

THE COLLAPSE OF THE HIGH TECH SLUMS



Illusions of the Presidential Era Lula & Dilma Rousseff

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THE COLLAPSE OF THE HIGH-TECH SLUMS: Illusions of the Presidential Era Lula & Dilma Rousseff ¹

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INTRODUCTION

The Collapse of the High Tech Slums: Illusions of the Presidential Era Lula & Dilma Rousseff is an e-text elaborated by the Brazilian activist Maurício Waldman (Photo).

This text was based on articles published by Brazilian press in 2015 and posted in several home-pages during the same year. This work, published by Kotev Publishing House, was enlarged and incorporates commented figures, bibliographical notes, as well as additional information.

Maurício Waldman is a veteran activist of Brazilian environmentalist movement. Waldman collaborated with the Brazilian rubber tapper Chico Mendes, participated in movements against dams's construction, mobilizations in support to waste pickers, in opposition to nuclear plants and counter to freshwater's pollution in metropolitan area of São Paulo.

Besides, from the years 1980 to 1992, Maurício Waldman was a full time militant of Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT, Workers Party). Waldman participated in several political fields and mobilizations of the Party.

That is to say: the author had a long and real experience in the PT life and History. Then, as ordinary people say, education, experiences and memories are three things no one can take away of the our personal biography.

Thus, these are three central references that affirm the legitimacy of the Mauricio Waldman's words, analysis and considerations in *The Collapse of High Tech Slums: Illusions of the Presidential Era Lula & Dilma Rousseff*.

We appreciate the interest of readers, as well as comments and suggestions about this work. Kotev Publishing House, September 5, 2016.



Photo: Maurício Waldman discoursing to the ecological activists in alternative event of the World Climate Change Conference (COP 1 - United Nations), Berlin, March-April, 1995.

THE HIGH TECH SLUMS - BACKGROUND

In every conurbation in Brazil, all across the country, there is a separate state-within-a-state that houses over 11 million of the nation's poor.

Over 6 percent of the country's population lives in this archipelago of slums, almost entirely out of the authority of the central government or the municipal power.

These are the "favelas" (slum in Brazilian Portuguese), and they are almost a foreign country that maintains a state of cold war with Brazilian officials.

Poverty in Brazil is most visually represented by the various favelas, slums in the country's metropolitan areas and remote upcountry regions that suffer with economic underdevelopment and below-par standards of living.

Although controversial, the exodus of millions of Brazilians from poverty basically in the two Presidente Lula administrations has brought profound social, political and economic changes, winning the PT a loyal base of voter support that has helped keep the party in power during 13 years.

Luis Inácio Lula da Silva was a former syndicalist leader and founding member of the Partido dos Trabalhadores. Lula achieved victory in the 2002 presidential election, and he was inaugurated as president on 1 January 2003.

In the 2006 election he was elected for a second term as president, which ended on 1 January 2011. President Lula was succeeded by his former Chief of Staff, Dilma Vana Rousseff, the first Brazilian woman to have held that office, several times called by Lula as "Gerentona"³, an apologetic word stamped by political advertising of PT.

Lula left an enduring and polemic mark on Brazilian politics in the form of the *Lulo-Petism* or *Lulism*, as commented in researches and by Brazilian media. The Brazil's former president was featured in Time's *The 100 Most Influential People in the World for 2010*, and magazine called him as "the most successful politician of his time"⁴.

The Lulo-Petism changed the economic structure of Brazilian consumerism. For poor people, the new option to buy items like lap tops, washing machines, flat-screen TVs, refrigerators, computers and several electronic gadgets for the first time, further fueled economic growth.

In Brazil, an emergent middle class apparently was taking off to the future. In this sense, during the boom years, tens of millions of Brazilians would escape, at least deceptively, from poverty to the consumerism society.

This group became known as “The New Middle Class”, or “C Class”, a controversial jargon advertised by Partido dos Trabalhadores’s economists, activists, bureaucracy and politicians. *Mutatis mutandis*, this process, albeit impregnated with ambiguities and contradictions, attracted foreign investors, the national entrepreneurs and promoted the hopeful take off of the Lula period economic growth.

In these glad years, Brazil showed a dream scenario: poor people and rich people, both of them happy; entrepreneurs and workers grateful with the new opportunities; white, blacks, indigenous, eastern people and mestizos together in the malls. Everybody was satisfied. In sum: a new consumerist wave to Brazil.

But in the years 2010, poor people struggle to hold on to hard-won gains and now, are rethinking everything from spending habits to political loyalties. Definitely, the former promising scenario had changed drastically.

The protests in the years 2013-2015 marked the first major popular outpour of anger in the Brazilian society since the historic street rallies that forced in the year 1992, the resignation of President Fernando Collor de Mello.

Thus, the PT has found very hard difficulties to answer and to explain about the problems provoked by its economic policy, today largely understood as irresponsible and corrupted.

There is a very hard time to poor people, problems with bitter answers, mainly to the Brazilian high tech slum, a misleading mythology created by the Lulo-Petism political ideology.

“THE BRAZIL TAKES OFF”: A POLEMIC ISSUE

However, in the years 2005-2010, as few times throughout its History, the euphoria seemed to have taken hold in Brazil. With the economy growing rapidly, the country was at last becoming a member of the First World.

The poor residents of the periphery, who have always been on the fringes of the consumer society, started to visit shopping malls that shortly before, were as distant as the moon.

Even The Economist, important, respected and traditional British magazine, felt the urge to comment positively on this new context. The November 2009 cover edition hailed the economic dynamism of the country as “the greatest success story in Latin America”.

The image, as we know, is worth a thousand words. This was the largest magazine asset. The cover of The Economist showed the image of Christ the Redeemer of Rio de Janeiro climbing like a rocket. In addition, the triumphant title was *Brazil takes off*.

This iconography would soon be emblazoned across the world. It reflected one wave of optimism comparable to the *motto* “Brazil Awakening Giant” (or then, “Brazil Great Power”), an imaginary construction typical of the Brazilian military government in the years of 1970, called the “Os Anos de Chumbo” (The Years of the Lead).

In these years, President Lula was blessed by widespread records of popular approval. Not even the unacceptable Scandal of “*Mensalão*”⁵, involving politicians of direct circle of President Lula (Figure 1), several political parties (including the Partido dos Trabalhadores, the party of the president) and members of the public administration had shaken the prestige guaranteed by good economic indicators.

Therefore, the good understanding and perception of the Brazilian population about the economy, not only the poor people, helped Lula's re-election in 2005. In this way was assured to the former Brazilian syndicalist leader a second term that as the first, kept the siren call of consumerism.

But there are no miracles in economy. The “Lula Era” was benefited from strong global demand for commodities. This demand had inflated the prices of huge purchases of minerals, animal protein and grains.

This scenario was decisive especially to the markets of raw materials, Brazil, for instance, that had solid trade ties to the People's Republic of China, since the years 1980 the new giant of the global economy.

The numbers do not lie: the Chinese economy grew up 10% annually since 1980. To satisfy the hunger to growth, China acquired 30% of the iron, 12% of the platinum, 15% of the aluminum, 15% of the copper and 20% of the soybeans produced in the whole planet.



FIGURE 1 - José Dirceu de Oliveira e Silva (left), the strongman of President Lula (right), that was expelled from the Brazilian Congress on November 30, 2005, accused of breaking the parliamentary decorum due to his involvement with the “Mensalão” Scandal. Dirceu was judged for corruption, embezzlement, racketeering and money laundering, among other charges, by the Supreme Federal Tribunal of Brazil in 2012. Besides, on August 3, 2015, he was arrested again on corruption and money laundering as result of the Operation Lava Jato, an investigation with focus in the “Petrolão” Scandal, involving the powerful PETROBRAS, a state-owned enterprise. He found guilty and sentenced to 23 years and three months in prison. However, in this context, Dirceu is only the more prominent member of high staff of Lula. Today several members of administration of the Partido dos Trabalhadores, historical activists, influent entrepreneurs and lobbyists are being judged or arrested (Photo: Secretaria de Comunicação Social, SECOM, 2005).

Thus, favored by external demand and governmental income-generating programs, groups without access to consumerism began to be noticed in markets, malls and internet. 45 million poor people joined in the Brazilian web from 2006 to 2009. It was the largest migration toward a new media since the advent of television in Brazil in the 1950s.

Visibly, in the omnipresent, populous and problematic “favelas” of the Brazilian national metropolis, Salvador, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Manaus, Curitiba, Brasília, Porto Alegre, Fortaleza, Belo Horizonte e Belém, there were satellite dishes everywhere.

But not only: computers, tablets, answering machines, air conditioners, freezers, mobile phones, lap tops, delivery food and motorcycles now was incorporated in the

daily lives of the poor neighborhoods. Apparently, a new time of abundance seemed finally to arrive to the spaces forgotten of the urban poverty (Figure 2).

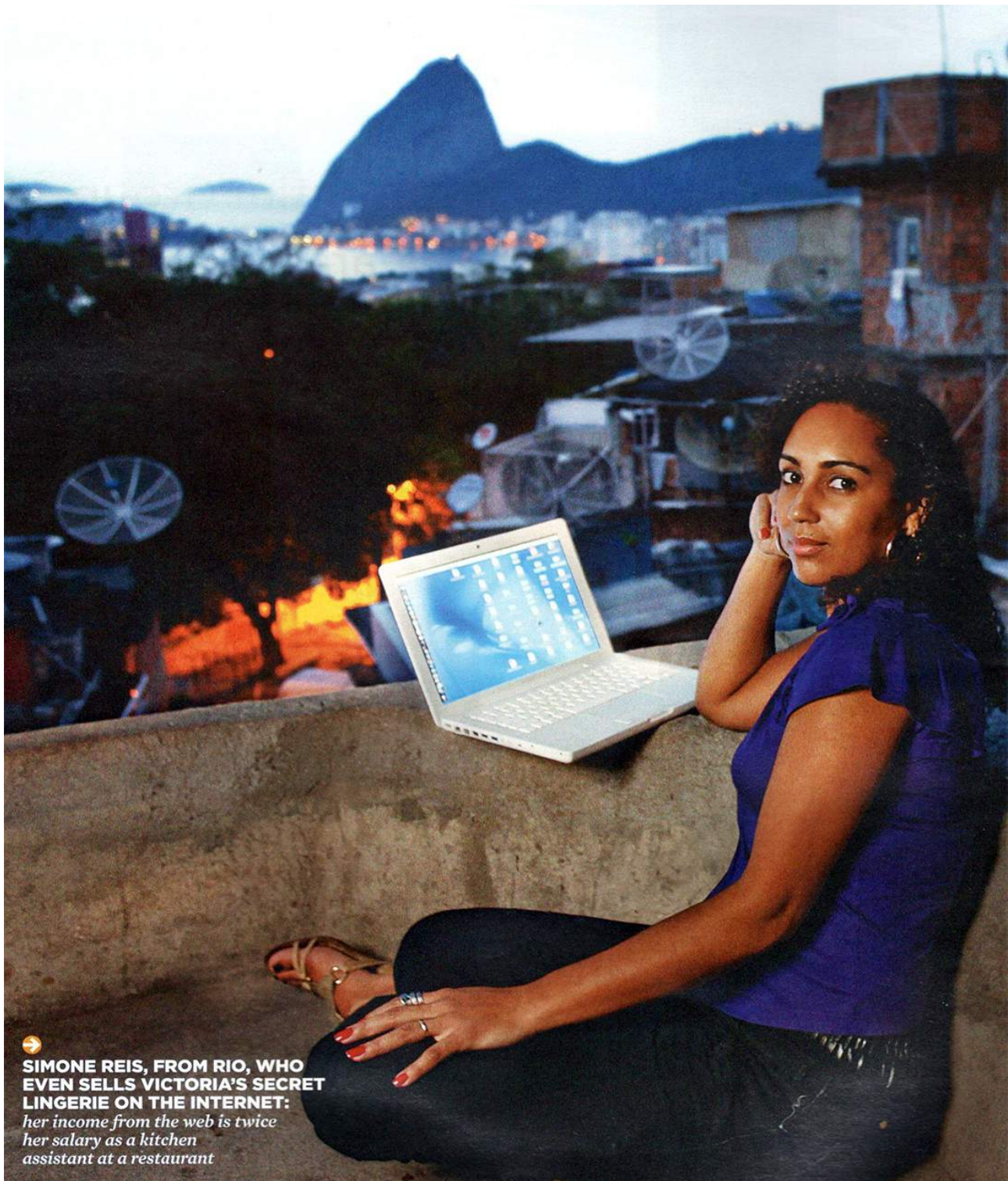


FIGURE 2 - An emblematic image of the new High Tech Slum of Brazil, published by Exame Magazine, special edition in English. The Subtitle below the photo, is a good example of the Triumphalism of the Lula Era: "Simone Reis, from Rio, who even sells Victoria's Secret on the Internet: her income from the web is twice her salary as a kitchen assistant at a restaurant" (See AGTOSTINI et MEYER, 2010: 10).

By the way, some researches show that this affirmation would be real. The generation of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) increased so much. The country in 2009 discharged in garbage cans 1.15 kg waste per person per day, national average comparable to the European Union, estimated at 1.2 kg per person per day in this same year.

However, not all that glitters is gold. Experts questioned the triumphalist exaltation of the country. For instance, they warned that The Economist editorial was aligned with the powerful financial capital, and then, they in fact appreciated an economic model that guaranteed profits never dreamed by the bankers.

They also warned that the economic context inspired caution. Supported by episodic global demands, the context could be misleading. It would be only a consumption bubble. No a real growth.

And who thought that the new technological life of the poor people improved with the new, imposing and uncontrollable mountains of garbage, was totally out of reality, in whatever perspective of the evaluation, quantitative or qualitative.

Certainly, there was some progress in recycling data, a speech always defended by pro-governmental specialists. They frequently show all kind of numbers to prove the environmental development, for them, a clear evidence of happy times.

For instance, in the years 2003-2015, the labor of the waste pickers provide the highest waste recycling rates of countries in Latin America: almost 92% for aluminum waste, and 80% for paper and cardboard waste. However, organic refuse showed very low performance and the *modus operandi* of institutional waste management is discouraging.

Data from one Brazilian association of solid waste (Associação Brasileira de Empresas Tratamento de Resíduos e Efluentes, ABETRE) show that in 2010, only 4% of 61 million metric tons of solid waste was recycled. So, in 2011 almost 59 million waste tons were piled up across the country on top of what was dumped in previous years. The country is literally throwing money away, submerged into the garbage.

The draft National Solid Waste Policy (Política Nacional de Resíduos Sólidos: PNRS), a law of President Lula Administration, exemplifies these difficulties. The PNRS mandated that by 2014 all Brazilian cities would not have open dump sites, and in all

municipalities the public services would carry out waste selective collection. However, the PNRS was a total failure.

In general perspective, Brazil's generation waste goes on connected to social exclusion, severe environmental impacts, uneven consumerism and economic dissymmetry. Surely, statistics demonstrate this reality (Figures 3 and 4).

Demographic Feature	Number of Municipalities	Waste collected per capita (kg/ inhabitant/ day)		
		Min	Max	Average
1	753	0,10	2,96	0,81
2	187	0,15	2,08	0,77
3	82	0,41	2,36	0,81
4	53	0,49	1,19	0,97
5	20	0,73	2,43	1,19
6	2	0,89	0,99	0,95
Total	1.087	0,1	2,96	0,96

FIGURE 3 - Municipal Solid Waste collected in urban areas (*per capita* index), according the demographic feature of the municipalities. Demographics groups: (1) until 30.000 inhabitants; (2) 30.001 -100.000 inhabitants; (3) 101.000 - 250.000 inhabitants; (4) 250.001 - 1.000.000 inhabitants; (5) 1.000.001 - 3.000.000 inhabitants (WALDMAN, 2015; CEMPRE Review, 2014: 34).

Groups by Per Capita Income	Metal	Paper	Plastics	Glass	Organic
A	6%	31%	11%	7%	28%
B	3%	14%	11%	5%	54%
C	2%	9%	12%	3%	59%
D	3%	5%	8%	3%	64%

FIGURE 4 - The latest available data on waste generation in Brazil demonstrate the perpetuation of social inequalities. The richest social groups (A), have a garbage generation profile similar to the nations of the First World, as has always had. The poor and excluded groups, are little different in this perspective of the Third World populations, with which are leveled. In this sense, the waste shows that the Era Lula did not the historical social inequalities in Brazil (WALDMAN, 2015; CEMPRE Review, 2014: 34).

Besides, during Lula & Dilma Rousseff Era, the situation of the recycling materials collectors did not improve. As informal workers, waste pickers were largely denied access to social benefits such as health insurance, pensions and unemployment insurance.

Physical debilitation, lack of education to accurately assess risks, emotional disabilities and low income, persisted as a permanent focus of suffering and anguish. For the waste pickers, the social and economic situation is basically the same, with

few changes, something evident in several conclusions in waste researches and by social data about these workers (Figure 5).



FIGURE 5 - Estamira Gomes da Silva (Estamira), was a woman who worked with the collection of garbage in the landfill Jardim Gramacho, currently closed, that received the waste generated by the city of Rio de Janeiro. She became famous for his philosophical discourse, a mixture of extreme lucidity and madness, with subjects like God, life, work, and existential reflections on modern society. For her, said Marcos Prado, director of the documentary “Estamira” (2005), “true trash were bankrupt values of society”. The documentary Estamira had international repercussion, with many awards and recognition international (Photo: Marcos Prado, Documentary Estamira, 2005).

However, the waste pickers are not and were not the only orphans of the public policy. The structural problems of Brazilian state governance were not supplied and even worsened.

Thus, several cases of bad administration, inconsistent guidance, short-term thinking, bad asset management, ineffective communications, initiatives with insufficient feedback to recognize the real problems, incorrect forecasts and naturally, the corruption in the Brazilian State administrative organs, became direct target of the disappointment and fury of population.

For example, between 1997 and 2010 the royalty revenues of counties in Rio de Janeiro revenues rose 34%. But the money was used to pay for a swelling municipal administration rather than public services like education, health, and infrastructure.

Besides, the Workers' Party found itself dragged into the corruption scandal amid allegations of having funnelled funds to pay off politicians and buy their votes and help with political campaigns.

So, the reaction of the people was imminent. The massive street protests that shook Brazil in June 2013 startled politicians and analysts alike. For the first time in Brazil, the social network supported by digital tools, as Face Book, proved to be a powerful vehicle of the mass mobilizations ⁶.

These mobilizations were provoked initially by strong protests in São Paulo, the richest city and the biggest industrial complex of the country. Fernando Haddad, the São Paulo mayor and member of Partido dos Trabalhadores, had increased the price of the bus tickets. But the people didn't accept this.

So, São Paulo became an uncontrollable epicenter of popular mass revolt against the price of ticket bus. Massive demonstrations grew continuously and spread rapidly to other state capitals and hundreds of cities.

The excessive violence of the police garnered attention and spurred mobilization. Thus, the manifestations increased, against all Parties, against all politicians. The unsatisfaction was diffuse and clear. But, ostentatiously against Dilma, the main target of the protests, and her local allies.

In a matter of days, the rallies became a national cry of frustration by the whole country, of the emerging middle class, as well as favelas residents in Rio de Janeiro, protesting against a corrupted and self-serving political class seemingly incapable of addressing real issues that affect people's quality of life, from public transportation to health and education. All things, the poorest people, life quality and the cities, seemed to be like always had been in Brazilian life (Figure 6).

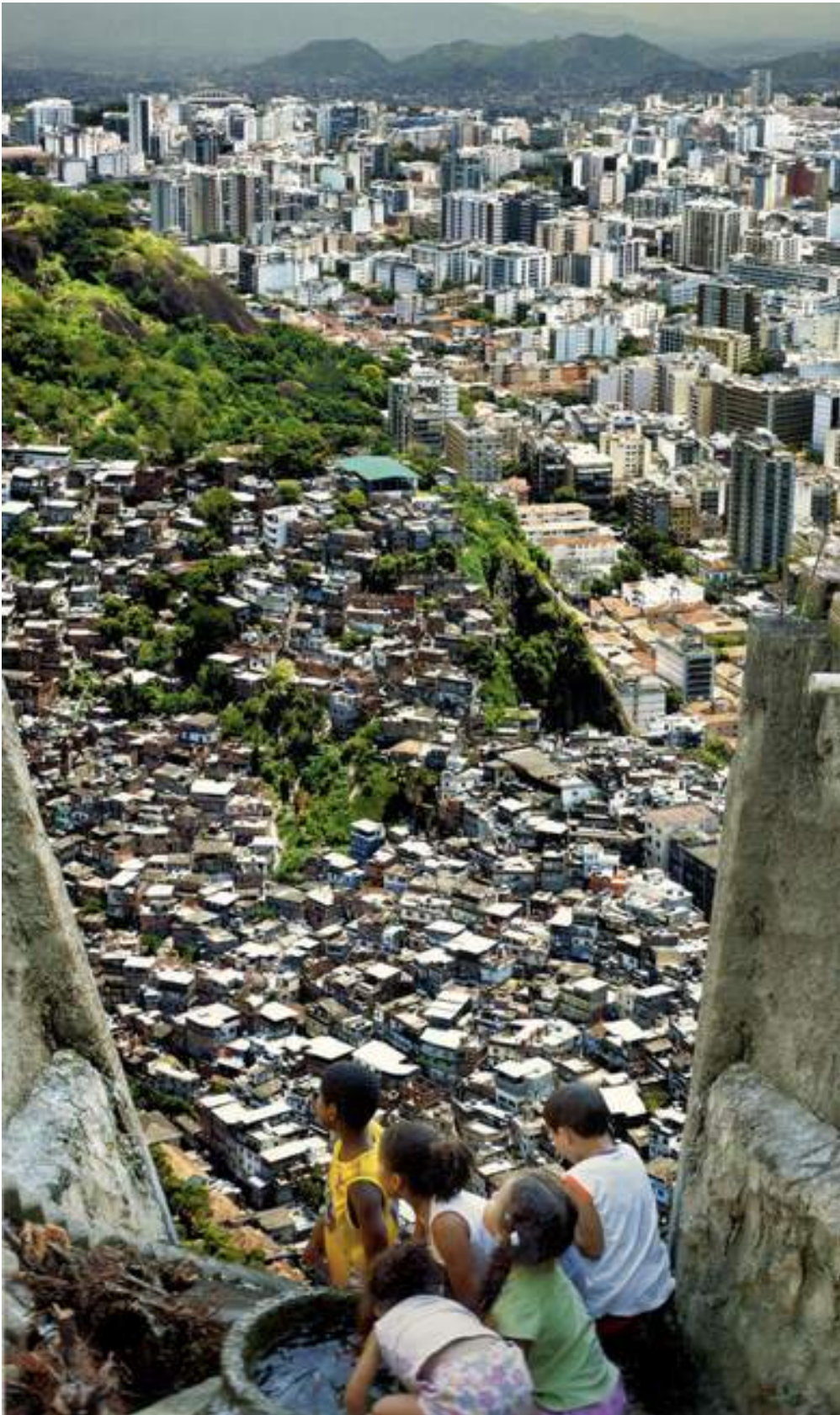


FIGURE 6 - Two contrasting and iconic landscapes in Rio de Janeiro: the slums and the formal city. However, this is a typical landscape in all Brazilian big cities, not only in Rio de Janeiro (Photo: Claudia Jaguaribe, in *Entre Morros*, Cosac Naify, 2012).

Surely, the *motto* “*The Brazil takes off*” had been only a cruel illusion. Allegorically, the Christ the Redeemer was totally out of control (Figures 7 and 8).



FIGURES 7 and 8 - The perception about Lula-Dilma Rousseff administrations in two covers of The Economist magazine. Left: the edition of November 12th 2009, showing the triumphalist rise of Brazil in happy times. In this picture, the Christ Redeemer Statue of Rio de Janeiro files like a rocket in the sky, opening a glorious period of prosperity to the Brazilians. Right: the edition of September 23th 2013. After only four years, as consequence of the bubble of economic illusion, the Christ Redeemer files without any destiny in the sky, now a dangerous and threatening petard.

HAS BRAZIL BLOWN IT?

The exceptional global context enjoyed by Lula, the predecessor of Dilma Rousseff, had disappeared forever. So it would be hard expect an external solution to Dilma Rousseff. The Administration Dilma Rousseff was totally without options.

In really, Brazil's economy simply did not play ball. Having grown by 7.5% in 2010, the fastest rate for a quarter-century, it slowed to 2.7% in 2011 and a mere 0.9% in 2012. Inflation was around 6%.

Pessimists recall that the one period of impressive growth within living memory, in the 1970s, ended in chaos and hyperinflation. In recent years Brazil was considered

as one of the leading emerging-market economies that would help drive global growth in the next half-century.

But now, many was asking whether “the success” has managed nothing more than a “vôo de galinha” (chicken flight), a brief, unsustainable growth spurt followed by a rapid return to soil.

For the high tech slum, is needed to note too an elementary fact: in the Brazilian selective innovation, the poor begun have access to digital pulses. But they remained what they always were: marginalized who live in slums, ghettos and neighborhoods without infrastructure.

So, all that was bought in endless installments remained a target, in a crisis context or not, of the first flood, of the urban violence or then, the gadgets was sold to get money.

By the way, since the beginnings of the year 2015, nobody can pay the energy bill. The energy became an onus expensive a lot. Especially to the low income people or “the poorest”: more than 50% of the Brazilian total population. So, the immediate solution is turning off the electronics gadgets.

Besides, the performance of President Dilma Vana Rousseff, that become known by her bizarre speeches in open defiance to all kind of logic - semantic, economic, social, political or administrative - would be the essential reason to understand that the problems would be very difficult to be solved by her.

This is clear too when Dilma Rousseff, boasted in an apothotic and delirious speech in 2014: “We will not discuss about goals, to in this way achieve them, as well as even to surpass them”.

And unfortunately, it was only one of many unbelievable public statements of the “Presidenta”, a corrupted form of the word President in Portuguese, like the supporters of Dilma preferred to call her.

Dilma Vana Rousseff became the hub of unmanageable popular irritations. The idea of impeachment wins social adherence. Thus, as soon as possible, on 31 August 2016 the Federal Senate voted in favor of impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, accusing the Presidente to break budgetary laws. By the way, this was only one item of extensive legacy of mistakes of President Dilma.

On the other hand, to the Brazilian high tech slums, the digital happy times found a melancholic final point. Needless to say, is because the digital slums were absolutely unreal, a fiction simply devoid of true.

The illusions may be appropriate to ensure an idealized peace. However, when illusions are manipulated to mask real problems, this decision always has more grave implications. The high tech slum was an illusion. But unfortunately millions people believed that it was real. The final effect could not be worse (Figure 9).



Figure 9 - The Economist cover, April 2016

Therefore, the solution is rethinking the Brazilian reality, to change the economic structural model and rebuilding the political institutions. Brazil demands real public policy, clear economic goals and less State intervention.

Is needed to say that Brazil's public sector imposes a particularly heavy burden on its private sector. Companies face the world's most burdensome tax code, payroll taxes add 58% to salaries and the government has got its spending priorities upside down. The specialists remember that despite the country's continental dimensions and lousy transport links, its spending on infrastructure is as skimpy as the impossible.

Brazil budget spends just 1.5% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on infrastructure, compared with a global average of 3.8%, even though its stock of infrastructure is valued at just 16% of GDP, compared with 71% in other big economies.

The Inefficient infrastructure loads unnecessary costs on businesses. For instance, a soyabean farmer spends 25% of the value of his product getting it to a port (the proportion in Iowa, in United States, is 9%).

The Brazilian nation urgently needs political reform. The proliferation of parties, whose only interest is the patronage, builds in huge waste at every level of government. One result is a cabinet with 39 ministries.

On paper, the solution is easy: a threshold for seats in Congress and other changes to make legislators more accountable to voters.

Last, but not least, the Brazilian society has a serious challenge: to create a new embracing national project, to change the nation, its destiny and its History.

A national project perspiring true, plurality and transparency, as Brazilian people deserve.

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¹ **The Collapse of the High Tech Slums: Illusions of the Presidential Era Lula & Dilma Rousseff** is an e-text elaborated by the Brazilian activist Maurício Waldman. This text was based on articles published by Brazilian press in 2015 and posted in several home-pages during the same year. In July 2017, this work, first published by Kotev Publishing House - **Editora Kotev** (Kotev©) - at **Kobo Platform**, was reformatted and enlarged, incorporating new commented figures, bibliographical notes, as well as additional information. Digital support specialist: Francesco Antonio Picciolo (Email: francesco_antonio@hotmail.com and Home-page: www.harddesignweb.com.br). **Key Words:** Brazilian High Tech Slums, public policy, social contradictions, social mobilizations, environment, garbage, electronics gadgets, consumerism, C Class, Brazilian economy, Brazilian History, Partido dos Trabalhadores, Lula, Dilma Rousseff, corruption. **The Collapse of the Slums of High Technology: Illusions of the Presidential Era Lula & Dilma Rousseff** is a PDF text with free access on the Internet. When citing this text, use the following bibliographic citation model: *The Collapse of the High Technology Slums: Illusions of the Presidential Era Lula & Dilma Rousseff*. Série Política e Sociedade Nº. 2. São Paulo (SP): Editora Kotev. 2018.

² **Mauricio Waldman** is a journalist, editor, researcher, professor and anthropologist. Waldman was born in São Paulo, Brazil, on December 2, 1955. Maurício Waldman is a veteran activist of Brazilian environmentalist movement. Waldman collaborated with the Brazilian rubber tapper Chico Mendes, participated in movements against dam's construction, mobilizations in support to waste pickers, in opposition to nuclear plants and counter to freshwater's pollution in metropolitan area of São Paulo. Maurício Waldman participated in Comitê de Apoio aos Povos da Floresta (Forest People Committee), Centro de Estudos Africanos da Universidade de São Paulo (African Studies Centre of São Paulo University) and Centro Ecumênico de Documentação e Informação - CEDI (Ecumenical Centre of Documentation and Information, in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro). Besides, from the years 1980 to 1992, Waldman was a prominent member of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT - Workers' Party), working out political papers and organizing the Party. Besides, he became involved in the Executive branch of government as Chico Mendes Park's Coordinator in east side of São Paulo (1990) and Environmentalist Administrator in São Bernardo do Campo (1991–1992), the most important city of ABC Region, industrial region next to São Paulo where PT begun. However, anti-ecological actions involving the administration of the city and members of the party created a hard conflict between Waldman and the mayor. Thus, he broke off definitely relationship with the PT (1992) and came back to the university and to his professional life (1993). Mauricio Waldman has been a columnist for Brazilian Media. He has published articles in *Jornal Cultura* (Lkuanda, Angola), *Diário do Grande ABC*, *Cultura Verde*, *Ambiente Urbano* and *Jornal O Imparcial*, *Think & Rethink Column*. Waldman has published extensively on Water Resources, Waste Management, Religion, International Relations, Topology, Geography, Cartography, Anthropology, Sub-Saharan Africa and Afro-Brazilian education: 18 books, 22 ebooks and 700 papers, articles and technical

reports. Maurício Waldman is currently a scholar, researcher, consultant and educator.

More information and External links:

Wikipedia (English Edition): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauricio_Waldman .

Official Academic Curriculum at CNPq: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/3749636915642474>

Maurício Waldman - Textos Masterizados: <http://mwtextos.com.br/>

Waldman Academic Web Portal (Portuguese): www.mw.pro.br

Email: mw@mw.pro.br

³ Strong or/and competent manager in Brazilian Portuguese, particularly in colloquial language.

⁴ However, this popularity was shaken by several corruption cases. On March 4, 2016, as part of “Operation Carwash”, Brazilian authorities raided the home of Lula as part of the ongoing "graft scheme" corruption investigation. The investigations are going on, and the social perception of the former syndical leader is seriously in danger.

⁵ The *Mensalão* Scandal was a vote-buying case of corruption that threatened to bring down the government of President Luis Inácio Lula da Silva in 2005. *Mensalão* is a Portuguese neologism and variant of the expression for “big monthly payment”. In this year José Dirceu de Oliveira e Silva, a leftist Brazilian politician was the Chief of Staff of Federative Brazilian Republic. But, he was dropped after Roberto Jefferson, a Brazilian Congressional Deputy, denounced him “as the ringleader of a plot to hand out illegal monthly payments to congressmen” (Newspaper Folha de São Paulo, June 6, 2005). The *Mensalão* Scandal was the worse case of corruption in all Brazilian History.

⁶ “The 2013 protests were quite different from past protests in at least two ways: social media proved to be the vehicle of the mass mobilizations and, at times, groups involved in civic journalism eclipsed traditional press outlets in the coverage of the events. Experienced journalists acknowledged their surprise at the explosion of popular discontent [...] the normally talkative political class turned unusually quiet. A perplexed Rousseff took an entire week to react” (SOTERO, 2014: 6).

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