

URBAN SOCIETY: Social Inequality and Exclusion. Problematizing the Brazilian Cities

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Introduction

As well put by Fernand Braudel, the two main capitalism's multipliers are Currency and the City, which means, there is a close relation between financial market and real estate market, leading to new urban configurations.

This double relation is manifest, however, in a multifaceted way: while the financial markets become more and more immaterialized, "deincorporated" in new speculative and/ or virtual "products", the concentration levels in the cities are higher, and the urban soil is more and more valued for sheltering more and more sophisticated services connected to the same financial capital or as multi or transnational company's headquarters just like in the global cities' case (S. Sassen, 1998). This contradictory relation is made clear by the paradox according to which the more deterritorialized the activities are in a way of geographical dispersion, the greater is the need for control and the big cities are the ones to play this role (Castells, *et alii* – 1990 and Vêras, 2002).

Although it is an emblematic sentence, Carol Willis (1995) reaffirmed that "*the shape follows the finance*" (Roseta, 2000) which means, different urban landscapes obey diverse urban drawing philosophies and also different real estate market formulas.

The skyscrapers production must be seen as resulting of calculi to obtain the greatest profitability. Thus, "the cities should be seen as complex commercial environments, where building is a business that extracts profits at the same time, from space production, from location, from image and from *status*" (Roseta, 2000, p. 2).

In many Brazilian cities, the public powers have reduced their task of making cities, leaving this role to private capital, leaving the occupation of urban soil to market's free action. In a society marked by extreme inequality, most of population see themselves away from housing formal market, from which result extreme unequipped peripheries as the poorest's belts of approach to the metropolitan regions, besides damaged central lands and the elite's self segregation. All this is made visual in a certain social topography of inequality.

While the "spaces of poverty" are left to market's free action, unlike, in the central undertakings, in the tour spots or in the neighborhoods made out for banks or multinational companies' headquarters, in the luxury buildings, the face of great capital may be seen – the new globalization's face. The real estate pressures have grown exponentially and local power cannot resist them, unless a consciousness and public policies are developed to stand up against them for having values that territorial identity and memory represent.

This way, after this brief introduction, this new urban scenery may be related to other recurring aspects of capitalist cities' life.

It is important to explicit, hence, that the subjects involved in the Urban Society proposition in the contemporary context are, on the one hand, instigating, challenging and opportune; on the other hand, the task of dissertating on each of the elements "city" and "contemporary context", constitutes a complex activity for the multifaceted nature of each one of them and, moreover, for the relation between them, drawn here as "new and old issues" and for the remaining of the cruel social inequality.

We should necessarily choose an argumentative path and we have chosen, from the start, a panoramic view of many aspects involved in the contemporary context, afterwards, talking about the city, how it can be made an object of study and, finally, highlighting the social issue in the new urban configurations.

Doubtless, we live in perplexity times. There are vertiginous changes of all kinds and that state challenges to the many points of view established, remarkably to the social sciences that should tackle the new issues posed in this early millennium. Although still in an introductory way many present circumstances and historical traces compose the complex contemporary picture: the so called globalization, alias, globalizations, as it is political, cultural, economic and so on – seems to be a present stage, in its many angles. From the economic point of view we watch a new international work division with the fragmentation of the productive process throughout the planet (not among regions or cities or companies within the same country anymore, but with the product's parts coming from the most varied places in the world), in what was agreed to call productive re-structuration. Associated to financial capital's nomadism, the worldwide voracity carries the labor force's movements on (migrations and seasonal adjustments) technological unemployment progressively caused by the revolutionary discoveries in that field. The role of information technologies is undeniable – which means, the huge telecommunications' advance, the computer's chip, the satellites, the mobile telephones, all came to provide a new Age, called by M. Castells (in the trilogy published in 1997 and translated in Brazil in 1999 by Paz e Terra Publishing House – Network Society, End of Millennium and The Power of Identity) Age of Information. The culture's westernization, with the media's power is throughout the globe. Internet, television and cable TV make people nearer and farther.

It is possible to notice the drawing of a post-industrial society, of more and more sophisticated services, some connected to the capital management, some to scientific and technological research and, some others, directed to emergent social layers' spending.

This way, with information technology and with the – capitalist and state's - crisis and the emergence of socio-cultural movements, such as the feminist, environmental and human rights ones, for example, a new picture is composed, in more and more problematic levels.

Along with biology came many scientific revolutions: genetic and medical engineerings, with their clonage, genoma, transplants, anyway, re-stating a new conception basis for what human, mortal and natural are. In this panorama the relations between nature and culture are discussed, as well as time and space are re-signified: distances are shortened and time becomes schedule setting up (Virilio, 1993).

New sociabilities are started – in the man-machine interface and no longer face to face. Strangely, the more peoples, nations and people get closer, the more the spectacle of differences and inequalities may be seen. Ethnical conflicts, the “nationalities” fade and are worsen in an electronic topology. Countries keep on being of first, second, third or fourth worlds. Stock markets fight for their currencies in the market and we may ask: Competitiveness or complementariness?

The social picture is alarming: although we criticize the dual reason (in the terms used by Francisco de Oliveira in the paper that became reference in the 1970s and the 1980s) we should admit that the reserve industrial army is not that missed by the system. Lots of (thinner and thinner) arms paraphrasing Marx in Salaried Labor and Capital, are more and more numerous, searching for work. A growing amount of workers, cast away from productive works by machines and/ or enterprises' closing, make a living in part-time, informal jobs or gravitate satellized around the most synchronized businesses to the globalized dynamics. The vastly seen homelessness, “*sans-abris*” and underclass phenomenology, with new characteristics, draws the First World's attention and makes way for a discussion on Social Exclusion, Social Disqualification, Disaffiliation, besides the discussed Latin American and Brazilian issues such as “marginality”, remarkable in the slum houses (favelas), occupations, begging, deterioration or unequipped peripheries studies (Vêras, 1999).

The science itself goes through crisis and mutation. Talking about the paradigm's crisis has already become a commonplace (and in social science we have lived with methodological debate, in the theoretical and ideological positions' confrontation, and with the absence of a hegemonic paradigm). Nevertheless, nowadays, we watch debates and confrontations amidst unsecurity due to the meta-reports' (in Lyotard's terms) and revolutionary ideals' crisis. In other words, we lack safe and broad theoretical systems; science has lost its arrogance, but if this humbleness set us free from the somehow limiting monolithic blocks, on the other hand, it broke up, sometimes, randomly.

In this context, the city – the urban phenomenon – is challenging the most varied specialists. The city assumes many functions in the world, but re-signifies others, re-tries new features. Keeps on being a not totally deciphered, an enigmatic object.

Our cities' problems certainly have not appeared with the capitalism, because as soon as the manual and intellectual work division and the country's surplus production were originated, the antique and medieval cities held their contradictions. But the industrial and capitalist city reached its absolute shape by making the social class struggle clear in the geographic, social and political space.

The city "emptied" the country in the 19th Century, by holding back the capitalization, dominating it, having the labor force cluster so that it could produce plus value (at first absolute and relative afterwards). Long working days subordinated the workers, closer and closer to the industrial estate and more and more dependent upon working for surviving.

Depending on their wages to bear the costs of their reproduction as workers, they had their lodging, feeding, education and health levels increasingly worse.

And all these elements had an urban cost and feature: the city gathers the (constant and variable) capital, and the labor force and the elements necessary to life. As well as the working period – bought by the capitalist as salary – divides the worker's time in "work time" and "living time" (necessary to restore energy to remain alive and "productive"), the capitalism also divided the city's space: the working space (the enterprise, the factory, the manufactory, the workshop, the store) and the living space (for the housing and the meeting of human's basic needs). Thus, the badly-reputed "cursed neighborhoods" emerge, in the words of F. Engels in his classic The Situation of Labor Class in England, from 1845, where the labor class gathered in unhealthy settlements, without urban services and equipments.

The crowd occupied the streets, and the city was revealed as the bearer of the new (urban, industrial and modern) civilization but that was also when it was seen as having an undesirable side, the poverty. It was the presence of the "dirty and gruesome" starving people who "should" be apart from the bourgeois looks. That was when the first explicit segregation form appeared – they were sometimes near the bourgeois neighborhoods, but avoided as being highly dangerous. Afterwards, there would be a more focused intention, including from the public departments for the planning of "zoning", cataloguing and straightening of the urban space for certain functions. One of the urbanist trends was of reshaping, "cleaning", "sanitizing" and making the urban space rational and destining specific spaces to popular housing. The city progressively becomes value of change.

The more the capitalist system of production advances, the more the city is shaped according to its interests. The metropolis turns out to be the great locus representative of the Fordist and clustering accumulation of Taylorist work division.

The urban soil, although collectively produced – and here State plays a key role, as it provides the means for collective consumption: equipments and services like the so-called infrastructure (drinkable water, sanitary sewerage system, electricity, cleaning and other services) is individually appropriated by the ones who can afford it. The collective transport, the streets (road system and its maintenance) systems are normally organized, and many times, supported by State. Urban policies are regulative and urbanization inductors and "excluding" for the poorest.

Like this, by assuring the conditions for the settling of companies (of all kinds, i.e., industrial, commercial or of services) making the "general production conditions" easier, the State, with honorable exceptions, has disciplined the workers in distant housing places and, from the economicist point of view, for "reasonable prices", which means, in far peripheries. The Brazilian example of popular joint housings is enough to reveal other recurring urban issue: the role of State and of urban policies.

In short, the capitalist city makes its own consumption for the poor more difficult, as it is seen as constant capital by the owners who use the "occupied environment" as they have used the machine in industrial production. When the offer of healthy housings for prices suitable to the demand lack, precarious solutions appear, such as slum houses (favelas), the clandestine land divisions and their self-built houses in the periphery.

And the urban policies end up, sometimes for insufficiency, and other times for attaching themselves to private capital, reproducing the model that tries to put the city in order, making the city work like a machine, where there is not only disorder, but also contradiction (Lefebvre, 1978).

But the industrial city is the city that gathers the working class, typical period of Fordist accumulation with important role of trade unions and workers' struggle. Social movements, new actors start performing the urban struggles, germ and accomplishment of the citizens' rights. The civil, political and social rights consciousness – all constitutive of citizenship, even in its bourgeois feature, also needs the recognition that the city is the privileged stage for struggle. Moreover, as basis where production-generated activities happen – the city weighs in its “multiple determinations”, urban fights, movements for water, electricity, asphalt; the right of occupying the streets, of circulating on them, of manifesting, the right of living with dignity (and housing quality goes beyond the “ceiling, wall and floor”, reaching location, convenience, transportation, health, education, leisure, religion and culture equipments) of being provided basic services, anyway, all that should be offered and usufructed by the citizen, indispensable arsenal for modern life, turned out to be included in the claims agenda.

The literature on social movements has often oscillated between an exaggerated optimism (of the “social class struggle’s new modality”) and pessimism (movements as being merely claimer, requester and bourgeois); a distinction between “dweller” and “citizen” was often made, which means, the first just wanting to “adapt” to the city of capital and the latter, being really aware of his/her rights and duties, is able to work for the effective society’s transformation.

City and citizenship, since the classic correlation between “*civilis*” and “*polis*”; have been indissoluble terms. Since the “the urban air sets men free” idea, the cities, unlike the feudal countryside, have been seen as a free manifestation space. But the cities became centers of a new kind of domination, the bourgeois one, having the private ownership (of the means of production and of urban land) as its excluding axle. The so-called means of collective consumption, in turn, contributed for the socio-spatial inequality very much – segregation, confinement.

In the contemporary configurations, new ingredients are added to the picture, already complicated for itself, of the capitalist city. Getting closer to the so-called “Information Age”, new challenges are placed, nevertheless not annulling the old issues such as inequality, exclusion, and the harmful effects of the urban policies. New forms have appeared though, without having emptied the previous ones, as well as new focuses, new approaches are seen.

This way the globalization-related studies are highlighted, the ones on its effects over the cities’ social framework, on the role played by the telecommunications over the urban configurations and on its citizens’ sociability.

Among many contemporary authors, Gottdiener points out the present difficulty of distinguishing the country from the city, as the capitalist industry took possession of both, resulting hybrid conglomerates – he prefers to call the city a settling space and, in a multidimensional and multidisciplinary approach, his focus is useful. With such a huge presence of telecommunications in urban daily life – either in the production (flexible accumulation, productive re-structuring, industrial plants’ overflowing and horizontalization, control and management functions made easier by the computer) and in the private life (not only on internet, but also television, cable TV) changes were introduced in time, in daily life’s programming.¹

Maybe it could be said that the scholars are divided in “the apocalyptic ones and the integrated ones” when it comes to globalization, and the Infocosm’s virtualities, paraphrasing U. Eco who by that time, referred to the mass communication media. As already stated here, it is undeniable, though, that new and old urban issues overlay in the contemporary city.

¹ In an article written in 1995, I called this problematic The City of Ice – ICE, Information, Computer, Entertaining, based on Andersen Consulting – Infocosm – specialists’ statements, who affirmed us to be going through a new glaciation and a new nomadism, but now a joyful one, for having individuals that now transfer themselves for pleasure, for free will and not for the obligation of going work.

In this article I discuss the relative application of this “joyful nomadism” to the context of contemporary city, and in Brazil’s case, to the big contrasts with such way of understanding the “urban”.

If the TV and the computer's screens eliminate the face-to-face contact's preponderance; if the new homes' window – the third one – is the television that regulates the sleep, the awakening, day and night, even more than the own nature, i.e., if the electronic topology impregnates the occupied environment, invading the public and the private, we should not forget that the Industrial Revolution and the City from the Fordist times had already introduced great changes: the crowd on the streets, the traffic lights, the clock, the banking and commercial times, the factory's whistle, all had already had us away from nature and inside an artificial environment; new routines, new values, the Merchandise's. Simmel, Weber, Marx, Durkheim – even E. Allan Poe, all in the transition to the 20th Century highlighted this “Second Nature” in Lefévre's words.

But this virtual city might bring big changes: if with flexibilization, with outsourcing etc, people start working at home – if the production is virtual, we shall have a “non employment”, “non transportation”, “non segregation” situation, diminishing the road system's importance and enhancing telephone and optic fiber's significance.

Revolution in the city and in the production! However, we should emphasize that this is a borderline picture, as this situation is not generalized yet, especially if we take the Brazilian city and São Paulo's situation, as the country's biggest city.

Even with the enthusiasm of the ones who see in society's informatization great potentialities in the struggle for citizenship (for example, the Louvre can be accessed on the internet from a slum house), it is not possible to annul the deep social inequality, although it may become a communication and education channel.

When it comes to the Brazilian city, resorting to classical arsenal is still necessary to understand it, and also updating this arsenal afterwards.

Some authors have brought a new paradigm as they show that some cities are important in 10% of world economy, as nodal points of economic and cultural articulation – playing an important role: as basis for the financial capital, research and technology institute centers, universities; transnational enterprises, banks and specialized services headquarters etc. These characteristics, read as a new “paradigm” – the global cities' one – turn out to be a description of attributes and to have effects over social framework.

In spite of of criticizing the pure and simple application of the “typical”, indiscriminately to any cities originated in such different continents or development levels, we should recognize that there are pertinent traces in the model. However, it is necessary to contextualize historically each city, its regional, national – and local role, always besides the international. (Vêras, 1997).

Preteceille (1994) alerts us not to deduce that there are globalization's direct and mechanical effects over the cities' social framework. This way, it is necessary to contextualize – fragmentation and homogenization walk along. (Vêras, 1997).

When it comes to the other contemporary issues that are strangely perceived, we can mention the territoriality, otherness and the right to differences issue.

Urban clustering has triggered territorialization and desterritorialization processes. The capitalist city tends to expel inhabitants – and territory is a citizen's conquest. More than a physical space, it is a space of social and identity construction. Citizenship consists of the right of coming and going, and also of remaining, if one wants to. This way, the expelled out and banished's nomadism would only be acceptable if it were an option. That is not what has happened; unfortunately, to evicted and even dispossessed peasants, slum dwellers, indigenous people and tenants, in financial and real estate capital's voracity in reshaping capitalist city.

Although some authors, like Jordi Borja (1990), among others, see the big city as a warm environment, a laboratory of ideas and cultures, to stand up to the market and formal democracy's cold mechanisms, we should not forget that the capitalist city keeps its contradictions.

In this scenery the otherness issue in the Other's confrontation is detached, in its broadened meaning, as the non familiar, the stranger and the foreigner. This way, socio-economic – also cultural and political – inequality determines who is other, by making use of racist and xenophobic arguments (Vêras, 2001).

Nowadays' discussion on the right to difference goes towards the same direction, as being so dear to left wing's sectors, may also be an argument used by the right wing to keep the inequalities.

In the contemporary city new and old issues cross, whose roots may be especially found in the unequal appropriation of occupied environment, of the city of velocity, turned into a whole of routes and itineraries, flows and routines, pragmatic aims of money circulation, labor force and capital's quickness. It is not about the place, the memory, the identity. These are not "places" – but an assemblage of "places" and "non places" in Marc Augé's words.

That is why it is necessary to fight for the memory, for the right to the territory, to the place, to the dignity of the space of living and working, as a citizenship's accomplishment, if not as an emancipating process yet, as an indispensable regulatory process.

"A city is a place where people can learn how to live with unknown people, share non familiar experiences and interests. Uniformity brutalizes while diversity stimulates the spirit. The city also offers to its inhabitants the possibility of developing a more complex and richer self-awareness (...) they are not subject to an immutable identity scheme. People can develop multiple images of their own identities, as what they are varies according to the people they live with. This is where the power of the diversity is – the freedom of an arbitrary identification" (Sennet, 2002), or *DiverCidade* (Vêras, 2001).

1. Social Inequality and Exclusion

The Social Exclusion subject is not new in Brazil. Although nowadays the "new poverty" and new contemporary social processes may be talked about, and we are influenced by the European and American debates on the subject, our history has often had chapters of domination over many population segments without citizenship. As put by José de Souza Martins,² our baroque-façade and conquest-based culture, excludes indigenous peoples and peasants in the country and, in town, migrants, slum and deteriorated houses dwellers, the homeless and so on, in a very well known phenomenology.

The debate on the social exclusion concept, nevertheless, has had new drawings in the contemporary stage when the so-called European sociological thought and even the American feel more closely processes already familiar to Latin American reality and, more particularly, the Brazilian one. For the controversies it triggers, this subject reminds us the well-known sentence: *No creo en brujas, pero que las hay, las hay* (I don't believe in witches, but they exist for sure).

The word exclusion turned out to be something doubly interpreted. On the one hand, such a wide concept, a kind of mother-word (horizon concept) that shelters many meanings to gather abandoned and disaffiliated (Castel, 1998),³ set aside and disqualified (Serge Paugam, 1999) people and groups, either from labor market or from social policies etc. On the other hand, it is a mistaken, backward and unnecessary concept.

The social exclusion subject, which bursted in France in the early 1990s, referred to varied objects, to the young from periphery, to the unemployed, to the homeless (*sans abris*) and so on, reflecting the debate on the many forms of poverty, prevailing in the media and in the political discourse of this First World country that started going over the "new" social issue more accurately.⁴

Among us, nevertheless, the debate on poverty, misery, exclusion, non-citizenship, marginality, oppression, inequality and difference is very frequent and, we could really say so, the scientific discourses on Brazilian reality, many times, have linked the social issue's analysis (under different theoretical-methodological approaches) to interpretations related to the country's historical-structural situation: dependence, underdevelopment, social policies' failure, Nation-State's crisis, minimum State.

² José de Souza Martins (1993). *A chegada do estranho*. São Paulo: Hucitec.

³ R. Castel (1998). *As metamorfoses da questão social*. Translated by Iraci Poletti. Petrópolis: Vozes.

⁴ R. Castel. *As armadilhas da exclusão social*. Translated by Cleisa Moreno Maffei Rosa and Mariangela B. Wanderley et al. (Org.). *Desigualdade e a questão social*. São Paulo: EDUC, 1997.

In this brief discussion, we aim at the approach of the different meanings of the terms used in Brazilian debate on the social issue: poverty, marginality, social exclusion, especially in its urban manifestations.

The first idea to highlight is the one of social fracture or rupture if, as Castel⁵ says, the social issue challenges one society's capacity of existing as a whole, of existing with an interdependence relation and of escaping the fracture risk. Likewise, Paugam uses the term social disqualification for a multidimensional process that indicates how individuals go losing their position in inclusive society, objective and subjectively in a series of professional precariousness and different situations that may lead to the social bonds' rupture.⁶

In Brazil's case, the conquest (or colonization) early enunciates the first domination. The colonial times are characterized by bourgeois rule, dominating the indigenous, and the peasant, enslaving the first, and the Africans afterwards. Asymmetric shapes mark our social relations: economical, gender-based, ethnic, religious and cultural inequalities. In its multidimensionality, the social issue is posed in Brazil as a 500 year-old problem, now made more severe by the new features of "globalized" capitalism.

In a suggestive paper, L. E. Wanderley clearly signalizes:

My thesis is that the social issue embraces determined elements that make the general problematic historical, embracing other essential components that here will be understood as constitutive parts of its meaning. Originally it will emerge with the indigenous subject and, right after, with the national formation subject, yet they are not understood like this by our present eyes. And it spreads and becomes more and more problematic in the racial, rural, labor, gender topics (...) Even in the case of its convergence with European signification, for the occasion of industrial capitalism's establishment in the [Latin American] continent, it will nevertheless be strongly conditioned by these historic-cultural propositions (...) keeping specificities (...)⁷.

The indigenous, banned, overwhelmed, enslaved and transformed in "minorities" and in dependents under tutelage afterwards. In spite of the rights' recognition in the 1988 Federal Constitution – *the right for social organization, customs, beliefs, traditions is recognized and the original rights over the land they traditionally occupy, whose all the assets' demarcation, protection and respect are the Union's duty*⁸ – the indigenous still claim for their citizenship – in their resistance, fight for identity, memory, starting participating in parties, associations, land revision, camps in the cities, seeking allies in other continents' countries to support their causes.

Our social relations also keep fractured for many issues such as ethnic, gender and identity. Our colonization's form engendered race and social class differences, symbolized in the *mestizaje*. The notion of otherness is really meaningful here to explain the xenophobia and strange-finding relations before the Other (foreigner, immigrants), a new national issue.

Touraine used to declare the contrast between the Latin American thought and the European one; the first for a long time has been organized around the social classes' topic as the central element. *In Latin America, economy and society's dualization introduces a duality of notions: the nation is the citizens' space, the mass is the excluded ones' way of existence. The people is the mythic image of a desired, but far from society, reunification.*⁹

Afro-Brazilians' situation in Brazilian society remains as one of the most serious and perverse fractures: the slavery (that was tolerated by the Church, in spite of isolated opposed voices), seeing them as fixed or circulating capital, in their productivity and their costs. And this situation remained beyond the 19th Century, marking Afro-Brazilians' insertion in 20th Century.

⁵ Idem, 1998.

⁶ Serge Paugam (1991). *La desqualification sociale*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. In: Vêras, Maura (ed). *Op cit.*, 1999.

⁷ Luiz Eduardo Wanderley. *A questão social no contexto da globalização – o caso latinoamericano e o caribenho*. In Mariângela B. Wanderley et al., 1997, p. 60.

⁸ Prieto (1993), *apud* Wanderley, *op. cit.*

⁹ A. Touraine (1989). *Palavra e sangue: política e sociedade na América Latina*. Campinas/SP: Ed. UNICAMP, p. 91, *apud* L. E. Wanderley, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

Even nowadays, discrimination and prejudice are visible in labor market and in urban segregation. Nowadays, defense and root-rescuing movements are frequent.

Without presenting Los Angeles' or Chicago's same kind of ghetto, the Brazilian city presents its ethnic enclaves. In the United States, the race concept is evident and not denied (having an African ancestor is enough to be considered an African-American), unlike in Brazil, where, according to Silva,¹⁰ the race's own importance as analytical category is questioned, canalizing the ethnic enclave's interpretation to a merely economic issue.

The feminine issue, considered by some as the most radical and the oldest issue, should be registered, yet. It is many times related to the ethnic issue (indigenous and African) that nowadays gets much political visibility.

Peasants, migrants and, in the cities, slums', damaged houses' and peripheries' dwellers have constituted many aspects of what has been called the excluded, marginalized.

We seek, here, to situate the debate in Brazil, with brief syntheses of the main authors' present positioning (the ones who thought it over among us), followed by a compilation to introduce the state of art of the international discussion's gist.

Not aiming at the approach of the many marginality¹¹ conceptions in vigor in the 1970s, it is necessary, however, to point out significant references. Not assuming the "backward and modern", non-integrated, rural X urban dualism¹², the studies, then, started seeing the economic and sociological relations inherent to the capitalism as¹³ constitutive of the productive system. Marginal populations appear, in this context, as a capitalist accumulation's consequence, a singular industrial army of reserve.

We here start the debate with José de Souza Martins' suggestive proposal,¹⁴ according to which the term social exclusion became a label – god/devil – responsible and elucidating of all and for all, in the 1990s debate. By openly criticizing the current practice of rigidly and randomly labeling, this Author seeks, in this writing, to oppose the label to the references of what has been experienced and find out, as he addresses to the popular educators, the

gaps opened in what has been experienced capable of transforming life and world and giving a meaning to the radical hope of the man who humanizes himself and sets himself free of shortage, poverty, in the everyday struggle, experiencing different kinds of exclusion.¹⁵

This way, criticism to the conceptual "objectification and fetichization" is made, as it leads less to a practice's expression and more to the induction to one practice. Defining it in a sociological and political perspective – and, this way, avoiding privileging economicist approaches and reductionisms – that is why this is the ambit of efficacious intervention of civil society, of the people and of those who are *vaguely defined as the excluded*, because the social rights are vindicated right in this field. This way, the sociological reflection, by approaching the political relation between society and State, focuses the contradictions that might create conditions for the dominated one's effective action.

From this perspective, the exclusion concept's interpretative reductionism to economy replaces the idea of exclusion process (integrative or marginal way of insertion).

¹⁰ M. Nilza Silva (1999). *Mulheres negras: o preço das trajetórias de sucesso*. Mastership dissertation, PUCSP.

¹¹ The term seems to have been used for the first time by R. Park (Human Migration and the Marginal Man, 1928), faithful to the School of Chicago's principles, already outlined in this introduction. Among others, verify F. H. Cardoso *et al. Sobre teoria e método em sociologia*. São Paulo: Cebrap, 1971, especially Populações Marginais: Maria Célia Paoli. *Desenvolvimento e marginalidade*. Livraria Pioneira Editora, 1974.

¹² Cf. Francisco de Oliveira. *A economia brasileira: crítica à razão dualista* (1981), in which he criticizes CEPAL's theses, seeking to revert Brazilian analyses focused on the "underdevelopment's" description and that blamed the existence of "2 Brazils" for our misfortune. He highlights F. H. Cardoso and Enzo Faletto's importance. *Dependência e desenvolvimento na América Latina* (1970). José Nun, Aníbal Quijano, Luiz Pereira this way are also references.

¹³ *Capitalismo e marginalidade na América Latina*. (1975) Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra and *A espoliação urbana*. (1979) Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.

¹⁴ (1997) *Exclusão social e a nova desigualdade*. São Paulo: Editora Paulus.

¹⁵ Martins, J. de S. *Op. cit.*, p. 10.

The label ends up overlaid to the movement that seems to push the people, the poor, the weak, outside the society, outside its “best?” and fairest and most “correct” social relations, depriving them of the rights that give meaning to these relations. When, in fact, this movement pushes them “inside”, to the subaltern condition as the economic system’s mechanic reproducers, reproducers who do not claim or protest over deprivation, injustice and shortage.¹⁶

It is remarkable, here, that the term exclusion is conceived as the capitalist system’s contradictions’ expression and not as a fatality state. It is necessary to experience the contradiction that is expressed in the exclusion, developing some level of consciousness about the contradiction one experiences as he/ she acts.

There is a concept closely correlated to exclusion which is the poverty one; but it, nowadays, has changed its name and form. Besides being the deprivation: of employment, means to participate in the consumer market, well-being, rights, freedom, hope and other items necessary to a condign life, the poverty receives, now, a moral dimension, not offering any alternative or even the remote possibility of social ascension. Even with certain relativity in the delimitation between the rich and the poor, there seems to be an irremediable condemnation to poverty, what makes the poor prefer not to self recognize like this. *The reducing discourse over the condign poverty’s redeemer character no longer moves or convinces.*¹⁷

Martins points out that, in Brazil, the present economic policies, that might be called neo-liberal, turn out to trigger, not exclusion policies, but precarious and marginal inclusion policies, i.e., they include people in the (...) *economic processes, in the production and in the goods and services circulation strictly in terms of what is rationally convenient and necessary to the most efficient (and cheapest) capital’s reproduction.*¹⁸

This way, they soften the dangerous character of the dominated classes, who, in turn, see themselves much less inclined to social conflict, having them fit the political order functioning, in favor of the dominants.

The new inequality, thus, must be analyzed through a “phenomenology of excluding social processes”, because, besides the marginal relations being produced and (re)produced, an ideological universe in the consumer society’s imaginary is also created. Martins gives an example, which is, through the same pressing of a television button, there is the capacity to transport the poor and the millionaire, simultaneously, to the same fancy and colorful mass communication’s world of fiction, allowing certain ideological unification, in spite of the material inequality.

The detach given by the Author to the colonization of the ordinary man’s imaginary, through directed consuming, leads to that the new inequality generates two worlds, a double society, of two parts that mutually exclude each other, but that are alike for having the same merchandises and the same individualist and competitive ideas. However the opportunities are not the same, the goods’ value is different, the social ascension is blocked. Despite this, a fake, delusive and market-based block of ideas waves at the *colonized modern man* who starts imitating, miming the rich and thinking that is what equality is.¹⁹

It is the “imitation, reproducibility and vulgarization” society, instead of the creation and the dream.

In short, considering that the exclusion concept is mistaken, a fetish that portrays incompletely the processes of precarious, instable and marginal inclusion, in the whole of the difficulties and residual places in present society, Martins concludes that the word exclusion is not a new one. Capitalist society is born with the excluded; its motto is to respect the market, uprooting and brutalizing everyone – and this is its structuring rule – and then including them afterwards, according to its own logic. The peasant, for instance, goes to town in order to become an industrial worker. Nevertheless the new capitalist dynamics excludes and takes long to include and then it makes visible what has been called exclusion. In other words, the transitory moment of the

¹⁶ Martins, J. de S. *Op. cit.*, pp. 16. 17.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 19.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

¹⁹ See Morin, E. (1969). *Cultura de massas no século XX*. Rio de Janeiro: Forense and also Lefêbvre, U. (1972) *La vida cotidiana en el mundo moderno*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

exclusion's passing is becoming a permanent way of life: the way of life of the excluded who cannot be re-included. And such way of life commits one's dignity, one's capacity of being a citizen, one's human condition, from the moral and political point of view.

Besides the mankind composed by the integrated (rich and poor), somehow inserted in the economic activities' circuit and having their rights recognized, there is other mankind in Brazil, increasing fast and sadly through precarious work, in small commerce, in the badly-paid services' sector, treated as second-class citizens (underclass in the Anglo-Saxon view, "excluded" in the French).

Between these two worlds, a more and more difficult gap to surpass.

With no intention to explore the global city's wide topic, we highlight the social issue involved in the big cities' problematic and its international role. Many authors have mentioned as one of its main characteristics a social dualization (Castells and Mollenkof) or a social polarization, i.e., those who bet that the economy's globalization and financialization are felt over the cities' social framework, point out to labor market's fracture, increasing the search for those highly qualified individuals, demanded by the economy's top sector, and related to the specialized services, to capital management and control, and to the advanced technological activities. On the other hand, the non-qualified would tend to be the "leftovers," industrial workers once qualified are residual now. Middle classes would tend to diminish, replacing the classic pyramidal graphic social representation for a kind of society of a log glass feature, with two configured poles narrowing in their middles.

Although this model may be relativized and we should always contextualize the world city we are talking about, because the historic-social position counts, as well as the relations with national and regional economy, as well as the nation-State's role cannot be underestimated, nowadays these traces are unarguably present in many world cities.

As we have seen, Preteceille²⁰ states that the global city does not follow just one model and that globalization's effects are not direct and do not always go in the same direction. This way, social polarization might happen in some of them, but segmentation and fragmentation might too. So the commerce and a sophisticate tertiary sector's development, the research functions and enterprises' development, the subsidiary services, may also increase and disfigure the announced log glass-model of the so-called polarization, for the presence of middle, upper and lower layers in social framework.

Thinking about this new stage experienced by global world, Francisco de Oliveira²¹ considers that top limits of developed capitalism have been reached, without having reached its minimal platforms: *vanguard of the vanguard's delay*. Latin America, for example, should be thought about not only by taking into account its internal contradictions, but also the crossings with international capitalism, so that we can cope with the *underdevelopment's singularity*. The delay's vanguard's prime characteristic would be in State's regulatory incapacity as it loses the possibility of regulating the economic system within its political-territorial areas and becomes an *easy prey to private violence* (...) and that the national ruling classes ended up being dissolved in the vast whole of ruling forces in global level (...) But this was not done without a high price for the dominated classes to pay (...) Latin American contradictions' main characteristic, made explicit and moved by the so-called neo-liberal economic policies, is the exclusion.²²

Without having properly known a Welfare-State, the so-called integrating policies have actually included very little. In Latin America, the open and disguised unemployment rates have reached between 30% and 50% of economically active population²³ and, despite all the Plano Real's fuss, and after its crisis, the salary erosion and the lack of readjustments deny the anti-inflation policy's success. The country is open to speculative foreign capital, the extern and intern

²⁰ Cidades globais e segmentação social. In: Queiroz Ribeiro. L. C. and Santos Jr., O. (1994) *Globalização, fragmentação e reforma urbana*. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Civilização Brasileira.

²¹ Vanguarda do atraso e atraso da vanguarda: globalização e neoliberalismo na América Latina. Text prepared for the magistral conference at XXI CONGRESSO DA ASSOCIAÇÃO LATINO-AMERICANA DE SOCIOLOGIA – ALAS – São Paulo, September 1997.

²² Oliveira, F. de *Op. cit.*, p. 6-7 (our highlighting).

²³ F. Oliveira. *Op. cit.*, p. 8

debts increase, consuming great part of the fiscal wealth. The entrapment is complete. The circle is closed. The monetary policy's condition for success is containing any social expense and, for that reason, no social policy.

In countries like ours, with abyssal inequalities between the many social classes, this kind of policy becomes exclusion; previously the term could be contested, even though, more for the worse than for the better, the policies tried to progressively include the populations and social classes in market, in culture, in citizenship, anyway, the integration was in excluding ways that created the great poor majorities in Latin America; the many cuts in labor market showed this integration by exclusion: Afro-Brazilians in Brazil, women throughout Latin America, the indigenous of many ethnic origins in Latin America, the mestizos, the children, the generational courts (...) Market materialized in individuals and classes' attributes what used to be historical perversions of inequality and of non-citizenship in Latin America.²⁴

Nowadays, even the neologism "unemployable" has been created to refer to the groups that, in the new globalized order in which Brazil is inserted, will not have any opportunities, a somehow fatalist vision according to which the so-called productive re-structuration will divide the groups in the absorbable (employable) and the large excluded group. Francisco de Oliveira estimates that around 50% of the economically active population would be doomed to "marginalization".

Social exclusion, thus, appears as the economic face of Latin America and Brazil's globalized neo-liberalism and to it there is no assistencialist policy because, according to Oliveira, the ruling classes have given up of integrating it, whether to the production whether to citizenship. What they do intend is to segregate, confine, in a real apartheid between classes, a growing distancing and uncommunicativeness, a socially-built feature.

The fragmented society's new stratification appears, with certain sociability of separation and confinement and the "media communication" replaces the public sphere construction, as it, many times, denounces it and the public issues' following, from wars to Investigation Parliamentary Commissions (the CPIs), have become just spectacles; the media have self declared as the popular interests' (or sometimes human rights') sentinels, making, then, the social reality's fracture evident and replacing the *violence's legal monopoly for the violence's private monopoly*.²⁵

And the poor start distrusting each other, in a popular culpability: walking on a floor paved in prejudice of poor against poor, Brazil's ruling classes started extravasating an anti-public subjectivity that segregates, elaborates an anti-state ideology in the media communication,²⁶ based on the great capitalist development, on des-industrialization on superior tertiarization, on State's financial dilapidating and on the image of a State in debt. And, then, idea of the public's "unnecessity" is segregated. Market seems to superpose the State, suggesting that the Brazilian bourgeois believe that they can do without it as the State depends upon them or upon the own association between themselves and the international capital.

This way, F. de Oliveira believes that the deepest sense of exclusion is related to the Brazilian bourgeois' wish of showing that the dominated ones are different, by segregating them, not even worrying anymore about legitimating their domination in the classic coercion and consensus formula. They put us aside, forbidding the divergence, because the "social" must subordinated to the economic and getting closer to the totalitarianism than to hegemony (in Gramscian terms).

The apartheid is characterized by the creation of a semantic field in which the meanings of the civilizing rights and conquests, molded in social, laborite, civil and political rights are transformed in causal factors of misery, poverty and exclusion, in obstacle to economic development and

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 9-10.

²⁵ Here the author refers to M. Weber's concept of State. M. Weber – (1970) *Política como vocação*. São Paulo: Ed. Cultrix. – as the owner of violence's legal monopoly.

²⁶ Oliveira, F. de. *Op. cit.*, 1997: 15.

furthermore, are transformed in lack of citizenship. The social protection, for example, becomes the “Brazil cost”.²⁷

Other author, starting with the worry of constructing epistemologically – and sociologically – the social exclusion concept, Luciano Oliveira finally agrees with many of the positions so far outlined by the quoted authors and offers a good panorama of the issue, in an interesting article.²⁸

Stating that the phenomenon assumes dramatic features, also in the developed world (France’s case has been an important register for bringing expressions addressed to the poor as “Fourth World”, new poverty and the own exclusion, since the 1960s), and seems to recognize a specificity generated from the 1980s on, like a structural unemployment which is a sub-product of the own scientific and technological advance (that releases working force) and the working relations’ precariousness. In Brazil, above all, there is a new scission which is of included X excluded.

As already stated by other authors, the balance of the diverse meanings attributed to the term demonstrates a wide diffusion of usages, embracing not only the minority sense (Afro-Brazilians, homosexuals, handicapped), but also unemployed, poor, homeless, etc. Traditionally, the term has been applied to slum-dwellers, street orphans, trash catchers, peripheries, a *lunpen*, or a certain kind of deprivation, discrimination or banishment.

If exclusion, *lato sensu*, has permanently been connected to the capitalist way of production, as already seen, contemporarily we can hear of a double-faced “new exclusion”²⁹: on the one hand, the non-insertion in the world of work is expressed by the fact that some contingents (for their low qualification) become “economically unnecessary”, even if new technologies may partially employ some of them and, on the other hand, a stigma lies over them, for living in precarious and subhuman conditions compared to “normal” sociability standards, of whom they are dangerous threateners and, *right for this reason, subject to being eliminated*”.³⁰

The Author seeks to train the look to identify the phenomenon and improve the concept’s construction. Starting through Social Sciences’ hegemonic position among us, since the 1970s, which is Marxist, in its many senses, the division in two groups – included and excluded – would represent a dualist view, very criticized. The cause would be, hence, attributed to the global accumulation. The concept of relative “superfluous” population, of industrial reserve army, still kept a relation with the capitalist accumulation, according to the classic F. Oliveira’s writing, *Economia brasileira – crítica à razão dualista*.³¹

This *lunpenproletariat*, besides being generated by the accumulation process, is functional to the system, not only as industrial reserve army, like Marx wanted, but also, in Brazilian conditions, as an allowing factor for the segments integrated to economy’s dynamic sector – of which we shall not forget about the middle classes – to benefit from a super-exploited workforce, that is going to render services for very low costs, this way releasing, more resources to be reallocated (in the durable consumption goods’ purchase, for example) in the dynamic sector.³²

The present situation seems to suggest that this industrial reserve army has become economically unnecessary and for this the term exclusion, as it would not be reserve anymore and would become a burden. This, in part, may be true, although there is evidence that through even the most perverse ways, there is articulation with economy. This way, only those of whom one could not “*extract any more plus value penny*” would become *excluded* indeed.

Besides that, other vision sees the excluded as inferior “mankind”, which means, their inhumanity and, according to Hannah Arendt, these contingents’ sub-humanity also brings political

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

²⁸ Os excluídos existem? Notas sobre a elaboração de um novo conceito. Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais. São Paulo, ANPOCS, no. 33, year 12, February 1997, p. 49-60.

²⁹ Nascimento, Elimar. Hipótese sobre a nova exclusão social. Cadernos CHR, no. 21, Salvador, 1994.

³⁰ Oliveira, Luciano. *Op. Cit.*, p. 52.

³¹ Oliveira, Francisco. (1981) *Economia brasileira – crítica à razão dualista*. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes/ Cebrap.

³² Oliveira, Luciano. *Op. cit.*, p. 53.

consequences, as they, just like the Jews without nationality, would not have a *peculiar place in the world*.³³

Moreover, such contingents would cause a hostility, distrust, irritation and fear feeling in other social sectors, a kind of fomentation for neo-Nazi ideas, as these sectors also feel threatened. This triggers, likewise, a higher demand for security and repression services, canalizing the energies much more to the social issue's perverse effects' contention than to its causes' resolutions.

In order to conclude, Luciano Oliveira states that to understand the causes, the anti-dualist point of view is more appropriate, as it avoids the naïvety of explaining the misery by blaming the miserable (in a moralist commonplace).

When it comes to the effects, however, the dualism between the excluded and non-excluded is useful, as it copes with a vast phenomenology. We should also add that the economic reductionism does not allow embracing the issue's ethic-political dimension and only the latter can found and rescue the inclusion's conquest.

These statements, as well as José de Souza Martins', already quoted, allow perceiving how the society gets used to the duality, almost permanent, what we may infer from the substantive rise on security expenses, transforming them *in a flourishing investment area (surveillance, electronics, car blindage, private guards etc. (...))* The exclusion concept has a theoretical, but, above all, ethic and political reason: it is the one that questions us about the nature of the polis we are building.³⁴

“Underdevelopment cannot be improvised, it is work of centuries”
Nelson Rodrigues

2. Problematizing the Brazilian Cities

The current discourses in Brazil, whether by the intellectuals whether by the government and public men, have been concerned about the attack of the deep inequalities in national society's issue, aiming at not seeing them as natural processes and denouncing the existence of two distinct citizenship configurations (the included and the excluded), with outlinings diverse from the respective set of rights and duties.

If the debate is generalized reaching civil society sectors, social movements and non-governmental organizations, in turn the government, in its various powers (executive, legislative and judiciary), has been devoted to some priority projects against starvation and unemployment.

Even in the academical contemporaneousness, in which a paradigmatic controversial crisis is perceived in the Social Sciences, conceptual tools adequate to the social comprehension and intervention have surely been searched. A common discovery has well-founded this debate, almost consensually among the experts in the issue: the one that states that the power-related and excluding processes are due to the deep social inequality in the country, because Brazil is not a poor country but a country with many poor.

The clearness that a binomious is necessary seems, thus, to emerge in the consciousness of many people: eradicating poverty and attacking inequality, because the old recipe, so present in the dictatorship years, according to which the first step would be “make the cake grow” and then “share it” is nowadays totally discharged. Even the “nouvelle cuisine” recipe according to which the right choice is “growing, growing and growing” means nearly an inertion because in the meantime many Brazilians will have died, not only for starvation but for the complex conspiracy that chains the excluded groups, whether in the labor market, whether in the healthy housing, in the school education and in culture, transforming them into victims of crime, organized or not, of ignorance, of disease or of earth falls and floods in the unprepared periphery.

The Brazilian social inequality is historical, and it has been through different periods, various economic models, dictatorships and democratic transitions since the colonial past.

³³ Arendt, Hannah. (1990). *As origens do totalitarismo*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.

³⁴ Oliveira, Luciano. *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

As suggested by Amartya Sen (Nobel in Economics Awarded in the 1980s)³⁵, the economic growth objective should be pursued but not as a finality: “development should refer to the improvement of the quality of the life we live and to the liberty we usufruct.” (our underlining).

That is the main goal of this article: offering data for the understanding of poverty and inequality in São Paulo providing suggestive ways for its superation.

2.1 – Poverty: preliminary concepts and respective measurements

The poverty conceptualization and measurement is an unfinished debate. It depends on national and international criteria, on the estate of knowledge, political conventions, of the conquest of minimal standards of humanity, so divided by competition, wars and scarcity. We shall start by the economists in Brazil.

For the IPEA (Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada), organism related to Ministério do Planejamento do Governo Federal (Ministry of Planning of National Government), poverty “refers to scarcity situations in which the individuals cannot keep a minimal life standard corresponding to the socially established references in each historical context”³⁶. From this point-of-view, it is possible to establish a parameter measure that allows everyone found under his/her value to be considered poor, i. e., in a given society there would be a measurable poverty line.

Although the references are socially and historically built up, the economists stipulated that the poverty dimension would be directly related to the quantity of people living in households with income per capita under the poverty line: the income per capita under the minimal level necessary for the basic needs fulfillment. In other words, the reproduction cost of the workforce that includes feeding, clothing, dwelling and transportation costs.

It was also agreed to be viable to establish an indigence line, regionally defined by the structure of costs of the food supply (caloric consumption of an individual, usually around 2,000 K/ day – calories per day, including the so called basic food supply containing rice, beans, flour, sugar, bovine or swine meat, chicken, eggs, milk etc.).

According to the criteria mentioned above, in 1999, about 14% of Brazilian population – 22 million people - were under the indigence line and 34% of households had income per capita under the poverty line (53 million people).

Even with a certain variation in poverty rates, the absolute number of poor has been increasing.

In the metropolitan region of São Paulo in 1996, the limit value of indigence line was in R\$ 76.36 (US\$ 25.00 in the present currency) and the value relative to the poverty line would be R\$ 152.73 (US\$ 50.00 in the present currency), while the average family income in this region was R\$ 483.92 (US\$ 158.00 in the present currency).*

The extent of Brazilian poverty leads to questions on the immediate causes of this phenomenon, putting forward two possibilities, one of lack of resources in the country and other of unequal distribution of resources.

2.1.1. Lack of resources?

In the hypothesis of resources scarcity, economists organize their arguments by researching the pattern of average consumption of the Brazilian family, the average income structure in the country and also by international comparisons.

On the endogenous construction of the definition of poverty, the comparison between poverty line and indigence line with the Brazilian structure of income per capita (GNPC – Gross

³⁵ SEM, Amartya. “Issues in the Measurement of Poverty” in Scandinavian Journal of Economics, v. 81. n. 2, 1979 and Desenvolvimento como liberdade. São Paulo, Cia. das Letras, 2000.

³⁶ BARROS, Ricardo Paes de, HENRIQUES, Ricardo & MENDONÇA, Rosana “A estabilidade inaceitável: desigualdade e pobreza no Brasil” In Desigualdade e pobreza no Brasil. IPEA, 2000, p. 22.

* The value of dollar in the beginning of May was around R\$ 3.06.

National Product per Capita) reveals that this one (income per capita) represents from 5 to 8 times those ones, indicating the enormous contrast in the income distribution in the country.

By making use of the classical measure of inequality - such as GINI coefficient, studies have compared Uruguay's inequality that obtained 0.40 in that index, and transferred it to Brazil as an exercise. Then, according to this thinking, the proportion would only be 14% of poor people, in opposition to the 34% existent in the country. They have concluded, thus, that 2/3 of Brazilian poverty would be associated to the differentials in the income inequality. Brazil is only after Paraguay in the proportion of poor - that make more than 40% in there³⁷.

About the pattern of consumption of Brazilian family, the above mentioned study points out that the average household income in 1999 was around R\$ 483.92 (US\$ 158.00 in the present currency) and about 20% of the total of Brazilian families were close to this situation (10% of them with income over this average and 10% with income under the limits of this average). The consumption pattern, including housing, has revealed that the average household income per capita corresponds to six times the value of indigence line and three times the value of the poverty line.

Even if we just consider essential expenses such as feeding, it is possible to figure out that they represent 47% of total expenses (around R\$ 272.50) and around two times the poverty line and four times the indigence one.

Thus, as the average Brazilian income is higher than the poverty line, the intensity of poverty can be associated to income concentration; and if the average pattern of consumption is satisfactory, we might conclude that there is no lack of resources but bad distribution of resources.

The international comparison is conclusive when it is registered that Brazilian levels of poverty are higher when compared to other countries with income per capita similar to Brazil's.

Around 64% of the countries in the World have income per capita lower than the Brazilian and for that reason Brazil is among the third of richest nations [The real GNP Per Capita in Brazil is US\$ 6,500.00 GNPC]. If compared to the industrialized countries, the income of work in Brazil represents 1/3 of income of work in these countries, but if compared to the developing countries Brazil would be in better conditions to face its population's poverty.

In the comparison of countries with similar average income, based on the Report of Human Development (PNUD), Brazil presented percentages over 30% of poor, while in the other countries the proportion was from 8 to 10%, what leads us to conclude that there is major presence of Brazilian social inequality.

2.1.2. Unequal distribution of resources

The unequal distribution of resources is, thus, detached as the main determinant for poverty in Brazil, especially income inequality that has been remaining for centuries in surprising stability, one of the highest in the international comparison.

In the economical measurement of inequality, the traditional instruments are usually the above-mentioned GINI coefficient; the THEIL index; the ratio between the average income of the richest 10% and of the poorest 40%; the ratio between the average income of the richest 20% and the average income of the poorest 20%³⁸.

The international comparison with GINI coefficients reveals that only South Africa and Malawi have degrees of inequality higher than Brazil's, where it is 0.60. "... it represents, in the group of 92 countries with available information, a pattern only reached by the four countries with the highest degree of inequality: Guatemala, Brazil, South Africa and Malawi."³⁹

About the ratio between the richest 10% and the poorest 40%, there is a certain pattern in the international distribution with figures stretching to 20% at most. In Brazil it is 28, while in other countries it is lower: in the United States (5), France (6,5), Argentina (10) and Colombia (15), Ivory

³⁷ BARROS, MENDONÇA, HENRIQUES, 2000 – op. cit., pp. 28 on.

³⁸ BARROS, MENDONÇA, HENRIQUES, op.cit.

³⁹ idem ibidem, p. 34.

Coast (20). The value of 28 times of the average income of the richest 10% and of the poorest 40% puts Brazil in a distant position from any recognizable pattern in international scene in terms of distributive justice.

On what concerns the ratio between average income of the richest 20% and of the poorest 20%, the majority of the countries presents this ratio under 10. Once again, according to information given by the Report of Human Development of 1999 (PNUD), Brazil is the country with the highest degree of inequality because the ratio between average income of the richest 20% and the poorest 20% gets over the expanded value of 30, putting it in the singular position of champion of inequality.

Such inequality has been revealed as a stable process, keeping its GINI coefficient in the last 30 years regularly around 0.60. Obviously compromise of social development shall come up, thus, through the reduction of inequality by renewed agreements and universalist and compensatory policies in terms of employment, education, health and housing.

Even without the intention of reducing the condition of poverty just to figures, and admitting the divergence of estimation, a view of the numbers of poor in São Paulo can be pointed out. According to a study by Fundação Getúlio Vargas and IBGE⁴⁰ realized in 2001, São Paulo state was the one that obtained the lowest percentage of poor (10.41%), while in the Northeast states alarming proportions were revealed, like in Maranhão (63%), Piauí (61%), Ceará (56%), Bahia (55%), Alagoas (55%). However, if the reference is the absolute number, in São Paulo the concentration of 3.8 million indigents can be found, while Maranhão state (the highest percentage) presents 3.5 million.

In the internal investigation of the situation in each state, there are new inequalities. Cities in the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo presented diverse proportions because Itaquaquetuba holds the high index of about 21% of its population indigent (56,000 people) and Santo André (6%), São Caetano (5.6%). The case of São Paulo city (10.13%) is elucidative: there are 1,053,936 indigent people, besides 2 million living in slum houses, around 1 million with low schooling, 23,000 analphabet unemployed, almost 9,000 homeless⁴¹ and a general mortality rate of 7.04 (rate for 1,000 inhabitants) and 16.29 of infant mortality (rate for 1,000 born alive). In this panorama the intraurban inequalities must be detailed because there are districts with clear marks of social exclusion. A “new poverty” can also be added to this panorama of “traditional” excluded: in São Paulo, there are about 45,000 unemployed with College Degree, that the low economic growth of the country, between 1981 and 2002, led to a new exclusion (data by São Paulo City Hall – Secretaria do Trabalho e Cidadania – 2000).

2.2 – Social Inequality

Denaturalizing the social inequality is to search explaining axis outside the biological determinations. For the classic authors of Sociology finding out the causes of hierarchy and social differentiations was an essential concern, explaining them whether by the existence of division of work (different functions, mechanic or organic solidarities, anomy, malfunctions and different degrees of integration, like in the Durkheimian schema), or by the unequal power distribution that manifests itself capillaryly in the economic, social and politic spheres (in the ways of domination, legitimate or not, like in the case of the Max Weber’s Typological Sociology); or even by the basis of labor force and work relation, in the different ways of propriety and social division of work (like in the struggle between social classes as the history’s engine in the Marxist approach).

With other approaches, more recent, the analysis gets more complex and searches empirical measurements, crosses variables, identifies fields of inequality, whatever they are –

⁴⁰ Mapa do fim da fome – Centro de Políticas Sociais – FGV – Rio de Janeiro, according to which 29% of Brazilian population would be constituted by indigents, 50 million people, using the WHO’s criteria (World Health Organization’s) and according to which R\$ 80.00 (US\$ 27.00) would be enough for a person to satisfy his/ her basic needs.

⁴¹ The source is official: São Paulo em números – Prefeitura Municipal de São Paulo – Secretaria Municipal de Planejamento – SP – 2000.

education, color and race, territory (region)/ place/ neighborhood, sex/ gender, religion, employment, allowing to embrace processes of segregation, segmentation and discrimination.

Two approaches have already been reference in the 20th. Century:

1. The School of Chicago's, for example E. Burgess's, with the theory of concentric circles in the cities' growth and that identified social poverty and disorganization as resulting of processes of competition, filtration, similar to the natural processes in which the most capable ones would tend to occupy better urban zones. The marginality focuses would be gradually controlled by the advance urbanization and its ways of life.
2. The culture of poverty – being Oscar Lewis' work emblematic – Anthropology of Poverty – Mexico, FCE (1983) and La Vida (1975) in which, with autobiographical testimonies, centered on the individual and the family, it “focuses” a kind of poor's life: besides the privation, they would have a life system with their own values, like a subculture in itself.

In the Brazilian debate, many authors have contributed for the debate on social inequality and its economic, political and cultural founding. Just for mentioning the main references in the 1960s and 1970s, the Theory of Marginality was created, and so were its critics, including Francisco de Oliveira, Lúcio Kowarick, F. H. Cardoso, Celso Furtado, who explained the existence of a numerous industrial spare army that emptied fields and brought to the Southeastern cities lots of immigrants looking for work by the economic dependence, by the underdevelopment and by subalternity. The metropolis in the Southeast met very well this process that sheltered enormous unprepared peripheries, slum houses, that increased the popular tenancy in slum houses and made urban social movements revindicate citizenship.

In the 1980s and 1990s, new thoughts were added to the previous ones because the recession and unemployment years came along with processes of economy internationalization and the constitution of an information society, with enormous contrasts in the São Paulo metropolitan region. Specially, new Brazilian discussions on exclusion and social inequality corresponded to European thoughts on processes of exclusion, disqualification, disaffiliation and disinsertion.

2.3 Social Spatial Inequalities

The 1990s brought many important authors who expressed themselves on the Territory's importance for citizenship, like Milton Santos, J. Souza Martins, Aldaíza Spozati, revealing the perverse inclusion, or the marginal way of insertion of many people, a transgeneration process of sub employment, informality, in which the tentative and precarious becomes stable and permanent – in the World City São Paulo. Nowadays the industrial spare army doesn't seem to be absorbed in the future anymore – it is a hindrance. The economy has, on one-hand, dynamic and ultimate technology zones and, on the other hand, a huge unemployed crowd.

Increasing unemployment rates, work precarization, lack of minimal rights of surviving, color and sex discrimination – are processes that highlight many segments of Brazilian population, also in the São Paulo metropolitan region, although there are enormous contrasts in its inter and intra urban space.

The study of the configuration of territories is more detached because the “place”, more physically than administratively delimited, is the place of identity, memory and that carries specific possibilities of citizenship. In this explicit social topography it also makes exclusion and inequalities evident⁴², as well as denounces different effects in public policies.

⁴² M. Vêras – *Territorialidade e Cidadania em São Paulo* – ANPOCS – 1998. Aldaíza Spozati (coordinator) Mapa da Exclusão/ Inclusão de São Paulo – PUCSP, 1996 and Dirce Koga. *Medidas de Cidades*, São Paulo, Cortez, 2003, Milton Santos: *O espaço do cidadão*, Nobel, 1998.

This spatial inequality has been denounced for years because the problems that affect the population's quality of life in São Paulo are not uniformly spread in the city, making clear the existence of exclusion territories, areas of concentration of poverty, unprepared peripheries and degraded downtown, neighborhoods with high violence indexes. However, besides these, there are also zones devoted to international activities related to capital informatization and management, ultimate industries, centers of technological research and education excellence beside periphery neighborhoods – dormitories, precarious “camps”. That is why some authors mention “social apartheid”.

Elites' self-segregation in closed condominiums, security technologies in fortresses, make São Paulo known as the “walls' city”, with fancy shopping malls, progressive industry of armored cars and growing helicopter fleet⁴³.

According to the Report of Human Development 2002, Brazil obtained the 73rd. position in the ranking of 173 analysed countries, nevertheless presenting regional, municipal and intraurban disparities, what made us see the traditional poverty/ indigence lines drawn above as relative. The Index of Human Development has been established as the most complete reference as it added the education and health indexes to income⁴⁴.

It is also remarkable that São Paulo city has been under a gradual process of changing of its use, in which an industrial city turns into a service metropolis. This profile transforms “parts” of the city too, through new dynamics and new sociabilities.

The volume of informal workers has been increasing in the capital since the 1990s, as can be seen on the table below:

Table 1: Evolution of categories of informal workers – M. São Paulo 1990-1999

Segments %	1990	1999	Variation
Autonomous	39.1	36.7	-6.2%
Non registered employees	21.8	25.2	+15.6%
House workers	16.8	18.6	+10.7%
Family business employees and owners	11.3	11.1	-1.8%
Employees in companies with no more than 5 registered employees	7.7	5.3	-31.2%
Family workers	3.3	3.2	-3.1%

Source: Jakobsen et alli 2000

Reproduced from Dirce Koga (2003) – p. 225

The advanced tertiary city becomes evident in the so called Mid-Western part of the city (new downtown/ new Faria Lima Avenue, Jardins/ Berrini Avenue) near Marginal do Rio Pinheiros: there are towers, “intelligent” buildings, enterprise centers with thematic shopping malls, convention centers, playhouse auditoria, head-offices of transnational enterprises and banks, a new world city centrality⁴⁵.

Real estate capital plays a prime role in these new centralities, investing in new areas in a new urban autophagia and soon other front of expansion will appear. The well-equipped neighborhoods are Jardins, Pinheiros, Morumbi, with highly incomeed populations and that compose the Southwestern part of the city.

The Eastern city, specially its peripheral extremes, suffers by the precariousness of housing conditions, high infant mortality, high homicide figures, with low investment in the formal

⁴³ Tereza Pires do Rio Caldeira: A cidade dos muros, crime, segregação e cidadania em São Paulo, SP, Ed. 34, EDUSP, 2000 and CEDEC: Mapa de risco à violência, São Paulo, 1996.

⁴⁴ The Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas em Seguridade e Assistência Social da PUCSP (NEPAS), as well as the Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas Urbanas (NEPUR) at PUCSP have been devoted to the study of São Paulo and socio-spatial inequalities based on this conception.

⁴⁵ Heitor Frugoli, Centralidade em São Paulo, SP, Cortez/ EDUSP/ FAPESP, 2000 and Maura Vêras: Novos olhares sobre São Paulo. *Revista Margem*, SP, 1998.

real estate market, excepting the COHAB's and CDHU's habitational blocks in Cidade Tiradentes, Itaquera, Guaianazes, Iguatemi, surrounded by clandestine lands and almost no urbanity.

The model center/ periphery must be, thus, often up-to-date because new spatialities come up not presenting the simplicity of the dichotomous schema.

In a fragmentation process, there are neighborhoods presenting major degrees of social exclusion, even in the Southwest, like the Jardim Ângela's case with high juvenile homicide and squatter settlements, lack of equipment.

For comparison, there are the Alto de Pinheiros and Jardim Ângela districts⁴⁶.

The Alto de Pinheiros neighborhood exemplifies the included's city:

The district presented in 1991 a 50,354 people population that in 2000 diminished to 44,401, suffering a 11.79% decrease, with birth-rates of 10.25 (for each 1,000 inhabitants).

The immigrant origin of the householders living there is from the Southeast or foreigners, indicating groups more integrated to the urban web and to the formal work market.

In 1997, among 865 economic establishments, the majority was composed by services and commerce, and the householders who presented 15 years of study or more, almost 9,000 cases would be a high proportion for São Paulo city. The neighborhood keeps a high housing standard for the average and highly income strata, one of the highest in São Paulo and Brazil.

Concerning the mortality, there is a small number of deaths for external causes: 9 as a total, of which no one was for traffic accident, 5 were for homicide, 1 suicide and 3 other cases. The relative rate to this kind of mortality is 22.53 (data by PRO-AIM – 1999).

Jardim Ângela symbolizes the excluded portions of the metropolis.

From 1991 to 2000 the district presented a population increase of almost 37%, growing from 178,373 people to 243,779 inhabitants. The natality rate (for 1,000 inhabitants) is 28.84 (São Paulo city's in 1999 was 21.97).

For this population, the mortality rate for external causes is 115.54 (rate for 100,000 inhabitants), being 20 deaths for traffic accidents, 222 homicides (rate of 88.76, one of the highest in the city), 6 suicides and 41 for other reasons (drownings, falls and other external causes), making clear that this area is the most vulnerable to risks and violence.

On the householders' origins, in 1999 it was verified that most of them were migrants, and about 80% of them had come from the Northern/ North-Eastern part of the country, poor regions. There are only 1,180 householders with 15 years of study and more.

These contrasts' outlining would last for more time because a sociological cartography makes the inequality between citizens very clear. Besides that, these territorial portions are revealed by the presence or lack of urban equipments – and accessibility, dwelling, leisure, work and transportation conditions in a given spatial contexture.

The citizenship conditions are, thus, shown by the "place" where these inhabitants of the major Brazilian concentration are. A social topography that denounces the perverse stability of resources inequality that results in poverty, in the dialectics of social inclusion/ exclusion, is built up.

⁴⁶ The data are from São Paulo City Hall – Secretaria de Planejamento – São Paulo em números – 2000.

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