

# Chapter 4

## Fascism or Illusionism of Capitalist Dominance in Brazil?

**Raphael Lana Seabra**  
*University of Brasilia, Brazil*

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter aims to debate the pertinence of fascism as a concept for analyzing the recent socio-political situation in Brazil. It confronts the fact that there has been, in the last few years, a rise of politicians and movements that seem to reproduce elements typical of fascism: a tendency towards authoritarianism, leadership strength, the decimation of minorities, and a hatred towards the left and differences in general. Confronting the emergence of these phenomena, the chapter will examine certain facts, tendencies, and social classes in contemporary Brazil. The particularities of the political system of domination in dependent capitalism will be highlighted. The power and exploitation structure of dependent capitalism presents significant obstacles for the emergence of a minimally cohesive fascist movement. The country has, however, a repressive and political structure that is not very democratic.*

### INTRODUCTION

To say that fascism has made a comeback seems an obvious remark. The term has emerged these past few years in what seems to be an escapable definition for some parties, movements, and important political leaders worldwide, in both core and peripheral countries. Capitalism in core countries is showcasing fascist tendencies in France with Marine Le Pen's National Front, in Italy with vice Premier Matteo Salvini and his League, and in the United States and their President Donald Trump. Dependent capitalism is not lagging far behind, with President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-5205-6.ch004

in Turkey, President Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro and, according to some analysts, the Islamic State in Iraq and in Syria. Such diversity manifested allows *fascism* to resurface in some cases almost spontaneously, as something that is semantically easy for the political struggle when we are lost for words to name new, unexpected, and very unsettling realities (Traverso, 2016).

Considering Brazil's reality more thoroughly, fascism has been placed on scene since: the June 2013 protests (Azaredo & Novaes, 2013), the countless accounts of xenophobia and hate towards Haitian ("Imigrantes haitianos sofrem racismo e xenofobia no Brasil," 2014) and Venezuelan immigrants (Mendonça, 2018), the ultraconservative turn of political movements such as the Free Brazil Movement (MBL - Movimento Brasil Livre) (Rossi, Betim, & Segalla, 2017), the National Military Forces' launch of a military intervention in the city of Rio de Janeiro (Martins, 2018) in January 2018; and, more recently, the truck drivers' strike calling for military intervention (Senra, 2018) in the government; the police actions against Student Body Governments in Public Universities (Craide, 2018), the declarations and posture of Jair Bolsonaro, both during his candidacy and after entering office, and his colleagues in defense of torture and repressive governments (Della Barba & Wentzel, 2016; Mendonça & Galarraga Gortázar, 2018; BBC News, 2019). This list of events can be thickened by including the continual coverage by big private media of corruption and "Bolivarianism" in the left<sup>1</sup>, fomented by the coup-mongering capitalist class's spokespeople and institutions, the resentment of the middle class, the slanderous preaching of several pastors in Neo-Pentecostal churches, the creation and dissemination of fake news via social and other media, the countless accounts of sexism, homophobia, and racism as a response to advances in basic human and social rights.

The mobilizing passions of fascism listed by Robert Paxton (2007, p. 360) seem to echo in contemporary Brazilian society:

1. The perception that we are crossing a crisis of such magnitude for which the solutions available within liberal democracy seem insufficient.
2. The creation of "insider" group with rights and duties that put them above those "others" who cannot be reintegrated or re-socialized.
3. The belief that the "insiders" (the good citizens) are victims of indolence, of trickery, of corruption, of value degeneration and the reversal of traditional social hierarchies.
4. The fear of the "good citizen's" decadence as a direct influence of these "others" requires a purer community, through exclusionary violence if possible.
5. The need of authority (necessarily of the male gender), climaxing in the national chieftain, the only one capable of incarnating the "good citizen's" historic destiny.

19 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/fascism-or-illusionism-of-capitalist-dominance-in-brazil/255407](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/fascism-or-illusionism-of-capitalist-dominance-in-brazil/255407)

## Related Content

---

### The Future of the European Union in the Framework of Globalization

Ebru Nergiz (2014). *Globalization and Governance in the International Political Economy* (pp. 184-196).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-future-of-the-european-union-in-the-framework-of-globalization/94328](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-future-of-the-european-union-in-the-framework-of-globalization/94328)

### Do Web Campaigns by Party Leaders Enhance the Images of Party Leaders Held by Voters?: Experimental Evidence from Finland

Tom Carlson, Göran Djupsundand Kim Strandberg (2014). *Political Campaigning in the Information Age* (pp. 179-196).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/do-web-campaigns-by-party-leaders-enhance-the-images-of-party-leaders-held-by-voters/109120](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/do-web-campaigns-by-party-leaders-enhance-the-images-of-party-leaders-held-by-voters/109120)

### China's Infrastructure Financing and the Role of Infrastructure in Awakening African Economies

Michael Mitchell Omoruyi Ehizuelen (2021). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-25).

[www.irma-international.org/article/chinas-infrastructure-financing-and-the-role-of-infrastructure-in-awakening-african-economies/279131](http://www.irma-international.org/article/chinas-infrastructure-financing-and-the-role-of-infrastructure-in-awakening-african-economies/279131)

### Cultural Political System: Popular Culture and Films in Indian Election Campaigns

Kavita Karan (2017). *Music as a Platform for Political Communication* (pp. 221-237).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/cultural-political-system/178015](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/cultural-political-system/178015)

### Media Portrayal of Climate Change and Renewal Energy in Nepal: Insights From a Qualitative Study

Sudeep Uprety, Arkom Palamanitand Kuaanan Techato (2025). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-14).

[www.irma-international.org/article/media-portrayal-of-climate-change-and-renewal-energy-in-nepal/384320](http://www.irma-international.org/article/media-portrayal-of-climate-change-and-renewal-energy-in-nepal/384320)