Party called *Líber*. Around 500 people engaged in the new party project, but most of them were students that had little or none political experience and scarce financial resources, so the party was never officially created, but the efforts made to create this new party were of fundamental importance years later to the emergence of the most famous pro-impeachment social movement, the Movimento Brasil Livre (MBL). Between 2006 and 2013, some of the activists involved with the creation of the Brazilian Libertarian Party, like Fernando Chiocca from São Paulo, also started to actively participate on the creation of new civil organizations, such as the first libertarian think tank in Brazil inspired by the American Mises Institute, the *Instituto Mises Brasil*, founded in 2007 and founded in 2007 by Hélio Beltrão, who created in 2006 the most important libertarian community on Orkut called *Liberalismo (verdadeiro)* (True liberalism); the organization *Estudantes pela Liberdade* (Students for Liberty), inspired by the American Students for Liberty, created in 2010 by the then *Líber's* first chairman, Juliano Torres together with an ex- *Koch Summer Fellow Program* student called Fábio Osterman, that also participated on Orkut communities and helped to organize a branch of the American think tank *Cato Institute* in Brazil called *Ordem Livre* (Free Order) in 2009; and the renewal of the first Brazilian Neoliberal think tank in 2013, the Instituto Liberal, led by Rodrigo Constantino and Bernardo Santoro, that had been also *Líber's* chairman:

"I was always browsing the Internet looking for things, and in 2007 I found the *Ordem Livre* website, which was Cato Institute's program for the diffusion of pro-market ideas in Portuguese. In the middle of 2008 I decided to apply for two seminars, one from Cato and another from FEE, the *Foundation For Economic Education*, and I met some people who were starting to organize a new organization in the United States called Students For Liberty. When I came back to Brazil I straightened my contacts with the people from Students For Liberty and latter I decided to participate on an internship program called the *Koch Summer Fellow Program*. At the end of 2009 I helped to create two organizations in Brazil, *Estudantes pela Liberdade* (EPL), and an academic one within my University called NEDEP. In January 2012 I attended the first summer seminar of *Ordem Livre*. In this seminar participants were divided into thematic groups, one group was going to talk about ways to spread pro-market ideas within the academia, another on how to do it within the press, another through political parties, and another thru student activism. I participated on the student

activism group and along with me there were Juliano Torres and Pedro Menezes, and I said "the EPL is a great idea, it just needs people to manage it, are you willing to do it?" And Juliano, who had just left the presidency of Líber, decided to become the chairman of EPL. At the time I was also at the Instituto de Estudos Empresariais (Business Studies Institute) board and I was invited by Ordem Livre to be their operations manager here in Brazil." **(Fábio Osterman, Rio Grande do Sul, 2016)**

"In 2012 I was invited to be the Director of Institutional Relations of the Instituto Liberal do Rio de Janeiro, the Institute was dying and I was a guy who knew everyone in Brazil from the pro-market movement. I knew everyone from the Instituto de Estudos Empresariais, the Instituto de Formação de Líderes (Leadership Coaching Institute), the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, the attempts to create promarket parties, Partido Novo, Federalist Party, Líber, I was Líber's chairman at the time ... My first event as the Director of Institutional Relations was an event of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation that brought together all the Brazilian pro-market organizations and promoted a workshop on how to raise money and such and I presented a project for restructuring the Instituto Liberal. Everyone thought that was great idea but no one gave me a penny. Later I presented the same project to local entrepreneurs in Rio de Janeiro and to Rodrigo Constantino, he liked it, and then, at another pro-market event at Rio Grande do Sul, Constantino talked to some more people, turned to me and said: "Bernardo, the project was approved, we have money". Then I quit my job, I was a legal advisor to the Rio de Janeiro State Development Agency, and I went to work at the Institute. Later that year a great friend of mine, who also knew everyone, became the new Director of Institutional Relations, Fábio Ostermann." **(Bernardo Santoro, Rio de Janeiro, 2015)**

By the end of Lula's second term, when both Carvalhos's supporters and libertarians were already consolidated counter-publics, due to their early beginning, yet another right-wing online counter-public emerged: the *Revoltados Online* (Online Rebels) (ROL), led by Marcello Reis, a 40 year old businessman that was responsible for the creation of a pedophile-hunting community on Orkut in 2006. When the online pedophile-hunting activities started to be done professionally by other people, ROL, that later came to be the largest online right-wing counter-public, moved from Orkut to Facebook and started to assemble a lot of people who felt dissatisfied with a great number of things but were not able to direct this dissatisfaction toward a common agenda, so, compared to the other two early right-wing online counter publics gathered around Carvalho's theories and libertarian ideas, ROL was a right-wing counter publics that began without a clear leitmotif, as Reis himself points out:

"When ROL began, on August 1st of 2010, in less than a month we already had 5000 people and in two months we were already reached 15000 people. In October, for example, when the presidential elections would be held, we climbed up to 50.000 people! ROL's first publications did not have a clear direction. We had a team of people and a list of ten topics and each topic was managed by a specific person from

this team: violence against women, animal cruelty, environmental degradation, drug control, corruption, etc.” (Marcello Reis, April 6th of 2017, São Paulo)

June 2013: everybody in the streets!

In 2010 Lula left the Presidency with an 80% approval rating and Dilma Rousseff, that acted as Lula’s Secretary since 2003, won that year’s presidential elections despite she had never ran for any elected office. On the 7th of September of 2011, the Brazilian Independence Day, around 25000 people gathered in Brasília to protest against corruption and 500 at Avenida Paulista, one of them was Marcello Reis, ROL’s leader. The protests were called through Facebook, and on April 21st, a holiday in honor of Tiradentes, a Brazilian martyr, the anti-corruptions protests occurred once again in dozens of cities. Nevertheless, the Workers Party hegemony seemed unshakable.

If during the first decades of the New Republic the implementation of neoliberal reforms led by Fernando Henrique Cardoso’s government faced a major social resistance organized by leftist groups and movements aligned with the Workers Party, Lula’s neo-developmental shift, initiated in 2006 with the appointment of Guido Mantega for the Ministry of Finance, supported by a gigantic political coalition and deepened during Dilma Rousseff’s first term (2011-2014), had not yet faced any major political resistance. At that time, the apparent success of the political project undertaken by the Workers Party’s government was so widespread that it felt like substantive ideological and programmatic differentiations had virtually ceased to exist not only within the political system but also within the dominant public arenas¹⁸.

However, in June 2013, during a period of economic and political stability, a huge wave of protests started to take over the country. Since 2011, several street protests were being held in different Brazilian cities against the increasing costs of public transportation, and the protest initiated on June 6th by the *Movimento Passe Livre* in São Paulo, was another protest of the same kind, but soon the protests began to gather millions of people throughout the country after an episode of police

18 Nobre, M. (2013). Imobilismo em movimento. Da abertura democrática ao governo Dilma (Companhia Das Letras).

brutality against activists in the city of São Paulo¹⁹, indicating a societal overflow: "when the protest diffuses from mobilized sectors to other parts of society"²⁰ and pointing out to the rejection of the political system as whole²¹.

Among the many groups who decided to protest on the streets were the ROL and the right-wing activists gathered by Líber, who were already organizing their own street protests and participating in larger demonstrations since 2009, such as the March for the Marijuana liberalization in 2011:

"My experience with street protests came Líber, we made a lot of noise in São Paulo. We participated when the government prohibited the Marijuana March and it changed its name to March for Freedom, we went there with our posters. We did a lot of protests gathered around the "Tax meter", we always supported the Tax Freedom day, we organized protests at the gas station, selling untaxed gas. We were also at the streets on June 2013 and we almost had a fight with leftists there. We gathered around a hundred libertarias there, so when the people would call for public transportation we were calling for privatization. Who organized all those protests was Líber. " **(Felipe Celeti, São Paulo, 2016)**

"In 2013 we managed to organize a libertarian protest there as well. Líber was a very nice thing in my life, I was dedicated to it and I liked it. I was one of the people from Liber that helped to organize that demonstration." **(Joel Fonseca, São Paulo, 2017)**

For ROL's leader it was also not his first time on the street. He participated in several protests since 2011, mostly in São Paulo but also in Rio de Janeiro and Brasília. After an intervention in Sao Paulo's Assembly, on April 18th of 2012, against the donation of a terrain to Lula's Institute, he became more popular on the Internet and started to organize small protests against the Workers Party and Lula at MASP at Paulista Avenue. On April of 2013, for example, he was there accompanied by 20 people protesting against Lula with a banner that said: "Lula, Brazil's Cancer, investigation on the boss of the gang", as Mildred, one of the five ROL Facebook page's administrators, described it **(Mildred²², August 5th of 2017, São Paulo)**. In June of 2013, he was at a bar on Avenida Paulista, attending a "happy hour" in order

19 Alonso, A., & Mische, A. (2016). Changing Repertoires and Partisan Ambivalence in the New Brazilian Protests. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 36, 144-159.

20 Bringel, B., & Pleyers, G. (2015). Les mobilisations de 2013 au Brésil : vers une reconfiguration de la contestation. *Brésil(s). Sciences humaines et sociales*, (7), 7-18.

21 Nobre, 2013, op. cit. and Gerbaudo, P. (2017). *The Mask and the Flag: Populism, Citizenism and Global Protest*. Oxford University Press.

²² Some of the activist's name were changed to protect interviewees privacy.

to gather people from his Facebook page, when he saw the *Movimento Passe Livre*, protesting and decided to follow them, filming the protest and calling his followers to the street. Since the beginning, he openly assumed an anti-left position and called for Military intervention:

“Well, I went to the front [of the protest] with a banner. God, this day, we almost died! And they started to scream “Revoltados Online is aligned with PSDB!” “They are Rightists!” and that sort of stuff. God! They were mocking the banner...this was the first time [in June of 2013]. This was my fifth or sixth protest, and from then on, we started to call Brazilians to come and get down with the CUT, PSTU and PSOL’s flags. So, the people started to come, and when they raised the flags, the guys... And then, it began again, we dominated again, we led the protest.” **(Marcello Reis, April 6th of 2017, São Paulo)**

The online right wing counter-publics protagonists encountered each other on the streets in June of 2013, but their differences were strong. ROL gathered persons who were outraged with corruption and dissatisfied with the Workers Party’s government. Their objective was primarily to show their discontent, and, for some of them, asking for a drastic solution: calling for an army intervention “to wash all the corrupt and communist politicians that occupy the congress”, as a ROL’s member explained in November 2015. However, it was precisely in the midst of the June 2013 uprisings that the idea of bringing together libertarian militants in a broader movement that would not be restricted to the pro-market organizations created until then rose:

“I was discussing with Juliano (Torres) the following idea: to create a social movement focused exclusively on activism and bringing together people who supported the cause of freedom to mobilize, to make protests, petitions, demonstrations, this kind of thing that the media outlets like and which would help us to promote our ideas. I had seen a lot of libertarians wanting to protest on the streets, but our current institutions do not allow the active participation of so many people, because every organization has its own rules and it would not be nice also to be a party like Líber, because we wanted to avoid accusations of partisanization. There were people wanting to participate and we needed to find a way to channel this enthusiasm, then we started to do it from June 16 on. ” **(Fábio Ostermann, Rio Grande do Sul, 2016)**

Through the incipient *Movimento Brasil Livre* (MBL), the libertarian militants were able to better organize themselves in order to participate in the various demonstrations that took place during June throughout the country. As the protests were going on without any leadership, the future MBL leader, Renan Santos

proposed that he-himself could act as the movement's main contact with the police and started to develop a main role within MBL during the protests. During a protest against PEC 37, he met Marcelo Faria, that today is the Chair of the Liberal Institute of São Paulo, with whom he shared the same willingness of acting politically. Renan's early experiences with the PSDB's youth movement was a deception because he did not feel listened by their peers, and he was eager to go back being a political militant just like he was during his years at Law School.

Because of June 2013, the right wing counter publics' members learned that it was possible to call outraged Brazilians to the streets that were not leftists. In that sense, *June of 2013 created an "opportunity" for the cycle of protest of 2014-2016*. However, it was only in 2014 that the libertarian militancy began to gain some political visibility with the candidacy of Paulo Batista for the Legislative Assembly of São Paulo State.

The 2014's Electoral Campaign and Rousseff's Reelection

The year of 2014 was very important for the right wing counter publics. During this period, different activists' networks started to connect to one another as that year's Presidential Elections were approaching. As Tilly theorizes it, Social Movements Organizations do not appear from nowhere, so we sustain in this section that the "catness" (belonging to a former group) was the way by which the right wing counter-publics formed their SMO's "netness" (the strength of the network)²³. Both aspects, with the political opportunities that rose on June of 2013 and on 2014, with Rousseff's re-election, allowed the right wing SMOs to emerge.

The collaboration between Marcelo Faria and Renan Santos, for instance, originated a new movement that began at an office divide with a Movie and Music Entertainment Company called ANC, owned by Santos's brother, Alexandre. The project, named « Movimento Renovação Liberal » (MRL), literally Liberal Renovation Movement, started its first activities within a *Whatsapp* about the politics of Vinhedo, a city of the São Paulo State's countryside. MRL goal was to destabilize the left local city councilor Rodrigo Paixão (PSOL). Based on this first experience, Renan Santos started a new group called «Renova Vinhedo», joined by Rubens Nunes Junior, the

²³ Tilly, C. (1978). *From Mobilization to Revolution*. McGraw-Hill.

son of a Vinhedo's rightist City Counselor, elected by the Republican Party (PR) in 2012. Renan wrote a political guidebook to be distributed amongst its members and the movement began to spread to the nearby cities, including Valinhos and Itatiba.

In the beginning of August 2014, the electoral period was near and the MRL organized an event in Vinhedo to gather people he knew from the libertarian movement²⁴. It was on this day that Fabio Ostermann, invited as « *figurão do meio liberal* » (libertarian Big Shot), according to Renan Santos, met the MRL protagonists. It was from this encounter that the MBL as we know it today was born. The collaboration between Santos and Ostermann consolidated after the Election's second turn result, in October 2014:

“The second turn was a huge deception for us, for everyone. [...] They said: “Fabio, you have to create a “Renova Porto Alegre”, and so on. I said “Man, why don't we recycle an idea I had in the past, with people you know, about a movement that was called “Movimento Brasil Livre”. You will be acting in São Paulo as the movement's core, São Paulo is a city where there will be more demonstrations [...]” From then on, we succeeded to give a productive goal to these people protesting against the government. And, at the same time, we calmed down ‘wilder’ groups, because there were a lot of people defending a military intervention, Dilma's impeachment, cancellation of the elections, those were ludicrous claims. I said, “look, we have an interesting opportunity to raise the public debate's level, to maintain our claim inside the democratic boundaries and communicate our ideas. With those ideas in mind we started to recreate the MBL movement from this São Paulo core's energy. This people were really energetic, really creative.” **(Fabio Ostermann, August 17th of 2017, São Paulo)**

But the real departure point for their political project was the campaign for the general elections that occurred between August 19th and November 26th of 2014. Paulo Batista, a member of « Renova Valinhos », wanted to run for São Paulo's State Assembly. MRL offered to manage his campaign, even though it was the group's first electoral experience. Their idea was to compensate their lack of experience and financial means using social media tools and a fun style of communication that was spreading through social media based on memes and so on. The Facebook page “Liberalismo da Zoeira” (Funny Libertarianism), whose founder is Kim Kataguri, is a good example of this way of communicating political ideas in a simple and funny way. So they shared thru Youtube a video of Paulo Batista acting like a libertarian super-

²⁴ The connection between the different networks went on with events like libertarian congresses or conferences. Like the Austrian School's conference that took place in September 7th of 2014, with Ron Paul as major speaker, organized by the Institute Von Mises where Kim Kataguri, Marcelo Faria, and other members were present.

hero shooting privatizing lasers on communist cities that was a great success on the Internet. However, it didn't bring enough votes for the candidate, who lost the election with 17 000 votes. Anyway, the notoriety of MRL and Paulo Batista grew amongst right wing activists²⁵, and soon after Dilma Rousseff's re-election, Batista, thru his own Facebook page, called people to come to the street on November 1st with the motto: "against censorship, supporting Lava-Jato and asking the end of impunity"

During this 2014 electoral period, the right wing online counter-publics' crystallization process into SMOs gained one more actor: the VemPraRua (VpR). The activists of VpR did not have the same profile as MBL's members. Their members were above 30 years old (the majority of MBL activists were under 30), most of them had a full-time job and did their activist activities as a hobby. VpR also had different SMO structure compared to the two other movements. The MBL's SMO functioned like a startup, and ROL's SMO was centralized around its leader and the movement's Facebook page. However, we also observed connections between VpR's discourses and the libertarian discourses.

After Dilma Rousseff won the first round, on October 5th, a 40 year old executive of a small enterprise, sent an email to various of his friends, some from high school, who were complaining on Facebook calling for an action to oppose to Dilma re-election. He wrote: "We have a lot of outraged friends with the current Brazilian government's corruption and I see that you guys, want to do something about it. What do you think about initiating a movement?" (**Cássio²⁶, 17/8/2017 – São Paulo**).

On October the 16th, Colin Butterfield and Rogerio Chequer, future main activist and speaker of the VpR, gathered 300 persons at Largo da Batata, in São Paulo, to protest against a potential Rousseff's re-election and support the opposition candidate, Aécio Neves (PSDB). Colin, who had already protested against the government years before, organized the street demonstration acting the same way

²⁵ Chico Graziano (PSDB), fascinated by the way MRL managed Paulo Batista campaign communication, called for help to support Aécio Neves against Dilma Rousseff during the second round. The video « A mensagem do futuro 2018 de Danilo Gentili » (a message from the future 2018 by Danilo Gentili) presented a fictional TV news show called "Republica bolivariana do Brasil" that took place 4 years after Rousseff's re-election. The journalist depicted a scenario where elections were abolished, however the president announced that Lula, would take her place as president and freedom of speech would be prohibited (MBL, Youtube page, October 23th of 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ysUHEbqwn4&t=1s> consulted on 06/25/2018). To make this video, the MRL called other persons that stood up during the 2014 legislative campaign, as Kim Kataguirí and Rafael Rizzo, who latter became major activists of the MBL.

²⁶ Idem nota 22.

as he did when he participated on the protest done by “*Cansei*” in 2007, when he sent an email to all his contacts calling against the government’s management of airports and against corruption. On October 2014, a friend of Colin, Zacarias, who was in the mail-list made by Cássio, made the connection between him and Cássio, that together with other other friends who responded to the mail took the leadership and organized new anti-reelection protests on October 22th of 2014. During three days, they sent messages to all their contacts asking for help, even to the Pope; “Well, he did not respond. But we had to try everything, right?” (**Interview Zacarias. 17/8/2017 – São Paulo**), and because of their professional and social networks, five individuals alone could contact a huge number of people.

“I said: ‘Well, everyone around this table have credibility inside his circle, right?’ I had a lot of Facebook followers, friends. We will organize it on ‘Largo da Batata’ and we will need a lot of people. I said: ‘- How much people do you think we can bring on? I don’t know, let’s try 2000, 5000’ what can we do for that? Let’s call our friends! Unions can bring a lot of people in the street too. Let’s call unions ... call to the one that are allied to Aécio against Dilma.” (**Zacarias. 17/8/2018 -São Paulo**)

They convinced various artists and public personalities to make videos calling people to “go to the streets”. They also contacted PSDB, who, at first, did not give much credit to the project. But, after two days, they came back asking to take part of the initiative. During the protests, VpR members were able to make a connections with a member of the libertarian counter-public, Humberto Laudaes, a friend of one of the five first organizers, who is currently member of LIVRES (a libertarian political strand within NOVO), who was on the streets during the protests and helped VpR to communicate with the press. The anti-reelection protest that took place at Largo da Batata - called “the cashmere revolution” by *The Economist*²⁷ - and was described by the organization as a success, having assembled 2500 people (1000 according to the military police). Only five persons and three days were the starting point of VpR movement.

After Rousseff’s re-election, the three groups started to think about getting back to the streets, and then, when Batista called for the protest of November 1st, ROL and MBL went to streets. During the protest some participants were asking for Military intervention, others protesting against the Workers Party and their voters.

²⁷ J.P. 2014. « The cashmere revolution ». *The Economist*, October 23th of 2014. <https://www.economist.com/americas-view/2014/10/23/the-cashmere-revolution>. consulted on 28/6/2018

The deputy Eduardo Bolsonaro (PSL - son of Jair Bolsonaro) and the rock singer Lobão, famous right-wing figures, were also on the streets that day. VpR's SMO, though, got upset with this protest because, in their view, it could easily destroy the peaceful way of protesting they have had experienced before. Nevertheless, after this first protest, VpR decided to contact MBL to organize another demonstration on November the 15th in order to be "back on tracks" with the anti-corruption speech.

"After the Lava-Jato operation we decided to organize a protest on November 15th of 2014. It was an emblematic date: the Republic Independence Day. We had to do something that manifested our intentions because our image was still under the damaging effect that resulted from the protest organized by the other groups. So we decided to apply a strategy: *back to basics* [originally written in english]. What we would continue to defend was our first claim: the end of the corruption." **(Extract from the VemPraRua book. 2016. p.78)**

Marcello Reis, after protesting on June of 2013, also participated on the first manifestation against Dilma re-election and decided to join the 2014 November 1st and 15th protests. But at this time there weren't "only a group of 20" in the streets. This time the SMO leader rent a "protest's truck" to gather his followers on the Avenida Paulista. He was using a t-shirt that said «impeachment» and because of his followers and his experience in protests, he came to be one of three main speakers that day.

From military intervention to the pacifist encampment

After the 15th of November protest, the three movements started to act together calling for new street demonstrations against the Workers Party and Rousseff's re-election. In 2015, more and more people started to join them, and despite their differences, the groups started to feel under pressure since the success of the first massive protest of March 15th of 2015. Because the demonstrations were gathering a large amount of people to the streets, the SMOs felt encouraged to call for more demonstrations. MBL, called for a second protest one month later, on April 12th of 2015. VpR didn't approve, thinking that it was precipitated, but participated anyway. ROL, being outraged as it always was, participated too. During the protest of April 12th, MBL announced they would do a "Liberty Walk". The idea being: walk the 1007 km distance that separates São Paulo and Brasília to demand Rousseff's impeachment. One more time, Marcello Reis walked with them, representing ROL. The walk was not a success, considering the participants' number, neither its

mediatic outcome. However, it became a main symbol for MBL narrative since the action strengthened the union between activists and the people that took part of it.

If VpR acknowledged its minor role in this specific action, they organized, on their own, a different action: delivering a “letter from Brazilian people” to the National Congress on April 15th. The letter was a direct critic to the “Letter for the Brazilian people” presented by Lula da Silva during his 2002’s campaign. Seven members of the VpR stood in front of the Congress Building to read the letter to the Deputies that were there.

“The lawyer Janaína [Lima, youngest VpR’s member], VpR’s activist, read the letter to the Deputies. She remembered that during this moment she focused all the outrage she felt against the politicians. The reading was so intense that it surprised the group’s members, who never had seen her so angry. “This episode showed for the press that we were not serving the Government neither the opposition, including Aécio” **(Extract from the VemPraRua book. 2016. p.122)**

VpR was still not supporting Rousseff’s impeachment then, but MBL and ROL were already pushing it through their actions. It was only after the TCU (Tribunal de Contas da União) declared that were irregularities in Rousseff Government’s budget for 2010-2014 term that VpR decided to change its tactics and support the same goal as he others. At this point, the focusing of energies around a same goal facilitated the course of action. All the SMOs were acting through the social medias to expand their activities, even if their success in term of participants was moderate. The fact that all the three SMOs gathered around the same claim allowed them to unify all their resources and their followers. From this moment on the relations between each other were led by their common goal: Rousseff’s Impeachment.

On October 19th, with (former Chamber Chair) Eduardo Cunha’s approval the groups started to arm tents and occupy the lawn in front of the National Congress. VpR couldn’t participate physically because of their professional obligations, so its flag was planted in the front of the encampment. MBL occupied the first part of the terrain with something around fifty tents next to the Congress building, and ROL, also with fifty tents, stayed a bit further away. Soon the interventionist groups were casted out of the encampment because of tensions between them and the other groups. The camp lasted two months until all the participants were removed by the military police on November 21th.

Beside the consolidation of SMOs as major protagonists of the 2014-2016 cycle of protest described here, what we could observe was a crystallization of right-wing discourses to legitimate their actions. First through the traditional aspects of right-wing civil society action, based on a qualitative field study done at the encampment, which showed how the participants framed their action drawing from a traditional Latin-American right-wing imaginary. The “internal enemy” figure is pictured as a communist, a brainwashed leftist, but also a corrupt politician, all of them representing a threat to the nation²⁸. If we sum up the discourse of unity in native words in one sentence this would be: «the legitimate power of the Brazilian Nation to legally impeach the President and stop all the corruption her party was associated with». Second, by the way their discourses evolved. In the MBL case protest’s reasons evolved from diffusing libertarians ideas to a radical opposition against the Workers Party through the demand of Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment. VpR was first supporting Aécio Neves (PSDB) with the idea of stopping Dilma Rousseff, however after Rousseff’s success, it quickly assumed a non-partisan position and anti-corruption moto. ROL started asking for a military interventionism and quickly advocate the impeachment after the re-election. We also observed that the three SMOs rejected institutional support or connection during their process of becoming part of the dominant publics.

Conclusion

In this working paper, we sustain that the roots of the New-Right Wing movements in Brazil can be traced mainly from online right-wing counter-publics which crystallized into different SMOs who gathered around a same claim: the Dilma Rousseff impeachment. We argue that even considering their peculiarities, the three main groups show similarities in their action frames and network connections. These similarities lay, particularly, into their discourses that mix traditional right-wing characteristics with new ones: anti-corruption, support of libertarian values, democratic right of protest and the claim of a non-partisan “essence”. Moreover, this belonging to online right wing counter-publics formed the “catness” and the “netness” needed to transform them into SMOs when the political opportunities were activated.

²⁸ Vrydagh, F. (forthcoming). Understanding Brazilian right-wing Social Movements. The case of the 2015 Congress Camp.

The activists' discourses of the three groups were constructed around several narratives. First, we identified the counter publics' peculiarity: the consciousness of being displaced of a dominant cultural and political horizon. The most expressive form of this consciousness is a shared feeling of being persecuted and feeling that their political ideas and values were not represented on mainstream publics. Second, we also observed that the evolution from counter-publics to SMOs was connected to an evolution of their discourses. Besides ROL's enthusiasm for military intervention, the SMOs claimed that they were doing a rightful and peaceful occupation at Brasilia, and their discourse claimed a legitimacy associated to the Nation, "Brazilian's identity" and the "legality of the act" (the fact that the Police said that the protests occurred without violence and that the encampment got Eduardo Cunha's authorization). We attribute it to a SMOs strategy to increase the adherence to their claims and gain legitimacy before its audience. This process also consecrates their evolution from counter publics to "dominant" publics, an example of this evolution is the fact that Kim Kataguirí became a *Folha de São Paulo* Op-Ed columnist, *Folha* being one of the most important Brazilian Newspapers.

Finally, the fact that the three main SMOs developed themselves through the same specific events shows also how connected they were. We call these "events" windows of opportunities and analyses them through the prism of the political process theory. The political opportunity concept expresses the "increase of political and administrative institutions' 'permeability' to the civil society claims"²⁹. Following Kriesi, this increase is due to three aspects of the political context. In our case study, we first identified the three elections and twelve years of Workers Party's government as the main factor, beside the "ashamed right" effect, to explain the raising of counter publics' assertions between 2004 and 2013. Second, we identified the potential allies as the economics and politics sectors (including the press, the police forces) that were discontent with Dilma' re-election and the economic recession to come as they began to support SMOs actions. And finally, we argue that the "crisis" that raised civil society's assertion was provoked by June of 2013 considering it as a "crisis into the political coalition"³⁰.

29 Alonso, Angela. 2009. « As teorias dos movimentos sociais: um balanço do debate ». *Lua Nova* 76: 49–86. p.55

30 *Ibidem*

