

# **Social welfare programs in Brazil and in France: assistencialism or emancipation factor?**

Sandrine Cuvillier

PhD student – PEP/Coppe/UFRJ

09/05/2014 - Leipzig

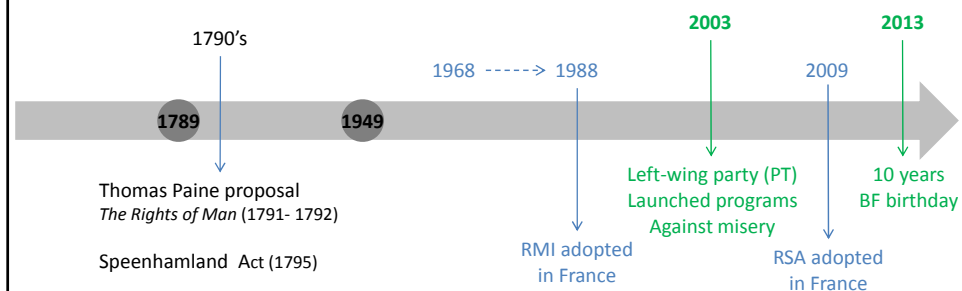
## Summary

1. Introduction
2. Contextualization and basis
3. The cash transfer programs:
  - Case of France
  - Case of Brazil
4. Discussion:
  - Values defended
  - Limits
5. Degrowth perspective
6. References

## 1. Introduction

- **Relevance:**
  - poverty and inequalities
  - need for more equity
  - discussion about the welfare state initiatives and about a Basic Income (BI)
- **Objectives of this presentation: promote the discussion about this**
  - presenting the origin and the evolution of some proposals and analyzes the main concepts and values defended
  - illustrating with “successful cases” in Brazil and France

## 2. Historical contextualization

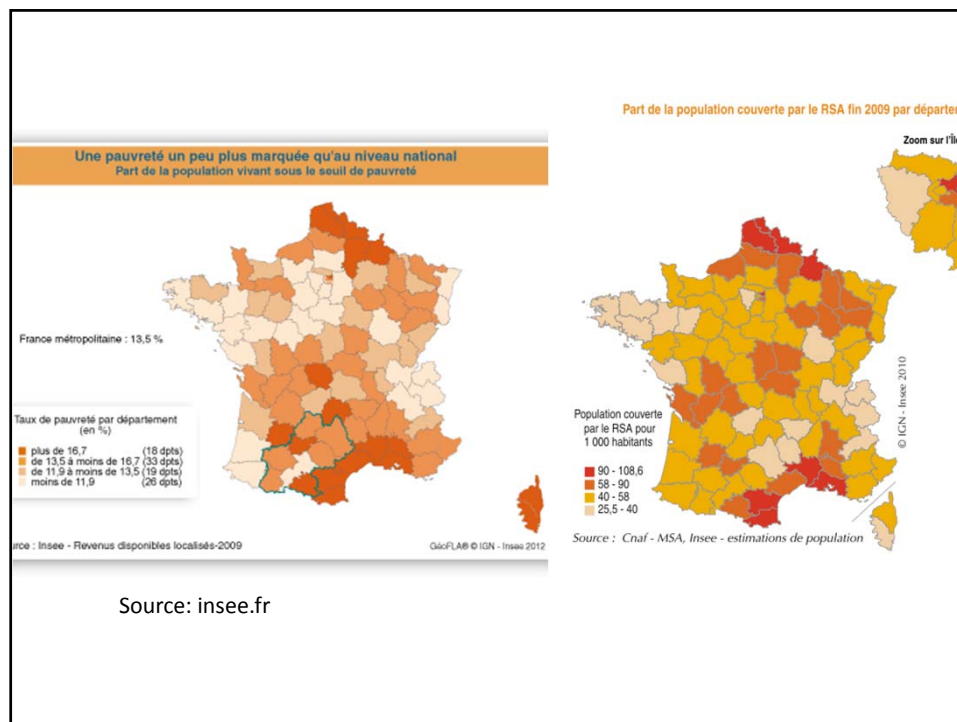


- “The Revolution had asserted the universal rights of man. But what did this entail for economic and social relations? How could the right to property be reconciled with the ‘right to life’, that is, to a decent minimum standard of living? (KING, J.E. and MARANGOS, J. , 2006)
- **UN Human Rights Declaration, Article 25 (1949)**
  - (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
  - (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.




### 3. Cash transfer programs in France

- What for?
  - French social protection <=> principle of universality of aid; Social minima logic to avoid exclusion
  - Against poverty; incentive to find a job (RSA)
- What?
  - RMI – *Revenu Minimum d'insertion* - (01/12/1988) aims to insert people in difficulty («the new poors »)
  - RSA – *Revenu de Solidarité Active* - replaced it in June 2009, with 2 formulas: the « RSA basis (socle) » and « RSA activity » to (can be combined to RSA) => right to activity
  - Around 500 €
- Who?
  - Young single persons (> 25 years old – condition)
  - Residents in France
  - With s Personalised Employment Access Project
  - With revenue inferior to limit (<less than ~500 €)
- How many?
  - **2.25 millions of families in September 2013** (2011: “in total, the prestation benefits 4.33 millions of people: 2,032 millions of beneficiaries; 380 000 spouses; 1.920 million of children in charge).
  - ~ 500.000 beneficiaries of RMI in 1989;
- Poverty (8% or 14%, controversy indicator) and social inequalities are increasing recently



### 3. Cash transfer program in Brazil- Description



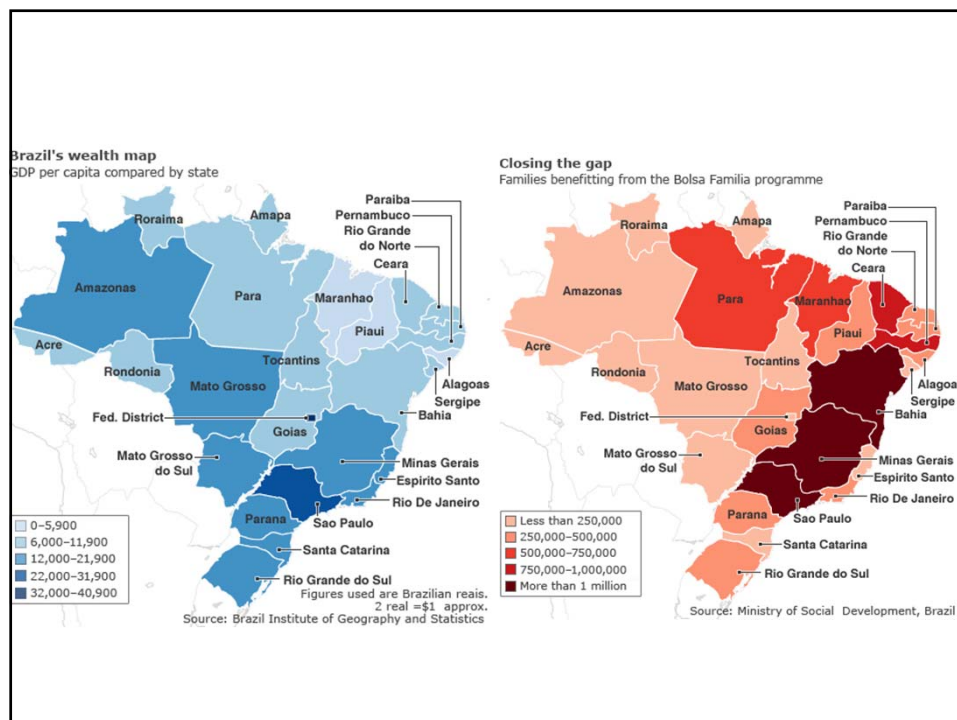
- Governmental action: MDS (Ministry of Social Development) – complementary programs coordination (generation of jobs and income; adults alfabetization, civil registration and other documents).
- What for?
  - Improve living conditions of most vulnerable families; contribute to access to basic rights as health and education
- What?
  - **Bolsa Família**
  - Variable allowance (R\$ 30 to 250)
- Who?
  - indigent (extreme poverty - <R\$77) and poor people (< R\$ 144,00/month).
  - Families, with conditions (monitor the prenatality, the vaccination; school attendance)
  - Women (93% responsible to receive)
  - More than 50% of beneficiaries in the Northeast region
- How many?
  - around 50 millions people (>14 millions of families) benefit from Bolsa Família program (2014)

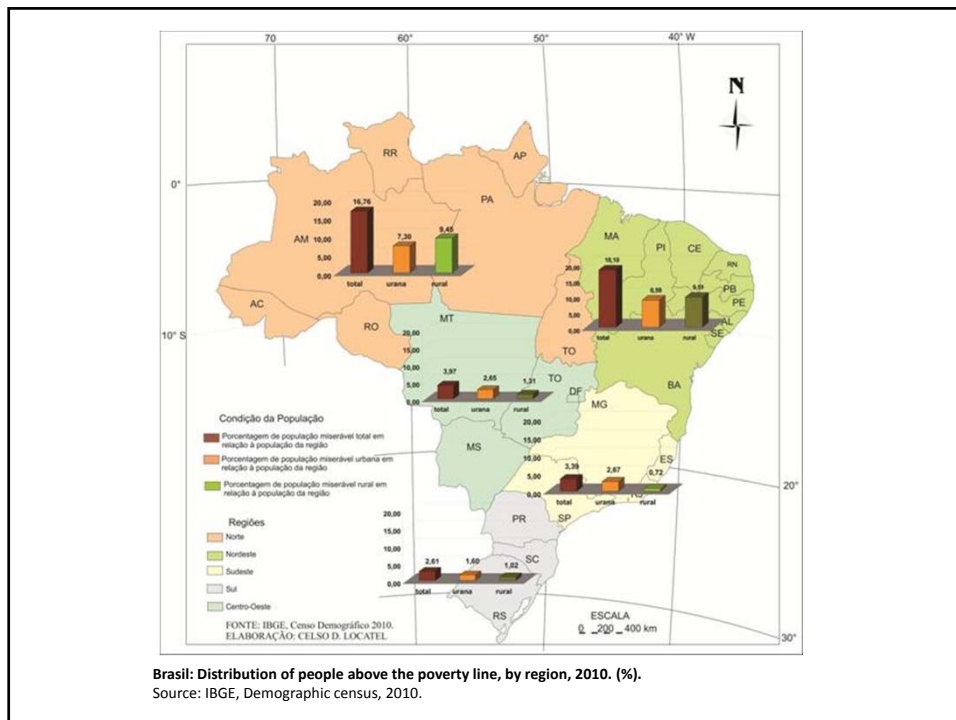
### 3. Cash transfer program in Brazil- Some figures

- Inequality in revenue distribution decreases and mean revenue increases (IPEA)
- Employment index of BF beneficiaries is better (77% against 76% between the other); Since 2003, 1,7 million of families got out of the program informing sufficient monthly revenue per capita.
- “Brazilian GDP increases R\$ 1,78 for each R\$ 1 do Bolsa Família. [...] effects on final consumption are even bigger: R\$ 2.40”. (Source: IPEA )
- About Latin America in general
 

“Firstly, it is claimed that the intensity of extreme poverty dropped significantly.  
Second, the increase in social spending targeting the most destitute improved some key indicators relating to poverty. A 2009 World Bank report, for example, asserts that ‘virtually every programme that has had a credible evaluation has found a positive effect on school enrolment’; Conditional cash transfer Programmes generally have increased the use of education and (some) health services.”  
Third, advocates of the programmes claim that by providing new entitlements, they instituted a new relationship between the state and the indigent, allowing the latter to make novel social demands on the former.

(Lena Levinas, NLR84, dec2013. 21<sup>st</sup> century welfare )





## 4. Limits and values

- Technical implementation limits
  - Integration of local and national levels of government (database updating not in real time (Brazil))
  - Problem of divulgation and adhesion to the program (RSA in France - >50% do not benefit)
- Cultural/personal critiques:
  - Private mass media role (negative image or active sensibilization (ex. in France in early 90's (Bourdieu, P.; Abbé Pierre))
  - Risk of assistencialism, promoting lazy society and the « status of the assisted precarious worker » (right-wing) discourse
  - State inquisition
- Justice and equality (Rawls; Van Parijs) ; Happiness ; Independence / autonomy (liberty); Moral prescription (when conditions); Solidarity (Paugam, S.)
- About the **concept of poverty**...
  - Different from the concept of poverty in living conditions (6% in 2004; 5% in 2013 in France) (*Observatoire des inégalités*)
  - poverty line Vs poverty perception; exclusion problem

France	Brazil
60% of median revenue (~950€/m)	R\$144 /month (2014) (R\$120 in 2004)
50% of median revenue	R\$77/month (2014) (R\$60 in 2004)

## 5. Degrowth perspective

- Conceptual limits:
  - Definition of poverty – include IDH? Material restriction include “growth paradigm aspects”
- Economical limits:
  - Consumption: multiplier effect of the BF program;
  - TVA feedback - as factor of self-financement of the program
  - Job precarity: can these programs promote it from part of the enterprises?
- Brazilian context:
  - BF program as barrier to child labour
  - BF program as political empowerment in some regions (North) – citizens gain voice
  - “the beneficiaries of the BF always contributed for the growth of the country [...] In Brazil, the tax structure is highly based in indirect taxes.. [...] The whole brazilian society finances the BF program”

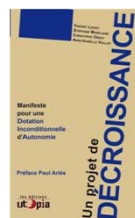
## 5. Degrowth perspectives... Basic Income?

- International context:
  - Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN) appeared in 1986 (UE level), expanded in 2004
  - Proposal at the European level

- French context:



2010



2013

- Discussion about RI, DIA, existence revenue, Maximum Revenue - monetary allowance? Basic services access rights?...
- First Summer Meeting about BI in France – aug/2013 (<http://universite.revenudebase.info/>)

- « Avec le revenu inconditionnel, c'est la question de l'utilité sociale qui est posée, et notamment la question de l'utilité sociale hors de l'emploi. Ce revenu vient reconnaître notre utilité sociale à tous, quelques soient nos activités. » (Baptiste Mylondo)
- « Law project » about the Citizen Income in Brazil (renda básica de cidadania) defended by Eduardo Suplicy (law 10835/2004) : monetary benefit sufficient for minimal expenses with food, education and health

## 5. Perspectives

- « The essential is that we are convinced of that this Inconditionnal Dotation for Autonomy is an essential component of this new social pact and will allow to move forward more autonomy and to stop, asap, with the centrality of the work in our lives.

The debates about the forms this social revenue will adopt must go on.»

Paul Ariès, in *Un projet de Décroissance: Manifeste pour une Dotation Inconditionnelle d'Autonomie*, 2013

- “When speculating about the programme’s near future, two distinct visions come to mind. In the first, by transferring cash to eligible poor people and targeting social services at them, the programme will take over the core of the Brazilian welfare state. In the other, the programme will find a proper place within a universalistic, rights-based social welfare architecture.”

Celia Lessa Kerstenetzky,

Centre for the Study of Inequality and Development (CEDE), UFF, nov. 2013

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sandrine.cuvillier@sage.coppe.ufrj.br