

# The ideology of capitalism in Brazilian social movements: the “nós-do-governo”<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** The aim of this work is to understand the ideological processes in the relationship between Brazilian State and social movements during Lula and Dilma Rousseff Governments until June 2013. For this purpose, we will see that there are some subjects that enjoy themselves when join any cynical apparatuses in the capitalist society, and also identified themselves with this lifestyle. On the other side, there are subjects that are indignant with this situation and seek to politically organize themselves, in this case in social movements. The article discusses these politically organized subjects, since the Brazilian State uses the “engodo” to put them in the cynical logic of capitalist social control. In this logic, the “engodo” is a discursive formation that puts at stake a symbolic and imaginary dimension for one to take cynically the other as object of his satisfaction.

**Keywords:** psychoanalysis, Marxism, “engodo”, discourse, capitalism.

## Introduction

First of all, we emphasize that this article originated from a presentation at the I Seminar on Critical Psychology held at the University of São Paulo (USP) on June 2013, therefore this reflection was circumstantial in that historical moment. At that time, we were living the fury of June demonstrations, and tried to understand them. In this context, our objective in this article is to understand the ideological processes present in the relationship between Brazilian State and social movements during Lula and Dilma Rousseff Governments until June 2013.

Since our concern was related to the aforementioned relationship, we wondered about the slowness of the Federal Government, Chambers of Deputies and Federal Senate to dialogue with the popular demands coming from streets. We know that after the demonstrations of June 2013 many things have changed in the Brazilian political scenario, and we can mention as example the organization of an opposition force to the Workers’ Party (PT) and Dilma Rousseff Government, culminating in the approval, by the Chamber of Deputies, of the petition for President Dilma Rousseff impeachment, on April 2016. This point will not be discussed in this text since we are respecting the historical circumstances in which it was written.

We will see that Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010) and Dilma Rousseff (2011-2014; 2015-2016) Governments reposition the relationship between the Brazilian State and social movements in the political

scenario. Before these governments, the movements opposed the State since the latter acted many times contrary to popular interests. According to Martins (2000), political and intellectual militants developed resources to question the State, but have not constructed strategies to govern it. This conflict of governance was not so apparent, since, in Lula Government, Brazil had enough social and economic development not to reveal the State political relationship with the organized movements of civil society.

Brazil’s social and economic improvement,<sup>2</sup> during Lula Government and Dilma Rousseff’s first term (in 2011, the country was the world’s sixth largest economy),<sup>3</sup> became possible, in a certain way, because several political activists took up positions in the Government, in ministries, councils and courts. This has caused the strengthening of several public policies as we will see throughout this article.

However, in this relationship between State and militants who were constructing public policies and economically developing the country, something of this “not being prepared to govern the State,” as Martins (2000) says, appears through the significant “nós-do-governo”, as a kind of “engodo”<sup>4</sup> (lure) that attracted militants to the Government, often without criticism of the ways in which this historical relationship has been constructed. However, on the occasion of the I Seminar on Critical Psychology, we had some hypotheses (which will be presented in the last part of this article) of the unfolding of this “engodo” established between the State and social

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1 In English: “we-from-government”. There is a wordplay here. In the Portuguese language, the word “nós” may have the meaning both of first person plural, that is, “we”, and of “knots”. It will be discussed later in the article. The term will remain in the original language throughout the article.

2 Recovery from <https://bit.ly/2Hs6HVi>

3 Recovery from <https://glo.bo/1cDcBna>

4 The word “engodo” will be discussed on the next page. It will remain in the original language throughout the article.

movements, and it seems that some of these hypothesis are currently confirmed.

### **“Engodo” and its discursive formation**

The *Dicionário Houaiss da língua portuguesa* (Houaiss Dictionary of the Portuguese Language) (Houaiss, 2001), brings some meanings for “engodo”, as we can see below.

The first explanation suggests the metaphor of the fisherman who uses the bait to attract the fish. The “engodo” puts into play two elements in this metaphor: a subject who wishes to capture their prey and uses a device (bait) that reproduces the feeding habits of the prey to attract it to its goal, thus the bait must exercise certain fascination on the prey; and the fish, which, when attracted by this scenario, will be captured by the hook camouflaged by the bait. The result of this operation is the satisfaction of the fisherman and the capture of the fish.

The second definition says that “engodo” means “any device to attract someone, lure” (Houaiss, 2001, pp. 1149-1150), so the artifice/lure has the function of attracting someone to an end. In this relationship, it is implicitly assumed that there is an agent who architects and manages the ambush through subterfuge to attract someone else. On the other hand, there is one who will be attracted by this lure: the target of the action.

The third definition brings us the idea of a “false attitude of flattery, adulation.” It seems to us that the definition is complementing itself, for the artifice/lure here is understood as an attitude of flattery and adulation, however effected in a false way. The action, therefore, becomes intentional, thought-out as a snare (hook and bait) to get something/someone. In turn, the one who receives this action, if he allows himself to be led by this logic of being flattered, he accepts the false flattery as a compliment, therefore, a “consented” equivocation.

The fourth definition refers to “any kind of trap, maneuver, or trick that seeks to deceive, cheat others, and induce them to error” (Houaiss, 2001, pp. 1149-1150). Again this definition supposes a relationship of someone who sets a trap in the intention to capture some type of prey that will be lured by it. Therefore, we can suppose that it is a relationship in which an infamous inequality is posed: one is the fish; another is the fisherman. “Engodo” is, therefore, the act of deceiving someone with collaboration of the deceived.

We also see that this exposition of the word “engodo” constructs a discursive formation. For Brandão (2004, pp. 106-107), discursive formation is a set of statements marked by the same regularities, by the same “rules of formation.” Therefore, it is defined by its relationship with the ideological formation, that is, the texts that are part of a discursive formation refer to the same ideological formation. Discursive formation determines “what can and cannot be said” from a historically determined social place.

The same text may appear in different discursive formations, thus causing variations of meaning in which there is a relationship placed between the interpellator, who uses a strategy to seduce, and the interpellated subject, who allows himself to be seduced by the staging (trap) elaborated by the first. At the end of this discursive formation, the interpellator, when he catches the interpellated subject with his snares, benefits from the acquisition in some way, and the interpellated subject/prey, in turn, is vulnerable to the wishes of the one who captured him.

### **“Engodo” as insidious discursive formation**

In the face of the aspects presented so far, we can realize that the possible meanings of the word “engodo” are not limited to conceptual definitions of an object, verb or behavior, but it refers to an insidious discursive formation that guarantees the full success of the excessive relationships in the positions of subjects established in this field; therefore, a political construction placed in the social bond and not simply an individual psychological process.

It is worth highlighting that in searching for the etymology of “engodo”, we find in the Portuguese language a word to express a political situation in which there are non-equivalent positions of subject, therefore it does not refer to fortuity or a mere individual mental equivocation. Thus, “engodo” deals with a political issue because it points to an operating rationality in the social bond in which the relationships between people are placed in the logic of the oppressor and the oppressed person, who is allowed “to be seduced by false flatteries” (Houaiss, 2001, pp. 1149-1150), approaching the Marxist thesis of ideology (Marx & Engels, 2007).

In this sense, “engodo” as a discursive formation opens up possibilities for us to understand an unconscious rationality placed in the social bond; the one who sets the trap and the *one who accepts* to bite the bait support a cynical rationality, since they participate in history without becoming responsible for the social bond they structure.

Thus, Sloterdijk (2012) affirms that in cynical rationality, the subject does not follow the conventional norms of sociability which govern a given society, for in this rationality, that subject that holds some power in relationships summons the other to the position of object, of thing to be used. In this context, Safatle (2005) argues that the superego that should somehow regulate this type of disproportionate action in contemporary capitalism is structured as an imperative of enjoyment. Following this logic, the subject, instead of feeling guilty for not following social norms and taking the other as a thing, enjoys the satisfaction of his immediate demand.

Cynicism, therefore, appears as the “Law under the figure of a superego, which requires that conduct to be based on the logic of pure enjoyment” (Safatle,

2005, p. 134). It is the appeal to unrestricted enjoyment that dominates and, therefore, there are fewer and fewer discourses in capitalist society that say the opposite or that limit this imperative of enjoyment, and, as a consequence, socializing institutions allow this cynical action to happen without repression, becoming hegemonic and identifiable reference for “successful” subjects in capitalism.

Those who adhere to this request are alienated from the hegemonic political model and, for alienation to be justified, the logic of “engodo” offers these subjects ideological discourses (symbolic dimension) that justify unequal relations as something given as constitutive part of life in society. In this way, the *status quo* continues to operate, because the subjects participating in this staging begin to assume the non-truth as an identifying reference (imaginary dimension) of their lives: *non causa pro causa* (Lara Junior, 2012).

“Engodo” is a discursive formation that puts at stake a symbolic and imaginary dimension to take cynically the other as object of his satisfaction (fisherman that catches the fish); in political terms it is verified the non establishment of equivalent relationships, and thus it is an insidious relationship. It is insidious because in this discursive formation there is a subject in the position of interpellator, whose function is to (re) set up an elusive staging destined for the other subject of the relationship with the purpose of obtaining some advantage at the expense of this other; in addition, there is an interpellated subject who will be summoned to act falsely in a position that allows him to enjoy cynically – superego of enjoyment (Safatle, 2005; Žižek, 1999), and then he starts finding his exploited situation “natural.” It is also worth noting that this insidious relationship is not absolute, because there are those who do not allow themselves to be interpellated with such a situation and fight politically to reverse it, as we will see later in this article.

In this sense, it could be said that in the “engodo” the function of ideology is to offer an imaginary map that defines as natural all the subject positions to be occupied in the “engodo” (Elliot, 1998; Lara Junior & Jardim, 2014). This map is provided especially in the process of socialization so that subjects treat these unequal and arbitrary positions as part of the reality they are destined to live in, then ideology ensures that the demands of the subjects representing the interests of capital succeed. In this way, the ideological fantasy of the desired world is created, as an “oceanic feeling” or even the fantasy that the social tie, whose coordinates were drawn by a map or any other entity, is immutable, persevering in fatalism without possibilities for change.

According to Freud (1913/2005), in the totemic ritual, the children killed the father and held an imaginary banquet in which parts of the father were distributed among them and these felt “as if they were” the father of the horde, then this “as if they were” bait guarantees them the feeling of being their own father or even more powerful than him. At this point, we emphasize that the

“engodo” is updated in this imaginary (“as if it were”) staging elaborated in the totemic rituals, since the subjects who participate are alienated in this staging.

This alienation of the subjects from themselves and from reality creates an inhuman situation of injustice, oppression, cruelty, violence, misery and other avoidable sufferings. Here, alienation appears as inhuman, because it deprives the subject of his reason and knowledge about the logic of the means of production that oppresses him:

alienation pulls the subject away from himself, away from his real nature and his real problems. Alienation is not only in ideas and feelings, but in the practice of exploiting the working class. Labor has become alienated, slaved, and overwhelming, for it makes the worker to become a hostage of a way of labor that does not free him from alienation, but, on the contrary, makes him even more attached to the logic of a minority (capital owner) exploiting the majority. The burden of alienation causes the subjects to treat money in the capitalist system as a sovereign and oppressive entity, thereby maintaining the logic of capitalist exploitation, because no one dares to think of an economy that is organized without the logic of capital. The alienated individual is thrown into inhuman destinies, and thereby treats his suffering as something proper to his existence, as a disease of his body, not visualizing the causes of many of his symptoms in capitalist modes of production. (Lara Junior, 2014, p. 108)

In this sense, Althusser (1970) declares that ideology for one to update oneself in capitalist society needs the ideological ritual in which subjects become alienated, through the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA), actively participate and ignore historical materialism in order to adhere to an ideology (as if it were).

Thus, we can mention an example of alienation that is very present in our reality: a salaried worker who acts “as if he were” the capital owner, thus updating the role of the “fugitive slave catcher” in the history of Brazilian slavery, a mestizo who was not black nor white, but tried to act “as if he were white”, even that for this purpose he had to implant barbarism without guilt.

We return to Freud’s perspective (1913/2005) in *Totem and Taboo*, which shows, in a second moment, that the superego (moral conscience) and the ideal of self start representing the insignia of the father. In this logic, the children seek in law a way to guarantee a supposed return of the father of the horde, “as if it were” the father living among them – alienating imaginary identification. They then erase the guilt over murder, and manage their impulses:

This is the double face of the Law in representing the return of the father of the horde: it establishes collective guilt as a principle of social organization

by the internalization of aggressive impulses, and institutes the figure of the “ideal of the self” that maintains the group members connected through libido. The guilt, collective superego, is, according to Freud, the psychic representative of the death drive, and the libidinal bound, the representative of the life drive. (Poli, 2004, p. 42)

We think that in this alienating imaginary identification one seeks the formation of a primal horde in which the father allows children unrestricted enjoyment, therefore, this fanciful construction puts at stake the psychological determinants of the taboo (unconscious desire to violate the law). In this perspective, rituals and magic feed superstitious beliefs impregnated with repressed desires. The ceremonies surrounding the taboos help hiding the hostility of the law (Freud, 1913/2005).

In this construction, fantasy becomes a strategy for subjects to escape from the reality of dissatisfaction. Thus, they appropriate discourses such as that of religion, psychology, and psychiatry, for example, in order to convince themselves in the name of science that they must submit/adapt to the logic of modes of capitalist production (Parker, 2007).

In this way, in possession of truth discourses of science and religion (Lacan, 2007), these subjects create the (imaginary and symbolic) staging to attract and maintain those who have already fallen into the “trap” of thinking that can only survive under their auspices – there is no life outside the primal horde (Freud, 1913/2005) nor outside the fief domains, recreating Hegel’s master-slave dialectic. They will only survive unemployment by subjecting themselves to the logic of capital as exposed by Marx (1968).

From this reasoning, we think with Freud that, for this purpose, the capital owners perform a staging in which the father of the horde appears “as if he were” not castrated, so the subjects can cynically enjoy, ignoring guilt. Consequently, in capitalist society it becomes possible to establish a superego that summons subjects to no longer repress their impulses, but follow them at any cost. For Safatle (2005), it is Žižek who brings this important inversion on the analysis of the Freudian superego that, in this society, summons paternal authority that does not blame sexual pleasure and therefore does not repress any kind of enjoyment.

For this super-egoic relationship to continue, every conflict must be suspended in order for, regardless of any universal norms, the enjoyment unrestricted appeal to dominate, without considering any other reference established by the processes of socialization. As Marx (1968) affirms, the state operates unequivocally in the defense of the interests of capital by suspending any order of conflict, maintaining control over workers and making them to produce without causing conflicts (strikes, claims, questionings).

Therefore, the handling performed by the State in its relationship with the modes of capitalist production is

not a mere misunderstanding, but an “engodo”, because it presupposes a certain intentionality; they set the trap (capitalist discourse of the non-castrated father) to approach those who are outside this logic, and to maintain control over those who have already been caught. Thus the “engodo” happens to operate in a cynical rationality:

Therefore, in capitalism, the Other is presented as “engodo,” since the capitalists say that this being is non-castrated, without fail, omnipotent, which allows everything, and then the fantasy that there is no limit to enjoyment is “sold” through the objects of consumption. Such as all capitalist logic, any provision of services has a price, so offering a non-castrated “father,” who no longer controls the horde, costs the subject to give up a commitment to his desire, thus insatiably remaining in an endless demand. This construction is ideological, because there is a double cynical relationship between the subject who sells the non-castrated father, knowing that there is castration, and those who buy and enjoy, remaining in the illusory position of having the choose option. (Lara Junior, 2010, p. 71)

Following the rationale of the “engodo” as an insidious discursive formation, we may ask ourselves: who “sells” the non-castrated father? What do they get out of it? How do they get that? How does this discursive formation happen so that they can succeed in our society?

“Engodo” is at stake in capitalist society because the capital owner interpellates the worker as a subject dispossessed of any knowledge and power. The discourse of capitalism projects the trick of the unrealistic creation of a perfect place where everyone can enjoy together. At this point, there is no room for criticism or questioning, thus the “bait” of this “engodo” is the belief in a powerful master who knows how to free everybody from the anguish that comes from the lack and incompleteness. The product of these insidious discursive formations is the emptying of criticism and questioning, so that the most absurd ideologies may become the very reality of the subjects, since they can justify to others and to the Other his sine of subservience.

This allows us to think that the “engodo” (lure to catch the prey) can work as a rule in the relationship both of the State with its citizens and of the citizens with their peers. In this state policy, each citizen is allowed making his false flattery to induce the other to his trap, thus making the rationality of the “engodo” to operate in its full success, so that everyone can enjoy “as if they were” the master or the wise subject in the several institutions that already regulate this way of obtaining spurious enjoyment.

Following this line of reasoning, the position of interpellator is not restricted to the capital owner – bourgeois described by Marx and Engels (1968) –, but, by means of a state policy of redistribution of power, the

wage earners taken by the “engodo” start insidiously interpellating their peers within this same insidious logic so that to feel part of the social bond. By this, the logic of capital fulfills its function of distributing power in order for some to dominate others without necessarily there being the classic figure of the capitalist bourgeois. Thus, the workers taken by this rationality are treated as nothing, dispossessed objects of immediate enjoyment of each other (Lara Junior, 2012).

Therefore, this discourse of the “engodo” becomes the identifying reference in capitalist society, and for this, more and more masters and scholars are invested with knowledge and power to determine the “engodo” as a rule of sociability: “*Goze no engodo!*” (Enjoy the lure!)

### **The “engodo” of the “nós-do-governo”**

We have seen here that there are some subjects who enjoy when they adhere to every cynical apparatus present in capitalist society and still identify themselves with this lifestyle. On the other hand, there are subjects who are historically oppressed by this cynical rationality through poverty, misery and all kinds of abuse. These subjects do not enjoy when are interpellated to act in this rationality, but feel and realize that they are facing an exploitation relationship that causes suffering. Some of these become indignant with the two previous situations and seek to organize themselves politically, in this case in social movements, precisely questioning the social order established (Lara Junior & Jardim, 2014) on these politically organized subjects – who are discussed in this article — because they also suffer with Brazilian State attacks, which uses the “engodo” to place them in the cynical logic of capitalist social control.

In this same perspective, the political era in Brazil is marked every day by the State interpellation, which for 500 years has not opened its structures for the participation of citizens and professionals from different areas, and nowadays, with the conquest of democracy and creation and implementation of public policies, increasingly number of citizens and professionals is in confront and debate with state institutions and their bureaucrats. In this same line, psychoanalysts have been assigned to participate in the state, whether as a civil servant, a consultant or a citizen. Therefore, it is essential to discuss this relationship.

When we refer to the relationship of social movements with the Brazilian State, we are faced with a controversial and complex issue which it is difficult to be theoretically and analytically circumscribed, besides discussing what social movement and the State itself would be at the present due to the development of the globalized capitalist system. In the case of Brazil, this issue gains specific contours due to the historical process of formation of the state, social movements, and the relationship established between them (Goers, 2003, Moroni, 2005, Oliveira & Silva, Rossiaud & Scherer-Warren, 2000).

For Martins (2000), the Brazilian State is structurally formed to guarantee the ruling classes ways of social control that legitimize privileges. One of the ways applied by the State for this is the use of violence, which demonstrates to subaltern classes which social places they must occupy and what relationships to establish with this instance of power – reality that was accentuated by the establishment of the military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985, a period in which the State demonstrated its authoritarian face more explicitly.

In this context of social repression, some Brazilian social movements begin to structure themselves in opposition to a state that historically privileges a social class and, therefore, uses the most diverse apparatuses of repression to prevent the militants from approaching any sphere of decision, since these were treated in their majority as communists, therefore a threat to the State (Lara Junior, 2012).

Due to this circumstance, according to Martins (2000), the movements also considered the State a threat, thus constructing their collective identities in this (necessary) relationship of opposition and attempt to take over that State. In this sense, the intellectuals and movement researchers realized no possibility other than treating the State as an “enemy” and, presumably, they have not prepared themselves to think how these militants would act after the political opening and redemocratization of the country that had the 1988 Constitution as landmark, as well as they have not imagined that a party which has historically been allied with social movements would come to power, in this case, the Workers’ Party (PT).

It is worth mentioning that the 1988 Constitution was the great landmark that guaranteed and regularized the participation of social actors in the process of the management of the State, since it, which was previously treated as an enemy, was at that moment being prepared to be the “house of the people.” According to Moroni (2005), the creation of management councils was a way found for the population to control the State, thus seeking to create democratic spaces that ensured citizen participation. It was this effective engagement of movements that enabled the creation of councils and performance of conferences as a way of participation and interference in the management of public resources:

It was this broad social and popular movement that elaborated the strategy of creating the decentralized and participatory system (councils and conferences) as an instrument of State democratization and public character. It is worth emphasizing here the importance that the professionals had in this process, who worked within the State and who, allied to this movement, helped in the construction of the political strategy. (Moroni, 2005, p. 288)

The movements that have begun to restructure in Brazil since the 1980s, no longer in terms of social

class but collective identities marked by citizen needs, have been called *new social movements* by the literature (Abers & Bülow, 2011), precisely because they were no longer tied directly to unions and parties, and their causes were circumstantial, such as: land, house, ecology, gender, etc.:

The outbreak of urban and rural social movements, outside partisan frameworks, was in a way a great novelty in Brazilian society, a new way of social expression that combined with the flourishing of new social and political subjects. Partisan restrictions enabled the appearing of protagonists of the historical plot that the populism of the previous decades had buried in the common grave of those benefited in advance by the State, which was the provider. All social demands gained expression and solution in the anticipations of rulers and politicians. (Martins, 2000, p. 269)

In this context of re-democratization of the country, social movements were placed in the (re) construction of the Brazilian Democratic State under the Rule of Law, and for this purpose, the public policies were highlighted because, somehow, they served as a sort of legal security so that a social cause could be legitimized by the State. We can safely say that many public policies exist only in Brazil by popular force, such as public health, housing, education policies, etc.

Another fact to be highlighted in this context of redemocratization is the relationship of these social movements with the Catholic and Protestant Churches through their pastoral and political ties, especially with the Workers' Party, what Abers and Bülow (2011) and Oliveira and Silva (2011) will call party-movement interpenetration. This made it possible for many Workers' Party members to be assigned for and take up political positions in the most diverse instances of the State (Councils, Chamber of Deputies, Federal Senate, Government, etc.). Consequently, many of the militant candidates or representatives of social movements ascend to the established instances of power within the State, and start recruiting members of the movements for State positions and bureaucratic functions.

In the 1990s, with the process of democratic restructuring underway, some important public policies have been approved and their implementation process begun, such as the Unified Health System (SUS), Social Security, etc., and as their demands were recognized by the State, the militants of these movements were interpellated to participate in the implementation of this policy by holding positions at councils and conferences. Because of this, the movement itself, pushed by Fernando Henrique Cardoso's minimum State neoliberal policy, had to create legal institutions such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations of public interest (Oscips) to comply with the standards of

the funding request for proposals for the implementation of these policies:

In fact, NGOs have become much more important in the 1990s than the social movements. These NGOs are different from those which acted along with popular movements in the 1980s. Nowadays, they are NGOs registered with the Third Sector, focused on the implementation of partnership policies between public power and society, working in areas with poor provision of social services, or even where they are absent, such as in education and health, to clients such as boys and girls living on the streets, women with low income, elementary schools. (Gohn, 2003, p. 22)

Once institutionalized, these movements have begun to be organized according to the norms proposed by the State (conduction of forums and conferences), which, in turn, supported these meetings financially. As a result, the agendas of the movements began to receive influences from the State officers who exposed their needs and ended up guiding discussions in many of these groups (Moroni, 2005).

With Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva government (2003-2010), these processes of party-movement interpenetration, as well as the participation of the militants in public policies and their consequent development of institutionalization, have been fairly settled. Thus, many of these militants started assuming positions of trust at various levels of the State bureaucracy. Obviously, occupying these political spaces has helped implementing public policies, and several basic rights have been guaranteed. At the end, this presence of militants within the State ensured that some demands of these social groups were discussed by governments:

Institutional transit is characterized by the continuous displacement of social-partisan activists across different spaces of action (social organizations, parties, institutional forums and governmental positions), what is, to a large extent, made possible by party-movement interpenetration. Thus, electoral victories and defeats tend to produce significant transit from civil society to government and vice versa, generating rapid and intense changes in institutional access opportunities (in terms both of degree and of form). (Oliveira & Silva, 2011, p. 98)

In this sense, to prove this institutional transit, and based on Hochstetler, these authors affirm that, for example, leaders of the Central Única dos Trabalhadores – CUT (Unified Workers' Central) have assigned their staff to about 9 ministries and 53 second and third tier secretariats. And we could cite several other ministers who have been directly connected to some social cause:

The incorporation of activists into the Government remained more recently. For example, under Lula government, the two Environment Ministers (Marina Silva and Carlos Minc) had a previous trajectory as activists. The interpenetration of activists into the State is not, however, the privilege of “new social movements,” such as environmental and feminist. This phenomenon also occurs among activists from more traditional left-wing branch. (Abers & Bülow, 2011, p. 67)

However, we do not want to deny the immense progress we have made in terms of public policies and guarantee of rights, especially in Lula and Dilma Rousseff governments: here we highlight *Bolsa Família* (Family Allowance Program), ProUni (University for All Program), *Minha Casa Minha Vida* (My House, My Life Program), among other historical policies in the country. But even these two presidents have not touched the structure of the State. It is at this point where our observation lies.

In this rendezvous between the State and large economic groups, the former militants began to feel the repercussion of being among the world’s eight largest economies<sup>5</sup>, and many talking points of social movements began to be presided over by them, who began to obtain some benefits (status, good wages, power) in order to defend the interests of the State.

In the research we conducted, we observed that this type of militant, who migrated to the State, supposedly representing the interests of social movements, became to present themselves during many meetings, councils and assemblies which they organized as “nós-do-governo.” By presenting themselves in this way, they sought to gain the confidence of the militants so that they would not rail against the State, because, in this “engodo”, the movement against the State would be against its own “friends,” now entitled: “nós-do-governo”, therefore, a “traitor” to common interests.

I emphasize the signifier – “nós-do-governo” –; this brings us two possible ideas: the first, “nós” functioning as a personal pronoun, which refers to the idea of a group of people who belong to the government; and the second, “nós” can be understood as a knot, that is, it refers to the act of tying, binding. In this case, we can understand “nós” as an “engodo”, because it shows Government’s action to tie the militants to its interests and avoid opposition. One can also understand the “nós” as a social “trap” to capture the opposition and hold it under the State bureaucracy, thus preventing the movements from exercising their function of denouncing and criticizing the capitalist system, necessary to democracy.

We think that the “nós” acts as an “engodo”, used in the first person plural, giving the idea of a group,

because, as we have already seen, the State does not yet represent the people’s interests, since it organizes itself according to the privilege of the elites, but it does not stop doing something substantial for the population and for the movements, as the public policies. At this point a dilemma arises: where would be the political frontiers referred to by Mouffe (1999) in this relationship between social movements and State, which allow the structuring of collective identities and, consequently, of political disputes between friends and opponents?

In this sense, we call attention to the “engodo” of a State (interpellator) that is based on the spoils of poverty, whose structures are thought-out for this purpose, since there was no social and political rupture with this model in Brazil’s history; on the other hand, there are militants and professionals interpellated to participate in this State who become fascinated by salary, stability, power, privileges (bait). Again, the result of this operation of “engodo” is to maintain a State that is cynically balanced in its historical function, that is, privilege one social class over others and, in order to maintain this balance, it is necessary the existence of ruined schools, degraded hospitals, and luxurious stadiums.

## Conclusion: untying “nós”<sup>6</sup>

From the data presented so far, we can consider that some subjects that participate in these movements are attracted by the insidious discourse of the Brazilian State, thus leading social movements to face three major challenges, namely: a) abandonment of criticism and opposition regarding State political opponents and national elites; b) specialization of the militants in public policies, when they start working for the State without maintaining the political tension necessary for this structural changes to occur; c) difficulty in mobilizing the new generations to take up the struggles of the respective movements:

ideology operates in the sense of perpetuating the existing reality. Thus, if the ideology leaves gaps in its generalizing explanation of the world, it is through these gaps that it is possible to see the existing contradictions, and fight for its overcoming. And these contradictions, pertaining to reality, can be perceived by the distance between what is said by ideology and what reality is. Thus ideology struggles to coincide with reality, putting itself in its place, but, since the process of adaptation is dialectical, what is not contemplated by it cries for help, generating discomfort. (Crochik, 1998, p. 2)

In this struggle, we assume that the main strategy used by the government is to produce “engodos” that

5 Recovered from <https://glo.bo/1cDcBna>

6 Here, as already mentioned, there is a wordplay with the word “nós,” which in the Portuguese language may mean “we” and “knots”.

interpellate the subjects of these movements from a discursive position in which they seek to capture these subjects through one or more strategies of domination for the *status quo* to remain in its polarity – some dominating, others being dominated:

With the structuring of this type of discourse, oppression is given as something intrinsic to society, as if it were a cultural, genetic or natural heritage. Thus reality is indistinguishable from ideology; the clarity of reality and ideology is lost, and the subjects are not allowed standing before the oppression that destructs them. Thus, it is the subject who should comply with the determinations dictated by capitalism as something intrinsic to the process of belonging to a society. In this way, the subjects are displaced from the clashes of everyday life, thus hindering any possibility of change, because they believe that reality is beyond human forces, and trying to change it is something impossible. (Lara Junior, 2012, p. 106)

In this perspective, we think that social movements, in the current context of our society, are one of the main responsible for exposing the truth of this capitalist society, sustaining a necessary tension for the critique of ideology (Sloterdijk, 2003), since these organized groups support a systematic opposition to the capitalist system:

Contemporary movements are prophets of the present. They do not have the strength of apparatuses, but the strength of the word. They announce the possible change, not for a distant future, but for the present of our life. They force power to become visible and thus give it form and face. They speak a language that seems uniquely theirs, but they say something that transcends them and then speak for all. (Melucci, 2001, p. 21)

These aspects clearly show that struggles now take place in a symbolic field, where the typical distortion of capitalism serves as a universal ideological manipulation. In this perspective, the social movements are strongly interpellated by the capitalist ideology, because they seek to challenge the logic placed in society. It is in this field of political dispute that the social movements are interpellated to participate in the “engodos” in order to avoid denunciations on the inconsistencies and gaps of the capitalist system operating in several ways of management of the Brazilian State.

On April 2016, we realized that our 2013 hypothesis that the State “engodos” in relation to activists of social movement resulted in the weakening of a historical opposition policy (usually led by social movements) to national elites and to the State itself, and culminated in the downfall of Dilma Rousseff government and the reorganization of a type of politics that flirts with old authoritarian systems, such as militarism.

### **A ideologia do capitalismo nos movimentos sociais brasileiros: os “nós-do-governo”**

**Resumo:** O objetivo deste trabalho é compreender os processos ideológicos presentes na relação entre o Estado brasileiro e movimentos sociais durante os governos Lula e Dilma até junho de 2013. Para isso, veremos que há alguns sujeitos que gozam quando aderem a todo aparato cínico presente na sociedade capitalista e ainda se identificam com esse modo de vida. Por outro lado, há sujeitos que se indignam com essa situação e buscam se organizar politicamente, neste caso em movimentos sociais. Tratamos sobre esses sujeitos que se organizam politicamente, porque eles também sofrem as investidas do Estado brasileiro que usa do engodo para colocá-los na lógica cínica de controle social capitalista. Nessa lógica, o engodo é uma formação discursiva que coloca em jogo uma dimensão simbólica e imaginária para tomar cinicamente o outro como objeto de sua satisfação.

**Palavras-chave:** psicanálise, engodo, discurso, capitalismo.

### **L'idéologie du capitalisme dans les mouvements sociaux brésiliens: les “nós-do-governo”**

**Résumé :** Le but de ce travail est de comprendre les processus idéologiques présents dans la relation entre l'État brésilien et les mouvements sociaux pendant le mandat gouvernemental de Lula et Dilma jusqu'à juin 2013. Pour cela, nous verrons qu'il y a quelques personnes qui extrapolent quand elles adhèrent à toute méthode cynique présente dans la société capitaliste et s'identifient même avec ce mode de vie. Nous traitons dans cet article de ces sujets qui s'organisent politiquement, parce qu'ils souffrent aussi des assauts de l'État brésilien qui utilisent des pièges pour les mettre dans la logique cynique de contrôle social capitaliste. Dans cette logique, le piège est une formation discursive qui met en jeu une dimension symbolique et imaginaire pour prendre cyniquement l'autre comme objet de sa satisfaction.

**Mots-clés :** psychanalyse, engodo, discours, capitalisme.



## La ideología del capitalismo en los movimientos sociales brasileños: los “nós-do-governo”

**Resumen:** El objetivo de este trabajo es entender los procesos ideológicos en la relación entre el Estado brasileño y los movimientos sociales durante el gobierno Lula y Dilma hasta junio de 2013. Con este fin, veremos que hay algunas personas que gozan cuando se adhieren a todos este aparato cínico en la sociedad capitalista y todavía identifican con esta forma de vida. Por otro lado, hay personas que están indignados con esta situación y tratan de organizarse políticamente, en este caso los movimientos sociales. Acerca de esos tipos que se organizan políticamente es que vamos tratar en este artículo, ya que también sufren la embestida del estado brasileño que utiliza “engodo” para ponerlos en la lógica cínica de control social capitalista. En esta lógica, el “engodo” es una formación discursiva que pone en juego una dimensión simbólica e imaginaria que toma cínicamente el otro como el objeto de su satisfacción.

**Palabras clave:** psicoanálisis, engodo, discurso, capitalismo.

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