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Civil society and social innovation in the public sphere: an analysis of the Brazilian Movement Against Electoral Corruption (MCCE)

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Presentation structure



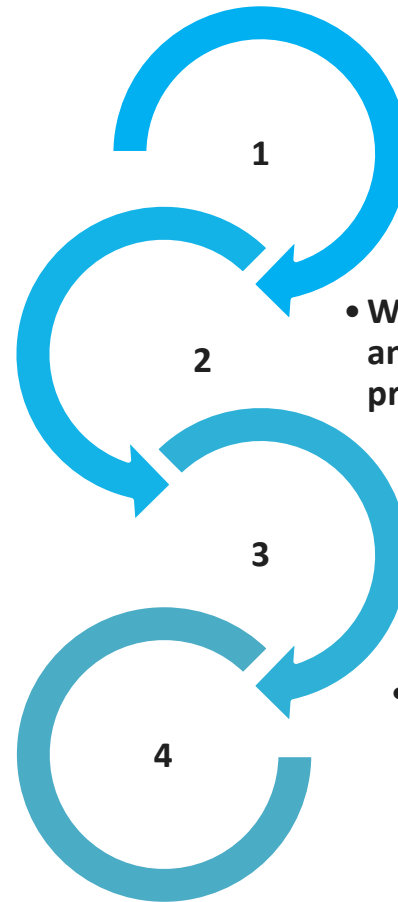


Research frame



Research problem and questions

- **The public sphere** as a privileged arena for social innovation.
- **Social innovations** as society's ability to reinvent themselves, i.e., create rules and conventions, as well as new social practices, becoming more creative and politically autonomous.
- Beyond the definition of social innovation, we intend to observe the “**emergence of a civic sense**”, or the “**experience of public problems**” (Cefai, 2009)



- What is the trajectory of the public problem of “electoral corruption” in Brazil and how are the mobilization of MCCE and other actors/beings around this public problem?

- What associations, translations, conflicts and disruptions around this public problem?

- What kind of “social innovations”, emerge as responses or solutions to this public problem

- How are other public arenas connected around the MCCE platform, and how do they communicate or conflict with one another?

Theoretical and analytical approach

- ✓ Action of civil society in the public sphere as a “collective action”
- ✓ Pragmatic sociology as a paradigm of “collective action”
 - overcome the classical oppositions of sociology;
 - creation of new tools for sociological analysis
 - the plurality of engagement forms of human and non-human in the world taken into consideration
 - "a pragmatic procedure follows the actors experiences and perspectives“ (Cefaï 2009, p.16) .
- ✓ Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as theoretical and methodological approach (Callon and Latour, 1981, Callon, 1986, Law, 1986, 1999 and Latour, 2001, 2005)
- ✓ Mapping of the news regarding electoral corruption in Brazil and the events related to MCCE since the 80s until recently. Interviews with MCCE members, technicians and founders.



Case study: MCCE trajectory



1985-1999

- Corruption as a endemic public problem in Brazil
- Constituent Assembly (1985-1986)
- Proposal of specific institutional framework devices in the Federal Constitution, providing civil society participation at public sphere: laws suggested by popular initiatives, plebiscite and referendum
- Creation of Article 14 in the Federal Constitution (1988)
- Almost 10 years later: Fraternity campaign “Faith and Politics” (1996)
- Survey to find the major problems of the elections: vote buying and electoral use of the administrative machine.
- Mobilization in order to pass the first Law of popular initiative in Brazil: Law no. 9840 from September 1999, “Law Against Vote Buying”.

2002-2012

- Gathering of 30 committees in order to create MCCE (2002)
- "Free Elections" mobilization (2007)
- Draft the bill that would originate the Lei da Ficha (LC n° 135/2012). The law forbids the election of politicians sentenced by Justice in a collective decision, when politicians are deposed by the Brazilian Electoral Justice or those that waived an elective position to avoid the impeachment process.
- "Clean Record" campaign (launched in april 2008). The campaign collected 1.3 million signatures to support the project of Law.
- Support of AVAAZ to the campaign
- The bill was appreciated and approved by the Deputies and Senators and it was sanctioned by the President on June 4th, 2010
- Disputes in the Federal Supreme Court about the application and constitutionality of Ficha Limpa Law (it was considered valid only in 2012)

Nowadays

- New perspectives and perceptions about the electoral corruption problem
- MCCE, CNBB, OAB and others institutions decided to launch the Clean Elections Campaign
- Cyberactivism as a mobilization strategy (with the AVAAZ support)
- Stagnation of the campaign (300.000 signatures out of 1,6 million)
- Political reform as an agenda that exceeds MCCE.
Discussion and proposals made by other actors in the Brazilian public sphere



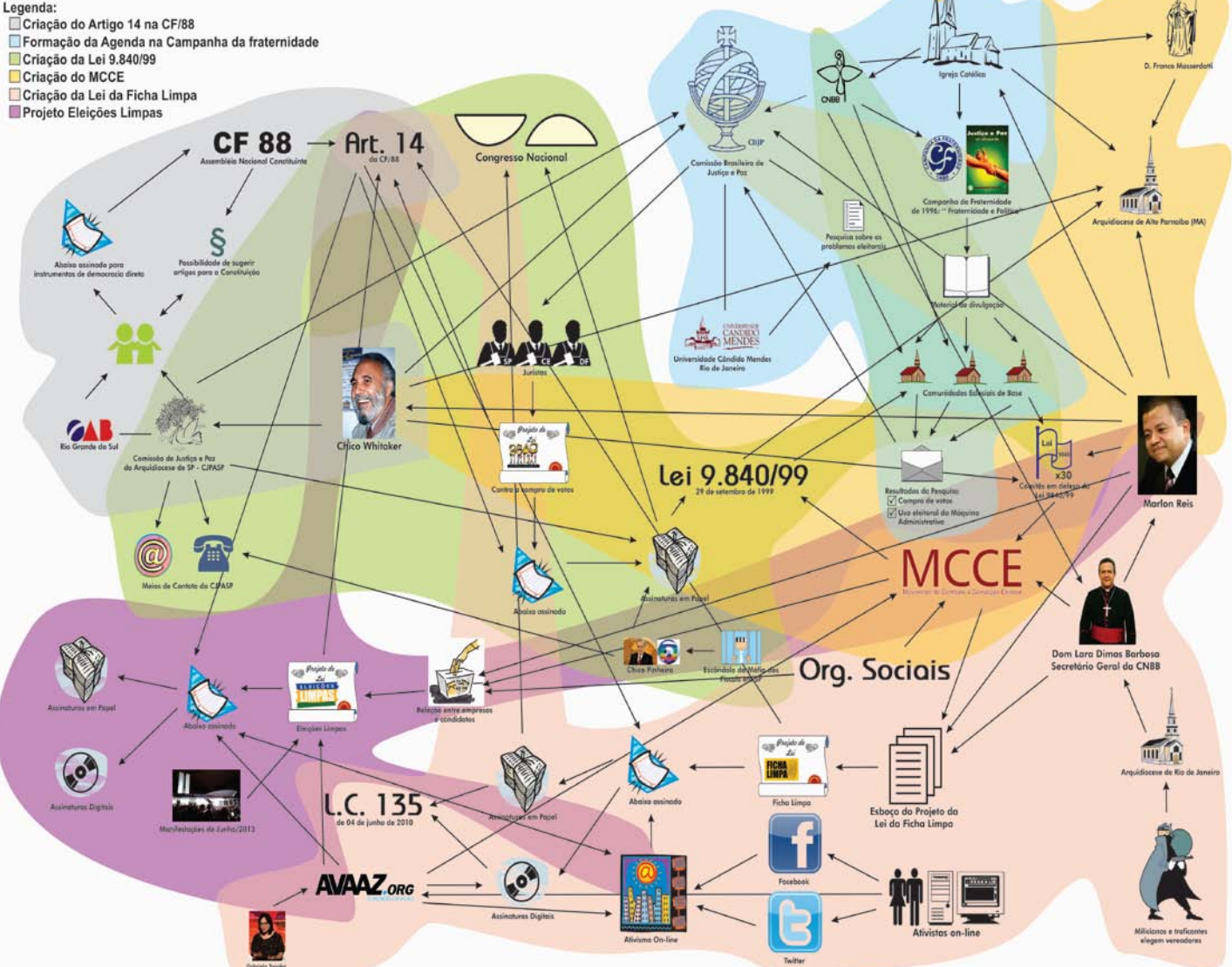
Analysis and conclusions



Actants, associations and network

✓ MCCE is part of and its formed by a network that changes its design during the time. This network is composed by a multiplicity of actors (individuals and collectives, humans and non-humans)

Rede Sociotécnica do Movimento de Combate a Corrupção Eleitoral - MCCE



- Catholic Church and its institutions
- Experts
- Legal and institutional instruments/devices
- Cyberactivists and objects related to them
- The mass media and journalists
- The politicians
- Social organizations and movements

Social innovations in the public sphere

🌐 **The role of a policy maker here is not limited to experts and elected politicians.** Religious leaders, lawyers, judges, activists and cyber activists, politicians and researchers are all present in the creation of new laws, rules and conventions.

🌐 **Social innovations as collective co-constructions:** network of collective mobilization that "co-define" the problem of electoral corruption in Brazil and together aim to give answers to this problem.

🌐 **Both the public problem (electoral corruption) and the solutions for it assume new delimitations in each step of the trajectory,** transforming themselves through associations and translations process (Latour, 2005 and Callon, 2008).

🌐 The network then expands the "**public arena**" previously limited to electoral corruption in Brazil, redefining the "horizon of possibilities" (Cefaï, 2009, p. 16) and giving place to new agreements and controversies.

Final considerations

- 🌐 The MCCE **network changes** (it is composed and then recomposed) over time, **while promoting changes in society** (Mische, 1994).
- 🌐 Therefore, the intensity of mobilization and social innovation promoted are **not defined in a linear form** (as a result of pre-defined and well-planned strategies).
- 🌐 **Collective action is unpredictable** and takes place in a **fluid environment**, which contributes to its success or failure.
- 🌐 Social innovations in this case were the result of **deviations, returns, step backs and obscure situations**, as well as being the **result of mediations and achievements**. So to follow this process it is crucial to understand the lessons learned during the construction of a “**public culture**”.