Poverty Eradication in Brazil: an analysis from the perspective of the Philosophy of Liberation

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Introduction

Since 2004, the Brazilian discourse about development has associated economic growth and social inclusion. According to Frenzel, Case and Sedgwick (2012), the classical development discourse has shifted from development to poverty eradication. In the Brazilian case, the main evidence of this is the Programa Bolsa Família (PBF) - a federal conditioned cash transfer program designed to alleviate poverty. Created by the Presidency in October, 2003, the Program transfers cash to poor and extremely poor families with conditionalities in health and education. In order to better operate the Program, the Federal Government has established the Extreme Poverty Line in R$70,00 (about US$32.00) and the Poverty Line in R$140,00 (about US$65.00). Thus, poor and extremely poor families are those whose income are under these values per capita monthly. The value transferred varies from R$32,00 to R$306,00 (correspondingly from US$15.00 to US$120.00), according to the family income, the number of children, teenagers, handicapped family members and pregnant women.

To receive the amount paid monthly by the Government, the families need to keep the children going to school and up to date with official immunization schedule. Pregnant women must attend antenatal care. Law 10.836 institutionalizes PBF and determines that the amount must be preferably transferred to women, who are conceived as the responsible for the families and for the accomplishment of the conditionalities. The information about fulfilling the conditions is provided to the Federal Government by the cities secretaries of education and health. All the families willing to receive the amount paid by PBF must sign up at the cities to CadÚnico, a databank that unifies and centralizes the information of the beneficiaries of the federal social programs.

PBF is financed by the National Social Assistance Fund (FNAS in Portuguese) regarding the National Budget. In 2012, over 8 billion dollars were transferred to 13 million families. Besides eradicating poverty, the amount provided by the Program also provides dynamism to the economy of small towns and keeps children in school. At a first reading, the numbers seem quite expressive, but there are aspects which make PBF quite controversial. The amount transferred in 2012 represents less than 0.5% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Besides this amount, a part of the conditionalities is borrowed from the loans and financial aid offered by multilateral institutions as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank or a donor country with the intention of enhancing aid effectiveness. These conditionalities are often grouped under the label structural adjustment as they were prominent in the structural adjustment programs following the debt crisis of the 1980s.

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resources is provided to support the States and Municipalities manage and perform the Program. Costs of implementation and management also are covered by loans from the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

In 2011, PBF became more focused on the extremely poor families, as the *Programa Brasil Sem Miséria* was launched. Complementary to *Programa Bolsa Família*, *Brasil Sem Miséria* articulates the cash transfer and conditionalities to a wider access to public services, due to the reinforcement of the presence of the Community Health Agents in poor areas and the creation of Centers of Reference in Social Assistance (CRAS in Portuguese). *Brasil Sem Miséria* brings another aim to the social issues in Brazil: the productive inclusion, organized as a transverse policy articulated to other policies related to job and microcredit. One of the main actions for productive inclusion is the National Program of Access to Technical Education and Work (PRONATEC in Portuguese). In the States and Municipalities, the governments have been fixing a series of projects offering technical courses to members of beneficiary families of PBF in order to prepare them to the market. The Federal Government not only broadcasts the fact that Brazil became the sixth largest economy in the world, but also that 75% of those who were poor in 1991 are not anymore. It made Brazil exceed the first of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to the MDGs’ Government Annual Report, if PBF keeps its pace, it will eradicate extreme poverty in 2014 (Brazil, 2010).

Besides the looks, which may seem allright, the poverty eradication practices in Brazil are quite controversial. The argument of this paper is that the poverty eradication discourse in Brazil dissimulates the reproduction of a neoliberal development agenda. To support this argument, the starting point is the discussion of the complex mix of liberal ideas which inform the Program - such as those of the World Bank, the UNDP, John Rawls, Amartya Sen, and Milton Friedman – and their repercussion to concrete organization of PBF. After that, the concept of poverty adopted by the Program is discussed, highlighting its definition in quite narrow terms: official documents and reports define poverty line as a monthly income below 65 dollars *per capita*; the extreme poverty line as a monthly income of less than 32 dollars *per capita* monthly – not surprisingly the same 1 dollar purchasing power parity (US$1.25) defined by the World Bank Group and the UNDP as the Extreme Poverty Line. The counterpoint is found in the Philosophy of Liberation (PL), a Latin American critical philosophy which emerged around 1970 (DUSSEL, 2008), discussed in the sequence. Following the method of this philosophy, three moments are identified. The affirmative moment is when the case of the *Programa Bolsa Família* in Sant’Ana do Livramento, a small Southern town in the borders of Brazil and Uruguay, is presented. There, workers within the Program and beneficiaries were interviewed. Next, the negative moment is when the data were analyzed from the perspective of the Philosophy of Liberation. Adopting this perspective, the concepts of poverty and poor sustaining the Program are criticized for not considering the causes of systemic poverty: unemployment and over-exploitation of workers. Finally, the issue of poverty is placed on the consensus of the oppressed.

**Liberal Ideas that Inform the *Programa Bolsa Família***

The theoretical approach on cash transfer as a policy to fight against poverty is marked by Robert McNamara’s speech to the Board of Governors at the 1973 Annual Meetings in Nairobi, Kenya, as he introduces the term ‘absolute poverty’: “a condition of life so degraded by disease, illiteracy, malnutrition and squalor as to deny its victims basic human necessities...a condition of life so limited as to prevent realization of the potential of the genes with which one is born – and yet a condition of life so common as to be the lot of some 40% of the peoples of the developing countries” (MacNamara, 1973: 6).
In this speech, MacNamara stresses that the attention to poverty in peripheral countries was undelayable, as poverty was the main obstacle to the expansion of trade, the strengthening of international stability, and the reduction of social tensions. After that, the theme of fighting against poverty got relevance in the international debate over development. Both the World Development Reports, published by the World Bank Group, and the Human Development Reports, edited by the UNDP, began to approach to this issue. Specific operations of the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank itself were created to lend funds to governmental projects to fight against poverty, which proliferated. As well as the academic concern over these programs and their results.

The liberal ideas the inform the Programa Bolsa Família are mainly subsidiary of those of the World Bank, UNDP, John Rawls, Amartya Sen and Milton Friedman. Development is understood as economical growth and may be associated to adjectives as one fancies. From this, we have the 'world development' (World Bank, 1978), the 'human development' (UNDP, 1990) or 'development as freedom' (Sen, 2000).

In common, these authors and institutions share the idea that economic growth did not end with poverty (Friedman, 2009; World Bank, 1973; Sen, 1991, 2000). For this reason, it is necessary to “help the poor help themselves” (World Bank, 2011; Sen, 2012). This moral imperative carries on an echo of MacNamara's statement that “the whole of human history has recognized the principle - at least in the abstract – that the rich and the powerful have a moral obligation to assist the poor and the weak” (MacNamara, 1973:8). In this sense, the current goals of the World Bank is to “end extreme poverty within a generation and boost shared prosperity” (World Bank, 2013).

Underpins this moral imperative the notion of a well-organized society, where the institutions responsible for the distribution of rights and duties are the freedom of thought and conscience, the competitive markets, the private property in the means of production and the monogamous family. In such a society, the capabilities and opportunities of the individuals are marked by inequality. In Sen's words (1992:5) the achieved well-being of a person depends on his or her capability to function. “Choosing may be itself be a valuable part of living, and a life or genuine choice with serious options may be seen to be – for that reason – richer”.

To Sen (1992:39), “living may be seen as consisting of a set of interrelated 'functionings', consisting of beings and doings. A person's achievement in this respect can be seen as the vector of his or her functionings”. The relevant functionings can vary and are constitutive. The functionings are constitutive of a person's being and an evaluation of well-being has to take form of an assessment of these constitutive elements. They belong to the constitutive elements of well-being. In the liberal approach of Sen, capability reflects freedom of to pursue these constitutive elements, and may even have a direct role in well-being itself, in so far as deciding and choosing are also parts of living, the essence of development as freedom, thus, resides in creating opportunities for the individuals to realize the functionings they value (Sen, 1997; 2000).

As Friedman states (2009:195), “the heart of the liberal philosophy is a belief in the dignity of the individual, in his freedom to make the most of his capabilities and opportunities according to his own lights, subject only to the proviso that he not interfere with the freedom of other individuals do the same. This implies that equality is the equal right of the individuals to freedom, nonetheless, inequality is the uneven result of the valuable functions they realized.

It is important to say that Sen understands that inequality amongst individuals puts the functioning of societies in danger, as The relation between inequality and rebellion is indeed a close one, and it runs both ways. That a perceived sense of inequity is a common ingredient of rebellion in societies.
clear enough, but it is also important to recognize that the perception of inequity, and indeed the
content of that elusive concept, depend substantially on possibilities of actual rebellion.

Income distribution makes it possible for the individuals to pursue states and functionings they
value in the market mechanisms as it suppresses the intention to rebellion. As a result, market
mechanism becomes the space “where people interact with each other and undertake mutually
advantageous activities” (Sen, 1999:142). In the market mechanism individual freedom is
associated to previous social dispositions. As we see it, cash transfer operates a income raise
without changing the order of distribution of wealth. At the same time, it mitigates the possibilities
of popular rebellion due to the fear of losing this monetary benefit.

The explanation for cash transfer programs as good strategies to fight against poverty follows part
of Friedman's proposition of a negative income tax: it offers monetary subsidies to those who do not
achieve a level of income. It is intended to straightly face the problem of poverty, helping the
individuals with what is most useful to them, money. To Friedman (2009) it is the most general way
and it can substitute a series of existing policies. Each dollar earned means more money available to
spend.

In Brazil, this solution is allied to the World Bank's resistance to just give people money and to
features of Human Development Index (HDI) to specify the conditionalities that the beneficiaries of
the cash transfer programs must cope with, namely school frequency and regular visit to health
institutions. To Becker (2008), schooling, a computer training course, expenditures on medical
care, and lectures on the virtues of punctuality and honesty are human capital. That is because they
raise earnings, improve health, or add to a person’s good habits over much of his lifetime.

In the liberal approach, poverty is seen as a problem of individuals, to be faced individually with the
inclusion in market mechanism. This is supposed to provide freedom. From this point, cash transfer
programs provide distribution of money and increase market mechanism - based on a moral
imperative intended to offer 'choices and opportunities for living a tolerable life' (UNDP, 1997:15).

The propositions and theoretical frame of UNDP is quite important to the design of Programa Bolsa
Família, as Brazil is one of the countries that signed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
created by the UNDP. In fact, the commitment to bring these goals to reality has brought the
poverty eradication discourse to the center of the political agenda in Brazil. Since 2010, the slogan
of the Federal Government is 'A rich country is as country without poverty', which implies a
coordination of policies and political strengths intended to fight against poverty. Brasil Sem Miséria
is the main strategy in this sense, spreading at the same time the number of beneficiaries of Bolsa
Família and the focalization of it.

The concept of 'human development' is a clear subsidiary of the this Program. This concept was
introduced in the first Human Development Report, organized by UNDP staff and external
consultants, under the coordination of Mahbub ul Haq. According to it, the central message is that
'while growth in national production (GDP) is absolutely necessary to meet all essential human
objectives, what is important is to study how this growth translates – or fails to translate- into
human development in various societies' (UNDP, 1990:iii). Thus, the concept of human
development departs from GDP growth to state that 'the basic objective of development is to create
an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives' (UNDP, 1990:9).
Human Development is defined as 'a process of enlarging people's choices', what may show an
accordance with the theory of capabilities of Amartya Sen – who also worked on the Report. This
definition may be seen as a praise to liberalism, translating humanity in individual terms and
development as enlargement of choices – what may be defined in market mechanisms.

In order to evaluate how Human Development is sustained in different countries of different regions of the world, the Report proposes the Human Development Indicators, focusing on longevity, knowledge and decent lives standards as the three essential elements of human life. To represent these elements, the Indicators define three components. For the first element – longevity – life expectancy at birth. For the second – knowledge – literacy. For the third – command over resources needed for a decent living – per capita income.

Curiously, the wide and loose definition of human development as a process of enlarging people's choice are to be verified in terms that, despite pragmatic, seem narrow. As we see it, the Human Development Indicators reduce the complexity of the concept, establishing quantitative elements that beyond liberal take quite simple basis. But, to define the Millennium Development Goals, these terms can be even narrower, as it is possible to verify with the first target of them: to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than US$1.25 a day. Putting beside the definition of Human Development and its Indicators, this target defines a restrained line of poverty independent of the conceptual frame of UNDP and creates a new pattern to observe in order to eradicate poverty. Not referring poverty to human development seems to leave a conceptual and operative gap difficult to trespass in the fight against poverty. It is necessary to understand how these ideas are incorporated to the design and definition of poverty and its eradication programs in Brazil.

The Concept of Poverty Subsidiary to the Programa Bolsa Família

One of the main influences of the liberal approach to the policies of poverty eradication in Brazil may be seen in the definition of the Poverty and Extreme Poverty Lines that are established to focus the operation of Programa Bolsa Família in those who are seen as the most vulnerable and poor. The Extreme Poverty Line is R$70,00 (about US$32.00) and the Poverty Line is R$140,00 (about US$65.00). Thus, poor and extremely poor families are those which income are under these values per capita monthly. Those families classified as Extremely Poor receive a Basic Benefit of R$70,00 (US$32.00) and a Variable Benefit of R$32,00 (US$15.00) to each child in school age, pregnant women or handicapped, up to five Variable Benefits. Families between the Extreme Poverty Line and the Poverty Line just receive the Variable Benefit. Thus, the value transferred varies from R$32,00 to R$306.00 (correspondingly from US$15.00 to US$150), according to the family income, the number of children, teenagers, handicapped and pregnant women.

This definition of poverty represents the actual state of an recurrent idea of the poor as someone deprived of his or her condition of subject to be conceived as an object of the Eradication Poverty Programs. This line of thinking changes the focus from poverty as an state of living to the poor as an individual who did not have an stable and enduring incorporation to market mechanisms. According to Peralta (2006) this shift is not new, but follows the historic movement of the capital system. To her, it is possible to trace this conception of the poor in the 16th Century. Then, poverty was limited to the intersection of two axes: the relation of proximity between an individual needing help and being unemployed or unable to work due to cognitive or physical disorders. It was notorious that in its genesis, poverty was related to work, being the absence of it or someone's incapacity to work the cause of mendicancy, the most usual representation of poverty.

In the 19th Century England, a classification of the poor emerged as a new phenomena, shifting from mendicancy to pauperism. This reflected the changes in the social and economical organization that were taking place. The Poor Laws predicated on the Workhouse test. This was
where poor relief would be offered via 'deterrent house' designed to be an institution of last resort. The Poor Laws also determined that people who were able to work and were caught straying would suffer penal sanctions. The conditions in the Workhouses were quite difficult and only the most desperate for help would recur to them.

One of the principal theoretical influence to this idea of the poor as a morally degenerate individual is found in the moral utilitarian theory of John Stuart Mill, a philosopher and economist reader of Malthus and Ricardo. To Mill, the individuals seek satisfaction and it is not possible to be otherwise, as satisfaction is the synonym of joy. The principal moral is the maximization of satisfaction, or joy. Mill stressed that it is not desirable a maximum quantity of goods, because they are scarce, but a satisfactory level of them with the rights of property guaranteed (MILL, 1879).

To Mill (1879), poverty was the same of suffering and it could be completely extinguished by society, wisely combining good judgment and the providence of the individuals. Associating poverty to disease, Mill assured that even that most intractable of enemies, disease, may be indefinitely reduced in dimensions by good physical and moral education, and proper control of noxious influences; while the progress of science holds out a promise for the future of still more direct conquests over this detestable foe. And every advance in that direction relieves us from some, not only of the chances which cut short our own lives, but, what concerns us still more, which deprive us of those in whom our happiness is wrapt up. As for vicissitudes of fortune, and other disappointments connected with worldly circumstances, these are principally the effect either of gross imprudence, of ill-regulated desires, or of bad or imperfect social institutions even this that is the most intractable of the enemies can be indefinitely reduced through good moral and physical education and through the control of pernicious influences (Mill, 1879).

At the beginning of the 20th Century, explications and interventions regarding the poor continued focusing its individual dimension, reinforced by such discussions over the immorality of the poor. The individuals who lived under poverty conditions where classified as dangerous, vagabonds, abnormal or deviants. The poor were took in comparison to the hegemonic patterns of normality and morality. To make the poor behave according to those values, norms and social etiquette was the way to eliminate the problem of poverty (Peralta, 2006).

To Peralta (2006) and Fanfani (1991), the moralization and normalization of the poor are the main criteria selected to intervene in the problem of poverty during the 20th Century. It is possible to observe the maintenance of this approach to poverty and the poor in Brazil even in the decades of 1980 and 1990, with the incorporation of a quantitative and descriptive focus. To threat the evil of poverty it was necessary to get a sense of the magnitude of the problem to be faced. The development of measures of poverty was intended to provide the dimension of the temporality and greatness of the phenomenon in comparative studies amongst countries and decades (Peralta, 2006).

The look over who were the poor made it possible to create public policies according to the directions of poverty alleviation programs from the UNDP and the World Bank. The objective and quantitative approach provided precise criteria to identify who exactly the poor were and where they lived, develop programs and evaluate their efficiency. The understanding of poverty as an individual phenomenon is institutionalized with the cash transfer programs that were broadcast not only in Brazil, but in several countries in Latin America. This well-focused strategy also aided the governability in Brazil, where the contradictions of the neoliberal model were acute. Defending poverty as an individual issue made it possible to change the perception of structural inequalities resulting from the over-exploitation of work into particular shortage of resources in a natural order to which the poor must adapt.
To Fanfani (1991), the discourse of eradicating poverty based on morality and norms ignores poverty as a structural consequence of the capitalist system to define it as a mass constituted by the sum of poor individuals. This way, the social character of poverty only exists because it encompasses a great number of persons. It denies its origin or significance as a product of a social relation of exploitation. There undergoes a modernizing conception of social change nurtured by the idea of progress. In such a context, those who are not able to keep pace with the modernizing dynamics – due to cultural, economical, or ecological-urbanity features – are excluded of the progress. Here, the ideal of the World Bank to ‘help the poor help themselves’ is fulfilled with a moral role instituted more than a century before.

Analyzing how this moral and economical conception of the poor and of poverty is embodied in the Bolsa Família, it is possible to observe that it helps turning the Program in a well-focused one. The restrained concept of poverty adopted by the Government helps determining exactly who are those receiving the value transferred but this so-called good focalisation leaves in vulnerability a great range of people. It intends to alleviate the conditions of life of those who live in the edges of the society, excluded by years of policies oriented by neoliberal logic. However, the individuals must go to school and visit the health center to receive the money. Nothing can be given for free and those who need, but do not show the capability to be recovered are not to be financed. Besides, the definition of poverty in individual terms – as cash is transferred according to the number of children, pregnant women or handicapped – may cause an idea of the money belonging specifically to someone in the family. It might bring another liberal characteristic to the Program: the beneficiaries can choose to do whatever they please with the money. In a society marked by the fantasy that the goods deliver happiness and self-realization, the freedom of choice defended by liberals is just the freedom to choose what to buy in the market mechanisms.

Including the poor in the market mechanisms provides what Sen (2000) calls development as freedom meaning the increase of opportunities to realize states and beings individuals value. Recurring to concepts and terms typical of the liberal approach may create an illusion that there is an advance in the treatment of the poor. In fact, what occurs is the maintenance of hegemony in the issues concerning poverty. It is our task to deny the poor in a bi-folded way, as an target to social policies and as the concept that bases the analysis of the poverty eradication programs in Brazil.

Our argument is that the definition of poverty that subsides Bolsa Família is not enough to compensate the perverse effects of a long history of exclusion and oppression which includes decades of dictatorships, (neo)liberal governments, structural adjustment policies and the reproduction economical strategies of oriented towards export and dependency. Instead, the association of a (neo)liberal approach with such limited Poverty and Extreme Poverty Lines contributes to the reproduction of living condition marked by unemployment, insecurity and vulnerability. In order to better understand the phenomena of poverty, beyond the explanations and recommendations biased by the liberal approach, the analysis of the Bolsa Família held in this paper is based on the Latin American Philosophy of Liberation, presented next.

The Philosophy of Liberation

In the decades of 1960 and 1970, new explanations about Latin America and its people marked by poverty emerged in the continent. The Marxist Theory of Dependency, the Theology of Liberation and Paulo Freire’s Education for Liberation recognized the theoretical insufficiency and the ineffectiveness of the practices of the ruling approach. They appropriated the Marxist thinking to Latin American reality intending to present a critique of the totality of the capitalist system departing from the concept of liberation. Oriented by the urgency of the liberation praxis, the
thinkers of the Latin American Marxism advocated the limitations of the idea of the poor as a figure antithetical to progress and development. The new perspective defended that the social problems are expressions of the structural and superstructural contradictions of the capitalist system and the social relations that conform it. In this approach, the eradication of poverty is a consequence of the suppression of the capitalist social relations.

With the civil-military dictatorships in Latin America, in the decades of 1960 and 1970, the theoretical work on poverty and the actions held to fight against it in the perspective of Latin American Marxism were deeply affected. Scholars and intellectuals working on this approach were censored, arrested, exiled and murdered; books, journals and magazines were destroyed; initiatives of structural fights against poverty were simply eliminated with their creators.

In this context, the Philosophy of Liberation (PL) emerges around 1970. PL is defined by Dussel\(^2\) (2008:340) as a 'critical philosophy self-critically localized in the periphery within subaltern groups'.\(^3\) According to him, 'the originary intuition was influenced by the events of 1968', 'inspired by the Frankfurt School (Horkheimer, Adorno, and especially Marcuse’s *One-dimensional Man*), which illuminated the political meaning of said ontology, allowing it to be more thoroughly understood' (Dussel, 2008:340). At that time, the mass battling against the civil-military dictatorship in Argentina and the rest of Latin America demanded from philosophers and scholars a critical and theoretical responsibility (Dussel, 2008), a 'historical rupture in the field of philosophy' (Dussel, 2012:32), a rupture that could not avoid the consideration of the victim\(^4\) as a material corporeal being:

> From the first Frankfurt School, we discovered “materiality” in the sense of living corporeality [...]. This anthropological materiality, a far cry from Soviet dialectical materialism, was perceptibly close to our situation of impoverished, starving, and suffering Latin America. In the Southern Cone, the multitude of demonstrations shouted: “bread, peace, and work!” three necessities that refer strictly to life, to the reproduction of its corporeal content (*Leiblichkeit*). [...] Philosophy of Liberation set out from the *locus enuntiationis* of the material victim, from the negative effect of authoritarianism, capitalism and patriarchy. However, this is the root of a profound divergence with Critical Theory that continues up to the present [...], that of the material negativity of colonialism [...], a phenomenon which corresponds to metropolitan capitalism, Modernity, and Eurocentrism. (Dussel, 2011:17)

It was in this context that Emmanuel Lévinas’ (1971) category of ‘Totality’ provided the ground for overcoming the ‘narrow understanding of ontological Totality that dominated Critical Theory from Horkheimer to Marcuse, Apel and Habermas’ (Dussel, 2011:18). The contact with Lévinas, mainly with *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, produced a subversive disorientation. To Dussel

\(^2\) Enrique Dussel was born in 1934 in the town of La Paz, in the region of Mendoza, Argentina. He moved to Mexico in 1975 as a political exile and is currently a Mexican citizen, Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the Iztapalapa campus of the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Autonomous Metropolitan University, UAM) and also teaches courses at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (National Autonomous University of Mexico, UNAM). He has an undergraduate degree in Philosophy (from the National University of Cuyo in Mendoza, Argentina), a Doctorate from the Complutense University of Madrid, a Doctorate in History from the Sorbonne in Paris, and an undergraduate degree in Theology obtained through studies in Paris and Münster. He has been awarded Doctorates *Honoris Causa* from the University of Friburg in Switzerland and the University of San Andrés in Bolivia. He is the founder with others of the movement referred to as the Philosophy of Liberation, and his work is concentrated in the field of Ethics and Political Philosophy [*http://enriquedussel.com/Home_en.html*].

\(^3\) PL roughly emerged at the same time as the first works of Ranajit Guha in India. For Dussel (2008:340), the PL and the movement later identified as “Subaltern Studies” share common grounds, such as being a critical perspective ‘that utilized their own reality as a point of departure, and is some cases a revitalized Marxism as a point of theoretical reference’. However, these similarities may be ‘misinterpreted if the original situation is not taken into account and, consequently, the theoretical perspective is distorted’.

\(^4\) The notion of ‘victim’ is inspired in Walter Benjamin’s work and specially *On the Concept of History*. 
(1997:3), the 'formal' aspect of morality (the right) and the level of universal intersubjective validity, abstractly, determine in turn formally all the levels of the material ethics. It is a matter of a mutual, constitutive and always present co-determination with diverse senses. This is a fundamental thesis of PL, because in this way 'poverty', the domination of women in their corporeality, the discrimination against non-white races, etc., could be interpreted ethically from the perspective of the material criteria always already presupposed a priori in all critiques that departs from the 'lack of' material realization of subjects; that is to say, from their unhappiness, their suffering.

In defense of the articulation of the formal with the material, Dussel (2004) defends taking into consideration the principus exclusionis: the Other, the affected in the Exteriority, the excluded of the community of communication which cannot participate, as not even to be represented poses a moral question to the problem of validity. Here he punctuates the difference between discourse ethics and liberation ethics: the first one departs from the community of communication; the second departs from the excluded of that community, precisely at the point where the discourse ethics finds its limits. The concrete principle liberta hic et nunc the oppressed, or turn the affected-excluded a participant, has a logical procedural difference: the situations of exception for the practice of the discourse ethics are the normal situations for the ethics of liberation” (Dussel, 2004:275).

The Philosophy of Liberation (PL) departs from a ethical and normative criterion: the reproduction and growth of human life. It allows all, in the first place, to be self-critical with respect to the intrinsic moments that hinder his or her very life; and, in the second place, allows every culture to establish a dialogue with other cultures from the universality of this very same criterion- with respect to the validity or invalidity of its manner of achieving the reproduction or growth of human life (Dussel, 1997). According to Dussel (1997:14), capitalism is a historical system that has been organized in order to 'reproduce human life' in a concrete manner. “That it can do so is demonstrated by its persistence and survival over centuries, including millions of members and struggling for its globalizing development against other historical systems”. The issue PL brings to discussion is that as an institution capitalism created victims in an intolerable number - through marginality, the poverty of the post-colonial world, the exclusion of masses in the neoliberal agenda. It has fallen into a contradiction. The institution that had been created in order to reproduce human life began to mean merely the "self-preservation of the system" itself, thus putting in jeopardy the reproduction of human life in its totality.

From this point, the fact of poverty in peripheral capitalism (in the epoch of central late capitalism) is not an immediate fact. In the light of the criteria and material principle of the community of survival, of subjective happiness and of the objective good, in the last instance, of the whole humanity, a massive fact is discovered: the majority of this humanity finds itself sunk in 'poverty', 'unhappiness', 'suffering', under domination and/or exclusion (Dussel, 2008). The utopian economic, political, erotic, etc. project of the ruling system is discovered (in view of its own claims to freedom, equality, property for all, and other myths and symbols...) to be contradictory since the majority of its participants find themselves in effect deprived of the possibility of fulfilling the needs that the system itself has proclaimed as rights (Dussel, 1997).

The discovery of domination, oppression, suffering and exclusion and the urgency of its overcoming in PL is the result of Dussel’s original ana-dialectic\(^5\) method: the adoption of the absolute transcendence of the Other as the point of departure. Ana-dialectics is a method that presupposes three moments: (1) the affirmative moment of critical and ethical consciousness (from Paulo Freire’s conscientização) -which is to listen to the interpellation of the Other in his/her

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\(^5\) The term derives from the Greek root ‘ana’ (beyond).
suffering corporeality -has as first subject the dominated and/or excluded. They, therefore, have a concrete, historical, existential consciousness. (2) the negative moment - and only by those who have some 'experience' of 'us', with the dominated and/or excluded, can the misery of the other be thought reflexively: it is the thematic critique. This moment requires the recognition that there is a politics of Totality and a politics of the Other, that is, an anti-politics, a politics of subversion and refusal that denies the oppression and exclusion of the victim. This moment brings to life a new consciousness that is scientifically informed resulting in the consensus of the oppressed. (3) the moment of existential, historical and practical consciousness of the people, it is the organizational moment, when the anti-hegemonic consensus is expressed in the concrete struggles and in the construction of alternatives.

Once we have introduced Dussel’s philosophy of ethics and politics, positioning it within existing dominant ideas that are widely used to analyze and subside the poverty eradication programs in Brazil, we will apply his ana-dialectics to the empirical field. Our aim is to show the contradictions in implementing the Bolsa Família in the city of Sant'Ana do Livramento, in the borders of Brazil and Uruguay. First, the affirmative moment, when we poverty is recognized. Second, the negative moment, when the causes of poverty are denied. Third, the organizational moment, when the consensus of the oppressed emerges to struggle against the Totality of the system.

The Affirmative Moment: the Programa Bolsa Família in Sant'Ana do Livramento

In this section, the beneficiaries and those intending to enter the Program are presented as the excluded. Specifically, the focus is in the city of Sant'Ana do Livramento, located in the Southern borders of Brazil. Neighbor to the Uruguayan Rivera, the two cities have a very peculiar condition: one may go from one country to the other just crossing the street by chance. Praised as a symbol of Mercosul, Sant'Ana do Livramento is a former industrial city, with a population of more than 82,000 inhabitants, that has been decreasing in the past 10 years. Of those, 6,218 families receive the R$70,00 (US$32.00) Basic Benefit for Extreme Poverty and other 12,818 Variable Benefits are paid to alleviate poverty in a sum of R$904,762,00 (about US$450,000.00) transferred only in May, 2013.
The Federal Government estimates that 9,164 families are living in poverty in Livramento, but the number of families who subscribed to enter the Program is of 12,244. To Patricia⁶, a Social Worker responsible for the registration of the people intending to enter the Program, there is a lack of accuracy of the governmental data, as many Brazilian families live in remote areas and do not have access to the municipality's equipment. Others, she explains, are Brazilian but live in Uruguay and the children study in Uruguayan schools – which make it harder for them to subscribe to the Program.

Although the Program informs an Active Search to make it known in such areas, Patricia says the Government of Livramento did not form the team of visitors to do so. Another problem she punctuates is that 'as the Federal Government estimated a modest number of poor families, the quota of beneficiaries is almost full'. A small number of new beneficiaries is contemplated monthly, even though some families recurrently go to the Secretary of Social Inclusion and Assistantco to ask for the Bolsa Família they have applied for a long time before. As Patricia puts it, 'the general profile of the beneficiary is a woman of middle age, single mother of 3, who lives in a simple home in a poor neighborhood. She works informally on changas – temporary and incontinuous jobs mostly related to cleaning - and has finished elementary school. The majority of the beneficiaries omit a husband fearing to lose the right to Program.'

My talk with Patricia was interrupted four times, as the trainees who do the subscription, called on her to report problems or solve doubts. Patricia, who is working in the Program since February, 2013, complaint about the conditions of work. She leads the group responsible for the registration of the candidates to the Program and to bring up to date the family information of the actual beneficiaries, which must be done each 2 years.

Patricia's team at the Secretary is composed of another commissioned worker and four trainees whose contract lasts for six months. After that period, there is another group of trainees that need to have the work taught again. She states that as the duration of the contract is small and people know they cannot be called again, so they do not commit to the work, what damage the assistance to the beneficiaries.

During one of these pauses I could talk to Berenice, 19, single mother of Theo, 4. The director of the municipal kindergarten where Theo studies said that she had the right to Bolsa Família and she was there to plead for the Program. She said she finished elementary school and was abandoned by Theo's father when she got pregnant. She works cleaning houses, but it is not a continuous job – 'To go to work I have to pay my neighbor to look after the boy when he leaves kindergarten. It is not easy to find some work with the boy. Most of the madams do not want a maid with a small boy'. Her income is about R$400,00 (US$180.00) monthly: R$150,00 to rent a kitchen-and-bedroom brick house with a bathroom; R$200,00 on the grocery, R$30,00 on electricity and the other R$20,00 on transportation or emergencies with Theo. She hopes to get the Bolsa Família to buy shoes, clothes and cookies for Theo: 'Even if it is not much, anything helps', she says. When I asked if she wanted to go back to school she said 'I would like to, but I can't pay my neighbour every night'.

When Patricia returns, she says sometimes people working on the registration need to interfere in the responses of the candidates to the Program, as they see people need the money but the patterns are quite strict. The case of Berenice is illustrative. The per capita income at her home is about R$200,00 (US$100,00) monthly. Although she lives with such a low income, it is over the R$70,00

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*All the names in this section were changed in order to avoid the identification of the interviewees. The passages between ' ' in italics are transcriptions of the interviews.*

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(US$35,00) that defines the Extreme Poverty Line. This will not allow her to receive the Basic Benefit of R$70,00 if she enters the Program. When the interviewer who does the registration find it necessary, they reduce a little the income informed.

Patricia proudly showed me the Planing she wrote for the Bolsa Família Office at the Secretary. It aims to qualify the work, increase the amount of subscription and re-registration to the Program with complete forms. She thinks it will make the Municipality able to increase the Decentralization Management Index (IGD, in the acronym in Portuguese), which defines the amount of budget the Secretary will receive from the Federal Government to develop actions related to the Program.

The Secretary of Social Inclusion and Assistance of Livramento has 2 Centers of Reference to serve the people of the two poor neighborhoods of Prado and Armour. I visited both and could accompany the Social Workers visiting some beneficiaries. In the Center of Reference of Armour I talked to Teresa. She works informally with cleaning in two houses and her husband is formally employed in a farm, with a salary of R$700,00 (about R$350.00). They have a 16-year-old daughter and a 1-year-old boy. The boy is not included in their register and she went there to do so. Unfortunately, she could not have it done, because they were facing problems with their internet connection. Also, they didn't have ink to the printer. Teresa told me she was afraid of losing the Bolsa Família, as her daughter is not frequent to school and the boy is not registered yet in the Program. Her family is a beneficiary for so long she does not remember since when. I asked her how important it was to her family to receive the amount and she answered that 'the Bolsa is summed to my husband's salaries and the money I receive. We all use it'. About her fear of losing the amount, she sighed 'Oh, son! Who is poor is used to lose. What can I do? I hope my girl finishes high school so she can try a chance working'. Teresa is resigned and appears to have no way to get her daughter go to school everyday, as she has go to work and her daughter has to look after the little baby. Registering the boy would be a way to not losing the amount provided by the Program.

Figure 2 – Picture of a street at Armour
Source: personal archive

In one of the visits to beneficiaries at Prado, I accompanied the team of the Reference Center of Reference to Fernanda's. According to the records, she receives the Bolsa but had not re-registered in the last two years, as it is necessary. The phone number was not working, so the car of the Secretary was ordered to the visit. We were conducted by the driver who works for the Secretary and the 2 Centers, visiting the beneficiaries and taking the Social Workers to wherever it is necessary. That is only one car available to attend the Secretary and the Centers, that take turns in the usage. When we arrived at Fernanda's, the door and the windows were shut and the Social Worker thought the house was abandoned. She yelled 'Fernanda' twice. Dogs barked inside the house and a breach was opened at the door. Fernanda invited us in. The house was filthy. In the sitting room there was only an old TV and a wrecked sofa. The kitchen was furnished only with oven and stove. Fernanda,
a 38-year-old mother of four girls, borrows the house from a friend. 'It is not rented - she says – when I have, I give my friend some money'. One of her daughters is married, the other one lives with a godmother, and there are the 12-year-old twins, who live with the grandmother. She receives R$252,00 (about US$123.00) from the Bolsa and gives it to her mother in behalf of the girls. Her husband abandoned the family when she got pregnant of the twins and she worked selling cosmetics from worldwide famous magazine to make a living. She got surprised when the Social Worker said she was to be suspended from the Program because she hadn't re-registered. Fernanda said the money was blocked three times past year and that she went to the Secretary three times to solve the problem. One of the twins was not included and just this year she could start receiving the correct amount. As the confusion over Fernanda grew, the Social Worker took note of some data and asked Fernanda to go to the Center of Reference the next day to solve the problem. Fernanda is following her new boyfriend who travels as a seller all over the state of Rio Grande do Sul. She hopes 'the girls have a better fate, although things are much difficult nowadays'. As we left, Fernanda’s boyfriend tried to sell me one of the dogs. Back at the Reference Center, the Social Worker told me: ‘the Program is good. The problem is that we can't do much by our own. We depend on the system. I hope in the future there'll be instances for social control of the Program'.

The next day, I visited the Center of Reference for Social Assistance of Prado, where one of the Social Workers told me some more about the conditions of work there, so I could 'take a glance at the context in which the Program occurs', she said. Only the coordinator is hired under the public statutory regime, all the others are commissioned, temporary trainees or hired under private contracts. This causes apprehension amongst them and all demands to the Secretary are made by the coordinator. Most of them are working since the beginning of the new mandate of the Mayor – January, 2013. To two of them, it is the first job as Social Worker. To them, 'money comes. Comes even from abroad. Our bigger problem is that it doesn't reach the Social area. We work as we can. There's no workshop for the community. There's no money to buy snack, nor material to make the workshops. Women ask us for workshops on knitting and crochet, or handcraft. We cannot make it'.

Figure 3 – Picture of a street at Prado.
Source: personal archive.

The same driver of the day before took me along with another Social Worker and a Psychologist to visit Mr. Nelson, a 72-year-old widower who lives alone in a humble wooden hut in Prado. A ditch run in each side of the street, must houses are made of simple wood, As the car stopped, a neighbor showed by. She was familiar to my companion and, in advance, said Mr. Nelson was at home. There's six months since Mr. Nelson's wife died. She received from Social Security a value
equivalent to a minimum salary in Brazil, R$678,00 (about US$335,00). As it cannot be transferred to him, he lives from help from the neighbors. Seeing quite little, it is difficult for Mr. Nelson to take a bus with no help. His documents are with his daughter, but he doesn't have her phone number or know where she lives. She used to call a neighbor, asking for her father, but there is a long time she does not. The roof over Mr. Nelson's is damaged and might fall; his floor is simply beaten ground. He cut off the light, as he couldn't pay the electricity. The bathroom is a wooden cabinet with a sinkhole outside the house. The Social Worker is trying to get the second way of his documents for free, so he can start to receive the amount from Social Security. It was his neighbor who took him to the Reference Center. She intends to receive the money to look after and nourish him. Mr. Nelson is resistant to leave home and move to a public asylum. 'At the beginning, I had it registered in the grocery everything I took, thus I could pay later. But now, it is six months, and I can't work and I don't have any money. I don't have courage to go to the grocery and ask for anything. I'll pay as soon as I receive'. That afternoon, the Social Worker and the Psychologist were accompanying him to the Identification Office.

The situation of Mr. Nelson and Fernanda may be seen not just as a coincidence of people living in precarious conditions in the same city. It denounces the vulnerability of the lives of the poor, marked by insecurity of income, lack of social protection and fragile family bonds. Both Fernanda and Mr. Nelson show us that whether in or outside the Program, poverty and exclusion remain as a scar in the lives of the poor.

![Figure 4 – Picture of Mr. Nelson's home. Source: personal archive.](image)

After there, we went to an even poorer neighborhood in a rural area, where lives the family of María and Rolando. They have 6 kids and she is pregnant of the seventh. Rolando, María and the kids are Uruguayan, though they live in the Brazilian side. The kids walk more than two hours to go to school in Uruguay, crossing the hill that separates the countries in that neighborhood. María intends to receive the Bolsa Família, but without the Brazilian papers it is not possible. To deny the Uruguayan nationality and become Brazilian it would cost R$300,00 (about US$140,00) to each of them, in a total of R$2,700,00 (US$1,450.00). The house they live in was bought by Rolando's father by R$1,500,00 (US$740,00) without documents. The electricity had been cut a couple of days before, because of a debt of more than US$800,00 of the former owner. It is difficult for them to contact that person and prove to the electricity company that is is not their debt. While María takes care of the children, Rolando collects recyclables to sell for the living of the family.

As one of the Social Workers told me, 'those who Programa Bolsa Família do not reach are exactly who need it the most, the really vulnerable ones. There are many people who do not know they can
candidate for the Program, or, as the ones we visited today, they don't even have the documents that make it possible for them to plea for the Program'. In the words of another Social Worker, 'there is a gap that the Programa Bolsa Família do not cover'. This is quite surprising, as the Program is based on a definition of poverty designed to achieve exactly those who need the most.

Changing the scenery, back to downtown, I could talk to a person responsible for the courses offered in the National Program of Access to Technical Education and Work (PRONATEC). The PRONATEC courses are offered by the National Service for Commercial Education (SENAC, in the Portuguese acronym). Created in 1946, SENAC is a non-profit private organization that works in a decentralized and autonomous manner in each state of Brazil, offering courses for different levels of education. Within PRONATEC, the SENAC of Rio Grande do Sul deals an agreement with the State Government to offer courses according to the profile of the people interested in the courses identified by the Secretary of Social Assistance of each Municipality. In Sant'Ana do Livramento, main courses are related to commerce and tourism, one of the main economic activities, because of the duty free shops in the Uruguayan side that attracts thousands of tourists each week. The SENAC from Sant'Ana do Livramento offered The ongoing courses are for Spanish, Computing, Kitchen Assistant, Waiter, Hotel Reception and Pastry. The students receive a two-way bus ticket and a R$2,50 (US$1.20) food ticket for each course day. The courses are paid by the Government.

Curiously, the logic of PRONATEC has changed since its beginning. At first, only people over 16 years old, members of families beneficiaries of the Programa Bolsa Família could register in one of the courses, but the policy changed, as Joana told me. Now, anyone can apply to one of the courses registering directly in the website of SENAC, be his or her family beneficiary of the Bolsa or not. This caused a quick spread in the number of registered students. In 2012, there were 302 people registered in the courses. In 2013, the number jumped to 605 up to June. Besides Livramento, this unit of SENAC circumscribes also the cities of Rosário do Sul, São Gabriel and Quaraí, nearby.

When asked about the social impact of the courses of PRONATEC to local economy, the interviewed said that 'We have never made a research with the businessmen of the city. I just know that when I pass by the stores I see familiar faces. So I know they studied here, but we don't have numbers'. She told me that some companies and stores call SENAC searching for alumni, but it's not part of the politics of SENAC to suggest a single former student, because 'all of them who have concluded the course have the equal capacity to try a chance in the market'. They just send a list with the names of those who have concluded a course related to the profile the company has asked for. Also, they do not know whether their students are already working and want to find a better job or if they are unemployed.

It is clear that PRONATEC has changed its objectives from a policy of technical education complementary to Bolsa Família to a course anyone with internet access can apply for. This shift rose the number of courses and students in SENAC and spread the logic that a professional education can create better opportunities. One can make an easy association with the human capital theory.

**The Negative Moment: a critique of the Program**

The experience with the workers and beneficiaries of the Program Bolsa Família showed that this Program has been developed according to the liberal approach that informs it. As the Human Development Reports from the UNDP (1997:15) would argue, the Bolsa is creating 'choices and opportunities for living a tolerable life'. In the words of World Bank Group, it is ‘helping the poor
help themselves'. Maybe this is why the Program is so celebrated within this group. But the *principius exclusionis* from the Philosophy of Liberation takes us beyond. It is necessary to negate the exclusion and the oppression of those people. The people interviewed interpellates us as the Other, the victim of the Totality of capitalism.

Relating the effects of the *Bolsa Família* to job opportunities, it is clear that the beneficiaries are already included in the market mechanisms, as the liberal approach defends. Except for Mr. Nelson, due to his advanced age and bad health conditions, in all the families we could contact, both the parents (if they exist) had already been working. The *Bolsa* does not make it easier for the women to find a formal job. They and most of their husbands work informally. It happens both because they are afraid of losing the *Bolsa* if they find a formal job that would make a modest increase in their income and because they just do not happen to get the chance to work formally. The contradictory point is that the economical inclusion promised by the Program happens only in the borders of those market mechanisms, from where the poor have never been away.

The economical security offered by the *Bolsa Família* is fragile and reinforces the over-exploitation of work. It seems that though the amount transferred is important to the families’ budgets, it is not enough to make people quit their jobs – as some critics would believe. The moral belief that poverty is an 'illness' and 'the poor are lazy or vagabond' happens to be a lie. The beneficiaries work in the same discontinuous and precarious conditions found before the Program, as Teresa and Fernanda testified. In this sense, the Program does not make it any easier for the families to stick together. People continue moving out of town to try better chances.

The legal fact that *Bolsa Família* is not a social right as a guaranteed minimum income but a social benefit depending on the decisions of the President of the Republic marks the daily life of the beneficiaries. The fear of being excluded from the Program is common amongst them. It comes together with the resignation of those who have so little and are used to lose everything. In this sense, the increase of purchasing power is oriented towards the acquisition of more urgent and non-durable goods, as food, electricity, clothes and shoes, mainly for the children. Some of the parents interviewed call the cash transferred from the Program as 'the money of the kids' in a sense that losing it would jeopardize the children directly.

The data from the interviews show that the ethic-critical principle of reproduction and growth of human life in associated forms (Dussel, 2008) is not accomplished by the Program as it does not change the structural poverty materialized in the objective conditions of living and internalized in the subjectivity of who is struggling to get to the next day. In this sense, the *Bolsa Família* is reproducing the insecurity, fragility and shortage that characterizes the lives of the poor with perverse effects to the union of them. The poor are turned into individuals whose citizenship is defined by the need of purchasing. The centering of life in the market mechanisms dismantles the eminence of rebellion that Amartya Sen (1999) was so afraid of. Submitting life in community to the bondage of market turns the need of social relations – the most human of the needs – into a competition of individuals for their lives.

In order to mark a position against this simplified conception of human life, it is necessary to reaffirm that the poor and the working class are not excluding dimensions. Otherwise, as Marx (2009) puts it, pauperism is the deepest sediment of the relative super-population that vegetates in the *inferno* of indigence. The production and the necessity of pauperism is comprehended in the production and the necessity of a relative super-population – and both constitute the condition of existence of capitalist production and development of wealth. Whether one lives in poverty or is just a regular worker earning a salary, his or her life is determined by work under the capitalist form.
Both these conditions are part of the totality of the working class. What changes is just the moment: or one is working or he or she is part of the relative super-population.

The change in PRONATEC demonstrates it, as the Program overcame the focus on the beneficiaries of Bolsa Família to be circumscribed by the interest of SENAC, as the agent offering the course. Augmenting the number of students certainly increases the amount the Government pays for the courses. However, there is no more direct relation between the fight against poverty, the courses offered and their effectiveness. The imperative 'to include in the market mechanisms' gets a moral façade that is empty of content, as the results of professional education cannot be measured. The plea for qualifying the workforce is not a guarantee that there will be jobs to everyone that is trained.

The denial of the concepts of 'poor' and 'poverty' that subsides the Programa Bolsa Família, reaffirming that the poor belong to the working class, leads us to the third moment of the ana-dialectics, the consensus of the oppressed.

The Consensus of the Oppressed

It is important to mention that at the time this paper is being written the people in Brazil takes the streets of the main cities demanding better public transport and repelling controversial initiatives of the Government of Municipalities, States and the Country. The numbers are not precise, but in more than 120 cities over 1 million people marched holding placards, singing songs of protest and attacking symbols of institutionalized power as public buildings, banks e media companies. The initial protests were against the rise of the price of the bus in São Paulo. As the police acted violently, using tear gas and rubber munition against the protesters, support from other cities came almost instantly. The following days, people from Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Belo Horizonte, Porto Alegre, Florianópolis and more than 100 other cities took the streets twice a week. They demanded free fare for students, retired and unemployed, the retreat of the police and different. As reporters and journalists were injured, the mainstream media started supporting the protesters. But it had a price: no flag from parties, no depredation of private properties and no 'communist' demands would be tolerated. People should carry the Brazilian flag and chant for no corruption – the rightist motto. The President must be attacked anyhow. As a result, the price of the bus did not increase in São Paulo, Salvador, Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro and even diminished in Porto Alegre. But it was not enough. People continued on the streets twice a week with a multitude of protests and the police action grew more violent each day. In 20th, June, the first protest happened in Sant'Ana do Livramento. A second one is to happen on 26th, June. Those who are not used to be part of any social movement stated that 'the giant just woke', ignoring the socially constructed history of protests in Brazil.

The Program Bolsa Família is not being directly attacked or defended in the protests, although demands for 'better quality of life', 'better health' and 'better education' are quite frequent. As the protests are still going on and the tendencies are in dispute, it is quite difficult to make any speculation of what is going to happen the next days. One thing is clear: the air we breath is the air of change. The protests mark a clear opposition to the idea that 'there is no such thing as society, but a bunch of individuals'. The protests make it clear that we live in a society market by the antithetical relation of working and capitalist classes. People are taking practical consciousness, organizing anti-hegemonic struggles, rehearsing the construction of alternatives that position not only those called 'poor' but the whole working class, in its diverse manifestations, as the victims, the absolute Otherness facing the Totality of the capitalist system.
References


