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### Language

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The mass demonstrations that broke out in Brazil on 6 June 2014 began as a protest against a rise in bus and metro fares in Sao Paulo (organized by the leftist and anarchistic Movement for Free Passes), but a brutal police response prompted the demonstrations to swell rapidly in numbers and spread across the country. As a movement erupted the demands also grew, including improvement in social services such as transport, health and education, calls for electoral and constitutional reform and opposition to corruption. Another central focus for protests was the lavish government expenditure on preparations for holding the World Cup in the summer of 2014 and the Olympics in 2016. This expenditure should, demonstrators asserted, have been directed instead to improving the welfare of ordinary Brazilians.

The protests drew on students and young people alienated by the link between government and corporations and the role of money in politics, the poor from the slums, but also many from the middle classes. This diverse constituency and the largely spontaneous nature of the protests meant that the demonstrations lacked a clear sense of political priorities and had no organizational focus. The movement arose outside the party political system and although some protesters indicated support for small leftist parties and support for the ruling Workers' Party waned during June 2014, there was no concerted call for President Dilma Rousseff, who made a number of promises in response to the protests, to resign.

Demonstrations continued periodically in 2013 and into 2014 against the World Cup, and slum clearance and demolitions in preparation for the Olympics aroused anger in the favelas. But a movement on the scale of June 2013 did not reappear.

Postscript 2016: There were further protests up to the opening of the Olympic Games in August 2016 against the cost of the Games and the impact on the poor. But the central political issue from March to September 2016 was the impeachment of President Rousseff. The impeachment campaign in Congress, on the charge of manipulating budgetary accounts, led by the Speaker of the Lower House, was backed by right wing parties and mass middle class demonstrations. It has understandably been interpreted by the left in Brazil as a right wing coup, especially as Rousseff was replaced by the relatively right wing Vice President. But Rousseff, voted out of office by the Senate in September, had also lost general public support (her approval rating falling as low as 10 per cent in the polls in 2016) due to the economic slump and the massive bribery scandal centred on the state-owned oil company Petrobras. This scandal implicated almost all parties, including the Workers' Party. Rousseff herself, however, has never been accused of personal corruption, unlike a large number of her Congressional opponents (including the Speaker of the Lower House).

Branford, Sue ; Wainwright, Hilary, [Riots in Rio](#) [1], Red Pepper, issue Aug/Sept, 2013, pp. 40-41

Campos, Nauro F., [What drives protests in Brazil? Corruption, ineptitude and elections](#) [2], VOX, 23/07/2013,

Economics professor suggests three main causes of the protests.

Dent, Alexander S. ; Pinheiro-Machado, Rosana, [Protesting Democracy in Brazil](#) [3], Hot Spots. Cultural Anthropology website, 20/12/2013,

Series of 22 posts covering numerous aspects of protests, their cause, and issues of policing.

Gatehouse, Tom, [Copa de Cash: saying this is a World Cup for everyone is a cruel joke](#) [4], Red Pepper, issue Jun/Jul, 2014, pp. 38-39



On the negative impact of preparations for the World Cup and increasingly repressive police tactics.

Saad-Filho, Alfredo, [Mass Protests under “Left Neoliberalism”: Brazil, June-July 2013](#) [5], Critical Sociology, Vol. 39, issue 5 (Sep.), 2013, pp. 657-669

Examines causes, range of demands, social base and ‘contradictory frustrations’ of the mass protests. Discusses political dilemmas and proposes ‘constructive alternatives for the left’.

Singer, André, [Rebellion in Brazil](#) [6], New Left Review, issue 85 (Jan/Feb), 2014, pp. 19-38

Analyzes varied class, age and political beliefs of the protesters (sometimes resulting in conflict between them).

Winters, Matthew S. ; Weitz-Shapiro, Rebecca, [Partisan and Nonpartisan Protests in Brazil](#) [7], Journal of Politics in Latin America, Vol. 6, issue 1, 2014, pp. 137-150

Uses evidence of two surveys to examine effects of protests on party-alignment and suggests a drop in support for the ruling Workers’ Party, but that no other party gained in support.

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