NEOLIBERALISM AS A “VILLAIN”: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THEORETICAL CRITICAL STANCE TOWARDS NEOLIBERALISM IN THE TEXTS FROM ANTIPODE – A RADICAL JOURNAL OF GEOGRAPHY, 2010-2013

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ABSTRACT
The paper represents a study of papers published in Antipode – A Radical Journal of Geography, from 2010 to 2013, in which, as to the author’s assessment, a highly critical stance towards contemporary neo-liberalism exists. Hence Antipode publishes “a radical analysis of geographical issues and its intent is to engender the development of a new and better society,” and, of course, a critical stance towards neo-liberalism is expected in the papers published. However, the intent of this paper is to analyze what kind of critical stance was present in the texts published in Antipode in the period of four years (2010-2013). The period of four years was taken as a referential period, especially because it started after the year in which the Great Recession struck most of the developed economies (2009). It ends with the end of the year 2013, which was the year when almost all developed economies exited the recession or the stagnation of their economies ended. Since neoliberalism, which brought the liberalization of markets, particularly the financial one, was usually blamed as the ideology behind the outbreak of the economic crisis that shocked the world in 2008 and 2009, the intention was to show how radical the leftist critique is in its perception of neoliberalism in the era of the current economic crisis. A basic content analysis was used in order to analyze the discourse that was used to describe, characterize, and critically judge contemporary neoliberal capitalism, i.e. neoliberalism. Due to the ubiquity of the topic (neo-liberalism), and the critical stance of the Antipode towards it,
the research contains only the texts from the studied period, in which the word “neoliberalism” was found in the title of the text or among the key words mentioned below the abstract.

**Keywords:** neoliberalism, capitalism, free markets, financial capital, Antipode.

1 INTRODUCTION

According to the AntipodeFoundation.org, which publishes *Antipode – A Radical Journal of Geography,* Antipode offers a radical analysis of geographical issues and its intent is to engender the development of a new and better society. *Antipode* continues to publish some of the best and most provocative radical geographical work available today; work from both geographers and their fellow travellers; from both eminent and emerging scholars.

The paper represents a study of papers published in *Antipode – A Radical Journal of Geography* (further in the text: *Antipode*), in which, as to the author’s assessment, a highly critical stance towards contemporary neoliberalism exists. Hence *Antipode* publishes “a radical analysis of geographical issues and its intent is to engender the development of a new and better society,” and, of course, a critical stance towards neo-liberalism is expected in the papers published. However, the intent of this paper is to analyze what kind of critical stance was present in the texts published in *Antipode* in the period of four years (2010-2013). The papers devoted in various ways to neoliberalism, published in *Antipode* during the 2010-2013 period, mostly dealt with the following topics:

1) Neoliberalism as a form of capitalism – theoretical explanations;
2) Neoliberalism and the use of nature/natural monopolies;
3) Neoliberalism in local communities: case-studies;
4) Neoliberalism and immigrants (immigrant work force);
5) Neoliberalism and higher education.

Due to the ubiquity of the texts devoted to neoliberalism, this paper is limited to various definitions of neoliberalism found in the selected texts published in *Antipode* in the previously mentioned timeframe.

2 METHODOLOGY

The paper analyses the critical stance towards neoliberalism present in the texts published in *Antipode* through basic content analysis. In order to analyze the discourse that was used to describe, characterize, and critically judge neoliberal capitalism, i.e. neoliberalism, the basic content analysis was used: research focused on key words and phrases that were identified in most of the texts, and the presence of these key words and the context in which they were used was at the same time the criteria for the selection of the texts that were analyzed. The key word used for the analysis was the following: neoliberalism (i.e. neo-liberalism). The context of the use of the key word “neoliberalism” was analyzed through the analyses of the sentences and/or full citations in which the key words were used. Key words used in a direct link with the word neoliberalism were identified and analyzed. However, due to the large number of texts found

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1 http://antipodefoundation.org/about-the-journal-and-foundation/a-radical-journal-of-geography/
and due to the fact that not all papers that contained the word “neoliberalism” in the title or among the key words comprised a definition of neoliberalism, this paper analyzes only the comprehensive, usually introductory, theoretical definitions of neoliberalism as a form of capitalism, and it does so in the texts that offered these kinds of definitions. The period of four years was taken as a referential period, especially because it started after the year in which the Great Recession struck most of the developed economies (2009). It ends with the end of the year 2013, which was the year when almost all developed economies exited the recession or the stagnation of their economies ended. Since neoliberalism, which brought the liberalization of markets, particularly the financial one, was usually blamed as the ideology behind the outbreak of the economic crisis that shocked the world in 2008 and 2009, the intention was to show how radical the leftist critique is in its perception of neoliberalism in the era of the current economic crisis.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Emphasis of Neoliberalism on Free Markets, Competition, and Individual Responsibility

Discussing the emphases of neoliberalism, authors have mostly oriented on individualism, competition, free markets, financial capital and markets, privatization, the role of transnational elites, etc. The authors have mostly cited Harvey (2005, 2007), Peet (2007), or Brenner and Theodore (2002).

Hiemstra claims that neoliberalism emphasizes individual responsibility; the value of the neoliberal citizen is connected to her value as a rational-economic actor, as both consumer and client (2010: 91), and that neoliberalism fosters and thrives on indirect forms of governance, as the power to govern is dispersed among growing numbers of public and private institutions, organizations, and individuals (2010: 94).

O’Reilly (2010) cites D. Harvey, saying that Harvey (2007: 2) summarizes neoliberalism as a political economic theory that posits that humans are best off when an institutional framework of private property rights, free markets, and free trade is created and preserved by the state and humans are free to exercise their “individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills (2010: 183).

Among various authors that cite Harvey, Buckley (2013) emphasizes Harvey’s view of neoliberalism: Indeed, Harvey (2005: 11) broadly frames neoliberalism as a project primarily aimed at freeing capital from the constraints imposed by these “embedded liberalisms”, and more directly as a process ultimately focused on restoring the class power of economic elites (2013: 259). Hodkinson (2011) also cites Harvey, deconstructing the false notions about neoliberalism: What we are left with is a transnational capitalist class (Harvey, 2005), and a thoroughly liberal, anti-political, and state-centric version of civil society where politics in this realm is reduced to economic competition among competing elites, both “internal” and “external” (2011: 535).

Young (2010) sees neoliberalism as a political-ethical project, one that is aimed at the transformation of not just markets but also morals (2010: 202).

Narsiah (2010) states that neoliberalism is the presently hegemonic discourse of development (Harvey 2007; Peet 2007). This discourse articulates a number of economic measures: fiscal
austerity, export-oriented production and privatisation of public sector services among other strategies. Citing George (1999: 1), Narsiah also states that the primary goal of neoliberalism has been clearly described—“the market mechanism should be allowed to direct the fate of human beings” (2010: 375). So, neoliberalism is updated Smithian economics married with neoclassical economics and unleashed as a class project to facilitate accumulation by a few (George, 1999; Harvey 2007; Peet 2007). The application of neoliberalism globally is driven by key institutions, creating a homogenous and disciplined economic space (2010: 376).

The Free Association (2010) claims that neoliberalism, through its strategies of class decomposition, marketisation, the naturalisation of individualism and so on, forces an intensification of competition: that is, an intensification of the competitive struggle between every worker on the planet (2010: 1025).

Hess (2011) sees neoliberalism as the simple withdrawal of the state from markets and society via trade liberalization, privatization, reduced entitlements, and government deregulation. (…) However, scholars of neoliberalism have noted that the emphasis on enhancing and protecting markets has resulted in several paradoxical developments. Governments have sometimes become more involved in the economy as facilitators of the creative destruction of markets (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Jessop, 2002) (Hess, 2011: 1056). (…) Underlying the various approaches is an agreement that neoliberalism involves changes in ideology, policies, organizations, and practices that favor the expansion of markets and the weakening of public ownership and government regulation. The general favoring of markets and opposition to government intervention in markets in turn is associated with specific policy reforms, including the reduction of trade barriers, roll-back of environmental and other regulations, privatization of public enterprises, reduction and devolution of the welfare responsibilities of national governments, encouragement of entrepreneurship and individual responsibilization, and creation of new markets and industries. (Hess, 2011: 1057).

Prokolla (2013: 1322) states that neoliberalism is a contested term that has been used in multiple ways; in general, it refers to the idea that economic and social wellbeing is best achieved through free markets and minimal state interference, and when individuals are free to make autonomous choices (Ferguson 2009; Larner 2009).

3.2 “Actually Existing” Neoliberalisms

The concept of “actually existing” different kinds of neoliberalism can be found in the works of various authors that were published in Antipode 2010-2013 (Narsiah; Roberts and Mahtani; Varro; Mills and Mc Creary; Lauermann and Davidson). They recognized the existence of different kinds of neoliberalism in capitalism. They have mostly cited Brenner and Theodore (2002), Larner (2000), and Peck and Tickell (2002).

Narsiah (2010) states that “actually existing” neoliberalisms are always (some way or another) “hybrid or composite structures”, “path dependent” (Brenner and Theodore, 2002) and geographically uneven. Yet neoliberalism is not an event but contingent on the spatial context and the existing political and ideological apparatus (2010: 377).

A second view of “actually existing” neoliberalisms as “hybrid or composite structures”, also can be found in Roberts and Mahtani (2010: 249) since these authors, like Narsiah, have also cited Larner (2000), and Peck and Tickell (2002: 383). A third view of “actually existing”
neoliberalism is found in Varro (2010): Actually existing neoliberalism can be seen as a process of institutional creative destruction (Brenner and Theodore 2002) (2010: 257).

Mills and Mc Creary (2013) also cite Brenner and Theodore (2002: 349), who used the phrase “actually existing neoliberalism” to distinguish between practices that are termed neoliberal and neoliberal ideology. They also cite Larner: Neoliberalism is a powerful political project in part because of its ability to penetrate and alter other political projects such as those of marginalized social groups (Larner, 2000). Through control over access to funding, neoliberal state policies can compel marginalized groups to configure their claims within the terms of mainstream political discourse (2013: 1301).

Neoliberalism represents the contemporary process (institutional, political, economic, and discursive) by which this self-revolutionizing is achieved. Critical engagement with the messy landscape of actually existing neoliberalism(s) has much to contribute to our understanding of how capitalism becomes universalized and hegemonic (Lauermann, Davidson, 2013: 1278).

3.3 The Historical Context of Neoliberalism; “Roll-Back” and “Roll-Out” Neoliberalism

Short discussions about the historical context of neoliberalism (its ascendance and maturation), as well as discussions about the concept of “roll-back” and “roll-out” neoliberalism, can be found in the works of several authors: Corson, Breathnach, Belina et al., Waquar, Wiilhusen, Lauermann and Davidson, Hess, and Manderscheid. They have either given their own views about the historical context of neoliberalism and/or “roll-back” and “roll-out” neoliberalism, or they have mostly cited Harvey (2003, 2005), Peck and Tickell (2002), Brenner and Theodore (2002), or some other authors mentioned below.

With its ideological and material antipathy toward state regulation and influence, neoliberalism has become manifest not only in deregulation, but also in re-regulation designed to create new commodities and new governing structures that sustain neoliberalism, claims Corson (2010), who sees not deregulation, but also re-regulation in neoliberalism, that sustains neoliberalism itself (2010: 579). Neoliberalism’s emphasis on competition, along with its rolling back of state protection and the social contract, creates spaces in which local people are not often able to compete effectively in the face of much more powerful transnational interests (2010: 581). Emphasizing on the historical path of neoliberalism’s rise to prominence, Corson also states: With this groundwork laid, neoliberalism rose to prominence in mainstream economic policy in the 1980s, particularly under Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States (2010: 583). The intertwining of conservation and neoliberalism in Washington DC politics, through public/private/non-profit “partnerships”, has facilitated capital accumulation in the United States, as well as created new spaces for capitalist expansion overseas (2010: 596).

Breathnach (2010) also mentions the historical context of neoliberalism’s ascendance. However, he does not connect it to particular government(s) but to the changes in the modes of production, which affected the organization of the state: The transition, in the 1970s and 1980s, from the Fordist regime of accumulation built around the mass-producing welfare state to a post-Fordist regime of flexible neoliberalism is widely associated with a profound restructuring of state spatialities throughout western Europe, whereby the centralised Fordist welfare state, oriented to the spatial equalisation of living standards and employment opportunities within its
borders, was replaced by a decentralised neoliberal state wherein regional economies pursued their own economic interests through direct participation in the global economy (2010: 1181).

This historical change is recognized by Belina, B. et al. as well (2013): While Fordism was dominated by the social-democratic hegemonic project, neoliberalism in its actually existing versions is dominated by the neoliberal hegemonic project. It’s becoming hegemonic has to be understood as the result of successful struggles of neoliberalising initiatives that emerge from different positions within the existing relations of forces on various terrains—in our case the state apparatus university—in time and space (2013: 744).

Historical context was also recognized by Waquar (2012): In an era when neoliberalism has emerged as a global policy regime, furthering the interests of a new economic formation—global finance capital—to manifest as a new form of imperialism (Harvey, 2003, 2005; Peet, 2007; Smith, 2005) and geopolitical hegemony (Kohl, 2006; McFarlane and Hay, 2003), protests and social movements face the challenge of rising to the occasion in serious contestation (2012: 1061). Hess (2011) discusses the historical context of neoliberalism and its kinds (roll-back and roll-out neoliberalism): An influential historical approach to temporal variation has distinguished a “roll-back” period associated with the deregulation and privatization of the Reagan and Thatcher administrations of the 1980s and a “roll-out” period that followed (Peck and Tickell, 2002, 2007) (Hess, 2011: 1057-58) and also stakes: The concept is also used in a more encompassing historical and contrastive sense to refer to a broad political transition and/or hegemonic regime that succeeded Keynesianism, socialism, and import substituting developmentalism (2011: 1061).

Wilshusen (2010) recognizes the gradual acceptance of neoliberalism: processes of accommodation to neoliberalism are not so much a direct response to specific institutional reforms as a gradual accretion of practices in response to decades of state-sponsored development activities. In this sense, accommodation constitutes creative adaptation to state-led reform rather than passive acceptance (2010: 769). He also sees the true nature and intentions of neoliberalism: proponents of neoliberalism argue that unfettered markets are the best mechanisms for allocating goods and services within society. Such an approach seeks to minimize state-imposed regulations that might hinder flows of financial capital (2010: 769).

Lauermann and Davidson argue that there has been a gradual transition within the literature on neoliberalism, from “neoliberalism” being used as an analytical category to describe a relatively clear set of economic reforms that emerged in the late 1970s, towards a concept that is confusingly fragmented, used to reference almost all market-based governance projects (and many other contemporary governance phenomena). This shift in analytical form has led to problematic theoretical and political framings. Our core argument is that neoliberalism studies research increasingly tends to narrate particular economic and political projects into a paradoxically universalized project of neoliberal “-ization(s)” and “-ism(s)” (2013: 1278).

Since the 2007 financial meltdown, the neoliberal project has been in crisis. Even some of its most ardent supporters have begun to rethink its legitimacy (Peck et al. 2009; Quiggin 2010; Sheppard and Leitner, 2010). Yet neoliberalism remains hegemonic, underpinning a host of policy rhetoric and initiatives aimed at stemming recessionary declines (Crouch 2011; Demirovic, 2009) (Lauermann, Davidson, 2013: 1277).

The roll-back phase of neoliberalism represented an attempt to weaken policies associated with progressive, social liberalism and replace them with hegemonic neoliberalism, but to sell them as redistributive neoliberalism. Furthermore, the hegemonic aspect of social liberalism, as well
as some of the more popular programs associated with progressive social liberalism (such as health-care and social security), survived the transition. Because the roll-back was incomplete, the resulting political field was more diverse and complicated rather than wholly transformed. (Hess, 2011: 1061-62). He (2011) also mentioned the potential current problem for neoliberalism: Although the effects of the Great Recession on politics and economics are not yet known, some of the policies associated with the Democratic Party’s control of the US government in 2009 suggest a partial turn away from neoliberalism. Deficit spending, health-care reform, regulation of the financial sector, new educational programs, green economic development, and carbon-trading are all policy directions that suggest at least a partial return to higher levels of state intervention in markets, albeit ones that often cede significant ground to neoliberal approaches in the construction of policy instruments (2011: 1058-59).

Several changes in spatial policies have been described in connection with the paradigm shift to neoliberalism. Whereas the latter is most often connected with deregulation and dismantlement, also characterised as “creative destruction” (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 15ff) or “rollback neoliberalism”, a second aspect of this ideological framework has been more recently characterised as “roll-out neoliberalism” (Peck and Tickell, 2002: 384). This is a form entailing purposeful construction and consolidation of neoliberalised state forms, modes of governance and regulatory relations with a highly authoritarian impact (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Wacquant, 2009) (Manderscheid, 2012: 202).

Violence from above comes attendant to both “roll-back” neoliberalism, where regulatory transformation sees the state narrowly concerned with expanding markets to the peril of social provisions, and “roll-out” neoliberalism which concentrates on disciplining and containment of those marginalized by earlier stages of neoliberalization (Peck and Tickell, 2002) (Springer, 2011: 549).

3.4 Four Different but Overlapping Definitions of Neoliberalism

Hodkinson states that prior to the global financial crisis that erupted in 2008, neoliberalism was undoubtedly the driving ideational force behind capitalist globalisation (2011: 358). He also offers four different but overlapping definitions of neoliberalism: an ideological hegemonic project, selectively rooted in the free market and non-interventionist state philosophy of classical liberalism, and internationally propagated by think tanks and intellectuals like Hayek and Friedman in their assault on “egalitarian liberalism” (Peck and Tickell, 2007). Neoliberalism’s second definition—as a specific policy and program—has been usefully conceptualised as a process of “creative destruction” that aims to replace the national institutional arrangements and political compromises of Keynesian-Fordism with a “new infrastructure for market-oriented economic growth” set within a globalising and financialising economy (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 362). This has often comprised distinct if overlapping phases of “roll-back” and “roll-out” neoliberalism (Peck and Tickell, 2002). The former focuses on rolling-back state intervention and working class gains (regulations, subsidies, protections, ownership, services) through privatisation, market liberalisation and austerity. The rolling out phase is associated with a third definition of neoliberalism, namely as a new state form encompassing “new modes of regulation, new regimes of governance, with the aim of consolidating and managing both marketisation and its consequences” (Peck and Tickell, 2007: 33). The literature’s fourth definition of neoliberalism is as a form of governmentality, which follows Foucauldian ideas in emphasising how neoliberal governmental power operates in multiple sites and scales from the state down to the personal level “not through imposition or
repression but rather through cultivating the conditions in which non-sovereign subjects are constituted" as entrepreneurial, self-reliant, rational-economic actors (Hart, 2004: 92) (2011: 358-359).

3.5 “A True Nature of Neoliberalism”

The section of this paper named “A True Nature of Neoliberalism”, together with the section about “Neoliberal Utopia”, comprises the harshest critique of neoliberalism found in the analyzed texts. The authors have a strong critical stance towards neoliberalism, and they put in front of the reader only the negative aspects of neoliberalism (they have not found a single positive aspect).

In defining neoliberalism, Duffy and Moore (2010) cite Cox: Critical scholars defined it as a hegemonic project that produces a “nebuleuse” of ideas, institutions and organisations which create conditions favourable to neoliberalism so that it appears as natural, neutral and as if there were no alternative (Cox, 1996). They also cite Brenner and Theodore (2002: 356-358), who suggest that, to understand actually existing neoliberalism we must explore the path-dependent, contextually specific interactions between inherited regulatory landscapes and emergent forms of neoliberalism (2010: 745).

Ilcan and Phillips (2010) share a similar view on the true nature and intentions of neoliberalism as Wilshusen: We understand neoliberalism as a governmental rationality that shapes conduct by re-positioning and deploying the values and norms of the market as the principal means by which people measure themselves and others. (…) That is, neoliberalism entails a cultural reform, where economic liberalization, privatization, and market mechanisms become key instruments that privilege and oblige particular conceptions of knowledge, capacities and actions for social transformation. Such rationalities and practices render spaces, capacities and conduct amenable to the objectives of “global government” (2010: 847).

The Free Association also recognize totalitarian tendencies and populist behavior behind neoliberalism: Neo-liberalism is non-negotiable. It’s a totalitarianism that doesn’t think of itself as based on belief or principle, but simply on a question of efficiency, of getting the job done. (2010: 1026). Populism also dovetails neatly into the moments of piety that pass for “politics” under neo-liberalism. One minute we’re asking the G8 to solve hunger in Africa, the next we’re condemning young mothers for feeding their children junk food. (2010: 1028). They have also recognized that neoliberalism is not so directly connected with climate change: While it was easy to argue that neo-liberalism had directly caused the massive increase in global poverty and the harshening restrictions on our lives, it was harder to attribute the causes of climate change so directly. (2010: 1031). However, for them, there is no doubt which ideology is behind the actions of global financial institutions: There’s an echo of this in the way institutions like the IMF and the World Bank make loans conditional on “good governance”, that is, full-blooded neo-liberalism in the shape of opened markets, unrestricted capital flows etc. (2010: 1031).

Demirovic (2011) sees neoliberalism as a strategy to change the relations of force within the power bloc, and in particular the relationship between the state apparatuses and the subaltern classes. The former neocorporatist compromise between the state, capital and the trade unions is dissolved through more or less radical political measures, and the balance of forces is shifted in favour of the bourgeois class (2011: 47).

Springer (2011) recognizes the tendencies of neoliberalism, which seeks to: eradicate interference with markets; stifle collective initiative and public expenditure via privatization of
common assets; advocate individualism, competitiveness, and economic self-sufficiency as fundamental virtues; attenuate or nullify social transfer programs; and actively “recruit” the poor into a flexible labour regime of low-wage employment (Peck 2001; Peck and Tickell 2002) (2011: 555). Whether neoliberalism is understood as aligned to authoritarian/archy or democracy/anarchy depends to some extent upon the context in question. However, if empirically neoliberalism seems to do well in democratic states this speaks to the contemporary abuse of democracy’s etymology. Those favouring institutional versions of “democracy” (ie demarchy) will be less inclined to associate neoliberalism with authoritarianism. Yet seen through the anarchic lens of radical democracy, the authoritarianism of neoliberalism becomes evident, as the aggregations and deliberations of “liberal democracy” strip away individual freedoms via institutionalization (2011: 555-56).

Lauermann and Davidson also cite D. Harvey and his view of neoliberalism: Reiterating his general thesis that neoliberalism represents a moment of creative destruction, Harvey (2007:42) argues there is something fundamental in capitalism that connects particular neoliberal forms: an historical-geographical trajectory of capital accumulation that is based in increasing connectivity across space and time but marked by deepening uneven geographical developments. This unevenness must be understood as something actively produced and sustained by processes of capital accumulation, no matter how important the signs may be of residuals of past configurations set up in the cultural landscape and the social world (2013: 1279-80). Harvey’s (2005, 2007) understanding of neoliberalism as based on class conflict, creative destruction and accumulation by dispossession places neoliberalism as the newest stage of capitalism. Likewise, Brenner and Theodore (2002) tied neoliberalism to capitalism while discussing the former as a moment of creative destruction. (Lauermann, Davidson, 2013: 1285). As Peck (2004) emphasizes (see also Peck and Tickell 2002), neoliberalisation cannot be understood as a parallel, harmonious process. Neoliberalism does not exist in pure form. Instead, it can be best understood as a loose and contradictory ideological framework, evolving through conflict with the wider “external” sociocultural world and its “internal” authoritarian and libertarian constituencies (Peck 2004:403) (Prokolla, 2013: 1322).

3.6 “A Neoliberal Utopia”

Two authors have also discussed the anti-political tradition and the notion of a “universal consensus in capitalism,” which can be referred to as “neoliberal utopia”. Springer (2011) accentuates the anti-political tradition (exemplified by neoliberalism), that fears the people in its radical manifestation, not as das Volk shaped by the state, but as die Leute, the people in their bare life liberty and irreducible plurality. The convergence of homo sacer and the presupposition of equality turns existing power relations on their head and overcomes the dangers of “militant particularisms” (Harvey, 1996) (2011: 532). He then refers to the utopian notion of a cosmopolitan global village and the end of history: Faith in universal consensus is not only antipolitical, it is also the exact mode that constitutes utopian thinking, as is exemplified by neoliberalism’s grand narratives of a harmonious “global village” and the “end of history” (Fukuyama, 1992) (2011: 533). Glassman’s (1999) conception of the internationalization of the state recognizes, distinctions between so-called “local” and “global” elites have become increasingly blurred under neoliberalism (Springer, 2011: 549).

Our starting point for understanding neoliberal projects is therefore to see neoliberalisation as part of the ideological process by which capitalist logics are universalized through discursive, institutional, and policy innovation. Echoing other historically specific capitalist logics like Fordism, neoliberalism is not ideology per se, but a symptomatic expression of and symbolization in the capitalist symbolic (Lauermann, Davidson, 2013: 1284). (…) This insight
is key to understanding how neoliberalism operates principally as an ideological component of the capitalist symbolic: capitalist practices and relationships are universalized through neoliberal discursive, institutional, and policy work. At this point though, it is necessary to develop our understanding of the parallax relations between capitalism (as universal) and neoliberalisms (as particulars) (2013: 1284).

4 CONCLUSION

After studying the definitions and the accentuated characteristics of neoliberalism found in the texts from *Antipode* that had the word “neoliberalism” in their title or among the key words, we have found that the most important points about how the authors of analyzed texts see neoliberalism can be summarized as follows:

- Neoliberalism is based on free markets, free flow of capital, free trade;
- Neoliberalism promotes individualism, atomizing the population;
- Neoliberalism is a type of authoritarianism, a masque behind liberal democracy;
- Neoliberalism is a type of totalitarianism, based on efficiency, and it is non-negotiable;
- Neoliberalism has populist tendencies;
- Neoliberalism treats citizen as a client and customer;
- Neoliberalism establishes competition between every worker on the planet;
- Neoliberalism shifts the balance of power in the society in favor of the bourgeois class;
- Neoliberalism wants to attenuate or nullify social transfer programs; it promotes an active “recruitment” of the poor into a flexible labor regime of low-wage employment;
- Different variations of neoliberalism exist in capitalism: in reality there is one capitalism and different kinds of neoliberalism;
- Existing kinds of neoliberalism are hybrid and are composite structures; they are path dependent and geographically uneven;
- “Roll-back” and “roll-out” types of neoliberalism exist as different phases in the development of neoliberalism; the “roll-back” phase precedes the “roll-out” phase;
- Neoliberalism is the ideological component of the capitalist symbolic;
- Neoliberalism universalizes capitalist practices and relationships through discursive, institutional, and policy work.

5 REFERENCES


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