Include you!

Social Inequalities Shaping Physical Spaces
Included you!

Social Inequalities Shaping Physical Spaces

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Thank you capitalist world for giving me a lot of topics to write about. Thank you again, capitalist world, because of you I don’t have to write about some context where people are all the same. Such a boring context! Thank you again and again and again, capitalist world, for creating urbane and inequality, for creating New York, London, São Paulo, Shanghai, Lagos, Paris, and other cities. Thank you for being so cruel but at the same time so interesting.

My sincerely thanks to John Heintz, which with his patience, wisdom and knowledge guided me along the way. Thanks for this whole period of learning Mr. Heintz. I will take it for my whole life. Thanks my wife and parents for supporting me in every single moment of these years abroad. I love you guys.
INTRODUCTION
From 2004 until 2010 I lived in São Paulo. Actually I moved to that city due to the better opportunities that I could find for my career. As an architect there is no better environment such as big urban centers. I mean, as an architect fascinated by huge urban centers. I grew up in a southern city of Brazil, which is a small and not so metropolitan urban center within the Brazilian context. As a child I used to draw and think about this huge avenue full of buildings with shining glass and people wearing formal outfits walking on the street. Oddly or not, I’ve always seen people in my dreaming avenue.

As time goes by I started my bachelor in architecture, always with the image of that avenue in my mind. My first internship was in an office back in my home town. By that time I’ve realised that working in projects within such a ‘small’ context wouldn’t materialize my childish dreams. A year after I had the opportunity to do a summer internship in a big architectural firm in São Paulo. Oh god! Those guys were materializing my avenue. Skyscrapers out of shining glass, stunning curves covered in aluminium, people in formal outfits, and so on. Everything that I’ve dreamed with my entire life was there. So I took a step further and decided to move out to that city, São Paulo.

Seeking for my child’s dream, I came across with a different reality, where my dream would have some more elements than just the avenue and that people. There were also the cleaning crew, the crowded public transport, the traffic jam, the hawk (by the way, a bunch of them), the pickpocket, the homeless, the door-keeper, the unemployed, the hiker, the black, the white, the yellow, the blue, and so on. All kinds of people inhabiting that same dreamed avenue. Even though, in a different condition that I used to dream with, the avenue and the shining glass buildings were still there. Moreover, that people who I envisioned before was there, but not alone.

How can my avenue still work even though with all these different people using it? That was my first fascination referring to big urban centers. How can life go on in this chaotic environment?

Traveling around the world my dream felt apart. I realised that cities are not just created by buildings, but by people. I’ve realised that, different than a doctor which is in most of the cases is needed by society, architects are not. People can build and live in the environments created by them. The architect creates a world just for his own sake. All in all, I’ve realised that architecture is conceived
for someone and the architect should know who the users are before starting a
design. Otherwise, that avenue would never be possible.

The word ‘architecture’ comes from Greek ‘arkhitekton’ which means the
chief builder, carpenter or mason, in other words the one which has the expertise
and technique to build. In its sheer meaning it has no direct relation with the one
who plans or designed, rather the one who know how to build.

I believe that architecture is not just about buildings, master plans, mod-
els, papers and images. Architecture is all about people and their relation with the
inhabitable space. There is no reason for architecture to exist besides its users,
besides people. But people can exist and survive without architecture as a tradi-
tional discipline. In my opinion architecture has lost its pure essence, long before
arts, by acquiring symbolic qualities and later, especially in our capitalist society,
when it became a commodity.

The following research was developed at TU Delft, as part of the master
graduation year within Explore Lab.

Explore Lab is fascination driven research and architecture studio. Fascina-
tion differently than obsession can be seen as a powerful attraction. Meanwhile
obsession is the domination of one’s thoughts or feelings by a persistent idea,
image or desire. Fascination gives freedom to the fascinated one. Fascination
trails to research and new knowledge. Obsession becomes frustration in most of
the cases.

I am fascinated for urban environments, the city itself and its inhabitants
whom I like to call as city-makers. My background gives me an opportunity to look
towards the city from a different angle. A point of view where most of the times
architecture is not traditionally planned. A position from where city-makers oper-
ate more than plan.

In a world context where only 20% of the urban spaces are planned the
other 80% really draws my attention. I see them as a vast and rich environment
which even though not planned by official architects has a super complex and
intriguing architecture. One could say that there are more ‘pure’ architects, as the
original meaning of the word proclaims, in the informal than in the formal world.

"A space is not a place until it is used for a
purpose other than which the designer
intended."
David Engwicht

"People can inhabit anything. And they can
be miserable in anything and ecstatic in
anything. Architecture has nothing to do
with it."
Rem Koolhaas

"City is not a problem, city is a solution".
Jamie Lerner

This research deals with some kinds of issues that are an emergence, such
as the overurbanization process around the globe, the insurrection of a new social
class, social exclusion and the effects of those conditions within the cities. All in
all, this research needs more than just one single research question.

In order to focus the research on the Brazilian context it was needed be-
fore a short global panorama on the urbanization process. This process even
though different in every country or region has more similarities than discrep-
cies. It is a global tendency result of capitalist system.

The world is becoming more urbanized every day. Consequently cities
have never played such an important role for human activities, once never before
in human history there were more people living in urban centers than rural areas.
Consequently this new urban order will reflect upon the city’s inhabitants and
spaces and has an ultimate price to be paid. It brings together the increasing of
inequality within and between cities. Most of the urban centers, no matter their
size, have no plan and no infra-structure to house new inhabitants and provide
them basic services.

From this perspective the first research question arises. What are the
causes/effects of overurbanization in our current context?

In modern sociology concepts to classify the population according to social class within a binary framework cannot be legitimated anymore. To separate an entire society in two distinguished group, as Marx did, bourgeoisie and proletariat, cannot be totally accepted mainly because the relations between and within classes have become more complex that a simplistic categorization has not the efficiency to describe individuals or entire groups anymore. Of course, from a distant point of view the capitalist world still provide us with few specifics group, but once a closer analysis is made those big categories doesn’t make sense anymore. We could make an analogy stating that the technique which categorizes the population into few big groups is like an orthogonal grid (as a bracket) where individuals or groups can be precisely place within it. However, modern society, due its complex relationships and hierarchies, works more as a rhizomatic structure where individuals or groups can be placed in more than one spot and their relations can be drawn in all directions.

The concept of ‘class’ is one of the most controversial and contested concepts in sociological theory. In general, the concept of ‘class’ addresses understandings of economic inequality. There are some social transformations going on around the globe that bring to life a new understanding of social class, once the socio-economic relations are much more complex than ever before. Moreover, these transformations have a severe impact in the way that cities are being shaped nowadays.

Brazil has nowadays a social class structure typical of the capitalist mode of production in which prevails widely employed people. In this scenario one can found two distinguished classes: dominant and dominated. On the other hand the idea of a new class, called ‘new middle class’, has become a common ground in the media together with the discourse of many Brazilian politicians.

There is a sort of a national celebration because millions of Brazilians have reported an improvement in their income and ascended to the higher consumption patterns. The rules used to categorize social classes separate the population by its consumption capacity. In Brazil these rules are an instrument of economic segregation. The State makes use of a survey that verifies the position of an individual or a group within a specific social class by appropriating scales that use factors as education level, occupation and income, in general types of data easy to obtain. Moreover, the classification criteria adopted are less analytical and more descriptive. Individuals are located in the social pyramid despite the lack of a consensus of the variables that contributes to determine the social class.

The workers themselves perceive the inadequacy on the method that verifies the social stratification which allows such distortions. After all, the most traditional way that people see as the opposition between rich and poor, is the one based on the control of machines, tools and other means of production. Common sense indicates that any valid assessment for understanding social classes stems from the understanding of how social relationships of production occur and the position of the people within them.

The misconception of ‘new middle class’ used by the Brazilian government obscures the fact that social mobility in the lower classes occurred by the incorporation of millions of unemployed workers to productive activities, as well as the increasing of payroll and wages, starting from the minimum wage set by the government. There is a middle class very different from the one which attends the imaginary, closer to ordinary workers.

Changing social positions and making the dominated class believe that they are becoming richer is the most desirable context for the dominant class and the State. The logic is that the more money to the people, the more consumption and production, consequently the more tax to the State and profits to the dominant class, moreover less social manifestations against them. However, this logic hides the working relations, and in the end everything remains the same. Two distinguished class, the dominant and the dominated.

The second research question can be seen as a set of three questions, regarding to the Brazilian ‘new middle class’, in other words, the social mobility. Why these people are classified as new middle class? What are the hypothetical and ulterior motivations to this? What are the processes and forces that position them in such a category?

In our current days, political and economic games placed the city in a level of commodity, that is, in merchandise level. This process leads to drastic consequences to the poorest parcel of the population and the urban spaces. The exclusion in space affects directly the social exclusion once disqualifies the poorest individuals from the formal city and society, thus characterizing them as ‘disposable’ beings.
The current capitalist system imposed to the urban centers new contempor-ary features. Cities are now centers of capital production and the place for movements of goods. Consequently they became a space of consumption. Within a capitalist logic, the spaces within the contemporary metropolises now have a market value and accessing them is a process nothing democratic and unequal. The exclusion is also given by the ability of accessing them. The commodification of the city is the key factor in the exacerbation of misery, poverty, income inequality and violence in the contemporary world. In other words the commodity city has a very specific client.

Social issues as social exclusion, inequality, poverty and violence are close-ly tied to urban issues more than ever, as the world population tends to become hegemonically urban. A complex approach on urban poverty and spatial segregation leads us to a more responsible analysis on the Brazilian cities. Especially in large urban centers and metropolitan areas one can verify high levels of residential segregation of neighbourhoods, each one fostering its own space’s occupation by a specific class.

The last research question has to with the effects of social inequality on the shape of the cities. This brings to light also issues as social exclusion and segregation in spatial, social and economic terms. More than a research question it can also be read as problem statement. The capitalist world through in-equality is shaping the contemporary city. On the other hand, a very impor-tant question follows this statement What are the implications of social inequality on the spatial conditions of the cities?

By the end of the day some of these questions won’t be easy to answer, others won’t have an answer. On the other hand the issues addressed in this work should be, at least, problematized once we are all experiencing a new urban order that will have severe implications in our daily life and for the society as a whole. Social inequality is a major concern in a world where more people are sharing the same spaces every day. The relationships within society and the spaces which we live in have become much more complex. Don’t forget that, despite all social and economic differences between people, we still have to live in a common ground, as known as THE CITY. And maybe that avenue, which I referred in the begin-ning, will never be materialized. Meanwhile the last childish remnants of it will persist only in the imaginary.

“All cities are mad: but the madness is gallant. All cities are beautiful: but the beauty is grim.”

Christopher Morley
A slum in the 'World of Ticks' by Almir Correa.
The slums are next, underneath and on top of mountains and floating islands of rubbish alien. Oddly enough ticks are slum dwellers which use much of the technology forbidden for the cities' ticks.
from everywhere to the cities

In our days cities are more important for human activities than ever before. Few years ago a city received a new inhabitant. Maybe a child was born there or a peasant moved in from rural lands. What exactly happened does not matter. The important is the fact that from that point there were people living in urban than rural areas. It is as relevant to human history as the transition from stone to bronze age or even as the industrial revolution. No one can date this event precisely, but a symbolic day was set out, May 23rd of 2007, called as ‘Urban Millenium’ or ‘tipping point’. UNDESA – UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision, Highlights, Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP.210,” last modified 2009, United Nations, http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2008/wpp2008_highlights.pdf.

Every day the world that we live in becomes more urbanized. In 2015, 550 cities will carry the burden of housing more than 1million people, while in 1950 there were 86 cities in the same condition. Due to the fact that rural population has reached its limit (it has been also decreased) and the continuous growth of the world’s population, which will reach its apex with a number around 9billion inhabitants n 2050, cities will have to absorb this over amount of people somehow. Nowadays cities all over the globe receive 4million new inhabitants per month. (UNDESA, 2009.)

At the same time that new cities arise and consolidated ones enlarge no one dares to predict, with high precision, if these urban concentrations are sustainable or not in biological, ecological and economical terms. The only certainty is that they interweave new and extraordinary networks, hierarchies and consequently spaces. Take for instance these new Chinese megalopolises where cities spread and can be the first stage of the emergence of “…a continuous urban corridor stretching from Japan/North Korea to West Java.” Yue-man Yeung and Fu-chen Lo, Emerging World Cities in Pacific Asia. (Tokyo: Brookings, 1996), 41. It can become the physical and demographical apotheosis of the history on urban evolution.

Meanwhile, “…the price of this new urban order, however, will be increasing inequality within and between cities of different sizes and economic specializations.” Mike Davis, Planet of Slums. (New York: Verso, 2006), 7. Consequently this will reflect in their inhabitants and spaces. In this new urban order the small cities will take the larger amount of people even though the megacities are the ‘cherries of the cake’. Around 3/4 of the upcoming world’s population growth will be located in secondary
cities or small urbanized centers. Most of these smaller urban concentrations have no plan and no infra-structure to settle new inhabitants and provide even the basic services for them. At this moment this is the only certainty and predictable fact.

**fusion**

This rapid and massive growth of urban centers have never been experienced in human history before and along with it a question raises concerned to the territorial relation between urban and rural environments. Which one is moving towards the other?

In his studies on the migration process in China, Gregory Guldin states that “Villages become more like market and xiang towns, and county towns and small cities become more like large cities.” [Gregory Guldin, *What’s a Peasant To Do?: Village Becoming Town in Southern China.* (Boulder: Westview, 2001), 14-17.]

Magdalena Nock draws a predictable relation between globalization and the urbanization process when saying that “Globalization has increased the movement of people, goods, services, information, news, products and money, and thereby the presence of urban characteristics in rural areas and of rural traits in urban centers.” [Deborah Bryceson, Cristóbal Kay, and Jomooij, *Disappearing Peasantries?: Rural Labour in Africa, Asia and Latin America.* (London: ITDG, 2000), 173.]

“I have never felt salvation in nature. I love cities above all.”

Michelangelo

In fact, in most of the cases, rural people do not need to migrate to urbanized centers, because these centers migrate towards them. Consequently people who do not need to move to the cities suffer the shock of the urbanization process. The cities are swallowing them and their culture.

**sink or swim**

In practical means it seems impossible to stop or soften the aggressive
progress of the urban environment and the capitalist life-style. That ‘bucolic’ time when people could live in the country side with no straight connections with the cities are over. Succumb or succeed, ‘sink or swim’\(^1\). In other words, there is no alternative route.

"In most of the developing world, however, city growth lacks the powerful manufacturing export engines of China, Korea, and Taiwan, as well as China’s vast inflow of foreign capital.\(^1\)" (Davis, 2006, 13.) Consequently the size of a city’s economy has few relations with the size of its population and vice-versa. The big industrials cities in the South Hemisphere since middle 80’s have been suffering a dis-industrialization process. Factories are closing due several reasons meanwhile their population keep growing.

This phenomenon can be clearly noticed in São Paulo, a city which has been driven by industry. In the first decades of the 20th century thousands of immigrants came to the city annually, mostly in search for jobs in the factories of Bom Retiro, Luz and newer industrial neighbourhoods such as Mooca and Barra Funda. Today the industry is no longer the most important activity in the city. In 1920 the industrial sector accounted for 55% of all wealth produced in the city. Currently the city has established itself as hub of services and its industries represent only 17% of the wealth.

The deindustrialization process in this city, and in most of similar cases, left behind, in spatial terms, entire empty industrial neighbourhoods, overgrown of unused industrial sheds. Some places also have a railway track, which is still in use for, rather cargo, but people.

In Africa, the situation was paradoxical. Meanwhile its economy was shrinking, contracting, Africa sustained a 4-5% annual urbanization rate growth. UNDESA – UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “World Urbanization Prospects: The 2001 Revision,” last modified 2002, United Nations, http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wup2001/WUP2001report.htm. Deborah Bryceson gives us an overall idea about what occurred in Africa. "One by one national governments, gripped in debt, became subject to structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionality. Subsidized, improved agricultural input packages and rural infrastructural building were drastically reduced. As the peasant ‘modernization’ effort in Latin American and African Nations was abandoned, peasant farmers were subjected to the international financial institutions’ ‘sink or swim’ economic strategy. National market deregulation pushed agricultural producers into global commodity markets where middle as well as poor peasants found it hard to compete. SAPs and economic liberalization policies represented the convergence of the worldwide forces of de-agrarianization and national policies promoting de-peasantization.\(^2\) (Bryceson, Kay, and Jomooij, 2000, 304-305.)

There are few other causes that made the peasants to move to urban areas, as “... drought, inflation, rising interest rates, falling commodity prices, illness [...] rapacious warlords and the chronic civil war, stimulated by economic dislocations of debt-imposed structural adjustment or foreign economic predators..." (Davis, 2006, 15-16.)

reproduction of poverty

The cities even though with their decadent economies and lacking of infrastructure had taken for themselves the resultant product of the agrarian crisis around the globe. As consequence in most of the developing countries one would find what wouldn’t be expected, labor-intensive deindustrialized cities and capital-intensive rural areas. This means that overurbanization is “…driven by the reproduction of poverty and not by the supply of jobs.” (Davis, 2006, 16.)

Almost all of the cities in the south hemisphere suffered more with the

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\(^1\) This expression alludes to the former barbaric practice of throwing a suspected witch into deep water, often weighted down. In case of sinking, the victim died; in case of swimming, the victim was considered in league with the devil and therefore was executed. * (idioms.yourdictionary.com)
deindustrialization than the industrialization process. Jacinta Prunty compares Dublin’s situation back in the industrial era with the modern slums, saying that in both cases the “...slums were not a product of the industrial revolution.” Jacinta Prunty, _Dublin Slums, 1800-1925: A Study in Urban Geography_. (Dublin: Irish Academic, 1998), ix.

The global forces which take people out of rural areas and settle them within the urban centers seems to keep the urbanization process running in track even though cities are weakened by economic depression. “As a result, rapid urban growth in the context of structural adjustment, currency devaluation, and State retrenchment has been an inevitable recipe for the mass production of slums.” (Davis, 2006, 17.)

“Traveling, you realize that differences are lost: each city takes to resembling all cities, places exchange their form, order, distances, a shapeless dust cloud invades the continents.”

Italo Calvino

the growth of informality

Since the 70’s the growth of slums in the hemisphere bellow Equator Line has overcome urbanization growth. The formal sector supplies no more than 20% of the new housing stock. In this scenario people need to build their homes informally. In other words, the annual housing deficit in the formal sector is translated to a correspondent increase in informal housing units in the slums around the world. Urban planner Priscilla Connoly claims that “…informal subsistence work has always accounted for a large proportion of total employment.”


As Gautam Chatterjee suggest, if this tendency remains, we will have no more cities, just slums. Gautam Chatterjee, “Consensus versus Confrontation,” _Habitat Debate_, June 2002, 8:2. Following this tendency, Mike Davis has depicted in a few words the future of the cities as “...rather than being made out of glass and steel as envisioned by earlier generations of urbanists, are instead largely constructed out of crude bricks, straw, recycled plastic, cement blocks, and scrap wood. Instead of cities of light
soaring toward heaven, much of the twenty-first-century urban world squats in squalor, surrounded by pollution, excrement, and decay. Indeed, the one billion city-dwellers who inhabit postmodern slums might well look back with envy at the ruins of the sturdy mud homes of Çatal Hüyük in Anatolia, erected at the very dawn of city life nine thousand years ago.” (Davis, 2006, 19.)

origins of the Brazilian favelas

The correspondent word for slum in the Brazilian context is ‘favela’. The favelas in Brazil were originated in the city of Rio de Janeiro, federal capital in the mid-nineteenth century. Social changes such as the decline of the coffee production in the Vale do Paraíba in the state of São Paulo, the abolition of slavery through the Lei Áurea, or Golden Law, in 1888, and the beginning of industrial development in the country brought many former slaves and Europeans, mainly from Portugal, to the city.

The misfit population growth swelled the central area of Rio de Janeiro. In this area, traditionally, there were located houses which rooms were rented to low-income families. Each room, called cortiços, serving one family with shared sanitary facilities. At the same time the current mayor, Cândido Barata Ribeiro, began a persecution against this type of dwelling, which culminated in the demolition of the cortiço Cabeça de Porco, in 1893. The dump displaced around 2000 people. Part of them got a permission to build their homes in a hill situated on the harbour zone, as known as Morro da Providência. Meanwhile a group of soldiers who fought in Revolta da Armada received a permission to build their houses in Morro de Santo Antônio, a spot right at the city center of Rio de Janeiro. Thus the first clusters arose, which later came to be called as favelas. Interesting is the fact that the first land appropriations of the hills were under the consent of the government.

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2 ‘Vale’ in Portguese means ‘Valley’.
3 Cortiço is also used to refer to a cork cylinder within which bees produce wax and honey.
4 ‘Morro’ in Portuguese means ‘Hill’.
5 A movement of rebellion promoted by units of the Brazilian Navy against the government of Marshal Floriano Peixoto, supposedly backed by monarchist opposition to the recent installation of the Republic, as described Miriam Santana Ilza, in ‘Revolta da Armada’.
In 1897 around 20,000 soldiers who had returned from the Guerra de Canudos to the national capital, Rio de Janeiro, were living in the already inhabited Morro da Providência, as pre-arranged with the government. During the conflict government troops settled in an area of Canudos called Morro da Favela which name comes from the plant that covered the region, Cnidoscolus quercifolius, popularly called favela. Due to the fact that people who came back from the conflict were inhabiting Morro da Providência in Rio de Janeiro, it became known as Morro da Favela, in reference to the place settled by them during the war.


The first current favela was recorded in early 1920, although there were similar clusters since the nineteenth century. The housing crisis of the 1940s forced the poorest citizens of cities to raise hundreds of shacks in the suburbs. At the time favelas replaced cortiços as the main type of dwelling for this population. The booming growth of favelas began in the 1940s with the industrialization process of the government of Getúlio Vargas, until 1970 when favelas had expanded beyond the urban area of Rio de Janeiro. Julio Cesar Pino, “Sources on the History of Favelas in Rio de Janeiro,” Latin American Research Review, 32:3 (1997): 111-122.

Most of the current favelas began in the 1970s, when strong economic growth during the Brazilian military regime initiated a rural exodus of workers from poorer states of Brazil towards richer regions, which formed large communities in terms of population.

Even though these clusters were created under different conditions but with similar ending results, the term favela has become generally attributed to any impoverished area of a city. (Mattos, 2007.)

There are conflicting studies about the number of people living in Brazilian's favelas. According to official data collected during the 2010 Census, about 11.4 million people live in substandard clusters compound by at least 50 people, which

6 A war between the Brazilian army and members of a grassroots movement of socio-religious background, led by Antônio Conselheiro, between 1896 and 1897, in the community of Canudos, northeast of Brazil, according to José Calasans, 1959.

### origins of the favelas in São Paulo

From the 1940s the process of favelization began in the city of São Paulo. The first favelas were established in Mooca (Favela do Oratório), Ibirapuera (Favela Ordem e Progresso) and Barra Funda (Favela Vila Prudente, which still sits there). In the following decades this process has exponentially accelerated due to the huge influx of migrants from different regions of Brazil, especially from the Northeast, searching for work and better living conditions. São Paulo 450 anos. “Territórios Demarcados: Favelas e Condomínios.” Accessed August 27, 2013. www.aprenda450anos.com.br/450anos/vila_metrpolpe/3-1_territorios_demarcados.asp. With no place to live, they occupied vacant lots without any infrastructure. From that the favelas emerged in the city, in the complete abandonment of public policies.

The city of São Paulo always had part of its population living in poor housing conditions. In the second half of the nineteenth century reports produced by the municipality pointed out to the precarious sanitary conditions of the cortiços around the central districts of the city. The major concern by the municipality’s authorities at the time was that epidemics and pestilences, confined to these localities, could spread to other regions and thus reach various segments of the Paulistana society. Maria Ruth Amaral de Sampaio and Paulo Cesar Xavier Pereira, “Habitação em São Paulo,” Estudos Avançados, 2003, 17:48, 167-183. Such concern prompted the first actions in the field of hygienism and sanitarism, being recommended the demolition of the cortiços and the construction of dwell outside the urban perimeter. There was no concern, however, with the establishment of public policies that meet the poorest segment of society.

Reflecting on the complex web of relationships between public and private interests that permeate the history of occupation of urban spaces in São Paulo, the authorities delegated to private the arrangements related to the occupation of the territory. Meanwhile, voicing the intention of segregate the people who inhabited these sub-housing and being satisfied just by pushing them away from the city center, without tackling the problem of housing shortage. This mode of action of the government would remain substantially unchanged during most of the twentieth century.

With the demographics growth of the city the problem of substandard housing began to reach even the larger strata of the population. Around the central neighbourhoods a huge ring of suburbs emerged, interspersed with empty and occupied spaces. They were often constituted by houses or shacks built by the residents themselves, with large concentrations of poverty and the lack or insufficiently provision of services, infrastructure and public facilities. It is especially in those regions that the favelas of São Paulo are more concentrated.

(Sampaio and Pereira, 2003)

In 1957 it was estimated at 50,000 the number of favelados in São Paulo, occupying 8.488 shacks in 141 sub-housing cores. A census conducted between 1973 and 1974 pointed out to a population of nearly 72,000 inhabitants, that was 1.1% of the total population, living in 14.500 shacks over 525 slums. A number considerably lower than 150.000 people estimated by the Movimento Universitário de Desfavelamento in 1962. Compared to the survey conducted in 1957 the census of 1973/1974 indicated a decrease in the average size of the favelas, from 60 to 30 shacks, featuring a typology of small favelas scattered around the urban area. Quite different from the Rio de Janeiro’s typology of favelas, where the topography and configuration of land ownership enabled the formation of complex clusters of favelas. Suzana Pastermark, Espaço e População nas Favelas de São Paulo. (São Paulo: FAU-USP, 2002).

A research done in 2000 indicated that putting together the population of favelas, cortiços and other irregular dwellings, more than half of the São Paulo’s inhabitants live in dwellings classified as sub-housing. Chico Góis and Soraya Agége, “Metade

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8 A good example is the Favela Paraisópolis, which is displaced within a ortogonal grid, created before by a private company which sold the plots. Due some reasons, these plots were illegally occupied and almost the whole enterprise became the favela. The paradox, in this specific case, is that the illegal settlement made use of the existing infra-structure, as roads and sewage system left behind by the developers.
9 ‘Favelados’ is the Portuguese word for ‘Slum Dwellers’.
10 A student movement created is the 70s to discuss over favelas.
In 2007 the city of São Paulo had 1538 favelas occupying an area of 30km², that was 0.5% of the total area, according to IBGE. The number of families inhabiting favelas in the city was 400,000, that means a number in between 1.6 to 2 million people, approximately 16% of the population.

In a 2009 research, it was found that the number of favelas had stopped growing and it was experiencing a decrease, although the favela population was still growing. Currently the city of São Paulo has the largest amount of favelas in Brazil and the second largest population of favelados in the country, behind just by the Cidade Maravilhosa, Rio de Janeiro.

According to a survey done by the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo in 2011, along with information from the Municipal Housing Department, there are about 22 favelas located in prime areas of the city. Some of them have more than 5 decades. Most are located in the southwest vector, in the neighbourhoods of Vila Mariana, Campo Belo, Planalto Paulista, Moema, Aclimação, Brooklin and Vila Madalena. Situated in narrow streets, away from the grand boulevards, they remain unnoticed for the general population.

"My world is the favela, but what worries me is not only the favela of Vila Prudente, but its totality. I see this phenomenon as an effect, which cause is not into it. And this represents the system very well. It is part of the capitalist world’s system. What I see:"

11 Marvelous City is how Rio de Janeiro is popularly known.
favelas, poverty in the countryside, poverty in all sectors, and I attribute the cause of the favelas, to all this misery. I condemn the system. I condemn the conservatives of this system who do not accept neither change nor structures’ renewal.”

Manoel Francisco Espíndola

The Brazilian government defines favelas as housing clusters built on land without infrastructure, such as sanitation, health clinics, access routes or public transportation, and usually are presented densely populated. Most often they arise from the illegal occupation of public areas or even private ones.

In larger cities, the lack of access to land with minimum conditions of habitability caused many favelas to arise in risky and environmentally dangerous sites, which may have, for example, steep slope subject to landslides. There are also cases of favelas located in valley bottoms, liable of flooding, or in mangrove areas.

There are some progresses going on but housing still remains a fundamental Brazilian problem. The governmental programs targeted to the poor should improve the situation in the next decade.

According to a study published by UN-Habitat from 2000 to 2010 around 10.4 million people no longer live in favelas in Brazil. This means that the number of favelados was reduced by 16% in the country. However, research coordinator Eduardo Lopez Moreno says that the Brazilian progress could have been greater. At the same time, Vitor Abdala, also involved in this study, states that “Brazil could have invested more in improving favelas.”

Moreno and Abdala share the same opinions and stress out that the Brazilian authorities could have worked harder at this period to get at least an

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12 1915-1990, president of Sociedade Amigos da Favela and coordinator of the São Paulo’s favelas.
index higher than the average progress in Latin America, which have decreased by 19.5% the slums population. Some countries like Colombia and Argentina managed reductions of over 40%.

"It would be much better if Brazil had managed to improve from 20% to 30% and we would be talking about 20 million people leaving the slums instead of 10 million. Undoubtedly, efforts should have been higher, mainly between 2000 and 2005, since most of those 10 million, got out of poverty after 2005." said Moreno.

The largest advance, since 2005, can be assigned to actions such as ‘Bolsa Família’\(^\text{13}\) and ‘Minha Casa, Minha Vida’\(^\text{14}\). Brazil will have more significant advances in the coming years due to the nature of these social policies. On the other hand, the country remains with about 26% of its population living in substandard housing.

“What I can say, with full knowledge of the facts, is that the Brazilian case will show that these policies will have a high success. And they will have a high success because of the magnitude of the resources involved, the number of cities that are implementing, the number of people which are benefiting from them. There will be an evolution.” said Moreno.

According to the UN, to not live in slums anymore does not necessarily means that the person is living elsewhere. It could also mean that the area where the person lives has just been improved in terms of sanitation and housing conditions, and can no longer be considered a slum. And there is also the issue of a new social class classification, which will be discussed later.

**a peek around the world**

The Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, Anna Tibaijuka, said that in the last ten years 227 million people no longer live in slums around the world, but she

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\(^{13}\) A social welfare program of the Brazilian government which provides financial aid to poor Brazilian families. If they have children, families must ensure that the infants attend school and are vaccinated. The program attempts to both reduce short-term poverty by direct cash transfers and fight long-term poverty by increasing human capital among the poor through conditional cash transfers.

\(^{14}\) A housing program of the Federal Government of Brazil which consists of housing finance for low income people.
stressed out that an even larger number went to live in these places, which made the global slum population rising from 776.7 million to 827.6 million.

For her, the world was able to achieve one of the Millennium Development Goals\textsuperscript{15}, which aimed to take out of substandard housing up to 100 million people by 2020. Despite this fact, Anna is not satisfied, because it occurred unevenly around the world.

“While we managed to have improvements in countries like India, China, Indonesia, Morocco and Tunisia, in sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia, the story is different. In these places, most people still live in slums, without water, without sanitation and decent housing.” she said.

**foreigner and national romanticization**

The favelas attract foreigners maybe because they materialize a utopia which people from abroad feed on the tropics. They believe to be a place where people do not work or have no material concerns, living in community and occupy themselves only with the satisfaction of basic instincts, like making love and having sex, drinking, eating, and of course, in the case of Brazil, dancing Samba and playing soccer. It seems that the favelas are the closest that they can experience in real life of what they are saturated to appreciate in the museums. Maybe it is the closest that they can get from Constant’s New Babylon. Untill foreigners won’t be threatened by the favelas, they will remain truly believers of this fairy tale created by them.

This glorification of the favelas as the deepest core of Brazil comes from the ‘Estado Novo\textsuperscript{16} and its search for our roots and ‘our stuff’. From the favelas, the Samba emerged. It was promoted to the supreme manifestation of Brazilian

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\textsuperscript{15} The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight international development goals that were officially established following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000, following the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. All 193 United Nations member states and at least 23 international organizations have agreed to achieve these goals by the year 2015. The goals are eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality rates, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development.

\textsuperscript{16} Estado Novo is the name of the political regime founded by Getulio Vargas on November 10, 1937, which lasted until October 29, 1945, which is characterized by centralization of power, nationalism, anti-communism and its authoritarianism.
culture and the origin of the current problem of sex tourism.

In short, the real Brazil was in the favelas and lived for the carnaval. Brazilians in which were not part of this reality, or rather, were not part of the foreigner’s utopia, were part of a colonized elite. For foreigners the favela is a tropical utopia, while for us Brazilians, the modernist myth of the golden years of the 1950s and 1960s, still persists. Therefore, there is in both cases a romanticization, a utopia.

parenthesis: poetic license

As an architect, I must take a little break from other disciplines at some point and spill few words out about my, as a good French would say, ‘metier’. In this part of the work I will try to describe what this national and international romanticization on favelas has been produced.

São Paulo without any doubts is “an urban laboratory for the solutions of the Favelas.” Fernando Serapião, “Favela: Moderna ou Contemporânea?,” last modified June, 2012, Select, http://www.select.art.br/article/reportagens_e_artigos/favela. Personally I disagree with the word solution in this context because it implies the notion of problem. Favelas are problems to the city as an old fashioned believe. I would re-quote as São Paulo is an urban laboratory for the exploration of the discourse around favelas. It is worth emphasizing that the favelas have their problems and peculiarities as the ‘formal city’.

The project led by the Italian architect Stefano Boeri entitled “Jornada da Habitação – São Paulo Calling” includes exhibitions and debates. It shows that São Paulo is in the vanguard of the urban discourse on slums, bidonville, shanty towns, vila miséria, baraccopoli, squatter settlements and favelas. This project will also engage some other cities like Medellin, Rome, Moscow, Nairóbi, Baghdad and Mumbai.

Universities and institutes from all over the world, including big names such as Harvard, Columbia and ETH are paying a lot of attention to several works which encompass more than 50 architectural teams worldwide including Brazil, such as MMBB, Brasil Arquitetura, UNA, Urban Think Tank, Christian Kerez among others.
The way of thinking concerned to the peculiarities and understanding of the favelas is an evidence that the discourse has moved forward since the modernist architecture's apex during the first half of the 20th century. At that time architects believed that the solution for the housing problems could be achieved by building ‘white-elephants’ for this purpose on the outskirts of larger cities, by the use of pre-fabricated parts in order to design elongated blocks on pilotis. The belief on this formula was part of the modernist ideas when building thousands of dwellings in a Europe devastated by the Second World War. In Brazil the problem was not regarding to the war consequences, rather the pressures created by the migration from rural and poor areas to the big cities under development. The master piece of the Brazilian contribution for the discourse was the Pedregulho, by Affonso Reidy, in Rio de Janeiro. The same principles applied across the ocean under different conditions were applied in Brazil.

From that time the urban discourse on favelas changed. The favelas overgrew a lot and the desire and hope to extinguish them relies in the past. So to speak and evoking ideas from Jane Jacobs, which wrote one of the most important manifestos anti-modernist, the urban planners and architects understood that the built environment in an irregular way could have more potentialities than actually problems.

Today there are no doubts that the favelas are consolidated within the cities. So, what should be done? Some ideas claim for the provision of infra-structure and the regularization of the land tenure situation, removing just buildings which are placed in risk zones. Government and planners believe that with these actions the conditions of the favelas can be improved. They claim that with the regularization there is a natural tendency that the environment will get better since the community realises that their situation is perennial and not temporary anymore. Somehow the most significant part of this process is invisible and hardly recognized, in other words, infra-structural pictures rarely make votes.

The new housing blocks that emerge are strong elements in the context, the cherries on the cake. However, at this point a paradox on the process becomes remarkable. Meanwhile urban planners believe that ‘urban acupuncture’ can transform the favelas, the major part of the architects still have the modernist block of Pedregulho as paradigm.

Most of the Brazilian projects cannot get rid of the modernist paradigm,
ending up on the reproduction of structures and buildings designed in the past. A clear example is the project developed for Favela do Bamburral in São Paulo, by Brasil Arquitetatura. It is conceived as a modernist block, with accesses on mid-levels, as Reidy designed for Pedregulho back in 1947.

The paradox becomes more evident when confronting projects for the new dwelling blocks conceived by international offices. In this scenario two projects really represent this conflict. The first one designed by the Swiss architect Christian Kerez, one of the most interesting architect nowadays in my opinion. Kerez spent weeks in São Paulo, together with a community leader, which didn’t speak English or German, trying to understand the place called Jardim Colombo, in order to develop a project. The results are two high-rise volumes that mimic the landscape, incorporating the existent aesthetical language. The second project also comes from Switzerland. A team from ETH designed new concentrated blocks with a square shaped floor plan. The envelope has different types of exposed bricks cladding, revealing the individuality of each unity.

Few other planners and designers, probably led by the international office Urban Think Tank, claim to be more performative than symbolic intended. They believe that the provision of infra-structure or social buildings will be the solution for the slums around the world. As can be verified in projects such as Metro Cable and Modular Stair in Caracas and Vertical Gymnasium in Amman.

Another paradox refers to architectural representations. The projects are represented through renders and architectural drawings that follow the formal city’s logic. What matters in the end is a beautiful image that can be sold rather than an effective design. An image that calls the constituency and satisfy the developers’ pocket. A static image for the most non static place. In other words, those projects seem to be more market and political driven rather than social oriented.

Between the foreigner’s perspective which can be folkloric and find some romanticism in poverty, and the national one which cannot get rid of the modernist paradigm, this process to be completed claims for a new perspective, which dialogue with the spatiality and the inhabitants of the favelas.

Star architects are celebrated around the world precisely because their works have never said anything regarding to our current catastrophic urban condition. Unlikely, they are the progenitors of the crown jewels which goal is to glisten to the point that we forget what is happening in the big cities. Those stars will ever light out the dark planet of slums which has become the urbanization at the periphery of capitalism. There are other architects and actors involved in the transformation of this reality. People which have never been awarded before.

The issues related to favelas are complex with no easy answers. The right-wing parties’ policies oscillated in between two extremes. Removal and Regularization. In the first one, favelas, especially the ones located in central and real estate market interest areas, were removed to the periphery, away from the eyes of the middle class. In the second, the regularization in the favelas not accompanied by heavy investment in urbanization, sanitation, public facilities and leisure areas has become a miracle flag to solve the problem as juridical solution with low investments. This was the model successfully applied in Peru during Fujimori’s period. Regularize to the slum dwellers so they will have, in the small property, the basis for becoming a borrower and small entrepreneur.

What happened in the end is the regularization of uninhabitable, risk and unhealthy areas, consolidating and legitimating social and land tenure inequalities, which can be translated as living in a slum shack. A socialist policy for the cities should consider the favela in other terms. Favelas need to receive heavy capital investment. It is also necessary to open new spaces to implement public facilities and recreational areas. Execute the projects with good infrastructure and above all, the people who live there need to be heard, participate, discuss. Governments and private corporations cannot make intervention by decree, works without the involvement of communities are only interesting to developers which have found on the urbanization of favelas a very lucrative business. It is possible to involve residents in the management of resources and the implementation of the work through local cooperatives that generate income for the unemployed population.
SOCIAL STRATIFICATION
"Basically, it’s a right old mess. Toffs at the top, plebs at the bottom, and me in the middle making a fat pile of cash out of both of them."

Mr. Blackadder

(BBC sitcom character)

The concept of ‘class’ is one of the most controversial and contested concepts in sociological theory. In general the concept of ‘class’ addresses understandings of economic inequality.

Some scholars, as Raymond Edward Pahl, claim that class as a concept does not do a useful work in sociology anymore. Some go even further proclaiming ‘the death of class’, as Jan Pakulski and Malcolm Waters. On the other side there are sociologists, like McNall and Marshall, publishing works that the notion of ‘class’ is still useful, maybe more useful than ever before.

This work does not intend to go deeper in this topic but it is very important to understand few basic definitions of ‘class’ before reading further.

Class as a concept figures as the main core of the structure for some theoretical traditions in sociology, most remarkable in Marxism. In other traditions specially identified with Durkheim only vague remarks appear.

Even though all uses of the concept of ‘class’ among different sociological theoretical traditions invoke understandings of systems of economic inequality, they entail different agendas involving a variety of questions of class analysis. According to Wright, “one way of sorting out these meanings is to examine what might be termed the anchoring questions within different agendas of class analysis.”

Erik Olin Wright, “Forthcoming in Encyclopedia of Social Theory,” last modified January, 2003, University of Wisconsin Department of Sociology, http://www.uw.economics/~wright/Social%20Class%20-%20Sage.pdf, 1. From that, Wright reviews 5 different approaches or questions in which the word ‘class’ plays as the central figure in the answers. In his work they are presented as Class as
Subjective location, Class as objective position within distributions, Class as the relational explanation of economic life chance, Class as a dimension of historical variation in systems of inequality and Class as a foundation of economic oppression and exploitation. In general in all five agendas above space constraints preclude the discussion. Many distinguished theoretical approaches to class analysis create their concepts of class in order to help answering these questions.

Class as Subjective location implies an investigation of how people locate themselves and others within a social structure of inequality. One of the possible answers could be the use of ‘class’ as social categories. According to Wright “classes are social categories sharing subjectively-salient attributes used by people to rank those categories within a system of economic stratification.” In this sense the definition of ‘class’ will vary contextually. It will revolve around lifestyles, occupations and income levels. Wright states that “class is not defined by a set of objective properties ... but by the shared understanding of people about rankings within social inequality.” Following this definition religion, ethnicity and gender, for example, would be contrasted with ‘class’. Even though they play on economic dimensions, they are not centrally defined in economic terms.

Class as objective position within distributions. This is the concept of class most used in the popular discourse. The central question in this discourse is “How are people objectively located in distributions of material inequality.” In this classification method “…class is defined in terms of material standards of living, usually indexed by income or, possibly wealth.” (Wright, 2003, 2.) The most common sub-categories found are, from bottom to the top, under class, lower class, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class and upper class. Later we will see that this type of concept is largely used by the Brazilian government to categorize the population. “Class, in this context, is contrasted with other ways that people are objectively located within social structures, for example, by their citizenship status, their power, or their subjection to institutionalized forms of ascriptive discrimination.” (Wright, 2003, 2.)

Class as the relational explanation of economic life chance. This third concept is more complex than the previous ones because the central point here is not just locating people within a system of stratification descriptively, rather trying to identify people’s relationships to various income-generating resources and assets. Even though these locations are related to people’s life-styles and tastes as in the first agenda, what it differs from each other is the relationship to resources that affects people’s life chances as race, nationality, gender, among others.

Class as a dimension of historical variation in systems of inequality. In this classification “… class figures in answers to the question, “How should we characterize and explain the variations across history in the social organization of inequalities?” This question implies the need for a macro-level concept, rather than simply a micro-level concept capturing the causal processes of individual lives; and it requires a concept that allows for macro-level variations across time and place.” (Wright, 2003, 3.) For Marx and Webber this question is really important in their work even though the answers are different. On one side class and status are confronting each other as distinct forms of inequality, on the other side class is confronted with non-rationalized17 ways through which individual life-chances are shaped. (Wright, 2003, 3.)

Class as a foundation of economic oppression and exploitation. In the last question, class plays as the core of the answer. “What sorts of transformations are needed to eliminate economic oppression and exploitation within capitalist societies?” Wright states that this question “...supports a concept of class which is not simply defined in terms of the social relations to economic resources, but which also figures centrally in a political project of emancipatory social change.” (Wright, 2003, 3.) This is probably the most controversial of all five questions because rather than just simply explaining the mechanisms that create economic inequalities, it becomes a normative judgment about those inequalities.

Even though I tried to summarize all the five questions a further exploration on Encyclopedia of Social Theory by Erik Olin Wright is always a nice opportunity for a deeper understanding of all those issues.

Karl Marx and later Max Weber have contributed to sociology in many ways. Probably the most important contribution comes when confronting their different approaches towards inequality and social class. They used the notion of socioeconomic class as a key issue of their analysis on modern culture and society that is the modern capitalism. However, they have different opinions in ad-

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17 The concept of rationalization plays an important role in Weber’s work. Weber demonstrated rationalization in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. Rationalization refers to the replacement of traditions, values, and emotions as motivators for behavior in society with rational, calculated ones.
dressing this topic. Consequently the different descriptions of social stratification neither criticize nor contradict one another.

Marx built up the notion of class around two distinguished extremes related to the means of production, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. For him the modern capitalism tends to polarize all class relations, merging the unsuccessful petty bourgeoisie with the proletariat and creating an even wider gap between the two poles. He saw a shift in the context from a feudal society based on agriculture through the industrial revolution. In other words a shift from where the land owning class was different than the peasant class to a condition where the capital owning class, in this case factory owners, was distinguished from the factory workers. Other individuals whom did not contribute to the production in the economy, such as civil servants, scribes among others, were however useless, or non-productive. Consequently, they did not constitute a class. Marina Cristina Garcia, Apologia à Obra de Karl Marx, Principamente O Capital. (São Paulo: Edicon, 2009), 52.

In historical terms, Marx was conscious that the socioeconomic context was more complex. On the other side, by polarizing classes was functionally necessary in his work focused on the notion of a logical argumentation on materialism and even on an eventual class revolution.18

The existence of some intermediate class groups in between those two poles, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, was a historical circumstantial characteristic that wouldn't affect his theory of class relations, thus theoretically without any importance.

Max Weber, differently than Marx, saw that social classes were based upon three factors, power, wealth and prestige. Weber points out another dimension of class. In his work he does not mention Marx's historical inaccuracy which simplified identifications of class structure. On the other hand, Weber transform the notion of class to a much more complex system, by pointing out the differences between structures of economic and social status class. Weber pointed out that society is composed not just by two but several layers and that issues other than the material were relevant. Ricardo Lima, Introdução à Sociologia de Max Weber. (São Paulo: Saraiva, 2008), 78.

According to Teixeira and Frederico the difference between Marx and Weber can be addressed to a divergence in the main questions that both used to deal with the issue of class. With the construction of a binary class structure system Marx was concerned with the establishment of an internally consistent description of the relations of capital in modern capitalism, a historical specific moment. His main goal was to describe the foundations of economic structures from where social relations emerge. On the other hand, the driven question on Weber's work is related to the organization of power in modern society, in other words, how is power organized in modern society? The focus of Weber's and Marx's question is different. Weber describes the power relations in the context of modern capitalist society and do not establishes causes for the relations themselves and even for the current capitalist system on that time. Francisco Teixeira and Celso Frederico, Marx, Weber e o Marxismo Weberiano. (São Paulo: Cortez, 2010), 122.

Distant from a simplification, Marx's social relations within modern capitalism shows the intricate new measures of value and types of wealth developed under modern society. Marx formulated a coherent explanation of modern capitalism rather than a precise model which describes it.

Weber described a set of power relations rather than finding an explanation for them in "The Distribution of Power" and "Bureaucracy". However in "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" Weber built an explanation for the relationship between the Protestant ethic and modern capitalism by claiming that first one was a cultural phenomenon which origins were not related to capitalism but it had promoted the growth and development and eventually the dominance of this modern economic system. Weber diverged from Marx by acknowledging the relationship between economic structure and culture. On the other hand he doesn't go very far in order to reach the point to suggest that the fire that fuels capitalism will kill this very economic structure through a revolution. (Lima, 2008, 156.)

In our days there is still a tension between the two classes defined by Marx, the owners and the workers. However there are a greater amount of people in social situations between those distinguished groups. Consequently the struggle between these two poles has relatively declined. A lot of "smaller capitalists" have emerged bringing together a powerful ideology in favor of private enterprise. Adding up to this fact the decline of large factories which culminate on a decline in the tensions between Marx’s two distinguished classes as it was back in

18 Marx predicted revolution would occur in industrial societies as the workers rebelled against the owners, and this did not happen. The only countries where there were communist revolutions were agricultural and feudal.
his time.

Probably if Marx were still living in our days, he would be probably shocked with two conditions that he didn’t predicted and affected the society as a whole, the privatization of services and the rise of consumerism.

Today, even though society and the relations within it have changed and became much more complex than in the late nineteenth century, both Marx and Weber still continue to contribute to a sociological understanding of current society.

the duality between capital and labor in Brazil

Brazil has nowadays a class structure typical of the capitalist mode of production in which prevails widely employed persons whom, in order to obtain their livelihood, need to sell their labor power to the capital. In this scenario one can found two distinguished classes. High and low. Rich and poor. On the other hand the idea of a new class, called new middle class, has become a common ground in the media together with the discourse of many Brazilian politicians. But, what is this new middle class?

There is a sort of a national celebration because millions of Brazilians have reported an improvement in their income and ascended the higher consumption patterns. Many politicians present themselves as progenitors of this phenomenon, including the ex-president Fernando Henrique Cardoso who is eager to catch a ride on the prestige that comes from it.

ideological goals

In the 90s the most common discourse was the one that devaluate the working class and claims that the work had lost centrality in modern production, meanwhile, the proletariat have no longer historical role of changing agent, as classical Marxism had labelled before.

The current conception of new middle class seems to devaluate the class struggle\(^{19}\) between capitalism and workers, which now are seen as new middle class. This new class can be seen as a kind of a conflict buffer, which is unable to have its own and independent project, genuinely reformist, living immersed in a consumerist fairy tale.

The classification of a population by income and access to consumption follows mainly a market need but also has a political function that is not just the forecasts of an electoral performance. It also seeks to identify within the whole population which part can become, for the security of the dominant class, the buffer within the class struggle. This segment of the population becomes a preferred target of the cultural and propagandist efforts, therefore, even though ideological, it builds up a consensus around the society as it is organized.

classification criteria

The rules used in this effort separate the population by its consumption capacity. In Brazil they are an instrument of economic segregation which makes use of the survey of household characteristics, such as the presence and quantity of household items of comfort and education of the household head, to differentiate the population.

why middle class?

There is a clear understanding by a large portion of the population classified as new middle class that their perceptions of their current situation puts them among workers and between those sectors which are not traditionally considered as part of the higher social classes.

The workers themselves perceive the inadequacy on the method that verifies the social stratification which allows such distortions. After all, the most traditional way that people see as the opposition between rich and poor, is the one based on the control of machines, tools and other means of production. Common sense indicates that any valid assessment for understanding social

\(^{19}\) Class struggle, as a Marxist definition, is the continual conflict between the capitalist and working classes for economic and political power.
classes stems from the understanding of how social relationships of production occur and the position of the people within them. The same concept was first systematized by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and became a political tool in the fight against capitalism.

**work as common ground**

Marx and Engels tried to understand the social fundamentals of the separation among people by putting the work at the center of the analysis. Based on the duality between direct workers and the owners of the means and instruments of production they sought those fundamentals in social relations of production that involve cooperation and conflict and also the production and distribution of produced wealth. For them social classes are defined by the position of each individual within these relations of production and the social structure that organizes them.

The definition of social class was developed further by Vladimir Lenin, the Russian communist revolutionary, who said that classes are large groups of people, distinguished by their place in a determined historical social production system, by their relationship, often fixed and formulated by law, with the means of production, by their role in the labor’s social organization and, consequently, by the method of obtainment and dimensions of the wealth’s social part which they have. Classes are groups of people, which one can appropriate the labor of others thanks to the fact of occupying a different place in a given system of social economy. V. I. Lenin, *Uma Grande Iniciativa - Obras Escolhidas - Volume 3*, translated by Alfa Ômega. (São Paulo: Alfa Ômega, 1980), 139-160. In this context, social class can be faced from a set of situations, such as the place occupied in the production system, the relationship to the means of production, the role in the labor’s social organization and, consequently, by the method of obtainment and dimensions of the wealth’s social part which they have. Classes are groups of people, which one can appropriate the labor of others thanks to the fact of occupying a different place in a given system of social economy.

**topic’s complexity**

Other aspects that are fundamental to the Marxist theory include the articulation of the definition of social classes with the political struggle, class’ consciousness that is forged in the political struggle and materializes in a program to meet the interests of the workers and in a party that is the instrument and guide of their struggle. Also the development of the labor’s division that requires new functions to meet the new changing needs of the production and distribution of the products of labor.

In this sense, Marx himself understood that the capitalist’s evolution could break with a simplistic point of view that opposes in a dichotomic way to the bourgeoisie, in its different factions, and the proletariat understood as a factory laborer. The development of bourgeois’ production will lead to a decrease in the number of workers directly linked to the production and the growth of the middle class. Marx also claimed that this would be the course of the bourgeois society. Not that Marx has left aside the idea of a fundamental polarization between owners and workers, but it would happen in a higher abstract pattern, the fundamental contradiction between capital and labor.

Marx also included what is so called middle class in this polarization. It would be formed by public servants, like professional groups, teachers, amusement artists, and others that have an increasingly significant role in the maintenance of bourgeois society, and also by small producers, market employees, wholesalers, retailers, those whose dictate on behalf of capital, as managers and their assistants, supervisors, secretaries, bookkeepers, employees, and finally the ideological group formed by lawyers, artists, journalists, clergy and State officials. Note that the definition of middle class, in this case, has nothing to do with the market’s conception, which main criterion is the income.

**what is middle class today?**

The situation of the capitalist production is in most of the countries nowadays, more than a century after the publication of Marx and Engels, confirms that prediction, based on analysis of the logic that prevails within the capitalist production. There is a middle class very different from that which attends the imaginary, and closer to ordinary workers. In fact, what can be noticed in our days is a class far more heterogeneous than in the initial phase of capitalism.

There was a strong compression in the traditional middle class sector and, at the same time, an increasing of the representative portion of a modern middle
class, or a new middle class, with less qualified, lower income and poorer working conditions. For example in Brazil, the amount of people working at banks, which is, by the common sense, considered middle class, has decrease. Meanwhile the amount of people working as telemarketing operators or as motorcycle couriers, which by common sense belong to a lower social class and today are considered part of the new middle class, has increased.

**favelas’ new middle class**

The discussion of what is labelled as ‘new middle class’ is the most important social, economic and political contemporary debate in Brazil. According to the results of a survey conducted by the Data Popular Institute on the topic, 65 in 100 of slum dwellers in Brazil can be classified as middle class. That is, most of the inhabitants of the socially precarious areas belong to the middle layers of the social pyramid. In Brazil middle class are families those which have an income of 2600 reais per month (±800 euros). According to data submitted by the institute, in 2002, 32% of slum dwellers were in the middle class. In 2013, the number rose to 65%.

Data Popular pointed out that nowadays more people have computers and washing machine at their homes, for example. The survey results also emphasized that education, formal employment, entrepreneurship, the reduction of extreme poverty and the opportunities that came with the arrival with Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora20, were the ‘diamonds’ to improve the living conditions of slum dwellers in Brazil.

**the lie behind the concept**

The misconception, or the lie behind the concept, of ‘new middle class’ used by the media and propagandist medias obscures the fact that social mobility21 in the lower classes occurred by the incorporation, mainly during Lula’s administration22, of millions of unemployed workers to productive activities, as well as increased payroll and wages, beginning with the minimum wage set by the government. The social mobility was basically a changing of social status or positions within the working class. If we judge social reality, by a Marxist point of view, what has been called as the new middle class is actually the working class, which lives through the amount payed for its working force, with salaries that have grown in the past few years but are still really low.

**there is no new class, much less new middle class**

However, facing this intriguing reality, here there are some considerations. Do these millions of Brazilians which ascended socially in the last ten years form a truly new middle class? Moreover, what criteria should be used to classify a particular social class?

Certainly, there are controversial issues that could generate warm debates. However, it should be stressed out that the studies on social classes must go beyond traditional approaches. Thus, other factors besides income, as well as the ability to convert economic capital into cultural capital, for example, should be used to define a class. "Social classes are not determined by income, not merely by its place in production, but by a practical vision of the world, that shows itself in all behaviors and attitudes. 22 Jessé Souza, *Os Batalhadores Brasileiros: Nova Classe Média ou Nova Classe Trabalhadora?* (Belo Horizonte: UFMG, 2012), 42. Thus, the economic and occupational aspects are necessary but not sufficient to determine a class.

Therefore, there is no new class, much less new middle class. What exists is an extension of the working class which occupations are related to outsourcing, temporary work, provision of services to families, civil construction, among others and remuneration (around 1.5 of the minimum wage23) typical of the working class. Even by income level, type of occupation, profile and personal attributes,

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20 In English ‘Pacifying Police Unit’, abbreviated UPP. Is a law enforcement and social services program pioneered in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which aims at reclaiming territories, more commonly favelas, controlled by gangs of drug dealers. According to wikipedia.org.


22 Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, as known as, Lula, is a former president of Brazil. He is often regarded as the most popular politician in Brazilian history, and, at the time of his mandate, one of the most popular in the world. Lula was inaugurated as president in2003. In the 2006 election he was elected for a second term as president, which ended in 2011. He was succeeded by his former Chief of Staff, Dilma Rousseff.

23 The minimum wage is the lowest amount of wage that employers may legally pay to their employees and the lowest amount by which a person can sell their labor power.
the biggest portion of the emerging population does not fit into coherent criteria which clearly identify them as middle class.

**sociological fallacy**

Celebrated by both the hegemonic mainstream media and by governmental propaganda as the main feature of the new middle class, the increase in the consumption has yet started to show side effects. According to a study, nearly half of Brazilian defaulters consumers belong to the new middle class. 

Nevertheless, the consumption of the new middle class is associated with the more credit available than with the increasing purchase power. That is why today in Brazil there is a critical mass of defaulters.

The issue of development should be considered beyond the monetary factor. Therefore, it must be taken into account extra-economic factors, such as freedom of individual choice, decent housing, proper food and access to public health services and quality education.

Finally, to define the middle class as the millions of Brazilians who ascended socially in recent years is the biggest sociological fallacy, that means the action with malicious intent to deceive, of the contemporary Brazil.

**informality**

This new middle class is a working class that lives a growth in the formal employment. On the other hand, it has about two-thirds of its total population still in the informal sector, unemployment and underemployment or in activities defined as self-business. This shows a labor market strongly deformed and marked by informality, in which capital dominates the work using different legal forms of employment.

With the perpetuation of inequality and exclusion from the market the most disadvantaged social classes find themselves in need of performing illegal ventures as working without registration and occupying properties with illegal dwellings.

Now, the market economy is a system of exchange of properties, so what can be offered from this new middle class as a guarantee for a loan? The negotiations assume that those involved know what belongs to whom. So that, what does the exclusion of millions of people without an address and without a legalized property mean? It means a loss of billions of dollars that could be circulating and promoting economic and social growth. How to insert these people in a legal system of property in a world governed by the same laws for both formal and informal and within a majoritarian social contract?

For the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto what must change is the current system which it is more advantageous to be outside the law than inside it. The illegality should be expensive and those which live on the legality should have life less burdensome. There should be a reduction in bureaucracy, a rationalization of taxes and greater efficiency of the State in return services paid by the population through taxes. Lucia Soares, “Não é mais um sonho impossível,” last modified March, 2007, Veja Online, http://veja.abril.com.br/140307/p_066.shtml.

The challenge to reverse this situation in Brazil is the task of conquering the new without breaking with the old which works and deserves to be respected. The informal sector can be anarchic, but it is not chaotic. It holds a law with its own rules and it could be stronger than the official rights. The excluded portion of the market economy has its own proprietary codes and respects the agreements made. The official law should open a dialogue and respect certain aspects of the existing state of affairs.

Hernando de Soto stressed out also the inclusion in the law of thousands of small groups. At the most, he emphasizes the combination of two systems of laws, two property codes which must somehow fit with negotiation and persuasion. In order to this context become reality there must be a participation of the involved parts and respect from both towards the major social contract. Corruption undermines this pact which it would only be possible when the official law occupies the position that in fact was pledged to fulfil.

**polarization**

Statistical data show a clear polarization in the Brazilian class structure. In one side a clear majority contingent of employees, on the other side, opposing to
the first one, a clear minority number of employers. The numerical predominance in our social structure is to those which can only get the goods necessary for their survival if they can sell their labor power to the minority of 5.5% formed by the owners of capital.

This is the class structure of a country where the capitalist mode of production is hegemonic and where the fundamental social contradiction occurs, as Marx had pointed out, between capital and labor.

government’s role: the current left in Brazil

When politics come to the discussion I prefer to be neutral. Not that I don’t have my own opinions and believes about it, no. Rather I prefer to take the points which fits better in my opinion, whether they emerge from the left or the right wing, radicals or not. The right wing in Brazil, back in the 90s, led by the president of the republic Fernando Henrique Cardoso sets Brazil in probably its best economic moment since the 50s. Following his mandate the left wing took place with the promise to solve social issues in the country. So far both wings did a lot but there is still a long way to walk.

In Brazil, nowadays, there is an awkward combination of a not so much developed capitalism obstructed by the dominance of foreign monopolies, coming along with a new working class growing. This new working class has no experience with class struggles and social movements which are in decline since the 80s. Moreover, the presence of a coalition government from the left, which one part has the leading role, becomes even more complex to solve the contradictions of overcoming capitalism.

Under these conditions, the current central issue in Brazil becomes the construction of a waging working class quantitatively strong, able to become a powerful social force enough to fight in this ‘war’ and overcome capitalism. In other words, at least we should hope that capitalism develops, since it is the one which when in developing can develop at the same time a waging working class. Of course, this contradiction is embarrassing, especially because there are people which think that capitalist development means dropping the class struggle and subordinated to bourgeois’ policies.

Indeed, if the current capitalism predominant in Brazil develops by its own free will it will not create more waging working class but reduce it, replacing it by machines and technological innovations. The result is that the left wing in the government cannot agree to the current development of capitalism in Brazil. On the other hand it should not create barriers to the installation of modern industrial plants with few jobs. It should also put some efforts for the development of labor-intensive industries able to multiply the number of workers employed.

The left wing part that has no responsibility of govern will have to strive for this waging working class which is in ‘training’, in order to this class become aware of the process of exploration that it is submitted and go to fight for their rights which the only way to give it consistency and active social power in the Brazilian society.

This is not so different than the process implemented by the military dictatorship to the automotive industry in the state of São Paulo with the migrant workers from rural areas of the northeast of the country, whom learned to fight in repression conditions and emerged as the main actors with decisively contribution to give an end to the military regime.

A capitalist development stimulated by the left wing governments’ coalition will have to rely on workers who are part of the industrial reserve ‘army’ of the slums and suburbs whom will learn to fight in conditions of democracy and against the attempts of criminalizing social movements, thus emerging as actors that decisively contribute to the changes that transform capitalism, into another kind of society. Pure contradictions that can only be solved through the class struggle.
FIELD OF STRUGGLE
briefing

The consequences of the political and economic games, which put the city to the level of merchandise, lead to serious consequences for the poorest of the urban spaces. This exclusion in space directly affects the social exclusion, disqualifying the individuals from the formalized society and thus turning them into disposable beings.

"City is not a problem, city is a solution".
Jaime Lerner

The capitalism as the current predominant socio-economic system in the world end up over imposing new contemporary features to the cities. The cities became the center of production of capital, as well as places/spaces, for the movements of goods. The current urban spaces are still undergoing a dictate of capitalist nature, in other words, the city as a social, economic and political actor, more than never, has the pure need to fit into the global economy. Within this perspective the process of globalization pulls the cities to this new global economic scenario. This process began with the crisis of capitalism in the 1970s, and from that time a radical change in the functionality and the essence of the cities are clear perceived, especially in the major urban centers.

From the 1950’s the cities were no longer passive agents of global socio-economic structures and they became the main actors of the new globalization spectacle,24 thus, the cities had their essence modified. These changes brought severe consequences to the urban society, once the city was conceived as a space of capital’s movement and now become a space of consumption, in other words,

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24 It is worth reading Guy Debord in Society of the Spectacle, and other situationists’ works.
the contemporary metropolises became the central object of the capitalist logic, that is, the space now has a market value and makes the access to it as a process nothing democratic and unequal. In this context one could consider the commodification of the city as a key factor for the exacerbation of misery, poverty, income inequality and violence in the contemporary world.

To tackle the functionality of cities in the contemporary world is also to give the looks to issues related to inequality, social exclusion, poverty and generalized violence. Based on this intrinsic examination between modern city and social phenomena one can fall in the analysis about an old phenomenon, which brings us back to the industrial cities of the nineteenth century, but only became more explicit and perverse with the new effects in the social urban layers, in other words, the socio-spatial segregation. Therefore, the social issues are closely linked to the urban issues to the extent that over the years the world population tends to become hegemonically urban.

Cities, particularly the large urban centers, became in the most recently times the focus of attention of researchers due to their high degree of complexity in relation to the socioeconomics phenomena. The debate on this issue, especially in countries like Brazil, cannot be disassociated from historical and structural problems which derive from the way of the occupation of urban spaces, which is also the result of high levels of income inequality and poverty in these countries. The topic is a complex debate and it is directly linked to the issue of urban planning, the profound institutional and political reforms and the planning of social policies.

The scope of social problems that afflict contemporary cities are the results of economic and functional structures transformations. Thus, the analysis of the socio-spatial segregation phenomenon beginning from a Marxist approach is needed.

a Marxist approach

For a Marxist review the city occupies a central position within the new globalized economy. The cities, after the 1970s, became not only the space of accumulation of production but also the space of production and circulation of capital. The very definition of urban space is grounded in a market sense, where

“in relation to the condition of the production (or reproduction), space is a commodity that can have a price: the price of the land, the land rent i.e. the over profit captured by who holds the land as a resource, in short, is what you can call land toll.” Alan Lipietz, Miragens e Milagres: Problemas da Industrialização no Terceiro Mundo. Translated by Catherine Marie Mathieu. (São Paulo: Nobel, 1988), 126. Based on this idea, the most varied forms of socio-spatial exclusion are given by the conditions of access to urban land.

This way of approaching the cities comes from the theoretical contributions of Structural Marxism25, which had as its foundations in the 1960s and 1970s. Thus the approach towards the city and its relations with the capital came to be understood as a reflection of the social structure.


The capitalist city is marked by profound social, economic and spatial differences. The Marxist thought brings out the urban question as a set of problems which are the result of the constant process of the capitalist system’s reconstruction. Along with it a lot of studies began to denounce the essence of the urban problems from the “private property of land, the inequalities of access to the equipments, the unequal availability of urban services, the dwelling as being treated as a commodity and inaccessible to lower income population layers, the existence of large popular neighbourhoods and suburbs unequipped.” (Véras, 2000, 16.)

the tendencies

There is a tradition that believes that polarization of classes reflects the dominance of capital in urban issues. This duality may be inevitable first world’s cities. On the other hand, when analysed Latin American countries for example, this perspective becomes fragile once poverty and inequality are more uncertain and unstable. From this point of view, it can be said that the new capitalist

25 An approach to Marxist philosophy based on structuralism, which arose in opposition to the humanistic Marxism.
economic model adopted is increasing inequalities in alarming levels but in variable ways in space.

Taschener and Bógus made an interesting comment on Marcuse in their 2001 publication, stating that with a different approach on the urban space he slightly goes away from this tendency in his examination on the city of New York. Although, stratifying the occupation of urban spaces through social classes, Marcuse's way of thinking proves itself revealing when the concept of fragmented city is raised. "In residential areas the spaces correspond to high level housing; the renewed and remodelled city is the location of yuppies; the suburban city is still the traditional middle class' stronghold; the rental city is the locus of tenements and small rental units; and the abandoned city is the location of the excluded, the homeless, and more acute poverty." Suzana P. Taschner and Lucia M. M. Bógus, São Paulo: o caleidoscópio urbano. (São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2001), 33.

Even though fragmented, the city to Marcuse is an organized unit based on zones of occupation, correspondent with social class' condition. His analysis is important to verify that the city is not only subject to the logic of capital, in the economic sense of the word, but also linked to some issues of symbolic expression. Therefore the appropriation of space by the wealthy classes finally produce what Marx already called as commodity fetishism, because land appreciation generates strong symbolism tied to the power of consumption, leading to the rise of their actual values and preventing access of the poorest population to them, thus strengthening the processes of socio-spatial segregation.

exclusion by the capacity of accessing

With the new role played by cities in the contemporary world the exclusion is also given by the ability of accessing. The city has become a sort of commodity to be consumed. Poverty and socio-spatial exclusion phenomenon acquire a quantitatively different character in the major urban centers as opposed to smaller ones. But the conception process of these phenomena is the same. “The way that the transformation of the city in (luxury) goods reflected a launched look on poverty, could be explored a little bit more. The transfiguration of poverty in environment was explicitly formulated by the Catalans by including, in what they call social environment, the burden of poverty. The poor are the surrounding of the environment, for the reason that they do not constitute themselves, nor indigenous, neither virtual immigrants, in solvable demand. At all levels, both in concrete terms (infrastructure, subsidies, tax favors, institutional support and financial resources of all kinds) as in the perspective of the image, no doubt remains: the commodity city has a very specific and qualified consuming public.” Maricato, Erminia Maricato, Carlos Vainer and Otília Anantes, A Cidade do Pensamento Único: Desmanchando Consensos. (Petrópolis: Vozes, 2000), 82.

the concept of excluded

The concept of social exclusion is also relativized through space. The excluded from the social, economic and political formal sphere, as within an action and reaction relation, becomes an excluded in the perspective of space as well.

Regarding to the use of the concept of ‘excluded’, we should meet some caveats. It is really worth to situate the concept of exclusion not only in space but also within other perspectives. First of all we should take care of specifying which sphere of the excluded we are referring, that is, to which extent we adopt to qualify and quantify an individual or a class. This is essential under the prism of social issues in order to analyse the spatial segregation processes. Luciano Oliveira, “Os Excluídos Existem? Notas Sobre a Elaboração de um Novo Conceito” ARCS, February 1997, 12:33, 51-52.

the Brazilian excluded

During the 1970s and 1980s the issue of inclusion and exclusion in the capitalist society was around the employment market. In the 1990s, the approach

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26 Yuppie is the short term for ‘young urban professional’ or ‘young upwardly-mobile professional’. It is a term that refers to individuals of the upper middle class or upper class in their 20s or 30s.

27 According to the ideas of Bourdieu who states that the symbols are forms of social integration.

28 In Karl Marx’s critique of the political economy of capitalism, commodity fetishism is the transformation of human relations, derived from the trading of commodities in the market, whereby the social relationships among people are expressed with objectified economic relationships, among the money and commodities, and the buyers and sellers. As such, commodity fetishism transforms the subjective, abstract aspects of economic value into objective, real things that people believe have intrinsic value. (Wikipedia according to RUBIN, Isaak Illich. Essays on Marx’s Theory of Value. Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1990, p.5.)
on social issues from the market and financial point of view has become ephemeral, once employment is a reduced variable. (Oliveira, 1997, 51-51.) If the structural unemployment is the only symptom of social exclusion, Brazil could be mistakenly placed as a State that does not broke up with the ties of social problems and the issue would be reduced to a pure and uniquely economic vision, as well as the progress made in recent decades would not have any importance. And that is not true.

Therefore, the concept of exclusion and excluded became predominantly adopted by the Brazilian academy from the 1990s, when the ‘new exclusion’ gave to the problem a more humanitarian character. In other words, the exclusion besides being more closely tied or linked to the flaws and loopholes of the economic system, here it is now also tied to the power and insertion capability of the individual in the formal society.

The new excluded is not only more than an individual or class which sat out the state’s predominant grandiose progressist projects in Brazil until the 1970s. The new excluded is also the one who falls in “a stigma where the most dramatic consequence is the expulsion from the excluded’s own humanity orbit, to the extent to become perceived as individuals socially threatening and therefore liable to be excluded or eliminated.” (Oliveira, 1997, 51-51.)

**from theory to practice**

Bringing this analysis to the core of the urban issues became really important due to the new patterns of segregation prevalent in the Brazilian cities. The most plausible example is the self-segregation process, which consists in the locomotion of the new urban middle and upper classes to spaces around the cities. This process broke with the prevailing paradigm in the analysis of intra-urban spaces, once the issue of income and land use from the social classes began to behave in a much more complex dynamic.

In Brazil the issue of urban poverty, exclusion and segregation processes have been analysed by a sociological tradition that states that the model of land occupation is directly connected to the peripheral pattern of urbanization, which in its turn, was the hallmark in the Brazilian process of metropolization. This process is marked by the fusion of the increment of economics’ modernization and growth of productivity with the exploitation’s practice of the working class. From this perspective it was created a segregating urbanization model, as the state policies turned to meet the big capital’s needs, in what is addressed to urban infrastructure and other services.

**periphery**

Notewithstanding the suburbs came to be conceived as “socially homogeneous spaces, forgotten by state policies and typically located at the edges of metropolitan areas.” Haroldo da Gama Torres, Eduardo Marques, Maria Paula Ferreira, and Sandra Bitar, “Pobreza e Espaço: Padrões de Segregação em São Paulo,” *Estudos Avançados*, 2003, 17:47, 97-128.

Still today these spaces are usually formed by irregular and illegal allotments of large properties, which consequently do not meet the minimum requirements of the official departments for the implementation of dwelling, fleeing away from the minimum standards, and where the most common types of poor housing are the favelas’ shacks and self-constructions. (Torres, 2003, 97-128)

The intrinsic approach on urban poverty and spatial segregation leads us to a more responsible observation about the Brazilian urban space. This complex relationship is present in the Brazilian cities, especially in large urban centers and metropolitan regions due their particular characteristics. In these spaces are fostered high levels of residential spatial segregation of neighbourhoods through specific classes. This urban phenomenon in Brazil ends up influencing on the formation of social sites. That means the society is selective in respect to places, always looking for environments according to its own wishes. Flávio Villaça, *Espaço Intrautrano no Brasil* (São Paulo: Studio Nobel, 2001), 159.

**chicago school**

It is clear notable that the Brazilian understanding and reading about this topic was influenced by American sociology, especially the Chicago School. This school calls the phenomenon in which different and interdependent individuals end up defining spaces which they deem desirable and meet their expectations as ecological segregation. (Villaça, 2001, 159.) The understanding of this concept can be read from the idea that a selected group with common peculiarities, whether
economic or cultural, tends to concentrate in a specific space. Those spaces could also be defined as ‘parochial’, as said dhr. prof. A. Reijndorp, from The University of Amsterdam (UvA), in a lecture series given at the same university in March 2012, in which I had the pleasure to attend.

From this perspective the Chicago School’s scholars understood that from the ecological segregation’s phenomena two other subcategories emerged of urban segregation, which are the voluntary and the involuntary. The first refers to groups, that through self-initiative, they seek to share the same space with social segments with the same characteristics. The second form of segregation is enforced by different factors and forces. It usually evicts the poorest urban population from certain areas of the city. The effects of these processes are the concentration of poverty rather than the dispersion of the periphery.

The phenomenon of socio-spatial segregation takes peculiar forms through different environments, such as the segregation in the US in contrast with countries under a developing or poor economy. It is important to put this issue to reach comparative insights about the behavior of the phenomenon in different countries.

**segregation’s causes: theoretical analysis**

In the Brazilian cities the pattern of segregation corresponds mostly to the involuntary displacement of poorer to undesirable regions. But in the Brazilian cities there is segregation of various natures which brings the idea that cities do not produce just one single model of territorial exclusion but many, such as ethically or demographical segregation. In this context segregation can be understood from the idea that “it is a process in which different social classes and strata tend to concentrate more and more on different regions or sets of neighbourhoods within the metropolises.” (Villaça, 2001, 159.)

The academic literature on the exclusionary pattern of urbanization in Brazil classifies the causes of segregation in three different groups for theoretical purposes of analysis. Here they are presented as labor market and social structure, dynamics of the real estate market and housing production and state policies.

For ‘labor market and social structure’ the causes of socio-spatial segrega-
CONCLUSION
This research deals with no easy matters. Some types of issues that are an emergence, such as the overurbanization process around the globe, the insurrection of a new social class, which can be questionable as a discursive rhetoric, social exclusion and the effects of those conditions within the cities, the shared space that we all inhabit. This emergence can also be understood, in general, as a social transformation that brings to life a new understanding of 'middle class', or at least, a new item within this category.

In order to focus the research on the Brazilian context it was needed before a short global panorama on the urbanization process. This process even though different in every country or region has more similarities than discrepancies. It is a global tendency result of capitalist system.

The world is becoming more urbanized every day. Consequently cities have never played such an important role for human activities. The amount of people moving to urban centers around the world is really significant. Moreover, never before in human history there were more people living in urban centers than rural areas. No one can deny that world, in its all aspects, had changed and will change a lot. This new urban order brings to life new questions in almost every discipline.

Consequently this new urban order will reflect upon the city’s inhabitants and spaces and has an ultimate price to be paid. It brings together the increasing of inequality within and between cities. Most of the urban centers, no matter their size, have no plan and no infra-structure to house new inhabitants and provide them basic services.

The cities even though with their decadent economies and lacking of infra-structure had taken for themselves the resultant product of the agrarian crisis around the globe. As consequence what can be found in most of the developing countries are a labor-intensive deindustrialized cities and a capital intensive rural areas. Davis made a brilliant explanation for this condition stating that overurbanization is "...driven by the reproduction of poverty and not by the supply of jobs." (Davis, 2006, p16.)

As the cities are not ready to settle their new inhabitants, these populations must find a way to survive within this condition. Almost as prehistoric humans, firstly they need to find or build a shelter and later 'hunt' for their own subsistence. As a consequence, for example, in the last decades the growth of
slums in the South Hemisphere has overcome the urbanization growth. That brings the issue of informality and its consequences into the discussion. If this tendency remains there will be no more cities, just slums.

The favelas in Brazil first appeared in Rio de Janeiro in the late nineteenth-century due some social and economic changes as the decline of the coffee production, the abolition of slavery and the industrial development of the cities. The term ‘favela’ became popular and part of the Brazilian national culture after 1920, referring to improvised dwellings without infrastructure that occupy the hills. In 1940s the housing crisis forces poorest citizens to raise hundreds of shacks in the suburbs. But just after 1970s, when a strong economic growth initiated a rural exodus of workers towards richer urban centers, the phenomenon of favelization had boomed.

According to the Brazilian government favelas are housing clusters built on land without infra-structure. In most of the cases they arise from the illegal occupation of public and private areas. In big urban center the lack of land with minimum habitable conditions made the favelas to arise in risk sites, for example, subjective to landslides.

Housing still remains as one of the most fundamental Brazilian problems. There are some improvements going on, but the situation is far away from being totally solved. In the last decades 10millions of people no longer in favelas in the country, on the other hand, to not live in favelas anymore does not necessarily means that the person is living elsewhere. It could also mean that the area of the favela have been improved and no longer fits into the former category.

But this type of classification doesn’t tell too much about the real conditions, once the government can easily lower the classification and evaluation criteria standards in order to upgrade the classification category of a given area. Most of the favelas nowadays cannot be legally called as favela anymore. They have upgraded to the condition of a community, at least theoretically. That was the first step that the Brazilian government took in order to improve the favelas. On the other hand, the real situation shows that the ‘upgrading’ was basically an abstract gesture, once the real conditions haven’t changed that much.

No doubts that some serious improvements were made in the last decade in Brazil, but the ‘improvements’ and changes on the classification criteria have upgraded the favelas and their inhabitants, within a classification group, further than the conditions that they live in. All in all, the ‘false’ idea of social mobility has overcome the improvements of real conditions. It became a powerful psychological tool to control the masses even more.

Brazil has nowadays a class structure typical of the capitalist mode of production. On the other hand the idea of a new class has become a common ground in a national discourse. There is a sort of a national celebration because millions of Brazilians have reported an improvement in their income and ascended to higher consumption patterns.

The consumption capacity is the main classification criteria used in the effort to separate the population in Brazil. The classification of a population by income and access to consumption follows mainly a market need but also has a political function. It also seeks to identify within the whole population which part can become, for the security of the dominant class, the buffer within the class struggle.

There is a clear understanding by a large portion of the population classified as ‘new middle class’ that their perceptions of their current situation put them among workers and between those sectors which are not traditionally considered as part of the higher part of the social structure. This new group is a working class that lives a growth in the formal sector employment. On the other hand, it has about two-thirds of its total population in the informal sector, unemployment and underemployment or in activities defined as self-business. This shows a labor market strongly deformed and marked by informality in which capital dominates the work using different legal forms of employment.

One of the most common campaign promises, either form left or right wing parties, is the one which deals with social mobility, in other words, taking out of poverty millions and millions of Brazilian. So far both sides have done a great job, but there are still many things to be done. The issue of development should be considered beyond monetary factor. It must be taken into account extra-economic factors, such as freedom of individual choice, decent housing, proper food and access to public health services and quality education.

The criteria used to upgrade social status within the Brazilian social structure has elevated millions and millions of Brazilians from the lower class, at least in theory. Today 65% of the favela’s population is part of the new middle class, with a higher consumption patterns but also with a huge portion of defaults.
The type of classification criteria adopted in Brazil can become dangerous once it hides the real problems of the classified group by dealing with just few factors which are easy to obtain through statistics surveys. This notion of new middle class obscures the fact that social mobility, in this scenario, is basically a changing of social status or positions within the working class.

It seems that the Brazilian government made use of not very elaborated classification criteria in order to place the ‘new population’ within a social stratification system. Maybe the government was just naive by asking “Who are these people economically emerging?” and by not giving a proper answer to the question. Maybe that was the intention. On the other hand, beyond this question it would be really important and identification process, which I would call it a form of subjectivization that needs to be addressed carefully, as tagging and classifying has always been a way of ‘clamming’, that is inserting otherness into bracketed and visible orders.

The Brazilian government followed and still follows empirical sociological traditions once it includes social class variables in quantitative analysis. These traditions verify the position of an individual or a group within a specific social class by appropriating scales that use factors as education level, occupation and income, in general types of data easy to obtain. Moreover, they may not indicate a particular theory of social structures and frequently they are less analytical and more descriptive. Individuals are located in the social pyramid despite the lack of a consensus of the variables that contributes to determine the social class.

In a country such as Brazil the instruments used to separate the population by its consumption capacity create a fantasy world in which the dominated class live their dream in and believe that somehow they are achieving a prosperous position in the society. Through the classification methodology the State and the dominant class created a ‘new middle class’, which has been used as a buffer within the class struggle. They blind people by never talking about the working relations, using the capital as the only way to classify the whole population.

I’m not the one which can tell if this is good or not. In our consumerist society, capital is the mean to reach some ends. If you can afford a car, comfort, leisure, in other words, if the money you got from your work can afford your dreams and makes you happy, what is the problem? But we all know, in our society, the rich will be richer, and the poor poorest. Or should I say the poor less poor? This lower class has never seen so much capital in its hands. On the other hand, the dominant class keeps the big parcel of the profits. The difference between dominated and dominant is still growing. No one can deny that this new middle has more purchase power than ever. But the working relations are still the same. The lower classes can survive through the price paid for working force.

Changing social positions and making the dominated class believe that they are becoming richer are the desired conditions that dominant class and the State want the most. Billions and billions has been spent by governments in social programs. Not because they are charitable. The logic goes like that, more money to the people, more consumption and production, more profit to the State and the dominant class, and less social manifestations against them. But this logic hides the work relations, and in the end everything remains the same. Two distinguished class, the dominant and the dominated.

Political and economic games placed the city to the merchandise level. This process leads to drastic consequences to the poorest parcel of the population and the urban spaces. The exclusion in space affects directly the social exclusion once disqualifies the poorest individuals from the formal city and society, thus characterizing them as ‘disposable’ beings.

The current capitalist system imposed to the urban centers new contemporary features. Cities are now centers of capital production and the place for movements of goods. Moreover, they were conceived as a place of the movement of capital. On the other hand, they became a space of consumption. Following the capitalist logic, the spaces within the contemporary metropolises now have a market value and accessing them is a process nothing democratic and unequal. The commodification of the city is the key factor in the exacerbation of misery, poverty, income inequality and violence in the contemporary world.

The cities after 1970s became not only spaces of production’s accumulation, but also spaces of production and circulation of capital. The very definition of urban space is grounded in market sense, where space is seen as a commodity that can have a price. With the new role played by cities in the current scenario, where they become a type of commodity, the exclusion is also given by the ability of accessing them. In other words the commodity city has a very specific client.

Social issues as social exclusion, inequality, poverty and violence are close-
ly tied to urban issues more than ever, as the world population tends to become hegemonically urban. In other words, in order to tackle on the functionality of the cities those social issues must be tackled as well. The social problems which affect the contemporary cities are the results of historical transformations in the economic and functional structures.

There is a tradition which believes that polarization of classes reflects the dominance of capital in urban issues. This duality may exist in developed countries, but in a country as Brazil this perspective becomes fragile once poverty and inequality are more uncertain and unstable. That is why the current debate on the socioeconomic phenomena, especially in the Brazilian context and similar ones, cannot be disassociated from historical and structural problems that derive from the type of urban space occupation, which is also the result of high levels of income inequality ad poverty in these countries.

Marcuse in his analysis of New York found a fragmented city. Each zone of city has to do with a certain type of group. Suburbs for traditional middle class, renewed areas for yuppies, abandoned areas for the homeless, residential areas for high class, and so on. His study is important in the sense that he verified that the city is not only subject to the logic of capital, but also linked to some issues of symbolic expression.

A complex approach on urban poverty and spatial segregation leads us to a more responsible analysis on the Brazilian cities. Especially in large urban centers and metropolitan areas one can verify high levels of residential segregation of neighbourhoods, each one fostering its own space's occupation by a specific class. This urban phenomenon in Brazil ends up influencing on the formation of social sites. In other words, society is selective in respect to places, always looking for environments according to its own wishes.

In the Brazilian cities the pattern of segregation corresponds mostly to the involuntary displacement of poorer to undesirable regions. But in this context there is segregation of various natures and this brings the idea that cities do not produce just one single model of territorial exclusion, but many, such as in ethnic or demographic form.

The three different groups, for theoretical analysis, that are the causes of segregation (labor market and social structure, dynamics of the real estate market and housing production and State policy) occurs simultaneously in the Brazilian context. It is fateful that individuals that are the basis of social status tend to live in poorer conditions and consequently their chances of choices, particularly regarding to space, are more restricted. It is also true that the speculation of land use closes the options for the poor to access the land. And lastly the State is also a fostered agent of these inequalities.

In all levels of this work, whether the discussion is on social stratification, social segregation or urbanization process, it becomes clear that what dictates those conditions, unfortunately, are the governments and the power of capital. They tell the rules of this game especially in countries like Brazil. Maybe this is the way that the game must be played and people will have to ‘sink or swim’. No one can predict who will end up winning, but as long as it goes on, inequality will remains in its deepest core.

All in all, the world which we live in is drastically going under some expressive changes. No one dares predict its future. Some forecasts can be made, but they will be full of speculations. Social inequality is a major concern in a world where more people are sharing the same physical spaces, in other words, the cities. The relations within society and the spaces which we live in have become much more complex. In the end, the only predictable thing that one can say is that inequality is shaping our society and physical spaces, whether rural or urban.
bibliography


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