UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

# Urban Trajectories

## A comparative study between Rio de Janeiro's Favelas and Johannesburg's Townships

Sérgio H. Rocha Franco

PhD in Sociology

# Urban Trajectories

## A comparative study between Rio de Janeiro's Favelas and Johannesburg's Townships

## Sérgio H. Rocha Franco

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

# PhD in Sociology

**Thesis title:**

## Urban Trajectories
A comparative study between Rio de Janeiro's
Favelas and Johannesburg's Townships

**PhD candidate:**

## Sérgio H. Rocha Franco

**Supervisor:**

## Peter Wagner

**Date:**
Barcelona 2019

UNIVERSITAT DE
BARCELONA

# Table of Contents

## List of Pictures

## List of Images

To Joan and Clara

'Viver é negócio muito perigoso....'

João Guimarães Rosa

**Acknowledgments**

First of all, I am especially grateful to my supervisor, Peter Wagner, for his truthful support, guidance, and encouragement. Without letting me on my own, he has always allowed me to find my own way while developing my work in this thesis. Peter and all those engaged in the project Trajectories of Modernity (TRAMOD) provided me with an essential foundation from which I have developed many of the ideas encompassed in this thesis. Nathalie, Sam, Beatriz, Rommy, Edgar, David, Bru, Lorena, Gerard, José, Alice, Áurea, Gerard, Svjetlana, Joyce, Riaan, Jacob, Ivor, Sérgio, Andreas, Cláudio, Dipesh, and so many other wonderful people with whom I have had the chance to dialogue with through the project, I thank them all for their valuable comments and suggestions on my work. I have benefited enormously from our conversations, meetings, workshops, and conferences. I want to thank Sam too for his valuable help in the editing of the text.

My foremost indebtedness is to all the people Soweto and Alexandra and from Pavão-Pavãozinho and other Rio de Janeiro's favelas, but particularly to everybody that made my field possible: Valdete, Dionísio, Azelina, Cleonice, Ulisses, Carlos, Sibusiso, Aubrey, Bongani, Benny, Lindan, Lilly, and Stanley. I want to thank all of them for sharing their precious time, opinions, stories, memories, and everyday existences with me. Without them and their titanic generosity, I would have never come that far! Thank you all my friends!

Many other people in Brazil and South Africa were also immensely helpful either by offering me their kindness and hospitality or by extending my network, allowing me the chance of getting into Rio's favelas and Joburg's townships. In Brazil, Jair, Marcelo, Gláucia, Wendel, Flávio, Olívia, Luana, Celso, were of real help. Thanks for your warmth! In South Africa, those worthy of a mention surely include Riaan, Lwazi, and Federica. I owe a great deal of gratitude chiefly to Alice and Mosa for their inestimable assistance, friendship, and hospitality during my last fieldwork in South Africa. Their support has been critical.

I am also grateful to my colleagues Renato, Marc, Vic, Catalina, Matías, Arturo, and Raul at the University of Barcelona; Diego and Pepe at the Autonomous University

of Barcelona; and to many other remarkable scholars – Víctor, Eduardo Luis, Liliana, Giovanni surely among them – that I have come across on different occasions while presenting ideas and excerpts of what at the end of the day has become this PhD thesis. My old comrades from Brazil also deserve an allusion here for their – either deliberate or accidental – support and encouragement. Marcos, Raquel, Tiago, Wendel, Anabelle, and Cadé, thank you all.

I am thankful to Ivor and all people I came to meet at the Public Affairs Research Institute (PARI) during my time in South Africa. They have been my gateway to a completely new world. In South Africa, those worthy of a mention include Alan and Nancy too. My short exchange with them demonstrated to be very useful for my work. The same is factual regarding José Maurício at the Institute of Social and Political Studies (IESP) in Rio de Janeiro. Back then, conversations with him and other scholars at the institution – particularly Luiz Antônio Machado da Silva – were a proper source of inspiration for my personal and intellectual immersion into the world of Rio's favelas.

Finally, but not least, I want to thank all my family in Brazil and in Catalonia, but above all my dearest Marina. Thank you for your serenity and constant warmth throughout all the vicissitudes, griefs, and ecstasies across my long route to get this thesis finished.

**PART ONE – Theoretical Framework**

**Chapter 1 – Introduction**

In *Planet of Slums* Mike Davis (2004, 2006) shows that research on major global trends in the field of urban studies vastly underestimates the experiences of people who live in shantytowns across the so-called global South, and chronicles the shocking conditions under which these people live. Davis has been criticized for presenting a dystopian view of the urbanization of the so-called global South (see, for instance, Angotti, 2006; Roy, 2009). A second handicap in Davis's analysis is that he develops a panoramic diagnosis of changes in the makeup of contemporary cities, through mobilization of a vast amount of secondary sources, but without himself possessing first-hand experience of concrete situations in the everyday life of today's slums. He could be criticized as well for classifying quite dissimilar territories under the same all-encompassing concept of the 'slum.' Davis places under the same umbrella such dissimilar realities as those of Johannesburg's Soweto, Nairobi's Kibera slum, the massive shantytown of Dharavi in Mumbai, and Rio de Janeiro's consolidated favelas. And he does so without paying minimal attention to the particularities that might be expected to exist within all these places. Davis finds a kind of lowest common denominator – the urban dystopia – that both encompasses and de-historicizes all these urban realities of the global South.[1]

Besides the two critics I have mentioned above, Tom Angotti and Ananya Roy, many postcolonial African scholars such as AbdouMaliq Simone, Edgar Pieterse, and Jenny Robinson have taken issue with the Eurocentric nature of dystopian narratives about African cities. A good amount of my theoretical and methodological choices in this thesis have been informed by these kinds of disapprovals. In broader terms, in the present thesis, I aim at contributing to the critical understanding of socio-spatial change by examining the historical-geographies of two specific urban settings of the global South, namely, Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. I aim at contributing to the critical understanding of (urban) development by emphasizing how processes of

---

[1] There are several ways of naming world divisions and global inequalities: center and periphery; global North and global South; First World and Third World; West and East; metropolis and colony; or core, semi-periphery, and periphery. As Connell (2009 [2007]: 212) states, though each of these concepts refers to different theoretical traditions, there is a good deal of overlap between all of them. To a great extent, they all highlight the long-lasting pattern of inequality of power, wealth and cultural influence, which grew historically out of European and North America colonialism and imperialism (Connell, 2009 [2007]: 212). I am aware of the crude schematism that speaking in broad terms like North and South involves. However, in this thesis, I will adopt the concepts of global South and global North to refer to world divisions.

(de)commodification and socio-spatial segregation have been taking place in these two contexts of urban marginalization. We should retrieve here Loïc Wacquant's (2008: 9) understanding of urban historicity and change while deploying his comparative sociology of urban marginality in the United States and France. Accordingly, Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships are not motionless, a-historical entities but rather quite dynamic places. This means that we should expect to be able to depict the ways in which they have changed over time. We shall see in what follows how they have evolved in ways that render homogeneous and dystopian understandings incapable of accurately explaining what has been happening with them and with the people living there. Without disregarding historical and comparative orientations, when we survey these settings at ground level it is difficult to claim that there is a single pattern in course. The historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships entail change, diversity, and complexity that sometimes involve the play of contradictory forces.

Therefore, while approaching Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships through qualitative methodologies, and without neglecting a historical-comparative orientation, I shall be able to show that we have a more complex picture that hardly fits into the general representation of them as static, indistinguishable, dreadful worlds. On the other hand, in what follows I will also maintain that critique – which in our case might be also understood as a critique of (urban) development – must not be sidestepped. I will argue that a strong engagement with the critical literature in urban studies is required while understanding the complex and evolving historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. Along with the postcolonial literature in urban studies, this critical literature is precisely the other main source of inspiration for me in this work. We must take the unevenness of capitalist development (Smith, 2010 [1984]) and other debates around key issues like the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]), accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003), and (de)commodification into account if we are to understand our urbanizing present.

Whereas this thesis has the postcolonial and critical literatures in urban studies as its two main theoretical foundations, it has been arranged in dialogue with the framework of analysis advanced by the project Trajectories of Modernity – Comparing non-European and European varieties of modernity (TRAMOD).[2] The point of departure of this

---

dissertation relies, therefore, on a broad collective effort. With the thesis' title – *Urban Trajectories* – I have intended to signify the stimulation and encouragement that the TRAMOD project has had for my work here.[3] The objective of the TRAMOD project has been to comparatively analyze non-European societies in terms of their specific configuration of modernity and their historical transformations against the background of the European trajectory of modernity. The project has been crucial for my examinations of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships both in intellectual and practical ways. For instance, all my three field trips in Brazil and South Africa between 2013 and 2015 took place under the umbrella of the TRAMOD project. Thus, I assume that it is fair enough to start this thesis by shedding some light on the relationship it has had with the TRAMOD project. My doctoral research has taken place in the course of several years (September 2012 – December 2018) and has entailed many decisions and adjustments, some of which I will discuss below. This brief discussion of the TRAMOD project's framework shall facilitate my subsequent explanations about both the progressive constitution of my research subject and the adjustments in the research design of this thesis. Successively, I will explain how the two relevant bodies of literature I have alluded to before, that is, the postcolonial and critical literatures in urban studies, have inspired and steered my work in what follows. Before discussing methodological issues in Chapter 2, I shall mention the objectives, justification, and hypothesis of the thesis as well.

## 1.1. Trajectories of modernity

The TRAMOD project's interpretative approach has aimed at advancing the analysis of the contemporary plurality of societal self-understandings and related institutional structures in the current global context. The project has advanced an interpretation connected to the analysis of multiple forms of modernity, while disentangling the concept of modernity into components that are empirically comparable in terms of both commonalities and differences between the several trajectories of modernity. In order to move forward with this historical-comparative approach, the project focused on southern American and southern African societies, in particular South Africa, Brazil and Chile, in terms of their specific articulations of components of modernity and their historical

---

[3] Wacquant (2008: 136) uses the expression at one point of his comparative study of French *banlieues* and the ghettos of the United States. His words were no small source of inspiration to me too.

transformations. The TRAMOD project explored how best to confront prior analyzes of modernity with a view to laying empirically rich foundations for a global sociology that recognizes the specificity of the European trajectory of modernity but does not confuse it with a model or a unique interpretation (see Wagner, 2012).

The TRAMOD project's framework approaches modernity in plural terms. Moreover, according to it, modernity is inherently ambivalent. From this perspective, modernity is marked by tensions between orientations and commitments toward autonomy and toward mastery (Wagner, 1994, 2008, 2012). This reference to autonomy and mastery marks a commonality across all theories of modernity, even though the terminology varies, and is, thus, a defining characteristic of modernity itself (see Wagner, 1994, 2008, 2012). While assuming the existence of a plurality of trajectories of modernity, both in terms of socio-political organization and of the efforts involved in its interpretation and understanding, the project has worked with a historical-comparative approach. In order to organize the comparison of the several trajectories of modernity, Wagner (2012: 68-78) has designated three basic *problématiques* that all human collectivities need to address, namely, the epistemic, the political and the economic *problématiques*.

The epistemic *problématique* interrogates the degree of certainty of knowledge human beings can attain with regard to themselves, to their social life and to nature. The central subject of the political *problématique* relates to those matters that should/need to be dealt with in common and those others that should/can be left to individual self-determination. Wagner (2012: 68-78) explains that modernity's commitment to autonomy shapes the relation between individual autonomy (freedom from constraint, or freedom from domination) and collective autonomy (political democracy). The heart of the economic *problématique* is the question of how to best satisfy human material needs, that is, the matter of how to solve the problem of human material existence.

Wagner's (2012) understanding of modernity in plural terms raises important issues related to the identification of the aspects that should be assumed as common to all trajectories of modernity and of those ones that might confer uniqueness, or at least some degree of specificity, to each particular trajectory of modernity. Therefore, one central task for achieving a proper understanding of modernity would be to identify differences and similarities between its several trajectories. In this sense, the three *problématiques* can be considered common features of the various trajectories of modernity. And, as Wagner (2012: 76) argues, there has been a plurality of possible ways of responding to

these basic *problématiques*, with variations both in time and in space, that is, between and within the several trajectories of modernity. All societies must provide an answer to each of the three basic *problématiques* and differences between these answers mark a crucial step toward the disentangling of societal features that can be systematically compared (Wagner, 2012: 74-8).

In addition to the persistent plurality (Wagner, 2012: 12-3, 40) of forms of modern socio-political organization and self-understanding, it seems important to me to mention at least two other aspects bound up with the analytical framework of the TRAMOD project. First of all, contemporary modernity is a global phenomenon and its study involves the construction of a world-sociology (Wagner, 2012: 158-69), which means the construction of a kind of sociology that seeks to compare the various trajectories of modernity in such a way that asymmetrical or teleological interpretations can be effectively avoided and differences between the trajectories so identified can be understood just as different collective ways of 'being-in-the-world' (Wagner, 2012: 486). Secondly, it is important to emphasize that the responses given to the aforementioned *problématiques* are not definitive, but temporary, which means that the openness to change is a fundamental characteristic of every modern society.

## 1.2. The making of the research subject

Departing from the TRAMOD project's guidelines, I started to think of how to relate my research interest on the urban realm with the project's proposal. It is not so original to say that all social phenomena happen over time and occur in space, being, therefore, unavoidably related to both dimensions. Time and space are linked, but it is possible to argue that in the social sciences and social theory, and more remarkably in the theorization of modernity, much attention has been given to the former at the expense of the latter. The scholarship on modernity has focused largely on temporal structures to the neglect of the spatial categories that have shaped modernity. Against this background, my initial clue was that I might put the focus on the spatial dimension in order to help to better understand the different trajectories of modernity.[4] The evolving historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, and the (urban) development and (de)commodification processes that have been taking place in them, which have

---

[4] Following Lefebvre (1991 [1974]), in this thesis, terms such as 'space' or 'spatial dimension' do not refer to any pure, neutral space. Space is not an *a priori* category.

become the research subject for the thesis, entered onto the scene some time later. In any case, while approaching Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships I have always been mindful of the perspective advanced by the TRAMOD project.

The TRAMOD project provided me with a comprehensive framework of analysis, key concepts, and the two broad units of analysis that would be studied and compared, that is, Brazilian and South African trajectories of modernity. But I still had to move beyond general orientations and, consequently, to further delimit my research subject, case studies, objectives, methodology, and everything else that it takes to set a doctoral thesis on the right track. In this regard, two main aspects must be highlighted. Firstly, it was clear to me that I should work with (social) spaces that might tell us something relevant about the tensions between freedom and mastery in South Africa and Brazil. Secondly, I knew that I should pay attention to (social) spaces that were at once sociologically significant and methodologically comparable. Places like South African townships and Brazilian favelas, on the one hand, and gated communities – and other spaces of the elites – on the other, promptly came to mind, surely because all of them are somehow evocative of the deeply unequal societies we have in Brazil and South Africa. Without disregarding the multifaceted nature of social inequalities, it was plain to me that my doctoral research would be based on spatial manifestations of inequalities.[5]

The interwoven class and racial divides that characterize both Brazil and South Africa are quite visible in their main cities, where the extremes of poverty and wealth can be found nearer to each other. As Segura (2014: 3) notes, on the one hand, social inequalities are objectively expressed in the space of the city. On the other hand, the urban space intervenes in the (re)production of these same inequalities. In other words, although it is not possible to seek any kind of automatic reflection of social inequalities in urban space, there are multidirectional umbilical connections between them. Conscious of these interpenetrations between society and urban space, I wished to focus on Brazilian and South African cities, their spatial ordering and built environment, that is, on tangible elements that could help me to shed some light not only on the persistent plurality of modernity (Wagner, 2012), but also on the persistent and huge inequalities that pervade

---

[5] Social inequalities have different dimensions, and it is not accurate enough to speak of inequality, in the singular, but rather of inequalities, in the plural. As Braig et al. (2015) argue, there are various inequalities that overlap with each other and that, as a whole, constitute what we conceptualize as social inequalities. Thus, when dealing with social inequalities, we must consider the interdependencies and juxtapositions between different axes of stratification – such as, for example, racial, territorial, class, income, gender, and so on – which together form and shape them. For other studies that reflect on the multidimensionality and dynamic character of social inequalities, see Fitoussi and Rosanvallon (1997) and Boatcă (2009).

Brazil and South Africa. Soon after, in further reviewing the massive bodies of literature on Brazilian and South African cities, I would confirm that my initial intuitions had nudged me in an interesting direction indeed. Paul Maylam (1995: 20), for example, suggests how apartheid's most fundamental contradictions were exposed in South African cities.

At a first glance, it struck me as rewarding to compare gated communities in the two countries, but, inevitably, I would have had to reduce the historical length of my analysis, due to the fact they are relatively recent events that started around the 1970s and 1980s. Another problem is that the gated community phenomenon is not something that could be assumed as particular to Brazilian and South African cities, because it can be found in several parts of the world (from other unequal trajectories of modernity in the global South, such as India, to several paradigmatic cases in the suburbs of the United States). In view of that, I have chosen to focus on Brazilian favelas and South African townships, which I came to conceptualize as *historically marginalized urban spaces*. The concept of historically marginalized urban spaces might encompass both South African townships and Brazilian favelas without collapsing these two different social spaces into one another. As I will explain in the methodological chapter (Chapter 2), this concept has allowed me to comparatively approach these two urban settings without disregarding their historical and geographical particularities. For now, let me just indicate that both South African townships and Brazilian favelas are places built under modern conditions. One consequence of this is that the rigid oppositions and dualities between the so-called formal city, directly associated with modernity, and the informal city, relegated to the traditional, the pre-modern, should be seriously challenged. Besides, to argue that favelas and townships are modern calls our attention to the fact that both of these urban spaces relate to social groups that have been marginalized in Brazilian and South African trajectories of modernity.

Modernity entails change. One of my objectives in this thesis is to understand how the historically marginalized urban spaces of South African townships and Brazilian favelas were created and how they have evolved ever since. As I have just mentioned, for Wagner (2012), and for most of us engaged in the TRAMOD project, modernity is characterized by ambivalences. In this sense, under modern conditions we shall assume that positive change, which could be conceptualized as development – or progress, as Wagner (2016) has theorized it – has diverse dimensions (political, economic, social, and so on). Development comprises both positive and negative outcomes. Usually these

outcomes are unevenly distributed across a single trajectory of modernity and also between the several trajectories of modernity. Consequently, I think it is important to clarify here that I do not defend dichotomous visions of (urban) development but rather assume its eminently ambivalent, and therefore potentially positive and negative, character at the same time. It is not, therefore, a question of opposing the positive forces of development to the negative reality of urban marginalized areas, but rather of addressing (urban) development and its socio-spatial dynamics in their eminently ambivalent character.

Since realizing this, the research subject of this thesis has become (urban) development, and the related processes like those of commodification, monetization, and eventually, privatization, which I have chosen to approach from the perspective of an inquiry into the historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships.[6] In fact, this focus on (de)commodification and (urban) development started to take shape when I came back from my first fieldwork in South Africa in 2013, which illustrates well the progressive making of the research subject of this thesis. Two interrelated research topics have emerged: (a) The relationship of townships and favelas with the capitalist economy since their very creation, that is, the political economy of townships and favelas; (b) The socio-spatial transformation of these territories in view of recent dynamics of (urban) development. Both of these topics have come to the fore of my doctoral research and together they have framed my effort to compare the urban trajectories of favelas and townships, which came to be my two case studies.[7]

Concerning the temporal scope of the study, I have chosen to put the emphasis on recent dynamics of social change in Brazil and South Africa that might have had consequences for the historically marginalized urban spaces of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. Drawing upon Wacquant's (2008: 9) work, I want to remark again that these two urban settings of the global South are not fixed realities but dynamic historical entities. Consequently, despite my attentiveness to the history of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, I have preferred to place the weight

---

[6] From here onward, when referring to 'commodification' I do so in broad terms and mean to encompass dynamics which, in fact, relate to commodification, monetization and, ultimately, privatization and even consumption. Commodification entails a series of dynamics that relate to the capitalist expansion into sectors of the social and natural world that were beyond it, and, as such, were not treated as commodities. For details on this theoretical orientation, see Chapter 5.

[7] Given my focus on issues such as capitalist accumulation and (de)commodification, I will engage more muscularly with Wagner's (2012) economic *problématique* than with the other two *problématiques* in what follows.

of the analysis on recent times, that is, the period that starts somewhere between the 1990s and 2000s and goes on into the 2010s. There are differences between the two contexts, but one could say that we are talking about a historical moment that begins from the successful resistance to oppressive regimes in Brazil and South Africa and that has given way to the hopefulness that the upcoming future ought to be better than the past in both countries.

The African National Congress's (ANC) 1994 electoral victory in South Africa and the Workers' Party's 2002 presidential election in Brazil are certainly major hallmarks of the time. Nonetheless, we should not delink these two key political moments from the general contexts of high levels of political participation, implementation of innovative and progressive social policies, economic growth, and greater international recognition, which have characterized the recent history of both countries. The two countries have expanded their welfare policies and, alongside China, Russia, and India, have been referred to as among the world's 'rising powers' (Tillin and Duckett, 2017). Brazil and South Africa have seemed to be doing quite well while addressing their historical injustices and social inequalities in the shifting global context opened up by the 2008 financial crisis. These circumstances have encouraged quite optimistic understandings of Brazil and South Africa and other polities of the global South (see Chapter 3). In relative contrast with them, my doctoral research intends to deal with the question of how territories that incarnate the historical injustices and social inequalities of Brazil and South Africa have been transformed within what might be termed 'overall positive contexts.' And we shall see that, in opposition to the dystopian narratives, both favelas and townships have gone through (urban) development, which has led to their transformation. Nevertheless, if social change is for real, I mean, if it is potentially emancipatory, it should have positive consequences for those in the lowest ranks of Brazilian and South African society, which surely include people living in places like Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. Otherwise, we should seek a radical critique of (urban) development in Brazil and South Africa.

## 1.3. Justification

In addition to the imbalances in the process of theorization about modernity, I have found considerable motivation for my research in two powerful bodies of literature, namely: Postcolonial urban studies and critical urban theory. As we will see in a moment, one of

my objectives with this thesis is precisely to contribute to bringing postcolonial and critical theories of space together into conversation in meaningful ways. Actually, in seeking to promote such a dialogue between these two powerful bodies of work in urban studies, I have gained valuable insights into the historical-geographies of favelas and townships. And perhaps this is an apposite moment to explain that, despite having debates around modernity and the TRAMOD project's guidelines as clear and inspiring starting points for my work, I have aimed to inscribe the current doctoral thesis in what could be broadly called the field of urban studies, a field that consists of several disciplines that range from urban sociology to planning to urban geography to urban anthropology. We shall see in chapters 3 and 4 that the field of urban studies has been tensed precisely across lines carved out by postcolonial and critical grammars. Both of them have steered my reasoning in this thesis.

While making my choice of case studies, I confidently drew upon the postcolonial diagnosis in urban studies according to which theorizing the urban realm requires focusing on spaces beyond the so-called global North (see Chapter 3). Indeed, the selection of the two case studies also followed the TRAMOD project's research agenda. TRAMOD project was itself part of a far larger debate trying to grasp the complexity of modernity beyond modernization narratives and beyond the northern societies that generated them. The project was itself an attempt to take debates about multiple modernities and civilizational analysis into new territory. Therefore, in the light of the research agenda proposed by authors like Robinson (2006) and Roy (2009) and, following the TRAMOD project's broad research agenda, I have attempted, among other objectives, to arrive at a critical understanding of (urban) development by examining comparatively how socio-spatial change and (de)commodification pushes have been taking place in two territories of urban marginalization of the global South, namely, Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. I will present my objectives in this doctoral thesis in the next section.

What is worth mentioning at this point is that, although the postcolonial critique in urban studies has guided my work in this thesis, my intention is not to dismiss critical theories of space focused on northern experiences. Undoubtedly, Harvey's and Lefebvre's works are a main source of inspiration for me in what follows. As Roy herself (2009) says, the point is not that critical analyzes, like those by Lefebvre or Harvey, could not be applied to the urban milieus of the global South. The problem is rather that these interpretations do not deal with key dynamics that have happened in contexts beyond the

global North, such as, for example, the specific ways in which the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]) takes place in the metropolitan contexts of the global South (Roy, 2009: 825-6). Unfortunately, Roy (2009) herself and much of the postcolonial literature in urban studies do not go much further than recognizing the relevance of critical urban thought for a proper understanding of the urban realm in the several contexts of the global South (see chapters 3 and 4). As we shall see in the remainder of this dissertation, I do take Roy's (2009) recommendations seriously and, accordingly, rely strongly on Lefebvre's and Harvey's works in order to critically appreciate the evolving urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg townships. The examination of variety must always be of main concern, nonetheless. Furthermore, it is essential to analyze the ways in which key research topics in the literature of critical urban studies, for instance, Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) production of space or Harvey's (2003) accumulation by dispossession, might be reinterpreted and re-theorized from southern urban milieus.

Finally, it is good to take note here of the robust academic production about urbanization (Monte-Mór, 2003, 2004a, 2004ab, 2014; Diener et al., 2006, 2016; Wu, 2007; Lin, 2007, 2011; Hsing, 2010; Wu et al., 2014; Brenner and Schmid, 2011, 2014; Shin, 2015; Castriota and Monte-Mór, 2016; Castriota and Tonucci, 2018), the production of space (He and Wu, 2009; Lin, 2009; He and Lin, 2015; Nkooe, 2018), the right to the city (Fernandes, 2001, 2007b; Marcuse, 2009; 2014; Huchzermeyer, 2016, 2017), gentrification (He, 2007; Leite, 2013; Ghertner, 2014, 2015, 2017; Lee et al., 2016; Ortega, 2016; Bhan, 2016), primitive accumulation (Caffentzis, 1995, 2011; Federici, 2004, 2010; Dalla Costa, 2004, 2005; De Angelis, 2007, 2010; Bonefeld, 2001, 2014; Sevilla-Buitrago, 2015; Shin, 2016; Moreno and Shin, 2018), and commodification (Harvey, 2007; Dawson, 2010; Su, 2011, 2014, 2015; Wu, 2015; Leite, 2015; Larkins, 2015; McKinley, 2016), to mention a few key works. Even though many of these works may not always be forthrightly connected to the recent postcolonial literature in urban studies, a non-negligible amount of it has been directly informed by the variegated contexts of the so-called global South. I am glad that I am not on my own. But it is fair enough to say that, within the scope of this thesis, I will not engage with all strands of such a fruitful literature developed from such diverse theoretical standpoints and methodological orientations. I hope, nonetheless, to be able to tackle and contribute to some of its debates.

## 1.4. Objectives and research design

My general objective with this thesis is to contribute to the search for connections between postcolonial and critical understandings in urban studies. The current state of affairs in the field of urban studies calls for efforts to both decolonize critical urban thought and reinstate critical perspectives into postcolonial urban studies. This is one broad orientation that informs much of my work in what follows. This doctoral thesis has been clearly arranged around it. Accordingly, after the methodological chapter (Chapter 2), in chapters 3 and 4, I will provide a review of the literature in urban studies encompassing what I will refer to here as postcolonial and critical grammars.

In Chapter 3 I shall review the recent postcolonial literature in urban studies while seeking to identify the main voices and leading debates taking shape in it. At the same time, I will seek to highlight the strengths, tensions, and limits in this already-vast body of literature. As we shall see by the end of Chapter 3, despite its contribution to broadening the scope of urban studies beyond the global North, one of the main limits of the postcolonial literature in urban studies is that it seems to have lost sight of critical reasoning about issues like capitalism and urbanization.

My aim in chapters 4 and 5 is to help to shorten the gap between postcolonial and critical grammars in urban studies. In Chapter 4 I will focus on the work of one of the foremost referents in critical urban studies, namely, Henri Lefebvre. As such, Chapter 4 should be read less as a conventional literature review chapter than as a theoretical chapter with a specific motivation: To help to reinstate critical grammars in a field of research that is nowadays pretty aware of the postcolonial warnings. In Chapter 5 I go on with this task and place the focus on one subject that might facilitate the integration of critical and postcolonial perspectives in urban studies: (De)commodification. There I shall discuss (de)commodification from a theoretical point of view through the works of Karl Polanyi (2001 [1944]), David Harvey (2014), and Henri Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]). In the second part of the thesis, I will approach (urban) development and (de)commodification from the perspective of Rio de Janeiro's favelas (Chapter 6) and Johannesburg's townships (Chapter 7). In emphasizing processes of (urban) development and (de)commodification that have been taking place in these two spaces, I will seek to oppose simplistic dystopian narratives of urban marginality as well. Chapter 5 operates as a connector between the theoretical debates I deal with in the first part of the thesis (chapters 3 and 4) and the comparative appraisal of favelas and townships I develop in

the second part of the thesis (chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9). Indeed, after Chapter 5, the remainder of the thesis will be largely tied up with David Harvey's (2014) notion that we live under the threat of the potential extension of commodification to everything, which surely might include the urban margins of the global South. And I shall use the term (de)commodification here because, at least since Polanyi's (2001 [1944]) work on this theme, we know that, despite its current pervasiveness, commodification can go through setbacks.

Just to be clear: Some of the debates I will discuss in the initial chapters, mainly those in postcolonial urban studies (Chapter 3), will be left partially aside in the two chapters in which I will examine each of my two case studies (chapters 6 and 7). Many of them will only be revisited in chapters 8 and 9. I am aware that this could be criticized as a sort of imbalance or disconnection between theoretical debates and empirical data across the thesis. What should be noted here, however, is that the theoretical discussions in the initial chapters point to some issues that I will try to advance in the remaining chapters. In particular, the diagnosis I will suggest in Chapter 3 – that there has been a withdrawal of critical perspectives in the postcolonial literature in urban studies – frames my efforts in the remainder of the thesis. This diagnosis provides me with the foundation for my subsequent engagement with critical urban studies (Chapter 4), and for the examination of (urban) development and (de)commodification, which I first approach from a theoretical standpoint (chapters 4 and 5) and later on in view of the urban trajectories of favelas and townships and the empirical data that I produced through my fieldwork in Brazil and South Africa (chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9). Consequently, I must clarify here that theoretical and empirical perspectives mutually inform one another throughout the work. The theoretical debates in the first half of the thesis (chapters 3, 4, and also 5) shall, in the second part, be selectively taken up insofar as they offer an opening toward a better understanding of the everyday life and historical-geographies of favelas and townships (chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9). In any case, I should also say here that I will seek to reunite the theoretical and empirical realms more explicitly in the final part of the thesis (chapters 8 and 9).

For sake of clarity, I have opted to have one chapter dedicated to each of my case studies before engaging into a point-by-point comparison (for details, see Chapter 2). These chapters on Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships (chapters 6 and 7) shall pave the ground for the comparative effort that I will explicitly develop in chapters 8 and 9. However, as I shall explain in a moment, such comparative reasoning

has existed since the earliest stages of this thesis, and sometimes it has taken shape in semi-instinctual ways (see Chapter 2). It is perhaps good to clarify here too that, while undertaking the long itinerary that goes from theoretical debates (chapters, 3, 4, and 5) to the discussion of historical and empirical data linked to favelas and townships (chapters 6 and 7) to the point-by-point comparison of the two case studies (Chapter 8) and, finally, to the reassessment of theoretical reasoning from what has been said previously (Chapter 8 and, also, Chapter 9), I do not look for ever-revisable innovative theories (Robinson, 2011a, 2016) but for a grounded comparison that would help us in developing situated theorization committed to furthering a critical agenda in urban studies.

Having said that, I may now set out my specific objective with this thesis. My specific objective is twofold. (a) I will seek to 're-theorize' key research topics of the critical literature in urban studies, for instance, the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]), based on a close engagement with the urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. (b) I wish to understand how places like favelas and townships have become what they are today, while shedding some light on recent (urban) development and (de)commodification taking place in these two historically marginalized urban areas. My goal is, thus, to figure out exactly how broader social processes, which might be related to the recent dynamics of capitalist development in Brazil and South Africa, dynamics linked to the 'overall positive contexts' I have alluded to earlier, have had (ambivalent) consequences for favelas and townships and their inhabitants' everyday life.

## 1.5. Research questions and hypotheses

The twofold specific objective I have just announced relates to scrutinizing what the self-built environment of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and the planned segregation reflected in the space of Johannesburg's townships, both spaces of social exclusion in their own urban contexts, might tell us about (urban) development in Brazil and South Africa and about the potential commodification of everything (Harvey, 2014). In addition, without intending to carry out an exhaustive analysis, I will seek to outline an interpretation that deals with the whole picture, that is, an interpretation that incorporates both recent (urban) development and (de)commodification and also previous patterns of accumulation, marginalization, and segregation.

In view of all this, my research questions are the following: (a) From a historical standpoint, what kinds of relationship have Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships had with capitalist accumulation processes, urban segregation, and urban marginalization? What are the social forces behind the spatial configuration and the social worlds of townships and favelas? How have places like Pimville, Mofolo and Orlando in Soweto, and Pavão-Pavãozinho, Vidigal, Babilônia and other favelas in Rio de Janeiro, become what they are nowadays? On what terms have these and other similar places been assimilated into the wider urban fabric? (b) How should we interpret recent pushes toward (de)commodification in favelas and townships in contrast to their previous histories as marginalized urban territories? To phrase the question in accordance with diverse theoretical traditions: How has the relationship between use value and exchange value (Marx), the lifeworld and the system (Habermas), everyday life and the habitat (Lefebvre), been established and evolved in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships? How, and to what extent, have the recent 'overall positive contexts' been translated into the daily life of people living in these places? (c) Do the urban trajectories of favelas and townships demonstrate variety with regard to widespread processes such as those of the production of space, accumulation by dispossession, and (de)commodification? If so, in what sense? How could we (re)approach these research topics in light of an encounter with the historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships?

Given several essential features of this thesis – it has been forged in the context of a project with broad interpretative bases, it is fundamentally qualitative (for details on methodological issues, see Chapter 2), it has a strong commitment to 'retheorization,' and its research design has been progressively structured – it might sound somewhat odd to outline a sharp research hypothesis here. The reality is that I did not start out from a pre-existing research hypothesis. And I should clarify as well that I have not been working with a purely inductive approach either (the grounded theory method, for instance). This thesis has been shaped through a constant exchange between deduction and induction. For instance, my focus on (de)commodification and (urban) development started to take shape after my fieldwork in South Africa in 2013, when I first stepped into the townships of Alexandra and Soweto. Only then was I capable of appreciating how the all-encompassing narratives about places like townships and favelas just fall short of grappling with the complexity of social processes happening in them. During my last two field trips in Brazil in 2014 and in South Africa in 2015 this viewpoint was already well-

settled, but still there was room for adjustments along the way in the research design. In this sense, I have constituted both the research subject and the research design of the thesis progressively in view of new inputs coming from my first-hand experiences in my field sites.

But if I had to delineate a research hypothesis it surely would be that we have been seeing the spread of commodification impulses into unexpected territories and areas of social life, something that appears to be a general tendency of our time, and that might be found also in the social landscapes of marginalized places like Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. Despite the persistent plurality (Wagner, 2012: 12-3, 40) that characterizes modernity, (de)commodification pushes are something that one might expect to cut across the several trajectories of what Wagner (2012) calls the current constellation of modernity. Commodification is something that appears to be both there and here; it seems to be a ubiquitous tendency of our urbanizing present (Harvey, 2014), and as such it should be found in places like Rio de Janeiro's favelas and in Johannesburg's townships as well. From my point of view, what we have to do is to try to expose it, to unveil its concrete manifestations, to elucidate it, to point out its leading dynamics, while forging critical understandings about it.

We should also suppose that the forms and the pace of (de)commodification might vary from one context to another. That is, actually, one of the underlying principles of this doctoral thesis. In this regard, what we should try to do is precisely to understand the concrete forms of (de)commodification in each of the two contexts of urban marginalization. If, on the one hand, I embrace the idea that capital is a concrete abstraction that lends itself toward inescapable expansion (see Chapter 5), I assume, on the other, that it is necessary to go to the concrete to properly apprehend all this entails. In this sense, my historical-comparative approach and the use of ethnography shall help me to ground the discussion of (urban) development and (de)commodification.

The historical perspective shall enable me to examine transformations within each one of the two urban settings over time and, as I will later argue in detail, reveals a sizeable increase in the commodification of urban space. Conversely, the ethnographic methodology I have used in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships should allow us to realize that the recent tendency toward commodification is not a homogeneous occurrence. The effects of commodification may be near-ubiquitous but they are not homogeneous. On the contrary, we should expect them to have particular and concrete manifestations in each given context. Although (urban) development and

(de)commodification usually start from above and beyond places like Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships – with either the state or capital playing a leading role in it all – only by descending to the local, to the ground-level of everyday life, we will be able to grasp the specific and concrete effects of both of them (for further details on this approach, see Chapter 2).

A last comment. I am aware of the limitations of critical scholarship. We are not turning the world upside-down just by doing mindful and socially engaged research. Sometimes this reality becomes evident to the researcher, particularly to the qualitative researcher. For example, when interviewees or informants ask what benefit they will derive from collaborating with someone's research. This happened to me twice in Rio de Janeiro. And the question on the table was not precisely about their personal benefit, but about the relevance of my research for the local community. In one of the two occasions, the person expressed something like the following: 'You [researchers] come here, ask us questions, record us, do whatever you've got to do, and then you leave us behind just as we are. Nothing changes.' I am certainly not the first scholar to take note of this kind of statement. It is not pleasant to listen to. But it makes lots of sense.

My research by itself is not going to transform the immediate reality of everyday life among the inhabitants of favelas and townships. As Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 53-67, 125) said, any possibility of transformation (of synthesis, as he puts it) resides in social praxis and not in the philosopher or in the figure of the academic, be he/she a geographer, urbanist or sociologist. Irrespective of all my critical commitments, I must recognize that my doctoral research is above all an interpretative exercise. Having said that, I assume that it is necessary to avoid the easy assumption of the uselessness of such endeavor. In addition, taking Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 66) as a reference again, I would say that any ode to fragmentation must be avoided. Without any doubt, in order to pursue a radical critique of our variegated urbanizing present, it is necessary to go beyond both resignation and fragmentation.

**Chapter 2 – Methodology**

Methodological explanations usually break the narrative flow, regardless of whether they are concentrated into a specific methodological chapter or are dispersed throughout the text as interweaving punctual clarifications at each step. My strategy here is to concentrate methodological questions into this chapter. This should allow me to deal properly with methodological issues while alleviating the rest of the text from them. This should also allow me to further clarify the progressive delineation of the research subject, case studies, and research design. Therefore, after a few words about my specific engagement with ethnographical research in the next section, I will provide readers with a description of my field trips to Rio de Janeiro in 2014 and Johannesburg in 2015. I will leave the 2013 fieldwork in South Africa aside while doing so because it was shorter and because it took place at an initial phase of the thesis. Thus, I will describe the preparation for my 2014 and 2015 field trips and the research activities I undertook in each of them. Subsequently, I will discuss the work of data analysis and some of the challenges accompanying multi-sited ethnographical research. While doing so, I shall illuminate methodological aspects of the comparison between the two case studies as well.

We can now move forward to deal in some detail with the methodology I have used to approach (and to create) my research subject. I have said that my goal in this thesis is to disentangle how recent (urban) development and (de)commodification have taken place in favelas and townships. I have said too that we should understand all this in view of the relationships townships and favelas have had with the capitalist economy. Which methods are best suited for these kinds of theoretical problems? Moreover, how can traditional research methods be adjusted to assist us in our comparative effort?

As a comparative, historically attentive, multi-sited study the kind of research I have done has demanded a resourceful organization and combination of several methodological elements. In order to organize a comparative study of the urban trajectories of favelas and townships, I have relied on a methodology that combines both secondary and primary sources. I have drawn upon the pertinent literatures about each of the two cities in order to delve into the histories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. This methodological resource has proven to be crucial to discuss the linkages of favelas and townships with the capitalist economy. We shall see the results of this effort in the first half of chapters 6 and 7, in which I will approach, respectively, the past times of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships.

My informants also provided me with valuable material about the histories of favelas and townships.

This leads me to other methodological resource that I have used in this thesis: Qualitative research methods. This thesis depends largely on qualitative data that I gathered during my fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. The data coming from my fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro in 2014 and in Johannesburg in 2013 and in 2015 is essentially qualitative – it comprises in-depth interviews, field notes, and photos from the areas I lived in and visited. I should also mention that by my first travel to South Africa in 2013, I had not defined yet the research subject of the thesis. Aside from my field notes, pictures, and a few interviews with inhabitants of Alexandra and Soweto, part of which I will present in the second part of this thesis (chapters 7 and 8), my 2013 fieldwork was an exploratory step in the development of this thesis. Even if it was crucial for the consolidation of my research subject and specific questions, I would say that the real fieldwork only started when I took up residence in Pavão-Pavãozinho in 2014 (one of the near nine hundred favelas in Rio de Janeiro) and went on one year later when I did the same in Mofolo North (one of the townships that make up Soweto). It was only then that I was able to produce the bulk of the qualitative data for this doctoral thesis.

Following the methodology advanced by the TRAMOD project, I have assumed from the very beginning that differences and similarities between Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships should be identified and considered (see Wagner, 2012). Thus, while building upon ethnographical research and in-depth interviews with inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships I have pursued a perspective that goes beyond the one-sided view – the one that sells the most – according to which the territories of inhabitation of the urban poor are always, and no more than, homogenous dreadful domains (see, for instance, Davis, 2004, 2006). I shall show that when we go to the ground we are able to grasp social reality in more nuanced ways. Besides, as DeVerteuil (2016) says, in the trendy postcolonial literature there is an often misleading lack of engagement with previous bodies of literature and a shortage of empirical corroboration of key theoretical propositions. Accordingly, while returning to classical works related to each of the two contexts of my research, and while bringing in first-hand empirical data from Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, I hope not to echo any kind of theoretical elusiveness.

As I have suggested in Chapter 1, the research subject of this thesis has been progressively constituted in a circular process in which theoretical propositions were

adjusted in view of empirical evidence. This has happened since the earliest phases of the thesis up until the writing process. In the meanwhile, I conducted my fieldwork and adjusted my focus in view of my experiences in the field. On the other hand, even though the present thesis is strongly based on first-hand information, I must recognize that data production was demarcated by wider theoretical orientations. There was theory in the first place. I have not relied on the grounded theory method, be in its 'hard' version (by Glaser and Strauss, 1967) or in the 'soft' one (by Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Perhaps Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach to the grounded theory, which is both inductive and deductive, resembles more to my engagement with qualitative research here. The ethnographic research is not something like go to the ground and see what is going on there. As Lapegna (2009: 13) states while commenting on the perspective of global ethnography, 'portraying fieldwork as a mere "look and see" done without the guidance of theory is unacceptable. Ethnographers inevitably always perceive, register and interact in the field with the aid of a theory, consciously or unconsciously.' The ethnographer's research categories frame her/his experiences in the field. Without the guidance of theory it becomes impossible to know where to look, what to ask or what fieldnotes to take (Lapegna, 2009: 12-3).

However, this does not mean that new categories of analysis from interviews and participant observation cannot be incorporated into the study, which means to assume a permanent transition between deduction and induction. In this respect, my intention has been to come back to my research questions and to focus on them from a new angle, a more grounded one, that of the observable and sensorial reality I lived and experienced in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Soweto. I have pursued a well-balanced exchange between theoretical orientations and empirical evidence. As such, I aimed at developing a contextually sensitive research, which might provide me with first-hand, complex, and nuanced empirical information, but without overlooking the importance of setting qualitative research alongside wider theoretical debates. This was an intellectual challenge that I set up for myself in this dissertation.

Always consistent with what I have said so far, I should draw attention to the fact that participant observation in Pavão-Pavãozinho and Mofolo North demonstrated to be an irreplaceable research resource. However, all ethnographic study is invariably influenced by the researcher's particular experiences. Personal characteristics (that is, age, gender, phenotypic characteristics, nationality, language, and so on) usually have consequences for the interactions that come about in the field. The ethnographic approach

that I undertook in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and in Johannesburg's townships – my subjective immersions into these two social landscapes – were inevitably marked by my personal characteristics and my status of researcher. As Guber (2004 [1991], 2011) highlights, reflexivity is a manifest aspect of the ethnographer's and the qualitative researcher's work. She (2004 [1991], 2011) is mindful of the reflexivity of every ethnographic work. I have taken Guber's observations into account for the duration of my fieldwork and afterward. We must always acknowledge that the researcher's intervention in the places studied is unavoidable because the researcher can neither be simply one more local among many, nor can his/her presence be so external that it does not affect residents' behavior in any manner.

There are obvious differences between the two field missions. For instance, locals perceived me differently across research sites. As a matter of fact, in Soweto, I was seen by locals either as a Brazilian researcher or as a white South African that very likely got lost on his way to somewhere else. Being classified as 'non-black' by townships inhabitants had clear consequences for my experiences and daily undertakings in Soweto. But, even if my presence in Mofolo was easily noticeable, I was quite well-received both by those who knew that I was a Brazilian researcher living for a while in the township and by those folks who neither knew me nor what I was doing there. In Mofolo and other similar areas across Soweto, I was almost always seen as a curious individual. The fact of being a foreigner influenced positively the way I was received by people and the manner they interacted with me. For Mofolo North's people, I was an intriguing presence but very seldom an objectionable one. Remarkably, I had a much easier stay in Mofolo North than in Pavão-Pavãozinho precisely because of this. At best, Pavão-Pavãozinho's people considered me as someone from Minas Gerais, the Brazilian state in which I was born and raised, at worse I was regarded as a policeman or a kind of spy by criminals that rule the place.

Even though mindsets and vocabulary were completely different, in Rio de Janeiro Portuguese was a first language for all people concerned, whereas in Johannesburg's townships conversations were almost always in English, a second or even third language for most of us. Ironically, on many occasions, communication was easier in South Africa than in Brazil. In any case, the point to be noted here is that there were clear variations in my everyday interactions with local people across the two urban contexts. Marcus (1995: 112) indicates that in a multi-sited ethnography the social landscape changes across sites of research, which requires the renegotiation of the

ethnographer's 'self.' As far as possible, I have tried to take advantage of my 'diverse selves,' but, as we shall see in the second part of this thesis, the process of renegotiation of the ethnographer's 'self' causes complications as well.

What I want to make clear from the beginning is that my particular engagement with the everyday life of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships as researcher shaped the production and analysis of the qualitative data. Guber (2004 [1991], 2011) points out that the direct presence of the researcher in the field is of valuable utility to knowledge-production because it avoids mediations. She is right but it is also inevitable that the qualitative researcher's work is always directly interrelated to his/her own subjectivity, and, in the case of comparative studies, by his/her 'diverse selves.' What is more, the 'situatedness' of all knowledge-production must be kept in sight and there is no space for the abstraction of the researcher himself/herself from his/her own research (Grosfoguel, 2008). As such, I am aware that my 'diverse selves' exerted an inescapable mediation over my interactions in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships.[8] I have tried to keep all these particularities of qualitative knowledge-production and multi-sited ethnography in mind throughout my research.

## 2.1. An approach from the level of everyday life

My use of qualitative methodology (participant observation, in-depth interviews, notes in a field diary, and photographic records) has had a clear goal: To interpret how (urban) development and (de)commodification have met favelas and townships, which go hand in hand with changes in the everyday life of favelas and tonwships, and that, as such, can be examined from this very specific level of social life. Even though development and commodification usually start from above and beyond everyday life, we need to go to the ground, to the level of everyday life, if we want to apprehend and discuss them. The adoption of this methodological orientation is based on Lefebvre's idea that it is necessary to approach socio-spatial forces from the level of lived experience, that is, from the fertile soil of everyday life (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 31-46, 230, 2002 [1970]: 77-98, 128-9, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 161-2, 210). Lefebvre (1991 [1974], 352-400, 2002 [1970], 77-98,

---

[8] The recognition of the researcher's positionalities is of upmost relevance. For instance, the vortex of racial relations and urban violence interfered in different ways with the deployment of qualitative research in both Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Soweto (see Chapter 8). There are clear challenges bound up with doing qualitative research in particular urban contexts of the so-called global South that for reasons of space and I will not discuss here. Criminality is certainly one of them.

2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) suggests that emancipatory transformation can only exist at the level of everyday life, in the life of ordinary people, which confers everyday life a special status, at least for those of us seeking to evaluate social change.[9]

Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 316) prudently indicates that the lived experience should not be divorced from critique and knowledge production. 'When institutional (academic) knowledge sets itself up above lived experience, just as the state sets itself up above everyday life, catastrophe is in the offing' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 415). Thus, even though it may be interesting to examine the varied daily interactions in the lived spaces of favelas and townships, in terms, for example, of their structures of power and meaning, family and friendship relationships, formal and informal networks of mutual support, sociability patterns, and so on (all of which common research topics in urban studies, for example, amid enthusiasts of the so-called Chicago School); throughout this doctoral thesis, I shall suggest another approach to everyday life. I will not seek any kind of 'phenomenology' of daily life. Instead, in what follows, I shall focus on recent socio-spatial changes in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and in Johannesburg's townships in order to foster a critical interpretation of our urbanizing present. As Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 553) indicates, we must seek radical critique of everyday life, not at its acritical celebration. Critique of everyday life should never fall into the mere cataloging of its banality (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 553).

As we shall see in chapters 4 and 5, for Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 165) both misery and banality persist in the rich and irreducible ground of everyday life and any radical critique should have it as starting point. Racial critique must endure the trivial; it must deal with the level of everyday life. It must descend to the very terrain of everyday life; it must penetrate it (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 161-2, 210). As he (1991 [1974]: 362) remarks at one point in *The Production of Space*, the user's space is mainly *lived* – neither *perceived* nor *conceived*. It is, therefore, necessary to descend

---

[9] In contrast to exemplary multi-sited ethnographies that have sought to cope with broad processes such as globalization and the like by focusing on d flows of goods, circulation of ideas, or transnational connections, I claim that to understand development and (de)commodification it is necessary to focus on particular spaces. Social change, social struggle, circulation and movement of ideas, information, commodities, and peoples, all of them have to materialize in particular spaces, spaces in which common people usually carry on with their lives. I say that here in view of the emphasis that there has been on flows, circulations, point to point connections, and so on and so forth, in several areas of research in social sciences, from anthropology and sociology of globalization (Marcus, 1995; Ferguson, 2006) to commodity and value chains approaches (see, for instance, Freidberg, 2001, 2004; Fabinyi, 2013) to (postcolonial) urban studies (Robinson, 2011a; Roy, 2011b).

from the high levels of the *conceived* and of the *perceived* deep into the level of the *lived* to discuss dynamics that are often generated in distant echelons, either those of capital or of the state. Radical critique must, therefore, descend to the level of lived experience, to the ground of social life itself; it must, one way or another, reach and go through everyday life. For my purposes here, this is important because I assume that, although often generated in more or less distant orders, the ambiguities that permeate (urban) development can only be grasped throughout their concrete manifestations in specific territories and from particular lived experiences. As Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 216) suggests, the examination of a trivial day in a person's life may offer a consistent critique of society, it can lead to radical critique. In the chapters that follow, I hope to succeed in offering a glance in how a trivial day in a person's life in a Rio de Janeiro's favela and in a Soweto's township looks like. Like I have stated earlier, if social change is for real, it should have positive consequences for the most disadvantaged residents of Brazilian and South African unequal cities. Let us take a look at these two trajectories of modernity 'from below.'

## 2.2. Research site 1: Rio de Janeiro's favelas

My fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro's favelas took place between September and November 2014. My eventual entry into the realm of Rio de Janeiro's favelas was preceded by a long and tortuous stage of communicating with people and institutions that could facilitate my entry, with a minimum degree of safety, in one of the city's favelas. I started these contacts in May 2014, that is, months before traveling to Brazil, and got the first answers between June and July 2014. Despite a few positive responses, it was only when I arrived in Brazil in August 2014 that I could get my fieldwork on the right track. After numerous phone calls and emails, in which one person introduced me to another, and so on and so forth, I was finally able to contact directly with local people who were willing to help me. After a few frustrated attempts, a woman expressed her intention of renting me a small backyard house in the favela known as Pavão-Pavãozinho.[10] As I had mobilized independent networks of contacts, two other options opened up simultaneously: A room in Babilônia and a small house in Vidigal. I came to visit both dwellings, but in the end, for various reasons, I did not stay in either of them, but in Pavão-Pavãozinho. Actually,

---

[10] Telephonic conversation on 29 August 2014.

my visits to Babilônia and Vidigal in the first week of September could be considered as the starting point of my 2014 fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro. That was the first time I stepped into the complex social landscape of Rio de Janeiro's favelas.[11]

I think it is worth mentioning here the reasons why I eventually opted for Pavão-Pavãozinho's place instead of the other two options. Maria, a woman in her fifties who was born on the hill of Babilônia and who was member of the residents' association, was renovating her house and wanted to transform a kitchen, bathroom, and part of a small room, into a rental accommodation. She explained to me that with that reform, she wanted to make some extra money to help in the family economy.[12] What Maria was offering me was a shared room with four beds and a small bathroom. Maria intended to rent each bed individually, which is locally known as *vaga*. By then, the small studio flat was still under renovation and the forecast was that it should be finished after a month or so, so I did not stay there. At any rate, it was stimulating to visit the place and to talk to Maria. This gave me a new glimpse of the issue as my initial prospects of finding housing in one of the city's favelas were emphatically discouraged by local researchers in view of the intense armed conflicts that were taking place in some of them at that time. Besides, my short visit to Babilônia disclosed relevant aspects of what was happening in Rio de Janeiro's favelas in the aftermath of the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Maria told me that she was willing to take advantage of the World Cup (which had took place just a few months earlier) and the Olympics (at that moment, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in 2016). She envisioned to rent the room for tourists. Maria also said that there were university students interested in what she was offering. Regarding the small house in Vidigal, I decided not to rent it because the price the landlord was asking for the place was too high for what I was willing to pay. At the end of our negotiations, his best offer was a rent of 1,100 reais per month, about 400 euros, for a conjugated room with kitchen, lavatory, and a small service area.[13] Moreover, the place was not of easy access because there was no street to get there but stairways and passageways. This was the market price for a room in Vidigal at that moment. About one month later, while already living in Pavão-Pavãozinho, I returned to Babilônia and Vidigal to interview other people for my research. Only then, I was able to connect the renovation in Maria's house and the high rental fee in Vidigal with wider changes in Rio de Janeiro's favelas.

---

[11] In order to maintain the anonymity of my informants and interviewees, I have not used real names.
[12] Observation in situ and informal conversation on 4 September 2014.
[13] Observation in situ and informal conversation on 6 September 2014.
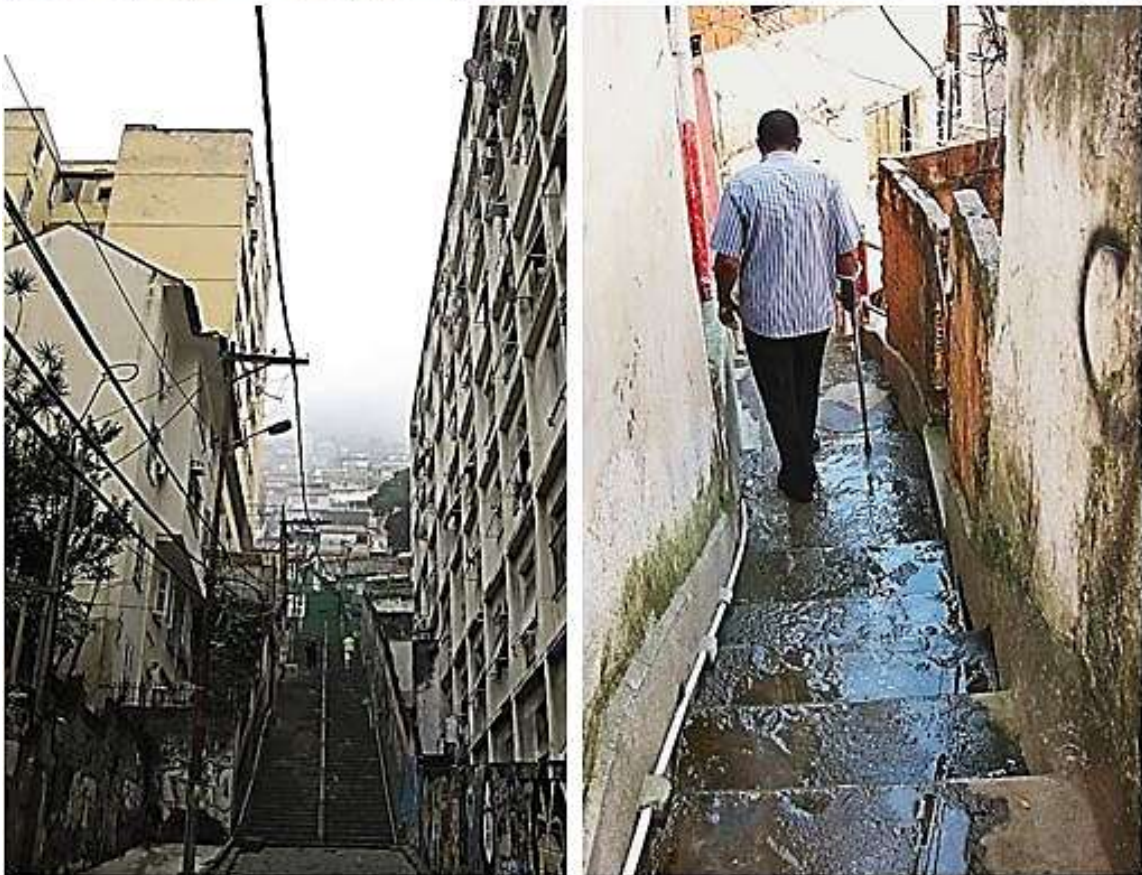
Source: The author, 2014.

After dropping my options in Vidigal and Babilônia, I then focused on the small backyard house in Pavão-Pavãozinho (see picture 1 above). I arranged a meeting to see the place on a Saturday afternoon.[14] Vilma waited for me at the bottom of the favela and took me to her dwelling, located on one of the highest parts of the hill, about twenty-five minutes walking up the hill (picture 1, lower-left photo). The fifty-two year old dark-skinned woman lived with her mother, one of the oldest people on the hill. Both of them were friendly. They had other tenants on their plot of land, most of who migrants from northeastern Brazil. Vilma also said that Pavão-Pavãozinho was a moderately safe favela. On that basis, I took my decision and moved into the house a pair of days later. On Monday, September 15, I encountered Vilma at the same place were we had first met a few days earlier. I was carrying on my backpack and two bags with my belongings and, this time, we took the old cable car all the way up until the highest station and walked up only the remainder of our route. On our way up, we found ourselves with a party, with people standing and drinking in the middle of a pathway. The event illustrates the diversity of relationships between public and private spaces in places like that one. Vilma simply went through the party without greeting anyone. I followed her closely. Almost at our destination, we had to deviate from open sewage and trash spread across an alleyway. In addition to the bad smell, I saw rodents in the middle of the trash. Vilma seemed to ignore the whole thing. She limited to say that when it rains the rats come out. In fact, I had the impression that the place was infested with rodents. It was already night and, despite the general climate of normality and the trivial conversations between Vilma and her neighbors while we waited for the cable car, this time I had a darker impression of the hill.[15]

Once living in Pavão-Pavãozinho, I tried to become acquainted with the place, at least to be able to reach my dwelling without getting lost in the vast network of stairways and alleyways that make up the mountainous terrain of the favela. Vilma had to work and her mother, Aparecida, was too old to escort me across the place. Besides, it did not take me too long to realize that the old cable car was quite often out of order. I learned the whole route home by heart – all the way long from one of the favela's entrances on a little-frequented street between Copacabana and Ipanema up to my small accommodation at the top of the hill. Getting around was not easy because Pavão-Pavãozinho's pathways are irregular and have no names or any indications. I also tried to gain the confidence of

---

[14] Observation in situ and informal conversation on 13 September 2014.
[15] Fieldwork note on 16 September 2014.

my landlord, Vilma, as well as of people within her family and friendship circles As a matter of fact, Vilma and Aparecida became key informants in Pavão-Pavãozinho. Another key informant was a well-known member of the residents' association, Agenor. Thanks to them I was capable of interviewing people and carrying on my fieldwork with safety.

Pavão-Pavãozinho is adjacent to the favela known as Cantagalo, both of them located in the same rocky massif that rises in front of the ocean and finds itself enclosed between the rich and upper-middle class districts of Copacabana, Ipanema, and Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas. The history of Cantagalo dates back to the urbanization of the coastal lines south of downtown Rio de Janeiro. With the construction of Ipanema and Copacabana between the 1890s and 1910s, workers coming from the states of Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais found easy access to work and shelter in the area. Pavão-Pavãozinho's history is similar. The favela started in the 1930s shadowing the expansion of Ipanema and Copacabana. In the following decades, Cantagalo and Pavão-Pavãozinho grew along with the vertical expansion of Copacabana and Ipanema. While Cantagalo and Pavão-Pavãozinho are the result of independent occupation processes, they have expanded over time and today there is no empty space left between them. Together Cantagalo and Pavão-Pavãozinho count with more than 10 thousand inhabitants distributed almost proportionally between the two favelas (IBGE, 2010; IPP, 2014).[16] Unless you are a local person, it is difficult to define clear frontiers between Cantagalo and Pavão-Pavãozinho. Even the public authorities usually treat them as a single entity. For instance, the so-called *Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora* or Police Pacification Unit (UPP), inaugurated in December 2009 in Cantagalo, was named 'UPP Pavão-Pavãozinho/Cantagalo' (IPP, 2014).

Vilma and Agenor showed me where the boundaries between Cantagalo and Pavão-Pavãozinho stand, and told me stories that illustrate their relevance. For instance, not so long ago, each favela came to be under control of rival criminal organizations that fought each other for the control of the entire place. Back then, someone from Pavão-Pavãozinho should not just step into Cantagalo, and vice-versa. In times of 'peace,' that is, when the two favelas are ruled by one single criminal organization, life is easier but certain rivalry remains between Cantagalo's and Pavão-Pavãozinho's dwellers. It comes to my mind now how Vilma and Aparecida from time to time portrayed Cantagalo's

---

[16] Available at http://www.data.rio/ [Accessed 19 February 2018].

people as vociferous and egoistic. On one of our conversations, Vilma and Aparecida mentioned that nowadays Pavão-Pavãozinho is predominantly occupied by poor migrants from the underprivileged and arid northeastern Brazil, many of which are classified as whites according to Brazilian standards, whereas nearby Cantagalo remains populated mostly by Afro-Brazilians. Vilma and Aparecida said that the reason for this was that Cantagalo's people had fiercely opposed northeastern newcomers in their area.[17] Many northeastern migrants living in Pavão-Pavãozinho arrived at the place decades ago. Today they are fully integrated into the everyday life of the favela. Aparecida's and Vilma's attitudes toward Cantagalo's folks were not racially founded, however. Mother and daughter are themselves proud Afro-Brazilians.

What I want to indicate here is as soon as I took up residence in Pavão-Pavãozinho I started to take part in the daily life of the favela. In doing so, I began to go through experiences locals are used to. For example, I witnessed how drug traffickers ruled the territory and how unstable the balance of power between official police forces and ruling drug traffickers can be.[18] As I have just mentioned, I also came to know that Pavão-Pavãozinho's residents differentiate themselves from the residents of the adjacent Cantagalo. I could see how, despite the recent increase in basic services in Pavão-Pavãozinho and Cantagalo, they lagged far behind the standards found in the nearby neighborhoods of Copacabana and Ipanema. The inefficient garbage collection, the lack of adequate sewerage network, and the fact that much of the electricity and water supply is still outside formal public networks, illustrate the state of affairs in this respect (see, again, picture 1, lower-right photo).[19] During my time in Pavão-Pavãozinho, I also observed that many employees of cable TV companies and internet companies walked up the hill to sell their products.[20] I also found out that Pavão-Pavãozinho's residents do not have an individualized postal address, so that postal mail was delivered at the headquarters of the residents' association (see picture 2 below).[21] Some people told me that they keep a postbox at the nearest post office in Copacabana.[22] This gives them an address outside the favela, in Copacabana, which is sometimes facilitated by them in order to avoid discriminatory treatment, for example, in job interviews. I shall return to the

---

[17] Informal conversation on 21 September 2014.
[18] Participant observation between September and November 2014.
[19] Fieldwork notes on 16 September and 30 September 2014.
[20] Fieldwork notes on 17 September and 28 October 2014.
[21] Informal conversation on 20 September 2014. Observation in situ on 20 October 2014.
[22] Informal conversation on 20 September 2014. Interview conducted on 02 October 2014.

empirical findings coming from my time in Pavão-Pavãozinho in chapters 6 and 8. For now, let me focus on other methodological issues related to my fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro.

*Picture 2 – Mailbox in the neighborhood association of Pavão-Pavãozinho*



Source: The author, 2014.

While living in Pavão-Pavãozinho, I conducted in-depth interviews with locals. At first, I had to struggle to find people willing to collaborate in my research. But, once the initial approach was established, I was able to conduct most interviews without difficulties. My participant observation in Rio de Janeiro took place mainly in Pavão-Pavãozinho. However, while residing in Pavão-Pavãozinho, I also visited, more or less habitually, other favelas located in the southern area of Rio de Janeiro, among which the two favelas I have talked about earlier, Babilônia and Vidigal. I also carried out my research in Cantagalo, Chapéu-Magueira, Santa Marta, and Providencia. This last favela is located in the central area of the city. I conducted in-depth interviews and made photographic registers in all these favelas.[23] In total, I conducted twenty-nine interviews

---

[23] Participant observation between September and November 2014. I estimated the pros and cons of paralleling the situations I was experiencing in Pavão-Pavãozinho, with similar territories across the city.

in Rio's favelas, most of which were recorded, always with the express consent of informants. Moreover, I walked from one favela to another crossing the middle- and upper-class neighborhoods along the way and wrote my perceptions in my fieldwork diary (I noted down particularly my perceptions of borders, spatial contrasts, 'checkpoints' between territories, and so on). In any case, what I want to make clear here is that the information I produced in 2014 in Rio de Janeiro arises from my observations and experiences in Pavão-Pavãozinho, Cantagalo, Babilônia, Vidigal, Chapéu-Magueira, Santa Marta, and Providencia.[24]

Let me make a brief observation here. I used the walking expeditions as an additional methodological resource in my research about the everyday life of favelas. This kind of methodological resource has been employed in various investigations in urban sociology and urban anthropology, but in general the explorations and itinerant reflections usually take place in cities of the global North.[25] During my walking explorations in Rio de Janeiro, many times marked by unusual circumstances – such as ending up at a anniversary party[26] or being voluntarily escorted by a favela dweller through potentially dangerous sectors for an outsider[27] – I was able to grasp particular aspects of the everyday life of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, including the diverse boundaries (physical and symbolic) standing within and between these territories. Boundaries are often not clear in the spatiality of Rio de Janeiro's favelas but they are there and it is essential to take them into account. Names indicate internal division of favelas like Cantagalo or Pavão-Pavãozinho: Quebra-Braço, Vietnan, Serafim, and so on. Some of these names relate to the meaning places have within local social life. Vietnan, for example, is the name given by residents

---

For instance, to come across armed criminals was part of my daily life in Pavão-Pavãozinho, whereas the situation appeared to be dissimilar in other favelas, in Babilônia.

[24] During my first few weeks in Pavão-Pavãozinho, I had difficulty to move around through the favela and to find people willing to be interviewed. Meanwhile, I tried to probe the possibility of renting another house in Cidade de Deus (CDD). The quick positive response of the homeowner at CDD and the initial poor prospects at Pavão-Pavãozinho encouraged me to accept their offer. In the end, the field at Pavão-Pavãozinho went well and I was able to conduct the interviews without too many inconveniences, but since I already had agreed renting the house in CDD, I rented it during the last month of the field. From time to time, I used it to perform explorations in that locality which occurred during the last three weeks of my stay in Rio de Janeiro in November and December 2014. I have virtually not used the material produced in CDD this thesis. I intend to return to said material in the future.

[25] My on-foot exploration of the territory of Rio de Janeiro's favelas was inspired by the notions of 'walking the city, *dérive*, and the *flâneur*. These notions were advanced by Charles Baudelaire, Walter Benjamin, the French Situationists, and Michel de Certeau, and might be related to the Lefebvrian idea of appropriation of the city by its users too, in this case, those who walk the city. For recent research along these methodological lines see, for instance, Jenks and Neves, 2000; Tester, 1994; Ingold and Vergunst, 2008; Silva, 2004; Brown and Shortell, 2014; Middleton, 2010, 2011, 2016; Bates and Rhys-Taylor, 2017.

[26] Participant observation on 2 November 2014.

[27] Participant observation on 17 September 2014.

of Pavão-Pavãozinho to the topmost part of the hill, in which there is a dusty soccer field.[28] Named after cold war Vietnam, Pavão-Pavãozinho's Vietnam is a place related to torture, death and violent acts. It is true that, even if I sought to emulate this methodology in Soweto, what I think I did with relative success, I did not extensively drawn upon this information while assembling the content for the chapters about Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships (chapters 6 and 7). In any case, without a doubt, my walks nurtured my 'cognitive appropriation' of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships.

## 2.3. Research site 2: Soweto

In 2015, I spent approximately three months from September to November living in Soweto. Soweto is an agglomeration of townships about sixteen kilometers southwest of inner-city Johannesburg. It is estimated that Soweto has nowadays from one million and a half million up to two million residents, which makes it the biggest conglomerate of townships in South Africa. As we shall see in more detail in Chapter 7, what is nowadays Soweto started much before the National Party grabbed power in 1948 but the township was consolidated during apartheid receiving its name in the 1960s. Based on my experiences in Rio de Janeiro's favelas in 2014, I yearned to research through qualitative methodology how people shape their space and carry on their everyday life in Soweto. As such, I looked for a place to stay in the township. It took me some time to find accommodation in the township but it demonstrated to be much easier than in my previous field in Rio de Janeiro. A preparatory stage of contacting with people and institutions preceded the factual beginning of my 2015 fieldwork. I started these contacts around June 2015 and had the first affirmative responses by the end of July. After a couple of unfertile attempts during my first week in Johannesburg, and with the direct and truthful mediation of South Africa-based researchers, I found accommodation in a small backyard room in one of the various townships that are part of Soweto. I am particularly grateful to a black South African researcher and activist that put me in touch with Dumisani, a social activist that owns a standard 'matchbox' house in Soweto.[29] Without their help, my establishment in Soweto would have been rather much more complicated.

---

[28] Participant observation on 17 September 2014.
[29] In order to maintain the anonymity of my informants and interviewees, I have not used real names.

*Picture 3 – Mofolo North*

Source: The author, 2015.

By the last week of September, I arranged a visit with Dumisani and went to his place in Soweto's outlying northwestern township of Mofolo North (see picture 3).[30] We met in the place known as Ndingilizi, the last stop of one of the bus lines that go all the way from downtown Johannesburg to Soweto. Mofolo North was created as an African township by apartheid planners in the 1950s. According to the 2011 Census, Mofolo North counted with 13 thousand residents, more than ninety-nine per cent of who were categorized as 'Black Africans,' and the two main languages in the area were isiZulu (68 per cent) and isiXhosa (12 per cent) (Stats SA, 2011).[31] In general terms, Mofolo North's figures echo those for Soweto as a whole. In 2011, more than ninety-eight per cent of Soweto's population was classified as 'Black Africans' and the prevalent languages in the township were respectively isiZulu, Sesotho, Setswana, Xitsonga, and isiXhosa (Stats SA, 2011). Most of Mofolo's and Soweto's people do speak English but they do not have English as first language. Before moving to Mofolo North, I wondered if I would be able to carry out my research in a context in which there were so many unknown languages,

---

[30] Observation in situ and informal conversation on 24 September 2015.

[31] Available at http://www.statssa.gov.za/ and https://census2011.adrianfrith.com/place/798026 [both Accessed 19 February 2018].

and, above all, in which past racial oppression might somewhat jeopardize my safety. I was pretty aware of recent xenophobic attacks in townships across South Africa like the 2008 violent outbreaks (see, for instance, Hassim at al., 2008; Trimikliniotis et al., 2008; HRW, 2014; Gordon, 2015). I knew from the beginning that Johannesburg was not the safest city in the world but the overall situation seemed fairly challenging to me.

With a few doubts bouncing around within my head, rented the room in Dumisani's backyard. On Sunday, September 27, I moved in. This kind of accommodation was, in fact, the easiest alternative because lots of people in Soweto try to earn a few extra money by renting out rooms erected in their backyards (see Chapter 7). After a long trip from downtown Johannesburg on that Sunday afternoon, it was already dark when I arrived at Mofolo. This time I did not have a place, even if a small one, of my own. I had to share the backyard room with my landlord's brother, Sipho. I also had to share the outside toilet and the only water tap in the plot with Dumisani and Sipho themselves, with other six tenants, and with other people Dumisani occasionally received in the main house.[32] I knew all of it from my talk with Dumisani two days earlier but things always take a different aura when the time comes and you see yourself immersed into the situation.[33] Fortunately, all of us got along pretty well. Sipho and another of Dumisani's tenants, Daniel, became key informants in Soweto. And this was so notwithstanding Sipho's pre-dawn loud music, which could start as early as 5:15 a.m., while he managed to get ready to leave for college.[34] My backyard mates showed me that life starts early in Soweto. In fact, we will see in Chapter 8 that life starts and ends early in Soweto.

Happily, my initial anxieties about how people would see me and react to my presence in Mofolo North demonstrated to be quite unfounded. Now I think that they had to do with the distress the unknown may cause in us. As someone who was born and bred in a big Brazilian city, I was acquainted with Brazilian favelas. Soweto and, above all, Mofolo North were truly new worlds. In Mofolo, I had to start from scratch in many senses. I lacked practical knowledge about how to carry on my life in that context. For instance, it was difficult to get around because I did not know the hand signs Sowetans perform to stop minivans that flow all across the township and beyond.[35] Irrespective of

---

[32] Fieldwork notes on 28 September and 4 October 2015.
[33] Observation in situ and informal conversation on 24 September 2015.
[34] Fieldwork notes on 29 September and on 1 October 2015.
[35] Fieldwork note on 29 September 2015.

new transportation infrastructures like the Bus Rapid Transit system, the *Rea Vaya*, minivans, locally known as taxis, still are the most common mean of transportation in Soweto (see picture 4).[36] At least, I was able to walk Mofolo North's streets on my own. With Dumisani's and Daniel's invaluable support, I soon earned the confidence of Mofolo's people. People started greeting me. I started getting to know more places. I was comfortable enough to go around by my self and conduct interviews without too many difficulties. It took me more time to learn the minivans sign language, however. Fortunately, before that, I realized that people around me were friendly and supportive. They gave me the strength I needed to develop my research.

*Picture 4 – Soweto's taxis*



Source: The author, 2015.

From Mofolo North I visited different areas of Soweto and interviewed their inhabitants. In total, I conducted thirty-two interviews, the vast majority of which were recorded with the consent of interviewees. Some interviews were not recorded due to the refusal of interviewees. Most interviews were conducted in English, but sometimes

---

[36] Informal conversation with Sipho and Daniel on 1 October 2015. Participant observation between September and November 2015.

interviewees expressed themselves in African languages, namely, isiZulu, isiXhosa, and Sesotho. In view of this situation, it was indispensable to count with someone to translate what informants said. Luckily, help was at hand. In most cases, Daniel assisted me on the issue. Three interviews with migrants from Mozambique that dwell in Soweto were partially conducted in Portuguese.[37] In addition to the interviews, I documented specific aspects of the built environment and everyday life of Soweto by noting down my daily experiences in a field diary.[38] Most of the ethnographic study and in-depth interviews took place in Mofolo North and in the neighboring townships of Crossroads, Zondi, and Dobsonville. I also visited other townships such as Mofolo Central, Dube, Orlando East, Orlando West, Protea Glen, Pimville, Diepkloof, Jabulani, Pennyville, Chiawelo, Naledi, and Zola, all of which part of Soweto. Moreover, I walked into three informal settlements – Chickens Farm, Kliptown, and Protea South – and three low-cost government-subsidized housing areas, usually called Reconstruction and Development Programme houses or just RDPs, one of them in Kliptown and the other two respectively in Braamfischerville and Snake Park. Despite most of the fieldwork took place in Mofolo North and in the neighboring townships of Crossroads, Zondi, and Dobsonville, I conducted interviews and took photographs in almost all localities I have listed above. I documented in my field diary such visits and my displacements through Soweto, underlining, among other issues, my perception of boundaries, socio-spatial contrasts and specific aspects of the built environment. For safety reasons, in some of these undertakings I was accompanied by local residents and/or people of their confidence.

## 2.4. Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis consists of a set of manipulations, adaptations, arrangements, considerations, and checks, that the researcher performs on data produced in the field in order to generate relevant content in relation to the research subject (Rodriguez et al., 1999: 200). While analyzing my fieldwork data, my strategy has been to select meaningful portions of data in view of research questions and, above all, theoretical framework. On the other side, while performing data analysis, I tried to incorporate new ideas and conceptual connections to the framework of the thesis as well. I worked back and forth in a seesaw movement in which theoretical questions that guided data

---

[37] Interviews conducted respectively on 25 October, 30 October, and on 2 November 2015.
[38] Participant observation between September and November 2015.

production in the first place were progressively adjusted in view of data production and analysis. In accordance with what I did in my 2014 and 2015 field trips, neither a single township nor a single favela, like, for instance, Mofolo North and Pavão-Pavãozinho, but the urban trajectories of Johannesburg's townships and Rio de Janeiro's favelas, became my two case studies. After my last field trip in 2015, I realized that both the past times of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships and their contemporary realities should be put into comparison. In any case, in what follows, I will rely upon my everyday experiences in each research site, which took place habitually in Mofolo North and Pavão-Pavãozinho.

The data I produced in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and in Johannesburg's townships has specific characteristics, starting by the fact that I have recorded interviews in different languages, among which Portuguese, English, isiZulu, and isiXhosa. Moreover, the amount and diversity of information are considerable – apart from field notes and thousands of pictures coming from each research context, I conducted more than sixty interviews across the two research sites. That is precisely what someone should expect to have in his/her hands while working with ethnographical research, in-depth interviews, and life histories in two different research sites. In sum, I gathered data that is diverse and complex and this meant a considerable work of data classification and categorization. Indeed, I started data analysis already in the field. During my idle hours, that is, in the gaps of my daily life in Pavão-Pavãozinho and Mofolo – for instance, when an informant did not show up, or the time between one interview and another – I began a preliminary classification and categorization of interviews and photographic records. By then, I did short notes and general comments about interviews. When I came back home from Brazil in 2014 and from South Africa in 2015, I moved forward with data analysis by listening to and futher categorizing interviews, and, finally, selecting and transcribing relevant fragments of them. I also read my field diary notes once and again, classifying and selecting segments of text that would be useful for the writing process. The analysis of pictures followed a similar pattern. In a word, I have done a progressive and extensive work of data analysis that started already during my field. Nonetheless, only when I came back from Soweto in 2015, I could make sense of my data in its entirety.[39]

---

[39] In fact, I would describe the period in-between my 2014 and 2015 field trips as a time of uncertainty for my research. Before my second travel to South Africa in 2015, I did not know exactly why, but I was somewhat apprehensive. Before moving into Soweto in September 2015, I was particularly concerned because I was aware that the final structure of my doctoral thesis would be heavily contingent on the material I would be able, or not, to produce during my time in Johannesburg. At that moment, my only

Therefore, after fieldwork was accomplished, I was eager to move forward with analysis insofar as data could finally be approached as a single data set. The main challenge at that juncture was to overcome preliminary analysis while addressing the question of how to connect all the empirical information emerging from my three field explorations together in meaningful ways. Time had come to put what I had been doing hitherto into perspective and to make sense of my research as a whole. In view of this, I had two clear tasks ahead me: (a) To apprehend the information produced for my doctoral thesis as a whole, and (b) to define more conclusively how it might be related to the theoretical framework of the thesis. I knew that I had to be capable of organizing, analyzing, and paralleling, two main blocks of information produced in each of my research sites. I recovered the few interviews and photos from my 2013 research stay in South Africa and analyzed them in assembly with data I produced in Soweto in 2015. I also compiled data from Rio de Janeiro and started to parallel the two main blocks of information. This allowed me to visualize main crosscutting, integrative research themes that might facilitate the work of depicting similarities and differences across case studies. I have advanced qualitative data exploration along these lines as far as the latest phases of the research. We will see the proper development of this work in chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9.

## 2.5. Multi-sited ethnographic research and the comparative effort

What will I compare in this thesis? As I have already mentioned, I intend to compare the entire urban trajectories of Johannesburg's townships and Rio de Janeiro's favelas (see Chapter 1). But how could I comparatively apprehend the entire urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships? Are the historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships comparable at all? In which sense?

secure underpinning was the data I had been capable of shaping in Rio de Janeiro around one year earlier. Fortunately, at the end of my 2015 field trip I could feel that I had succeeded in my endeavors. Fieldwork in South Africa in 2013 and 2015 had provided me with worthy data about the built environment and everyday life of Johannesburg's townships. I was also sure that during my time in Rio de Janeiro in 2014 I had attained comparable information in the context of the favelas. I had secured in my hands ideally comparable qualitative data emerging from each research site. I knew that I had a lot of work ahead to get the thesis done but I also understood that I had everything I needed to accomplish it. I finally had all the empirical information I was supposed to have in order to progress with my doctoral thesis. By the end of my 2015 field trip, the delineation of the comparative effort I will put forward in what follows was already underway (for the comparison between favelas and townships, see chapters 8 and 9).

Yes, I sustain that they do are comparable realities insofar as both of them are spaces of urban marginalization that have undergone through transformation over time. The concept of historically marginalized urban spaces incorporates both of these types of urban settlements without signifying them as identical. Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships should not be rendered incommensurably different social landscapes that have nothing in common with each other. Despite their diverse geographical-histories, favelas and townships have occupied homological positions at the bottom of the material and symbolic network of places that make up the metropolitan orders to which each of them belongs to, to borrow Wacquant's (2008: 1, 39, 168, 202-3, 268, 272) words in his comparison between French *banlieues* and the ghettos of the United States. My comparative effort should encompass urban transformation too. In this sense, the concept of historically marginalized urban spaces should help me to examine comparatively how Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships have changed with a special focus on the recent years.

I have already said that this thesis shall not have a, so to speak, classical comparative design in which comparison between case studies is structured around a selection of key topics with comparative reasoning taking place all across the text (see Chapter 1). In its place, I will structure the second part of the thesis around the two case studies, the urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, and the comparison will be arranged from that basis. Even if I may refer to the two case studies with a comparative glance across the thesis (in Chapter 7, for instance), the comparative effort will be concentrated in the two last chapters. Chapters 6 and 7 will pave the ground for point-by-point comparison, which I will develop consistently in chapters 8 and 9. We could say that, *grosso modo*, in chapters 6 and 7, I will deal with favelas and townships spatiality diachronically, whereas, in Chapter 8, I will approach them synchronically. The comparative effort moves forward in Chapter 9 meanwhile I seek to refer the comparative analysis of the urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships to the retheorization of key topics in critical (urban) studies.

One could certainly argue that in doing so I will be working with two cases but not necessarily in a comparative way. I have opted to have separeted chapters about my case studies due to the amount of qualitative information I produced about each of them. Moreover, I want to avoid the risk of mistreating the particular and complex historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. From this

standpoint, each case is a universe in itself. That is why I have rejected the option of having a thesis design with several thematic chapters in which case studies are repeatedly brought together. Therefore, both for sake of clarity and in order to have a fair attitude toward the complex urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, I will focus on each of them separately and in detail (respectively, chapters 6 and 7) before comparing them comprehensively in chapters 8 and 9. On the other hand, I should also specify that comparative reasoning has existed since the earliest stages of this thesis, which sometimes has taken shape in quite intuitive ways.

Firstly, even though I defined neither the research subject nor what ought to be compared in one single step, but rather adduced both progressively and in accordance with new inputs coming from the field, I nonetheless had a comparative orientation toward Brazilian and South African urban milieus from the outset under the broader umbrella of the TRAMOD project.

Secondly, the same sort of theoretical questions delimited data production in each of the two contexts – everyday life, built-environment, (urban) development, (de)commodification, and so on. Even though the present thesis is strongly based on first-hand data coming from my time in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and in Soweto, and although a constant transition between deduction and induction has shaped it, it is important to remark here again that theoretical questions framed the production and analysis of the qualitative data. I have decided to use qualitative methodologies in order to research how favelas and townships have changed within the 'overall positive contexts' that have characterized South Africa's and Brazil's recent history. The questions that guided me during my field explorations, and that have informed me throughout the thesis, are those I have presented earlier, particularly those about the recent transformation of favelas and townships (see Chapter 1). They are important insofar as they have allowed me to examine what kind of city we live in, but also because they assisted me in finding a common ground to set up a comparison between favelas and townships. They provided me with a common theoretical ground in which to place empirical data coming from my experiences in Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro.

Thirdly, my experiences in Rio de Janeiro in 2014 had influences on what I did during my last fieldwork in Soweto in 2015. I am aware that there are obvious differences between the two research sites and my undertakings in each of them. However, when I was in Soweto in 2015 – perhaps more intuitively than openly – I searched for the same type of information I obtained in Rio de Janeiro's favelas in 2014. Only later on, while

trying to bond together the information I produced across the two contexts, I realized how my experiences in Rio de Janeiro directed me in Soweto. The point is that my preliminary analysis of Rio's data gave me a clearer idea of what to seek in my next field trip. In this sense, Rio de Janeiro's favelas paved my way to Soweto. Thus, in this thesis, comparative reasoning has a history in itself. It was crafted in-between my field trips, that is, on my way from Rio de Janeiro's spontaneous and (nowadays) well-located favelas to the originally planned and peripheral townships of Soweto. Comparison started to take shape between Rio de Janeiro and Soweto. That is why I have chosen to name the second part of this work *From Favelas to Townships*. Besides, I recognize that I am talking about a type of data in which the researcher plays a key role in its production (see Marcus, 1995; Guber 2004 [1991], 2011; Grosfoguel, 2008). As Picker (2014) suggests, in multi-sited ethnographies the researcher serves as a heuristic resource of comparison. Overall, the different research sites are tied together precisely through the person of the researcher, even though he/she may possess 'several selves.' In this sense, I should argue that my person as qualitative researcher, as ethnographer, has somehow bridged the two diverse urban settings, nurturing comparison.

What may we learn from our comparative effort? First of all, that comparative approaches and qualitative research, including ethnographical research, should not be understood as opposite or incompatible. On the contrary, they should be taken as complementary. Despite the uniqueness of each case study – in this case, of the urban trajectories of favelas and townships – each research site shed light on another, and both of them shall assist theoretical reasoning. Secondly, we should take into account that incommensurability entails incomparability. The unique urban trajectories and the rich everyday life of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships illustrate the complexity of the social. Incidentally, to recognize that social reality is interminably complex is not something exactly new as Max Weber (2017 [1903-17]) made the point long ago. Nevertheless, despite acknowledging the complexity of social life, and the singularity of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, I think we must avoid embarking on a journey toward total incommensurability. Otherwise, any comparative determination becomes just unmanageable. Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships should not be rendered incommensurable urban settings.

Understandings founded on social life's real or imagined incommensurability have sprang up recently with a postmodern spur. They have become ordinary in the postcolonial literature in urban studies, oddly by the vindication of comparison. They do

not come without consequences though. We will see in the next chapter that a key research topic in the postcolonial literature is what has been termed as comparative urbanism (Chapter 3). Writing against parochialisms and quasi-scientific methods, Jenny Robinson (2011a) makes a call for a comparative gesture between 'a rich and fragmented array of ongoing conversations across the world of cities' (Robinson, 2011a: 19). Robinson (2014a, 2015, 2016) reaffirms how the comparative gesture – in its commitments with the multiplicity of cases and with the inductiveness of theory production – imply both the 'revisability' of inherited (and located) theories, and 'the need to be willing to think again in the light of new experiences and evidence' (Robinson, 2016: 188, 193) (for more, see Chapter 3).

Under this chaotic theoretical panorama, at the best researchers are capable of juxtaposing, in a patchwork, disconnected parcels of social reality that have very few commonalities with each other, something that has been more or less successfully done by scholars working with assemblage theories in urban studies (see, for instance, Farías and Bender, 2010; McFarlane, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). In fact, despite establishing a comparative agenda, and declaring the multi-directionality, multi-connectivity, multi-causality, and multiplicity of our cities, the postcolonial literature in urban studies has been unable to go much further than unsteady juxtapositions between fragments that allegedly make up our urbanizing present. As Leitner and Sheppard (2016: 233) suggest, despite the numerous works dedicated to upholding the comparative gesture (Robinson, 2011a), 'the extensive interdisciplinary literature that has emerged recently on rethinking comparison has had little to say on how to undertake such comparisons.' Many postcolonial scholars have been glad to play with the multiple circulations, assemblages, and juxtapositions of our, so they say, multiple, complex, and fragmented urban milieus (Farías and Bender, 2010; Robinson, 2011a, 2011b, 2014a; Roy, 2011b, 2015; McFarlane, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). In doing so, however, the postcolonial literature in urban studies has not advanced its comparative agenda that much. I would say that it has lost sight of critical reasoning too.

In sum, conscious of the parochial character of any theory (Grosfoguel, 2008), I will present a series of comparative resources that, I believe, will allow me to go beyond the mere assemblage or juxtaposition of fragments of the social. For instance, while getting to open comparison between Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships in chapters 8 and 9, I will keep an eye on the TRAMOD project's historical-comparative guidelines, I will rely on the concept of historically marginalized urban

spaces, and I will draw on studies that have looked comparatively at our urbanizing world, for instance, Wacquant's (2008: 8-12, 135-62, 200-4) comparative account about French *banlieues* and United States ghettos. We should not pursue ever-revisable innovative theories (Robinson, 2011a, 2016) but grounded comparison that nurtures situated theorization. As Burawoy (2000, 2001) indicates while dealing with global ethnography, to overcome postmodern fracturing and fragmentation, and other elusive understandings that so often conceal current power relations, we must take both locality and history into account, we need 'to ground our ethnographies in local histories' (Burawoy, 2000: 5). Based on Lefebvre's (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) critique of everyday life, I will pursue this kind of grounded analysis through the lived experience of favela and township dwellers. The supposedly elusive and ephemeral character of our urbanizing present should not divert us from its interpretation and critique. Radical critique will be one of my motivations in what follows.

**Chapter 3 – Postcolonial Grammars**

My aim in this chapter is to review the recent and fast-growing postcolonial literature in urban studies.[40] In the last four decades, postcolonial studies has taken its place among other social theories – such as poststructuralism, cultural studies, and feminism – as a key critical discourse arising first in the humanities and later spilling out across the social sciences. Although the postcolonial perspective seems to lack an 'originary moment' (Gandhi, 1998: viii), it is possible to say that the postcolonial perspective began in the 1980s as an attempt to study subordination in South Asian societies among so-called 'subalterns.' The postcolonial perspective and its reflections on so-called 'subaltern voices' have been strongly guided by epistemological concerns and directly related to scholars such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Ranajit Guha and Dipesh Chakrabarty. Certainly, one of the most influential proposals of this vast literature is Chakrabarty's (2000) now well-known *Provincializing Europe*. Nevertheless, there are many others that have been contributing to a broader move beyond Europe and the West from a variety of standpoints: From Raewyn Connell's (2009 [2007]) *Southern Theory* to Jean and John Comaroff's (2012) *Theory from the South* to Peter Wagner's (2012) *Modernity* to Boaventura de Sousa Santos's (2007) *Another Knowledge is Possible* and (2014) *Epistemologies of the South*.

That is without mentioning the prolific production from Latin American settings, framed above all around the so-called 'Modernity/Coloniality' research program or group – for instance, Enrique Dussel (1992, 1993, 1996, 2000), Arturo Escobar (1995, 2001, 2003, 2014), Fernando Coronil (2000, 2003, 2007), Aníbal Quijano (2000, 2014 [1968-2010]), Walter Mignolo (2000, 2002, 2001, 2005, 2009), Castro-Gómez (2000), Lander (2000, 2006), Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2006a, 2006b, 2007), Ramón Grosfoguel (2002, 2006a, 2006b, 2008), Catherine Walsh (2007), and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2010), among many others. Cusicanqui (2010) remarks that, despite the lack of references to Pablo González Casanova's work, many of Mignolo's and Quijano's ideas are indeed 'borrowed' from Casanova's thoughts about internal colonialism in the late 1960s. Thus, key ideas that have been warmed up in the context of the so-called 'Modernity/Coloniality' project from the 1980s on have been around for a while now.

---

[40] The literature review I provide in this chapter encompasses the work of the main postcolonial scholars in urban studies published until January 2017.

It is not my intention to review the wide and diverse postcolonial and decolonial scholarships here. Instead I wish to point out how these bodies of work have been acknowledged and integrated (or not) into the field of urban studies. Despite the wide influence of the postcolonial perspective on different fields of knowledge for some decades now, such as history, literature, gender studies and philosophical and sociological discourses of modernity, only more recently have researchers in the field of urban studies advanced postcolonial viewpoints while theorizing about cities, the urban and space. Some years after Parnell (1997) discussed how we can best understand cities that fall outside the territories where urban theory is usually formulated, Grant and Nijman (2002) warned that much of what had been done in urban studies had been focused almost exclusively on experiences of large cities located in North America and Western Europe. Jenny Robinson (2002, 2003), a South African scholar based in the United Kingdom, was also one of the main precursors in pointing out that the field of urban studies suffers from an 'asymmetrical ignorance' because knowledge and theories are produced in cities of the global North, thus ignoring the urban experiences of the rest of the world. Robinson's (2006) book *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development* is undoubtedly one of the chief contributions to the dissemination of postcolonial debates in the field of urban studies.

In *Ordinary Cities*, she (2006) expresses the need to open up a new research agenda in the field of urban studies based on postcolonial considerations. Shortly afterward, the United States-based Indian scholar, Ananya Roy (2009) heeded Robinson's requests and joined her by arguing for 'new geographies of theories.' In her account of the urban experience of metropolitan modernity in the twenty-first century, Roy (2009) argued that much of the theoretical work on urban space, cities, and metropolises had happened in the urban contexts of what she terms Euro-America. Roy (2009: 820) argued then that the center of theory making must move from the parochial experience of Euro-American cities to the global South. As Roy (2014: 13) noted afterward, the theoretical agenda that was provoked by Robinson's (2006) call for a new agenda for postcolonial research 'has been taken up by several genres of urban scholarship' (Roy, 2014: 13). I would add Roy's (2009) own call for new geographies of theory to the list of influential contributions to the setting out of the current postcolonial urban agenda. Since Robinson's (2002, 2003, 2006) and Roy's (2009) studies appeared, the number of symposia, conferences, manifestos, research articles, books and special issues dedicated to the deployment of the postcolonial agenda in urban studies has grown manifestly. And, as we

shall see in what follows, this effort has been primarily inspired by subaltern studies scholars, such as Gayatri Spivak (1985), Partha Chatterjee (1997), and Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000), as well as by Raewyn Connell's (2009 [2007]) work.

In this chapter, I delve into this latest postcolonial literature in urban studies. However, my first step is to take a closer look at the work of leading critical spatial thinkers, such as Henri Lefebvre's, David Harvey's, and Edward Soja's works, steered by Robinson's and Roy's postcolonial standpoints. In doing so, we shall see that Robinson's and Roy's criticisms are not misplaced. On the other hand, along with this thesis I will maintain the relevance of critical urban thinkers such as Lefebvre and Harvey for understanding current transformations in places like Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg. I take seriously the orientation established by some postcolonial (urban) scholars that we should not just get rid of northern theories (Chakrabarty, 2000; Roy, 2009: 824-6; Sheppard et al., 2013; Lawhon et al., 2016). At any rate, what I want to stress here once more is that the point is not that critical analyzes, like those by Lefebvre and Harvey, cannot be applied to the spaces, cities and the urbanization processes of the global South. This is not the case at all. In fact, they can and should be used to apprehend southern socio-spatial dynamics under contemporary capitalist conditions, such as the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]). As we will see throughout this thesis, these critical urban thinkers do provide key conceptual tools and valuable theoretical insights for the examination of the global South.

Subsequently, in this chapter, I will summarize most of the recent debates that have taken place around the postcolonial literature in urban studies and explore its main lines of research, tensions, and some of its impacts for upcoming research. We will see that there is an increasing sense of fragmentation in the field of urban studies. I will try to show as well how the bulk of recent postcolonial interventions, despite their calls for dialogue between multiple voices and conversation between variegated perspectives, has not engaged with analogous matrices of thought being deployed elsewhere, such as in the varied and varying contexts of Latin America. Moreover, there is a perception that new theoretical insights have been missing in the now vast postcolonial urban scholarship (Mabin, 2014; Lawhon et al., 2016).

I finish the chapter by analyzing in some detail Jenny Robinson's (2006) path-breaking book *Ordinary Cities*, in which some of the main guidelines and avenues of research for postcolonial urban studies were established. In doing so, I wish to draw attention to some limitations that have often accompanied the postcolonial turn in the

field of urban studies since its early days. Besides, *Ordinary Cities* is one of the few non-edited books in recent postcolonial scholarship, and as such it offers a more well-defined and internally bounded framework of analysis. I will take the occasion of reconsidering Robinson's (2006) book to bring in a few offerings from Latin-American decolonial approaches, a body of work that has been awkwardly ignored by the bulk of postcolonial scholarship in urban studies.

## 3.1. A reassessment of leading critical spatial thinkers from a postcolonial viewpoint

The starting point of recent postcolonial criticisms is surely the diagnosis that there is a necessity to advance critical theories of space directly related to, inspired by, and grounded in, the contexts of the global South. Accordingly, my main aim in this section is to take a closer look at the contributions of critical thinkers of space (such as Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, Mike Davis, among others). These authors and their theories have served as sources of inspiration for many planners, architects, geographers, and urban sociologists around the world, and there is no doubt about their contributions in understanding key processes happening across the global South.

However, their postcolonial critics claim that because they have been predominantly rooted in the global North, mainly, in North America and Western Europe, most of them do not offer proper conceptual tools to grasp realities beyond the global North. For instance, as I have just said, Roy (2009) argues that much of the theoretical work on space, urban, cities, and the metropolis are to a large extent located in the urban contexts of what she designates as 'Euro-America,' mainly, those from North America and Western Europe. Therefore, despite of how well-articulated and theoretically relevant such spatial theoretical contributions might be, Roy (2009: 820) suggests that most of them were produced and informed in/by their northern contexts: Lefebvre and his Paris, Harvey and his Baltimore, Berman and his New York, Castells, Soja and Davis and their Los Angeles, and so on. From this diagnosis, she seeks to articulate 'new geographies of urban theory' advising that:

> Doing so requires 'dislocating' the EuroAmerican centre of theoretical production; for it is not enough simply to study the cities of the global South as interesting, anomalous, different, and esoteric empirical cases. Such forms of benign difference-making keep alive the neo-orientalist tendencies that

interpret Third World cities as the heart of darkness, the Other (Roy, 2009: 820).

In a similar vein, Robinson (2003, 2006) holds that the field of urban studies suffered from an 'asymmetrical ignorance' because theories, knowledge, and policy are mainly produced in the cities of the global North, ignoring largely urban experiences of the global South. She claims that the cities of the global South have fallen 'off the map' of much of urban studies (Robinson, 2002). Myers (2011: 5-6), in his work on *African Cities*, also suggests that 'Henri Lefebvre, Doreen Massey, Saskia Sassen, Manuel Castells, and many other widely cited stars of urban studies, like Harvey, seldom make reference to Africa in their works, or put its cities in footnotes and margins.' From this condition, there is always the risk of engaging in spurious generalizations from particular and located experiences or promoting huge erasures of entire realities outside the global North, and its spatial backgrounds (Connell, 2009 [2007]). Moreover, as our analysis of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg shall show, socio-spatial dynamics, particularly of the current capitalist city and the global era, are surely important, but they do not occur in a socio-spatial vacuum. Instead, they overlay, juxtapose, and obliterate inherited socio-spatial configurations (Santos, 2004 [1978]). The epistemological ignorance of the spatial experiences of the global South seems to be an entrenched situation in critical urban theory. For example, Andy Merrifield (2002), while scrutinizing Marxist spatial thinkers in his *Metromarxism*, simply does not mention any thinker outside of the global North mainstream. But let us inspect the work of other leading critical thinkers.

Indeed, it is not exaggerated to claim that several of key Lefebvre's Marxist dialectical conceptualizations have their direct inspiration in the French urban experience, mainly the Parisian one. Just to be clear. Lefebvre does go beyond Paris and France in his theorizations. For instance, in the second volume of *Critique of Everyday Life*, Lefebvre (2014 [1961]: 524) mentions how the everyday was by then still in need to be transformed both in the United States and in the Soviet Union. In the *Urban Revolution*, when talking about the planetary character of urbanization or about the emergence of differential space, he (2002 [1970]: 49, 104-6, 133-4) alludes to world regions (for instance, South America, Asia) or to national realities in particular (i. e. the ghettos of the United States). But, like elsewhere, in these two books Paris and France are the more immediate backgrounds of his critical thought as well. This prevalence of Paris and France is well evident almost whenever Lefebvre addresses how dominant classes have drafted and developed spatial strategies (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 29-38, 1991 [1974]: 56-8, 312, 2002 [1970]: 103-5,

136, 2008 [1972]: 94-6. Lefebvre invariably develops his arguments focusing on the case of France, of Paris. Essentially, he describes the development of class spatial strategies that took place in three subsequent acts, which, at the end of the day, point out to a broad redevelopment of Paris.

According to the French thinker (1978 [1968]: 29-38), the first act consists of the reforms promoted during the Second French Empire by Haussmann, that is, the opening of Paris to the troops and armies (which later served also to imperatives of circulation), the expulsion of worker classes from the city center to the outskirts and the related gentrification of the city center. The second act relates to the creation of what he calls the habitat with the construction of functional and impersonal suburbs in the outskirts during the French Third Republic. The third and final act refers to the creation by the French State after the Second World War of 'housing programs,' 'autonomous districts' and 'new towns' in clusters marked by a highly abstract and functional character, which then could lead to a kind of pure form of the habitat. Lefebvre emphasizes that while all this process unfolds, the point of reference changes gradually from the sphere of production – from the factory itself – to the sphere of daily life in general, which entails, as a consequence, 'the production of the whole space' (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 29-38, 1991 [1974]: 325-6, 334-7, 343-51, 2002 [1970]: 104-5, 2008 [1972]: 94-6). Therefore, it is largely from the analysis of Paris' tangible spatial experiences that part of Lefebvre's main theorizations about the production of the entire space by capital, in its accumulative movements, comes to light. Thus, the author, to a great extent, derives core concepts and notions about the urbanization process, such as the dialectical relationship between industrialization and urbanization and the double movement of 'implosion-explosion' of the city under it, from the Parisian (and European) historical experience (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 25, 2002 [1970]: 26-7). The French case comes up again as the historical substrate that allows Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 2002 [1970], 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) to criticize the state, and state planning, their rationality, and allows him to illustrate how the ideology and the practice of urbanism fall deep into socio-spatial segregation and alienation.

By the same token, it is basically from the European standpoint that he theorizes about the abstract space – the planned and programmed one, where all places are homologous and distinguished from each other only by their quantitative distance (signified through their price) in the market –. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 229-91) theorizes the emergence of the abstract space in opposition to the previous absolute space, which was saturated with a religious-political symbolism, and which he associates to places like

ancient Roman and Greek cities, the Italian Renaissance cities, or to his hometown village in Nanterre (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 73-9, 229-91, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 221-47). To put it briefly, despite the unquestionable relevance of his reflections, it is important perceiving that Lefebvre often derives wide-ranging statements from particular cases and, above all, does not pay much attention to possible dissimilar impacts of all these general processes in different regions of the world. Above all, he generally does not take into consideration the radically dissimilar consequences colonial and imperial relations and legacies may have to spatiality, segregation, or the general dynamics of urbanization (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]) and the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]).

For instance, when Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 147-58) discusses in *The Production of Space* how the social space relates methodologically and theoretically to the concepts of *form*, *structure*, and *function*, he notes that the same quadrangular spatial form it was established in both the Spanish-American colonial town and in New York City with the transformations which began there around 1810. He suggests that the same *form* may have divergent *functions* and give rise to diverse *structures* (extraction of wealth by a metropolitan power in the former and production and accumulation of capital 'on the spot' in the second). However, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 152) claims that in both of these cases 'the pre-existing' space was destroyed from top to bottom, the aim being homogeneity – which in both cases was achieved. Rationalization and homogenization are the drives of abstract space. That is the utmost Lefebvre does to incorporate plurality in the examination of abstract space. From Lefebvre's criticisms of the abstract space and its wideranging homogenizing consequences, his reasoning seems to want to encompass the entire world. But the criticism of homogeneity runs the risk of deriving in a homogenizing narrative. Another example of this potentially homogenizing narrative is when he (1991 [1974]: 312) portrays Brasilia precisely as a step further in the direction already put forward by Haussmann, Le Corbusier, and other European modernist planners.

Another scholar with an impressive work in the field of critical urban studies is undoubtedly David Harvey. In a similar way, it is not too difficult to point out places that relate more closely to his thinking. One of these places certainly is Baltimore. In the late 1960s, Harvey moved from Bristol University to Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. There he could see how injustice, racism, and exploitation were present as well as the struggle of social movements around these issues. Harvey has approached Baltimore from several prisms analyzing deindustrialization processes, the urban restructuration,

relationships between financial capital and investment in real estate, household displacements, processes of gentrification, urban poverty, social movements, the impact of the so-called subprime-mortgage crisis, and so on. Later on, he recognized how important Baltimore has been to his work. 'Baltimore itself intrigued me from the start. In fact, it was a terrific place to do empirical work. I quickly became involved in studies of discrimination in housing projects, and ever since the city has formed a backdrop to much of my thinking' (Harvey, 2001: 6-7).

It was, for example, in Baltimore that Harvey (2009 [1973]), concerned with urban poverty, wrote his classical *Social Justice and the City*. Even when Harvey develops a more abstract and theoretically guided reasoning, like in *The Limits to Capital* (1982), where he analyzes how capital relates with built environment and advances key concepts for critical spatial thought such as 'spatio-temporal fixes,' he recognizes that the links with historical realities like those of Baltimore or Paris are obviously present there (Harvey, 1982: xiv, 2001: 17-23). Harvey himself (2001: 17-23) openly recognizes that Paris is, along with Baltimore, an important 'concrete situation' from which he develops his critical 'theoretical apparatus.'

It is interesting how Harvey, following Lefebvre's previous considerations, also paid close attention to the urban transformations in the nineteenth century Paris. Would Paris be thought as the paradigmatic locus of modernity, of urban modernity, and its contradictions? In *Paris Capital of Modernity* (2005a [2003]), he brings together a series of historical-geographical articles about Second Empire Paris. Here Harvey points out how from a situation of crisis of capitalist overaccumulation, in which massive surpluses of capital and labor power were side-by-side, the 'Haussmannization' opened a way to bring them back together in profitable union. Harvey stresses in what ways Paris changed radically between 1848 and 1970 through the idea of circulation: not only the circulation of air, of sunlight, of water and of sewage, but also of people and troops and, above all, the circulation of money, and commodities.

Thus, following some of Lefebvre's suggestions, Harvey (2005a [2003]) shows how the new boulevards not only provided opportunities for sanitary and military control but also permitted free circulation of the capital throughout the open space of the city. However, slightly different from Lefebvre's reasoning, Harvey (2005a [2003]) remarks that in all these processes the state was set out just to solve the striking problems of overaccumulation, which, consequently, require a more careful consideration of the real power of the state and of Haussmann himself over the process. In any case, what Harvey

suggests is the outcome of the operation of absorption of labor and capital surpluses through the reconstruction and reshaping of Paris: The aggravation of spatial segregation in the city, with the expulsion of the worker population to the outskirts or its overcrowding in high-rent locations closer to the city center.

It is true that later Harvey turned back his attention to contexts and problems beyond the global North, such as in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Harvey, 2005b), and developed noteworthy analyzes on 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey, 2003), claiming that dispossessions occur both in the South and in the North. Harvey also showed linkages between crises of overaccumulation in the core of Europeans and United States Empires and the external expansion of capitalism, through imperialism, in its search for 'spatio-temporal fixes' (Harvey, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2005b, 2012). Even though Harvey does not pay much attention to the colonial domination of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, since his writings, it is mandatory to consider the modern imperial expansions as a key element to the understanding of the production of space, which means to some extent to bring the global South into the discussion.[41] In addition, it is worth noticing Harvey's recent considerations on contemporary social movements such as those in La Paz and El Alto, Bolivia, or about the Arab uprisings (Harvey, 2012), and his statements on the huge process of urbanization underway in China (Harvey, 2003, 2005b, 2012). By doing so, Harvey contributes to a better comprehension of current spatial dynamics beyond the well-trodden grounds of the global North. These later shifts seem not to be enough to author such as Myers (2011: 5), who claims that Harvey's work belongs to the West.

It is easy to extend the list of 'North-biased' scholars whose works were developed in similar circumstances. Edward Soja's theoretical work – like the work of other representatives of the so-called Los Angeles Postmodern School – is largely outlined from the immediate experience of Los Angeles, such as in *Postmodern Geographies* (1989),

---

[41] Harvey (2000: 26-9, 2001: 284-88, 307-11, 2003, 125) mentions how Hegel observed that inner contradictions of bourgeois European society, registered as an overaccumulation of wealth on one hand and the creation of paupers on the other, drive it to seek solutions through colonial and imperial practices. Harvey (2003: 125) also quotes Lenin saying that colonialism and imperialism abroad was the only possible way to avoid civil war at home. It is from Hegel and Lenin that Harvey claims that class relations and the state of class struggle within a territorially bounded social formation clearly affect the impetus for 'spatio-temporal fixes.' However, in such analyzes Harvey focuses on the imperialist expansion since the nineteenth century until the present era and does not pay much attention to the previous modern colonial practices. In addition, he does not focus on incidences of colonial and imperial expansion over the spatiality shaped in the 'colonies.'

*Thirdsapce* (1996), and *Postmetropolis* (2001 [2000]), and when he expands the range of options he does so by approaching other northern cities such as Amsterdam (Soja, 1996a). Even though in *Thirdspace* (1996) and *Postmetropolis* (2001 [2000]) Soja dialogues with celebrated postcolonial scholars like Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, and Gayatri Spivak, Los Angeles, in its status of global, unequal, and polycentric metropolis, is still the dominant reference in most of his statements on the experience of space and of time in the turn of the century metropolis.

Equally, most of Mike Davis's well-documented and ambitious analyzes are conducted around the sprawling and fragmented spatialities of Los Angeles, such as in *City of Quartz* (1990), *Ecology of Fear* (1999 [1998]) and *Magical Urbanism* (2000b). Perhaps the exceptions are *Late Victorian Holocausts* (Davis, 2000a) and *Planet of Slums* (Davis, 2004, 2006), where the author puts the focus on the wretched realities of the global South. In the former, Davis (2000a) combines environmental changing conditions, imperialist ambitions of the European powers and economic mechanisms of capitalist expansion to explain the emergence of what he defines as the 'Third World.' In *Planet of Slums,* Davis (2004, 2006) does a kind of 'global slum census' in order to show the negative impacts of neoliberal politics in the conformation of the urban poverty in the 'Third World.' *Planet of Slums* (Davis, 2004, 2006) was strongly criticized as 'anti-urban' and 'overly apocalyptic' with Davis being charged with failing to perceive agency capacity among the urban poor in solving their problems and in shaping their lives (Angotti, 2006; Roy, 2009; Myers, 2011).

As mentioned before, several scholars fit into the situation outlined here, having little to say about spaces outside, beyond the global North in most of their works, and, thus, it is not so difficult to claim that the global South has not been that crucial in critical spatial theory (Robinson, 2002, 2003, 2006; Roy, 2009; Myers, 2011). Moreover, when the global South comes up into the discussion this usually happens through general studies conducted from far northern theoretical latitudes. That is why postcolonial thinkers maintain that it is difficult to find case studies outside the global North as the main basis for broad theoretical reasoning. Accordingly, Robinson (2006: 82-5) and Roy (2009: 820-8; 2011) argue that when the global South takes place in the debate this often happens through a negative connotation, expressed in terms as 'modernism of underdevelopment' (Berman, 1988 [1982]) or 'planet of slums' (Davis, 2004, 2006).

In sum, although there has been some effort to incorporate the global South, like the latest offerings by Harvey, the postcolonial criticisms of the critical urban theory are

not out of place. Even the crudest critics of recent postcolonial scholarship do recognize it. 'Obviously, cities of the Global South have been severely overlooked in past research efforts; obviously we must be careful to pay attention to the specificities of these cities' (Storper and Scott, 2016: 1121). Nonetheless, there are some questions that should be asked at this point: What is possible to do from the postcolonial diagnosis? What to do in order to surpass the biased situation that prevails in the field of urban studies? Or better, after about one decade and a half of the inauguration of these debates in the early 2000s, what postcolonial urban scholars have done so far in order to 'provincialize urban studies' (Sheppard et al., 2013; Leitner and Sheppard, 2016)?

## 3.2. Dialogue, rhetoric, and lapses in a fragmented field of research

The postcolonial literature in urban studies has advanced rapidly and steadily both in size and complexity since the pioneering and influential works of Robinson (2002, 2003, 2006), Roy (2009), and a number of others arguing along similar lines, such as Grant and Nijman (2002), Mbembe and Nuttall (2004), Nijman (2007), Watson (2009), and Ward (2010). Jeremy Seekings and Roger Keil's (2009) editorial statement in the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (*IJURR*), even though in a reticent tone, grasped the widening reach of the postcolonial turn in urban studies while 'encouraging explicitly comparative studies and facilitating conversations between scholars with knowledge of diverse settings' (Seekings and Keil, 2009: vii). A little bit further they qualify this, however, because 'given the pace of change in cities across the global South, the comparative project also needs to confront squarely (…) global influences and dynamics' (Seekings and Keil, 2009: vii). The odd aspect of this editorial statement is Seekings and Keil's (2009) justification for the nonappearance of research by southern scholars in this journal until then. They (2009: vii) explain that their disappointment with some scholarly works by researchers from the global South was usually due to 'a failure to link original empirical research to broader theoretical debates and literatures. This delinkage seems widespread in academic contexts which are isolated from global academic circuits and tend towards parochialism.' But the process of editorial 'rebalancing' was already in progress by then and, in 2012, Seekings issued a call for contributions that was much more encouraging for southern scholars.

Topics as varied as urban regime theory, social cohesion, neoliberalism and democracy are all ones where cities across the global South can pose fundamental challenges to theories from the global North. We look forward to a time when our urban theory is derived as much from studies rooted in Buenos Aires (or Cordoba or Mendoza) as in ones rooted in Chicago or Los Angeles (Seekings, 2012a).

Besides Seekings's 2012 welcoming call for papers, the virtual issue put together by Robinson (2014b) some years later, a more recent special issue edited by Robinson and Roy (2016), and the new co-editors joining *IJURR*'s editorial board between 2016 and 2017 (Boudreau et al., 2015: v), exemplify well the noticeable position postcolonial urban studies has gained in this and other leading journals in the field of urban studies. In fact, nowadays it is almost impossible not to come across this vast body of work while addressing main issues and debates in the field of urban studies. The influences of the postcolonial perspective can be noticed almost everywhere: From urban development to gentrification to cultural aspects of the urban and urban art to urban political economy to planning and urban policy to urbanization, and so forth. It gives the sheer impression of being almost ubiquitous. Paradoxically, the postcolonial perspective, despite its defense of diversity and variety, gives the impression of having become an emergent canon, with all the problems accompanying the consolidation of a canon, such as excessive deferral to a limited few commanding, authoritative (now southern) voices.

Obviously, the more recent postcolonial interventions have been taking place against the backdrop of prominent earlier research projects in urban studies (such as those on the global or neoliberal city). Due to this, negotiations and even heated interchanges between representatives of the different 'sides' have been unavoidable, above all, between those that could be broadly named as inheritors of Marxist thought and their postcolonial opponents. To a large extent, these rivalries in the field of urban studies end up propelling us toward eminently philosophical reflections much beyond the scope of this chapter (about the particular and universal, concrete and abstract, empirical and theoretical, inductive and deductive inquiry, and so forth). They also draw upon debates between scholars such as Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) and Vivek Chibber (2013). Some of these debates will inevitably be alluded to in what follows. However, let me continue my undertaking of reviewing the postcolonial literature in urban studies by focusing on

the more recent works of the two founding mothers of the postcolonial turn in urban studies, Jenny Robinson and Ananya Roy.

After her (2009) call for new geographies of theory, Roy has made many contributions to the postcolonial urban literature, becoming a kind of 'global star of current "southern" city theory' (Mabin, 2014: 25-6). For instance, Roy (2011a) revisited one of her own familiar research subjects, urban informality (Roy, 2005), challenging dominant narratives of the cities of the global South that are studied and represented in urban research under the idea of the 'megacity.' Writing polemically against apocalyptic and dystopian narratives of 'the slum' that are present both inside and outside academia – both Mike Davis's (2006) book *Planet of Slums* and the Indian movie *Slumdog Millionaire* are discussed by Roy (2011a: 224-7) and give evidence of the widespread presence of these narratives – Roy (2011a: 223-4) seeks 'emergent analytical strategies of research.' She is interested in understanding the 'inevitable heterogeneity' (Roy, 2011a: 231) of southern urbanism by developing new theoretical categories that would 'transcend the familiar metonyms of underdevelopment' such as 'the megacity' or 'the ubiquitous slum.' 'The megacity,' as the trope is commonly employed by scholars and in popular culture, 'is a metonym for underdevelopment, Third Worldism, the global South' (Roy, 2011a: 224).

Roy (2011a) argues that the realm of subaltern urbanism provides fairer accounts of the cities of the South as topographies of politics and popular agency, aspects 'that often remain invisible and neglected in the archives and annals of urban theory' (Roy, 2011a: 224). In doing so, 'subaltern urbanism recuperates the figure of the slum dweller as a subject of history' (Roy, 2011a: 228). At some point, Roy (2011a: 231) even says that subaltern urbanism is indeed an approach to her previous call for new geographies of theory (Roy, 2009). Even so, she is mainly 'concerned with the limits of and alternatives to subaltern urbanism' (Roy, 2011a: 223).

Roy (2011a) clearly engages in epistemological debates and 'is primarily concerned with a formation of ideas – "subaltern urbanism" – which undertakes the theorization of the megacity and its subaltern spaces and subaltern classes' (Roy, 2011a: 223). Thus, building on Spivak's notion of subalternity, Roy (2011a) appears to claim that subaltern urbanism should be better understood as a sort of heuristic resource. 'In her work [Spivak's work], the subaltern marks the silences of our archives and annals. It is this conceptualization of the subaltern that I believe is most useful to urban studies, for it calls into question the conditions for knowledge through which "slumdog cities" are

placed in the world' (Roy, 2011a: 231). Then, informed by the many urbanisms of the global South, Roy (2011a: 232-5) discusses four 'emergent' categories – 'peripheries,' 'urban informality,' 'zones of exception,' and 'grey spaces' – that would be helpful in breaking with ontological and topological understandings of 'subaltern subjects' and 'subaltern spaces.'

Roy (2011a: 223, 231, 235) indicates that she seeks a disruption of the ontological and topological readings of subalternity. Indeed, drawing on the work of Mouffe (1993) and Gregory (2010 [2009]), she clarifies that the four categories mentioned previously should be assumed as 'vanishing points' (Roy, 2011a: 235) that would both disrupt and extend the reach of subaltern urbanism. Somewhere along the way, what Roy calls the '*dependista* tradition' (Roy, 2011a: 230) is thrown overboard, basically due to Roy's contention that the heterogeneity of the South cannot be 'worlded through the "colonial wound"' (Roy, 2011a: 231).

The worldling of the South is actually a main subject in Roy's (2009, 2011a, 2011b, 2014) work. She rephrases it from diverse angles, with the concept of worldling gaining a quite ambivalent aura in the process, but worldling seems always to refer to engaging with the experiences of the cities of the global South on their own terms. For instance, in her chapter to the *Routledge Handbook on the Cities of the Global* South edited by Susan Parnell and Sophie Oldfield (2014), Roy (2014: 9) argues that the murals of Muscat Street in Kampong Glam heritage district, Singapore, are an instance of the worldling of the South. Like in her (2009) previous work, Roy (2014: 18) relies again on Spivak's ideas (1985, 1999) about worldling. But now Roy's (2014) argument becomes much sharper. The worldling of urban theory has to do with concrete changes in 'urbanization patterns' that characterize present times. Actually, Roy (2014: 13-4) sustains her statements on UN-Habitat statistics regarding the pace and patterns of world urbanization. This allows her to state that while the twentieth century was marked by the shift from the Chicago School of urban sociology to the Los Angeles Postmodern School of geography, 'the urban future already lay elsewhere: in the cities of the global south, in cities like Shanghai, Cairo, Mumbai, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Dakar, Johannesburg, Singapore, Dubai' (Roy, 2014: 13).

Roy also states that the empirical research that has been conducted in the context of such cities has not entered into the authoritative theoretical canon of the discipline of urban studies (Roy, 2014: 13). She argues that the time has come to readdress these omissions. The time has come to push the immense heterogeneity of the South up to the

center of the global urban picture: 'It is in this sense that the cities of the global South are the centre of a world order that is being created and recreated through the urban revolution. And it is in this sense that southern urbanism is today's global urbanism' (Roy, 2014: 14). This is the current 'postcolonial condition' of theory production in urban studies. With the shifts in the patterns of world urbanization, the South has been empirically 'worldled.' 'Southern urbanism is today's global urbanism' (Roy, 2014: 14). At least it appears to be so while we step further into what she (2014: 14) terms the 'Asian urban century.' However, as we shall see, naming a problem does not mean solving it. As Brenner and Schmid (2015) note, new theoretical imbalances might emerge, with Latin American and African urbanizing contexts very likely to be (re)marginalized in the course of the latest seesawing transition from the alleged urbanized West to the new-fangled urbanizing East.

In her latest works, Roy (2015, 2016) proposes a way of theorizing the urban under the current 'postcolonial condition,' maintaining that what is at skate is a critical urban theory attentive to 'historical difference.' In doing so, she (2016) also clarifies some misinterpretations of her former call for new geographies of theory (Roy, 2009). Roy makes clear that her call is not about adding empirical variation coming from the cities in the global South to existing northern urban theory. She says that creating new geographies of theory means being attentive to historical difference. Thus, Roy (2015, 2016) argues that 'historical difference' has been misread as 'empirical variation.' The question is: What does she understand by 'historical difference?' Roy argues that it has to do with 'the long history of colonialism and imperialism' (Roy, 2016: 203); that 'to think via historical difference is not to avoid generalization but it is to insist that general processes … are not necessarily universal' (Roy, 2015: 811); and that different histories 'might yield a different working-class politics, a different urban transformation, a different way of being political' (Roy, 2015: 811). Still, what the 'difference' might be is something never completely elucidated. What she does do is embark on a crusade against 'universal grammars' (Roy, 2016: 202) and 'totalizing theories' (Roy, 2015: 812). In her epistemologically channeled statements, every theory is 'located' and, as such, is 'particular.'

Roy's (2009) previous call is about 'embodied' and 'located' theorization. 'What is at stake in "new geographies of theory" is not the empirical diversity of Southern cities, but instead the stories the West most often tells itself about itself' (Roy, 2016: 207). Thus, against universalizing narratives of capital (Chibber, 2013) and urbanization (Scott and

Storper, 2015), she defends plural understandings of political economy and multiple concepts of the urban (Roy, 2015, 2016). Roy's latest forays into these well-trodden theoretical settings are far from unquestionable. And the problem resides not in Roy's call for attentiveness to 'historical difference' and 'multiple theorizations' but in how she appears to pursue it. As we shall see in Chapter 4, in her battles against 'universal grammars,' the urban ends up trapped in the present and disjointed from the future, something that would be characterized by its 'undecidability;' or, at most, it is reduced to a 'governmental category' (Roy, 2015).

Like Roy, Robinson (2008, 2011a, 2011b, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2016) has made many contributions to postcolonial urban scholarship since publishing her (2002, 2003, 2006) earlier works in the 2000s. A quite recurrent subject in her more recent intellectual production is 'comparative urbanism.' In the same spirit as that of her (2006) *Ordinary Cities*, Robinson (2011a) makes a call for the comparative gesture, that is, for 'thinking across differences,' while taking all cities into account. She (2011a: 10) is basically concerned 'with encouraging a more geographically wide-ranging comparativism within urban studies,' that is, she wishes 'to build a revitalized urban comparativism that is more adequate to the task of thinking through a world of cities' (Robinson, 2011a: 13).

In reviewing comparative tactics that have been applied in social sciences and urban studies (the case-study approach, the encompassing method, variation-finding schemes, and so on), Robinson (2011a) indicates how there has been a tendency 'to think comparatively across the experiences of relatively similar cities' (Robinson, 2011a: 9). She calls for more flexibility in the criteria for selection of cases and in delimitating the units of comparison. Robinson (2011a: 10, 17-8) also denounces the tendency in much comparative research in urban studies to ratify quasi-scientific models of research, which operate with dependent and independent variables and are based on hypotheses derived from parochial theories, even if these theories often circulate as universal knowledge. To put it briefly, she offers a critique of the narrow geographical foundations of urban theory by indicating two main problems: (a) research on wealthier Western cities is generalized as 'universal knowledge about all cities' (Robinson, 2011a: 3), and (b) comparisons are underpinned by 'assumptions about the incommensurability of urban experiences across different contexts' (Robinson, 2011a: 4).

Against these biased theoretical and methodological approaches, while drawing on Connell's (2009 [2007]) idea of 'sociology on a world scale,' and having Deleuze's and Guattari's philosophies as her main theoretical foundations, Robinson (2011a: 16-8)

contends that all cities are both resources and sites for theory generation. She trusts that the emergent mobilities and decenterd circulations that tie each city up with unsuspected elsewhere(s) will be recognized as the grounds for developing a new type of theory that seeks to register the mutual understandings being crafted across distances (Robinson, 2011a: 15-6). 'This style of theorizing would be neither a parochial universalism nor a uniform global analytical field but a rich and fragmented array of ongoing conversations across the world of cities' (Robinson, 2011a: 19). Thus, while seeking to 'revitalize comparativism,' Robinson (2011a: 13, 17-9) turns to poststructuralism and offers what she believes would be a more nuanced mode of comparative inquiry that takes account of the multi-directionality, multi-connectivity, multi-causality, multiplicity, complexity, and diversity of a world of cities. Without the constraints of previous comparative research, this new comparitivism on a world scale should be able to invigorate urban theory, which now might be much more fragile and uncertain in view of the widening range of the 'conversations.' Urban theory should be rendered perpetually revisable (Robinson, 2011a).

Once and again, Robinson (2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2016) has stressed the necessity of the comparative gesture, sometimes rephrased as 'comparative imagination,' and the potential 'revocability' of an urban theory really committed to new empirical and theoretical inputs coming from all over the world. Again and again, she (2014a, 2015, 2016) reaffirms how the comparative gesture – in its commitments to the multiplicity of cases and to the inductiveness of theory production – implies both the 'revisability' of inherited (and located) theories and 'the need to be willing to think again in the light of new experiences and evidence' (Robinson, 2016: 188, 193). Moreover, Robinson (2016) has done so while sharing Roy's (2014) 'world picture' of urbanization patterns that progressively shift from the West to East. Thus, against 'universalizing theoretical practices,' 'dominating and unmarked authoritative voices,' and 'quasi-scientific methodological models,' Robinson (2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2016) has repeatedly defended a new repertoire of comparative methods open to thinking across diverse and divergent urban contexts, which means 'being open to ideas from elsewhere, while attending to the locatedness of all conceptualization' (Robinson, 2016: 188), and also being aware of the possibility of beginning conceptualization anywhere. It is necessary to build cultures of theorizing (Robinson, 2016) beyond the 'western' ones, which foster a diversity of starting points, and which would expose the parochial character of universalizing theories. In making these kinds of claims, Robinson (2014a: 66-8), just like Roy (2015,

2016), emphasizes the need to conceptualize the urban in all its multiplicity, which, like in Roy's work, does not occur without difficulties. Her (mis)usages of isolated concepts of Walter Benjamin and Henri Lefebvre's dialectical thought within her fragmentary, Deleuzian-inspired poststructuralist framework can sometimes be frustrating. I will deal with Roy's (2015, 2016) and Robinson's (2014a, 2015) multiple understandings of the urban in Chapter 4.

Therefore, resembling Roy (2009, 2014), Robinson (2011a, 2014b, 2016), in her poststructuralist comparative scheme, seeks out fragmentary connections between cities, unexpected linkages, and circulations without demarcated 'centers' and 'peripheries.' She puts the emphasis on the complexity of global connections and goes well beyond previous 'ways to go global' in the 'archives of comparative urbanism' (Robinson, 2016: 189), such as world-systems approaches. The two of them note that 'there has been an effort to rethink the Euro-American legacy of urban studies and consider the relational multiplicities, diverse histories and dynamic connectivities of global urbanisms' (Robinson and Roy, 2016: 181). Robinson (2014a: 59) recommends 'new geographies of theorization' that would be open to (global) lines of conversation, and open to being revised in view of this very conversation.

It is worth noting that Robinson's (2014a: 59) new geographies of theorization moves beyond Roy's (2009) call for new geographies of theory. When suggesting that Roy's (2009) proposal works through fixed speaking positions, which could re-establish the so-called lines of incommensurability, Robinson goes a step farther. Thus, in a more radical vein, Robinson (2014a: 61, 68) criticizes 'regional circuits of theorization' and moves beyond Roy's (2009) idea of 'southern positionality.' In so doing, Robinson bursts asunder not only world-systems theories' key concepts (core, semi-periphery, and periphery), which Roy (2009) does too, but also the very concept of the global South. Ironically, here Robinson coincides with Scott and Storper (2015) on the notion that we should get rid of the concept of the global South. Robinson (2014a) presses the postcolonial attitude further than Roy seems able or willing to do, at least in view of Roy's (2009, 2011a, 2014) works to date. Even Chakrabarty's (2000) guidance is mistrusted as potentially obstructing a wider range of comparative, cross-fertilizing, inductive, and non-hierarchical conversations across different contexts.

> Even in its post-colonial idiom (for example, Chakrabarty 2000) this imagination, which preserves the idea that structures (such as global

capitalism) derived in analysis can be identified locally in a hybrid, differentiated form, generates a view of many places as residual to theorization, marking only the hybridization of processes derived (and already conceptualized) from elsewhere. This both retains the centrality of conceptualizations informed by only some contexts, and reduces the study of different places to a form of 'defanged empiricism', unable to transform understandings of these wider processes and leaving conceptualizations relatively intact (Robinson, 2014a: 66).

We shall see below that Robinson is just making some of her (2006) previous (radically non-hierarchical) ideas more categorical. Robinson's (2014a, 2015, 2016) latest calls for global urban studies revives the radical spirit of *Ordinary Cities* (Robinson, 2006); for instance, when she (2016: 196) mentions the multiple subjects researching and theorizing the urban and ideally engaging in a 'global conversation.' Yes, I did say 'ideally,' because allusions to Latin American milieus in Robinson's (2016: 195-6) 'new taxonomies' of the repertoire of urban comparison are at best vague. At least she recognizes, like Parnell and Pieterse (2016), 'the destructive consequences of the deeply uneven material bases of global urban scholarship' (Robinson, 2016: 196) and 'the practicalities of unevenly resourced circuits of knowledge and publishing' (Robinson, 2014a: 59).[42] As we will see further down, considering language barriers would go a long way toward explaining the persistent parochialism and unevenness in current 'global' conversations in urban studies.

Robinson's (2014a: 68) suggestion that we would do well to largely do away with territorialized referents of theory insinuates the existence of interpretative tensions within the hard nucleus of postcolonial scholarship in urban studies. They have not gone unnoticed. Lawhon and colleagues (2016: 1613) propose that 'postcolonial urbanists have begun developing two related tactics for acknowledging diverse theoretical urbanisms which have some as yet unexamined tensions between them.' They (2016: 1613) suggest that these two tactics may be precisely summarized as, on the one hand, Roy's (2009) call for new geographies of theory, that, according to them, in one or another way would

---

[42] In spite of *IJURR*'s editorial changes, which I alluded to at the beginning of this section, there are still strong imbalances in this 'postcolonial friendly' journal. Robinson (2016: 192) recognizes, for instance, that rejection rates in it are highest for papers submitted by scholars based outside of 'western' institutional milieus.

emphasize 'locational differences,' and, on the other hand, Robinson's (2006, 2011a, 2014, 2016) successive calls for comparative urbanisms.

Many authors have joined or collaborated to the deployment of the two 'tactics' revealed by Lawhon et al. (2016: 1613). Thus, volumes such as those edited by Roy and Ong (2011), Edensor and Jayne (2012), Seekings (2012a), Miraftab and Kudva (2014), and Parnell and Oldfield (2014), provide good examples of the several efforts made toward developing new geographies of theory (Roy, 2009). And the many pieces on urban comparative studies (Nijman, 2007; Ward, 2008; Mcfarlane, 2010; Mcfarlane and Robinson, 2012; Jacobs, 2012; Peck, 2015), along with the vividness of recent debates about actor-network theory and assemblage urbanism (Farías and Bender, 2010; Farías, 2010, 2011; Acuto, 2011; MacCann and Ward, 2011; McFarlane, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Brenner et al., 2011; Tonkiss, 2011; Smith, 2013), offer a good amount of evidence of the deployment of the comparative 'tactic.'

Despite the numerous works dedicated to the comparative 'tactic,' 'the extensive interdisciplinary literature that has emerged recently on rethinking comparison has had little to say on how to undertake such comparisons' (Leitner and Sheppard, 2016: 233) (see Chapter 2). And Leitner and Sheppard (2016) state this while arguing that a new comparative reasoning is still central to provincializing urban studies. Indeed, as Lawhon et al. (2016: 1613) note, there are some unexamined tensions in the postcolonial urban literature. They do not go much further in disentangling these 'tensions' though. Instead, they choose to advance new strategies to circumvent such tensions. They seek to contribute to the progress of the postcolonial endeavor of provincializing urban studies. Lawhon et al. (2016) think optimistically that, notwithstanding its opacity and inner tensions, the postcolonial agenda in urban studies shall move ahead in a one or another way.

Of course, not everyone concurs. Mabin, for example, outlines what he defines as a 'sympathetic but skeptical position' (Mabin, 2014: 22). He starts by reflecting on what 'theory from the south' (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2012) would be and by asking whether there might be some limits to the idea of 'urban theory from the south' and ends up challenging essential lines of argument in the recent postcolonial literature in urban studies (Mabin, 2014). For instance, Mabin is skeptical that approaches departing from the global South, in this case, from cities in the South, will be able to usher in something new. He calls our attention to the fact that the recent 'empirical rerouting' toward the South in urban studies does not necessary mean theoretical innovation or a substantial

change in thinking. Just before referring to AbdouMaliq Simone's (2010, 2011) poststructuralist ethnographic account on the city he asks: 'What is new and different? What might be missed by older city concepts from the north?' (Mabin, 2014: 25). At another point, he raises comparable questions: 'What have self-consciously southern city theorists done to go beyond the northern? Is there a reason not to take up northern concepts in the cities of the south?' (Mabin, 2014: 28). Mabin answers to these questions with unconditional conviction:

> Nonetheless, a lot of what is being written currently 'from the south' ends up analysing cities of the south through concepts and tools emanating from long-standing urban studies elsewhere. Within the pages of collections such as Edensor and Jayne (2012), or even Roy and Ong (2011), one searches a little fruitlessly for the promise of a new concept and substantial difference in contemporary cities of the south. New consequences for society or of life in the city seem scarcer than some of the rhetorical promises (Mabin, 2014: 26).

Indeed, analogous to Simone's (2010, 2011, 2014) 'extended display of deleuzoguattarian jargon in an attempt to illuminate descriptions of urban informality' (Storper and Scott, 2016: 1127), much of the recent postcolonial urban scholarship keeps poststructuralism, even if sometimes in veiled ways, as a main conceptual and methodological source of inspiration. For instance, at times Roy's (2011a, 2015) offerings have generous doses of a sort of Derridean flavor. The same applies to Robinson's (2011a; 2014a, 2015, 2016) work, but the inspiration in this case comes from Deleuze and Guattari, sometimes via Simone (Robinson, 2015: 21) – even though Robinson has been criticized from poststructuralist standpoints (Smith, 2013). Indeed, unless we think of poststructuralism as less 'western' than existentialism, structuralism or Marxism, it seems that Mabin does have a point. Notwithstanding his unsympathetic comments regarding ethnographic research throughout the text, Mabin points out convincingly that 'new rhetorical representations' can be very flamboyant, 'but what we have available presently, does not yet take us very far into the promised land of southern urbanism' (Mabin, 2014: 27-9).

Mabin (2014) is not on his own as other scholars – incidentally, much more sympathetic to the postcolonial lines of argumentation – share Mabin's attentiveness to the lack of theoretical innovation in the recent postcolonial literature in urban studies. For

instance, in their ten-point manifesto for 'provincializing global urbanism,' Sheppard et al. (2013) anticipated Mabin's argument while recognizing that urban studies are still framed in one or another way by northern perspectives. As they put it: 'Alternative perspectives never emerge fully formed from spaces that lie outside those of mainstream global urbanism' (Sheppard et al., 2013: 897). More recently, Lawhon and colleagues (2016) have also endorsed Sheppard and colleagues' (2013) position. 'Postcolonial scholars have argued for the provincialization of urban knowledge, but doing so remains an opaque process' (Lawhon et al., 2016: 1611). These last authors manage to make room for their call for 'unlearning' – according to them, a suitable way for moving the postcolonial agenda in urban studies forward from the 'stationary' point at which it seems to find itself – precisely by acknowledging that 'there is notably limited scholarship developing new theoretical insights from the South' (Lawhon et al., 2016: 1613). Not without certain doses of irony, despite the quite reasonable calls for theoretical innovation and for the incorporation of new cases and perspectives – of course, southern ones – there is an odd perception that there is an insufficiency of theoretical inventiveness. And this leaving aside the huge activity these calls engendered – easily detectable in the countless seminars, workshops, symposia, manifestos, articles, books, and special issues. Despite its more than legitimate foundational calls (for new geographies of theory/theorization and renewed comparativisms), could the postcolonial urban literature have grown too hermetic around its own claims? At least apparently, it seems so.

Perhaps this lack of 'newness' has its foundations in language barriers. As Seekings and Keil (2009: vi) declare in the editorial statement I have quoted before, 'the publication of translated abstracts might facilitate readership of *IJURR* articles but will do nothing to change the division of the world into English-reading (and writing) insiders and non-English-reading (and writing) outsiders.' To his credit, drawing on the work of Choplin (2012), Mabin (2014: 24, 27) reminds us that most of the recent literature in postcolonial urban studies has been limited to the 'Anglophone domain' and that a vast body of work in other languages has remained out of the picture. But, could language explain why so many have been left out of the recent postcolonial 'world picture' (Roy, 2014)?

I agree with Mabin (2014) that we must be mindful of the limits established by the 'Anglophone dominance' in knowledge production; however, in addition, there seems to be a kind of 'balkanization' in the field of urban studies that linguistic considerations alone might be unable to account for. For instance, in the now large postcolonial literature

in urban studies, there are only a few pieces directly focusing on Latin America and Latin American thought. Carlos Vainer's (2014) and Sujata Patel's (2014) chapters in the comprehensive *Handbook* on cities of the South edited by Susan Parnell and Sophie Oldfield (2014) are among them. Arturo Escobar's critique of 'developmentalism' and Milton Santos's 'critical theory of underdevelopment' gain only passing references in Robinson's (2006, 4, 66, 2011a, 2) work. Robinson (2011a: 2) quickly rejects Milton Santos and other 'dependency theorists' on the basis of their assumptions about the 'incommensurability.' She claims that, although offering theorizations attentive to difference, and presenting theories that tie the urban experience of poorer countries to that of wealthy ones, 'like the modernization theories before them,' they 'established a landscape in which assumptions about the incommensurability of wealthier and poorer cities are taken for granted, and reproduced it through separate literatures that find few grounds for careful and mutual comparative reflection' (Robinson, 2011a: 2). Similarly, Mignolo's 'colonial wound' and Dussel's 'transmodernity' are sometimes swiftly mentioned, and even quicker forgotten, by Roy (2011a, 230, 2011b, 307-8, 312). Would this be enough? It is worth noting that a fair portion of Latin American decolonial thought is available in English. DeVerteuil's (2016) watchful words about recent postcolonial scholarship in urban studies seem to apply here. DeVerteuil (2016) says that in the voguish 'theoretical carousels' of postcolonial literature there is an often misleading lack of engagement with previous bodies of work and a shortage of empirical corroboration of key theoretical propositions.[43]

In spite of some attempts at dialogue between major representatives of postcolonial and critical urban scholars – with Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid (2015: 161) declaring a 'spirit of comradely dialogue' toward the postcolonial scholarship in urban studies and with Ananya Roy (2015: 815) even quoting her personal correspondence with Neil Brenner in one of her latest papers – there appears to exist 'a growing sense of disarticulation, dissipation and fragmentation' (Peck, 2015: 162) in the field. While defending the necessity of a more constructive dialogue across theoretical traditions, notably at the interface between political economy and postcolonialism, Peck (2015) also criticizes what he terms the 'particularist drift in contemporary urban studies' (Peck, 2015: 162). Roy (2015: 811) rejoined that 'to find difference is not to sidestep

---

[43] What DeVerteuil (2016) seems to miss, though, is the chance to relate current academic 'fashions' with the general conditions of research and knowledge production, very often guided by a blind pursuit of 'originality' and by pressures for publishing research throughputs.

general processes for particularities.' Following Peck's (2015) words, Scott and Storper (2015; Storper and Scott, 2016) provide a cruder interpretation. After branding postcolonial urban theory as 'cacophony' and denouncing it for its overall commitment to what they call the 'new particularism' or even the 'sophism of particularism,' by which they basically mean the emphasis on the 'difference,' 'idiosyncrasy,' 'exceptionalism' and 'uniqueness' of cities, they (2015) directly request a return to universality. Not for nothing have Scott and Storper's (2015) theorizations about 'agglomeration economies' and the so-called 'unban land nexus,' along with the universal claims that undergird both of them, been fiercely antagonized by Robinson and Roy (Robinson and Roy, 2016; Robinson, 2016; Roy, 2016), as well as others in the postcolonial camp (see also Leitner and Sheppard, 2016; Parnell and Pieterse, 2016). According to Robinson and Roy (2016: 183), categorically, a 'reformatted comparativism' obliges a move away from 'universalizing ambitions.'

Brenner and Schmid (2015: 158-9) have also made a diagnosis that 'the core agendas of critical urban social science have become rather disjointed in recent years.' But their diagnosis of fragmentation offers a different perspective. Whereas Brenner and Schmid (2015: 158-9) identify intellectual fragmentation in the field of urban studies, characterizing this situation as challenging, they do not blame postcolonial urban theorists for it. On the contrary, they maintain that, under the general context of deepening of intellectual fragmentation, the postcolonial turn has provided a 'reflexive strand of urban scholarship' (Brenner and Schmid, 2015: 159). They even affirm that their own developing investigations on 'planetary urbanization partially overlap with the substantive research foci of postcolonial urbanism' (Brenner and Schimd, 2015: 160). Nevertheless, even if framed within a 'spirit of comradely dialogue,' Brenner and Schmid (2015) offer a set of critical reflections on contemporary urbanization that 'stand in some measure of tension' (Brenner and Schimd, 2015: 161) with postcolonial interventions in urban studies.

The main line of tension is that, even if some postcolonial scholars have incorporated 'relational concepts,' such as Robinson (2011a, 2014a, 2015, 2016), who, as we have seen before, has done so in a poststructuralist manner, and Leitner and Sheppard (2016), these last through a less fragmentary approach, the quest for 'specificity,' 'distinctiveness' or even 'uniqueness' of cities beyond the West has directed postcolonial urban research toward a kind of 'conceptual specificity' (Brenner and Schimd, 2015: 161). In reaffirming their commitment to the Marxist notion of totality,

Brenner and Schmid (2015: 161) claim that in the contemporary 'capitalist world system (…) contextual specificity is enmeshed within, and mediated through, broader configurations of capitalist uneven spatial development and geopolitical power.' The recognition of varieties of patterns of urbanization, the criticism of universal validity and the 'provincialization of urban studies' (Sheppard et al., 2013), should take place as well through the theorization of 'the context(s) of those contexts' (Brenner and Schimd, 2015: 162). In this sense, the postcolonial attentiveness to southern specificities and heterogeneity should be positioned within the 'constant evolving' and world-encompassing whole of 'planetary urbanization' (Brenner, 2013, 2014a, 2014b; Brenner and Schimd, 2011, 2014, 2015) shaped by 'the drive towards endless capital accumulation' (Brenner and Schimd, 2015: 161) and dynamics of exploitation, commodification, and dispossession.

The lack of 'relationality' or 'connectivity' beyond fragments has occasionally been criticized by authors from within the postcolonial arena. For instance, in their introduction to the edited volume *Urban Theory beyond the West*, Edensor and Jayne (2012) largely acclaim postcolonial agendas and research methods in urban studies while nonetheless arguing that a more relational reasoning is required. In a more radical vein, one from an external but respectful viewpoint, Peck (2015) weighs in on the issue by stating:

> Turns toward particularism, deconstruction and case-study singularity have enabled the opening up of new spaces in and for urban theory, and new ways of thinking about urban theory, which is now being practiced across a more variegated terrain and in more diverse registers. But in the wake of these opening moves, there is a growing need to explore alternative modes of conceptual abstraction and theoretical reconstruction. It cannot be sufficient to hold singular cases at ambivalent distance from supposedly 'offshore' theories. The ongoing work of remaking of urban theory must occur across cases, which means confronting and problematizing substantive connectivity, recurrent processes and relational power relations, in addition to documenting difference, in a 'contrastive' manner, between cities. It must also occur across scales, positioning the urban scale itself, and working to locate cities not just within lateral grids of difference, in the 'planar' dimension, but in

relational and conjunctural terms as well (Peck, 2015: 162).

We should not disregard Robinson's (2002, 2003, 2006) and Roy's (2009) foundational interpretations, which have been extended by themselves (Robinson, 2008, 2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2016; Roy, 2011a, 2011b, 2014, 2015, 2016; Robinson and Roy, 2016) and embraced by many others ever since (e.g. Nijman, 2007; Mbembe and Nuttall, 2004; Watson, 2009; Mcfarlane, 2008, 2010; Bunnell and Maringanti, 2010; Ward, 2010; Ong and Roy, 2011; Simone, 2010, 2014; Cook and Ward, 2011; Myers, 2011, 2014; Edensor and Jayne, 2012; Seekings, 2012a; Pieterse, 2011; Pieterse and Simone, 2013; Sheppard et al., 2013; Parnell and Oldfield, 2014; Parnell and Pieterse, 2016; Leitner and Sheppard, 2016; Lawhon et al., 2016; Schindler, 2017). Yet, while recognizing the merits of such a vast literature, it is also worth noting that examining in detail the spatial processes that occur beyond the so-called global North is perhaps a necessary but not sufficient step in order to overcome the imbalances of critical spatial theory. Moreover, depending on how imbalances are addressed, new inconsistencies may emerge. It seems to me that Robinson's (2006) early seminal book, *Ordinary Cities*, illustrates quite well the ambivalent condition that in one way or another characterizes the postcolonial turn in the field of urban studies. In the next section, I will offer a critical appraisal of Robinson's (2006) book. We shall see that many of Peck's (2015) criticisms of 'planar urbanisms' are not untenable. There are complications in Robinson's (2006) pivotal proposal of a world of ordinary cities. The endorsement of economic growth and the withdrawal of critical (urban) thought are among them.

### 3.3. A world of ordinary cities?

In *Ordinary Cities*, Robinson (2006) uses the term coined by Amin and Graham (1997) to set up 'an agenda for a new generation of urban scholarship that will move beyond divisive categories (such as Western, Third World, African, South American, South-East Asian, or post-socialist cities)' (Robinson, 2006: 1-2). She wishes to lay the groundwork for a 'postcolonial urban theory that will challenge colonial and neo-imperial power relations that remain deeply embedded in the assumptions and practices of contemporary urban theory' (Robinson, 2006: 1-2). Robinson wants to break with the long-standing division in urban studies between histories of cities of the West and other cities, especially cities labeled as 'Third World.' She states that it is compulsory to overcome the

hierarchical tendency in the field of urban studies and advances a 'cosmopolitan framework' based on the general claim that urban studies should posit as its domain of study a world of ordinary cities (Robinson, 2006).

> It is the argument of this book that all cities are best understood as 'ordinary'. Rather than categorising and labeling cities as, for example, Western, Third World, developed, developing, world or global, I propose that we think about a world of ordinary cities, which are all dynamic and diverse, if conflicted, arenas for social and economic life. Whereas categorising cities tends to ascribe prominence to only certain cities and to certain features of cities, an ordinary-city approach takes the world of cities as its starting point and attends to the diversity and complexity of all cities (Robinson, 2006: 1).

Robinson (2006) also points out how 'modernity' and 'developmentalism' are the two sides of the asymmetrical ignorance prevailing in the field of urban studies. In this sense, she (2006: 2, 22) affirms that celebrations of modernity and the promotion of development have produced a deep division within urban studies between modern cities, which have been privileged sites for the production of urban theory, those of the West, and all others that have been portrayed as objects of developmental intervention. According to Robinson, together, these two conceptual pivots have contributed to attributing differentiation, complexity, innovation, and dynamism – which she equates with modernity – to the cities of the West. They have enforced the bigoted guideline that the poorer cities of 'the-rest-of-the-world' should 'catch up' with their wealthier, modern, and developed counterparts in the West, which should happen by means of modernization or developmental measures (Robinson, 2006: 2, 111).

Another aspect Robinson (2006) denounces is precisely the notion that cities of the global South must 'catch up' with the standards, solutions and models found in their northern counterparts by emulating their 'successful' paths of development. As she (2006: 06) puts it: 'I want to achieve a collective refusal of the categories and hierarchizing assumptions that have left poor cities playing a punitive game of catch-up in an increasingly hostile international, economic and political environment.' Robinson argues from the perspective advanced by Johannes Fabian (1983), arguing for the necessity of abandoning any kind of temporal dislocations that place the poorer cities of the global South in a different 'time zone' from cities of the global North.

'Backyard', 'developing', 'primitive', and 'traditional', even 'underdeveloped', are terms that redistribute historical time across geographical space – and that prevent understandings of urban cultural inventions in different contexts from informing one another. To avoid this source of incommensurability amongst accounts of modernity in different cities, all cities need to be understood as coeval, as existing in the same time (…) (Robinson, 2006: 84-5).

The leading idea of Robinson's reasoning is, therefore, to locate all cities in the same *tempo* because all of them are, in fact, equally diverse, complex, and modern. All cities must be understood to reside in a relation of temporal equivalence. The deep commitment to avoiding any 'assumptions of incommensurability' among cities that guides most of her (2011a, 2014a) later work is already here. On numerous occasions, Robinson (2006) fiercely condemns the counterposition of the modern 'here' and 'now' against an 'incommensurable' traditional 'there' and 'then.' For example, in the opening chapters of the book, she (2006: 13-64) makes a brief foray into the work of Walter Benjamin and the ethnographic research of essayists such as Clyde Mitchell (1956, 1987) and Max Gluckman (1961) in southern Africa to criticize the main assumptions of the Chicago School of urban sociology. Robinson (2006: 42-60) signposts how the transposition, and extrapolation, of Wirth's (1938) and Simmel's (2002 [1903]) theories beyond their contexts of origin demonstrated key hypotheses of the Chicago School to be limiting. In another of the initial chapters, Robinson (2006: 65-92) analyzes the circulation of concepts, ideas, urban design and urban forms between cities of the global South and the global North. She evokes southern contributions to city planning and urban design to locate innovation and creativity beyond the North. In doing so, Robinson shows how modernist urban forms and architectural styles that originated in places like Rio de Janeiro circulated to other cities of the North such as New York. According to her, 'tracking the circulation of urbanisms brings different cities within the same theoretical field' (Robinson, 2006: 9). Actually, the global circulation of policy, planning, and design has been strengthened as a main research topic in urban studies in the context of the postcolonial turn (see, for instance, Parnell et al., 2009; Robinson, 2011b, 2012; Robinson and Parnell, 2011; Cook and Ward, 2011; Jacobs, 2012; Peck and Theodore, 2010, 2015).

These initial chapters are undoubtedly relevant for postcolonial theory as they illustrate how creativeness, and innovation, are to be found not only in a handpicked

number of cities of the North but in all cities. But, leaving somewhat aside Robinson's (2006) insightful inquiries about the relevance of alternative 'urban ways of life' and of the circulation of modernist urban design in pluralizing the experience of modernity, I want to focus here on a number of other arguments she advances in *Ordinary Cities* that are key to the flourishing of the postcolonial perspective in urban studies. One of the strengths of Robinson's (2006) work is undoubtedly the line of attack it opens up toward global city theories, of which Saskia Sassen's (1991) already classic book *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* is surely the prototype. Robinson (2006: 99) denounces that in the mainstream global city literature millions of people and diverse cities are simply overlooked, 'left off the map' of urban theorization, given its focus on specific economic sectors of the city, such as financial clusters. It is surely complicated to justify why some criteria, instead of others, take precedence when classifying cities in rankings or when assigning them qualifiers such as 'global.'

With the aim of overcoming the hierarchical assumptions of global city approaches and of other divisive forms of thought about cities, Robinson (2006) formulates her call for a world of ordinary cities. In her attempt to lay the foundations for a postcolonial urban theory, Robinson invites us to think of a world in which all cities are likewise appreciated for their own dynamism, diversity, creativeness, and complexity. Against the view that some cities, those located in the West or North, are the privileged loci of creativity, dynamism, innovation, and even of modernity itself, she asserts that 'a post-colonial urban studies would draw its inspiration from all cities, and all cities would be understood as autonomous and creative' (Robinson, 2006: 2). References to the 'autonomy' and 'creativity' of all cities, as well as of their inhabitants, and to notions such as 'creative learning' or 'distinctive forms of urban life' saturate Robinson's proposal. Whereas, on the one hand, it is necessary to acknowledge the virtues of Robinson's approach in denouncing concealed hierarchical presuppositions in urban theory, on the other hand, Robinson's (2006) radically anti-hierarchical approach has limits that must be disclosed. In spite of its good intentions, Robinson's call for considering all cities as ordinary – that is, as equally complex, diverse, creative, and autonomous – is insufficiently critical of economic growth and comes with a tendency to overlook asymmetrical relations of power.

Robinson (2006) anchors her proposal of a world of ordinary cities in the notion of economic growth. She (2006: 11) states that the key issue is to promote 'interventions in support of economic growth that also have the potential for redistributive outcomes.'

This approach is deeply rooted in the illusion of indefinite growth, and this becomes crystal clear when Robinson (2006: 116-73) claims that the CDSs (City Development Strategies promoted by organizations such as the World Bank as a 'best practice'), though linked to neoliberal policies, would factually exemplify her postcolonial framework. According to her: 'In contrast to global- and world-cities analyzes, and also quite differently from earlier development interventions in cities, CDSs build an approach to cities that requires a city-wide view and engages with the complexity and diversity of the city' (Robinson, 2006: 126-7). The CDSs would involve a discursive commitment to economic growth but with a redistributive potential to be achieved through 'participatory processes' and 'consensus building' (Robinson, 2006: 126, 131). But CDSs, as Robinson herself signposts from the experience of Johannesburg, do not always lead to the consensual promotion of growth with redistribution, and hardly ever achieve the demands of the poorest.

Molotch (1976) and Molotch and Logan (2007 [1987]) illustrated well in their classic study how the implementation of growth machines requires consensus-building, yet in practice threatens to destroy the local life of many districts, something that particularly affects poorer neighborhoods. This is perhaps one of the main limits of so-called 'local urban development' across both the South and the North, which has gained many facets over time: 'Haussmannization,' gentrification, urban renewal, redevelopment, and so on. There is a varied and compelling body of critical urban research on it. None of this research is mentioned by Robinson though. Robinson (2006: 117) simply accepts that cities are 'platforms for growth' and then embraces the cause of those seeking ways to promote it: Whether through the abovementioned CDSs, or 'enclaves of specialized activities' (the so-called clusters), or even 'urban agglomeration economies,' usually based on the city as a whole or even on the notion of city-region. Without providing a critical assessment of economic growth, Robinson's (2006: 2, 22, 111) critique of 'developmentalism' loses much of its vigor. And she (2006: 44) does not seem to be unaware of frontal criticisms of economic growth and capitalist development, since she refers to the concept of 'developmentalism' by Arturo Escobar (1995) – clearly without taking on all the theoretical consequences of doing so.

The blind faith in economic growth is not the only weakness in Robinson's (2006) call for a world of ordinary cities. The central argument of Robinson's book is that those cities 'left off the map' of theorization by hierarchical approaches must be included on an equal footing 'on the map' of urban studies. There is no doubt that there are severe limits

to the hierarchical understandings found in the literature about the global city. Undeniably, just as Robinson (2006: 2, 22, 99, 111) maintains, both the developmental proposals and the hierarchical schemes that have informed much of the canonical literature must be dethroned. But the question then is: How to include the cities 'left off the map' in the annals of urban theory and in the blueprints of urban practice? One possibility, to some extent alluded to by Robinson, is that we should widen the focus to include other activities and sectors beyond financial hubs. To counter proposals that favor a specific sector of the city economy, which is assumed as global, to the detriment of all others, Robinson (2006: 114) calls for proposals that explore the diversity of economic activities present in any (ordinary, of course) city and emphasize the creative potential existing in all cities. And this despite there being certain activities that may be problematic in themselves, such as prisons, garbage dumps, nuclear power plants, and so on. At least at first, no one wants these kinds of activities in her/his backyard.

The point at issue is: Would it suffice to simply state that all cities are equally ordinary since all of them are complex, diverse, creative, and autonomous? Yes, all cities are indeed complex, diverse, creative, and, depending on how one conceptualizes it, autonomous. Actually, depending on how one conceptualizes modernity, autonomy emerges to the fore of our considerations (see, for instance, Wagner, 1994, 2012). At any rate, Robinson (2006) argues that each city is complex, diverse, creative, autonomous, and modern, each in its own way. The problem is that in asserting so without any further qualifications she bypasses domination. And depending on our understanding of modernity, domination is also a key facet of it (Wagner, 1994, 2012). Robinson has a different understanding of modernity. I will consider it in a moment. The point that should be noted here is that Robinson's (2006) call for a world of ordinary cities leaves free ground for relativism. The 'ordinary-city' approach lacks 'relational concepts' (Brenner and Schimd, 2015: 161). Thus, in making abstraction of history (and above all of the relations of domination, exploitation, and expropriation that have marked the constitution of modern spatiality – including, of course, the spatiality of cities like Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro – Robinson's world of ordinary cities fits into what Peck (2015: 162) denounced as 'planar' theorization. It is true that Robinson (2006: 110, 113) indicates that autonomy and creativity are not unrestricted but occur 'within considerable limitations related to replies and unequal power relations.' However, her consideration of power relations is far from compelling. The claim of a world of ordinary cities, as formulated by Robinson (2006), does not consider in feasible ways the arrangements of power that

diminish cities' autonomy and creativity, especially where the poorest cities are concerned. While theorizing our urbanizing world, one should consider the specific ways in which each city, region, territory, or landscape participates in the unequal arrangements of the world economy. It is, therefore, also important to look for 'when' and 'how' the various trajectories of urbanization intersect, how some cities, regions, territories and landscapes 'engage' with the others.

Moreover, in 'mapping' the 'forgotten' cities, and in placing them 'on the map' of urban theory, we must consider not only contemporary power asymmetries and economic inequalities (see Brenner and Schimd, 2014; Peck, 2015) but also both present-day asymmetries and inequalities and those inherited from the past. It is here that perspectives created in the contexts of Latin America – for instance, what Aníbal Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein (1992) termed the 'modern/colonial world system' or Milton Santos's (2004 [1978]) notions of 'spatial inertia' and 'space's roughness' – might be helpful insofar as they provide conceptual tools for considering (a) how each city, region, territory, or landscape participates in the unequal and hierarchical power relations that make up our urbanizing world, and (b) how power relations inscribe themselves into space over time. Thus, in order to overcome current imbalances in the field of urban studies without leaving the door wide open to relativism, Robinson and other postcolonial urban scholars could draw on postcolonial authors like Connell (2009 [2007]: 212) and Myers (2011: 43-69) and also on contributions such as those by Santos (2004 [1978]) and the so-called 'Modernity/Coloniality' group, all of which call our attention to the long-lasting patterns of inequality, domination, and expropriation that have emerged over time and have been incrusted into our city spaces and beyond. These literatures would allow postcolonial urban scholars to put the focus not only on the particularities of the cities of the South but also on characteristics of modern and colonial histories and urbanisms that relate to long-term patterns of domination that have emerged and been perpetuated throughout modernity.

Now let me turn to the concept of modernity with which Robinson (2006) operates. Robinson's (2006) call for a world of ordinary cities means a more than welcome rupture with both the stages of development posited by modernization theories and the Chicago School's organic-ecological models of city expansion. She correctly attacks any suppositions that some cities are 'modern' whereas all the 'others' are catalogued as 'traditional,' belonging to a supposedly preceding 'stage of development.' On these grounds, she maintains, building on Fabian (1983), that any kind of temporal

displacement of contemporary societies and cities must be opposed. By decentering modernity, that is to say, in arguing that modernity does not occur only in Europe or in the West, Robinson largely rehearses, even if sometimes inadvertently, major interpretations in recent scholarship on modernity – that is, 'multiple modernities' (Arnason, 2003; Arnason et al., 2005; Eisenstadt, 2002, 2003, 2009), and 'trajectories of modernity' and respective constellations of relations between capitalism and democracy (Wagner, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016). This holds as well for Chakrabarty's (2000) *Provincializing Europe* and even for Latin American decolonial thought.

There are, of course, obvious differences between these several interpretations of modernity, but in all of them neither Europe nor the West are considered the birthplace of modernity. What such accounts of modernity have in common is that modernity cannot be understood as a European or 'western' creation. Up to this point, Robinson (2006) listens to the music and keeps in time with it. But, while identifying modernity with innovation, novelty and dynamism (Robinson, 2006: 7, 13-21), Robinson moves away from all the main lines of interpretation mentioned above, including Chakrabarty's (2000). For instance, the concept of modernity as coloniality would have obvious consequences for Robinson's leading idea that 'all cities are ordinary,' but she does not dialogue minimally with key Latin American authors that have tackled the issue, such as Enrique Dussel (1992, 1993, 1996, 2000), Fernando Coronil (2000, 2003), Aníbal Quijano (2000, 2014 [1968-2010]) or Walter Mignolo (2000, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2009). As a result, at variance with their own proposal of embracing 'non-Western' thinking, Robinson (2006) in particular – and the postcolonial urban scholarship in general – ends up disregarding, ignoring, or, at best, marginalizing, Latin American subjects and their understandings. In addition, these scholars have become leading thinkers on the subject far beyond Latin America, so the loss is not just of the oversight of one world region, but of major voices in the debates she has sought to intervene in.

To be sure, as Robinson (2006) points out, based on Chakrabarty (2000), the global South and its respective cities have never been passive receptacles of northern enterprises. It is also true that we must draw attention to imbalances in critical urban theories, such as their strong empirical grounding in the socio-spatial contexts of the North. Robinson also denounces in a satisfactory manner arbitrary hierarchies and the so-called 'rankings' of cities, which always follow criteria that are produced in particular settings but wholesaled as universal (from the so-called quality of life to the environment for business, and so on). We certainly must recognize the agency of the South, its cities,

territories, and peoples. So far, so good. But the cities of the South do not have total freedom of agency and no kind of discursive levering will change this situation. The capacity of discursive levering to effect meaningful institutional change is at best highly context-specific, and the abstract attribution of this power to all modern subjects equally is entirely indefensible. Doing so disregards the historically constituted relations of domination, exploitation, and expropriation that have constituted our urbanizing world. To a great extent, it disregards the very gestation of what we nowadays call the global South in the course of modernity. If we are to invoke Chakrabarty's (2000) History 1 and History 2, we could say that in order to make room for History 2, that is, for the cities of the global South that have fallen 'off the map' of urban theory, Robinson (2006) ends up virtually erasing History 1 from her 'planar' (Peck, 2015) call for a world of ordinary cities.

Inadvertently or not, Robinson's non-hierarchical ideas echo the progressive emphasis on agency to the detriment of collective and normative conceptualization elsewhere in social theory (for more see Wagner, 2001a, 2001b, 2010a). As such, relativism lurks behind many of her understandings. As we have seen, Robinson (2011a, 2014a, 2015, 2016) has remained on the same track she had set up for herself in *Ordinary Cities*, only moving further and further toward relativism, up to the point of getting rid of the very concept of the global South and mistrusting Chakrabarty's (2000) approach. Robinson's (2006) call for a world of ordinary cities just predicted her (2011a, 2014a, 2015, 2016) successive calls for a 'revitalized comparativism.' In all of them we perceive a kind of History 2 (and potentially, History 3, History 4, and so on) *without* History 1, to paraphrase Chakrabarty (2000) again. As Schmid (2018: 9) has recently contended, History 2 cannot exist without History 1 and vice versa – even if Chakrabarty's (2000) History 1 surely entails much more than the concrete abstractions of capitalism. In short, Robinson's (2006) aspiration to establish a postcolonial research agenda that moves beyond divisive categories and Roy's (2009) call for new geographies of theory can only thrive if they go beyond hierarchical universalizing thinking (that is, the sort of reasoning advocated by Scott and Storper, 2015) but without disregarding the inequalities and asymmetries characteristic of our urbanizing world.

### 3.4. Between postcolonial and critical grammars

To summarize what I have said in this chapter: First, the postcolonial critique of urban studies is not mistaken. Postcolonial urban scholars do have a point in denouncing the asymmetrical ignorance prevailing in the field of urban studies. I largely agree with the postcolonial critique of Eurocentrism in critical urban theorization. Moreover, as Schmid (2018: 11) notes, in following Robinson's (2006) and Roy's (2009) call, we might assume that 'any place on the planet could, at least potentially, become a starting point for generating insights into the urban process' (Schmid, 2018: 11). Second, although not always in comprehensive ways, critical urban scholars have looked 'southwards' (see, for instance, Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 313, 373-4, 2002 [1970]: 133-4; Harvey, 2003, 2005b, 2012, 2014). Third, even if, all theories are located and it is hard to defend their universality – at least in the way Scott and Storper (2015) have done – critical (urban) thought should not be rendered obsolete. Actually, and fourth, it seems to be required in order to reinsert critical thought into the core of postcolonial grammars. Even if Roy (2009) and Robinson (2014a, 2015) sometimes rely on Lefebvre (1991 [1974], 2002 [1970]), it often happens more rhetorically than substantially or does not go much farther than declarations of good intentions (see Chapter 4). Even if capitalism and capital accumulation are not universals, they clearly are extant in the various urban contexts of the global South. As such, we should return to radical critique. Even if we strongly agree with Schmid (2018: 15) when he states that the opposition between 'universalizing' tendencies in critical urban thought and the 'particularism' of postcolonial urban approaches is essentially false, this should not stop us from requiring of postcolonial theorists more commitment to radical critique. We need to avoid at any cost the eviction of critical perspectives from postcolonial urban studies, to paraphrase Tom Slater (2006).

While welcoming their openness to interdisciplinary and comparative urbanisms, Harvey Molotch reminds Seekings and Keil (2009: x) that critical perspectives must be kept in sight, being especially necessary to consider (and reconsider) what it means to be critical. Thus, urban critique should be constantly reassessed in view of postcolonial urbanisms and their theoretical and comparative scaffolding. I think we can interpret Molotch's words the other way around as well: Postcolonial critique must keep critical perspectives in sight. Postcolonial critique should join up with radical critique and vice versa. The one must keep track of the other and vice versa. Accordingly, I think that my best bet for advancing my analysis of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's

townships lies somewhere between critical urban theory and postcolonial urban theory. A 'somewhere' where these two bodies of thought overlap, intersect, and interconnect. Throughout this thesis, I pursue the challenge of searching for this 'somewhere.' Radical critique must be reinstated into the very heart of postcolonial urban literature. At the same time, the postcolonial gaze should inform forthcoming critical urban theory. Even though much of the polarization in the field of urban studies is rooted in a false opposition (Schmid, 2018: 15), divergent interpretations, simplifying criticisms and superficial engagement with alternative modes of thought show that, at least hitherto, the aforementioned 'somewhere' does not seem to be much more than an ideal worth pursuing. It is up to us to turn it into reality.

Before proceeding further in this challenging task I have set for myself here, let me clarify how this retrieval of critical (urban) thought might be linked to the rest of this thesis and to my explorations in Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg. The overemphasis on agency in some postcolonial interpretations in urban studies appears to share optimistic understandings of the global South that have been forged amidst a recent and already-vanishing global constellation. Among the most prominent features of this global setting are the aftershocks of the 2008 financial crisis, the emergence of many nations of the global South onto the international scene, of which the so-called BRICS are possibly the best known, and the constitution of welfare state policies in some countries of the South, such as in Brazil and South Africa (for a discussion of the interconnectedness between welfare policies and urban marginality drawing on our case studies, see Chapter 8). The Comaroffs's (2012) *Theory from the South*, and, to a lesser extent, Wagner's (2011, 2012) analysis of the entangled relationships between capitalism and democracy in 'non-western' trajectories of modernity, are good examples of these recent optimistic understandings. There are many others. The links Seekings (2010, 2011) finds between welfare regimes in contemporary South Africa and decommodification follow pretty much the same mood (see Chapter 8). He has also studied the unprecedented rise of redistributive welfare programs in other countries of the global South, including Brazil (Seekings, 2012b). In the field of urban studies, Roy (2014) has shown a comparable – albeit differently articulated – confidence in the global South, whereas Mabin (2014) takes a skeptical approach toward these optimistic understandings and their reverberations in the theorization of the urban realm.

On this point, I side more with Mabin (2014) than with the others. And I hope to show over the remainder of this thesis that even when the South has appeared to be doing

quite well, with some even proposing that the future of all, of both South and North, remains deep-rooted on those contexts of the South (see, for instance, Comaroff and Comaroff, 2012; Roy, 2014), there are clear limits to the South rise, limits that relate to well-known topics in critical (urban) theory such as capitalism, commodification, the uneven pathways of urban development, and so on. It is true that the BRICS have been more than just an acronym (Pinheiro, 2016). For instance, cooperative initiatives among BRICS members in different areas have been instituted in response to the shifting world order (Khomyakov, 2016; Yi, 2016). But, as we shall see later, despite major political ruptures and some achievements in cooperation and in the economic realm, our examinations of Brazil and South Africa indicate that everyday life has not been radically transformed in places like Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships (chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9), at least not in the ways envisioned by radical thinkers like Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]). This diagnosis may most likely be extended to other BRICS countries.[44] But the examination of all BRICS members surely exceeds the scope of this work. For us here, the most relevant aspect of the diagnosis I have just offered above is that it leads us to the next step of our inquiry: The retrieval of critical urban theory.

---

[44] See, for instance, Shin (2009, 2012, 2015, 2016), He (2007); Hsing, (2010), and Wu et al., (2014) about contemporary urban China. See Doshi (2013), Pethe et al. (2014), Ghertner (2008, 2014, 2015, 2017), and Bhan (2016) about urban India. See Bond (2016) for a critical view of the place of South Africa within the BRICS group. See also Maiorano and Manor (2017) on the outcomes of human development in the BRICS.

**Chapter 4 - Critical Grammars**

What is critical urban theory? Some time ago Neil Brenner (2009) undertook the task of answering this question. Brenner (2009: 198) begins by mentioning that the term alludes to writings of radical urban scholars of the post-1968 period, including Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey. Brenner (2009: 199) argues that critical urban theory distances itself from the mainstream urban theory – defined by him as theories that are heir of the Chicago School tradition or those ones guided by the neoliberal agenda. Brenner (2009: 199) also argues that because of what Lefebvre (2002 [1970], 2003 [1970]) conceptualized as the complete urbanization of society it would no longer be possible to separate critical theory from critical urban theory. In our age, critique involves critique of urban reality.

> Rather than affirming the current condition of cities as the expression of transhistorical laws of social organization, bureaucratic rationality or economic efficiency, critical urban theory emphasizes the politically and ideologically mediated, socially contested and therefore malleable character of urban space — that is, its continual (re)construction as a site, medium and outcome of historically specific relations of social power. Critical urban theory is thus grounded on an antagonistic relationship not only to inherited urban knowledges, but more generally, to existing urban formations. It insists that another, more democratic, socially just and sustainable form of urbanization is possible, even if such possibilities are currently being suppressed through dominant institutional arrangements, practices and ideologies. In short, critical urban theory involves the critique of ideology (including social–scientific ideologies) and the critique of power, inequality, injustice and exploitation, at once within and among cities (Brenner, 2009: 198).

I agree with Brenner (2009), but I believe that the postcolonial debates we discussed in the previous chapter add some complexity to the definition he offers. My purpose in this chapter is to engage with critical urban theory. Without disregarding the postcolonial warnings, this is a necessary step in my examination of the transformation of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships in the second part of this study (chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9). And, of course, the examination of these two urban realities of the global South should assist us to 'theorize again' key research subjects in critical urban

theory, such as urbanization, the production of space, and processes of commodification that assimilates everyday life. If phenomena such as urbanization, the production of space, and commodification have a planetary reach (Brenner and Schmid, 2011), the concrete realities of the global South can contribute greatly to critical urban theory. In a word, throughout this thesis, I will seek to put critical urban thought into conversation with the two contexts of the global South that make up my case studies, the urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships.

To start to set up a dialogue between these two urbanizing realities of the global South and critical urban theory, in this chapter, I will revisit the work of the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre. Lefebvre's work is an essential starting point for any endeavor to evoke the meaning of critical urban theory. The actuality and transcendence of Lefebvre are undeniable. Many themes he addressed – such as the right to the city, the urbanization of society, the production of space, and everyday life – have gained attention within and outside the field of urban studies.[45] In addition to Lefebvre's undeniable importance for the constitution of contemporary critical urban theory and his influence on authors of the caliber of David Harvey, Neil Smith, Andy Merrifield, Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid, Doreen Massey, Edward Soja, Frederic Jameson, Michel de Certeau and Peter Marcuse, I have chosen to focus on his work because of the various references to it in the recent postcolonial urban literature (Roy, 2009, 2015, 2016; Parnell and Pieterse, 2010; Robinson, 2014a, 2015). Finally, Lefebvre's work has reverberated in Brazil and South Africa, influencing various research agenda and fostering theorization in both countries (see, for example, Seabra, 1996, 2003, 2004; Martins, 1996; Martins, 2000; Fernandes, 2001, 2007b; Monte-Mór, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2014; Parnell and

---

[45] Lefebvre is one of the thinkers that inaugurated what the North American geographer Edward Soja (1989) termed spatial turn in social sciences. The influence of his work is clear. The right to the city, for instance, has been revisited by David Harvey (2008, 2012), Andy Merrifield (2011), Peter Marcuse (2009, 2014), and many others (see, for example, the recent volume edited by Samara et al., 2013). Lefebvre's theorizations about the urban and his hypothesis about the urbanization of society also continue to inspire critical urban theory. The recent work of Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid (2011, 2014, 2015) on planetary urbanization exemplify this. The influence of Levebvre's ideas on authors like David Harvey (1982, 1985, 1989a, 2001, 2003a, 2006), Neil Smith (2002, 2010 [1984]), Doreen Massey (2001 [1994], 2005), Fredric Jameson (1991), and Edward Soja (1989, 1996, 2001 [2000]) is also notorious. The importance of Lefebvre's critique of everyday life for the work of Michel de Certeau (1984 [1980]) is also clear. This is not to mention the Lefebvrian (1978 [1968], 2002 [1970], 1991 [1974]) analysis of the expulsion of the popular classes and other 'disturbing groups' from the centre of Paris towards the city's new peripheries. Certainly, his interpretation could be seen as one of the opening moments of studies on gentrification, along with the seminal study in which Ruth Glass (1964) coined the term.

Pieterse, 2010, 2014; Huchzermeyer, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017; Coggin e Pieterse, 2012; Castriota and Monte-Mór, 2016).[46]

My expository option in the first part of the chapter is to address what could be qualified as two key hypotheses in Lefebvre's critical reflections about the urban, namely: The complete urbanization of society and the production of the entire space. Both of these hypotheses are power-ideas in Lefebvre's work and are continually taken up in the course of his reflections about the urban. In fact, we could say that the later hypothesis, that of the production of the space, comes to exist within the broader framework of the former, the complete urbanization of society. While analyzing Lefebvre's work, I will try to indicate the dialectical foundations of his thought. Precisely from this point of view, in the second part of the chapter, I will turn to the examination of postcolonial urban readings of Lefebvre. I will have a word on Jenny Robinson's (2014a) and Ananya Roy's (2009, 2015, 2016) ideas about the urban and the production of space.[47] Perhaps we could find in Lefebvre's work instances in which critical and postcolonial grammars intertwine, instances of that 'somewhere' between the two strands of thought that I have mentioned at the end of the preceding chapter (Chapter 3). In the second part of the chapter, I will also address controversial interpretations about the right to the city that have emerged in the global South, some of which directly connected to the postcolonial literature in urban studies (see, for example, Parnell and Pieterse, 2010).

## 4.1. Henri Lefebvre's urban dialectics

The work of Henri Lefebvre is remarkable. The author, who died in 1991 at the age of ninety, wrote more than ninety books and innumerable articles on various subjects. In this way, it is convenient to situate when and in what context Lefebvre deals with the urban.

---

[46] It seems fair to ask whether all this global South literature inspired by Lefebvre can be simply disregarded. Were they all only reproducing or replicating northern theory alien to their concrete urbanizing realities? If we take the postcolonial urban critique literally we may end up belittling interpretations that the South has made of itself. I think we can find valuable instances of critical theory in this self-interpretation of the South that precedes in much the recent postcolonial literature in urban studies.

[47] While the urban and the production of space are treated as measly fragments torn away from any notion of totality in the hands of postcolonial intellectuals, ideological patrolling is not my purpose here. Similarly to what Schmid (2018: 15) has recently observed regarding debates on planetary urbanization, Lefebvre's work can also 'be explored via diverse pathways, and may be connected to quite a range of epistemological assumptions, concepts, and methods' (Schmid, 2018: 15). I just attempt at an alternative reading of Lefebvre's work from the global South, one that retain its dialectical underpinnings. I shall delineate aspects of it in chapter 9.

Even though the author wrote texts about the subject previously, Lefebvre theorizes the urban mainly between the late 1960s and the mid 1970s. His first book about the urban is *The Right to the City*, written in 1967 and published in 1968, when the author was a professor at the University of Paris, on the campus of Nanterre. *The Urban Revolution* was published in 1970. In 1972, Lefebvre takes up and surpasses *The Right to the City* in *Space and Politics: The Right to the City II*. In 1973, in *The Survival of Capitalism*, he advances the argument that would be fully developed one year later in his last major work on the theme, *The Production of Space*. In addition, there are *From the Rural to the Urban*, a collection of texts written until the late 1960s and published in 1970, and *Marxist Thought and the City*, published in 1972, in which Lefebvre address the way the urban phenomenon was treated in the works of Marx and Engels.

Lefebvre also dealt with the everyday life. On this last subject he wrote, in 1968, *The Everyday Life in the Modern World* and, between 1947 and 1981, *Critique of Everyday Life*, written in three volumes (1947, 1961 and 1981). In the following two subsections, I will focus on the works in which the urban is reportedly the main research subject for Lefebvre. Firstly, I will present and discuss what I have previously described as Lefebvre's first key hypothesis, namely, the complete urbanization of society. Subsequently, I will focus on one of the author's best known theories: The production of space. Even though my focus in this chapter is on, so to speak, Lefebvre's 'urban work,' as Michel Trebitsch (2014a) suggests in his preface to the first volume of the *Critique of Everyday Life*, all Lefebvre's work on the urban – from *The Right to the City* to *The Urban Revolution* to *The Production of Space* – could be interpreted as part of Lefebvre's critique of everyday life. I will address Lefebvre's interpretation of everyday life in Chapter 5. As Trebitsch (2014a: 24, 2014b: 290) states, Lefebvre's critique of everyday life anticipated in a few decades the well-known Habermasian diagnosis of colonization of the lifeworld (Habermas, 1987 [1981]).

Before I begin the discussion of the urban phenomenon in Lefebvre's work, let me make two observations. First, Lefebvre's work on the urban precedes and arises from the events of 1968 in France. Along with the French Situationists, Lefebvre was one of the inspirers of the French May. The first two volumes of *Critique of Everyday Life* (2014 [1941] [1961]), *The Everyday Life in the Modern World* (1972 [1968]) and, especially, *The Right to the City* (1978 [1968]), were inspirational sources for the 1968 movement. Many of Lefebvre's works in the aftermath of the French May as, for example, *The Urban Revolution* (2002 [1970]), *Differentialist Manifesto* (1971), *The Survival of Capitalism*

(1976 [1973]) and, *The Production of Space* (1991 [1974]), which are main references for contemporary critical urban theory, bear the spirit of 1968. Lefebvre's critical understandings must be situated. While putting forward a critique of capitalism as a bureaucratic state of programmed consumption (Lefebvre, 1972 [1968], 2002 [1970]: 150), he attacks the French state and mass consumption. Lefebvre offers a radical critique of capitalism at that moment and in that place – in that *situation*.[48]

But the Lefebvrian diagnosis that capitalist accumulation has been inflicted upon everyday life can be extended beyond Lefebvre's time and immediate context of theorization. Today, capitalist production and consumption permeate and ruin everyday life everywhere – although it often happen with a lower presence of the state. As I hope to delineate throughout this thesis, this is palpable across the global South. Urbanization is indeed a planetary question (Brenner and Schmid, 2011, 2014). And this leads me to a second observation. Lefebvre adheres to Marxism and to Marx's legacy. Lefebvre is, however, one of the greatest critics of orthodox Marxism. He criticizes Althusser's interpretation of Marx because it glorified totality as a coherent system. Lefebvre's thought is dialectical. If Lefebvre maintains the notion of totality, he always does so dialectically. The Lefebvrian dialectical totality is contradictory rather than coherent. Moreover, Lefebvre indicates that he thinks the urban phenomenon dialectically from Marx, but not by repeating Marx. 'Dialectics are back on the agenda. But it is no longer the dialectic of Marx, just as Marx's [dialectics] were no longer Hegel's' (Lefebvre, 1976 [1973]: 14). After all, as Lefebvre justifies in *Marxist Thinking and the City* (2001 [1972]), Marx and Engels could not see in their own day all the effects, consequences, and possibilities opened up by urbanization resulting from industrialization.

---

[48] In fact, Lefebvre's (1972 [1968], 2002 [1970]: 150) critique of the bureaucratic state of programmed consumption and the correlate (residual) spontaneity of everyday life elucidate his multifaceted critique of structuralism. In a preface written in the end of 1985 for a new edition of *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre himself (2013 [1974]: 54, 61), recognizes that, in attacking frontally the state, planning, and mass consumption he may have neglected other processes that marked the recent transformation of capitalism, such as neoliberalism.[48] It is clear that the poststructuralist spirit was fully applauded by postcolonial literature, urban or otherwise. Perhaps precisely, for this reason, Lefebvre, even if a Marxist author, is so persistently cited by exponents of the recent postcolonial urban literature. The frontal criticism of the state and of structuralism that typifies the spirit of 1968 can be linked to what happened decades later with the state, philosophy, and the social sciences: Neoliberalism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism. For an interpretation along those lines see Wagner (2012).

**4.1.1. Lefebvre's first key hypothesis: The complete urbanization of society**

The starting point of Lefebvre's thought about the urban is undoubtedly that space is a social product. Lefebvre wishes not only to characterize the space in which we live in but to examine the genesis of present-day society and, above all, to explore possibilities inscribed in it. But what exactly is the urban phenomenon for Lefebvre? How he theorizes the urbanization resulting from industrialization? Let me try to work from such questions. First of all, it must be said that Lefebvre defines the urban as a potential occurrence. In the very first sentence of *The Urban Revolution*, Lefebvre states his key hypothesis as follows: 'I'll begin with the following hypothesis: Society has been completely urbanized. This hypothesis implies a definition: An urban society is a society that results from a process of complete urbanization. This urbanization is virtual today, but will become real in the future' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 15, 2003 [1970]: 1). He then clarifies that he uses the 'term "urban society" to refer to the society that results from industrialization' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 15, 2003 [1970]: 2).[49]

From this perspective, the urban is a phenomenon that is situated at the threshold of what Lefebvre (2003 [1970]: 16-7) calls possible-impossible. The urban is a phenomenon that does not exist in all its complexity today, but it already exists as a potentiality, that is, as a virtual phenomenon.

> The urban (an abbreviated form of urban society) can therefore be defined not as an accomplished reality, situated behind the actual in time, but, on the contrary, as a horizon, an illuminating virtuality. It is the possible, defined by a direction that moves toward the urban as the culmination of its journey. To reach it— in other words, to realize it— we must first overcome or break through the obstacles that currently make it *impossible* (Lefebvre, 2003 [1970]: 16-7, 2002 [1970]: 28).

Let us see more closely how Lefebvre presents and develops the relations between industrialization and urbanization. Certainly, Lefebvre's definition of the urban relates to his dialectics, according to which industrialization and urbanization develop toward a transformation that is not finished yet but that, nevertheless, provoke contradictory situations. These events happen within a wider process. Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 91-2,

---

[49] According to Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 28), the term 'urban' is the abbreviation for 'urban society.'

2002 [1970]: 20, 2003 [1970]: 7) proposes an imaginary continuum that ranges from the absence of urbanization to the complete culmination of this process. He (2002 [1970]: 21-8, 2003 [1970]: 7-17) proposes a periodization of historical time by dividing it into three eras or continents, namely, the agrarian, the industrial, and the urban. In the Lefebvrian imaginary continuum, the political city corresponds to the agrarian period. The political city takes place somewhere near the starting point, that is, zero percent urbanization. Despite all the resistance and struggles for cohesion, the political city is taken up by market forces. The mercantile city prospers upon the ruins of the political city. It precedes in a little the emergence of industrial capital and, consequently, of the industrial city.

Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 91-2, 2003 [1970]: 14-8) indicates discontinuities in the imaginary axis, which he terms 'critical zones' or 'critical phases.' He places the first critical phase between the mercantile city and the industrial city. It occurs when agricultural production and agrarian order recede against the market, exchange value, industrial production, and nascent capitalism. Soon after, the industrial city appears and then evolves, which, in the end, leads to a new set of contradictions, to another critical phase. The second critical phase lies precisely at the dual process of industrialization and urbanization. But what exactly is this double movement? In the period of the industrial age occurs what he (1978 [1968]: 25) calls the implosion-explosion of the city. This double movement refers to the 'tremendous concentration (of people, activities, wealth, goods, objects, instruments, means, and thought) of urban reality and the immense explosion, the projection of numerous, disjoint fragments (peripheries, suburbs, vacation homes, satellite towns) into space' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 26, 2003 [1970]: 14). Therefore, the era of the industrial city is characterized by concentrating diverse activities and things in a vast and ever-expanding territory. In other words, the city, while expanding its territorial extension, intensifies the occupation of space, promoting all sorts of fragmentations.

Lefebvre's dialectical interpretation proposes that industrialization conquers the previously existing city, penetrates it, promoting its implosion-explosion, 'and in so doing extend it immeasurably, bringing about the urbanization of society and the growth of the urban fabric that covered what was left of the city prior to the arrival of industry' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 25, 2003 [1970]: 13-4). This process, promoted by industrialization, implies the generalization of exchange value and the logic of the commodity, which are inflicted upon the city and the everyday life of its inhabitants, in such a way that the city as *œuvre*, as meaningful appropriation of its own inhabitants,

virtually disappears. This radical transformation has various consequences such as the assimilation of the city that preceded the industrial age into the logic of the commodity, for instance, as tourist attraction.[50]

Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 98, 2003 [1970]: 37-8, 190-1) suggests that in industrial society, the city, or what is left of it, is modelled as if it were a combinatory of homologous and always interchangeable elements. Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 98, 2003 [1970]: 37-8, 190-1) goes as far as to say that in industrial society and its corresponding city, in which space tends to geometric isotopy, the qualitative differences between places and moments are no longer of importance. In the industrial city, exchange and exchange value, the generalization of the commodity as a result of industrialization, prevail over use and use value, which were typical of the previously existing city and would be the foundation of still embryonic urban society (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 20). For Lefebvre, the city of the industrial age is characterized by planning and programming, carried out by the state and by the market, and has segregation as result and form. The industrial city represents the impossibility of appropriation, in a word, of the *œuvre*. In Lefebvre dialectics, it is the non-city, the anti-city par excellence (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 25, 2003 [1970]: 13-4). However, the industrial city announces, before anything, what the author calls second critical phase. It heralds the moment at which urbanization, due to the implosion-explosion of the city, can change from an induced phenomenon to an inductor one. After the assault of industrialization on the city, and its consequent implosion-explosion, the possibility of urban society, through the complete urbanization of society, opens up. In short: 'The city affirms its presence and bursts apart. The urban asserts itself, not as some metaphysical entity, but as a unit based on practice' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 103, 2003 [1970]: 108).

Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 101-3) argues that the real meaning of industrial production cannot be delinked from urbanization. The germ of the urban exists in the fissures of the programmed and planned order since use and use value cannot be totally subordinated by exchange and exchange value. Therefore, the industrial age does not have its end and meaning in itself. Urban society contains the final sense of industrialization. Thus, the next revolution would be, above all, an urban revolution (Lefebvre, 2003

---

[50] Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 27-8) suggests that historical cities become centers of consumption that have a dual function: Place of consumption and consumption of place. However, the integration to the logic of the exchange value is not specific only in relation to the pre-existing city. The extension of capitalism occurs over already existing spaces but also by the creation of new sectors (see next section and chapter 5).

[1970]). In urban society, there would be the realm of appropriation, in which all advances made during industrial society would be appropriated and converted into means rather than ends in themselves. Urban society means life liberated from its old industrial limits – those of scarcity and economism characteristic of the commodity realm. The urban means the retaking of the city (ruined by industrialization). It means that the city will be taken to a new level, that of the city as a place of appropriation, meaningful *œuvre* by and for its inhabitants. In the end, this is what the right to the city is about for Lefebvre (1978 [1968]).

Lefebvre (1978 [1968]) understands the city as a mediation between a close and a distant order, as the place of manifestation, development, and confrontation of contradictions prevailing in society. However, the city is also an *œuvre*. Lefebvre states that 'the city is an *œuvre* in the sense of a work of art. Space is not just organized and instituted. It is also modelled, appropriated by this or that group, according to its requirements' (Lefebvre, 2008 [1972]: 42). The city entails the appropriation of space, or rather, the real possibility of reappropriation of space. The old city was permeated by use and use value. However, during industrialization, the city as *œuvre* disappears and its production prevails, the city and its space become products. In this way, the city involves appropriation. Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 2003 [1970]) distinguishes the city from the urban, showing that they do not fully coincide but that they are intimately interwoven. He (2002 [1970]: 15-32, 2008 [1972]: 42) understands the city as the thesis, industrialization as the antithesis, the anti-city, due to the implosion-explosion imposed on the city, and the urban as the potential synthesis since it takes the city to a higher level and much wider scale – that of the whole society. Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 33) suggests that, as this process unfolds, the point of reference gradually changes from production to consumption, it changes from the company, the factory itself, to the production of space, which means the progressive assimilation of everyday life (see Chapter 5).

The assault of industrialization on the city, of exchange on use, occurs and develops through the active role of the ruling classes. The wide-range transformation constitutes and is constituted by class strategies and state action. Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 84-98, 2003 [1970]: 83-102) calls for a staggered subordination: First, the subordination of industry to the urban; second, the subordination of the state to the urban; third the subordination of the urban to the habitation, the *lived*. As Lefebvre himself says, his proposal, that of the urban revolution, only adds some aspects to the diagnosis of Marx's inverted world and his project of reversing it. For Lefebvre, the state is a hindrance, a

reducer par excellence, an impediment to the urban. Lefebvre follows Marx's indications and argues that the state must fade in the course of the birth of urban society. Lefebvre suggests the urban relies on the self-management of urban space by those directly interested. The state, global and strategic level, must be subordinated to the habitation, possibility of reappropriation.

In addition to the dialectics between the city and the urban, Lefebvre suggests a dialectical relationship between form and content. He (2008 [1972]: 43-5) relates the urban directly to an essential form, that of the centrality and simultaneity, that of the meeting and reunion of the various contents.[51] For him, the urban is a pure form that has no specific content. If the form of urban is that of centrality, 'the urban can be defined as a place where differences know one another and, through their mutual recognition, test one another, and in this way are strengthened or weakened' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 93, 2003 [1970]: 96). The urban form supposes the meeting, the simultaneity of all the diverse and differential contents. Lefebvre qualifies the space of urban society as differential insofar as the general form of the urban encompasses and brings together the multiple differences in space. The urban is the place par excellence of the meeting, of the simultaneity, always tending toward the centrality that announces its possible realization, a potentiality today but maybe real tomorrow.

Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 90-1, 2008 [1972]: 45) states that each society has its own time and space. The agrarian society had a time-space of juxtaposed particularities. Industrial society corresponds to homogeneous time-space, in which constraining homogeneity, continuity, and uniformity prevail either due to the logic of the commodity or the planning and programming of life by the state. In urban society, time and space appear to be differential because they encompass as much *isotopias* and *heterotopias* as *utopias*. In this way, Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 117-9, 2003 [1970]: 125-7) opposes urban centrality and its differential space to the segregation and homogeneous space characteristic of industrial society. In industrial society, all places are homologous, distinguished only by their distance and mercantile value. Space is represented only by purely productivist criteria (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 118, 2003 [1970]: 125). Besides the prevailing tendency to homogeneity, segregation between the homologous spaces triumph.

---

[51] Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 45) comes to compare the urban form to the form of exchange exposed by Marx (2017 [1867]) in *Capital* since both of them can assume multiple contents.

Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 152) states that the urban problematic supposes the end of all separations and segregations. Segregation prevents conflicts, while the urban is the place of conflicts. The urban form brings together the various contents and relates them to each other. The urban reunites all differences. 'In this sense, the city constructs, identifies, and delivers the essence of social relationships: the reciprocal existence and manifestation of differences arising from or resulting in conflicts' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 111, 2003 [1970]: 118). The reveals itself in direct opposition to its negation: Segregation. The urban reveals social relations through the (virtual) negation of distance. From here emerges the latent violence inherent to the urban (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 111, 2003 [1970]: 118). This argument is best presented by the author in the following passages.

> Difference is incompatible with segregation, which caricatures it. When we speak of difference, we speak of relationships, and therefore proximity relations that are conceived and perceived, and inserted in a twofold space-t ime order: near and distant. Separation and segregation break this relationship. They constitute a totalitarian order, whose strategic goal is to break down concrete totality, to break the urban. Segregation complicates and destroys complexity (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 123-4, 2003 [1970]: 133).

> This means that there is nothing harmonious about the urban as form and reality, for it also incorporates conflict, including class conflict. What is more, it can only be conceptualized in opposition to segregation, which attempts to resolve confl icts by separating the elements in space. This segregation produces a disaggregation of material and social life. To avoid contradiction, to achieve a purported sense of harmony, a certain form of urbanism prefers the disaggregation of the social bond. The urban presents itself as a place of conflict and confrontation, a unity of contradictions. (…)We could therefore define the urban as a place where conflicts are expressed, reversing the separation of places where expression disappears, where silence reigns, where the signs of separation are established (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 160, 2003 [1970]: 175-6).

Therefore, Lefebvre conceives and thinks the urban dialectically. He theorizes the urban as the form that brings together the various social contents in its differential and vast space-time. 'It is in this sense that the concept incorporates dialectical thought

(deeply modified, it is true, because it is now attached to a mental and social form rather than a historical content)' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 160, 2003 [1970]: 175). For Lefebvre, the urban relates to a pure form, that of centrality. Urban society is neither as an object nor as a subject, but a dialectical centrality. As such, the urban is in open opposition to its opposite form, its negation, that is, segregation, dispersion, separation. In the urban form of centrality, that of simultaneity and the gathering of all possible contents, there is always something on the way, experiences and adventures, emancipation and appropriation, fruition and spontaneity, the unusual and the unexpected, as opposed to the segregated and planned order, where control and predictability prevail and there is no opportunity for relations, contacts, and conflicts to prosper and show their full potential.

In putting all differential contents into relation, almost necessarily, the urban form implies and leads to new contradictions. This means that for Lefebvre (2003 [1970]: 174), the urban is not a system. There is no urban system. Urban society is the society of conflict, it is inherently contradictory. Interestingly, for Lefebvre the urban does not mean the end of finitude, instead, it is finite and, as such, does not represent any kind of universality. The urban is not the metaphysical purpose of history. 'Urban society provides a goal and meaning for industrialization only to the extent that it is engendered by it, encompasses it, and directs it toward some *other thing*. It is no longer a metaphysical conception, naïvely historical, of finality' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 69, 2003 [1970]: 67). The same idea is expressed by the author in the fragment below.

> The urban, because it combines finite elements in finite places and in the finitude of place (point, center), is itself finite. It can perish. (…) Urban form does tend to break the limits that try to circumscribe it. Its movement seeks a path. But it is not immediately obvious that any obstacles will be sidestepped or overcome. The dialectic (contradictory) character of this movement means that it can be thwarted, means that certain elements can be used against the movement of the whole. The urban, a place of drama, can be transformed into the drama of the urban (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 116, 2003 [1970]: 124).

There is a paradox in Lefebvre's urban dialectics. Segregation promotes the suffocation of conflicts (including those of class) and precisely because of this it can prevent the emergence of the urban phenomenon, currently only a potentiality. As we have seen, the urban and its differential space-time open the possibility of reunion and

conflicts, but the urban depends on the end of segregation, which, in turn, obstructs its very existence. Is there a vicious cycle in which segregation triumphs over reunion? Lefebvre foretastes the impossibility of the urban? Let me take a closer look at this paradox before discussing how Lefebvre theorizes the production of space.

In *The Right to the City*, Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 152-4) suggests that each city has its own type of centrality. The centrality of the political city is the *agora*, that is, the empty space in which meeting and political debate take place. The mercantile city corresponds to the market and exchanges in the market. It has the market square as centrality. The industrial (capitalist) city created the center of consumption in its dual meaning: Place of consumption and consumption of place. In the capitalist city, in addition to the commodities that are produced and located in space, space itself is produced and consumed. According to Lefebvre, such a centrality tends to absorb everything into the homogeneous order of exchange and exchange value. However, Lefebvre states that use and use-value 'permanently endure: irreducibly' (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 154). This irreducibility plays a central role in his line of argumentation. From the fortitude of use and use value, Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 155-6) proposes a new centrality that would be typical of urban society: Playful centrality, in which appropriation overpowers both domination and accumulation. Without the notion that use and use value are irreducible, that is, that they persist under the commodity kingdom, the possibility of urban society could turn into its impossibility. The urban arises from the residues of use and use value. Lefebvre states that 'use value, subordinated for centuries to exchange value, can recover the foreground. How? By and in urban society, starting from this reality that, however, resists and preserves for us the image of use value: the city' (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 151).

However, the irreducibility of use and use value is not in itself sufficient for the emergence of urban society. It is necessary to identify meanings and dynamics, to establish an orientation, finally, to define a strategy and, therefore, a social subject. In *The Right to the City*, Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 132-3) asserts that the city will be renewed by political and social forces while recognizing in the working class the fundamental historical subject for the realization of both the right to the city and urban society. 'Only the working class can become an agent, vehicle or social support of this realization' (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 139). 'Only the proletariat can turn its social and political activity to the realization of urban society' (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 166). In *The Urban Revolution* and *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 102, 109, 114, 274, 396, 415, 418, 2002 [1970], 165-71) no longer links the realization of urban society to the working class

or to the proletariat, but to wider categories such as 'those directly interested,' 'the user,' the 'participant,' and the 'inhabitant.'[52]

In *The Right to the City*, just after announcing that the capacity for synthesis belongs to the political forces that are in fact social forces, social classes, Lefebvre indicates the paradox in his theory. 'If the working class is silent, if it does not act, (...) segregation will continue with all its results in a vicious circle (segregation tends to prevent protest, opposition, action, dispersing those who could protest, oppose, act)' (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 145). The paradox reappears some years later in *The Urban Revolution* and once again in *The Production of Space*, but in these books it is the silence of those directly interested, of users, who attests and reinforces segregation, which for Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 102, 109, 114, 274, 396, 415, 418, 2002 [1970], 165-71) illustrates the lack of concrete democracy.

In *The Urban Revolution*, Lefebvre (2003 [1970]) conceives the possibility of urban society being stunted in its gestation, that is, the possibility that the urban as possible-impossible would become in fact impossible. 'Can segregation, the enemy of assemblies and encounters, arrest this movement [of the urban]? Can uniform space, without "topoi," without places, without contrast, pure indifference, a caricature of the relation between the urban and its components, stifle urban reality? It can' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 116, 2003 [1970]: 124-5). He (1978 [1968]: 43) had already presented a similar alert in *The Right to the City*. After distinguishing between three types of urbanisms, namely, (1st) that of the so-called 'men of good will,' supposed 'doctors of space,' (2nd) that of the state and its planning, and, finally, (3rd) that of capitalists and real estate developers, Lefebvre suggests that these urbanisms outline an overall strategy. The convergence of these three projects presents the greatest dangers to the effective

---

[52] In *The Right to the City*, Lefebvre (1978 [1968]) takes up Marx's thesis (2009 [1844]) in the *Introduction* of 1844, in affirming in the proletariat the representation of the general interests of civilization. 'The working class suffers from the explosion of ancient morphologies. It is a victim of segregation, of the class strategy that this explosion allows. This is the present form of the negative situation of the proletariat. (...) A new misery extends, reaching mainly the proletariat without pardoning other layers and social classes: The misery of the habitat, that of the inhabitant submitted to an organized everyday life (in and by the bureaucratic society of directed consumption). To those who doubt the existence as a class of the working class, however, suffice to designate on the terrain the segregation and the misery of "dwelling"' (Lefebvre 1978 [1968]: 166-7). Thus, Lefebvre replaces the negativity and universality of the proletariat, not only with respect to its participation in production but also, and above all, as to its insertion into the social-spatial reality of industrial society. In *The Right to the City*, Lefebvre (1978 [1968]) already suggests an aspect that will be further developed later on: The shift from the focus on production, restricted to the factory and the company, to the production of the entire space. Henceforth, Lefebvre would continue his reflections from this perspective, leaving behind the questions most directly related to the negativity of the proletariat amidst the new misery of the habitat.

existence of urban life. If this unitary strategy, this sort of total urbanism, succeeds, we might find ourselves before the irreparable (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 43), that is, a situation in which all conditions thus meet for a perfect domain, for a refined exploitation of people, which is exploited at one and the same time as producers, as consumers (of products and of space). The full development of the urban germ, which exists as a residue situated in use and use value) is not a metaphysical truth: The urban can be aborted in the very course of its birth. The urban can perish. Either the prevalence of coherence over contradictions in the action of the three forms of urbanism or the silence and omission of the social and political forces that suffer the consequences of industrial society – whether they are called proletariat (as in *The Right to the City*) or simply as those directly interested (as in *The Urban Revolution*) or the users, inhabitants, participants, interested, affected (as in *The Production of Space*) – can lead to it. The urban can be stillborn. But Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 43) also says that contradictions may prevent such a tragedy. The urban can perish. But the urban can also flourish.

## 4.1.2. Lefebvre's second key hypothesis: The production of the entire space

In *The Urban Revolution*, Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 138-50) presents and discusses what he calls urbanistic illusion. Lefebvre argues that the urbanistic illusion is twofold. On the one hand, it is a philosophical illusion and, on the other, a statist illusion. Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 143) indicates that in his/her illusion the urban planner believes in his/her capacity for creating life and social relations. This is what Lefebvre terms fetishism of space. Regarding this aspect, already in *The Right to the City*, Lefebvre argues that space is not neutral, it is social, produced according to strategies, that is, politically, and also warns that there are various urbanisms (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 41-5. In disentangling the various urbanisms, Lefebvre wants to argue that urban planners are not the actual creators of space. They are not the real decision makers. Quite the opposite.

> Urbanists seem to ignore that they themselves figure in the relations of production and that they carry out orders. They execute when they think they command space. They obey a social *commande* that does not concern this or that object, or to this or that product (commodity), but to a global object, that supreme product, that last object of exchange: space (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 45).

111

Lefebvre (2002 [1970], 143, 2003 [1970]: 156) states that the urbanistic illusion conceals a gigantic operation: Capitalist accumulation, in its present phase, involves the domination and production of the entire space, this 'supreme product, this last object of exchange' (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 45). Urbanism, in its illusion, masks such a huge process and such a strategy.

Contrary to what one may think at first, Lefebvre does not enunciate his celebrated thesis of the production of space in the eponymous book of 1974, but four years earlier in *The Urban Revolution* and even earlier in *The Right to the City*. In *The Urban Revolution*, Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 142-3, 2003 [1970]: 155-6) already indicates unconditionally that capitalism was sustained throughout the twentieth century because it expanded from the places of its emergence and power (production units, companies, factories, national and multinational firms) to the entire space. In its sway, capitalism subordinated and incorporated into itself everything that preceded its order, historical cities, agriculture, soil, and subsoil, nature, and so on, and also expanded through the constitution of new sectors, commercialized and industrialized sectors, such as leisure, tourism, culture, and urbanization.[53] It is in this sense that Lefebvre states that capitalism only sustains itself insofar as it extends and mobilizes the entire space.

> Space is no longer only an indifferent medium, the sum of places where surplus value is created, realized, and distributed. It becomes the product of social labour, the very general object of production, and consequently of the formation of surplus value. (…) Today the social (global) nature of productive labour, embodied in productive forces, is apparent in the social production of space. In the recent past, there was no other way to conceive of "production" other than as an object, located somewhere in space: an ordinary object, a machine, a book, a painting. Today, space as a whole enters into production as a product, through the buying, selling, and exchange of parts of space (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 142, 2003 [1970]: 154-5).

---

[53] In *The Survival of Capitalism*, Lefebvre (1976: [1973]: 37-8) reaffirms that, in this movement of extension to space, capitalism realized its concept as Marx had determined it, that is, capitalism absorbed, disentangled, and re-integrated what history had transmitted to it, from agriculture to the city to all the subsystems that preceded it. Capitalism subordinated everything to itself as it extended itself into space.

The production of space does not refer to the production of this or that object in space, of this or that commodity in space, but of space itself. Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 142-3, 2003 [1970]: 155) also states that the production of space is not something new, the novelty lies at the global reach of the production of space under capitalism. Capitalism appears to be out of steam but it has found new stimulus in the conquest of space, in real estate speculation, in big construction projects (inside and outside cities), 'the buying and selling of space. And it did so on a worldwide scale' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 143, 2003 [1970]: 155).

Lefebvre (1976 [1973]: 20-1) indicates that the frustration of Marx's (2017 [1867] [1885] [1894]) diagnosis of the overcoming of capitalism due to its own internal limits could be illuminated by the fact that capitalism was able to mitigate its own contradictions for more than a century since Marx's (2017 [1867] [1885] [1894]) predictions in the three volumes of *Capital*. 'Capitalism has been successful in finding "growth." We cannot calculate at what price, but we know by what means: occupying space, producing space' (Lefebvre, 1976 [1973]: 21). Lefebvre focuses on the role of real estate, that is, both the speculation with land and the construction sector in general, in contemporary capitalism. Supposedly, real estate plays the role of a secondary sector in capitalist accumulation. This subsidiary sector absorbs shocks in case of crises in the main sector, that of industrial production. However, Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 145-6) states that, as the share of surplus value produced and realized in the industrial sector decreases, the surplus value formed and realized in the secondary sector expands enormously. Real estate is mobilized, produced, and put up for sale, becoming, therefore, something that is mediated by exchange value. From a sort of contingency, the construction sector becomes essential for global surplus value production and realization (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 369-70, 2002 [1970]: 146, 2008 [1972]: 62-72). The secondary sector supplants what was originally the main sector.

Lefebvre puts in opposition capital's accumulation through the production of space and the life of the people. The production of the entire space by capitalism (which has proven to be central to its conservation) oppresses and curbs the potentialities of use and the very possibility appropriation. In this context, users, city dwellers, often reduced to mere consumers of space, are among those most disadvantaged.

> This strategy overwhelms the 'user,' the 'participant,' the simple 'inhabitant.' He is reduced not only to merely functioning as an inhabitant

113

> (habitat as function) but to being a buyer of space, one who realizes surplus value. Space becomes a place where various functions are carried out, the most important and most hidden being that of forming, realizing, and distributing in novel ways the surplus of an entire society (generalized surplus value within the capitalist mode of production) (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 143, 2003 [1970]: 156).

As I have said at the beginning of this chapter, in *Space and Politics*, Lefebvre (2008 [1972]) revisits and extends themes that he had started in *The Right to the City* and developed in *The Urban Revolution*. In the 1972 book, Lefebvre (2008 [1972]: 62) makes explicit the reason why the growth of the secondary sector has been central to the survival of capitalism. He (2008 [1972]: 71-2) remarks that the concept of the organic composition of capital (the proportion of variable capital and constant capital) is among the most important and least known of Marxist thought. Successively, the French author argues that the real estate industry, understood here as the production of space, has been key to averting the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. In its struggle against the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, capital expands its domain, it reaches and produces the totality of space.

> At the local level, like all industry, construction (in the broad sense, not only the construction in the real estate domain, but also the construction of 'infrastructures:' roads, motorways, airports, and so on) has greatly increased the organic composition of capital. So is agriculture. However, massive investments and the introduction of modern techniques have not led this industry to the position of the cutting-edge industries, it is already known that the workforce continues to be of great importance (huge variable capital: earthworks, use of foreign workforce). From this comes the massive production of surplus value and the recognized effect against the tendency of the rate of profit to fall Lefebvre, 2008 [1972]: 71-2).

There is a potential capitalization of all space (that is, agriculture, the so-called services and leisure sectors, tourism, real estate, and so on) in the process of capital's struggle against the downward trend in the average profit rate. This is the 'gigantic operation' Lefebvre (2003 [1970]: 88) denounces and that drags land and the built space directly into the production of surplus value. That is why Lefebvre states that

'construction ceases to be a secondary industrial branch, a subordinate sector of the economy. It becomes a primary sector. It (...) becomes an essential branch of production' (Lefebvre, 2008 [1972]: 83). Lefebvre (2008 [1972]: 97) argues that the company, the factory, is no longer the central place where wealth, surplus value, and production relations are molded. The mode of production as a whole is formed beyond it (Lefebvre, 2008 [1972]: 97). The commodity kingdom, once limited to goods produced in space, expands itself, encompassing the totality of (social) space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 370-6). The totality of space is, thus, interchangeable, it becomes part of markets that make up a single market, the world market. Space is fragmented and every piece of it receives an exchange value, and as such, just like any other interchangeable product, is ruled by prices, speculation, and so on.

In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 116, 369, 374, 379-80, 386-7) suggests that it was not only the production of space (that is, the construction of buildings, transport infrastructures, airports, ports, roads, railways, canals, dams, and new cities, and so on) that was central to the survival of capitalism. The production of space is one factor among others: (a) The expansion of capitalism to pre-existing space, that of agriculture, of the historic city; (b) neoimperialism and the looting and scanning of the so-called underdeveloped countries, which are suppliers of cheap labor and raw materials; and (c) the creation of new sectors, such as tourism. It is in this broad sense that Lefebvre assumes that the totality of space enters to take part in capitalist production. In any case, Lefebvre emphasizes surplus value production and realization (which encompasses the production and consumption of commodities under capitalism), while leaving relatively aside the various forms of dispossession, that is, of accumulation by extra-economic means, which Marx (2017 [1867]) termed primitive accumulation. This could be seen as a latent imbalance in Lefebvre's interpretation. As we will see later, Harvey (2003) and authors like Caffentzis (1995, 2011), Federici (2004, 2010), Dalla Costa (2004, 2005), De Angelis (2007; 2010), and Bonefeld (2001, 2014) have explored in insightful ways this form of accumulation that permeates the whole historical-geography of capitalism.

Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 374) sees in the land and art markets the last frontiers of this dizzying process in which everything can be sold and bought. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 145, 167, 255, 375-6, 2008 [1972]: 62) argues that nowadays one can say of space what Marx (2017 [1867]) said about everything produced by capital in space: Space is a product that contains and dissimulates social relations, it is a thing, a commodity that conceals the traces of labor. 'Space become-commodity develops the traits of

commodities in space to the maximum.' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 351). Lefebvre extends the Marxian (2017 [1867]) critique of the commodity to the totality of space. The notion that there is an extension of the fetishism of commodities to space gains even more powerful contours in *Critique of Everyday Life*. There, Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) suggests a single guiding line throughout Marx's work from the 1844 *Manuscripts* to *Capital*: The notion of fetishism could be understood as part of Marx's theory of alienation. Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) argues, then, that alienation multiplies from production to everyday life. Everyday life has been lost in countless separations and fragmentations. I will return to this point in Chapter 5.

What I wish to observe here is that, first, Lefebvre denounces a terrible reduction of everyday life. With the expansion of the commodity realm to the entire space, abstract space takes over absolute space while lived experience is crushed, vanquished by the habitat (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 51). Second, Lefebvre does not stop at this uncomfortable diagnosis. While recognizing the paradox of the passivity of those directly concerned, Lefebvre does not culminate the dialectical movement in any sort of negative dialectics (Adorno, 2009 [1966]). Lefebvre (1976 [1973]: 14-7) assumes that dialectics is no longer linked to historical time, nor to a single abstract mechanism like that of 'thesis-antithesis-synthesis,' but rather to (social) space. Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 155, 170, 1976 [1973]: 14-7, 1991 [1974]: 98, 110, 120, 182, 361, 365-8, 387-389 391, 397) does not think in terms of contradictions that evolve *in* space, but rather of contradictions *of* space itself. The contradictions *of* space elevate historical contradictions to a new level, without supplanting them, and, in addition, they open a flank to the emergence of another space, differential space, which would be the appropriate space of urban society (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 110, 182, 365-8).

Although Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 387, 2003 [1970]: 170, 2008 [1972]: 88) observes the relevance of contradictions *of* space (between the ability to conceive and treat space at a global level and the *ad infinitum* fragmentation of space; between the 'wealth-power' center and the periphery, between integration and segregation), and despite him arguing that 'the principal contradiction is shifted to the urban phenomenon itself' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 155, 2003 [1970]: 170), he never claims that the new contradictions supplant the old ones (for example, those announced by Marx between productive forces and relations of production) (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 365-8, 387-91). Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 365-9) does not reduce so-called historical contradictions to the contradictions of space, nor vice versa. He (1991 [1974]: 389) puts them into mutual

relation. At most, Lefebvre argues that contradictions and conflicts of society are now expressed spatially, they evolve into spatial realization. 'In other words, spatial contradictions "express" conflicts between socio-political interests and forces; it is only *in* space that such conflicts come effectively into play, and in so doing they become contradictions *of* space' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 365). Old and new contradictions overlap. Class struggle develops into urban struggle. Class revolution becomes urban revolution.

Lefebvre inscribes the contradictions *of* space within the urban phenomenon. As I have said above, Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 2002 [1970]) proposes a periodization of historical time in three eras or continents: The agrarian, the industrial, and the urban. Through this periodization, he emphasizes the difference between the urban and the city stating that 'there were cities in the agrarian era and in the industrial era. But the urban age is just beginning' (Lefebvre, 2008 [1972]: 41). The urban takes on a potential existence. 'Urban life, however, did not begin yet' (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 127). Its possibilities depend on transformations that occur during the current critical phase, between the industrial era and the urban one, which is characterized by the production of the entire space. Consequently, the Lefebvrian hypothesis of the production of space must be apprehended within Lefebvre's dialects about the city and the urban, which progresses across the passage from the agrarian to the industrial, and from the industrial to the urban, with the two critical phases relating to each transition. The hypothesis of the production of the entire space only makes sense within Lefebvre's broader hypothesis about the complete urbanization of society. The former relates to the survival of capitalism whereas the later relates to its potential termination.

## 4.2. Criticism, celebration, reduction, and fragmentation

Lefebvre's (1978 [1968], 1991 [1974], 2003 [1970]) analyses of the urban, the production of space, and the right to the city did not go unnoticed. Manuel Castells (1977 [1972]), who at that time was still writing from an orthodox Marxist perspective, was one of the first to censure Lefebvre. In *The Urban Question*, from an Althusserian-structuralist point of view, Castells (1977 [1972]) condemns Lefebvre's (1978 [1968], 2003 [1970]) theory of urban society. Castells (1977 [1972]: 87-96) argues that, in Lefebvre's thought, the urban was defined not from the economic infrastructure but form an ideological content, namely, that of non-work, of fruition. Against Lefebvre's 'new humanism,' He (1977

[1972]: 87) accuses Lefebvre of starting from a 'Marxist analysis of the urban phenomenon' to increasingly moving into an 'urbanistic theorization of the Marxist problematic.' Castells contends that Lefebvre no longer focuses on the central proposition of Marxism, namely, that the class struggle is the motor of history, and accuses him of having replaced it with urban contradictions. He says that it is pointless to talk about urban revolution. Besides, Castells (1977 [1972]: 87-96) argues that the foundation of the urban is not on the level of everyday life. According to him, both the urban and everyday life are mere superstructure dependent on the wider dynamics of monopoly capitalism.

> That 'everydayness,' that is to say, social life, governed above all by the rhythms of the ideological, may be the expression of new forms of contradiction in social practice, there can be no doubt. But that it should be the source, rather than the expression, of complex class relations determined, in the last resort, by economic relations is a reversal of the materialist problematic and sets out from 'men' rather than from their social and technological relations of production and domination. (Castells, 1977 [1972]: 93).

Around the same time, David Harvey (2009 [1973]), while endorsing several of Lefebvre's ideas, indicated that Lefebvre carried out a theoretical overinvestment in the production of space and, from there, in the process of urbanization of society and, consequently, in all the possibilities he claimed to be inscribed in it. In *Social Justice and the City*, Harvey (2009 [1973]: 302-14) questions the centrality of the production of space, or rather the relevance of the so-called secondary sector, that of construction, to the production, circulation, and realization of surplus value as well as to the reproduction of the relations of production. At that time, Harvey (2009 [1973]: 311-3) gave more centrality to the main circuit, the industrial one, and not to the new frontiers opened by the production of the entire space. Harvey maintained such a line of argument for a long time (see for instance, Harvey, 1985: 53, 58), but today we know that he adjusted his understanding in favor of Lefebvre. In fact, Harvey (2012, 2014) has highly praised Lefebvre's position. But it is also true that if the production of space has favored the survival of capitalism (Lefebvre, 1976 [1973]), this means neither that the construction sector is the last frontier to be transcended nor that it is the only engine of current

capitalism.[54] The interpretation Harvey (2009 [1973]) puts forward in *Social Justice and the City* is highly consistent with his recent reflections about the relevance of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003, 2005b, 2012, 2014). Not only the exploitation of the worker by capital, and the consequent surplus value production, including in the production of space, would explain the survival of capitalism, to use Lefebvre's (1976 [1973]) words, but also the accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003, 2005b, 2012, 2014) that ends up cornering and subjugating life outside work in many ways.

The so-called Los Angeles Postmodern School and particularly the work of Edward Soja (1989, 1996, 2001 [2000], 2010) constitutes a compelling well-known alternative interpretation of Lefebvre. Soja's reflections opened a theoretical space that allowed the development of a kind of spatialization of social problems and relations, which undoubtedly brought them closer to the problems and reflections of geography and urban studies. In Soja's (1989) spatial-historical materialism, class struggles are necessarily defined as struggles within and over space. While relying on Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) spatial triad, he leads the spatialization of social problems and relations to the next level. Actually, Soja's work inaugurates the first wave of postmodern readings of Lefebvre. Soja (1989) defends an understanding of social and spatial relations as unequivocal and directly homologous, eventually disconnecting from Lefebvre's philosophical commitments while making concessions to postmodern ideas. The second wave of postmodern readings of Lefebvre develops precisely within the context of the postcolonial literature in urban studies. I will address these postcolonial interpretations of Lefebvre in a moment. Before, let me discuss how Lefebvre's notions of the right to the city and the urban have been reduced in the framework of interpretations centered on the question of the so-called urban improvements, something that has occurred prominently in Brazil and South Africa.

---

[54] Lefebvre does not simply disregard such dynamics, but he deliberately subordinates them to what he calls the production of space. Therefore, in the opposite direction to Trebitsch's views (2014a, 2014b), one could easily argue that, for Lefebvre, phenomena such as the colonization of everyday life as well as urbanization arises from the expansion of capitalism to the totality of space.

### 4.2.1. Brazil, South Africa, and the right to the city

At least since the First World Social Forum, held in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre in January 2001, the right to adequate housing has been merged with the call for the right to the city. Social movements, non-governmental organisations, professional associations, and international networks, have drafted a World Charter on the Right to the City, which was developed and propelled during the Americas Social Forum, held in Quito in July 2004, and the World Urban Forums of Barcelona, September 2004, and Porto Alegre, January 2005. Even though the World Charter on the Right to the City is not an international treaty ratified by nation-states, it is in full accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. Based upon World Social Forum documents, Fahmi (2013: 269) indicates that 'the World Charter is an instrument intended to contribute to the process of recognition of the right to the city in the international human rights system.' Finally, the World Charter on the Right to the City was ratified by UN-HABITAT in October 2016 at the United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development, Habitat III, held in Quito (Franco, 2017: 267).

The recent popularization of the right to the city and its defense in a World Charter linked to the international human rights system can indeed be contrasted with previous conceptions of the right to the city. I have said before, in *The Right to the City,* Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 155-6) proposes a new centrality for urban society: playful centrality, founded on spontaneity and in which the users appropriate and self-manage urban space, free from both the state and the imperatives of capital accumulation. Lefebvre (1978 [1968]) made use of the expression to envisioning an alternative city to the capitalist one, a city based on use and use value, that is, on the needs of citizens and users (Franco, 2017: 267-8). Such a city, that of the right to the city of which Lefebvre speaks about, can only take place in urban society. Therefore, the right to the city, just like the urban, is now a virtuality. The right to the city does not exist yet. Or better, it only exists as a potential. Relying on Lefebvre's work, Harvey indicates that 'the right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city' (Harvey, 2008: 23). Harvey (2008) denounces that private property and the profit rate trump all other notions of rights, including the right to the city. He argues that 'the freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is (...) one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights' (Harvey, 2008: 23). Therefore,

while using the human rights grammar, Harvey (2008) draws attention to the radicalism involved in the Lefebvrian concept of the right to the city. To be precise, Harvey (2008) wishes to restore the right to the city as a radically transforming practice and is an outspoken critic of the rhetoric of human rights (Harvey, 2014).

Regardless of whether or not human rights are at issue, what needs to be noted is that, on the one hand, there is a desire to keep the right to the city subversive and linked to a horizon that goes beyond the capitalist city and, on the other, there is an attempt, above all by major international institutions, to convert it into a sort of tool for managing urban policies within the framework of capitalist society (Costes, 2014: 8). Costes (2014: 8) states that this last view of the right to the city in which the aim is basically the improvement of urban infrastructure, something that remains far removed from the radical urban transformation Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 2002 [1970], 1991 [1974]) envisioned, has developed particularly in South Africa, primarily from the work of Parnell and Pieterse (2010). Independently of what connotation is given to the expression, the point is that the right to the city should be understood as a collective right that safeguards everybody, conferring legitimacy of action and organization for the full exercise of fundamental rights and for the guarantee of dignified living conditions.

Parnell and Pieterse (2014) misuse the Lefebvrian term urban revolution in using it to refer to the ongoing rural exodus on the African continent. In this respect, Brenner and Schimd (2015: 155-6) indicate how the discourse around the 'urbanization of the world' finds supporters across the political spectrum. In any case, what is understood by urbanization takes shape in a more or less empirical way and has strong quantitative foundations (Brenner and Schimd, 2015: 155-6). The chapters in the volume edited by Parnell and Pieterse (2014) do not escape the rule. Scholars in South Africa are not alone in the cooling of the transformative potential of both the right to the city and urbanization. In fact, restrictive law-biased interpretations of the right to the city and visions of the urban as mere basic infrastructure developed in Brazil long before than in South Africa. As we have just seen, they were already present in the first editions of the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in the 2000s. However, such interpretations of the right to the city as a sort of progressive law, as urban policy, or even as urbanism, and of the urban as adequate housing and equipment of collective consumption begins decades before in Brazil.

During the 1980s, in the context of institutionalization of the so-called urban question in Brazil, it is already possible to detect how the Lefebvrian formulation of the

right to the city was narrowed toward the struggles for basic infrastructure improvement in Brazilian cities. In the following decades, several studies were carried out based on the experience of left-wing municipalities, generally led by the Workers' Party (see, for instance, Bonduki, 1997 [1996], 2000; Rolnik, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2000, 2002; Rolnik and Cymbalista, 1997; Fernandes, 1999, 2001, 2007a, 2007b; and Maricato, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2009 Maricato; Maricato and Tanaka, 2006). A vast literature based on the experience of the left-wing municipalities, especially in relation to the Participatory Budgeting, emerged (see, for instance, Souza, 2000a, 2002; Avritzer, 1994, 2002a, 2002b; Kowarick, 2000). They denounced the various deficiencies in infrastructure and collective equipment that still prevails in Brazilian cities and defended the consolidation and application of what has become known as participatory or inclusive city planning, or even left-wing urbanism. In general terms, the Brazilian literature argues that progressive planning and legislation could foster the right to the city since they would promote the 'urbanization' of poorer and needier areas of the city (for a critical assessment of Participatory Budgeting in Brazil see Franco and Assis, 2019).

Edésio Fernandes's (2001, 2007a, 2007b; Fernandes and Alfonsin, 2006) work on land regularization and the legal construction of the right to the city is perhaps the most-known interpretation along those lines beyond Brazil. Fernandes (2001) indicates how Brazilian cities present a very clear contrast between a part of the city that possesses some condition of 'urbanity' (that is, paved roads, basic infrastructure and services such as sanitation, piped water, garbage collection, and so on) and another part, usually much larger than the first one, whose infrastructure is incomplete and the so-called 'urbanization' does not exist. This situation restricts the access of groups and individuals to services, credit, basic infrastructure, collective equipment, and various rights that would enable them to become involved in what Fernandes (2001) calls 'urban economy and society.' Fernandes (2007b) analyzes the role played by the legal order in the determination of the exclusionary pattern of urban development in Brazil, as well as how laws could be used to advance urban reform, socio-spatial inclusion, and sustainable development. From this, Fernandes (2007b) amalgamates redistributive urban policies and laws, such as the 2001 City Statute, with the Lefebvrian (1978 [1968]) notion of the right to the city. The Brazilian case 'provides strong elements to make the development of a Lefebvrian theory of rights possible, in which the "right to the city" is to be understood not only as a socio-political and/or philosophical value, but also as a legal right' (Fernandes, 2007b: 202).

But what is exactly the right to the city in this case? What is meant by urbanization? Urbanization is basically understood as infrastructure upgrading and the right to the city is assumed to be the right to adequate housing, basic services and infrastructure (that is, paving, drainage, sanitation, and so on) as well as the social function of land ownership. Fernandes (2001, 2007a, 2007b) and many others (Bonduki, 1997 [1996], 2000; Rolnik, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2000, 2002; Maricato, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2009) have taken the Lefebvrian concept of the right to the city as the right to collective consumption. Castells's (1977 [1972]) orthodox propositions about the urban question, which I have briefly alluded to above, found an enormous resonance in these reductionist definitions of the urban as law and collective consumption. This reading of the right to the city as the right to basic infrastructure received a legal embodiment in the 2001 City Statute and has been recently ratified by the UN-Habitat (2016). Within such a conception, the right to the city and the urban are narrowed, restricted, reduced to improvements in collective consumption equipment and to land regularization, moving, therefore, away from the notions of appropriation of the city by its own inhabitants, of the restitution of use and use value, originally thought by Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 1991 [1974], 2003 [1970). The utopian meaning of the right to the city as appropriation, as *œuvre*, in a new and radically different (urban) society is sidestepped.

Recently, interpretations with a legal anchoring of the right to the city have developed out of struggles for improvements in infrastructure and basic services in South Africa. Thomas Coggin and Marius Pieterse (2012), for example, explore the possibilities of legal sanctioning of the right to the city in the South African context. Huchzermeyer (2016) also joined this interpretive line by focusing on the intersections between urban planning and rights in informal settlements in contexts of the global South. Huchzermeyer (2017) suggests that Lefebvre himself considered the possibilities embodied in the exercise of rights as part of a political strategy that could ultimately lead to the right to the city in a future post-state order.[55] It should be noted, however, that any conception of the right to the city as an urban policy or legislative action capable of providing collective consumption infrastructure collides with the way in which Lefebvre considers the state and urbanism. As we have seen before, urbanists are participants of a gigantic operation. For Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 45), they obey a *commande* and, as such, he considers them real hindrances to urban society and the right to the city. For Lefebvre the state is a reducer

---

[55] See also Huchzermeyer recent interview with Erick Omena de Melo (2017).

par excellence, an impediment to the urban. It must fade in the course of the complete urbanization of society (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 418).

I would say that this statist narrowing of the right to the city and of the urban is not the biggest issue in contemporary readings of Lefebvre. At least people behind it have a commitment to improve the living conditions of the majorities that inhabit the peripheries of the global South. Far more problematical readings of Lefebvre's work can be find in the midst of the recent postcolonial literature in urban studies. They also had a global reach, have been 'worldled,' to use Roy's (2015) expression, but not on the heels of World Social Forums or organizations like the United Nations, but rather within the framework of the academic industry, within the particular environment of the tower of ivory of urban studies, to paraphrase Parnell (1997). It is time to conduct an examination of the postcolonial (mis)reading of Lefebvre's work.[56]

### 4.2.2. Multiplexing the urban and decentering the production of space?

In contrast to the line of argumentation inaugurated by Castells (1977 [1972]) decades ago, which was rooted in structuralism and according to which Lefebvre had left Marxism in favor of a sort of ideological humanist discourse, we are now faced with a new wave of poststructuralist readings of Lefebvre's work. But if dialectical reasoning was in many cases retained in the undertakings of the so-called Los Angeles Postmodern School in the 1990s (see, for instance, Soja, 1996) – albeit in erratic ways, it is fair to mention – now Lefebvre's concepts are openly taken up by postcolonial urban scholars in isolation. Lefebvrian concepts and theories are ultimately disconnected from the whole in which they arose and to which they belong, that is, Lefebvre's dialectics about the urban and everyday life. One consequence of this is that the two key hypotheses I have chosen to guide our explorations of Lefebvre's thought – the complete urbanization of society and the production of the entire space – are either disregarded or distorted or, at best, largely downscaled. Schmid's (2015: 6) words with respect to Anglo-American postmodern geography seem fairly adequate to describe recent postcolonial readings of Lefebvre: Postcolonial understandings are thwarted by their postmodern ontological assumptions, which, as in the case of the so-called Los Angeles School, turn out to be largely

---

[56] There are contemporary works that rely on Lefebvre while discussing the interconnections between space, urbanization and postcoloniality, race, gender, that show a great capacity of critique (see, particularly, Kipfer and Goonewardena, 2013; Kipfer 2016).

incompatible with Lefebvre's approach. Thus, parallel to readings of the right to the city as state-sanctioned law and the urban as mere infrastructure, many of which relate to grassroots mobilizations in countries like Brazil and South Africa, we see too how Lefebvrian concepts are altered within postcolonial interpretations circulating in the international academic industry.

The misleading use of fragments of Lefebvre's theories and concepts within poststructuralist approaches is commonplace in the postcolonial literature reviewed in Chapter 3. Robinson's (2014a) and Roy's (2014, 2015) engagement with the urban exemplify this trend. Robinson (2014a) says that 'drawing all cities into the conceptualization of urbanization would benefit from reimagining [the] relationship between cases and concepts so that theorization of the urban can be informed by the widest range of urban experiences' (Robinson, 2014a: 66). Robinson's claim is fair. More cases should foster new theorization. But, due to the inclusion of new urban experiences in the process of theorization about the urban, she affirms that any theorization of the urban must recognize its 'revocability.' Robinson (2014a: 64-8) makes use of Lefebvre's proposition that the urban is a virtual object, *possible* and *impossible* at once, to maintain that the urban is always changing and, as such, is always out of reach. For Robinson, the urban is an incomplete-impossible thing in constant mutation, which makes it unreachable and unintelligible for both social practice and the conceptualization of it. In a word, drawing upon Lefebvre's work, Robinson theorizes the urban as the eternal impossible.

Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 128, 2002 [1970]: 18) developed a method for reflection on the *possible* object, not on the *impossible* one. The transductive method allowed Lefebvre to name and indicate the urban horizon from within the confines of the present. He argues that transduction involves the introduction of knowledge into utopia. For Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 136) the dialectical movement between theory and practice, between utopia and the experimental, is based on the utopian orientation of dialectical thought, which serves to control fictions, where imagination goes astray, and also to prevent reflection from becoming lost in purely programmatic projects. The transductive method is the construction of a near-virtual object from experimental data (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 148). The virtual object is on the horizon but clarifies present-day reality while at the same time calling for its realization (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 148). The urban implies the radical transformation of the present. For Lefebvre, the urban is a *possible-impossible* that contains the radical transformation of the present. By contrast, for Robinson in her Deleuze-inspired propositions, there is no space for radical

transformation, neither present nor future; all we have is an ever-lasting – albeit ever-changing – here and now. The urban is always an impossible circumstance since it is always to be decided.

As I have already indicated, Lefebvre (2003 [1970]) says that the urban may perish. But this does not mean that it must necessarily perish. It does not mean that it cannot prosper. The result of the present condition of *possibility* and *impossibility* of the urban depends on social praxis. And Lefebvre, even if afflicted by the silence or passivity of those directly concerned, is relatively optimistic about it: 'The contradiction between the passivity and the activity of people (of "inhabitants" or "users") is never completely resolved in favor of passivity. There is nothing more contradictory than "urbanness"' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 386).[57] Lefebvre sought to illuminate revolutionary praxis. He suggested the force and irreducibility of use and use-value, the irreducible possibilities in everyday life and the existence of counter-spaces beyond the state and capital (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968], 2002 [1970], 1991 [1974]). Lefebvre longed to contribute to the emergence of urban society, to the radical transformation of everyday life, to its restitution as a whole (see Chapter 5). He hoped to see the overcoming of the various segregations (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968], 2002 [1970], 1991 [1974]) and fragmentations (Lefebvre, 2014 [1941] [1961] [1981]) in a society beyond capitalism. The urban for Lefebvre is this, a society beyond capitalism. But it is also something that is already present in potential in today's society. And for Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 240-1, 340, 490, 549, 555-7, 582, 587, 644-6), critique must above all hint at the possible, not declare the impossible an unshakable certainty. Radical critique should help to make the possible real, not the real impossible.

Roy (2015, 2016) clearly places Lefebvre aside and chooses to pursue a 'non-totalizing' and 'non-topological' theory of the urban. She (2015) suggests that it would

---

[57] In view of the recent ode to fragmentation, it is perhaps good to note that Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 2003 [1970]) criticizes the several specialized sciences, incapable of apprehending the urban, since they operate with an analytical rationality, totally inscribed in the marks of industrial society. What does this thinking hold of the city and the urban? Only fragments. The elements of social life are presented by it in a dissociated way. For Lefebvre, the realization of any philosophy, as well as the synthesis into a new totality, remain an attribute of the social. Therefore, since for Lefebvre neither the philosopher nor any of the specialists in the various partial sciences are the creators of social relations, only social life (*praxis*) in its global, creative, and transforming capacity possesses the powers and elements capable of synthesis. At first, Lefebvre (1978 [1968]) identified this social praxis with the proletariat and, later, with the users, that is, those directly affected (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974], 2003 [1970]). Thus, if we are to take Lefebvre's propositions about the urban seriously, neither innovative comparative approaches nor a group of scholars illuminated by multiple contexts, and thus susceptible to the constant revision of their theorizations, offer a deeper engagement with the urban, but only social praxis itself.

be profoundly beneficial to conceptualize the urban assuming its ontological multiplicity and radical contingency (Roy, 2015: 810). However, by avoiding the stable, coherent, and universal route proposed by Scott and Storper (2015; Storper and Scott, 2016), Roy (2015, 2016) goes from one extreme to the other and, in a true ode to fragmentation, upholds the inevitable inconsistency and multiplicity of the urban: 'Whose urban experience is stable and coherent? Who is able to see the city as a unified whole? By contrast, for whom is the city a geography of shards and fragments? Whose urban experience is necessarily negotiated at spatial scales that implode the city?' (Roy, 2016: 208). Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 2003 [1970]) suggested a dialectical relation between the city and the urban according to which the latter goes much beyond the former. Without losing its dialectical underpinnings, Lefebvre's interpretation has been further developed by Brenner (2014a, 2014b) and Brenner and Schmid (2011, 2014, 2015) and many others (see, for instance, Diener et al., 2016; Castriota and Monte-Mór, 2016). But Roy (2015, 2016), in her dive into the fragmentary, literally throws away all dialectical thought while theorizing the urban. Alternatively, stimulated by Derrida, she insists on grasping the urban through the notion of 'undecidability' (Roy, 2015: 12), that is, the 'possibility/impossibility of positivity as such' (Roy, 2015: 811). Roy suggests that the urban is uncertain and multifaceted and that there are many ways of conceptualizing it. So far, so good. Analogous to what Schmid (2018: 15) states regarding ongoing debates on planetary urbanization, there must be room for multiple readings of Lefebvre from different traditions of thought. But Roy's (2015) understanding takes a turn for the worse when she decides to offer her own conceptualization of the urban. For her, remarkably, the urban is a governmental category (Roy, 2015). She seems to take what Lefebvre denounced as urbanism as the urban and, in so doing, in opposition to Lefebvre's ideas, the urban is reduced once more to the scope of the state.[58]

There is no doubt that there are many ways of theorizing any social phenomenon. The question is whether new concepts help us to better understand the world that surrounds us or not. And, at least for some of us, whether our understanding of our world

---

[58] In theorizing the urban as a site of irreducible multiplicity, Robinson and Roy miss a good chance for developing what I consider to be the strongest point emerging from their own work and that of postcolonial urban theory more generally: They miss the chance to expose how Lefebvre's thinking about the urban has an Eurocentric component. After all, as we have seen before, Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 27) projects a dialectical continuum that begins with the political city (that of Rome and Greece) and evolves into the medieval (European) city, the industrial city (European and then Western and finally global) and ends in the urban (the complete urbanization of society). In view of this, we might wonder whether the germ of the urban really has always been embedded in the West. This is not the trail followed by postcolonial authors in urban studies. I will try to develop this interpretation properly in Chapter 9, building on my case studies.

favors or frustrates its radical transformation. Would the multiple ways of theorizing the urban be propitious to radical critique? Very likely, yes. However, hitherto, a kind of hunt for theoretical innovation as an end in itself – a kind of academic scoop, similar to exclusive breaking news – seems to have dissipated many of the energies of the recent postcolonial literature in urban studies. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 265) indicates, in speaking about the relations between construction and monument, that without the dialectical overcoming, the movement stagnates and ends up drifting into a rough jumble of various moments and elements, in confusion and chaos. Confusion and chaos. This seems to be the by-product of recent attempts at multiplexing the urban in the gears of the academic industry. Amidst a pressing rush for innovative concepts, we witness the gelatinization of the urban. In order to reveal the latest theory about the urban, the urban can be anything. Everything seems to depend only on what we wish it to be. Again, can the multiple ways of theorizing the urban nourish radical critique? Are they able to somehow contribute to the radical transformation of our world?

The recent postcolonial theorization of the urban as conceptually and experientially fragmented does not seem to share Lefebvre's desire to overcome contemporary society, to favor the possible to the detriment of the impossible. And in so doing, in the best postmodern style of 'small is beautiful,' postcolonial urban theorists seem to end up in a quasi-masochistic endeavor to offer a detailed, kaleidoscopic, and of course unprecedented, contingent, and fluid appreciation from fragments (sometimes assumed to be comparable) of the existing non-urban reality of our days, both in the South and in the North. Of course, their effort looks more to the South than to the North, since in the North such an inventory of modern miseries seems to be more advanced. In this windstorm, the very possibility of urban theorizing, whatever definition of the urban we assume, seems to end in an eternal impossibility. Wagner's (2001a) rewording of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (2000 [1848]) and Marshall Berman (1988 [1982]) appears to be valid here: Not everything that is solid melts into air, because if this were so there would not even be the possibility of theorizing the social. Ironically, Marshall Berman's (1988 [1982]) withering commentary on Michel Foucault would find some parallel with the postcolonial condition of urban studies: 'what he [Foucault] has to say is an endless, excruciating series of variations on the Weberian themes of the iron cage and the human nullities whose souls are shaped to fit the bars' (Berman, 1988 [1982]: 34). Something similar could be said of Roy, Robinson, and other postcolonial urban scholars in their multiple, fragmentary, and successively revocable incursions into the urban in the spirit

of poststructuralist thinkers such as Deleuze and Derrida. Paraphrasing Berman (1988 [1982]: 32) again, in this case when he denounces the unfounded allusion to Hegel and Marx by Herbert Marcuse, we could also assert that invoking Lefebvre as Robinson and Roy do – that is, rejecting his view of the urban as a dynamic contradiction, struggle and dialectical progress – is to retain very little other than his name. This leads me to the last subject to be dealt with in this chapter: The postcolonial attempts at decentering the production of space.

In this regard, it is necessary to make a couple of comments about how Roy approaches the production of space. Although Roy (2009: 824-6) claims to seek a critical engagement with Marxist approaches to the city and space, such as those by Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, and Neil Smith, she hardly goes much further than statements of good intentions. Roy (2009: 820) mentions, for example, the relevance of Lefebvre's considerations about the production of space for understanding the metropolises of the global South. However, she never clarifies how exactly the production of space in fact comes about in the contexts of the global South and to what extent this differs from that which takes place in the global North. We know that Roy (2005, 2009) theorizes the production of space in the global South by building on the notion of informality. She (2005) states that in the global South the production of space is fundamentally shaped by informality. But how exactly would informality be related to Lefebvre's concept of the production of space? For example, Roy (2005, 2009) gives us only the most scanty indications about how informality might be related to capitalism and capitalist accumulation. If we really want to use Lefebvre's concept of the production of space – instead of any other alternative conceptualizations of it – we need to ask, for instance, how such a production of space as informality could be related – or not – to surplus value production and surplus value realization. How might it be theorized in view of past, present, and upcoming capitalist accumulation? Such questions lie at the core of Lefebvre's reflections about the production of space and the urban.

We have already seen in detail above in this chapter that, for Lefebvre, the production of space cannot be dissociated from capitalism. Nor can it be detached from the author's dialectical reasoning about urban society. Quite possibly, categories like surplus value or capital are too Marxist to be taken seriously by postcolonial urban theorists. Perhaps their omission is justified because such categories are not elegant enough; they are out of fashion. Yet, as I have shown before, Lefebvre's Marxism, however heterodox it may be considered by the exponents of postcolonial literature in

129

urban studies, is based on Marxist categories such as value, surplus value, accumulation, surplus value production, surplus value realization, and so on. While theorizing the production of space, Lefebvre never stopped thinking from and with Marx. In short, in the blind pursuit of theoretical innovation as an end in itself, which sometimes seems to be merely a change of clothing following the latest intellectual fashion, radical critique is easily evaded in favor of interpretations that are sophisticated but fall far short of contributing to radical critique. In this context, references to Lefebvre can only be made in inconsiderate and disjointed ways.

## 4.3. Conclusion

It is not new to observe that Marxism and critical theory have lost ground to poststructuralist interpretations over the last few decades. While mirroring this wider shift in social theory, the recent postcolonial literature in urban studies has approached Lefebvre's heterodox Marxism. As we have just seen, postcolonial readings of Lefebvre have not been unproblematic, given their misinterpretations and huge omissions. One concern emerging from all this is that there seems to be a need to restore critical thought while examining the cities, metropolises, and spatialities of the global South. Thus, before analyzing the case studies in the second part of this thesis, in the next chapter (Chapter 5) I will deal with the problem of commodification, which in Harvey's words (2014) should be understood as potentially ubiquitous in our time. Besides outlining and discussing Harvey's recent (2014) interpretation of the subject, I will also engage with other critics and interpreters of capitalism who have opened up prominent avenues for reflection on the intricate relationships between markets, capitalism, and society – such as Karl Polanyi (2001 [1944]), Jürgen Habermas (1987 [1981]), and Henri Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]). Thus, in the following chapter, together with the leading idea of the chapter, that is, the proposition that in contemporary capitalism there is a potential commodification of everything (Harvey, 2014), I will further discuss Lefebvre's work, namely, his (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) *Critique of Everyday Life*. This interlude on (de)commodification will be important for framing my interpretation of the changes that have occurred in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships (chapters 6 and 7). Later on, in chapters 8 and 9, I shall come back to commodification and other research themes we have discussed in this chapter, such as the urbanization of society and the production of space, in view of the urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's

townships. As I have already mentioned, the examination of these two urban realities of the global South will help us to 'theorize again,' giving critical (urban) theory a new impetus through the assimilation of experiences derived from other social topographies.

# INTERREGNUM

**Chapter 5 - The Potential Commodification of Everything**

The subject that I wish to discuss in this chapter is based on the now well-settled notion that capital has transcended the walls of factories and industries and that, as such, capitalist accumulation no longer has its foundations only on the exploitation of labor power, that is, on surplus value production and extraction. Long ago, Marx foresaw the creation of the world market and with it the relentless expansion of the commodity realm.[59] The subject inspired many of Lefebvre's (1976 [1973], 1991 [1974]) reflections about the 'third term' and the conceptual triad formed by land, labor, and capital, instead of the usual dualist reading that opposes labor and capital. The extension of capitalism far beyond the realm of productive labor has been revisited and expanded by other interpreters and critics of capitalism from markedly different points of view, Polanyi, Habermas, and Harvey among them. In what follows, I will seek to discuss some of these classic understandings. I will return to Marx's and Polanyi's propositions about market expansion, to Lefebvre's critique of everyday life, and to Harvey's points about the potential commodification of everything.

The progressive assimilation of everyday life into the capitalist economy and commodification have been usually discussed from the context of constitution and expansion of the consumer society in Western Europe and the United States. One point I find particularly interesting in considering these processes from the point of view of favelas and townships is that these two urban areas have been imagined as spaces on the margins, on the edges of the city, on the margins of society and of the capitalist economy. Indeed, at least from a historical point of view, favelas and townships may be conceived as unincorporated residues, which in the case of townships were purposely left aside insofar as townships were planned as far as possible removed from the so-called formal city. This situation may give way to their conceptualization as some sort of 'external constituents,' to use the expression in vogue among some postcolonial theorists (Chapter 3), that is, spaces that somehow lie beyond the capitalist economy. But, as we begin to scrutinize the everyday life of places like Soweto and Rio de Janeiro's favelas in the second part of this thesis, we will see that commodifying forces are extant in these

---

[59] Marx formulated this idea in the *Communist Manifesto*, together with Engels (2000 [1848]). Marx further developed it in the *Grundrisse* (2011 [1857-58]) and in the so-called chapter unpublished of *Capital* (Marx, 1978 [1863-66]).

territories of urban marginalization. Moreover, we will show that commodification has different facets on the ground.

At least since Polanyi (2001 [1944]) we know that we should not regard commodification as inexorable or unstoppable. We must be also aware that, as Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) suggests, despite all misery and banality, everyday life persists as a rich and irreducible ground. On the other hand, we also know, at least since Marx and also with Lefebvre and Harvey, that the tendency of capital is to expand itself *ad infinitum*, making itself present even in the most remote corners of our urbanizing world, from freezing Alaska to the warm rain forests across the Amazon region, including too the urban margins of the global South (Brenner and Schimd, 2014). Capital has conquered the world to the point that there seems to be no epistemological feasibility for any kind of 'external constituent' (Brenner and Schimd, 2014). Favelas and townships will be examined from such a theoretical orientations in the second part of this study. All of them will inform my interpretation about favelas and townships (chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9).

## 5.1. The restitution of the 'third term'

In the *Grundrisse*, Marx (2011 [1857-58]: 445, 448) indicates how capital, in its struggle to shorten accumulation cycles, tends to progressively reduce circulation time while suppressing geographic and physical distances. Marx (2011 [1857-58]: 206, 518) suggests that, even though capital historically proceeds from simple circulation, it carries and multiplies value not in a simple circle, but in a circle that expands itself as a spiral. The purpose of capital is to ever increase itself (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]: 210, 243, 400). As such, capital expands the universe of exchange and strives to 'conquer all the Earth as its own market' (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]: 445). Since the time of circulation of capital must tend to zero (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]: 525, 551), capital develops the means of transportation and communications and credit, annihilating space through time (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]: 432, 445). Therefore, under capitalism, not only the necessary labor time tends to be suppressed but also the time of circulation inasmuch as both of them are inherent obstacles to capital accumulation. Marx (2011 [1857-58]: 197-200, 234, 251, 262, 442, 524-7, 531-2, 566) indicates, thus, how production and consumption are tied together in the figure of capital, with production being subordinated to exchange on all sides (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]: 622).

Marx (2011 [1857-58]: 332-3, 610, 646) also suggests that by propagating itself capital creates new branches of production at the same time it submits to itself all that preceded it, including nature, land, which are transmuted into modern landed property (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]: 215, 332-4, 620). 'Capital did not participate in the creation of the world, but found production and products already ready before subjecting them to its process' (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]: 565). Marx (2011 [1857-58]: 429-34, 438, 574-5, 604-7) indicates as well that capital accumulation can be enhanced by the construction of roads, railways, canals, aqueducts, buildings, that is, as incorporated capital to earth. In addition to reducing the time of circulation of goods, and hence of capital, these and other means of transportation and communication can themselves be produced with the labor of others, contributing, accordingly, to surplus value production. Marx (2011 [1857-58]: 628) also indicates that the tendency of the rate of profit to the fall could be contained by creating new branches of production in which there is a need for more immediate labor in proportion to capital. In view of all this, one could argue that Marx (2011 [1857-58]) outlines the thesis that Lefebvre (1976 [1973], 1991 [1974], 2002 [1970], 2008 [1972]) would fully develop more than one century later, that of the production of space.

All the aforementioned points of the *Grundrisse* (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]) have encouraged Lefebvre's thought, notably the notions that capital does not create the world but submits it to itself, and that capital encompasses production and consumption. In any case, it seems that for Lefebvre the most significant contribution of the *Grundrisse* resided in the enunciation of the 'third term,' the term that was eventually eclipsed in Marx's work. Lefebvre (1976 [1973]: 8, 12, 1991 [1974]: 358-61) indicates that in the *Grundrisse* Marx (2011 [1857-58]: 204, 215-8) considers the development of capitalism from three elements instead of two. There would not only be an antagonism between capital and labor, but between land, labor, and capital. The historical combination of these three forces, which are contradictorily confronted with each other, is what frames the rise and expansion of capital. The 'land-labor-capital relation' would, therefore, be the 'constitutive trinity of capitalist society' (Lefebvre, 1976 [1973]: 8, 12). Lefebvre (1976 [1973]: 8, 12; 1991 [1974], 122-4, 155-7) says, moreover, that in the *Grundrisse*, although always guided by a quest for the genesis of his own age, Marx (2011 [1857-58]) takes into account historical mediations. Without neglecting the forms, Marx (2011 [1857-58]) departs from the contents of concrete history (Lefebvre, 1976 [1973]: 8, 12, 1991 [1974]: 122-4, 155-7).

Marx shelved this line of understanding. So much so that his choice in *Capital* was to begin by the examination of abstract forms (the most prominent of which was certainly the commodity form) to only progressively move toward the concrete (Marx, 2017 [1867] [1885] [1894]). In this respect, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 359-60) remarks how only in the last volume of Marx's (2017 [1894]) unfinished work the question of land is carefully analyzed and the considerations about the soil, the subsoil, and the built domain reappear. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 157) shows how the dual-abstract scheme of the pure form in its bipolar structure (use value versus exchange value), which ends up culminating in the notion of surplus value, and the correlated homogenizing rationality of *Capital* preponderated over the triadic critique of capitalist society Marx sketched in the *Grundrisse*. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 359) argues that 'such a reducing scheme' did not come without costs, however. Contradiction, antagonism, and class struggle were to be placed within the sphere of production: Capital versus labor, benefits versus wages, bourgeoisie versus proletariat. In recovering elements and moments left aside by Marx and, above all, relegated by many of his successors, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 270, 319, 358-60) argues that radical critique cannot be promoted by the means of binary oppositions, since instead of two terms capitalism comprises three terms, three movements, three essential forces: Land, labor, and capital. That is, rents, wages, and benefits, 'all of them in a global unity, the surplus value' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 270).

As we have seen in our analysis of Lefebvre's work (Chapter 4), with the extension of capitalism to the whole space, the restitution of the third element takes its necessity. Land, understood in its broad meaning, as nature, city, everyday life, the entire space, and with it those directly concerned, the interested; *everything* and *everybody*, takes part in the contradictory reality of capital. As I have already said, a potential problem in Lefebvre's interpretation is the prominence he sometimes gives to the question of surplus value production through the production of space to the detriment of other dynamic forces characteristic of the historical-geography of capitalism, such as the variegated forms of expropriation and dispossession, which are always more or less illegal and near-invariably violent (Chapter 4). Another potential problem is that the focus on land as a pre-capitalist legacy and the correlate emphasis on the issue of land rents can lead to an excessively univocal association between land and the so-called landowner classes. Landlords certainly exist and charge their rents, but the potentiality of the restitution of the 'third term' (land) does not rely on such a restricted connotation. On the contrary, its strength resides precisely in its broad meaning as nature, city, everyday life,

the totality of space, and in the resulting enlargement of the scope of critique of capitalism.

## 5.2. The great transformation

Karl Polanyi's (2001 [1944]) powerful study of the emergence and fall of the market system in Europe in the nineteenth century is indeed one of the most successful and influential interpretations of the dangers to society of the implementation of the liberal utopia of the self-regulating market. In the *Great Transformation*, Polanyi (2001 [1944]) focuses on the relationships between economy and society to offer one of the most compelling criticisms of economic liberalism. He denounces the myth of the free market. Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 31, 45-6, 48, 57, 71) argues that everywhere until the nineteenth century the market was a mere part of society and that the 'economy system' was always embedded into the 'social system,' not the other way around. He (2001 [1944]: 49-56) reminds us that principles of behavior such as reciprocity and redistribution can regulate economic life and that production for gain does not necessarily have to organize social life. But, even if unprecedented, the market economy is exclusively based on self-interest and the pursuit of gain. Under these circumstances, society becomes an accessory to the market (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 74-5, 79). 'Instead of economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 60). Thus, one of the destructive effects of the liberal utopia of the self-regulating market is that the economy ceases to be part of society in order to become the regulating principle of society. 'A market economy can only exist in a market society' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 74).

The transition from a situation in which markets were regulated by society to another in which society was regulated by supposedly self-regulating markets constituted a radical transformation of society itself: Everything should find a price in the market. 'Accordingly, there are markets for all elements of industry, not only for goods (…) but also for labour, land, and money, their prices being called respectively commodity prices, wages, rent, and interest' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 72). Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 41-4) denounces the destructive effects of the commodification of labor, land, and money in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and mechanized production. 'Machine production in a commercial society involves, in effect, no less a transformation than that of the natural and human substance of society into commodities' and this situation 'must disjoint man's

relationships and threaten his natural habitat with annihilation' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 44). The 'satanic mill' that the utopia of the self-regulating market set in motion engulfed society and meant a catastrophic transformation to the lives of ordinary people, 'a veritable abyss of human degradation' (Polanyi 2001 [1944]: 19, 41). Polanyi suggests that in the course of the great transformation human life and the natural conditions of life, which he terms '*Habitation*,' were catastrophically disrupted by economic progress, or '*Improvement*' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 36). The price of economic progress was social disarticulation (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 79).

However, the Hungarian author (2001 [1944]: 75-6, 122, 187, 239) indicates that labor, land, and money are not real commodities, but fictitious commodities in the sense that they were not originally produced for sale in the market. Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 75, 171, 187) recalls that labor is human beings themselves, that is, people who ultimately constitute society, and that the land is nature, the natural environment, in which human life and society exist. Money is not something that was produced either. It emerged as a way of mediating exchange. Money has no utility in itself, it only serves to purchase goods to which prices are attributed (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 206). Labor, land and money are, therefore, not originally produced by man for sale in the market. They are real commodities. Nevertheless, they are basic requirements for industrial production and market economy (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 76, 78). Polanyi (2001 [1944]) argues that the transmutation of labor, land, and money into fictitious commodities could not exist without the destruction of the human substance and society themselves. Polanyi's thesis is that 'the idea of a self-adjusting market implied a stark Utopia. Such an institution could not exist for any length of time without annihilating the human and natural substance of society' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 3-4). The market economy presents serious perils to society.

> To allow the market mechanism to be sole director of the fate of human beings and their natural environment, indeed, even of the amount and use of purchasing power, would result in the demolition of society. (…) Undoubtedly, labor, land, and money markets are essential to a market economy. But no society could stand the effects of such a system of crude fictions even for the shortest stretch of time unless its human and natural substance as well as its business organization was protected against the ravages of this satanic mill (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 76).

These institutions are disrupted by the very fact that a market economy is foisted upon an entirely differently organized community; labor and land are made into commodities, which, again, is only a short formula for the liquidation of every and any cultural institution in an organic society (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 167).

Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 79-80, 134-7, 225) demonstrates that almost concomitantly to the great transformation of labor, land, and money into fictitious commodities there were responses and resistance from society. In a self-protection movement, society created barriers, if not to prevent, at least, to regulate the commodification of labor, land, and money. 'Society protected itself against the perils inherent in a self-regulating market system' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 80). Society's self-preservation movement had to take place to prevent the catastrophic consequences of a self-regulating economy. Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 79, 134-8, 223) proposes, thus, the existence of a double movement personified by two organizing principles of society – on the one hand, the self-regulating market and, on the other, the social protection of labor, land and productive organization – and calls for regulation, and control of the market by the state and society.

For Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 138, 185-6, 206-8, 211, 214, 226) the market was, can, and should be regulated by social policies and legislation, trade union action, labor rights, occupational safety laws, environmental legislation, tariff and customs policies, land protection laws, the creation and operation of central banks, monetary policy, and so on and so forth. Against the dangers of the free market, Polanyi recommends, thus, which could be generically called protectionism. Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 211) suggests that Roosevelt's New Deal was a successful model of how to regulate market activity and protect society, that is, how to protect human beings and nature. In the last part of the *Great Transformation*, Polanyi (2001 [1944]) argues that society should, therefore, use political and democratic tools to control and regulate the economy and the market. The economy should be subordinated once again to society by political control but without the extirpation of democratic institutions (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 244-5). In a word, Polanyi sought a balanced solution that did not imply freedom at the expense of justice and security nor security and control with the loss of freedom (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 245, 263).

An important point to be noted in the argument developed by Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 145-7, 151-6) is that the free market and the commodification of labor, land, and

money were planned, whereas society's self-protection movement occurred more or less spontaneously, in unplanned and unconscious ways, involving various groups in society, from landowners to the emerging proletariat (the latter being sometimes described by the author as the protector of society against the dangers of mechanized civilization (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 105). Given the wide spectrum of social groups involved in different countries almost concomitantly, Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 157) comes to take the reaction against the expansion of the market economy as a sort of 'total situation.' Even if sometimes Polanyi recognizes the role of landed and working classes in the self-protection countermovement, he (2001 [1944]: 158-60) tends to highlight the general interest of society as a whole in contrast to the free market. Polanyi's (2001 [1944]: 160-2, 169, 182, 184) insistence that not only economic but social interests, such as status, security, stability, recognition, respect, were at the root of the countermovement can be read from such a perspective. The same can be said about the author's emphasis on the eminently cultural character of social disorganization, expressed by a cultural vacuum (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 165), to the detriment of economic aspects such as exploitation, whether in the industrialized England or in colonized societies around the world (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 164-8, 171). He strives to offer an interpretation that goes beyond class and class interests.

Of course, cultural degradation does stem from the commodification of labor and land, and from the separation of one from another. But this should not conceal the economic purpose that ultimately causes this separation and the correlate cultural catastrophe (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 164, 188), that is, the pressure for labor and land to be transformed into factors of production. Moreover, as it is well known, since the 1970s the widespread and supposedly permanent understanding that it is necessary to regulate the market has disappeared in the course of a return to the faith in the free market. The replication of neoliberal policies in several countries illustrate this. Under neoliberalism, once more, free market utopia has had deleterious consequences for society and nature. However, contrary to Polanyi's view of society as a whole, it is necessary to observe that the extension of markets usually favors particular classes and/or social groups to the detriment of others.

Halperin (2004) criticizes Polanyi's notion of society as a whole. She argues that Polanyi fails to perceive relevant long-term transformations precisely because of his lack of precision in dealing with social classes and their relations with the state and with the international system. In contrast to Polanyi, Halperin (2004) questions the general logic

of the double movement and argues that the destruction of regulations in the nineteenth-century Europe represented not the victory of liberal commercial interests but of aristocratic agrarian elites well established in autocratic power structures. Halperin (2004) posits the engine of the double movement in class interests within Europe. She suggests a double movement characterized by, on the one hand, internal repression and exploitation (and the resulting surplus value production, at that time, mainly, absolute surplus value) and, on the other, external expansion (in the form of imperialist disputes over markets for the realization of the surplus value). She indicates that the consistent development of internal markets in the United States and Europe occurs only after 1945, and came to be gradually dismantled from the 1970s onwards. In short, Halperin (2004) argues that the expansion of markets was not the work of a 'soulless mechanism' and neither was the countermovement a creation of the whole of society. Rather, both of them were molded by specific sectors of society.

> In focusing on how society as a whole experienced the rise of the self-regulating market and the commodification of land, labor, and capital, Polanyi ignored the fact that, while we have abundant evidence of lower class misery, we have little evidence that the privileged classes suffered. Instead, he treated these political changes as if their impact was like that of a plague, visited on rich and poor alike and in equal measure. The story of the rise and expansion of industrial capitalism can be truly told only through an account of the experiences of classes, not of nations or whole societies' (Halperin, 2004: 18).

Polanyi seems to want to make it clear that he does not subscribe to the tradition of Marxist thought, probably because he wrote the *Great Transformation* in the United States during McCarthyism. In doing so, he placed too much emphasis on machinery and mechanization, leaving aside not only class conflicts but also capital's inherent drive to *ad infinitum* expansion. Even if he (2001 [1944]: 188, 190) acknowledges the subjection of the entire surface of the planet to the needs of industrial society, which includes the disruptive incorporation of distant peoples into the core of the great transformation, in his argument lurks the idea that social disorganization (both that of the West and that of the colonized peoples) might be caused by the introduction of technical progress (Polanyi 2001 [1944]: 35, 43, 77, 93, 103, 105).

From this point of view, it is not surprising Polanyi's (2001 [1944]: 115, 133-6, 175-9) enthusiasm for Robert Owen's cooperative villages and Owen's sense of the social as something broader than the economic question. As Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 179) textually states: With the introduction of legislative and regulatory measures, not only better wages, or even in spite of an increase in real wages, productivity increased and workers began to enjoy better living conditions. But, despite all this, labor, as well as the other two factors of production, land and money, continued to be treated as commodities, in more or less regulated markets, but, after all, as commodities. Polanyi's Owenian perspective (2001 [1944]: 178-9) does not remove labor from the market. There is no decommodification of labor. At best, social protection can regulate the supply and demand of labor in the market. And as such, labor, land, and money, shall remain immersed in the realm of exchange and exchange value, a kingdom commanded by the self-referenced purpose of capital to ever expand itself. Like we have just seen, Marx (2011 [1857-58]) shows that capital's drive is to produce more and more surplus value and to realize more and more surplus value in an endless movement that is best described not by a circle but by a spiral.

Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 205) cries out for the restitution of the bonds between the political and economic spheres under the sign of the state. In a vision that borders Hegelianism, the state would protect and restore the organic whole. Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 39, 79) recalls, from what happened in England during the great transformation, that the pace of change is as important as the direction of change. He indicates that society can regulate the course of transformation by channeling it into less destructive avenues. It remains to be seen, however, whether such avenues would be, in any way, emancipatory. At the end of the day, one must recognize that the regulation of the economic by the political has limits under capitalism. 'After a century of blind "improvement" man is restoring his "habitation." If industrialism is not to extinguish the race, it must be subordinated to the requirements of man's nature' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]: 257). As we shall see below while revisiting Lefebvre's (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) critique of everyday life, the post-war state and its several regulations and controls, including urban planning, have not restored the 'organic whole' of society.[60] Although relatively

---

[60] Independently of the obvious differences, Polanyi's notion (2001 [1944]: 162) that society's self-preservative movement has similarities to Lefebvre's (1978 [1968], 1991 [1974]) idea of 'those directly interested.' It is also possible to see similarities between the two authors when Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 105, 162, 192-5, 200) indicates that the landed and working classes are the defenders of the social factory inasmuch as they obstructed the mobilization of land and labor. Both authors denounce separations – albeit

successful in a small part of the world over a very short period of time – in Scandinavia from post-1945 to the 1970s – it seems plain that regulation and control were not able to find freedom for all. But, even so, as Harvey (2014) demonstrates, much of what Polanyi has said makes sense in the context of the current neoliberal drift. In any case, we should not overlook the harmful effects of the earlier stage of state capitalism – assumed in its various manifestations, that is, from the Soviet model to Apartheid to the Western welfare state.

## 5.3. The potential commodification of everything

In *Seventeen Contradictions and the end of Capitalism*, Harvey (2014) begins by indicating how a neoliberal consensus was formed around the 1970s, which ended up retracting the public provision of various services in order to open them up to private capital and exchange value. From this, Harvey points out how, along with this neoliberal shift, many use values that were subsidized by the state were privatized and marketed (for instance, housing, health, education, energy, water, infrastructure, and so on). Today, commodification reaches truly unsuspected limits, encompassing history, traditions, and culture, which are transformed into spectacles, for example, in the fields of tourism or professional sports; and nature, which is commodified through climate derivatives, carbon credits, air pollution rights that are traded in speculative markets, or even life itself and its biological processes in the form of intellectual property of genetic sequences (Harvey, 2014: 56, 70-1, 143-4, 231, 244, 248, 255). Only elements of the natural world manifestly non-divisible and therefore not easily accommodated within the logic of private appropriation of wealth, as the atmosphere or the oceans appear to eventually escape this overwhelming logic (Harvey, 2014: 56).

Harvey (2014: 67) reminds us from Polanyi (2001 [1944]) that in all societies before capitalism there were barriers to the private appropriation of common wealth and, thus, to the commodification and monetization of everything. However, in the society of capital everything seems to receive a price, regardless of whether it is a product of social labor or not, and regardless of whether it is produced directly as a commodity or not (Harvey, 2014: 67). For example, land, nature, and so-called natural resources, are not products of human labor, but are central to capitalist accumulation (Harvey, 2014: 70).

---

differently presented. The attack on the state and its planning by Lefebvre is certainly the point of disagreement between the two of them.

Harvey (2014: 68) quotes Polanyi to warn us of the risks that the 'satanic mill' poses to society and to the very accumulation of capital. He argues that, without the protections created, above all, in the period following the publication of Polanyi's *Great Transformation* (2001 [1944]), society is increasingly at risk of being annihilated.

For Harvey (2014), this is the meaning of the current neoliberal consensus. It is precisely from this diagnosis that he (2014: 66-9, 71, 78, 93) states that what he (2003a) conceptualizes as accumulation by dispossession lies at the dynamic nucleus of capital: The commodification of labor, land and money never disappeared, never ceased to exist. On the contrary, commodification has been expanded to incorporate more and more aspects of our vital world into capital accumulation circuits (Harvey, 2014: 248). 'In this constructed world certain truths stand out as self-evident, chief of which is that everything under the sun must be in principle and wherever technically possible subject to commodification, monetisation and privatisation' (Harvey, 2014: 71).

Everywhere and in all spheres of social life, use and use value are successively subjected to exchange and exchange value. 'The colonisation of our lifeworld by capital accelerates. The endless and increasingly mindless exponential accumulation of capital is accompanied by an endless and increasingly mindless extension of capital's ecology into our lifeworld' (Harvey, 2014: 255). Relying on Marx (2011 [1857-58]), Harvey (2014: 47-9, 66, 228-30, 236-9) denounces that the lack of limits inscribed in the monetized order of capital, that is, capital's inherent tendency to accumulate and expand itself *ad infinitum*, explains the constant pressure for the creation of new markets, speculative business with fictitious capital (capital that is profitable, but that does not produce value), as well as the endless succession of diverse forms of accumulation by dispossession. The recent housing crisis in various parts of the world exemplifies the scope and harmful effects of such pressures. Harvey (2014: 228-9) asserts that zero growth is incompatible with the capitalist economy since every capitalist aims to have more capital at the end of a day than he/she had at the beginning. It is this tendency of capital to expand itself *ad infinitum* that would be at the root of the potential commodification of everything.

> When everything – but everything – is commodified and monetised, then there is a limit beyond which this process of expansion cannot go. How close we are to that limit right now is hard to judge but nearly four decades of neoliberal privatisation strategies have already accomplished a great deal and in many

parts of the world there is not much left to enclose and privatize' (Harvey, 2014: 231).

Unlike Polanyi (2001 [1944]), Harvey does not urge state interventions in markets as the ultimate solution to such a state of affairs. 'While these interventions may seem progressive, their effect is to further promote the penetration of market processes and market valuations into all aspects of our lifeworld' (Harvey, 2014: 245). Very often state interventions in the field of reproduction end up only pushing the complete monetization of everything (Harvey, 2014: 190). As such, he (2014: 195) argues that regulatory policies, such as titling of land ownership, do not guarantee that the urban marginalized will not be dispossessed, since land property regularization may imply the monetization and commodification of land. 'The sphere of social reproduction has in fact almost everywhere become the site of highly intrusive capitalist activities' (Harvey, 2014: 191). We shall examine how this occurred in light of our case studies in the second part of this work (see chapters 6 and 7). In short, from what Habermas (1987 [1981]) termed as 'lifeworld' and Lefebvre (1972 [1968]) as 'everyday life,' Harvey (2014) draws attention to the penetration of almost every aspect of life by capital.

With the potential extension of exchange and exchange value to the whole world, with the potential commodification of everything, now *everything* is in contradiction. Harvey (2014: 77) indicates, based on Marx (2011 [1857-58], 2017 [1867] [1885]), how with the contradictory unity between production and realization, the totality of social life is crossed by capital and its contradictions. What capital fails to gain in one area, it ends up recovering in other. 'Capital may lose or concede to workers' demands at the point of production but regain what has been conceded or lost (and then some) by excessive extractions in the living space' (Harvey, 2014: 93). The contradiction between capital and labor is no longer the only nor the principal contradiction of capitalism.

Harvey's (2014) conclusion is that 'there is necessarily a contradictory unity in class conflict and class struggle across the spheres of working and living' (Harvey, 2014: 94), being especially complicated 'to reverse the commodification, monetisation and marketisation of all use values without severely curtailing the terrain for capital accumulation' (Harvey, 2014: 239). That is, 'the commodification of daily life and social reproduction has proceeded apace and created a complex space for anti-capitalist struggle' (Harvey, 2014: 191). The legendary proletarian vanguard (especially that of the so-called most advanced countries), as well as its characteristic conflicts in the world of production, open up and combine with the vast and ambivalent terrain of everyday life.

'Processes of social reproduction get re-engineered by capital from without. Everyday life is perverted to the circulation of capital' (Harvey, 2014: 268). Dispossession and the potential commodification of everything characterize our age, they overrun the lifeworld everywhere. There would be, then, a penetration of monetization, privatization, and commodification into the very bowels of everyday life, and this would be so everywhere, both in the South and in the North. Indeed, as we shall see in a moment in the second part of this thesis, places like favelas and townships are not left out of such trends.[61]

## 5.4. The critique of everyday life

In opposition to the Althusserian thesis of epistemic rupture, which divides Marx's work between a young Marx, the philosopher and humanist, that of the *Manuscripts* and the theory of alienation, and an old Marx, the scientist and economist, the Marx of *Capital*, Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 246) proposes the existence of a guiding thread throughout Marx's work. Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 246) suggests that commodity fetishism could be understood as a culminating moment of Marx's theory of alienation. Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 101, 179-82, 198-9) suggests that the notion of alienation is a structuring axis in Marx's work. From this, Lefebvre (2014 [1961] [1981]: 80-3, 98-9) makes the concept of alienation the basis for the knowledge, critique, and transformation of everyday life.

As we have seen earlier in Chapter 4, Lefebvre indicates that there is a vertiginous process in progress in which *everything* (the totality of space) is sold and bought (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 374). With the extension of the world of the commodity to the entire space, 'the lived is crushed and defeated by the conceived' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 109). He denounces, therefore, a terrible reduction of everyday life, of the *lived*. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 384) argues that there is an extension of commodity fetishism from goods produced in space to the space that is now itself produced as a commodity. There I have affirmed that this idea gains even more powerful contours in Lefebvre's (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) critique of everyday life (Chapter 4). This is so because, with the expansion of capital, not only the entire space but the totality of social life itself, including

---

[61] Not for nothing Harvey (2014: 94) alludes precisely to Rio's favelas and hazardous shelter conditions in South Africa while dealing with politics of dispossession and the production of space. I wish to go beyond brief allusions and make an effort to concretize how favelas and townships have been penetrated by such processes. This is precisely what I want to achieve in the second part of this thesis.

everyday life, is embraced by capital and its contradictions. The economic sphere that previously did not predominate over social life gains more and more power invading everyday life (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 529, 594, 614, 618, 623, 629, 631). Lefebvre states that there is an expansion of alienation from production to the totality of the social world.[62]

Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) states that the very separation between work and free time as one of the most evident alienations. He (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 227-9, 253-4, 424) argues that, in the communitarian society, everyday life took place in an integrated whole, in a unity of three determinations or moments: Need-work-pleasure or do-say-live or even leisure-work-private life (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 32, 448-9, 485). Back then, there was no separation between leisure and work, festival and trivial, history and lived, between the high spheres of the state and everyday life within society (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 111, 222, 227-9, 252-3, 346, 383, 388, 403, 414). The extraordinary, sacred, divine, the festival, even without completely coinciding with them, were integrated into the ordinary, secular, the everyday, all of which linked to cyclical rhythms proper to the cosmos and nature (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 35-6, 227, 525-6, 596-9, 615, 650). Lefebvre denounces precisely the separation and fragmentation of these dimensions and moments of social life under capitalism. He wishes to restore the unity of the moments into an integrated whole. Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 643) envisions the reunion of the several moments, the festival and the ordinary, which would take everyday life to a new and higher level. Lefebvre's (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 487, 498-500) reference to the 'homo ludens' and to 'play' as a cross-functional activity that would unify work and freedom, production and creation, appears from this notion of a reunified everyday life.[63]

With the separation between festival and everyday life, work and leisure, life is enormously impoverished everywhere. Like productive activity, it finds itself

---

[62] The French author (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 83-4) notes that Marx himself derived several alienations from the relationship between wage labor and capital: Alienation of the direct producers from their products and from their productive activities, and also from themselves. Lefebvre takes such an interpretation a step further and proposes that in contemporary capitalism alienation, or rather, several alienations, encompass both work and life outside of work. New forms of alienation (technological, of the everyday life) are added to the old ones (productive, political, and ideological) (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 619).

[63] Trebitsch (2014a) notes that it is possible to say that such notions underlie the very idea of urban society (see Chapter 4). For example, in *The Right to the City*, Lefebvre (1978 [1968]) bets on the emergence of a society based on playful centrality and space. For Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 305), the party must be restored. It is the revolution insofar as it allows the reinsertion of the spontaneous into social life (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 513).

compartmentalized, segmented, and castrated of meaning. Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 60-1, 195) reminds us that reducing working time is a prerequisite, but that there may be alienation in leisure too. 'Fragmented labour has altered the relation between work and life outside work, and automation has altered it even more' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 527). From this point of view, Lefebvre chooses to develop a critique that, he hopes, should be capable of transforming everyday life. We must pay attention to the indication that there may be alienation in life outside work. We have seen earlier how capitalist accumulation increasingly expanded from the worksite toward social life, opening up new frontiers across the world, creating new sectors, and invading other spheres of life henceforth linked to capitalist accumulation. Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) argues that under contemporary capitalism accumulation goes beyond the strict limits of production to attain all moments of social life. This means that the time outside work, the so-called free time or leisure, tends to be turned into time of consumption: 'As Guy Debord so energically puts it, everyday life has literally been "colonized." It has been brought to an extreme point of alienation, in other words profound dissatisfaction, in the name of the latest technology and "consumer society"' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 305).[64] In this way, everyday life is torn apart by having its moments separated and rhythms redefined by exchange and exchange value, which constrains any rationality based on use and use value.[65]

But what exactly is everyday life? Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 209-10, 378-9, 514) defines it as the very ground of ambiguity. According to Lefebvre, everyday life is doubly determined: Raw human material and irreducible residue, an uncontrolled sector, an ill-defined frontier between the controlled and the uncontrolled sector, and, thus, fertile ground of spontaneity (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 107-9, 119, 209-11, 272, 351, 358-61, 431, 435, 476, 493, 629, 631). For Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 382-3), everyday life represents a residue indicating that the social cannot be reduced to the functional order of capital. 'Beyond the zone bureaucracy can reach, or, rather, in its margins, the unformed and the spontaneous live on' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947]

---

[64] Tourism, for instance, is one of the expressions of this expansion of accumulation beyond the strict space of production and work. And it is good to remember here the strong ties between work and time outside of work. Even when the tourist is free to decide how to spend his/her free time, he/she always does so in terms of the time he/she can escape from the world of work and the trivial daily life that comes with such a world.
[65] Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 614, 618) echoes Polanyi (2001 [1944]) when saying that communitarian societies had a political economy, an economic sphere that was important, but was not predominant. 'The economic sphere per se becomes the "base" and the "axis" of society and of its history. (…) The process of accumulation shatters and subordinates whatever resists to it' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 623).

[1961] [1981]: 358-9). That is why he (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 104-5) asserts that any critical thought should leave abstractions away to probe the terrain of everyday life. Philosophy must be tested by life itself (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 104-5).

However, he (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 337-9, 347) also warns us that critique should not be lost in the mere inventory of the miseries of everyday life, it must not dwell on suffering, on the sordid aspects of everyday life. Critique of everyday life should not derive into a mere description of banality (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 553) or into a sort of 'sociology of boredom' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 323, 369, 387). Lefebvre's dialectical thought (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 147, 240-1, 340, 490, 549, 555-7, 582, 587, 618, 641-2, 644-6) tends toward the possible. 'It is in the everyday and its ambiguous depths that possibilities are born and the present lives out its relation with the future' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 490). Critique must be able to insinuate the possible.

Radical critique must, above all, point out how everyday life lags behind, in debt, in relation to the possible, that is, in relation to the potentialities of an everyday life restored as a totality (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 147, 250, 271, 340, 352, 439-40, 566). It is in this sense that Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 70, 317, 387, 393, 524) argues that transformation, revolution, cannot take place in the higher spheres of political life, of the state. He (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 314-5, 618) argues that the metamorphosis of everyday life and historical change can never be dissociated. Transformation can only exist at the level of everyday life, at the level of the *lived*, in ordinary people's lives. Thus, based on Marx, he states that 'to change the world is above all to change the way the everyday, real life is lived' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 329). Everyday life must be metamorphosed, radically transformed (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 535, 554-5, 618), which also means that the state must disappear, it must be reintegrated into the social body (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 535-6).

Critique must endure the trivial, it must deal with the level of everyday life. Critical (urban) thought must descend to the very terrain of everyday life, it must penetrate it (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 161-2, 210). As I have pointed out in the introduction (Chapter 1), Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 216) suggests that examining a trivial day in an ordinary person's life may offer a consistent critique of society. The examination of how work, leisure, and family life are, or are not, conjugated into real life can lead to radical critique. But it is fair to ask if a day in an ordinary person's

life in Paris would not be different from a trivial day in an ordinary person's life in Soweto or in one of Rio's favelas. The French author (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 217, 248-9, 486, 502, 609-10) is aware of the inevitable uneven development that characterizes progress.

> Three determinations, three 'formants,' three dimensions: need, labour, pleasure. Each has its own reality; not one stands alone. Without losing its own determination, each one refers to the other two, influencing and transforming them, and suffering the repercussions of this transformation. (…) So distinct are the three determinations that, in social practice and in history, they are allotted to different and even conflictual individual, and groups (classes). We have the man of need (who is out of work), the man at work (who has few needs and little pleasure), and the man of pleasure (which does not mean that he achieves fulfilment) (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 485-6).

Against the optimistic idea that progress unfolds evenly across all sectors of social life in a continuous and unconstrained way, Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 609-10) suggests that everyday life is best depicted as an underdeveloped sector. Everyday life is falling short of its potential, and this seems to be so everywhere (although Lefebvre, like Marx himself, often privileges the examination of societies in which the so-called mode of production is allegedly more developed). None of the three men mentioned by Lefebvre (the man of need, the man at work, and the man of pleasure), none of them, for different reasons, has fulfilled their human potential. To each of them corresponds an everyday misery, respectively, deprivation, frustration, and alienation. None of them embodies the 'homo ludens' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 487). Fragmentation, separation, and alienation are ubiquitous. In view of this, at the end of the first volume of *Critique of Everyday Life*, Lefebvre (2014 [1947]: 260-6) suggests that everywhere there is a systematization of the absurd, the same sort of systematization that ended up giving way to Nazis concentration camps. This can be grotesquely appreciated in the functionality inherent to industrial cities and modern residential complexes (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 265).

Everyday life has been invaded by what Lefebvre conceptualizes as a non-symbolic functionality that characterizes 'industrial society' or 'technological society' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 594). In the second volume of *Critique of*

*Everyday Life*, he (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 594) asks whether, with computer advances, everyday life will not be ultimately regulated by a 'colossal mechanism,' a kind of 'gigantic machine,' which operates by cold precise signals. Everyday life would, as a result, be reduced to a factory, the factory of everyday life. He deduces such a possibility, in reality, a worst case scenario, from the extreme functionalization of the city, and of the dwelling. The city was reduced to a system of signals (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 604). The dwelling was confined in the replicable habitat of housing complexes in which housing units bear an unfortunate resemblance to boxes or even cages. Lefebvre chooses to term them as 'dwelling machines' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 81, 2003 [1970]: 81) or 'machines for living in' (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 248, 372-3, 605).[66]

> The problem in question is the problem of everyday life. Everyday life lies at the ill-defined, cutting edge where the accumulative and the non-accumulative intersect. On the one hand, it must submit to the demands of accumulation, and suffer its effects and consequences. It exists on the level of the most pressing conditions and effects of the process of accumulation: cohesion, logic, language, and, last but no least, signals. On the other hand, it sees itself increasingly 'distanced' by the process, which becomes dissociated in giddy heights of specializations and technology. In itself, it remains liked to rhythms, to cyclic time scales and to symbols. (…) The everyday is situated at the boundary between the controlled sector (…) and the uncontrolled sector (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 629).

The commodity realm, with all its signs and characteristic landscapes, is reclaiming terrain over everyday life, an ill-adapted, ill-lived everyday life (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 604-6). Just like urban society or the right to the city (Chapter 4), an everyday life restored in its entirety does not yet exist anywhere. Right now, they can only be understood as yet-to-come realities. But, at the same time, for Lefebvre, they all exist as possibilities, which is a different point of view from that of referents of the

---

[66] Lefebvre seems to use the term 'machines for living in' to criticize its original meaning. Le Corbusier (2007 [1923]) stated that architecture and the dwelling should be as efficient as a factory assembly line. As such, the Swiss-French modernist architect laid down distinct elements of design that would inspire what he called 'machines for living in.' Whereas Le Corbusier gave the term an eminently positive meaning, Lefebvre uses it to denounce the cold functionality of modern mass-production house. For Lefebvre, Le Corbusier's architectural project, that of 'machines for living in,' means a dreadful reduction of the dwelling, leading to the misery of habitat.

Frankfurt School (Adorno, 2009 [1966]; Adorno and Horkheimer, 1972 [1944]) and their supporters, amongst who prevails fatalistic exasperations about the so-called automatic subject (Kurtz, 2000 [1993]; Jappe, 2016 [2003]).

## 5.5. Theoretical terminations and the opening of lived dialogues

With the restitution of the 'third term' and with the appreciation of some of the most relevant interpretations of commodification, I will now examine the transformations of Rio's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. But my intention is not simply to replicate or emulate the critical (urban) theories discussed above in order to offer a critical reading of the urban realities of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg. On the contrary, my proposal here is to establish a two-way dialogue between the histories and everyday life of these two urban contexts of the global South and critical (urban) theories, especially with regard to the production of the space, urbanization of society, and the potential commodification of everything. As Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) says, one must descend to the fertile soil of everyday life to critique capitalism and capitalist urbanization. Only from this particular level of social reality, that of everyday life, can one both envision emancipation and realize the extent to which it has hitherto been lacking. Therefore, in the second part of the present work, I will try to open new avenues of dialogue between critical (urban) theory and the urban realities of these two specific contexts of the so-called global South. And in doing so, I will certainly take into account the warnings of postcolonial (urban) theory about the need take the variegated urbanizing global South into account while theorizing the urban.

Our reflections in the last two chapters (chapters 4 and 5) indicate that there is no good reason not to embrace critical (urban) theories such as those of the production of space, the complete urbanization of society, and the potential commodification of everything. Moreover, such critical propositions must somehow be reinterpreted from the perceived, lived and conceived everyday reality of favelas and the townships, but without an unreasonable pretension to find theoretical innovations at all costs, which can lead to a forgetting of already-established critical insights even while pioneering in other domains. The pretension to offer completely new theories of the urban or the production of space did not guide my immersions in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, and neither does it frame my efforts in the rest of this thesis. If capital has surrounded everyday life, and even the everyday life of spaces of urban marginalization

such as that of favelas and townships, then a critical engagement with the everyday life of such spaces creates a platform for critically engaging with capitalism as it is immediately experienced today. My objective is to offer a critique of those realities and also of interpretations that in one way or another seem to discern emancipatory transformations where in reality there seems to be the perpetuation of the existing order. The new, transformed everyday life, to use Lefebvre's (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) terms, still cannot be lived daily.

By scrutinizing the everyday life of self-constructed favelas and the planned segregation embodied in the social space of townships, both spaces of social marginalization in their respective urban and social contexts, we are in a unique position to delve deeper into the lived reality of capitalism and the dynamics that sustain it, such as the production of space and the potential commodification of everything. Some of the most basic questions arising when following this line of inquiry are: What could we say about the urbanization of society and the production of space from the historical experience of these two spaces on the margins? How has commodification extended toward the social space of favelas and townships? Taking into account their complex historical-geographies, could they be seen as expressions of what Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 316-7, 367, 373-4, 381, 383-4) termed counter-spaces?

But before proceeding any further, it would be useful to clarify here what I understand by commodification. Following Polanyi (2001 [1944]), we can assume that everything that is produced to be sold in the market is a commodity, and that commodification is the act of turning something that was not produced as such into a commodity. For commodification to take place, something needs to be commodified that before was not, such that inquiry into commodification is necessarily historical in nature. We have seen that Polanyi (2001 [1944]) denounces how the infiltration of market arrangements into what were previously social relationships governing natural and social resources turned labor, land, and money into fictitious commodities, which has had catastrophic consequences for society. Without discarding Polanyi's definition of the commodity, I take the Marxian concept of the commodity into account here too. Marx defines the commodity in another way. According to Marx (2017 [1867]), the commodity is the contradictory unity of use value and exchange value. To accumulate, capital must be transformed from its money-form into a commodity-form in production, and then transformed into a money-form again in circulation, in the market. Marx expressed this movement of capital in the formula M-C-M' (Marx, 2011 [1857-58], 2017 [1867]).

Furthermore, as I have already said, according to Marx (2011 [1857-58]: 210, 243, 400), capital's inherent purpose is to increase itself, that is, *ad infinitum* multiplication. Commodification often relates to the ever-growing capitalist expansion into sectors of the social and natural world that have historically remained in many ways beyond its reach.

In view of all this, in what follows, when referring to commodification I mean to encompass dynamics that relate to fictitious commodification but also monetization, privatization, and, ultimately, surplus value production and surplus value realization. Commodification relates to commodity expansion, to processes that end up facilitating the assimilation of regions of the social and natural realms into the logic of the capital – that is, into the wider logic of capital accumulation founded on the contradictory unity of production and realization (Marx, 2017 [1867] [1885] [1894]; Harvey, 2014: 89-94). Consumerism, for instance, entails the realization of surplus value. It relates to the expansion of capital over everyday life. Thus, while talking about commodification in this study, I am referring to the 'systemic penetration of almost all aspects of our lifeworld by capital and its products in one form or another' (Harvey, 2014: 190).

In our case, 'all aspects of our lifeworld' come to be those existing in the social space of favelas and townships. We shall deal with commodification and capital expansion as experienced in these particular lifeworlds. In this sense, commodification goes beyond labor, or even beyond land and money. It encompasses social life itself, including everyday life of marginalized territories. The movement of capital goes from industry to the urban factory to the factory of everyday life. When asking whether commodification has traversed the everyday life of favelas and townships, I am basically asking how capitalism expanded upon these territories of urban marginalization. In what remains of this dissertation, we shall see that by consumption, production, and the variegated forms of dispossession, capital has assimilated the everyday life of favelas and townships. But even assuming that such spaces of urban marginalization of the global South participate in dynamics that are constitutive of contemporary capitalism, differences must be properly considered. I hope to be able to find a balanced interpretation, with the proper nuances, in evidencing such differences throughout the chapters that compose the second part of this work. And I hope to be capable of doing so without losing sight of the critique of capitalist (urban) development. If these preliminaries in mind, let us move to the study of the formation and transformation of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. Let us, therefore, move down to the very terrain of everyday life on the (urban) margins.

**PART TWO – From Favelas to Townships**
**The Case Studies and the Comparative Effort**

**Chapter 6 – Favelas**

Rio de Janeiro has approximately nine hundred favelas scattered over the city that provide shelter for almost one and half million people (IBGE, 2010). That is, about one out of every five residents of Rio de Janeiro lives in a favela. Living conditions in Rio's favelas can vary substantially, but it is not a misconception to say that in general these territories present severe deficiencies in the provision of basic services, such as water and electricity supplies, adequate sanitation, and regular garbage collection. Moreover, there are clear insufficiencies in the housing stock of the favelas, from inadequate construction materials to poor ventilation, which very often go hand in hand with overcrowding housing conditions. It is also worth mentioning that most of the favelas were settled in areas with some kind of environmental hazard – hill slopes, areas subjected to floods, sanitary landfills, and so on – and that legal land property and tenure rights are not the rule in the favelas.

This situation of lack of attention and marginalization by public authorities also nurtured, from the 1970s and 1980s onward, the occupation and control of these territories by criminal organizations operating illegal activities related to drug trafficking. Since then, conflicts among different heavy armed criminal groups and between them and the police have been a main cause of violence and human rights violations in the favelas (HRW, 2009, 2012a, 2012b, 2013, 2014, 2015). Rio de Janeiro is one of the most violent cities in the world and its favelas have a high risk of death by violence and a high homicide-by-gun rate (Lucas, 2008; Barcellos and Zaluar, 2014). Thus, poverty in urban areas might relate not only to low incomes and the associated risk of malnourishment, but also to overcrowded housing conditions, absence of basic services, and exposure to a number of hazards and threats, from forced eviction and urban violence to floods, landslides or fires.

Nevertheless, as we will see below, there is a partial shift in this general panorama that must be properly evaluated. For this, I focus on territorial and social reconfigurations that have occurred in Rio de Janeiro's favelas with special attention to recent processes of (urban) development. Recently some of Rio's favelas have witnessed substantial changes attracting the attention of external entrepreneurs, such as real estate investors or commercial and financial companies. From a certain moment on, both public authorities and private investors started to approach the favela as a kind of reserve of market susceptible to be profitably integrated into formal economic circuits. The change of

orientation is so visible that in some cases the favela is now seen as a trendy and fancy place, a place to be visited and enjoyed by foreign tourists (Freire-Medeiros, 2007, 2009). Many of these contemporary tendencies have certainly strong linkages with global mega-events like the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil and the 2016 Olympics, and the public policies steered around them. As we shall see from the ethnographic evidence coming from my fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro, the changes are undeniable and perhaps the point at stake now is to offer a critical assessment of their prospective 'development.'

The chapter is structured in two main parts. In the first part – tilted *The scars of the past* –, I offer a brief historical account of the emergence of self-built Rio de Janeiro's favelas. My aim here is to develop a historical account in order to place and contextualize the historical-geography of Rio's favelas. In this first part, I will start the discussion of the role self-help housing might have played in the capitalist city too. As we will see, the people living in Rio's favelas are part of a labor force that is available to be easily exploited but that is also largely redundant, that is, it is also a kind of 'surplus' population. That is precisely why they have been on the margins of the capitalist economy, and of the city. In the second part – titled *The open wounds of the present* – I take the reader into the everyday life of Rio de Janeiro's favelas. This second part is based directly on my fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro's favelas in 2014, which means that I rely on interviews I conducted with favela dwellers, field notes, and pictures. From this well-grounded description of everyday life in Rio's favelas, and against the historical background set up at the first part of the chapter, I shall show how favelas might be related to typical issues on critical (urban) theory that I revisited previously (chapters 4 and 5). Consequently, in this chapter, I will bring commodification, accumulation by dispossession, gentrification, and the production of space, to the fore of my examinations of Rio's favelas.

## 6.1. The scars of the past

In what follows, I will take a brief journey through the history of the city of Rio de Janeiro and try to conceptualize the role played by colonial dynamics in the modeling of its space. From this historical assessment of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, I then move on to discuss the place and meaning that Rio de Janeiro's favelas might have in/for capitalist accumulation. Here, I will draw on Marxist theoretical approaches of the 1970s and 1980s, very often neglected by current research, that might be useful to shed light on how 'primitive accumulation' and commodification processes might be connected to self-built housing.

It seems to be clear that Rio's favelas have by no means been the archetypal locus of capitalist accumulation, in the sense that they have not been the place in which value is produced and surplus value extracted. Instead, they have been territories of inhabitation of the urban poor, territories of material deprivation left to their own reproduction, reproduction which very often has happened below what would be assumed as the standard level of subsistence of the labor force.

This leads me to my last point in this first part. It relates to the fact that Rio de Janeiro's favelas are self-built neighborhoods, which, as such, were not born as proper commodities. Despite the existence of markets connected to it, most of the built environment in favelas was not originally erected as a commodity for sale in the market. On the contrary, it comes to be the 'byproduct' of its own residents in their struggle to carving out a place for themselves in the city. Rio de Janeiro's self-built favelas come to be made in such a ways that they cannot be consumed as 'finished products' (Caldeira 2016: 3) that come up at the end of a production line. Nevertheless, the 'unfinished' can also get a market price, it can certainly be commoditized. In order to develop this point, I draw on Marxist theoretical approaches of the 1970s and 1980s that evolved around what came to be termed as the 'Turner-Burgess debate' (Conway, 1982). We will see afterward how from this incipient commodification, recently favelas have become suitable locations for (direct) capitalist accumulation, which has had profound consequences for their residents and unleashes forceful and far from finished struggles. I will examine these contemporary changes at the second part of this chapter. For now, let us revisit the first phases of the urban trajectory of favelas.

### 6.1.1. From Rio de Janeiro's foundation to Rio's favelas

In 1502 the Portuguese first arrived at Guanabara Bay, but it was only years later, in 1565, that the first colonial Portuguese population was established on a permanent basis. This settlement marks the beginning of the city of Rio de Janeiro (Abreu, 2010). In the second half of the seventeenth century, Rio de Janeiro became the most populous city of Brazil and, as result of the discovery of gold in the region of Minas Gerais, gained fundamental importance for the colonial order (Abreu, 2010).[67] This importance became even greater during the eighteenth century and the city acquired an unquestionable centrality in the

---

[67] For a meticulous study of the production and organization of the territory of the city and province of Rio de Janeiro during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Abreu (2010).

context of the Brazilian colonial economy as prominent port for exporting wealth and importing foreign goods, including African slaves, destined to populous mining centers in the vast territory of Minas Gerais. It was also from Rio de Janeiro's province that the gold and precious stones were shipped to Portugal. The condition of point of control between the colonial entrails and the overseas command center was so relevant at that time that, in 1763, the Portuguese administration, under the command of the Marquis of Pombal, and seeking to solve the problem of tax evasion and smuggling, transferred the seat of the colony from the city of Salvador to Rio de Janeiro.

The transfer of the colonial capital to Rio de Janeiro brought some changes to the city. 'Under the tutelage of the Metropolitan power, urban improvements were incorporated into the city by common work of large landowners and tradesmen, both joined by the condition of slaveholders, the basic duality of colonial society' (Benchimol, 1990: 21). The colonial administration made new public fountains, built bridges, promoted the drainage of swamps, repaired existing paths and opened new streets. However, at that time, the colonial town of São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro still was a port city on the banks of Guanabara Bay, squeezed between hills, occupying a space hardly won through the drainage of wetlands and mangroves of the region. Such situations only changed in a substantial way at the beginning of the next century with the establishment of the Portuguese royal family in the city. The Portuguese royal family and court moved to the city fleeing from the Napoleonic wars. In March 8, 1808, the large Portuguese delegation landed in Rio de Janeiro with about 15 thousand people, which represented almost a third of the city's population, at that moment estimated at around 50 thousand inhabitants (Benchimol, 1990: 23).

The new situation brought relevant changes such as the opening of Brazilian ports – decreed by the Portuguese power already in 1808 – which represented the end of the colonial trade exclusivism and generated a large influx of British manufactures in Brazil through Rio de Janeiro.[68] In addition, in 1815 the Portuguese power raised Brazil up to the condition of Kingdom along with Portugal and Algarves. Thus, Rio de Janeiro had an unprecedented presence of a social class until then non-existent in the city – the

---

[68] It is worth mentioning that the break of the colonial exclusivism had to do with British pressures driven by its commercial interests, and it reflects changes in the centrality from Spain and Portugal towards new European Powers, such as Great Britain and France. Since the Portuguese court was escorted by British navy in its escape to Brazil, Portugal and Brazil were economic *peripheries* under British *centrality*. However, at that same moment, the transference of the Portuguese court to Brazil also conferred *centrality* to Brazil towards other regions under Portugal power.

Portuguese aristocracy – and, besides, became the heart of a large multi-continental empire, which included Angola and Mozambique in Africa, and Goa, Timor and Macau in Asia. All this has caused changes in the space of the city.

> When disembarking in the port of Rio de Janeiro, the Portuguese court finds a still reluctant, trifling, hinterland city. (...) Already in the early years with the court, the city was in full acceleration with respect to the process of urbanization. The construction sector wins big impetus, occurs the installation of public services inherent to the role of capital of the Empire, and happens, consequently, a growth of commercial and manufacturing activities (Theodoro, 2008: 17-8).

This situation reveals that at the beginning of the nineteenth century several sanitation, drainage and infrastructural works were held in the city. The Portuguese power opened new streets and roads, constructed new buildings and renovated existing ones; moreover, new markets and warehouses took place in the city, together with the upgrading of the existing ones. Benchimol (1990: 25) notes that the installation of the Portuguese court broke the stability of the city. The author indicates that in less than two decades, its population doubled, reaching 100 thousand inhabitants, approximately, in 1822, and 135 thousand in 1840 and that, between 1808 and 1816, about 600 houses had been built on the perimeter of the city, most of them mansions, and 150 on the outskirts.

After the political independence, in 1822, the town became a magnet for free national and foreign workers and the new social consolidation generated new tensions related to spatial organization (Weid, 2010 [1997]). The central areas, densely populated, housed a heterogeneous set of activities and social classes (Abreu, 1987). The manor houses and mansions left by the Portuguese court and by the colonial administration after independence were internally divided and inhabited by a large number of families of the popular strata. Thus, in the central area of the city were side-by-side the houses of the new ruling classes; several houses of private dwellings; as well as the old mansions, transformed into rooming houses (*casas de cômodos*) tenements (*cortiços*) and cheap guesthouses (*estalagens*), that served as residences for the poor strata of the population (Abreu, 1987; Benchimol, 1990: 317-8). Furthermore, in the central area were also the seat of the Brazilian imperial government, public buildings, main shops, financial sector, warehouses and the port.

**Image 1 – Cortiço Cabeça de Porco (Pig's Head tenement)**

In the passage from the first to the second half of the nineteenth century, Rio de Janeiro consolidated its national hegemony as political capital and financial and commercial emporium in Brazil. The railways, opened to serve the region, reinforced the city leadership as 'import and export complex.' Rio de Janeiro was the nodal point of Brazilian economy, it was the exporter of coffee production, slave redistributor, main source of goods to coffee farms and importer of manufactured products. In a context where central capitalist economies, in particular England and France, launched voraciously to new sources of raw materials and new markets for their products and capital, the 'Carioca import and export complex' was closely controlled by the British capital (Benchimol, 1990: 76).

After the slavery abolition, in 1888, and with the consequential crisis in the production of coffee in the region of Vale do Paraíba, the importance of the port of Rio de Janeiro decreased. Meanwhile, the production of coffee in the region of the Oeste Paulista grew dramatically, and already in 1902, the main port of exportation of coffee was that of Santos in São Paulo (Benchimol, 1990: 169). Brazil maintained its peripheral position in the modern world system, but witnessed substantial internal transformations. The axis of the economic power shifted clearly from Rio de Janeiro to São Paulo, and during the First Brazilian Republic, São Paulo – the main producer and exporter of coffee –, and Minas Gerais – the largest constituency in the country, due to the huge concentration of people in the mining area in the preceding centuries – alternated in the political leadership of the nation.

In spite of this unfavorable shift in economic command, Rio de Janeiro went through truly relevant spatial changes in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1889, when a republic replaced the Brazilian monarchy, the city continued to be the capital of Brazil, in a context marked by the transition from slave labor to wage labor, and by the settlement of industries near the city center, and also the establishment of new means of transport, notably tramway and trains (Abreu, 1986; Weid, 2010 [1997]). Rio de Janeiro was growing at an astonishing pace. Between 1872 and 1890, the urban population nearly doubled, going from 274,972 to 522,651 inhabitants (Benchimol, 1990: 172; Vaz, 1994: 580). The city was the only one in Brazil with more than 500 thousand inhabitants by then, since the other two main cities, São Paulo and Salvador, had at the time just over 200 thousand inhabitants. In 1900, the city had 691,565 inhabitants and in 1906 it reached 811,444 (Benchimol, 1990: 172; Weid, 2010 [1997]: 63). This fast population growth was due to both internal and foreign migration, but it was mainly a

result of a massive flow of rural population into the city.[69] It is inescapable to relate it to the end of slavery in 1888.[70] This process was also directly associated with the impossibility of occupation of land by the popular strata of Brazilian society including former slaves and their decedents, due to the damaging consequences of the Land Act of 1850, which made difficult the access to land to vast sectors of the Brazilian population.[71]

It is clear that this fast influx of population in such a short time had direct consequences on the structuring of the city's space. These waves of migrants, mostly former slaves, had transformed the old downtown Rio de Janeiro into a gigantic informal labor market, in which each one sold his/her labor power or his/her inventiveness how it was possible in order to survive (Damazio, 1996; Theodoro, 2008). The above mentioned tenements spread all over the historical center and started to be approached by public authorities as a problem. It is precisely from this panorama of the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the first occupations of the hills in the central areas of the city occurred, in other words, in which emerges one of the striking features of the city of Rio de Janeiro physical and symbolic landscapes since then: the favela.

The demolition of tenements was the official policy adopted by public authorities. Exemplary is the case of the tenement known as 'Pig's Head' (*Cabeça de Porco*) (see image 1 above). Demolished in 1893, the 'Pig's Head' housed about four thousand people and situated in one of the access ways to the current hill of Providence. After the

---

[69] After 1889, the city suffered a substantial population instability, because it served as a port of transit for many foreigners, most of them Europeans, during the First Brazilian Republic. Some of these immigrants settled in the city in a permanent basis, but a good portion of them moved towards the countryside to work in the coffee production or went to other regions of the country.

[70] It is worth to noting that, despite external pressures, such as The Aberdeen Act, established by the Great Britain, in 1845, in order to suppress the Brazilian slave trade, Brazil abolished slavery only in 1888 and was one of the last countries to do so.

[71] The Act No. 601, September 18, 1850, known as the Land Act, regulated the occupation of vacant land in the Brazilian Empire, establishing legally a new form of land ownership based on the market (Graziano da Silva, 1980: 25). In its first article, the Land Act stated: 'It is prohibited the acquisition of vacant land by other methods diverse of the purchase.' The second article specified: 'Those who take possession of vacant lands or from others, and take off woods or put fire in them, will be forced to dump, with loss of improvements, and more will be punished with two to six months of imprisonment and a penalty of $100, plus satisfaction of the damage caused.' Germani (1993) indicates that it is no coincidence that the Act was first drafted in 1843 but only enacted in 1850, just two weeks after the legal extinction of the slave traffic by the Eusébio de Queiróz Act in the same year. The author (1993) argues that the imminence of the abolition of slavery was an issue of concern to the ruling class, which rushed to adopt legal measures for the process of substitution of slave labor without prejudice of the great plantation, at that time, mainly of coffee. The solution was the opening of a flow of foreign immigration. However, the foreign immigrants should be available for the capital needs, to employ its workforce on the farms, which would hardly occur if they had free access to land. Hence the importance of the Land Act of 1850 in a State already controlled by a strong class of large landowners. As Martins (1981: 237) states, the Land Act of 1850 'was a legal instrument that ensured a class monopoly over land from all regions of the country, including those who had not yet been occupied economically.'

demolition of the tenement, the slopes of the hill were inhabited, being later occupied by soldiers from the War of Canudos (Vaz, 1985). However, 'while attention was focused on the tenements, slums grew silently and, as tenements were disappearing with the demolitions; the slum would be secured and increased their domains to other hills that surrounded the center area' (Santucci, 2008: 29). Moreover, Abreu and Vaz (1991) suggest that soldiers from another battalion, returned from the same war, also built their shacks, with the authorization of the military chiefs, on the hill of Santo Antônio, situated at the back of the military base, between the streets Evaristo da Veiga and Lavradio. In fact, in that period, the authorities allowed the installation of small houses on the hills that surrounded the center area as a way to solve the problem caused by the extinction of the tenements, allowing, thus, in a temporary form, wooden buildings on the slopes (Benchimol, 1990; Monteiro, 2004; Santucci, 2008).

Until the early years of the twentieth century, despite being the largest Brazilian city, Rio de Janeiro was largely limited to the area now known as the historical center, and still had morphological characteristics of the colonial times: Narrow streets, curving and irregular, mostly unpaved, overcrowded by men and goods flows between the rail terminal, the port area and the commercial center (Weid, 2010 [1997]). In this context, the mayor Pereira Passos, named in 1903 by then president Rodrigues Alves, gave rise to a broad urban reform consisting of the redevelopment of the city's port, the opening of new avenues and boulevards, and the beautification of the capital. Although the main argument supporting the reforms was the opening of the old colonial center in the name of progress, with the improvement its appearance and conditions of hygiene, the reforms also aimed to solve imperatives of circulation (of people and goods), and to change the social use of that space (Abreu, 1987; Benchimol, 1990).

Directly inspired by foreign interventions, notably those of Haussmann in Paris, the reforms coordinated by Pereira Passos led to the ending of tenements and guesthouses in downtown Rio de Janeiro. The Rio de Janeiro City Council upheld a broad demolition strategy in the city's central area. The 'break it down' (*bota abaixo*) virtually destroyed the old center: Numerous trade houses, tenements and room houses, which were the residence of popular classes, were demolished (Vaz, 1994; Weid, 2010 [1997]). 'The demolitions triggered a devastating action, bulldozing the maze of narrow streets of the old town (...) The social cost was enormous, because the demolitions dispossessed thousands of people and fully disorganized their way of life' (Weid, 2010 [1997]: 25).

For Benchimol (1990), the idea of beautifying and the hygienist arguments were backed by other purposes.

> The eradication of people who resided in the central area, (…); the change of function of the center, taking into account – in a more immediate plan – speculative interests who coveted this area highly prized and – more generally – requirements of the accumulation and circulation of the commercial and financial capital; ideological reasons linked to 'the enjoy' of privileged stratums; political reasons arising from Republican State specific requirements in relation to the city that was the seat of nation political power (Benchimol, 1990: 228).

As Benchimol (1990) notes, suburbs were expanded in the first two decades of the twentieth century, stimulated by the demolitions in the city center and by the railway. Thus, something similar to what Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 2002 [1970]) and Harvey (2005a [2003]) describe in relation to the Second Empire Paris, with the opening of the center and the expulsion of the popular classes to 'out-of-the-way areas' and the 'implosion-explosion' of the city. However, in Rio de Janeiro's case, the suburbs were an outlet only for upper and middle classes, which could bear the cost of transport, which were too expensive for most of the people (Benchimol, 1990: 288). The expulsion of the popular classes from the downtown was followed by the occupation of the hills located around the central area, beginning the expansion of slums, the favelas.

Although the favelas of Rio de Janeiro have not appeared with the the Pereira Passos reforms, they had a notable role in the process of their expansion. In a context of early industrial development, the destruction of a large number of tenements made the favela the only alternative left to the urban poor, which needed to reside near the place of work. Abreu (1987: 66) remarks that, paradoxically, precisely because of industrial growth this population did nothing but grow steadily. Vaz (1994: 587), following the considerations of Abreu (1986), indicates that after the 'era of demolitions' working class housing was no longer seen as a construction (tenement, hovels, room houses) among some, but as an area (favela, suburb, outskirts) among others. Both authors (Abreu, 1987; Abreu and Vaz, 1991; Vaz, 1994) point out, therefore, one aspect of a larger transformation underway: The division and specialization of city spaces that occurs parallel to division and specialization of labor. Vaz (1994: 587) assumes that this was inherent to the urban modernization processes that took place there, but she argues that it

was accelerated by the haussmannization, that is, by the separation and segregation of social classes and activities in the city space. Several authors discussed associations between the state and private capital in the formation of Rio de Janeiro's spatiality since the end of the nineteenth century until nowadays along similar lines (Abreu, 1987; Silva, 1992; Vaz, 1994; Corrêa, 1995 [1993], Ribeiro, 1997, 2016). In general, the focus is on alliances between state, external capital, real estate capital, transport companies and landowners, from which the city space is conformed through the opening of new fronts of urban sprawl, as occurred, for example, in the case of Vila Isabel (1873), now internationally known Copacabana (1892), and more recently in Barra da Tijuca (1970).[72] Clearly, such analyses are to a large extent similar to those of Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 2002 [1970]) and Harvey (2005a [2003]) on Paris, which examine relationships between the state and portions of the capital in the structuring of segregation in the capitalist city.

The vision that during the establishment of Rio de Janeiro's spatial organization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries there prevailed, like elsewhere, a behavior in which the state joined private capital for the benefit of the wealthiest classes of society is perfectly acceptable. However, there are particularities that may not be erased from the picture. For instance, unlike Paris, the emulation of Haussmann's strategy in the tropical latitudes of Rio de Janeiro resulted in direct expansion and, above all, permanent consolidation of slums in the city, including in its central areas. How to explain this, so to speak, unexpected effect? A possible answer to these kinds of questions is to point out to the geomorphological and topographical characteristics of the city of Rio de Janeiro to elucidate the inscription of the favelas in the city's landscape, for example, the existence of various unoccupied hills in its central area. Another possibility would be to point out at legal loopholes and high cost of transport as explanatory factors. Decrees and legal loopholes authorized the construction on the hills, which allows questioning the concept of 'illegal' often present in many definitions of Brazilian favelas. Thus, similarly to the permission to build on the hills after the destruction of the famous tenement called *Cabeça de Porco* (Pig's Head), given in 1893 by the Rio de Janeiro City Council, Benchimol (1990) notes in decree No. 391 of February 10, 1903, a legal loophole to building shacks on the hills, hitherto undervalued: 'The rough shacks will not be allowed, whatever the pretext given to obtain license, except on the hills that have not yet dwellings and under

---

[72] There are recent studies of on-going reforms related with mega events taking place in the city, like the Olympic Games or the 2014 FIFA Soccer World Cup, that offer comparable points of view. See, for instance, Sánchez et al. (2007) and Vainer (2011).

license' (Benchimol, 1990: 265). Once more, the Rio de Janeiro City Council had nurtured the expansion of Rio de Janeiro's favelas.

## 6.1.2. Industrialization, peripheral urbanization, and self-built landscapes

From the wake of its colonial past, Rio de Janeiro is one of the most unequal cities in the world and inequality is fiercely entrenched in its spatiality. That is because inherited inequalities were to be reproduced and enlarged in the city's urban space in the course of the twentieth century. In a context of industrial expansion, the division and specialization of city spaces followed the division and specialization of labor (Abreu, 1987; Abreu and Vaz, 1991; Vaz, 1994). Ribeiro (2016: 128-9) shows how the urban sprawl that turned Rio de Janeiro into an industrial metropolis was engendered between the years 1930 and 1980. Industrialization in the southeastern region of the country resulted in intensive and massive migration toward main industrial areas – notably in to the cities of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Belo Horizonte. Ribeiro (2016: 129) mentions that in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, migratory flows reached about thirty million people by 1970, compared to a total national population of ninety-three million. Rio de Janeiro's fast and consistent urban sprawl led to the constitution of an unequal urban order marked by the strong concentration of economic, social, political and cultural power. Ribeiro (2016: 130) sustains that the hallmark of this early and explosive process of metropolitan sprawl is precisely 'the production of precarious and improvised areas in terms of urbanization and access to basic goods and services.'

Large parts of the city were planned and produced neither by the state nor by real estate developers, but were created and have expanded from the more or less autonomous and self-directed actions of their own inhabitants. It is true that activities carried out by public authorities and their connivance are in the roots of many of the occupations that gave rise to Rio's favelas, such as in the course of the Pereira Passos reforms at the early twentieth century. All the same, it is a fact that Rio's favelas, as well as its specific urban morphology, must be regarded mainly to collective self-construction. Favela dwellers have constructed not only their own shacks, houses, and buildings, but have also been directly engaged in in the production and incremental improvement of their entire neighborhoods.[73]

---

[73] Interviews conducted on 16 September, 21 September, 2 October, 8 October, 16 October, 22 October, and 25 October 2014. Fieldwork notes on 17 September, 30 September, and 2 October 2014.

*Picture 5 – Living on the urban margins*



Source: The author, 2014.

As Caldeira (2016: 3) states in her recent study on peripheral urbanization, in Brazilian self-built areas, 'homes and neighbourhoods grow little-by-little, in long-term processes of incompletion and continuous improvement led by their own residents.' I could appreciate this first-hand during my time in Rio's favelas.[74] Given their 'unplanned' history, Rio's favelas commonly have narrow streets, passageways, pathways, and alleyways, stairways, which have been drawn together by their own inhabitants and usually take maze forms (see, for instance, picture 5). It took me some time to get used to the right combination of passages, corridors, and stairways to reach home. And, as we shall see later on, to get lost in there was not a good option. Sometimes Rio's favelas inhabitants had the assistance of public authorities, very often they had to press for the provision of basic services such as water supply or sewage (Caldeira, 2016: 12-3).[75] Therefore, something that must be observed here is that even if the built environment of

---

[74] Participant observation between September and November 2014.
[75] Interviews conducted on 16 September, 21 September, 2 October, 8 October, 16 October, 22 October, and 25 October 2014.

favelas is obviously a product of human labor, most of it was not originally erected as a commodity for sale on the market.

Rio's favelas and their social space as a whole must be regarded as creations of the urban poor with the means and resources that they had at hand in their struggle to ensure a dwelling place in the city. Like many other informal settlements around the so-called global South, Rio's favelas began and have grown through multiple improvised arrangements and very often occupy land with irregular topographies and quite inconvenient for building. Together picture 5 above and picture 6 below exemplify well these circumstances. Even though currently they can be found in central areas of the city or contiguously to rich neighborhoods, generally speaking, Rio's favelas were erected in what could be termed 'residual areas.' That is, land left behind by the real estate market because of its location, physical features or some sort of physical or environmental hazard: Hill slopes, often subject to landslides; areas near rivers or swampy land, subject, therefore, to floods or waterlogging; landfills or even land taken to mangroves. In sum, Rio's favelas commonly occupy areas that at a given moment were of less interest from the point of view of the state and land and real estate markets. They were created in the gaps of highly discriminatory patters of urban planning and land occupation that have been set up by the state and the land market. Rio de Janeiro's favelas were built and have evolved on the margins, on the margins of the city, of the state, and of the capitalist economy (see picture 5).

Naming this pattern of land occupation as 'infiltration,' Ribeiro (2016) shows that it has characterized the process of urbanization in Rio de Janeiro. Ribeiro (2016: 137) summarizes Rio de Janeiro's growth in the twentieth century in three main dynamics: (a) Self-segregation of the upper classes; (b) progressive settlement of the popular classes across peripheral metropolitan areas; (c) 'infiltration' of popular strata into areas of the metropolitan core and its immediate periphery, a process known in common sense as *favelização*. Due to the notorious articulation between, on the one hand, industrialization and urban expansion fronts led by real estate developers and, on the other hand, the favela expansion, Ribeiro (2016) sustains that the inward migration and the metropolitan growth of Rio de Janeiro implied the constitution of an unequal and combined urban order. Moreover, he (2016: 39-40) argues that we are witnessing the consolidation of a residential segregation based on the double scalar grammar in Rio de Janeiro: That of social distance and territorial proximity expressed in the favela–neighborhood dichotomy

and that of territorial distance and social distance materialized, in turn, in the core–periphery opposition.[76]

> Throughout the social and urban history of the city of Rio de Janeiro, the infiltration dynamics have been expressed in the favela form as the outcome of collective actions where fractions of the popular classes are able to access interstitial spaces in areas that they would not have access if the pure land price functioned as a selection mechanism. Even in a highly hierarchical space and by real estate speculation, the relations and practices of capitalist appropriation and production of space coexisted with the practices of infiltration of the popular strata in the form of occupations of public and private land (…). As an example of this we have the numerous favelas built on the edge of the successive centralities produced by the dynamics of self-segregation of the upper middle classes, as occurred in Copacabana-Ipanema-Leblon during the period 1950/1970 or more recently in the incorporation of Barra da Tijuca as expansion of large real estate capital (Ribeiro, 2016: 138).

In a similar vein, Perlman (2010: 54) indicates that the first settlements, such as the one on the hill of Providência, were in the central area of the city; with the next wave of *favelização* following the city's residential expansion to the south (the site of demolished Catacumba and Praia do Pinto and ot the still standing hills of Santa Marta, Cantagalo, Pavão-Pavãozinho, Chapéu Mangueira, Babilônia, Cabritos, Vidigal, and Rocinha, among many other). Not long thereafter, favelas followed industrialization in the metropolitan frontier to the north of the central area (for instance, the many favelas clustered in Alemão, Maré, Maguinhos, Jacarezinho, and so on) and in the Baixada Fluminense (in peripheral municipalities such as Duque de Caxias, São João do Meriti or Nilópolis). Perlman (2010: 54) also mentions favelas expansion in the western area of the city (favelas like Rio das Pedras, Muzema, and Vila Autódromo, grew together with Cidade de Deus), mirroring the development of newly wealthy Barra de Tijuca. In a word: 'Favela growth started where the city started and grew upward and outward as the city grew' (Perlman, 2010: 54). Although risking oversimplification, Perlman (2010: 53-5) suggests appropriately that the spread of favelas outward from the central area to the south

---

[76] The favela-neighborhood dichotomy that characterizes the geography of Rio de Janeiro is locally expressed by the terms *morro* and *asfalto* (hill and paved street).

area of the city to the north and to west portions of the expanding metropolis has followed the growth of the city and the location of job opportunities – in factories, construction, maintenance, and domestic services.

Despite the territorial proximity to rich areas, the lack of attention and of basic resources have framed the erection and expansion of favelas. In one of my many talks with Ms. Aparecida she provided me with a rich view of how Pavão-Pavãozinho looked like in the late 1940s and early 1950s.[77] In her eighties, Ms. Aparecida is one of the oldest residents on the hill. She moved to the city from a small village in the State of Rio de Janeiro with her parents when she was just eleven years old. At first, they stayed at other peripheral areas in the expanding metropolis, like Bangu and Padre Miguel. But, when her mother got sick, they moved to Pavão-Pavãozinho, where Aparecida's aunt lived. Ms. Aparecida's personal trajectory from a small village in the countryside to the city of Rio de Janeiro, at the time the Brazilian political capital, shows the hardships of life without fundamentals on the urban margins. Ms. Aparecida characterizes Pavão-Pavãozinho and her everyday life during her youth as follows:

> When I got here on the hill, I was fifteen year old (...). It had many trees, few houses. Everybody knew everybody. We were like a family. Almost everyone had an orchard and a chicken coop. I've always really liked plants. Even today, I've bananas, *pitanga*, avocado, papaya... There were almost no shacks, no light, no sewage, no water, no roads, no alleys. There was nothing. To get up here we had to go through footpaths. (…) Back then, our shack was made of apple-fruit crates and iron-sheets. My mother bought the shack, bought it in installments. Do you see this space here of this room? It's like four houses of ours. We were eight people. Myself, my mother, and my brothers and sisters. As my brothers 'lifted their heads,' they left the hill. They said they were no goats to live on a hill (Interview with inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 16 September 2014).

> How many times did I go to fetch water with my aunt down there at the spout [*bica d'água*], next to the lake [Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas]? How many, my son? The thing was water on the head, water container on the head, my son... all our way up. I was young, my son, there was no problem

---

[77] Interview conducted on 16 September 2014.

> (Interview with inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 16 September 2014).

> Sometimes, I got the water from construction sites in Copacabana, when they were making those multistory buildings there. It was in the 'dead of night,' out of sight, because it was forbidden. But we always knew someone that was working in there. Many construction workers were from the hill. I looked for water for my mom and some of our neighbors. It was a way to make some money. It was no easy. I fought hard to get here (Interview with inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 16 September 2014).

Ivone, another old inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho that I interviewed during my 2014 fieldwork, recalls other routine complications from old times. As we talk in the simple room in which Ivone had been born more than seven decades earlier, she remarks on the difficulties of turning the original wooden shack into a house. Ivone's three-floor house is placed in the middle of the hill and today is home to four different generations of her family.[78] She remarks that it is a 'modest house without plastering on the outside, poorly plastered on the inside, but built with a lot of struggling.' She then talks about how the lack of streets and adequate pavement could turn everyday mobility into a real problem during the raining season in the 1950s.

> The pathways, at that time, they were all dusty. When it rained then... Oh my god, that was a sadness. What a mess! You would come down the hill and get there on the asphalt with your feet and shins utterly dirty of mud. You had to take your shoes off before going down the hill. And you had to go downstairs with a newspaper or something else to clean yourself up before putting your shoes back and going to town (Interview with inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 16 September 2014).

Life in Rio's self-built favelas has been difficult and precarious as a rule. However, despite the hardships and the lack of essentials, there seemed to be a sense of freedom as something attainable beyond the reach of state power. Other of my interviewees have narratives about past times in Rio de Janeiro's favelas that corroborate this idea.

---

[78] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 16 October 2014.

Source: The author, 2014.

Aurora, who lives at Serafim, one of the lowest portions of Pavão-Pavãozinho, since long ago, says that 'it was very calm. My house had only a small latch. I knew everybody in here, including the *malandros* [scoundrels].' The eighty-five year old woman also mentions she had an unobstructed view of the ocean from his front door before the erection of high-rise apartment building in neighboring Copacabana in the 1950s and 1960s.[79] In this respect, Valdemar evokes the plenty of space and the many trees of his childhood in Santa Marta in the 1960s.[80] 'Oh, those times. I grew up with guava, orange, avocado in the yard, vegetable garden, a lot of birds, and everything that existed before. In my childhood, all that was very common. In the seventies, this began to decline. And in the eighties, it basically ends,' articulates the fifty-eight year old man with the nostalgic tone of his voice. He explains to me that nowadays houses occupy all spaces. 'Inside the favela, today you can count on your fingers the trees. They disappeared and gave way to houses. Nowadays everything is occupied, there are no big trees, no areas for kids to play, there's no space left. There's nowhere else to grow anymore but upwards.'

Valdemar mentions that the first multi-storey building with a strong foundation was the residents' association. He says that it was built between 1981 and 1983 and that, back then, there were no two- or three-storey houses in Santa Marta. 'It's a four-story building. Today it disappears, but at the time, it had a great prominence. For Santa Marta, that was big.' It is pretty easy to find instances of vertical growth, deforestation, and densification in Cantagalo and Pavão-Pavãozinho (see picture 6). There these processes also accelerated from the 1980s onward. But let us focus on Valdemar's narrative. Valdemar goes on in recollecting how Santa Marta was during his childhood:

> When I was a kid, we had a lot more space. Around the houses, there was always a vacant area, not that I say that they were backyards because Santa Marta is very declivous, but like a yard, you know. There was no street structure but circulation areas, eh, I mean, the paths were wider. Eh, you had a lot more trees too. Indeed, Santa Marta was protected from removal because of this. You looked from the street to the hill, forward facing, what you saw was a vast vegetation and a few houses in-between the trees, the vegetation hid most of the shacks. This situation helped to protect the hill in the fifties and sixties. There was a threat of removal and the church itself and other people mobilized to avoid it... but it was

---

[79] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 28 October 2014.
[80] Interview conducted on 25 October 2014.

because of the rugged topography of the favela and the fact that it was visually less aggressive that it didn't happen. Unlike the... eh... that one close to the lake [Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas], the Catacumba. In the early sixties, Catacumba was already dense and very visible, it was already quite evident. Santa Marta was much more disguised (Interview with resident of Santa Marta on 25 October 2014).

While having Valdemar words as a background, it is necessary to mention here that the official approach toward Rio's favelas changed from indifferently ignoring them to fiercely fighting them. Between 1950 and 1960, the number of inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro's favelas virtually doubled from about 170,000 to 335,000 (Ribeiro and Lago, 1991 quoted in Brum, 2012: 358). A good amount of this steady growth happened within or near valued land located at the south area of the city, mainly around the Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas. It gave pace to favela eradication policies in the 1960s and 1970s (Perlman, 1977 [1976]; Valladares, 1978; Leeds and Leeds, 1978), the 'anti-favela operation' (Valladares, 1978) that marked the period even came to be termed as the 'eviction era' (Brum, 2013: 190). And this designation is not for nothing: It is estimated that during the most repressive period of the Brazilian military dictatorship, between 1968 and 1973, around 175 thousand people from around sixty-five favelas were evicted from their houses in Rio de Janeiro (Perlman, 1977 [1976]: 242; Brum, 2012: 371, 2013: 188).[81]

The eradication policies were combined with the massive reallocation of Rio's favelas inhabitants to poor-quality and poorly-serviced public housing compounds in the periphery of the city (Perlman, 1977 [1976]). That is precisely how places like Vila Kennedy and Cidade de Deus were planned and shaped.[82] We could say that urban planners made Cidade de Deus upon the ruins of favelas like Catacumba and Praia do Pinto. This kind of circumstances reminds us of Lúcio Kowarick's (1979) notion of urban spoliation. It is true that Kowarick (1979, 2000) has had the self-built peripheries of São Paulo in mind – which frequently started as private-led illegal developments (*loteamentos*), with land being parceled and sold out before being occupied –while depicting urban poverty in Brazil. But the term urban spoliation applies to the underserviced self-constructed peripheries of Rio de Janeiro and other Brazilian cities.

---

[81] The 'eviction era' started before the Military Coup of 1964, having its peak after 1968 during the worst years of the Brazilian dictatorship. It encompasses the governments of Carlos Lacerda (1961-1965), Negrão de Lima (1966-1971) and Chagas Freitas (1971-1975) in Rio de Janeiro (Guanabara State).

[82] The Cidade de Deus became globally known after Paulo Lins' homonymous novel was made into a movie by Kátia Lund and Fernando Meirelles in 2002.

This is so because it refers to the absence or precariousness of collective consumption services and basic infrastructure that are socially necessary for the reproduction of the labor force. This also applies to state-led housing programs like that of Cidade de Deus. Despite being planned by the state, the poorly-serviced housing compounds lacked almost everything, and self-construction works in both housing units and neighborhood were required. One consequence of it was the creation of favelas within and around housing projects planned by the state. This is pretty clear when you go through the originally ordered grid of streets of the Cidade de Deus.[83] As we shall see later on, this systematical urge for planned segregation (in this case, primarily along class lines but with a clear racial component) somewhat mirrors the historical-geography of South African townships (see chapters 7 and 8). Despite systematic efforts by Rio's public authorities to remove nothing less than all Rio's favelas to peripheral locations (Brum, 2013: 188), favela residents resisted displacement. Many of them succeeded in keeping their place and location in the city. In any case, because of the failure of removal policies to address the root causes of Rio's housing shortage, Rio's favelas population continued to grow steadily (Valladares, 1978).

Mirroring the pattern of urban growth of other Brazilian main industrial cities, such as São Paulo and Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro went throughout a vigorous population growth over the second half of the twentieth century. Based on official data, Perlman (2010: 55-6) has indicated that the population of the municipality of Rio de Janeiro grew from 2,337,451 in 1950 to 5,857,879 in 2000. She (2010) has also shown that, over the same period, the population living in the city's favelas grew from virtually 170 thousand to more than one million (1,092,958.) In 1950, the population of favelas represented no more than seven per cent of the city's population, whereas five decades later this figure jumped to eighteen per cent. That is, between 1950 and 2000, under a general context noticeable by a consistent industrial development, the city's population growth rate was immensely lower than that one of favelas. Despite the consolidation of the shift away from factory production toward a service-oriented economy, this patter was to be preserved over the next decade. As we have seen at the very beginning of this chapter, the data for 2010 shows that one out of each five city's inhabitants lived in a favela, which means near one and a half million people (IBGE, 2010). In this respect, Ribeiro (2016: 144) mentions that, between 2000 and 2010, the city's population grew by

---

[83] Participant observation between November and December 2014.

only five per cent whereas that population living in favelas expanded by nineteen percent, representing today about twenty-three per cent of Rio de Janeiro's inhabitants. Remarkably, Ribeiro (2016) shows too that favela growth in the 2000s was concentrated at the southern zone of the city alongside areas of urban expansion originally opened by the real estate capital (Copacabana-Ipanema-Leblon and Barra da Tijuca).

*Image 2 – Newspaper clipping of Pavão-Pavãozinho's 1983 tragedy*



Source: Última Hora, 1983.

Under the context of proliferation and growth of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, the official approach changed from the eradication endeavors of the 1960s and 1970s to the disregard and abandonment in the 1980s and 1990s. Thereafter, Rio de Janeiro's favelas have grown in the shadows of the land market and on the outer borders of the state. From the late 1970s and early 1980s, many favela dwellers have gathered the general conditions to build, improve, and extend their houses. This was precisely the time when densification and vertical expansion took place in many favelas across the southern zone of Rio de Janeiro, like in Valdemar's Santa Marta. However, regardless of the tone of the official approach, either esteeming favelas removal or virtually ignoring them, there was no easy

time for those striving on the urban margins of Rio de Janeiro. Ms. Aparecida's struggles to erect her home at Pavão-Pavãozinho exemplify this.

> We couldn't improve our place. We couldn't because the Leão XIII Foundation's people would not allow it. They told us: 'Oh, the hill will end. Do not do anything. They're going to get everyone out of here.' It was just that, 'out, out. out. It's all over.' I came here in 1949. It was only in 1977 that I started building my house here. Before that, it was only fear. Everyone was scared of being removed. But we still managed to put a nail here and there. That was how we were driving our lives. After 1977, we gradually increased the house until we get what you're looking at. Thank God (Interview with inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 16 September 2014).

> I loaded many bricks to make this house here. I carried wood, bricks, chopped stone... I helped fill up columns for the foundation. It was so. At night, when I came from work, I bought the bricks. And Vilma, my daughter, was always carrying material to make the house. It was very difficult because everything was very expensive…, just the two of us, there was no one to do it, you already see, right? I had to 'put my head into it.' I hired bricklayers but I had to put my hand in the dough too. I wanted to see everything settled. The thing was heavy, my son. (...) To have what I have here now, I even carried 50-kilos cement sacks. From the street down there up to here (Interview with inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 16 September 2014).

Every so often, the virtually complete inattention in a context of fast growth and proliferation ended up in disaster. For instance, in the rainy summer of 1983, a landslide of mud and debris destroyed several houses and shacks in Pavão-Pavãozinho, burying almost forty people on its way down. Most of the thirteen fatal victims were small children. The city mayor attended the burying of victims at one of the city's cemetery. The mob reproved him for the tragedy and the poor quality of coffins, made of vegetables' crates. After our talk, one of my informants who had played an active role during the event kindly shared a newspaper clipping with me (see image 2 above).[84] After the unrest and revolt of Pavão-Pavãozinho's inhabitants, public authorities filled the path of

---

[84] Interview conducted on 2 October 2014.

destruction with the funicular railway that nowadays serves the place. Santa Marta underwent a similar catastrophe in 1988 when a garbage avalanche caused the destruction of about thirty houses, leaving a balance of six deaths, forty injured, and three hundred homeless. The empty space left in the wake of the destruction was filled in with a cable car inaugurated in 2008. Many other lethal 'geological' misfortunes have plagued Rio's favelas thereafter, among which, those ones in Formiga and Borel in 1988, Vidigal and Rocinha in 1996, and Prazeres and Rocinha in 2010 (D'Orsi et al., 2016).

### 6.1.3. Primitive accumulation *without* dispossession

Before proceeding any further, it is necessary to inquire about the meaning and place self-built Rio's favelas might have for/in capitalist accumulation. Rio's favelas were not originally produced as a commodity for sale in the market. Therefore, it seems reasonable to ask if Rio's favelas and their social space have always been completely 'outside' capitalist accumulation circuits. That is not precisely the case because these territories and their inhabitants have been integrated in several ways to the so-called 'formal' city and its economy: From the provision of the vast array of domestic services that any Rio's rich and upper-middle class neighborhood might be expected to count with (gatekeepers, security guards, maids, cleaners, cookers, caretakers, and so on – what could be seen as a kind of alienation because favela inhabitants are not usually welcome to rich and upper-middle class neighborhoods in any other circumstances) to the very erection of these better-off districts to the provision of a cheap labor to industries. Rio de Janeiro's favelas have been spaces of social reproduction of the urban poor under (dependent) capitalist conditions of production, rather than places of direct capitalist exploitation. Perhaps their involvement into capitalist accumulation until fairly recently might be best understood as 'subsidiary' rather than 'direct.' As Ribeiro (2016) indicates, favelas may be seen as areas that 'fulfill the role of internal frontier to the space of accumulation of capital by accruing reserves of labor force and assets for future cycles of capitalist expansion' (Ribeiro, 2016: 130).

Francisco de Oliveira (2003 [1972]: 59) observed in his now classic study *Critique of the Dualist Reason* that the whole picture shows signs of what might be boldly qualified as primitive accumulation. Writing in the early 1970s, Oliveira specifies that this is so to the extent that, within the concrete context of expansion of capitalism in Brazil, the formation and expansion of self-constructed neighborhoods meant that housing costs

were simply excluded from the calculations of capital while remunerating the urban workforce. Thus, even though *without* direct dispossession, the creation of self-built neighborhoods brings about primitive accumulation.

> A non-negligible percentage of the homes of the working classes was built by the owners themselves, using days off, weekends and forms of cooperation as the 'joint effort.' The house, the good resulting from such an operation, is produced by non-paid labor, that is, super-labor. Although this good is not dispossessed by the private sector of production, it helps to increase the rate of exploitation of the workforce, because its outcome — the house — is reflected in an apparent lowering of the cost of reproduction of the labor force — of which housing costs are an important component — and to depress real wages paid by companies. Thus, an operation that is in appearance a survival of 'natural economy' practices within cities, connects remarkably well with a process of capitalist expansion, which has one of its foundations and its dynamism in the intense exploitation of the workforce (Oliveira, 2003 [1972]: 59).

Without any doubt, Brazilian favelas very formation, development and consolidation passes through the expansion of capitalism in Brazil. This implies, for instance, to recognize that Brazilian favelas – notwithstanding their organic morphology, which may be someway similar to that of European medieval towns – are modern occurrences, rather than mere residues of premodern spatial formations or enclaves of the rural world in the heart of the modern city. Favelas are evolving urban spaces. To the point that Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 133-4, 1991 [1974]: 55, 373-4) saw in them potential difference on the margins of the homogenized realm. Lefebvre indicates that favelas entail a kind of spatial duality in which appropriation and urban guerrilla might develop. But all this only shows how favelas have by no means been the quintessential locus of capitalist accumulation. In a word, they have not been the place in which value is produced and surplus value extracted. It is hard to see in them a privileged place of surplus value realization either. Their organic morphology and spontaneous planning demonstrate that favelas were not produced as 'machines for living in' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 303, 2002 [1970]: 81, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 248, 372-3, 605). Instead, favelas have been self-built by their own inhabitants within general circumstances marked by labor exploitation and urban spoliation. They have been places intended for the social reproduction of a portion of the

workforce that has been (over)exploited and poorly remunerated elsewhere. Capital accumulation did not happen within their own boundaries but somewhere else. Accordingly, favela dwellers might be seen as part of a surplus urban population readily available to be (over)exploited in either factories and industries or the commoditized production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]), of which most of the contemporary urban factory is itself an product.

## 6.2. The open wounds of the present

It is time now for us to delve into the recent spatial and social transformation of Rio de Janeiro's favelas. I have mentioned in Chapter 2 that when I was looking for a place to live in one of the favelas of Rio de Janeiro in 2014, a local woman offered me one room to rent on the hill of Babilônia.[85] Maria informed me that with that reform she was aiming to earn an extra income. Maria said she would like to take the opportunity of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympics to rent the room to tourists. The woman also told me that there were university students interested in what she was offering. Likewise, other favela homeowners interviewed in places like Santa Marta, Vidigal, Cantagalo, and Pavão-Pavãozinho declared to have rehabilitated or expanded their houses in order to rent or even sell them, always in view of the increasing tendencies in housing market prices after the *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* or Police Pacification Units (UPPs) were established from the last years of the 2000s onward.[86] It is evident that locals had been benefiting from the recent circumstances in Rio's favelas. However, multiples are the actors and determinations involved. The investments in Rio's favelas come from different sources raging from homeowners, who extend their houses on the lookout for business opportunities, to outside investors, some of them foreigners, who buy houses or plots of land in order to obtain a financial return in future transactions in a boosted real estate market gradually formalized, and with prospects of further formalization. Perhaps a paradigmatic case is that of the favela of Vidigal. Recently, Vidigal have gone through an intense process of change: New construction patterns have arisen and new social strata – formed either by 'better-off' new permanent residents or by occasional visitors and tourists – have been incorporated into the daily life of the favela. Transformations have

---

[85] Observation in situ and informal conversation on 4 September 2014.
[86] Interviews conducted on 2 October, 12 October, 14 October, 25 October, 29 October, 30 October, 31 October, and 2 November 2014.

been so intense that some have speculated that if in a few years Vidigal might have become a middle-class neighborhood, with a profile of residents similar to that of rich neighborhoods of its surroundings (that is, Leblon, Gávea, and São Conrado).

*Picture 7 –Morro-asfalto dichotomy*



Source: The author, 2014.

These processes remind us that distinctions between 'formal' and 'informal,' or, in the case in question, between *morro* (hill) and *asfalto* (asphalt), to use local way to name these distinctions, should be taken as social constructs that are constantly redefined according to the new meanings places are given within the urban fabric. Vidigal, a favela that was self-built over generations in a residual area – on the narrow and winding strip of land on a steep and rocky hillside bordering the waterfront –, and that had been during decades under the control of drug trafficking gangs, has gained new meanings and valuations, as much symbolic as economic. Nowadays, one can even find a luxury hotel on the top of the hill, with direct shuttle from the international airport, and with rooms overlooking Ipanema beach. Picture 7 shows Cantagalo and Copacabana. It reminds us that the vertical contrast between *morro* and *asfalto* really characterizes the historical-geography of Rio de Janeiro (Ribeiro and Lago, 2001). *Morro* and *asfalto* can be seen

side-by-side all over the cityscape. Thus, Vidigal might not the only gentrifying favela. Indeed, as we will see in what follows, the opening of new commercial establishments like restaurants and other tourist-oriented business is notable in many favelas located across the southern area of Rio de Janeiro. If one has in mind that Rio de Janeiro's favelas had been marginalized and neglected by public authorities for a long time, all these recent developments taking place in their territories are quite striking.

*Picture 8 – Trading with self-help housing*



Source: The author, 2014.

186
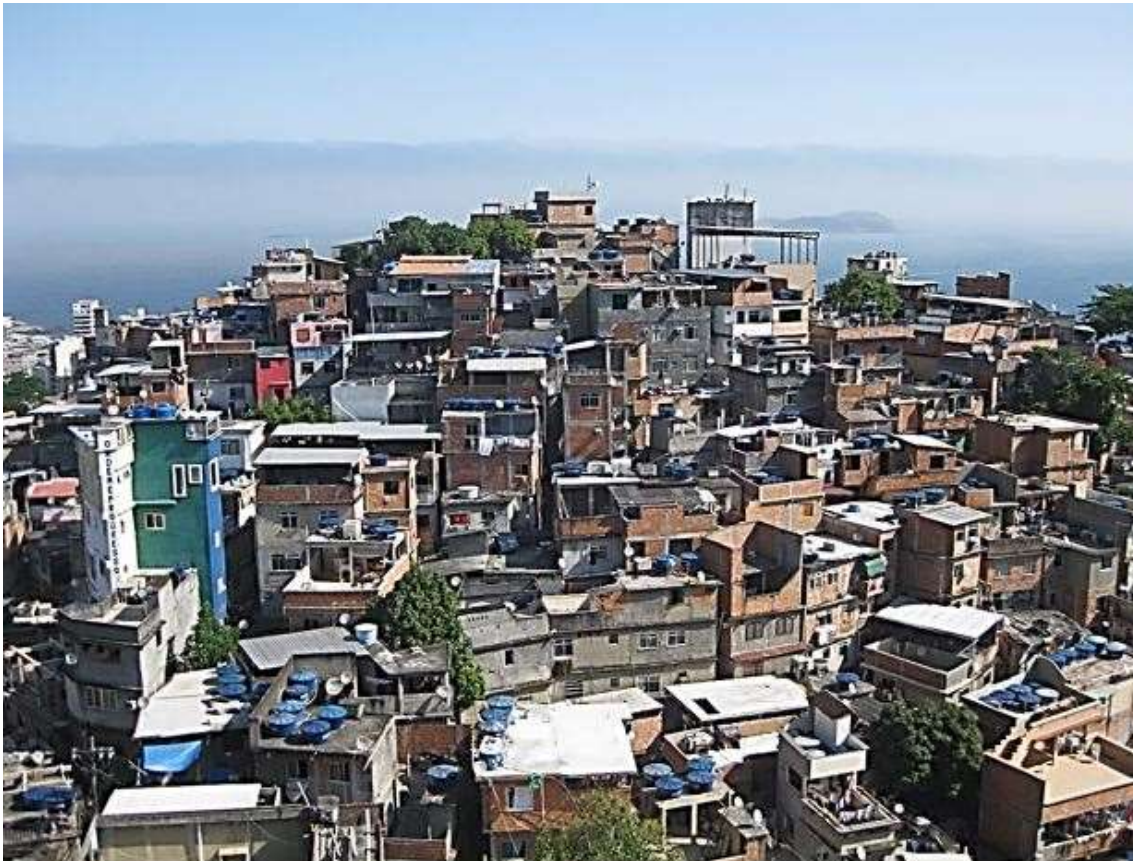
The changes are so visible that it is not difficult to find foreigner tourists wandering around with their cameras in some of Rio de Janeiro's favelas (see picture 12, lower-right photo, further down).[87] In addition to the beautiful views from viewpoints located in the upper parts of some of them, poverty and the poor seem to have been converted themselves into tourist attractions. In Rio's favelas, the poor and their poverty are now rendered as commodities! It is quite clear that recent public policies, such as the UPPs, have generated relevant changes in Rio's favelas. Nevertheless, these public policies would have ambivalent (unintended?) consequences. Thousands of people are victims of forced evictions every year in Rio de Janeiro. Such evictions are the result of both armed conflicts among gangs and the police but also of development projects, and the urban upgrading, these last often related to the organization of global mega-events, like the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil and the 2016 Olympics. Market-driven displacement and gentrification have also been in course. In what follows, I will seek to disentangle the ambivalent forces that shape the everyday life of Rio de Janeiro's favelas.

### 6.2.1. From incipient commodification to the production of space

The recent times in Rio de Janeiro's favelas can be vividly grasped through the modifications printed over their built environment. Some of them have experienced a real boom in the construction sector with the exponential vertical expansion of existing housing stock and the increasing in already high residential densities (see, for instance, pictures 1, 6, and 8 above and picture 13 below). During my field exploration in Rio's favelas in 2014, I saw many bricklayers employed in the expansion, renovation and construction of buildings. It was quite common to come across groups of construction workers loaded up with building material such as bags of cement or sand, bricks, and so on, diligently marching up and down stairways, ramps and narrow pathways, in many cases reaching the highest parts of the hills.[88] The division and subdivision of space that follows up the 'constructive euphoria' seems to be incalculable. Houses, shacks, unfinished flagstones and floorboards, even stairways, entrance halls and backyards, are traded, sold and rented, in a panorama in which buildings are almost literally stacked on top of each other. In these varied, discorded, and sometimes colorful agglomerations of

---

[87] Observation in situ in Santa Marta on 12 October, 25 October, 29 October 2014 and in Vidigal on 31 October 2014.
[88] Participant observation in September, October, and November 2014.

constructed volumes, everything appears to take a 'price tag' (Smith, 2010 [1984]: 78). Everything seems to move toward a logic in which each and every single portion of space, for more uninhabitable or unhealthy that it may be, has a price: From solid houses to pitiable shacks, from floorboards to rooftops; from corners, 'spots' and beds within a room to interstitial spaces between houses or between buildings and rocky hill walls...

Debates about the '*commodityness*' of self-help housing, which started in the 1970s and went on into the 1980s, showed the diversity of possible interpretations amid Marxists. Against Turner's (1968, 1976) liberal and highly optimistic understandings of self-help housing as a 'non-commodity,' Burgess (1977, 1978, 1982) and Pradilla (1974, 1976) argued that it should be seen as a 'real commodity,' a 'petty-bourgeoisie commodity,' in which exchange-value orientations surpass its use-value as shelter. Soon after, more nuanced views, such as Conway's (1982), suggested that it is a kind of 'potential commodity,' because it is produced as a 'non-commodity' in a context of 'pre-capitalist' production. But Conway (1982) also pointed out that, whereas self-help housing is a 'non-commodity,' it could be turned into a proper commodity insofar as capitalist relations of production penetrate the so-called 'developing countries.' Despite Conway's (1982) largely erroneous qualification of self-help housing as essentially 'pre-capitalist,' he indicates that even if self-help housing may not be created directly into the commodity form, it does not mean that it cannot be turned into a commodity.

Following Polanyi's (2001 [1944]) reasoning, one could perhaps claim that self-built housing, like land itself, can be only 'fictitiously' turned into a commodity. So, were Rio de Janeiro's favelas born as commodities? Are they part of a market that is 'informal' and, therefore, amenable to 'formalization?' As I have already argued, most of self-help housing in Rio's favelas was not originally erected as a commodity for sale in the market. And I want to emphasize here the words 'most' and 'originally' because favela residents have been quite resourceful and ingenious while establishing and engaging in 'informal' land markets since a long time ago. Akin to other situations across the so-called global South, where the state did not provide housing, and where the private sector was not interested in doing so, alternative market supply systems have filled the gap (Napier et al., 2013: 14). Furthermore, high unemployment rates and precarious employment status are characteristic among many favela residents and rental arrangements may be a key component in their survivalist reproductive strategies on the margins of the capitalist economy. Thus, contrary to what could be at first thought, the treatment of parcels of space as tradable goods has been the situation in Rio's favelas for some time now. For

instance, we have seen earlier that, Ms. Aparecida's mother bought a wooden shack, in installments, in Pavão-Pavãozinho in the late 1940s. Ms. Aparecida's testimony indicates how the real estate market and the trading with portions of land are not something new in Rio's favelas but have evolved with them.[89]

Without any doubt, self-built housing can be traded, either sold or leased, and eventually completely commoditized. Picture 8 above illustrates well that there is a real estate market in Rio's favelas. However, the land market in Rio's favelas have been under the regency of differentiated rules and conditions, which were commonly termed 'informal,' as, for example, the customary practice of record keeping of buying and selling agreements or written agreements in the residents' associations or other community-based organizations.[90] In addition, friends and relatives play a central role at all stages of a transaction, from finding potential buyers to establishing faithfulness and reliability to the transaction. My informants confirmed how, almost invariably, transactions rely on family or friends.[91] Those engaging in these markets are introduced directly by a family member or friend or at most by someone else that can be easily traced through family, kinship or friendship networks. Thus, favela inhabitants are actively involved in local land markets, which were largely established by themselves and have worked as a 'niche' of markets with particular features. These 'sub-markets' have been not straightforwardly accessible for everybody. Above all, after heavy-armed organized gangs established and entrenched themselves in Rio's favelas since the early 1980s. For most of those without previous bounds in the area that could afford something elsewhere, engaging in these 'sub-markets' was nothing else but a remote option.

Even if there have been small local entrepreneurs, long-standing favela residents producing portions of space with the purpose of trading them in the market, it is quite difficult to claim that they have been doing so on the same terms as proper capitalist developers and real estate investors. The former were surely guided by survivalist and reproductive motivations, whereas the later produce space in accordance with the icy purpose of profit seeking. In short, if, on the one hand, self-help housing in favelas has been treated as a commodity in 'informal' land markets, and even if sometimes it has been intentionally produced to be transacted, such as the several rental arrangements within

---

[89] Interview conducted on 16 September 2014.
[90] Interviews conducted with favela inhabitants on 2 October and 16 October 2014.
[91] Among other interviews, those ones I conducted with Pavão-Pavãozinho's inhabitants on 2 October and 8 October, and with inhabitants of Santa Marta on 16 October and 25 October 2014.

Rio's favelas do reveal, then on the other, it has not been produced by capitalists that produce space in the pursuit of profits. That is, the housing and built environment of the favelas had not been, at least until recent times, the final result of accumulation for accumulation's sake. While self-built housing in Rio de Janeiro's favelas make up 'informal' 'sub-markets' on the urban margins in which self-help housing is traded, the goods traded in these 'sub-markets' are usually far from being produced under what Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) named the production of space.

What is in question nowadays is precisely the potential 'opening up' of particular 'sub-markets' existing in Rio de Janeiro's favelas to new agents, from real estate developers and investors to retail and financial institutions, and their ongoing assimilation into the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]) and other accumulation processes. Their shift into allegedly impersonal markets, in ways that outside investors and traders without any previous links within the territory might play a significant role in the general dynamics of commodification. Consequently, traditional spaces of social reproduction of the urban poor, and all that is contained within them, such as their built environment and everyday life, after a long period of relinquishment and institutional discredit, have been 'rediscovered' by new agents like property developers and real estate investors who have been willing to move in to purchase land.92 It denotes, for instance, their treatment as 'abstract spaces' to be produced, merchandized and consumed in accordance with the underlying forces of the production of space (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]). These contemporary dynamics of change in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and some of their socio-spatial consequences will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

## 6.2.2. Global mega-events and their related public policies

Globalization has many faces and, regarding urban policy, one of them has been the promotion of a neoliberal agenda based on the assumption that all cities are competing for resources in the global arena. Therefore, submitted by market forces, the city should work like a business corporation (Vainer, 2000). In this scenario, global mega-events are seen as driving forces for urban transformation, as they supposedly stimulate the economy of the host city, attracting investments, business activities and visitors. Thus, at least since the 1992 Olympics, held in Barcelona, global mega-events have been advocated as a chief

---

92 It is necessary to note that there were eradication policies over the 1960s and 1970s. However, afterward the rule has been the abandonment of the favelas to their own fate.

propeller of economic activity and an efficient arranger of urban transformation. Large-scale events promotion very often involves efforts to achieve a kind of social consensus among the different interests present in the host city regarding the future transformations and projects to be pursued. However, global mega-events are often part of a process that shifts the urban planning from democratic approaches toward a market-orientated perspective. As Golay and Özden (2007: 08) indicate, efforts to exploit cities by putting them at the service of the market tend to empty them of their traditional and indispensable political dimension. Mega events promoters very often are capable to progress with their proposals, which are not properly achieved by wide-ranging public participation and deliberation.

In this respect, Vainer (2011) has already shown that the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil and the 2016 Olympic Games have been used as an excuse to operate with exceptional rules. The author (2011) denounces a 'state of exception' in which the neoliberal blueprint for urban policy is implemented meanwhile irregular forced evictions and other human rights violations are carried out against the urban poor. According to Vainer (2011), the two mega-events mentioned above are giving shape to a 'city of exception.' The urban planning for Rio de Janeiro, in accordance with the neoliberal assumption that all cities are competing for resources in the global arena, is currently oriented toward mega-events, neither covering the entire city nor popular participation, and carrying out proposals that increase inequalities and urban segregation (Vainer, 2011; Schwambach, 2012). Global mega-events have been leading public policies regarding Rio's favelas at least since the preparation of the city to host the 2007 Pan American Games (Vainer, 2011; Cano, 2012).

One of the main recent public interventions in the favelas is the promotion of the so-called *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* or Police Pacification Units (UPPs). Rio de Janeiro's favelas are places where police presence has habitually been reactive and violent and police have few links with the territory (Riccio et al., 2013: 311). In addition, in many of the favelas armed criminal groups predominate and exercise arbitrary and self-serving control over what happens in the territory (Souza, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 2000b; Machado da Silva, 2004, 2008; Riccio et al., 2013; Cano, 2012, 2013). 'The UPP model intends to change this negative relationship and mounts interventions in several favelas in order to reduce the space for organized crime' (Riccio et al., 2013: 313). The main aim of the UPPs was to take back the control of territories ruled by organized crime (Cano, 2012). In the process of implementation of a UPP, the initial interventions are conducted by special

191

groups of the Police, such as the Special Operations Battalion (BOPE) or the Coordination for Special Assets (CORE). In occasions, the Brazilian army and navy may play a relevant role in this first step of UPPs' implementation.[93] Then, instead of withdrawing after making arrests, the police remains in place and installs a permanent police unit – the UPP. In theory this initial action of force should be later on complemented with social policies (Henriques and Ramos, 2011; Fleury, 2012; Riccio et al., 2013). Even though this has been very seldom the case and, as Cano and Ribeiro (2014) indicate, the UPP program is far from any sort of social or city comprehensiveness.[94]

The first UPP was established in December 2008 in the favela Santa Marta, followed by the one established in Cidade de Deus in February 2009. In two years, twelve UPPs had been constructed and installed. Nowadays Rio de Janeiro counts with nearly forty UPPs distributed mainly across the south and central areas of the city. In the picture below (picture 9), we see that the presence of the police has become a permanent feature in favelas like Santa Marta. Nevertheless, the UPP program is not a broad policing program for the whole city, but rather focuses on territories that are controlled by organized crime and there is a clear concentration of UPPs in the favelas located at the richest areas across the southern zone of the city and nearby mega-event venues such as those arranged for the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil and the 2016 Olympic Games (Cano and Ribeiro, 2014).

The UPPs should also be related to the progressive promotion of regulations concerning the occupation of the land and to the formalization of commercial and services activities in the favelas, like the installation of electricity meters (see picture 12, further down) or cable TV.[95] Private interests back this movement of legalization and formalization currently taking place in some of the favelas. Accordingly, the retake of the favelas by state coercive apparatus could be fostering the advance of market dynamics deep into these territories (Fleury, 2012). In short, Rio de Janeiro's favelas, and all that is contained into them, such as the daily life of their inhabits, after a long period of abandonment and institutional discredit, have been recently 'rediscovered,' and are now

---

[93] https://noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/ultimas-noticias/2014/04/05/exercito-inicia-patrulhamento-na-mare-na-manha-deste-sabado.htm; https://anthropoliteia.net/category/commentary-forums/security-in-brazil-world-cup-2014-and-beyond/ [Accessed 10 May 2017].

[94] An insightful example of the lack of social motives behind the UPPs and other recent public interventions in the favelas was the construction of a wall at the upper part of the favela Santa Marta in 2009, less than a year after the first UPP was stablished in the favela in 2008. Walling urban poverty, in order to prevent its material spread over the landscape, is the kind of measure that resembles those of the apartheid.

[95] Participant observation and fieldwork note on 17 October 2014.

increasingly harassed by new agents: Commercial and financial capital, real estate investors, tourist agencies, and so on.

*Picture 9 – UPP Santa Marta police patrol*



Source: The author, 2014.

Actually, as I shall show later on (see Chapter 8), the daily existence of most favela dwellers moves between the narrow limits set by organized crime and this new marketization. Sadly, living conditions in Rio's favelas seem not to progress due to any form of 'insurgent citizenship' (Holston, 2008).[96] Far from the hopeful view depicted by James Holston (2008), from his observations in the peripheries of São Paulo some decades ago, the daily existence of those inhabiting Rio's favelas depends too often on the unstable scenarios set up by the opposing forces of urban violence and commodification. Political contestation is certainly also in there but it is in there amidst violence and commodification. At least since the 1980s, the everyday life of Rio's favelas and its correlated (individual and collective) struggles have taken shape within the

---

[96] Amidst the increasing urban violence in Brazil, it is ironic that very soon Holston (2009) saw how the language of his insurgent democratic citizenship was appropriated by criminal syndicates like the PCC (*Primeiro Comando da Capital* – First Command of the Capital) in São Paulo and criminal organizations like the CV (*Comando Vermelho* – Red Command) in Rio de Janeiro.

interstices of the domination of these territories by the organized crime (see, for instance, Souza, 1996b, 1998, 2000b; Machado da Silva, 2004, 2008; Perlman, 2010). Favela inhabitants undergo everyday violence. More recently, they have been engulfed by new commodifying forces as well.

### 6.2.3. State regulation and the reshaping of markets

Rio de Janeiro's favelas, as well as the everyday life of their dwellers, have been in large measure and for a long period of time out of the forefront ambitions of capitalists that, in their longing for accumulation, produce and turn around the city space. This was the general state of affairs until fair recently. And the state has been key to change this situation. The state has played a key role in the recent efforts to incorporate Rio's favelas to capitalist accumulation circuits, in the 'opening up' of their particular 'sub-markets' to new agents, from real estate developers and investors to retail and financial institutions. The state is a key player in the progressive commodification of favelas, or rather, in the deepening of their commodification. For instance, regularization policies of land ownership as individual property can be a suitable mechanism for putting the housing stock of the favelas onto the real estate market with a minimum degree of legal certainty. In this sense, Magalhães (2013) indicates how resident evictions in favelas might be pursued through land titling, that is, by the method of sanctioning and fostering the operating of market forces. Currently 'removal polices present themselves cleverly masked under the veneer of land tenure policy. (…) The issue now it is to promote removal through (so-called) land regularization' (Magalhães, 2013: 112).

These ideas surely lead us back to De Soto's (2000) claims that capitalism can work for the urban poor if the 'dead capital' embedded in their property were to 'come to life' through tilting, that is, through their lawful incorporation and offering in the land market. But even if the most rational decision in financial terms may be to sell a house, it does not come without undesirable consequences for the urban poor. The displacement from good location and the loss of social relationships and networks are best-known problems.[97] The role played by the state goes far beyond the promotion of land property regularization policies. As Polanyi (2001 [1944]) already indicated in his powerful criticism of liberalism, the state has been central to the establishment and expansion of

---

[97] Observation in situ and interview conducted with inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 23 October 2014.

markets. In the present case, state intervention relates to the militarized take over and control of favela territories, but also to physical improvements in the provision of basic services and urban infrastructure. After all, without a minimum level and quality of basic services (water and electricity supplies, garbage collection, sewage sanitation, and so on) and public security, the land regulations and the potential further formalization of markets might not be more than partial and precarious achievements. The preconditions for investment must be in place. In this sense, along with physical interventions in the framework of programs such as the *Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento* (PAC), the Growth Acceleration Program, and along with the (so-called) land regularization policies; a leading vector of public interventions in Rio's favelas has been the promotion of the *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* or Police Pacification Units (UPPs) I have alluded earlier.

Taken together, these recent public policies have generated significant changes in the built environment and in the everyday life of numerous Rio de Janeiro's favelas.[98] Although mega-events are not the root cause of recent changes, under the mega-events age the well-located and valued land whose many favelas occupy come to be under siege by capital. Favelas have virtually become part of the capitalist accumulation throughout urban space, which so-often operates in speculative ways. In addition to the rapid and consistent increase in land and real estate prices both across the city and within the favelas, and the pricing out of the poorest, it is necessary to mention here that a significant number of poor households have been removed from several favelas that were totally or partially eradicated in consequence of works and projects related to recent mega-events being hosted by the city (Comitê Popular, 2014: 21). For instance, Vila Autódromo, in the area of the west area of the city, was completely demolished to accommodate the Olympic Park.

The dossier presented in June 2014 by the *Comitê Popular da Copa e Olimpíadas do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio Popular Committee on the World Cup and the Olympics) estimates that 3,507 families, 12,275 people in total, had been removed from twenty-four favelas in consequence of works and projects directly related to mega-events (Comitê Popular, 2014: 21). Another 4,916 families from sixteen favelas were known to be at risk of removal (Comitê Popular, 2014: 21). The document observes that there are no official statistics about removals by favela and these data are probably underestimated. Moreover,

---

[98] Participant observation and interviews conducted in September, October, and November 2014.

there are other removals and treats of removals not directly connected to the 2016 Olympics, but that were taking place in the context of preparation to this global mega-event. For instance, removals coming from the extension of the international airport, construction and widening of motorways, and interventions in the port area (Comitê Popular, 2014). The scale of present-day dispossessions can only be matched by the slum clearance policies of the 1960s and 1970s I have alluded previously, when thousands of people were evicted from their houses and sent to peripheral housing compounds (Perlman, 1977 [1976]: 242; Souza e Silva and Barbosa, 2005: 45-7; Brum, 2013: 208). What does that mean if not accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003)?

### 6.2.4. When development means displacement

The more than necessary improvement in the provision of basic services and infrastructure upgrading, as well as, the more than mandatory reduction of violent conflicts, seem to be primary components in the expulsion of certain residents from well-located favelas to somewhere else in the current Rio de Janeiro's metropolitan outskirts. This occurs to the extent that the new conditions, that is, urban infrastructure, basic services, title deeds and the horizon opened by the enforcement of public security, have a tendency to leverage the land price. The general dynamic is the quite renowned mechanism that guides the capitalist urban land markets the world over: The so-called ground-rent system. Smith (2010 [1984]: 184) puts it clearly while stating that the ground rent of a particular portion of urban space is determined by a number of factors including its physical properties (such as size, surface form, contemporary use, and so on) and also its relation to other places (downtown, workplaces, and so on) and its provision with public services (transport, water, electricity, sewage, and so on). 'The ground-rent system levels urban space to the dimension of exchange-value, but does so as a means of then coordinating and integrating the use of individual spaces within urban space as a whole' (Smith, 2010 [1984]: 184). Consequently, the more a given favela comes to be well-located, and the well-serviced it develops; the more ground rents tend to soar and along with them, the general cost of living. For instance, in Vidigal the average real estate prices increased nearly 500% between 2008 (a year after the 2007 Pan American Games) and 2014 (year in which the FIFA World Cup took place in Brazil) (Comitê Popular, 2014: 41). This increase comes hand in hand with the establishment of new business activities. As I have mentioned before, at the top of the hill, in the site previously occupied by more

than a few shacks and modest households, developers erected a high-standard hotel.[99] With well-equipped rooms with enviable views toward the beach of Ipanema and with direct shuttle service from the international airport, it exemplify the participation of Rio's favelas into capitalist accumulation by other means than just by lowering the cost of the workforce.

In other cases, ground-rent soaring go hand in hand with the improvement of public transportation. In the upper photo of picture 10 further down, we can see the cable car inaugurated in 2014 in the old and symbolical hill of Providência (according to some, the occupation of the hill of Providência in 1897 gave rise to the first favela of Rio de Janeiro). The Providência's cable car is a 'solution' Brazilian planners borrowed from their colleagues in Medellin, Colombia. Actually, this transportation 'solution' for marginalized neighborhoods has been either in operation or under construction in many other Latin American cities like, for instance, La Paz, Caracas, and Lima. In view of Roy's (2011b: 331-2) cheerful observations about the infamous *Cingapura* public housing program in São Paulo – basically because it was named after the epitome of Asian's new century, Singapore –, very likely postcolonial scholars would see in Providência's new cable car another example of the multiple connections that bond up the urban milieus of the global South in quite unsuspected ways. What is seldom expressed by postcolonial scholars, however, is that organizations like the World Bank usually play a crucial role in the (sometimes global) circulation of these kinds of 'solutions.' There are many 'solutions' that have been promoted and circulated as 'best practices' by international organizations like the World Bank, from innovative participatory 'tools' like the Participatory Budgeting to Bus Rapid Transit systems (BRTs) to the abovementioned cable cars.[100]

Now, I also ask myself what would be the opinion of postcolonial urban scholars about the circulation of another 'solution' from the contexts of South African townships under apartheid to present day Rio de Janeiro's favelas: The armored vehicle employed by Rio's police special forces to come into favelas and combat organized crime, that is, a sort of urban warfare tank capable of resisting 7.62-mm machine gun attacks and grenade blasts, popularly known in Rio de Janeiro as *Caveirão* (Big Skull).[101] This armored

---

[99] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 31 October 2014.
[100] On BRT's global reach see, for instance, http://www.brtdata.org/ [Accessed 10 May 2017]. On Participatory Budgeting' global circulation see Sintomer et al. 2010, 2013; Goldfrank 2012; Baiocchi and Ganuza 2014: Peck and Theodore 2015; Porto de Oliveira, 2017.
[101] For more see http://piaui.folha.uol.com.br/materia/dentro-do-caveirao/; [Accessed 10 May 2017].

vehicle was utilized in South Africa in the 1980s to patrol both national borders and black townships. It was locally emulated in Rio de Janeiro's favelas for the first time in 2002. In 2014, armored tactical vehicles to transport troops in operations landed at the Port of Rio de Janeiro. The new armored vehicles were bought by the State of Rio de Janeiro directly from a South African company, the Paramount Group, supposedly to strengthen security during the 2014 World Cup. This is another example that demonstrates why we need to reinstate critical thought into the postcolonial agenda in urban studies.

Be that as it may, the fact is that, probably exactly like in Medellin, Providência's new cable car is part of a larger strategy, a gentrifying strategy. It was made in celebration of the 450 years of the city of Rio de Janeiro as part of a broader redevelopment program of the harbor area, the *Porto Maravilha* (Marvelous Port) redevelopment project. Comparable to previous redevelopment interventions in harbor areas and waterfronts around the world, for instance in Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, and London, the *Porto Maravilha* project aimed at recovering the architectural and archeological heritage of one of the city's oldest parts, while supporting the establishment of the so-called cultural and creative hubs, and correlated restaurants and museums. In this respect, one of the leading interventions is the *Museu do Amanhã* (Museum of Tomorrow) that was designed by the Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava – internationally known for both the best and the worst, I must add. The 'rediscovery' of the old pier where millions of African slaves first stepped Brazil during the colonial times, the *Cais do Valongo* (Valongo Pier), is another of the broadcasted virtues of the four billion dollars project (eight billion Reais).

But heritage preservation (that may be related to heritage commodification, one could surely argue) has not been the only goal of a scheme planned to encompass more than five million square meters all over the harbor area (see image 3 below). Structural changes were envisioned for the region and, of course, broad urban upgrading, real estate development, and large commercial buildings were in the plans as well. It is well known that large scale urban interventions enhance land values and may be pursued as a catalyst process for private real estate development in and around the areas in which urban interventions occur. The lower part of image 3 gives us a general perspective of the location of the harbor area within the city. We can see, for instance, that the harbor zone is relatively close to Maracanã Stadium (southwest), downtown Rio de Janeiro and Santos Dumont Airport (southeast), and to main beaches in the southern zone of the city (further south). It is also close to Tom Jobim International Airport (out of range in the image but just a few kilometers North).

*Image 3 – Porto Maravilha redevelopment project*

Source: CDURP - Companhia de Desenvolvimento Urbano da Região do Porto do Rio de Janeiro, 2012. Available at http://portomaravilha.com.br/mapa_empreendimentos [Accessed 10 May 2017]. Prepared by the author.

The announcement of the construction of five 'world-class AAA standard' towers branded by Donald Trump in Rio's harbor area in 2012 probably give an idea of the ambitions behind this redevelopment project.[102] This and other planned commercial developments are highlighted in red in image 3 (upper part). The global mega-events era

---

[102] Avaliable at http://www.trumptowersrio.com/about/ [Accessed 10 May 2017].

is now part of Rio de Janeiro's past and the two-billion-dollar office project has never left the blueprints. The megalomaniac spirit of the miscarried enterprise is expressed on the building group's website:

> TRUMP TOWERS RIO is a complex of five AAA 150 meters high skyscrapers with 38 floors, 322,400 square meters of gross office space and total built area including commercial and underground space of about 450,000 square meters. The project is being developed in Porto Maravilha ("Marvelous Port") – the Port Region adjacent to the commercial center of Rio de Janeiro. It is the first project to bear the Trump name in Brazil and the largest urban office development in the BRICS countries (Landmark Properties Participações Ltda., 2013).

In a word, the *Porto Maravilha* project has intended to foster the construction of tourist attractions and commercial buildings, even though in Rio de Janeiro there is a larger and quite visible housing deficit, above all among the poorest layers of its population. But, again, like somewhere else, in the aftermath of the global mega-events in Rio de Janeiro, one realizes how cultural and sports venues have very often been overpriced, and that construction delays and the entire withdrawal of projects have been more than just exceptions. Moreover, many stadiums have ended up being not profitable enough for investors and, as such, unceremoniously abandoned (like the mythical Maracanã itself). Of course, everything tempered by far-reaching corruption scandals.

What I want to remark at this juncture is that, despite the (relative) failure of urban planners and speculative capitalists in their joint endeavors to promote and seize prospective ground-rent increases, Providência's cable car was envisioned more for tourists and investors than for Providência's dwellers. Within the frame of the *Porto Maravilha* project, it was basically intended to connect the harbor area with the main train station, the Central do Brasil station, and to downtown Rio de Janeiro. The upper part of image 3 shows how the hill of Providência (highlighted by the big blue circle) is surrounded by many planned commercial, residential, institutional, and cultural developments scattered all over the harbor zone (other areas stressed in the image respectively in red, yellow, purple, and orange). It also signposts the Central do Brasil train station (underscored by the yellow circle). In this respect, it is not too much to mention that Providência's cable car does not reach the upper parts of the hill. The 'solution' did not come for everybody in the neighborhood! As we can see in picture 10

below (lower photo), for those living in the upper areas of the hill of Providência, there is no other option but to keep walking all the way up and down through the main stairway. And this is so without mentioning the several families that were evicted to make room for the infrastructure.[103] Not for nothing the inhabitants of other favelas across the city, Rocinha comes to my mind now, have opposed to the replication of similar 'solutions.'

Another aspect I want to stress here is that, given the rapid and consistent increase in land and real estate prices both across the city and within the favelas, a significant number of families were priced out from their homes (Vannuchi and Criekingen, 2015). As I just said, in Vidigal the average real estate prices increased nearly 500% between 2008 and 2014 (Comitê Popular, 2014: 41). But then again, even if Vidigal is the most paradigmatic and broadcasted case, probably due to the fact that global celebrities have been 'investing' in its real estate – it has been rumored that Madonna started 2015 by buying the house next to the property of David Beckham on the hill; gentrifying Vidigal is not an isolated incident. In other favelas that occupy what nowadays is valued land, like Santa Marta, Cantagalo and Babilônia – all of them positioned in the southern area of Rio de Janeiro, and proximate to internationally-known rich neighborhoods such as Ipanema, Copacabana and Leblon – the growing presence of newcomers and tourist accommodations, from bed and breakfast to guesthouses to hotels, is an sign of the immersion of these territories into capitalist logics that produce and 'revolve' the urban space.[104] For instance, in the upper-left photo of picture 12 below we see a room of a flat for rent in Pavão-Pavãozinho. It does not quite fit into the imaginary of the favela as a dreadful world.

The recent inauguration of businesses like restaurants and nightclubs is also notable in many favelas. In Babilônia one can even find an art gallery.[105] The garden-fresh design and the uniform white walls of the newfangled building contrast with the unfinished and patchwork brick houses of its surroundings. It also has a wooden deck with nice views to the ocean (picture 12, lower-left photo). Moreover, it is not precisely difficult to find foreigner tourists wandering around with their cameras in favelas like Santa Marta, Vidigal or in some spots of Rocinha.[106] The lower-right photo in picture 12 below portrays a group of foreigner tourists approaching Santa Marta hill. In addition to

---

[103] Observation in situ and informal conversation with favela residents on 16 October 2014.
[104] Participant observation on 12 October, 22 October, 25 October, 31 October, and 1 November 2014.
[105] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 1 November 2014.
[106] On-site observation in Santa Marta on 12 October 2014 and in Vidigal on 31 October 2014.

the beautiful viewpoints located on the upper parts of the hills (see picture 11 below), urban poverty and the poor themselves are turned into tourist attractions. Tourism often operates by the selling off representations attached to places, in this case, it exploits urban marginality and poverty. Urban poverty and all its correlate (mis)representations, including those related to delinquency and the lives of criminals, are now traded as commodities (Larkins, 2015). And it is never too much to mention that the bulk of the profit from the tourist operation in Rio de Janeiro's favelas does not have as its final destination the pockets of local residents (Freire-Medeiros, 2007). All these happenings might be seen as at least atypical if we have into consideration the status commonly ascribed to Rio's favelas: Places of inhabitation of the disadvantaged classes, very often pigeonholed as dangerous classes. And not forgetting the long-standing and adamant stigmatization of favelas as 'no-go zones' by both the local press and city's middle and upper classes. New material and symbolic dynamics – very often disruptive and contradictory – have come about in Rio de Janeiro's favelas.

Recent change in Rio's favelas entails the broadening of the land market, and other markets, which may possibly give free rein to gentrification. My talk with Mr. Antônio, a local multi-property owner and old resident of Pavão-Pavãozinho, illustrates how the effects of the recent real estate 'fever' have been sprouting across the favelas located at the southern zone of Rio de Janeiro in the early-2010s.[107] Mr. Antônio came to Rio de Janeiro in the early 1950s from northeastern Brazil. Initially, he lived in construction sites in Copacabana and Ipanema but, after a couple of years, he found a place for himself in Pavão-Pavãozinho. He has worked his entire life as a builder, first as a bricklayer and then as construction overseer, and had no technical problems to extend his place over the decades. Nowadays, Mr. Antônio's place has six floors containing eleven flats, of which he rents nine.

> I had tenants who left here to live in the State of Rio [de Janeiro]. There was a guy who went to Parque União, in the Maré. (...) The price here on the hill, man, eh ... for a bedsit, for a studio flat [*quitinete*], is up to 700 [reais]. A larger place with living room, bedroom with a kitchen and service area is 1,000 [reais]. Not everyone can afford it. If one of my studios of 700 [reais] happens to be vacant, in the follow-up I easily rent it. This is the price. This is the standard price. Now it's on that basis. I say so

---

[107] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 8 October 2014.

> because I deal with it. Four years ago it was 350 [reais]... 400 [reais], or a little less. There has been a 'fever' here (Interview with multi-property owner of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 8 October 2014).

Mr. Antônio told me that he owns other houses, some of which he was selling. He mentioned that not only has favela's housing rental market changed but that the buying and selling market has also undergone a significant variation. The issue of favela's land market valorization comes up in other interviews.[108] Valdemar, for instance, expresses how things have changed from the time he bought a wooden shack in Santa Marta in the 1980s to the current situation.

> Yes, I bought a house, I mean, I bought a *barraco* [shack] in Santa Marta. It was a wooden shack, very nice, but it was a wooden shack. Then I bought a second shack, which I thought was better and bigger, because it was a mixed shack, a section made of wood and another one of cement and bricks. When I go to this place, I reform it and build everything of bricks. I'm talking about a period when... That was in 1983, when my first child was born. But I already had a different economic condition. I already worked at the Bank and I already earned ten minimum wages. Eh, I cannot make comparisons because it was very easy for me to buy a *barraco* in Santa Marta at that time. Anyway, what I can tell you is that it was easier, even for those who earned much less. It was much easier to buy. You had more offer and more possibilities to buy a shack in Santa Marta. Unlike now, prices weren't exorbitant. (Inaudible). If I wanted to leave the house I live in today to buy another shack in Santa Marta of the same size, I'll hardly be able to do so. Even with the favorable economic condition of which I enjoy (Interview with resident of Santa Marta on 25 October 2014).

State interventions end up raising the price of land within favelas and have an exclusionary effect upon favela inhabitants, above all upon the poorest ones. Urban upgrading, land regularization and the so-called 'pacification' might be resulting in the displacement of thousands of people that cannot keep the track of the new standards of living.

---

[108] Interviews conducted on 14 October, 22 October, 25 October, and 6 November 2014 with residents, respectively, of Pavão-Pavãozinho, Babilônia, Santa Marta, and Pavão-Pavãozinho.

*Picture 10 – Providência's cable car and main stairway*



Source: The author, 2014.

*Picture 11 – Favelas' topmost views*



Source: The author, 2014.

*Picture 12 – Gentrification, tourism, and service regularization*



Source: The author, 2014.

Many Rio's favelas residents cannot eventually follow up the rising rents adjusted according to the new prospects of a housing market that is no longer exclusively oriented to the urban poor. Thousands of families have been placed under the threat of eviction through market, likely without any alternative than moving to affordable options somewhere in the fast-growing, crime-plagued, and under-serviced current urban frontiers of the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro. But if to move out is the 'choice,' or rather the lack of it, various friendship and family networks, which usually are established and nurtured in a territorial basis, should be left behind, or at least will be distant in the extensive space of the metropolis. To leave means to deal with the pains of de-territorialization. This is one of the reasons – along with the proximity to workplaces – why some of the poorest residents look for shelter alternatives either within the favelas where they already live in or in nearby favelas, before undertaking the ultimate relocation toward the current edges of the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro. Picture 13 illustrates the proximity between the favela Pavão-Pavãozinho and the well-serviced neighborhood of Copacabana, from both points of view, *morro* toward *asfalto* (picture 13, left photo) and vice-versa (picture 13, right photo). As with previous pictures (see, again, for instance, pictures 7 and 8 above), picture 13 helps us to shed light on how *morro* and *asfalto* are side-by-side in visible contrast, which means that the famous beaches of Copacabana and Ipanema, shops, services, bus stops, schools, hospitals, pharmacies, and job opportunities, lay just down the hill.

Nevertheless, under the context of inflation of rents and the price of land, to remain in the now well-located Pavão-Pavãozinho does not come without a cost for the poorest. In order to continue living in the same locality, some of the tenants displaced by raising rents compromise to not-as-good 'options' that may involve poorer quality of house unities, smaller or overcrowded places, constructions with some kind of physical hazard, such as low-slung aeration, or residences of problematic access. In a word, for the poorest, to find an affordable shelter within favelas that now have a good location in the extended network of places that makes up the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro means almost inevitably the worsening of immediate living conditions. The interview conducted with a forty-two year old informant, who now shares a dilapidated accommodation with her two daughters and three grandchildren, aged four, two, and one, in the bottommost part of the favela Pavão-Pavãozinho, exemplifies these circumstances.[109]

---

[109] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 23 October 2014.

*Picture 13 – The benefits of good location*

Source: The author, 2014.

Resident of the place since 1990, Marta works as a house cleaner in the middle-class neighborhood of Botafogo. The entrance to Marta's house is a bit strange because you have to go down a kind of ladder, which makes part of the house underground. In addition to the entrance door, the house has a single door leading to a small utility area in the back. There are no external windows and the air circulation is truly compromised. Very kind, the woman told me her story, she also introduced me to one of her daughters and her grandchildren. Even without relatives on the hill, Marta does not want to move from there, since she has a circle of friends and feels free to come and go whenever she wants. Marta always lived on the hill for rent. Always in the same place, close to the second station of the cable car. But, in 2010, the house where she lived almost collapsed due to extension works on the subway line in Ipanema. Rental prices skyrocketed when she needed to find another accommodation. She found a small house in nearby Cantagalo but it was too expensive for her. Marta explained to me that:

> A house that was rented for 300 reais is now 1,000 reais. A small house, only one bedroom with bathroom, you know? I was paying 900 reais. I kept

on there for almost a year. It was hard for me to stay there. Too expensive. So I went everywhere looking for a cheaper option... like Bonsucesso. Then I said to myself, I can't. I just can't. I work here in Botafogo, my daughters know everyone in here. I wasn't going to leave them there alone with their children. It has been twenty-four years here now. What I'm going to do down there? In the Baixada [Baixada Fluminense]? That swampland…, Realengo, Bonsucesso, Santa Cruz? No, no. Our life's here in the south zone. We belong here (...) Then, I couldn't continue paying all that money and I came here to this house. (...) Here I pay 600 [reais]... and I don't pay for electricity or water. (...) It has this little entrance, kitchen, bathroom and the bedroom. (...) Yes, as you see, there's no window (Interview with inhabitant of Pavão-Pavãozinho on 23 October 2014).

The so-called 'slum upgrading' appears to be, in fact, the provision of a minimum infrastructure to foster slum formalization, which, among other things, includes the regularization of land ownership and progressive formalization of the several markets existing in Rio de Janeiro's favelas, market of land, housing, water, electricity, in a world… of city. The same can be said with respect to the so-called 'pacification' that is supposed to provide and ensure minimum safety conditions to which such processes could take place. The problem is that, although these changes might reduce segregation in favelas, as their social diversity increases with the newcomers, they comprise social dislodgment and forced displacement as well. Both tendencies point out toward a general configuration that, if consolidated, will lead to an even more segregated city. At the end of the day, the global minded projects would increase social segregation in an already very segregated city. Urban development seems always to consist of social dislocation and physical displacement for those at the bottom tiers of the hierarchical network of places that make up the urban order. If we take a look at the picture as a whole, in the global mega-events era, the right to adequate housing and the right to the city – even in its less radical conception, that of the World Charter of the Right to the City (see Chapter 4) – seem to be far away to be achieved. The urban poor are under constant threat of banishment from the city.

Desai and Loftus (2013) remind us that the diversity of ownership arrangements makes developmental interventions and infrastructure upgrading to have dissimilar consequences within a given informal settlement. Unmistakably, because improvements

in service provision and infrastructure are likely to be translated into real estate appreciation and raising rents, the interests of landlords and tenants might be expected not to be the same. Instead, they are expected to be opposed. However, even if there are favela dwellers that may benefit from ground-rent appreciation, the circumstances can be socially disruptive for most of them due to the potential fragmentation of long-standing community networks that happen to be destroyed in the course of development and its 'unforeseen' consequences. The entire movement encompasses the latent but far-reaching change of the built environment and social space in favelas, which might eventually lead to their annihilation, at least as we know them now. But not only neighborhood solidarity and kinship ties are at stake in the unsettling streams and undercurrents of recent development. While comparing favelas and townships in Chapter 8 we will see that there are other much less altruistic players in the field. Before, let us tackle our second case: Townships.

**Chapter 7 – Townships**

Toward the end of the first volume of *Critique of Everyday Life*, Lefebvre (2014 [1947]: 260-6) suggests that everywhere there is a systematization of the absurd, something that eventually gave way to the holocaust and its awful spatial expression, the Nazi concentration and extermination camps (see Chapter 5). Interestingly, to my knowledge Lefebvre never scrutinized what the segregationist planning of apartheid in South Africa symbolizes. Of course, at the time Lefebvre wrote those lines about the systematization of the absurd, between August and December 1945, apartheid was not in place yet. However, apartheid was already a consolidated and operating reality when Lefebvre culminated his critique of modern planning between the late 1960s and mid 1970s. We have seen earlier that for Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 166-7, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 248, 372-3, 605) the paradigmatic case for the increasing functionalization of everyday life was that of the modern housing complexes on the peripheries of Paris (see chapters 4 and 5). And while it is true that the French author mentions other cases, they are to a large extent subsidiary to the French experience (see Chapter 3). For example, in *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) briefly alludes to the misfortune represented by the autocratic creation of Brazil's new capital city, Brasilia, while criticizing the model that was inaugurated by Haussmann and that Le Corbusier's and Walter Gropius's modernist planning had canonized: 'So faithfully is technocratic and state-bureaucratic society projected into the space of Brasilia that there is an almost self-consciously comic aspect to the process' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 313).

Lefebvre's critical insinuation to the creators and planners of Brasilia is accurate. The city was built in the country's remote interior in just four years and inaugurated in April 1960 to substitute Rio de Janeiro as the national capital. Lúcio Costa's city planning and Oscar Niemeyer's architecture certainly represented a deepening of the modernist master lines set forth by figures like Le Corbusier. Indeed, before long, Brasilia exposed the contradictions of modernist planning. The formation of satellite cities already during the construction works is certainly one of them. The construction of Brasilia attracted many workers, but there was no place for them in the monumental axis of the new national capital. Land occupations in areas surrounding the construction works were not long in coming and were diligently combatted by the authorities. In view of that, satellite cities like Ceilândia and Taguatinga were progressively created to house the city's workers and the urban poor in general. Taguatinga, for example, was officially established in 1958 to

contain land invasions near the future capital, at that time under construction. Ceilândia, established during the most repressive period of the military dictatorship in the early 1970s to house residents removed from various favelas that had emerged since the inauguration of Brasilia, illustrates well how both the 'problem' and the 'solution' to it have persevered over the years. Currently, while the original planned nucleus of Brasilia accommodates mainly the upper classes, there are around twenty-five segregated, neglected, and ill-serviced satellite cities like Ceilândia and Taguatinga. They are seldom remembered except for the criminality that appears to define everyday life there.

But let us turn to the case in point in this chapter. In keeping with the general lines defended in modernist planning – those canonized by Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus, and tragicomically culminating in the construction of Brasilia, that is, rationalism, functionalism and statism, which usually result in authoritarianism and exclusion – in South Africa racial domination was spatially planned and systematically enforced during apartheid (Mabin, 1990a, 1992, 1995, 2000; Mabin and Smit, 1997). The main difference vis-à-vis modernist planning deployed elsewhere is that the notion of race was the central axis in the systematization of the absurd (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947]: 260-6) in South Africa. Something that perhaps has some parallels only in the United States during the Jim Crow era. In the case of South African townships, state-provided or subsidized housing was not only turned into a functional habitat, like in the case of the French housing complexes that Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 303, 2002 [1970]: 81, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 248, 372-3, 605) denounced as 'machines for living in,' but into planned spaces for the confinement of those excluded from the city, all of them categorized as non-whites. South African townships should not be regarded as 'machines for living in' but as machines of ill-dwelling, of bad-living. Not for nothing would they come to be denounced as dumps of cheap labor. Economic functionality was indeed a key principle for apartheid planners but one could certainly claim that it was assimilated into apartheid's racist directives. Apartheid planners thought of townships as functional spaces for stocking and controlling the non-white labor force (officially categorized into Africans, Indians, and Coloreds), and strived to keep housing as cheap and as separate as conceivable. Racial domination gained the forms of planned oppression (Mabin, 1995: 191, 2000: 263); racial domination was functionalized.

Nevertheless, as we will see in a moment while inspecting the history of Johannesburg, racial segregation and the accompanying establishment of racially separated townships for those categorized as non-whites started much earlier than

apartheid. If, on the one hand, it is true that during apartheid racial segregation was pushed a step further toward what Alan Mabin (1992) termed 'comprehensive segregation,' on the other, apartheid planners were nonetheless not the creators of racial segregation in South Africa. Racial segregation enforced by law predates apartheid. It indeed predates the establishment of South Africa as an independent polity under British influence in 1910. Both the enforcement of racial residential segregation and the control of African urbanization by means of lawful state polices are marked characteristics of the whole capitalist development of South Africa (Christopher, 1989; Posel, 1991, 8-9; Haarhoff, 2011). Christopher (1989: 253) remarks, for instance, that prior to 1910 the various colonies and republics that occupied the territory of what today is South Africa had varied segregationist policies that were combined into a comprehensive policy only after the National Party took power in 1948.

During apartheid, racial segregation was tightened up, reinforced nationwide, in a word, systematized, but it was not created at that juncture. Even though apartheid systematized it, the South African absurd started much earlier. In view of this, it is necessary to consider pre-apartheid times in order to properly apprehend the roots of racial separation in South Africa, which also means to scrutinize the creation of the first racially segregated townships. We shall also see in the second part of this chapter that the progressive demise of apartheid in the course of the 1980s and early 1990s ended state-led racial planning but not its legacy. The huge political change represented by the African National Congress's (ANC) victory in the 1994 national elections has not been straightforwardly translated into the everyday life of many South Africans. *De facto* segregation along racial and class lines is still a fundamental feature of the contemporary South African city.

As with the previous chapter about Rio de Janeiro's favelas (Chapter 6), I will arrange the present chapter in two main parts. In the first part, titled *The profound scars of the past*, I shall deal with the creation and progressive structuration of Johannesburg's townships as racially homogeneous compounds. Similarly to the structure I have laid out in the previous chapter about Rio de Janeiro's favelas, in the first part of this chapter I shall seek to offer a brief account of the pre-1994 period, that is, an account of early racial segregation in South Africa and of the apartheid city. In doing so, I will draw on relevant literature about these issues and, when it is informative, I will bring in pieces of data from my two field missions in South Africa. In the second part, titled *The ambivalences of the present*, I will seek to explore current outlines of socio-spatial segregation and the vortex

of (urban) development and (de)commodification in the contexts of everyday township life. Here I shall rely strongly on the data I produced in my South African field trips.

## 7.1. The profound scars of the past

In the subsequent sections I will seek to offer a brief historical account of the emergence of racially-segregated townships in South Africa and their relationship with capitalism, with a solider focus on the city of Johannesburg and its townships. This historical account shall inform my reasoning about the recent transformation of South African townships in the second half of the chapter. We shall have a glance at the now-classical debates about the role racial segregation might have played for capitalist accumulation in South Africa as well. While doing so, I will not lose sight of the colonial dynamics and their long-lasting consequences for urban space. At the end of the day, South African racially-segregated townships have their roots in historical colonialism. It is good to explain, however, that for reasons of space and consistency I will keep the focus on Johannesburg (and on the creation and expansion of its townships) and will not approach key events of South African history that predates the emergence of Johannesburg in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

### 7.1.1. Johannesburg's foundation and early racial segregation

Around the year 1886, gold was discovered in the Rand around the area where nowadays the city of Johannesburg stands. The news spread out quickly and, in no more than ten years, in the place where previously existed a handful of Afrikaner farms and African homesteads, there was a fast-growing mining area. A sustainable gold extraction industry was established in the 1890s when deep-level, rather than surface, mining was introduced (Parnell, 2003: 617). In the mid 1890s, the original three thousand mining population had reached more than 100 thousand (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 10; Nieftagodien and Gaule, 2012: 1). By those days, Johannesburg was basically a mining town, which means that the city's population was mostly temporary and consisted basically of young-males in search of rapid fortune. The urban structure of the city was directly related to the mining activity and most of its inhabitants were housed in temporary shelter like corrugated iron shacks (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 11). Despite the precarious landscapes of the Johannesburg of the last decade of nineteenth century, there were indications of the

existence of urban segregationist principles in the city already. As Maylam (1995: 23) points out, while referring to the work of Parnell (1991), in the 1890s, the Kruger's government specified areas in the city for the separate settlement of Asians and Africans.

Only in the first decade of the twentieth century, when it had become clear enough that there were huge reserves of gold in the region, and mining companies managed to extend land tenure much beyond the immediate city's boundaries, Johannesburg started to gain a more permanent character (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 11; Nieftagodien and Gaule, 2012: 2-3). Analogous to other mining areas of the time, in Johannesburg prospective rights for gold were for Europeans only and racial segregation shaped the city's space since very early.[110] The white miners and white managers, were housed with their families on a permanent basis in new stablished suburbs progressively extended northwards, whereas the black miners had short-term contracts and were expected to leave their families behind in the rural areas while they worked on the mines (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 11).

The black workforce employed on the mines usually lived on the mining property in controlled single-sex barracks, often erected within walled compounds, and had to carry on an identity document known as 'pass' used by the authorities to control its movements (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 11). 'Marginal levels of profit obtained from gold meant that the mines depended on African migrant labour that was mostly housed in compounds. Compound housing was also used by the municipality, which was the second largest employer of unskilled African labour' (Parnell, 2003: 617). Since very early, thus, racial segregation took an official and oppressive character in Johannesburg. What is more, the notion that Africans do not belong to the city tempers Johannesburg's history since its initial stages. Mabin and Smit (1997: 198) draw attention to the fact that, unlike colonial territories elsewhere in the nineteenth century in which separated 'ethnic' zones were laid out in urban areas, in South Africa, cities were conceived as white-exclusive places.[111] Johannesburg did not break to this rule. It was envisioned as a city primarily for whites.

---

[110] See for instance Mabin's (1986) study about the mining town of Kimberley in the 1880s.
[111] As Mabin (1992: 408), Maylam (1995: 22), and Mabin and Smit (1997: 199) point out, the specific allocation of land to set apart non-whites from the white minorities in South Africa dates as earlier as the Port Elisabeth of the1850s. Over the 1880s and 1890s, the notion was reproduced in the mining compounds and was to be used again in the early decades of the twentieth century by the republican government to segregate Africans in 'native locations' and Malays and Indians in 'Asiatic bazaars' (Mabin, 1992: 408; Mabin and Smit, 1997: 199).

However, the city economy needed the African labor force that was initially employed on the mines and that soon found occupation in other sectors such as domestic services, retail, construction, and factories. A good amount of this African working population established itself in the several slumyards that had been developing across the inner-city area. These insalubrious makeshift quarters gained an impetus with the end of the South African War in 1902 (also known as Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902). In the aftermath of the war, the British administration took direct control of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State – and their mines –, while many Afrikaner farmers had impoverished during the war and saw no option but to migrate to Johannesburg. Many Africans also steered toward the city escaping rural poverty. Johannesburg's population grew fast and so did its inner-city slums. And, as both black and white needy newcomers found accommodation in them, Johannesburg's overcrowded inner-city slums started to house a multiracial population. The Indians and Malays traders living in there supplemented their interracial atmosphere. As Parnell (2003) sustains, 'in the 1900s and 1910s, Johannesburg was characterised by increasing rather than declining levels of racial integration' (Parnell, 2003: 616-7).

In 1904, the inner-city slums faced an outbreak of bubonic plague and the British colonial government and the Johannesburg City Council counted with the favorable circumstances to fight both the plague and the slums. The population of the inner-city multiracial slums, such as that one known as the Coolie Location, was displaced to elsewhere, racial considerations always being the main principle in the process of relocation. Africans, Indians and Europeans were separated by the authorities and then forcibly destined to racially homogeneous districts. Bonner and Segal (1999) observe that, despite the obvious health hazards, the slum clearance of 1904 had a clear racial motivation:

> The authorities objected to the new slum areas not only because they were breeding grounds of disease, but also because they considered them areas of "inter-racial mixing" which they believed would "dilute the white race" and undermine white supremacy. (…) Both the [British] government and the JCC [Johannesburg City Council] thus tried to segregate the different races of the city's population and to clear the slums (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 13).

It is precisely at that point in time that an African location, that is, Johannesburg's first segregated township, was created on the outskirts of the city. The Africans that happened to be forcibly removed from the inner-city area were resettled in Klipspruit, an area where nowadays part of Soweto (Pimville) stands (Parnell and Pirie, 1991: 130). Klipspruit was proclaimed a 'native location' and since its foundation, in 1905, at least theoretically, no African should be allowed to live in the city of Johannesburg, with a few exceptions such as domestic workers housed in their employer's places or those employed in industries and mines and suitably accommodated within companies' premises (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 13). Until the First World War there were several empty houses in Klipspruit, which was one of the few 'native locations' managed by the Johannesburg City Council (Parnell, 2003: 618). Located approximately twenty kilometres away from the city center, Klipspruit was established on disused sewerage works and lacked any sort of reliable transportation system (Parnell, 2003: 618). Bonner and Segal (1999: 13-4) indicate how insalubrious living conditions in Klipspruit could be and suggest that 'the chief reason why Klipspruit was built where it was, was to leave it as far as possible removed from any neighbourhood inhabited by Europeans' (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 14). Therefore, it was during the time of the Boer Republics, and in the subsequent British colonial rule, that the model of the racially-segregated township was brought into existence in Johannesburg, a model that would be replicated thereafter and that was ultimately tightened up and extended nationwide during the apartheid regime from 1948 onward. Not for nothing Mabin and Smit (1997: 198) place the founding sources of urban planning in South Africa in the continual efforts to dictate and restrict the pattern of settlement of Africans in South African cities.

In her study about Johannesburg's inner-city slums, Parnell (2003) argues that, despite the principle of drastic racial separation emanating from both national and local policies, Johannesburg municipal authorities were not always committed to upholding it. In consequence, the slums and other multiracial urban districts were not wiped off Johannesburg's map in the first decades of the twentieth century. Parnell (2003: 616-7) suggests that 'the Johannesburg Council was complicit in fostering black residential occupation in the centre of "white" Johannesburg' (Parnell, 2003: 616). She (2003: 616-7) argues that, in the 1900s and 1910s, the inner-city slums provided a temporary resolution to the opposing requirements of the official segregationist policy, on the one hand, and of the need for a steady supply of labor to small-scale manufacturers, on the other. 'For a time at least, the principle of segregation was abandoned as the Johannesburg

Municipality bowed to employer demand that their African workers be housed close to the factories in the city and not in distant segregated locations' (Parnell, 2003: 619). In fact, both employers and workers opposed the forced removal of African workers to 'native localities' away from workplaces. Distant and underserviced places like Klipspruit were undesirable for both employers and employees (Parnell, 2003: 618). The relocation of the workforce represented an additional cost of production for employers, and a problem of transportation for workers. Although mining companies and industries housed part of their employees in segregated compounds within their premises, this type of accommodation was progressively left aside in favor of the cheapest option at hand: the inner-city slums.

In 1910, with the union of the four British colonies, South Africa was instituted as a new (white) polity. Despite the initial relegation of instruments of urban planning and their capabilities to the laying out of segregated townships to local authorities (Mabin and Smit, 1997: 196), the new nation did not ignore the principle of racial separation. Rather, it was based on it. The Natives Land Act of 1913 was certainly a defining moment in the overall relationship between Africans and the white governing minority. Even if, as Walker (2010, 2013, 2014) notes, the law has been evoked in simplistic ways as the original moment of the division of the country into two to evade the post-1994 debate on land reform, the Land Act of 1913 had a clear racial bias and its consequences were certainly enduringly damaging for Africans and it is difficult to suggest that current inequalities have nothing to do with it.

The Land Act of 1913 established that only seven per cent of the agricultural land should be destined to the African population, with the promise of increasing this quota over time. This extension happened only in 1936 with the Native Land and Trust Act, when between thirteen and fourteen per cent of the land was then demarcated as 'natives' areas (Worden, 2012 [1994]: 67; Ferguson, 2006: 55; Beinart and Delius, 2014: 99). In any case, this proportion was far less than that of Africans vis-à-vis the total population of the new country. Insofar the Land Act of 1913 denied Africans the right to purchase or lease land outside the areas intended for 'natives,' the unequal distribution of land established by the act was reproduced over time. In a word, despite misguided understandings of the historical significance of the Land Act of 1913 in recent times, the law represented a significant episode in the consolidation of white control over land and other resources, a process of conquest and dispossession that started years earlier with the colonial wars of the nineteenth century (Beinart et al., 1986).

After the Land Act of 1913, the blockage of lawful access to most of the agricultural land and the rough conditions of work and life in the white-owned farms altogether pushed many Africans to seek a living in the South African cities (Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 23-4).[112] Thus, despite sometimes being regarded as not aiming to move the African population off the rural areas but to keep it there as a cheap workforce for white commercial farms (see Wolpe, 1972; Legassick, 1974; Beinart and Delius, 2014), or even as a measure that eventually prevented the total land dispossession of Africans (see Wolpe, 1972: 437), the Land Act of 1913 might be related to both the pace of African urbanization over the first half of the twentieth century and to the foundations of racial separation on a national scale. The African population that settled in Johannesburg grew continuously during the first decades of the twentieth century and so did the racially mixed informal settlements. As Parnell (2003) vividly explains, in the 1900s and 1910s, 'Africans from within the Union, along with Mozambicans, Swazis and Tswanas lived in Johannesburg's cosmopolitan slums with immigrants from Cyprus, the United Kingdom, India and Greece' (Parnell, 2003: 616-7). It was against urban milieus such as those ones that another infamous statute, the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, was passed into law.

The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 recommended the establishment of racially-segregated residential areas and the prevention of the further urbanization of Africans. Parnell (2002: 259) suggests that, although the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 was a national legislation, it was drafted from Johannesburg's rapid African urbanization and its application was pioneered in the city. She (2002: 261) indicates that the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 'was specifically drafted with Johannesburg conditions in mind. Johannesburg was not the largest city in South Africa at this time, but it faced particular demands as the mining-based economy flourished and manufacturing began to become more established.' In view of this state of affairs, Haarhoff (2011)

---

[112] Act No. 27, June 19, 1913, officially named the Natives Land Act, regulated the occupation of land in the Union of South Africa, establishing different areas for land ownership and land leasing based on racial criteria. In its first article, the Natives Land Act stated: 'Except with the approval of the Governor General – (a) A native shall not enter into any agreement/or transaction for the purchase, hire, or other acquisition from a person other than a native, of any such land or of any right thereto, interest therein, or servitude thereover: and (b) A person other than a native shall not enter into any agreement or transaction for the purchase, hire or any other acquisition from a native of any such land or of any right thereto, interest therein, or servitude thereover.'

maintains that the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 was a bold attempt to deal with the contradictory forces already into motion at the wake of the approval of the Land Act of 1913.

> The demand for black labour created a dilemma: how to manage Black urbanisation on which future prosperity depended, while at the same time conceiving cities as "white" places? An early solution to this perceived dilemma was found in the Native (Urban Areas) Act in 1923, that embodied the view of the Stallard [Commission] (Haarhoff, 2011: 197).

The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 stated that Africans should be regarded as temporary residents of South African cities and validated the influx control systems, which also meant that Africans were expected to return to their rural 'homelands' sooner or later. Mabin and Smit (1997: 199) argue that – despite the existence of alternative views that asked for the segregation of Africans but combined with the development of the 'native locations,' promotion of African homeownership, and the moderating of pass controls – the approval of the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 gave lawful validation to the Stallard Commission's view. Consequently, the law moved South Africa away from the reformist approach internationally predominant in planning at the period (Mabin and Smit, 1997: 199). In a similar vein, Haarhoff (2011: 197) suggests that, while South Africa has shared along with many other colonized countries conflicts between natives and settlers along race-based guidelines. What distinguished South Africa from other countries, however, was the extent to which these rules were legally institutionalized.

The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 was in agreement with the general principles established a decade earlier by the Natives Land Act of 1913: Africans were regarded as temporary in South African cities, they were supposed to have their home in the 'native reserves.' In view of that, Johannesburg's slums were appreciated as no more than provisional happenstances. Additionally, with the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, local authorities gained power to restrict most Africans in urban areas to townships and compounds (Mabin, 1992: 408; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 30). Maylam (1995: 34) signposts that the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 embodied most of the key mechanisms and institutions of urban racial segregation – the segregated township, influx control, pass laws, fiscal segregation, and so on. However, in the opposite direction of white lawmakers' intentions, African urbanization kept its pace. Haarhoff (2011: 197)

notes that, even if afflicted by uncertainty and disenfranchised, by the 1920s the African urban population had become permanent in many South African cities. This situation was to continue in the following decades. During the 1920s and 1930s, the country was afflicted by severe drought calamities that ended up forcing both Afrikaners farmers and Africans sharecroppers into the cities (Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 25). Invariably, many of these impoverished rural migrants found shelter in the inner-city slums of Johannesburg, which retained their insalubrious and racially-diversified landscapes. Carr (1990: 17-8) observes that by the mid-1920s the Johannesburg City Council had erected nearly four hundred additional houses for Africans in the Western Native Township under the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923. But, by 1927, that is, four years after the Native (Urban Areas) Act was ratified, over 40 thousand people lived in one of the many unregulated and racially mixed slums scattered across inner-city Johannesburg (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 14; Nieftagodien and Gaule, 2012: 6).

New laws were to be sanctioned in the 1930s to deal with the question. Bonner and Nieftagodien (2008: 30) indicate that the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 empowered the white authorities to proclaim entire neighborhoods white-exclusive and then to evict all those people categorised as non-whites residing in the area. Immediately after the passing of the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, the Johannesburg City Council requested for the proclamation of the whole city a white-exclusive area, which occurred in 1924 (Parnell, 2002: 262-3). However, only in the early 1930s the Johannesburg City Council would carry out its segregationist plans (Bonner and Segal, 1999; Parnell, 2002). Bonner and Nieftagodien (2008: 30) specify that, despite the power to restrict most Africans in urban areas to townships and compounds, the authorities faced many judicial setbacks mostly because they did not provide the evicted with alternative shelter. Parnell (2002: 260, 267-8, 270, 273-4) notes as well that many of the obstacles the Johannesburg City Council found in its way cannot be explained without the active opposition of African residents, Asian slumlords, and mining and industrial employers. Moreover, as Maylam (1995: 34) points out, the impact of the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 was sometimes limited because 'municipalities chose whether or not to implement it, which was not obligatory, according to their own means and interests.'

Bonner and Nieftagodien (2008: 30) maintain that both the 1930 amendment to the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, which was targeted on women and provided for the removal of all unemployed Africans residing in urban areas, and the Slum Act of 1934 were intended to close legal loopholes and to expel Africans from the city. 'The 1934

221

Slums Act, in particular, allowed local authorities to condemn buildings or whole neighbourhoods, and move people — provided the funds were available — to new housing estates' (Mabin, 1992: 409). It is maybe worth noting that, even if the Slums Act of 1934 emanated from the Western Cape, differently from previous laws and measures to deal with Johannesburg's inner-city slums, it did not rely on sanitary arguments – for instance, the slum clearance of 1904 was justified by the outbreak of bubonic plague, and the official establishment of the Western Native Township between 1918 and 1919 took place amidst a series of influenza epidemics (Proctor, 1979) –. In a word, insofar as the African urbanization and racial mixing continued, new statutes to regulate them came successively into being.

The formation of Orlando East in the early 1930s, at the location where nowadays stands a core portion of Soweto, relates to the inner-city slum clearances of the time. In the 1930s, the Johannesburg City Council removed thousands of families from the central area and 'by 1935, 2,625 houses had been built in the older municipal townships, and 3,000 in Orlando' (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 15). Nevertheless, not everybody headed to Orlando and other 'native locations.' Many of those being evicted from the city found accommodation in remaining inner-city slums like Prospect Township and Malay Location, which authorities would aim to destroy in 1938 with diverse outcomes though (Carr, 1990: 27-30), or in the freehold townships of the Western Areas (Sophiatown, Newclare, and Martindale) (Proctor, 1979) and that of Alexandra (Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008). Alexandra and the Western Areas were created in the first decades of the twentieth century and homeownership was conceivable in them because they were exempted from the application of the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 41; Carr, 1990: 24). All these places started to have a growing resemblance with slums in the 1930s and 1940s inasmuch as evicted people from other areas had been settling in them (Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 30-1, 60). The inner-city slums of the 1910s and 1920s gave way to increasingly slum-like peripheral freehold townships like Alexandra and the Western Areas in the 1930s and 1940s (Parnell, 2002: 261).

Between the First and Second World Wars and above all during the Second World War, industrialization and urbanization accelerated in South Africa (Wolpe, 1972: 443-4; Legassick, 1974: 268; Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 28-32; Bonner, 1989; Maylam, 1990; Mabin, 1990a, 1990b; 1992; Hindson et al., 1994: 339). In the midst of the Second World War, in 1943, industrial production surpassed mining in economic importance and the Witwatersrand, the main industrial hub in the country, received a strong influx of African

workers (Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 61; Nieftagodien and Gaule, 2012: 8). The data available for the period, even if regarded as not completely reliable, indicates that there was a clear tendency of continuous growth of the African population in Johannesburg. The African population settled in Johannesburg included more than 118 thousand people in 1921, near 229 thousand in 1936, and reached 387 thousand in 1946 (Proctor, 1994 [1987]: 256).

In view of the vigorous and continuous influx of Africans into Johannesburg, the already overcrowded freehold townships of Alexandra and of the Western Areas showed by this time appalling slum conditions (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 37; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 6, 31). The erection of additional structures and subletting on the backyards also became a common story in other townships such as Orlando East (Beavon, 2004: 124). Incidentally, with the eradication of Prospect Township in 1938, a good portion of its near seven thousand African inhabitants were resettled in Orlando East (Carr, 1990: 27; Nieftagodien and Gaule, 2012: 6). Part of the people evicted from Prospect Township managed to resettle themselves in the unregulated township of Alexandra and to a lesser extent in the Western Areas (Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 60). At any rate, following erstwhile segregationist removal patterns in Johannesburg, those being evicted from Prospect Township were propelled to where white planners meant them to be found: As far as possible apart from their dreamed white-exclusive city.

As Parnell (2002: 260) indicates, despite all the resistances and the many exceptions to the segregationist removals, the effect of Johannesburg's inner-city slum destruction was to create a rigid pattern of racial segregation in the city. 'The forced relocation of more than 50,000 people from inner-city slums transformed Johannesburg's landscape in the years between the First and Second World Wars. During this 20 year period the geography of the city came to be fashioned more overtly according to race than class' (Parnell, 2002: 260). Parnell (2002: 261) also remarks that, in the course of this change, 'state housing or state-licensed rental shelter became increasingly dominant forms of tenure for urban Africans' (Parnell, 2002: 261). However, those living in places like Klipspruit, Orlando East, Newclare, Sophiatown, and Alexandra had to endure gross overcrowding conditions and high rents.

Given the omission of the authorities, in March 1944, James Sofasonke Mpanza led a group of subtenants from Orlando East to an extent of vacant land in Orlando West and set up a squatter camp (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 20-3; Nieftagodien and Gaule, 2012: 12). Quickly the camp received people leaving other crammed townships harassed by the

police like Newclare. After some frustrated attempts, in 1945, the Johannesburg City Council demolished the squatter camp but Mpanza, under the slogan 'Housing and Shelter for All,' and other leaders such as Abel Ntoi commanded a sequence of new occupations in Orlando West, Dube and Pimville in the following years (Carr, 1990: 41-6; Bonner and Segal, 1999: 25-8; Nieftagodien and Gaule, 2012: 13). Along with this second wave of squatting, the same kind of movement took place among Alexandra's subtenants that seized land in Alexandra, Orlando, and other areas (Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 91-2; Nieftagodien and Gaule, 2012: 13). In 1947, an anti-squatting legislation was approved and the authorities fought back the squatter movements. This time the squatter camps were destroyed and their inhabitants removed to the precarious emergency camps of Jabavu and Moroka, in what nowadays stands part of Soweto (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 27; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 95). Despite being intended to last no more than five years, these two awful settlements would turn out to be much more enduring than the white authorities' initial plans. They would remain in place until the late-1950s, and, in their 'highpoint,' in 1955, together they counted for near 90 thousand dwellers living under unhealthy conditions (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 27).

The squatter movements of the mid 1940s showed that a good portion of the Africans living in Johannesburg's area would not ultimately leave the city to the 'native reserves.' Moreover, as Mabin and Smit (1997: 203; Mabin, 1992: 413) maintain, 'the occupation of potentially lucrative land by irregular settlers, rapid growth of both industrially employed and unemployed populations and pressure on housing meant that action seemed urgent.' It was under this state of affairs that the garden city model inaugurated in the Great Britain was deciphered into racial segregation in South Africa (Mabin, 1992: 413-7). As Mabin and Smit (1997: 197) mention, the garden city model influenced South African planners at least since the 1910s. Nieftagodien and Gaule (2012: 6) also remind us that the model inspired the construction of Orlando East in the early 1930s. Nonetheless, as Mabin (1992: 413-7) indicates, under the accelerated urbanization of the 1940s, the racially-oriented planning of large radial zones, along with the use of rivers or empty land as 'buffers' between them, became the habitual model in South African main cities.

The green belts of the original garden city model were then turned into 'buffer zones' to suitably separate different races in the urban areas. 'The notion of creating coherent communities separated by green belts' was once more 'translated into the idea of planning racially distinct, well-separated zones' (Mabin, 1990a: 18; Mabin and Smit,

1997: 204). While referring to works such as those by Barnett (1989) and Van Tonder (1990), Mabin (1992: 415, 417) argues that these and other of the United Party's policies prefigured future projects carried out by the National Party government after 1948.

Be that as it may, it was under this context framed by United Party's policies that a homeownership scheme aimed at the urban African middle-class was geared in the township of Dube in 1945, nowadays part of Soweto (Maylam, 1995: 30). For the white authorities of the time, class differentiation should advance within racially homogeneous townships set up as far as possible away from white-designed areas. The homeownership scheme had a short existence. As Gorodnov, (1988 [1983]: 149-50), Maylam (1995: 30), and Bonner and Segal (1999: 43-4) all note, class-differentiated housing schemes toward Africans would be cut back in favor of another form of division from 1948 onward, namely, 'ethnic clustering.' A last expression of this eclectic view, at once racist but with a liberal appearance, was conveyed between 1946 and 1948 in the context of the Fagan Commission. Trapido (1971) argues that by the end of the Second World War, for an industry and trade considerably stimulated by the war-time substitution of importation economy, the racial oppression of African workers was seen as no longer necessary for capital accumulation. Trapido (1971: 317) indicates that, the Fagan Commission advised along these lines that a more stable African workforce should be created according to the needs of the industry and commerce. The Fagan Commission recommended that African migration would be controlled and coordinated but that any idea of absolute racial segregation was simply unrealistic (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 8). In other words, under the industrialization boom of the aftermath of the Second World War, the Fagan Commission recognized overtly the inevitability and irreversibility of African urbanization.

The 1946 census showed that for the first time South African cities had a majority of Africans inhabitants, and that this urban African population was growing faster than the white one, which was seen as a threat by most sectors of the white minorities (Mabin, 1992: 419; Mabin and Smit, 1997: 205). In 1946, around 380 thousand Africans lived in Johannesburg (Proctor, 1994 [1987]: 256), many of which in one of the freehold townships along the city's western perimeter or in the unfettered Alexandra, all of them moderately close to Johannesburg. In the opposite direction of that expressed by the Fagan Commission, the National Party's Sauer Report (appointed in 1947) recommended among other measures the consolidation of the 'native reserves,' starker controls over African urbanization, and segregated facilities for Coloureds and Indians (Hindson, 1987:

59; Worden, 2012 [1994]: 101). For those in responsibility of the Sauer Report, African urbanization should be not only slowed down but ultimately reversed (Hindson, 1987: 59). Even though Afrikaner Nationalists studied the concept of apartheid as early as the mid-1930s (Mabin, 1990a: 11, 1992: 401), one could certainly say that the proposal of apartheid as a national policy was fully outlined in the Sauer Report (Worden, 2012 [1994]: 101). In May 1948, the National Party came to power and the Sauer Report's considerations became the blueprint for the new government. Even if there were resistance and some setbacks, under the National Party governments, any notion of a stable African urban workforce became just unconceivable. As, we will see in the next section, in its place, previous policies of compulsory racial segregation were to be taken to the next level.

### 7.1.2. Apartheid

Between 1948 and 1994 the National Party imposed apartheid – the Afrikaans word for 'separateness' – upon South Africa (Christopher, 1997: 311). In order to preserve the white minorities' political and economic domination, apartheid made every effort for segregating South African society along racial criteria at every possible level (Christopher, 1994, 1997). Segregation was enforced by a myriad of laws to ensure that racial and ethnic mixing would not take place. The consequences of this were outrageous for South African cities. Christopher (1997: 311) mention that between 1950 and 1991 over one million hectares of urban land were zoned in racial terms. As he (1997: 311) highlights, all urban areas were racially zoned and massive population movements took place to fit the population into the segregationist plans. Later we will see how, more than two decades after the end of apartheid, Johannesburg, along with other South African cities, continues to suffer the effects of apartheid's comprehensive racial planning.

Nonetheless, Nieftagodien and Gaule (2012: 6) suggest that it took some time for apartheid get on track. As Posel (1991), Mabin (1990a, 1990b, 1992, 1995), and Maylam (1995) mention, in opposition to what many liberals have maintained, apartheid's rulers did not have an all-encompassing and ready-made 'grand plan.' Rather, they relied on previous polices and apartheid was implemented piecemeal on an ongoing basis. Posel (1991) and Mabin (1992) show, for instance, how the National Party's comprehensive segregation drew hugely upon the United Party's previous experiments with planned, compulsory, segregation, in which large, empty radial zones would operate as 'buffer

strips' between the different racial groups in South African cities. Maylam (1995) takes a similar position when surveying apartheid's influx control policies.

> Influx control in the 1950s and 1960s represented a tightening of pre-existing measures rather than a significant new policy departure. All this tends to be concealed in the liberal mythology, which has tried to cover up the harshness of pre-1948 segregationism by pinning the severities of urban apartheid onto Afrikaner nationalism (Maylam, 1995: 34).

Posel (1991) and Mabin (1992) indicate that, despite the existence of general directives, such as those expressed in the Sauer Report of 1947, there was no clear indication of how these instructions should be implemented in practice. Furthermore, Posel (1983, 1991) argues that both internal divisions within the Afrikaner nationalist movement and opposed major economic interests, such as those of industrialists and white farmers, played a key role in the shaping and changing of apartheid. She (1991) goes farther and claims that even the Sauer Report itself had embodied conflicting views of apartheid already.

It seems plain that apartheid was not a monolithic entity free of contradictions and created at once and for all. Therefore, under the apartheid period, that is, in the course of the long years between the National Party's electoral victory in 1948 and the election of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1994, there would be variations in how racial segregation ought to be pursued. Two main directives are usually distinguished in the vast literature about the apartheid era (see for instance Posel, 1991; Maylam, 1995; Worden, 2012 [1994]): (a) township mass production from the late 1940s to the late 1950s, which could be understood as the deepening of the United Party's previous policies; and (b) the implementation of the so-called separate development between the early 1960s and the mid 1970s, a period also named as the 'heyday of apartheid' (Worden, 2012 [1994]: 104-31) or 'high apartheid' (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 70-2; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 184-91). Notwithstanding government's reformist strategy after the 1976 revolt in Soweto, separate development lasted until the mid 1980s, when apartheid moved into the policy of 'orderly urbanization' (Hindson, 1985). Let us take a look at these diverse segregationist schemes and at their main consequences for African townships like Alexandra and Soweto.

Despite the lack of a 'master plan,' and despite the many continuities between apartheid and previous segregationist policies, it is undeniable that, from the start, the new government showed it intended to check and eliminate interracial integration and residential mixing in South African cities (Davenport and Saunders, 2000 [1977]: 378). As Posel (1991) indicates, the main matter was not that racial segregation should be imposed upon Africans, Indians, and Coloureds but how exactly to do it and to what degree. Beyond white minorities' common requirement to rid South African cities of non-whites, apartheid's makers had to find a balance between the conflicting demands of agricultural capital, mining companies, commercial and industrial capital, white working classes, white ratepayers and white urban constituencies (Posel, 1991; Lester et al., 2000: 177-8). For instance, in order to guarantee the supply of cheap labor for white farmers, the National Party's government tensed and unified existing influx control and pass policies on a national basis. The strong bonds between white farmers and apartheid's rulers were clear-cut (Posel, 1991: 105-6; Bonner and Segal, 1999: 37) and, even though white farm houses had been increasingly mechanized (Posel, 1991: 136-7; Worden, 2012 [1994]: 67), labor shortages might arise due to agricultural production's seasonality.

The Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952, together with the misnamed Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents Act of 1952, were the laws passed by the new government in order to reinforce the control over African urbanisation (Posel, 1991: 103, 111). In fact, the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 acknowledged the (Natives Urban) Areas Act that the United Party had passed in 1945. On the foundations of the Act of 1945, the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 extended the capacity of the state to control the growth and composition of the African population in cities. Under the Section 10(1) of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952, Africans that could live permanently in the urban areas were limited to those who had born there – Section 10(1)(a); those who had lived and worked there continuously for fifteen years, or continuously for ten years for the same employer – Section 10(1)(b); and the wives and children of the preceding ones – Section 10(1)(c). Africans who did not fall into one of these categories were 'temporary sojourners' in cities, and could not remain there longer than seventy-two hours without securing official permission – Section 10(1)(d).[113] Under the misnamed

---

[113] For more see Posel, 1991: 102-3, 111-3; Bonner and Segal, 1999: 45; Davenport and Saunders, 2000 [1977]: 390; Lester et al., 2000: 178; Worden, 2012 [1994]: 107; and Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 108.

Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents Act of 1952, the renewed influx control system determined that all Africans, male and female, had the duty to carry an identification document with them all times. Similarly to pre-apartheid times, the principal means of controlling Africans in urban areas was the system of passes. Because of the application of these rules, thousands of African migrants were turned away from main South African cities already in the 1950s (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 38), which were to continue over the next decades.

Another correlated measure adopted by the new government in the 1950s was the construction of single-sex hostels for migrant workers along ethnic lines in already existing townships. Dube Hostel was erected in 1955, Nancefield Hostel in 1956, and Jabulani Hostel in 1958, in yet to be named Soweto (Pirie and Silva, 1986: 174; Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 9). Hostels were separated from the surrounding township by barbed wire, had strict rules, and received either single African workers until then residing in white-designated areas at their employers' houses and companies' accommodations or male migrants that had left their families behind in the 'native reserves' for temporary jobs under short-term contracts in the Johannesburg area. Bonner and Segal (1999, 38-42) narrate how gloomy the living conditions in Dube Hostel's and Nancefield Hostel's barracks could be at the time. They (1999: 42) also illustrate how apartheid's policy of ethnic grouping led to bloody encounters between Dube Hostel's isiZulu-speakers inmates and Sesotho-speaking families settled in the nearby township of Meadowlands (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 38-42).

The violent clashes of February 1957 left forty people dead and more than one hundred seriously injured (Carr, 1990: 81; Bonner and Segal, 1999: 38-42). Both the construction of hostels and the ethnic conflicts between hostel dwellers and townships inhabitants were to be prolonged into decades to come. For instance, during the Soweto uprising of 1976 there were violent clashes between hostels' workers and students (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 94-6; Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 24-5). In the 1980s and 1990s, hostel dwellers confronted squatters and townships inhabitants because of political disputes amidst apartheid's decline (Hindson et al., 1994: 337-42; Bonner and Segal, 1999: 148-57). Although the hostels supplied manufactures and mines with unskilled labor, they embodied the temporary character of the African person in the South African city, which had its basis on the notion that she/he belonged into the 'native reserves,' renamed by apartheid in the late 1950s 'Bantustans.' Just like under the Native (Urban

Areas) Act of 1923, Africans were once more regarded as 'temporary sojourners' in South African cities.

Notwithstanding hindering African migration to towns, and despite grouping and controlling Africans living in urban areas according to their 'ethnic roots,' apartheid's influx laws permitted a permanent or semi-permanent residence in towns to that portion of the African population already well established in urban areas. Of course, similar to the pre-apartheid times, this more or less permanent urban African population were meant to live apart from cities in strictly controlled and highly segregated townships. As we have just seen, the Section 10 of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 allowed urban-born Africans and those in long-term urban employment to live in urban areas. Posel (1991: 101) and Lester et al. (2000: 178) suggest that apartheid's bureaucracies silently permitted some unemployed Africans to stay in cities as well. Together with the wives of employed African workers, this group of unemployed people would operate as a reservoir of labor to be used in times of industrial expansion (Lester et al., 2000: 178).

In doing so, apartheid avoided that industries, commercial activities, and other employers in urban areas, had to face higher wage costs or labor shortages (Lester et al., 2000: 178). Even if urban employers were to drawn as far as possible upon migrant work in order to reduce African urbanization, manufacturers would continue to have access to African labor, including semi-skilled labor (Lester et al., 2000: 178). As Posel (1991: 91-115) shows, in analyzing the tortuous passage of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 through parliament, apartheid's policies of the time demonstrated the victory of a more pragmatic approach to segregation connected to the interests of the industrial capital over the plan of total segregation of men like W. M. M. Eiselen, largely supported by the agricultural capital and mining companies. The interests of the industrial capital had intervened in the final redaction of the Section 10 of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 (Posel, 1991: 101). We will see in moment how all this changed in the course of the subsequent decade.

I have mentioned earlier that since 1943 industrial production had become the leading sector in South Africa's economy. Thus, under a relatively favorable context of economic growth, apartheid's official policy from 1948 to the late 1950s was the construction of segregated townships on the urban outskirts (and beyond) of main South African cities, which in sometimes ended up conforming huge clusters of townships like in the case of Soweto. While deploying this policy, the National Party's government enforced ethnic zoning upon both long-standing townships and those to be produced

(Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 149-50; Maylam, 1995: 30). As Willem Jacobus Petrus Carr (1990: 80) – the manager of the Johannesburg City Council' Non-European Affairs Department in the 1950s and 1960s – indicates in his memories about the construction of Soweto, ethnic grouping was forced upon Africans as earlier as 1955 with townships and hostels being divided into three basic groups: Nguni (isiZulu and isiXhosa-speakers), Sesotho-speakers and 'other.' The massive allocation of houses for Africans in new townships that were being erected kilometres away from the southwest boundaries of Johannesburg in the 1950s followed the ethnic imperative: Chiawelo was planned for Xitsonga and Tshivenda peoples; Naledi, Mapetla, Tladi, Moletsane for Sesotho and Setswana-speakers; Dhlamini, Senaoane, Zondi, Zola, Jabulani, Emdeni for isiZulu and isiXhosa-speakers (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 43-4). Together with older townships, like Pimville, Orlando East, Orlando West, and Dube, all these newest townships were to be officially named as Soweto in 1963. [114]

The infamous (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950 complemented the renewed influx control system by enforcing the classification, physical separation, and surveillance, of all non-white groups in urban areas. It comprehensively redirected Africans, Indians, and Coloured in urban areas away from white-designated neighborhoods to segregated townships creating different residential areas for different racial groups. Mabin (1990a: 27, 1992, 423) mentions that the (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950 'imposed two interlinked necessities on planning: allocation of racially-zoned land for new areas; and deciding on, and achieving, uniracial areas where many "groups" lived and worked.' There must be no doubts that the (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950 provided the National Party with the legal body for its segregationist arrangements in urban areas, and that apartheid's rulers acted upon it at the local level (Parbhoo and Pirie, 1985). In the case of Johannesburg, for instance, the Mentz Committee was appointed in 1952 to guarantee the exhaustive implementation of the (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950 in Johannesburg's area.

Mabin (1992) summarises the potential and pioneering consequences of the (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950:

---

[114] In 1963, the naming committee arranged in 1959 by the Johannesburg City Council's Non-European Affairs Department finally chose, among many other suggested names, the acronym SOWETO – abbreviated form of South-West Townships – to designate the massive complex of townships southwest of Johannesburg (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 31). Even though the committee took other criteria into account, the name adopted reiterated Soweto's geographic location and its subordination to (white-exclusive) Johannesburg (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 5).

The Group Areas Act at least potentially extended compulsory general segregation to 'Coloureds'; centralised control over racial segregation, effectively undermining municipal autonomy; laid the basis for longrange, wide-scale land allocation planning; opened the way to greatly expanded (though of course strictly segregated) public housing provision especially for the poorer sections of the urban population; provided for retroactive segregation; and massively interfered with concepts of property rights generally (Mabin, 1992: 407).

Under the (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950, apartheid undertook a strategy of not only racializing, controlling, and curbing upcoming African urbanization but also of making urban racial segregation retroactive for everyone (Mabin, 1990a: 5, 23, 1992: 407). That was when thousands of African, Coloured, and Indian families were forcibly relocated and their houses and deep-rooted neighborhoods laid bare. The destruction of District Six in Cape Town and the Western Areas in Johannesburg was surely the most notorious and unhappy upshot of these policies.[115] Between 1955 and 1959, all African inhabitants of Sophiatown, Martindale, and Newclare were forcibly rehoused into 'matchbox' houses in new townships being erected kilometres southwest, like Meadowlands and Mofolo, in what not much later would be baptized as Soweto. Indians were set aside in Lenasea.

W. J. P. Carr, the manager of the Johannesburg City Council' Non-European Affairs Department at the time, reported the promptness of the operation by June 1955. 'The first removal of Natives from Sophiatown to Meadowlands took place on 9th February, 1955, and as at 30th June, 1955, 1,064 families comprising 5,515 persons, were re-housed in Meadowlands' (NEAD, 1955: 6). In his memories, Carr (1990: 88) recalls how in the course of less than five years the multiracial freehold township of Sophiatown and all its 70 thousand inhabitants were gone. Aside from the large Anglican church in the middle of Sophiatown only a scattering of structures remained standing. Everything else was doomed. Thereupon, something was rebuilt in Soweto like the Lutheran church in Mofolo North. After the wholesale destruction of the Western Areas, a white-designated neighborhood named 'Triomf' (Triumph) was erected in the place where Sophiatown once stood. The fate of those living at the District Six in Cape Town was not

---

[115] Sophiatown was the center of a cluster of interlocking townships known as the Western Areas consisted of Sophiatown, Western Native Township, Martindale, Newclare, and Pageview.

much different. Most of the District Six's inhabitants were relocated to the far-flung and sandy periphery on the Cape Flats.

Maylam (1995: 27) remarks that although the (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950 had devastating consequences for many African, Indian, and Coloured communities, 'segregation was already well advanced in most South African cities by the time that the act was passed.' In the same vein, Mabin (1990a: 36) suggests that 'South African society was highly segregated prior to "the group" and its application has, with exceptions mainly in the Cape, had rather little effect on increasing that segregation.' As Maylam (1995: 27) states, any kind of over-emphasis on the (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950 may conceals the continuities with pre-apartheid segregation. Accordingly, we should not overlook that the campaigns for the demotion of District Six and Sophiatown, and other non-white and mixed neighborhoods across South African cities, predate apartheid. For instance, as earlier as 1940 the Cape Town City Council's planners proposed the complete demolition of District Six to release the land for more profitable activities like commercial and industrial enterprises or white residential use (Mabin, 1990a: 16; Maylam, 1995: 28; Mabin and Smit: 1997, 197). By the same token, in 1944, that is, more than a decade before the National Party's government eventually carried out the removals in the Western Areas, the Johannesburg City Council under the United Party approved by a vast majority a motion for the wholesale demolition of the freehold townships of Sophiatown, Martindale, and Newclare (Mabin, 1990a: 16; Maylam, 1995: 28, 34). The segregationist legislation of Durban City Council against Indians in the early to mid 1940s illustrates the United Party's commitment to the racial zoning of South African cities as well (Mabin, 1992: 407, 413).

All long-standing townships suffered the heavy attacks of the retroactive measures implemented by apartheid. After apartheid's authorities had levelled the western section of the African 'ring' around Johannesburg, they focused on the northern section: Alexandra (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 41). In their historical study about Alexandra, Bonner and Nieftagodien (2008: 175) indicate that between the late 1950s and mid 1960, near 50 thousand dwellers were removed from Alexandra to racially homogenous townships. Similarly to what happened to the residents of the multiracial and blissful Sophiatown a few years earlier, many of them had nothing to do but to see how their dwellings were bulldozed. Those not married were directed to hostels in Soweto (isiZulu-speakers to Dube Hostel and Sesotho-speakers to Nancefield Hostel). Alexandra's African inhabitants were forcibly removed to Meadowlands and Diepkloof in Soweto and

Tembisa on the East Rand, now known as Ekurhuleni; whereas Coloureds were set aside in Noordgesig and Eldorado Park (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 48-9; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 4, 10, 109, 175, 178). Just like what happened in the Western Areas a couple of years before, those being expelled from Alexandra were separated racially and ethnically. The only difference was that Alexandra was not wholesale destroyed like Sophiatown, Newclare and Martindale. Around the 1950, Alexandra had nearly 100 thousand inhabitants (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 42) and the Mentz Committee, operating in 1952 and 1953, had defined that Alexandra's growth should be contained, that its populations should be reduced, but that the township should stay in place with its remaining residents working in Johannesburg's northern suburbs.

*Picture 14 – Men's hostel, Alexandra*



Source: The author, 2013.

Likewise the other cases I have just alluded to, the plans to remove Alexandra predate apartheid as well. Bonner and Nieftagodien, (2008: 96) mention that in the aftermath of the promulgation of the anti-squatting law in 1947 many of Alexandra's squatters were removed to emergency camps in Klipspruit and Orlando. They (2008: 10)

234

observe how, after the massive removals that had took place between the late 1950s and mid 1960s, the complete eradication of Alexandra seemed to be just a matter of time. In the early 1960s, the government announced that no more houses would be built in Alexandra and in the 1970s apartheid tried to turn Alexandra into a huge complex for migrant labor by destroying family homes and building hostels (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 48-50; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 182-91, 217, 220-1). As Gorodnov (1988 [1983]: 48-50) mentions, Alexandra should be turned into an 'exemplar' (from the point of view of apartheid) 'hostel city,' something pretty similar to a concentration camp. Bonner and Nieftagodien (2008: 187-8) remark that the hostels erected in Alexandra in the 1970s had electric doors in each section to be used in case of unrest and state that they 'epitomised the crass objectives of apartheid: to control the lives of urban African workers by housing them in prison-like, single-sex dormitories.' Surrounded by shacks, Alexandra's women and men hostels are still in place nowadays. They lack the most basics elements of a decent life. Alexandra's women and men hostels lack sewage, there is trash everywhere, and internal areas are poorly lightened (see picture 14 above and picture 17 further down). People say they are dangerous no-go areas. IsiZulu-speaking male inmates are stigmatized as criminals. Current hostel dwellers have no easier life than their predecessors did in the 1970s.[116]Alexandra's women and men hostels are unhappy reminders of the absurdity of apartheid planning (see pictures 14 and 17).

But, for diverse reasons, among them Alexandra's people struggles, the township has resisted and still standing nowadays where it was established as a freehold township for Africans and Coloureds in the 1910s. Not without problems and grievances, Alexandra has survived apartheid. Furthermore, the township relative proximity to the city has been reinforced with Johannesburg's expansion northwards since the fading days of apartheid. These days, Alexandra is on a walkable distance from the northern and rich suburb of Sandton in which much of the multinational headquarters resettled after apartheid's fall and the 'de-segregation' of Johannesburg inner-city area. In one of my walking explorations in 2013, I joined a small group of workers employed in one of the largest malls in Sandton that did their way back from work to their homes in Alexandra.[117]

The point is that the misfortune of Alexandra's and Sophiatown's residents represents the kinds of suffering over which the apartheid city was shaped. They illustrate the application of the principle of racial segregation in comprehensive ways (Mabin,

---

[116] Observation in situ on 30 October 2013.
[117] Participant observation on 19 October 2013.

1992). Places like Mofolo North, the township in which I lived between September and November 2015, commenced by this time. Mofolo was established in 1954 when thousands of two and four rooms 'matchbox' houses (Carr, 1990: 58-9) were constructed at the lowest cost possible to accommodate people being compulsorily removed from Sophiatown, and tenants, freeholders, and squatters being expelled from other zones that had been reclassified as white-exclusive areas. Picture 15 and image 4 below make manifest the minimalism and sub-economic standards in the African housing schemes of the time. The vast majority of the monotonous, poor serviced, heavily controlled, and dusty, townships that would came to be known as Soweto from 1963 onward were established over the 1950s: Mofolo, Meadowlands, Chiawelo, Dhlamini, Jabulani, Mapetla, Molapo, Moletsane, Naledi, Phiri, Tladi, Zola, Zondi, Senaoane, Emdeni, and Diepkloof (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 29-31). That is why people often say that apartheid's planners made Soweto upon the ruins of Sophiatown.

Gorodnov (1988 [1983]) argues that the choice of that specific location for the construction of these newly established townships and not anywhere else was not accidental. As early as 1953, apartheid's planners considered that the new townships would merge with the townships already in the area into a single large complex (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 58, 63).[118] Except for Alexandra, by the 1960s, the implementation of the segregationist plans had achieved the concentration of all Africans in one single compound of townships. Soweto, and its numerous townships, were 'opportunely' (from the point of view of apartheid's makers) located kilometres away from the city, exactly in the region where the British colonial government and the Johannesburg City Council had created the first 'native location,' Klipspruit, in the dawn of the twentieth century. And beyond the southern borders of the massive complex of African townships in bursting formation, the white planners had laid the foundations of Lenasea and Eldorado Park, townships set aside respectively for Indians and Coloureds. Lenasea and Eldorado Park also were shaped upon the attempt to rip apart any multiracial order that might have somehow survived in the city.

---

[118] Townships southwest of Johannesburg prior to the apartheid era included Klipspruit founded in the 1900s (renamed Pimville in 1934); Orlando East established in the 1930s; and all those established in the 1940s: Noordgesig (for Coloureds), Orlando West (started by squatters and then turned into a permanent location), the emergency camps in Moroka and Jabavu (turned into African townships in the 1950s), and Dube. All of them did nothing but grow since their creation. Orlando, for instance, towards the beginning of the 1950s had unnamed streets and its unnumbered houses housed 100,000 inhabitants (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 31). This shows how the township had grown since its foundation in the early 1930s. For instance, by the beginning of the 1950s, Pimville had a population of 24,000 inhabitants whereas ten years later it reached 35,000 (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 30-1).

*Picture 15 – Soweto's council house and general view of Orlando East's streets*



Source: The author, 2013 and 2015.

*Image 4 – Non-European housing blueprints*
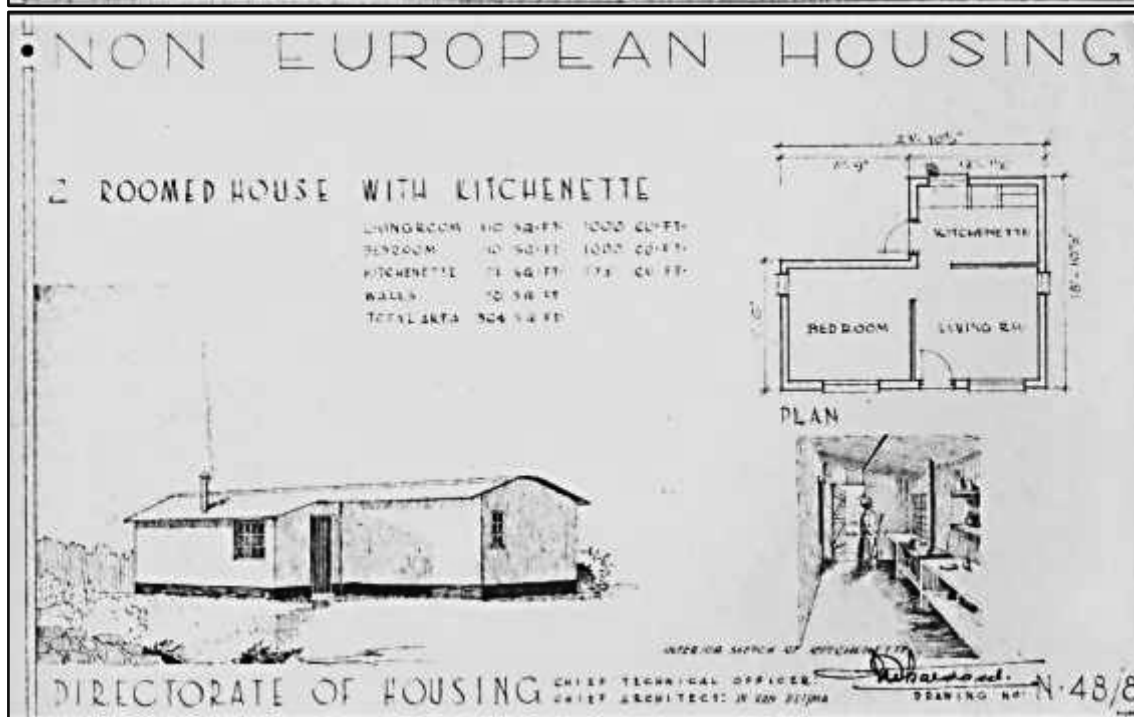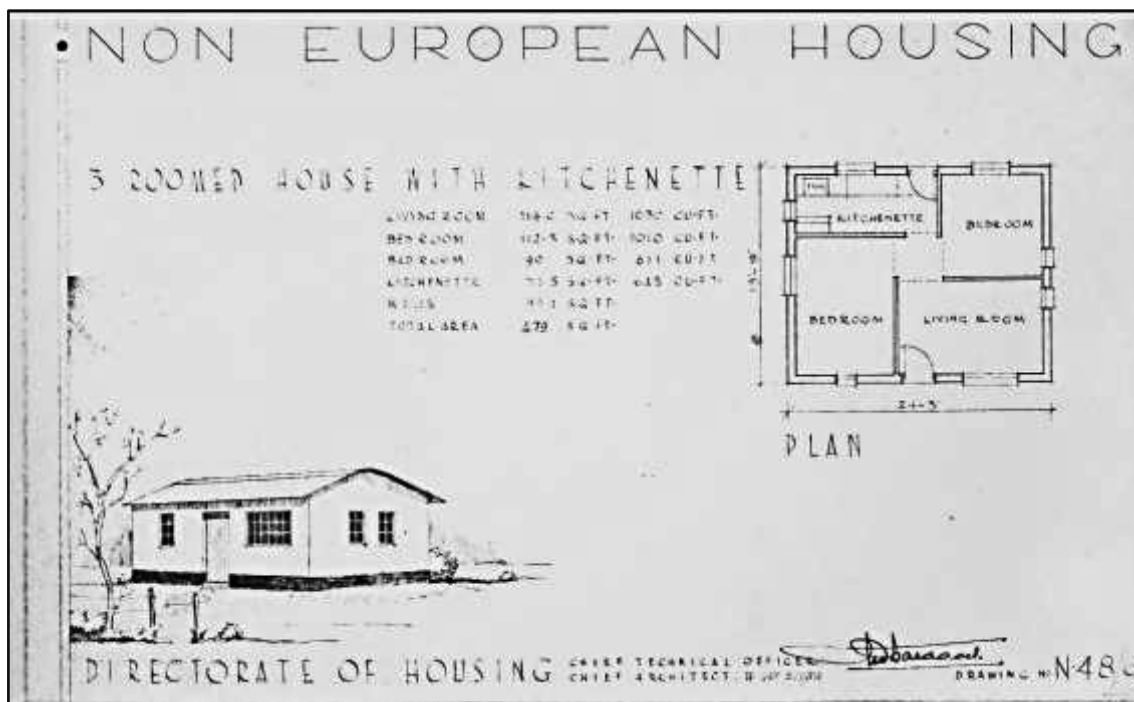
Although segregation along racial lines was already well advanced in the Johannesburg of the 1950s, and despite the fact that the very location of Soweto cannot be explained without the segregationist policies prior to the apartheid era, the separation of races in the city had advanced beyond all precedents by the early 1960s. The naming

of the white-exclusive neighborhood that now occupied the place of multi-racial Sophiatown, 'Triomf' (Triumph), insinuates apartheid's mood after the Western Areas were doomed. 'Triomf' celebrated apartheid's triumph over multiracialism. With the annihilation of the Western Areas, racial segregation in Johannesburg had come full circle. Only a few Indians remained in Pageview (previously known as Malay Location) until the 1980s when the place was eventually demolished and declared a white-designated area (Carr, 1990: 66).

*Picture 16 – Soweto's council houses*



Source: The author, 2013 and 2015.

Apartheid's planners had secured a functional and easily controllable urban form in Johannesburg. Until the late 1960s, secondary roads and the railway lines provided the easily controlled links between Soweto and Johannesburg, that is, between the place of reproduction of the labor force and the places of work. Only in the 1970s a highway was constructed to link Soweto to Johannesburg. In any case, all these infrastructures of transportation went throughout industrial zones, mine dumps, or empty areas, which in

fact worked as 'buffer strips' between the two racialized landscapes. As Gorodnov (1988 [1983]: 60) notes while quoting the words of the anti-apartheid activist Father Trevor Huddleston, rather than tall walls and iron fences, the physical distance was now the main barrier between Soweto and Johannesburg. Moreover, the 'buffer strips' were strictly controlled by the white authorities. In case of unrest, repression was easier and its spread to Johannesburg diminished. In fact, given the distance between the massive complex of townships and Johannesburg, it would be possible to organize a military intervention, counting with helicopters and sky-land attacks if needed, without putting in risk downtown Johannesburg and the city's white suburbs (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 60-1). Finally it is also good to mention that there were very few internal roads connecting the several townships of Soweto to each other. Apartheid wanted to keep Soweto's people apart from Johannesburg and internally divided. That was how apartheid attained racial control at the minimum cost.

The growth of Johannesburg in the late 1950s, the 1960s, and 1970s, followed this strict segregated and controlled pattern. The construction of standard 'matchbox' houses took place on massive scale in both old townships like Pimville and Orlando and in the newly established Mofolo, Diepkloof, Jabulani, and the like. In the early 1980s, this kind of accommodation amounted to ninety-eight per cent of the dwellings in Soweto (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 60-1). Interminable rows of the same kind of 'matchbox' house lined the dusty streets of Soweto. Although most of Soweto's streets are nowadays paved, it is not difficult to find standard 'matchbox' houses from apartheid period nearly unchanged in them (see pictures 15 and 16).[119] From a compilation of varied sources, Gorodnov estimates that:

> 11,074 houses [were built] in 1957-1958, 10,500 in 1960-1965, 3,000 in 1965-1969, 3,703 in 1970, 1,089 in 1971, 954 in 1972, and 1,009 in 1974. Thus, more than 31,000 standard houses were built in Soweto within a span of 18 years. Other sources say that nearly 50,000 houses, 88 schools, and three hostels for 14,000 persons were built between 1954 and 1969 (Gorodnov, 1988 [1983]: 61).

The progressive construction of several extensions in almost all townships of Soweto, in some cases after 1994, like most of Protea Glen's thirty-one extensions, are indicative of

---

[119] Observation in situ on 28 October and 29 October 2013. Participant observation in September, October, and November 2015.

the success of the strategy of the grand apartheid. Pimville has nowadays extension 1, 2, 3, 4… extension 8. Dobsonville counts with seven extensions, Chiawelo with five, Diepkloof with six, Meadowlands with nine, and so on and so forth. If you are going to one of the townships that make up Soweto, you better know to which extension you are going to. Otherwise, you will very likely get lost.[120]

The massive replication of standard 'matchbox' houses made the Soweto of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, a monotonous, impersonal, uniform, and endless landscape of identical dusty streets radiating from an equally numb central hub (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 34). The public housing schemes were apartheid's chief policy and the homeownership that characterized old freehold townships was abolished in African townships. Furthermore, there were strict regulations for those willing to extending their rented houses (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 34). Shopping, entertainment, and services areas were nowhere to be found due to restrictions on commerce and trade (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 34). Moreover, whereas criminality and youth gangs (locally known as *tsotsis*) were growing out of control in the townships, shakedowns and night-time raids for 'illegals' by police were a continuous in Soweto (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 42; Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 3, 23). The monotony along with the lack of basic amenities, rampant criminality, dull impersonality, raising rents, suffocating regulations, physical and social isolation, fierce control and state oppression soon led to riots and unrest. The Defiance Campaign against the unjust laws passed in the 1950s ranged from strikes to bus and rent boycotts to anti-pass demonstrations, and had its culmination in the Congress of People, held in Kliptown, which adopted the Freedom Charter in June 1955. The tragic events in Sharpeville in May 1960 displayed how crudely the new highly segregated order should operate in case of overt opposition. Sharpeville massacre marked the end of a resistance era with the African National Congress (ANC) being banned and thousands of political activists being jailed or going into exile (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 53). The systematization of the absurd – to be clear, the deployment of modern urban planning – in South Africa had secured a much worse instance than in the tragicomic Brasilia inaugurated just one month earlier, in April 1960, on the other side of the Atlantic.

---

[120] Participant observation between September and November 2015. Fieldwork note on 15 October 2015.

*7.1.2.2. High apartheid*

The principle of racial separation achieved its high point by the 1960s after the institution of the so-called 'Bantustans.' The Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959 set up eight (later extended to ten) distinct 'Bantu Homelands' out of the existing 'native reserves,' which would be allowed to govern themselves 'independently' without white intervention (Worden, 2012 [1994]: 119). Not only did this greatly extend the powers of co-opted local chiefs but it (re)established the principle of ethnicity as the basis of the 'Bantustans' (Wolpe, 1972: 451; Worden, 2012 [1994]: 119). Drawing strongly upon the notion of 'native reserves' for exclusive African settlement – as we have seen, an notion established by the Native Land Act of 1913 and corroborated by the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 –, apartheid divided Africans into distinct 'nations' based on their 'historic homelands.' The early 1960s saw a more determined application of African urban influx control as well. Accordingly, the government passed laws that allowed the deportation of unemployed people or those unable to find a regular accommodation in cities to the 'Bantustans' (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 70).

The official policy was to deny Africans permanent rights as urban dwellers, which led to attempts to remove rights of urban residence from all Africans, including those recognized under the Section 10 of the Natives (Urban Areas) Amendment Act of 1952 (Posel, 1991). Apartheid amplified the difficulties for migrant workers to achieve permanence in cities through the Section 10(1)(b) of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 70-1). Influx control was further enforced specially upon 'unproductive' people, that is, wives, children, the elderly, the disabled (Legassick, 1974: 279; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 184). Based on the work of Lodge (1983), Worden (2012 [1994]: 122) indicates that during the 1960s the population of the newly created 'Bantustans' increased by seventy per cent, whereas those of African townships decreased. The apartheid government had embarked into a process of repression and deportation of so-called 'illegal' Africans and it is estimated that between the early-1960s and the early-1980s, around three and a half million people were compulsorily relocated to the 'Bantustans' (Platzky and Walker, 1985: 10). As Seekings (2010: 4) observes in connection to the work of Simkins (1983) and Murray (1987), African urbanization was 'displaced' from the main South African cities into quasi-urban slums located in the 'Bantustans.' From the early 1960s onward, apartheid tried to shut off all further African migration to main South African cities and channelled all new investments in African

242

communities into the newly established 'Bantustans' or into the construction of single-sex hostels for migrant workers in urban areas (Wolpe, 1972: 450-3; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 184). As a result, conditions of life in established African townships deteriorated further and further. Although 'matchbox' houses were to be built in the 1970s by public authorities in Soweto, apartheid officially ceased to build public housing or to provide other facilities in the township in the mid 1960s (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 70). Because of the lack of public investment, by the late 1970s, only fifteen percent of the houses in Soweto had electricity, and only a quarter had running water, which was provided through a tap attached to one of the walls of the outdoor toilet (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 17).

In the late 1960s, apartheid further restricted trade and other commercial activities in African townships. Africans were forbidden to own shops, industries, and companies. Apartheid's deepening of racial separation also compelled the few African professionals in urban areas to leave to the 'Bantu Homelands,' to use apartheid's lexicon, which worsened the availability of professionals like doctors and lawyers in African townships. Africans were denied the right to self-employment as well. Invariably, African townships went underserviced. Because of the severe restrictions on township traders, by the late 1970s, there were still no pharmacies, bakers, supermarkets in Soweto, and no attorneys practiced there (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 26). As Bonner and Segal (1999: 71) indicate, the few small grocery stores in Soweto had a narrow range of products and prices that were much higher than in supermarkets in Johannesburg. That is why many people in Soweto commonly bought their groceries in Johannesburg. During my time in Soweto in 2015, many inhabitants of the township told me how during apartheid they had to go to Johannesburg for services like supermarkets or banks.

[Where did you buy your groceries? How did you do it during apartheid?] Before, most times we had to take a taxi to go to town. It was a long distance. Even the banks are here now. During apartheid, all we had to do… all was in town, Johannesburg. Groceries, banks, drugstores, everything was there in town (Interview with inhabitant of Mofolo North on 3 October 2015).

Back then, we had to go to town [Johannesburg], we went to Roodepoort, which was more difficult, but it was cheaper than those township shops. We did have shops here but they were more expensive

because they had to buy from the same shops in town and sell it to us. So, they had to make some profit in bringing it to you (Interview with inhabitant of Mofolo North on 19 October 2015).

The point is that there was a shift on apartheid's policy in the 1960s and 1970s from that of the 1950s. Now the African urbanization should not only be strongly constrained but eventually reversed. Apartheid's goal was African deurbanization... and African retribalization. In order to pursue this twofold aim, apartheid implemented what came to be known as separate development. The tightening of influx control, the attempts to revoke 'Section 10 rights,' the deportation of 'illegal' Africans to the 'Bantustans,' and the freezing of public investment on established townships, were all part of a broader strategy: separate development. According to the ideology of separate development, Africans and whites supposedly belonged to different worlds that should be kept apart from each other, and that should pursue development through different and separated paths (Ferguson, 2006: 60-1). Separate development ideology served both political and economic purposes. Worder (2012 [1994]: 119) quotes Giliomee (1985) to summarize the spirit of separate development: 'political independence with economic interdependence.'

Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 was the envisioned solution for the contradiction that South African cities were conceived as primarily white places but depend largely on the African urban workforce. Under separate development, apartheid's strategy was to relocate both Africans and industries toward the 'native reserves,' now renamed as 'Bantu Homelands.' Industrial decentralization policy was associated with the aims of apartheid (Wolpe, 1972: 452; Legassick, 1974: 278-80; Hindson, 1985: 405, 421). To be sure, apartheid encouraged industries to move not into the 'Bantustans' themselves but above all to their borders. Only mining investment was allowed to materialize within the 'Bantustans.' The fact is that border zone industries were away enough from South African main cities at the same time they would count with the existing pool of cheap labor fixed in the 'Bantustans.' Wolpe (1972) was one of the first in asserting the functional effects of separate development for capitalist accumulation. He (1972: 448, 450-4) claimed that, in a context in which the old reserves were no longer able to fulfil a role of reducing labor-reproduction costs, apartheid lowered the wage structure by the use of separate development and industrial decentralization. In any case,

Wolpe (1972) argues that the beneficial moves for capitalist accumulation were always in conjunction with control and repression.

> In its application to the urban areas, Apartheid nevertheless appears predominantly and with ever increasing thoroughness in its coercive form. In its application to the Reserves it has undergone a number of changes in content-culminating in the programme of self-development – in which the attempt both to establish forms of control which Africans would regard as legitimate and to institutionalize conflict has been an increasingly important ingredient although coercion is never absent. This policy towards the Reserves has been, whatever other purpose it may have had in addition, centrally concerned, as in the past, with the control and supply of a cheap labour force, *but in a new form* (Wolpe, 1972: 448).

Following the view inaugurated by Wolpe (1972), Legassick (1974, 1975) also emphasised the centrality of extra-economic coercion in the South African economy under high apartheid. For him (1974, 1975), repression and coercion were key aspects of the control of the African labor force. 'The structures of extra-economic coercion will serve to control the migrant labour force in the major urban areas, the commuting labour force in the border areas and "Bantustans"' (Legassick, 1974: 280). In a word, the apartheid economy relied strongly on extra-economic coercion, which might be related to forms of 'primitive accumulation.'

Indeed, the main problem in Wolpe's (1972) and Legassick's (1974, 1975) views about the apartheid economy was the understanding that racial oppression was always functional for capitalist accumulation.[121] By highlighting internal contradictions within capitalist interests, and the different possible policies at each point in time, Posel (1983) criticized the functionalist reductionism in Wolpe's and Legassick's analyzes. She (1983) maintained that there were dysfunctions between apartheid/segregation and capitalist accumulation in South Africa. For instance, when apartheid curbed African urbanization

---

[121] Although there were discrepancies between Wolpe's (1972) and Legassick's (1975) interpretations of the apartheid economy – with the former emphasizing oppression and the latter suggesting the continuity of previous segregationist labor – both of them endeavored to expose the functionality of apartheid for capitalist accumulation. Both authors had even more congruent views regarding the key role of the 'natives reserves' of the early twentieth century: The old 'reserves' were essential components of the migrant labor system because they provided the South African economy, which was basically based on mining and farming, with an abundant reserve of cheap labor reproduced in the reserves.

it prioritized the interests of agricultural capital to the detriment of industrial capital. For Posel (1983: 63), the relationship between racial policy and economic growth in South Africa was functional and dysfunctional at once, and thus inherently contradictory. What is more, if there were indeed a relationship of complete functionality between segregationist planning and capitalist interests, the end of racial oppression would have meant the demise of capitalism in South Africa.

Ferguson (2006: 61) offers a more politically-oriented assessment of separate development while mentioning how the South African state very often adopted a paternalistic view regarding the 'Bantustans.' However, he (2006: 56) also shows, just like Wolpe (1972: 448, 450-1) and Legassick (1974: 276-7) suggested years earlier, how behind the creation of the 'Bantustans' was the fact that racial segregation and oppression, and the economic returns that might come with them, should now be framed and pursued not through 'white supremacy ideology' but along slightly different lines, those of the more accepted notion of 'independent national development.' Basically, separate development ideology meant that the 'Bantustans' had 'their own problems' (Ferguson, 2006: 65) and that African political rights were now confined to these newly 'independent' states. This became crystal-clear when in the early 1970s apartheid passed a law that constrained all Africans to become citizens of the 'Bantustans' corresponding with their 'ethnic groups,' even if many of them had born in urban areas and had never stepped into what was now supposed to be their 'nation-states.' Under this law, the Bantu Homelands Citizen Act of 1970, Africans had virtually lost their South African citizenship and with it their right to remain permanently in urban areas (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 72). As Ferguson (2006: 57) and Worden (2012 [1994]: 119) note, citizens of the supposedly 'independent' 'Bantustans' lost their South African nationality, although the 'Bantustans' were not recognized as independent by any other country besides South Africa. Now a 'homeland citizenship certificate' stripped Africans of their South African citizenship and bound them to the pseudo-states of the 'Bantustans.'

Bonner and Segal (1999: 72) remark that by this time white authorities planned the removal of isiZulu-speaking families from Soweto to townships in Natal. Clearly, apartheid had started to think of African townships as places for temporary workers and, thus, promoted the construction of hostels rather than of houses. By the early 1970s, Soweto had seven of the eleven hostels in Johannesburg's area (Pirie and Silva, 1986: 175). Diepkloof Hostel, Meadowlands Hostel, Lifateng Hostel, and Mapetla Hostel, were all of them erected in Soweto in the 1960s and 1970s (NEAD, 1968; Pirie and Silva,

1986). It was by this time that apartheid tried to turn Alexandra into a 'hostel city.' With the reinforcement of the doctrine of the temporary status of those who already lived in places like Soweto and Alexandra, virtually only migrant workers would be allowed to inhabit there. Apartheid's efforts to further restrain the permanence of Africans into cities 'resulted in the gradual erosion of African land rights and African ownership rights' (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 12).

During the 1950s the public housing schemes were apartheid's chief policy and the homeownership that characterized old freehold townships was virtually abolished in African townships. Even in areas such as Dube, were a homeownership scheme existed prior to 1948, the homeownership was prohibited. Instead, the inhabitants of Dube had to lease their plots of land for a determinate period, which varied during the apartheid years from thirty to ninety-nine years. They were at least allowed to construct their own houses in the ways they wanted and had a perspective of permanence in the township. The situation of impermanence was to be worsened all over again. Insofar apartheid moved into the policy of separate development in the 1960s and 1970s, less and fewer people would have a secure permanence in Soweto. For instance, in the 1970s only those in possession of a 'homeland citizenship certificate' could lease land in urban areas (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 12-3). Apartheid progressively close down any residual rights Africans still might had to occupy land in urban areas on a stable basis. Even deep-rooted African families living in urban areas for generations were to belong as citizens to the pseudo-states of the 'Bantustans,' and as such being in risk of deportation. For those that were to remain in Soweto, life would become harder and harder as all public resources started to be channelled toward the 'Bantustans' at the same time repression and control were strained in urban areas.

In the early 1970s, the government unified the authority and control over African townships in the newly established (Bantu) Administration Boards (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 12; Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008: 193). As Pohlandt-McCormick (2006: 13) mentions, despite the recurring protests of a Nationalist minority in the Johannesburg City Council, until then the Johannesburg City Council had subsidized Soweto. From 1972 onward, 'the West Rand Administration Board depended on the income from beer and liquor sales, over which they had a virtual monopoly, and on rentals and utility rates paid by the residents of the township' (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006: 13-4). With the lack of public investment in housing, and due to either natural population growth or 'illegal' migration, Soweto and other townships started to face a housing

shortage from the mid 1970s onward. Pohlandt-McCormick (2006: 14) observes that by the late 1970s, 'the minister of Bantu Administration (…) described a building campaign according to which 1,530 houses were built in 1973-74, 545 in 1974-75, and 162 in 1975-76. The number of new houses to be built in Soweto in 1976-77 was 834.' There was a clear slowdown in the pace of housing provision from that of the 1950s and even from that of the 1960s. The increasing demand for shelter derived into overcrowding and backyard subletting became commonplace in established townships. It also made room for unlawful squatting on the fringes of townships like Soweto and Alexandra from the early 1980s onward.

The Soweto upheaval of 1976 was a watershed that transformed the South African political landscape. Without it, it is difficult to grasp the move away from separate development. In the aftermath of the Soweto upheaval of 1976, political and economic crisis generated turmoil within the ruling party and pragmatic reformers (*verligtes*) prevailed over conservatives (*verkramptes*) (Morris, 1999: 11). Apartheid embarked on a reformist strategy. The relaxation of apartheid had clear consequences for those living in Soweto. Bonner and Segal (1999: 104-7) indicate that, even though the relaxation of apartheid changed African townships across the country, the government gave Soweto special treatment. First of all, apartheid permitted Sowetans to buy, rather than rent, either newly built houses or the old 'matchbox' houses. Sowetans could now renovate their homes. As a result of these changes, a new class of African real estate owners started to emerge and with it new 'high-income' areas like Diepkloof Extension or 'Beverly Hills' in Orlando West took shape. Apartheid also withdrew restrictions on trade and African business grew quickly in African townships. A myriad of services started to be offered in Soweto from privately-owned *shebeens* to new grocery stores to fast-food outlets. The minivans were legalized and turned out to be a significant option to get to Johannesburg in view of the overcrowded, slow, and unreliable railway service. At the same time, informal businesses and *spaza* shops spread all over Soweto. Fruit vendors and other types of hawkers, usually placed around main railway stations and taxi ranks, began to be a permanent feature of Soweto.

Regardless of all these transformations, Soweto remained a sort of 'dormitory city' with severe problems in the 1980s: The vast majority of the housing stock was inadequate; the conditions of schools were unacceptable; unemployment was too high, reaching fifty-three per cent in 1984; and criminality went out of control (Bonner and Segal, 1999: 108, 112, 137). Backyard subletting within Soweto and unlawful squatting

on its fringes also came about by this time. In a word, social differentiation and inequality increased within Soweto from the 1980s and I would say that the township started to look more and more like the place I came to know in the 2010s.[122]

*Picture 17 – Women's hostel, Alexandra*

[122] Observation in situ on 28 October and 29 October 2013. Participant observation in September, October, and November 2015.

Despite the increasing opposition to apartheid in the mid 1970s, the strategy of separate development persisted until apartheid moved into the policy of 'orderly urbanization' in the mid 1980s (Hindson, 1985). Notwithstanding this new policy did not recognize African political rights, the main presupposition behind it was that African urbanization was both inevitable and economically desirable. The view advanced by the Fagan Commission decades earlier had finally prevailed (Huchzermeyer, 2002: 88). Although the (Urban) Group Areas Act of 1950 would be revoked only in 1991, separate development and the 'Bantustan strategy' (Ferguson, 2006: 58) were virtually abandoned in the mid 1980s. In 1986, apartheid put an end to the influx control and pass laws and many Africans coming from the rural areas flooded into main South African cities. The rapid urbanization from the 1980s onward happened in a context of economic downfall. It transformed Johannesburg and its townships.

Soweto's population grew quickly whereas its housing stock did not. Like elsewhere in South Africa, clandestine squatting in Soweto's fringes in the early 1980s evolved into considerable open squatting within the township itself in the late 1980s and 1990s (see, for instance, Hindson at al., 1994: 333; Gilbert et al., 1997; Gilbert and Crankshaw, 1999). Alexandra went through a similar process meanwhile. Alexandra's hostels, for example, ended up being surrounded by makeshift shacks (see picture 17). In the 2000s and 2010s, more and more squatter camps and shack settlements gained their place within established townships. Backyard renting consolidated in most of them (see, for instance, Gilbert et al., 1997; Gilbert and Crankshaw, 1999; Crankshaw et al., 2000; Bank, 2007). Lemanski (2009: 474) indicates from the work of Beall et al. (2000) and Beall et al. (2002) that, by the late 1990s, 'virtually every backyard in Soweto township hosted an informal shack or outhouse structure, accommodating nearly one-third (…) of Sowetans.' Backyard subletting expanded too in postapartheid public housing schemes, commonly known as RDPs, with backyard tenants facing more precarious conditions than those in the backyards of 'matchbox' houses in stablished townships (Lemanski, 2009). On the other hand, newly-built private housing, sometimes established in the form of entire extensions, and other enterprises raging from golf courses to malls to the privatization of service provision, inaugurated new patterns of socioeconomic life in African townships. It is time for us to delve into the recent spatial and social transformation of Johannesburg's townships.

## 7.2. The ambivalences of the present

It was hot during my last field trip in Soweto.[123] It was summer time. The air was dry and the township's landscape had a sandy bitterness. You could smell the heat. I was always looking for the shade of some tree and only seldomly was I lucky enough to find one.[124] Robert, one of my informants, brought up the subject of trees during one of our walks through Soweto.[125] The fifty-three-year-old man stated that it was very difficult to find tree-lined streets in the township. I already had this in mind in an intuitive way. His statement made it clear to me. Along the entire length of our route from his backyard accommodation in Orlando East to Mofolo North only a main road in Dube, the township occupied by professionals and the African upper classes during apartheid, was shady and tree-lined. Only that single main road. Robert told me that this was due to inhabitants of the township cutting down some species of trees that were planted in public spaces in order to make shelter or to heat their houses. They also did so due to superstition. I believe Robert knew this because he himself was a traditional healer. He did not mention this though. Instead, he finished his observations by stating that Soweto was meant to be a place for storing black people. And, as such, it was not that relevant whether there were trees on its streets or not. At this point, Robert stopped walking and asked me if I had taken the taxis, the minivans, from Soweto to town early in the morning or if I had done so the other way around at the end of the afternoon. After I answered him that I had not, he quickly said something like: 'I did it every weekday for more than thirty-five years. The sun is always there, in your eyes. It is always up there, obfuscating your vision, blinding you. It drives you mad.' Robert believed that Soweto was placed in that specific location on purpose. According to him, Soweto was planned to be exactly there and the people that inhabit in it were meant to be kept blind. Robert emphasized that oppressors conceived Soweto as a place to accumulate, stock, store the African labor force, keeping them under control. Robert made his point: Soweto was a place predestined to oppress and to subjugate black people. When I asked him about the changes that Soweto has seen since the end of apartheid, Robert said that there was no valid change. Soweto is still Soweto.

---

[123] Participant observation in September, October, and November 2015.
[124] Fieldwork note on 7 October 2015.
[125] Participant obsevation, informal conversation, and interview conducted on 15 October 2015.

Soweto is still Soweto, but not everything is still the same in Soweto. In what remains of this chapter, I will try to delineate features of Soweto everyday life that indicate how the township has changed after apartheid. In fact, I will track down some aspects entailed in the recent transformation of Johannesburg and historically marginalized places like Soweto and Alexandra. Based on my fieldwork in Johannesburg in 2013 and 2015 – which means that I will rely on interviews I conducted with township dwellers, field notes, and pictures – I hope to be able to take the reader into the daily life of Johannesburg's townships.[126] While setting out this grounded description of the current conditions of life in Johannesburg's townships, I hope to be able to show how townships might be connected to typical issues in critical (urban) theory that we have revisited previously (chapters 4 and 5). Commodification is certainly a key topic in this work. We shall see, for instance, how commodification is part of the present-day reality of Johannesburg's townships. Other key subjects for critical (urban) theory scholars, such as the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]), will find their place in our approach too. In sum, I will seek to disentangle the ambivalent forces that shape contemporary everyday life in places like Soweto and Alexandra. This will be done in the hope of offering a meaningful understanding of the urban trajectory of Johannesburg's townships.

### 7.2.1. The 'Other City'

Between the 1980s and the 2000s, downtown Johannesburg had been changing gradually from a white-designated area into an area occupied by non-whites, predominantly by Africans (see, for instance, Parnell and Webber, 1990; Morris, 1999). Urban decay shadowed racial desegregation. The racial transformation of inner-city neighborhoods was matched by the displacement of large companies' headquarters, the stock exchange, and other businesses, to new areas constructed to the north of the inner-city area. The displacement of economic activity northwards has had consequences for the overall spatial configuration of Johannesburg. Murray (2008: 187) argues that it ensues the consolidation of a 'dual city' characterized by poor marginal territories and rich sequestered spaces or 'privatopias' disseminated across the northern edge of the city. Despite the efforts to reverse the legacy of apartheid's city planning and to link parts of the city that had been separated from one another as a consequence of racial segregation,

---

[126] Participant observation in September and October 2013. Participant observation between September and November 2015.

postapartheid policies have put into motion new dynamics that ended up increasing the gap between rich and poor (Murray, 2011: 142).

Murray (2008, 2011) portrays how Johannesburg has experienced at once and the same time growth, expansion, and transformation, along with contraction, polarization, and decay, which altogether shapes it now throughout the two polarizing extremes of wealth and poverty. The steady expansion of 'sequestered sites of fantastic luxury has been matched by proliferation of places of degradation and despair' (Murray, 2008: 4). According to him (2011: 36), the landscape of contemporary Johannesburg is polarized along the axis of luxurious wealth at one extreme and abject impoverishment at the other.

> In Johannesburg after apartheid, the luxurious City of Spectacle, consisting of those fancy playgrounds for affluent that are at once orderly, clean, enclosed, and fortified, stands in stark contrast to the Other City – the one that contains those depleted, degraded, polluted, and stagnant spaces of confinement inhabited by the urban poor, who are forced to eke out daily existence under perilous and unstable conditions (Murray, 2008: 156).

The author sees these two 'discordant microworlds' as 'coexisting and mutually interdependent fragments' (Murray, 2008: 04). Murray (2008, 2011) concentrates much of his attention on the new-fangled 'privatopias' (Murray, 2008: 187), which may range from the Johannesburg International Airport to Sandton City Mall to Melrose Arch Mall to Rosebank Mall to Montecassino entertainment resort to golf courses to gated and walled neighborhoods at the north edge of the city. Together they constitute 'the 'luxurious City of Spectacle,' that is, an 'assemblage of bunkered enclaves' (Murray, 2008: 47) based on a 'paranoid urbanism' (Murray, 2008: 61) that encourages the privatization of spaces of encounter and sociability.

Without any doubt, Murray (2008, 2011) calls our attention to the increasingly commodification that has been developing in one the poles that constitutes the unequal postapartheid Johannesburg, the wealthier one. Nevertheless, what has been going on in the 'Other City?' What occurs if the poorer pole is not a homogeneous world of depletion and poverty? Perhaps it has not remained unvaryingly degraded and stagnated. Murray (2008: 47) himself recognizes that there is a risk of oversimplification while classifying the city in such a polarized way. But what is at stake here is that while shaping his understanding of Johannesburg as deeply segregated and irremediably polarized, Murray

(2008, 2011) does not pay enough attention to what has been occurring in the historically marginalized townships. He (2008) focuses on how the inner-city has changed, he also looks at the informal settlements that characterizes the new urban fringe to the south of the city, and at the informal settlements within established townships; but he (2008, 2010) puts most of his energies in denouncing the rising of new 'privatopias' (Murray, 2008: 187) across the northern portion of Johannesburg. Murray does not provides us with an accurate account of how African townships have changed after apartheid. He ends up giving us an image of places like Soweto and Alexandra as homogeneous eroded worlds only noticeable by their poverty and deprivation. I would say that, even if unintentionally, Murray's analyzes leave us with the simplistic view that economic activity and commodification may take place only in the richest parts of the city. We know that biased understandings regarding the territories of inhabitation of the urban poor are not precisely new (see chapters 1 and 3). Mike Davis's (2006) *Planet of Slums* is likely the most influential version of them.

The authors of the collective book *Class in Soweto* offer a more nuanced account of contemporary Soweto (Alexander et al., 2013). In contrast to monotonic views of places like Soweto, Alexander et al. (2013) show that current Soweto is not homogeneous; they show that there are economic and social differentiation in progress within the township. The passage below provides us with a good starting point for our examinations of how Soweto has transformed after apartheid.

> One can make two superficial mistakes about contemporary Soweto. Visitors usually quickly dispose of the first myth – that it remains the overflowing slum built by apartheid – only to replace it with a second fable, which is sustained by the swanky new shopping mall, substantial improvements to the main roads and tourist areas, shiny cars streaming in and out of the township on the weekends, and the refurbishment of many houses that started life as apartheid 'matchboxes'. Diepkloof Extension caricatures any myth of a socially flat township (…).The township is neither homogeneously squalid nor generally rich (Ceruti, 2013: 55).

Ceruti calls our attention to the diversity of circumstances that characterize present-day Soweto in a vivid manner and puts it straightforwardly: 'The township is neither homogeneously squalid nor generally rich' (Ceruti, 2013: 55). But as Ceruti's

argument evolves, she (2013: 55) raises the question of whether Soweto might be seen as a kind of surplus labor dump. Ceruti does so in view of the high and persistent unemployment rate in the township – which figures indicate may fluctuate between twenty-eight and forty per cent – and because of the many upward African professionals and members of the new African elite that have left Soweto behind – at least during the weekdays – to relocate themselves into one of the new fancy northern suburbs of Johannesburg. Other factors contribute to the interpretation that Soweto is now a kind of massive reservoir of cheap and surplus labor. For instance, the influx and settlement in the township of poor migrants from the rural areas and from other African countries since the end of racial segregation. From an analysis of statistical data available about the population of Soweto, Ceruti declares that:

> Questions remain in terms of broader geographic assorting. It is unclear if Soweto's 2006 population has stabilised or whether we have captured it during a process in which the best-off workers and the middle classes are gradually drifting out of the township, leaving behind only the 'lower classes,' making Soweto a surplus population 'dump' as much as a labour reserve (Ceruti, 2013: 55).

Even though Ceruti (2013) is aware of the likelihood of data inaccuracy, she portrays current Soweto as a place in which accumulation virtually does not take place. While doing so, she puts herself shoulder to shoulder with some of the less nuanced accounts I have just mentioned above. Regardless of class differentiation or anything else, at the end of the day, Soweto is a 'surplus population "dump"' (Ceruti, 2013: 55).

Alexander and colleagues (2013) mention that Soweto has become more and more stratified, which contradicts the socially flat suggestion that it is a 'surplus population "dump"' (Ceruti, 2013: 55). Ceruti's (2013) interpretation of Soweto is not completely wrong, but she tends to overemphasize one side of the coin. Although many middle- and upper-class families and individuals might have left the township behind, it seems difficult to claim that the recent transformation of Soweto shapes it into a sort of variant of the 'hyperghetto,' to use Wacquant's (2008) terminology while analyzing the harmful deterioration of the black ghettos across the main cities of the United States in the late 1980s and 1990s. In view of their previous neglect under apartheid, it is not mistaken to say that Soweto and other townships have somewhat improved. In addition, although Alexander and colleagues (2013) rely on Marxist concepts, they do not encompass all

forms production, which is also to say that they do not satisfactorily cover the entangled relationships between consumption and production. Of course, consumption is not left out of the picture entirely. 'Affordability,' for instance, is a concept that Alexander and colleagues (2013) mobilize in order to argue that Soweto 'is neither homogeneously squalid nor generally rich' (Ceruti, 2013: 55). We know too that consumption is important for social differentiation among the African population and that the topic has been approached from a variety of theoretical standpoints (see, for instance, Crankshaw, 1996; Beall et al., 2003; Chipkin, 2013; Seekings, 2013; Alexander et al., 2013; Sadian, 2018). As a general rule, the greater the social and economic differentiation, the greater the expected differentiation through consumption. Nevertheless, in most cases, consumption is rarely satisfactorily related to production. Consumption is very seldom understood as an essential part of capitalist production in the way proposed by Marx (2011 [1857-58]) in the *Grundrisse* (see Chapter 5). The authors (2013) of the book *Class in Soweto* hardly cover the transformation of Soweto in this sense.

My point here is that, unlike the apartheid years, Soweto does participate in the contemporary capitalist economy beyond providing a reservoir of cheap labor employed beyond its limits, with accumulation taking shape within the township's boundaries. Despite the high unemployment rate, despite the outward migration of African upper and middle classes, and despite the inward migration of poor African migrants, Soweto generates and realizes value, to use the Marxist vocabulary here again. I will argue that production comes about, for instance, through the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]) involved in the construction of infrastructure, malls and entire neighborhoods of private houses, all of which happen to materialize within the township. Despite the growing stratification that characterizes current Soweto, an outsized portion of its near one and a half million residents realizes value through the consumption of numerous commodities (Stats SA, 2011). Moreover, we should not forget the extensive privatization of public services and the 'cost recovery' predisposition that guided many of the postapartheid public policies. However, before getting to the examination of how contemporary Soweto might be related to the capitalist economy, beyond serving as a kind of surplus labor dump, let us take a brief look at the role the private sector has had in the recent transformation of the township.

## 7.2.2. Global mega-events, neoliberal urban policy, and the private sector

In 2010 South Africa hosted the FIFA World Cup. Just like what happened in Brazil four years later, in South Africa several investments were made across the country in order to organize and receive the global mega-event: From the construction of stadiums to the improvement of roads and other infrastructure. Johannesburg received a considerable amount of these investments due to the fact that it is South Africa's main economic hub and because major matches were scheduled to be played in the city. In this context, Soweto and some areas around it received both public and private investments. The deep revamping of the FNB Stadium, also known as Soccer City, located just outside Soweto on the way to Johannesburg, converted it into the largest soccer stadium on the African continent. The construction of other smaller stadiums and training sites within the township itself, like the one in Dobsonville (see picture 18 below), also deserves mention. Other stadiums already built long ago, like the Orlando Pirates' stadium in Orlando East, were entirely refurbished. The 2010 FIFA World Cup opening ceremony was indeed held in Orlando Stadium, that is, in Soweto.

Just like Brazilians, South Africans, and above all black South Africans, do enjoy soccer. During my last field trip in Soweto, soccer was a topic that usually popped up in my informal conversations with locals.[127] When I interrogated people about the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the habitual response was something similar to: 'Oh, it was wonderful! Lots of fun! People from all over the world amazed by the sounds of our *vuvuzelas*.' Recollections of the Brazilian soccer team and of Bafana Bafana's (as the South African team is colloquially called) games were also commonplace. However, at some given point, the conversation used to turn nostalgic: 'Oh, it is all gone forever. Nobody even remembers Soweto exists now. We have to carry on with our ordinary lives without it all, and so on and so forth.' I must indicate that, despite my interviewees' happy memories of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, there were problems with the organization of the mega-event, among which were the typical ones: Mismanagement of public funds, corruption, forced evictions, labor rights abuses, and so on. The grassroots movements against the usual problems that come along with these sorts of mega-events arose in South Africa too. Protesters focused on the fact that the country spent billions on new stadiums while townships lacked electricity, clean water and decent housing. Most South Africans saw

---

[127] Participant observation between September and November 2015.

little direct or sustained economic benefit from the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and certainly fell far short of possessing the funds to purchase a ticket to any of the games. Everything foreshadowed what would happen in Brazil in 2014.

There are, however, differences between the two global mega-events. Some of the venues refurbished or constructed for the 2010 FIFA World Cup within/around Soweto are still operative and open to the public nowadays (picture 18). In contrast to what happened in Brazil, at least there is a positive legacy of it all for Sowetans. But, in spite of the investments, the connected conflicts, and their likely legacies, I would say that the consequences of the 2010 FIFA World Cup for Soweto's inhabitants were less marked than the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympics for those living in Rio de Janeiro's favelas. For instance, there was no comprehensive public police deployment comparable to that of the UPPs in the context of Rio de Janeiro's favelas (see Chapter 6) aiming at 'retaking' Soweto from entrenched criminals allegedly in charge of the township.

Overall, two aspects appear to make the situation substantially different in Soweto. First, and I shall come back to this aspect later on in Chapter 8, Soweto is still were it was supposed to be, that is, as far away as possible from Johannesburg and its suburbs. Second, either through so-called public-private partnerships (PPPs) or by other means that do not rely on the public sector at all, not even in the sense of making some ostensible claim to represent the public interest, the private sector has had a great deal of power in the recent transformation of Soweto and other townships. Huchzermeyer (2002, 2003, 2010, 2011) has shown that the prevalence of the private sector has to do with a broader process, namely, the transition away from planning and housing policies steered by the public sector during apartheid to neoliberal urban policies and developer-driven housing schemes in the postapartheid period. She has exposed how organizations such as the Cities Alliance and the World Bank have played a leading role in this transition toward neoliberalism in South African cities. Under the neoliberal edicts, urban planning and other public policies and investments appear to be subordinate forces driving the transformation of African townships. The 2010 FIFA World Cup should be situated in the context of this general state of affairs. Many things signpost that markets have driven (urban) development in Soweto and in other established townships. Even if it might well be too much to claim that the strong presence of the private sector has been leading the recent transformation of Soweto, the private sector has been strongly involved in the transformation of the township. This has had consequences for Sowetans. We must try to track them down.

*Picture 18 – Dobsonville Stadium, Soweto*



Source: The author, 2015.

### 7.2.3. Soweto 'almost now now'

Soweto has its own tempos. Sowetans seem to have a peculiar engagement with time. If you want to ask someone to do something right now, and you wish to be sufficiently clear, you must ask them to do it 'now now.' Just one 'now' it is not enough. A 'double now' is required. Sowetans express their present time by saying 'now now.' The situation and facts I will describe and discuss in the following sections relate largely to my everyday experience in Soweto in 2015.[128] I think they depict relevant aspects of contemporary life in Soweto well but they are already part of a present that is behind us. Sowetans would probably not object if I call that moment in time, I mean, that of my time in Soweto, something like 'almost now now.' I hope to be able to recover here key aspects of my everyday experiences during those days.

My clue here is to start from concrete aspects of 'almost now now' Soweto in order to reapproach wider and abstracter subjects: (De)commodification, (urban) development, social transformation and the like. I have suggested earlier in Chapter 2 that, despite (urban) development and commodification beginning from above and beyond the immediate grounds of everyday life, it is necessary to approach these socio-spatial forces from the level of lived experience, from the fertile soil of everyday life (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 31-46, 230, 2002 [1970]: 77-98, 128-9, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 161-2, 210). Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 216) advises that the examination of a trivial day in a person's life may lead to radical critique. Assuming that Lefebvre's advice would be useful for us here, let us embark on the description of the everyday life of ordinary people in 'almost now now' Soweto.

Damian is a forty-nine year old man who lives in a well-maintained, completely refurbished council house in one of the extensions of Pimville.[129] Damian's spacious home has nothing to do with the original, standard four-room 'matchbox' house. It has all the appliances a middle-class South African household would usually have, from good lounge furniture to a big flat-screen TV in the living room to a nice, well-equipped kitchen, including a microwave, to inside toilets, and so on. Damian worked at Pick n Pay – a big South African supermarket chain – for almost twenty years before being fired in August 2012. The Sesotho-speaking man explains to me that he has been trying to find a job ever since but the situation is not easy for someone of his age. Now he is paid less

---

[128] Participant observation between September and November 2015.
[129] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 24 October 2015.

than 500 rand a month for a job as security guard. Duduzile, Damian's wife, gets involved in our conversation. She states that she would not call that a job. Damian says that maybe it is not a proper job but it was a commitment for him, a risky one, he added. Damian explains that he tries to be of service to his community. Six nights per week, he sleeps over at the primary school some blocks down on his street. He and Duduzile, tell me that on three occasions people broke into the school at night and stole projectors, computers, and office material. The last time it happened, Damian was already in there and the thieves beat him up, tied him up, and grabbed his smartphone together with other ransacked items. This happened one month before our meeting in October 2015.

Damian elaborates that those behind the break-ins are young drug addicts, some of whom are from Pimville itself. *Nyaope* and *dagga* are the main drugs destroying our youth's lives in Soweto, says Damian.[130] 'This is a sick world,' he concludes, whereas his wife asserts that during apartheid the situation was completely different, no one remained very long in the township without having a job or attending school. 'The police had control of everything,' states Duduzile. Damian agrees with his wife's view about police control during apartheid and claims that, be that as it may, he was not giving up on his community. Someone had to do something for the community, someone had to stop the burglars, Damian whispered.

> [This job], it's some kind of community policing stuff. Yes, rather than you sit down and do nothing… do you understand? In the meantime, I'll be maybe looking for another job. You must just keep yourself busy. I'm helping the community. I'm not saying you can call it a job because anytime you want to leave you can give them a resignation letter. Do you understand? It's not a problem. If you find another job… But it's quite on you, you must go there. Even now, six o'clock, I must go there to work (Interview with property owner of Pimville on 24 October 2015).

It was a Wednesday, early in the evening, and Damian had to go to do his night shift at the primary school. Before leaving, he complained that there were at that time too

---

[130] Along with mandrax, a synthetic drug made of chemicals wich the active ingredient is methaqualone, *nyaope* and *dagga* are the most common street drugs in Soweto these days. The active ingredient of *dagga* is THC (tetrahydracannabinol) and it is either smoked or ingested or even mixed and inhaled with other drugs such as mandrax. *Nyaope* is made by means of the mixing of illegal drugs such as low-grade heroin, marijuana and cocaine with other potentially nocive substances, including anti-retroviral drugs and rat poison.

many people out of work in the country. None of Damian's four daughters nor Duduzile were employed. Nandi, Damian's eldest daughter, clarified that she had a bursary, which in fact turned out to be a sort of bank loan, to study business administration at the University of Johannesburg, Soweto Campus. The twenty-four year old woman explained to me that she would like to get a nice job and move out of Soweto. 'Oh, even me, my friend. If I was rich, I was going to go to Sandton. I'm tired of this Soweto,' shouted Damian on his way out. The couple's other three daughters are attending school. Damian's small income covers all the household's regular expenditure, which includes groceries, water and pre-paid electricity bills, 'airtime' for the family's cellphones, and so on. Damian and Duduzile rely on the rent of backyard tenants to make ends meet. They charge backyard tenants a monthly rent of 650 rand. They remark that, despite their economic hardships, they are still a middle-class family capable of paying all debts as they become due, and having no more liabilities than assets.

Damian finally leaves us and our conversation follows on without him. I ask Duduzile about their house and she mentions that between 2005 and 2006 they hired builders and renovated it. The original house was a standard four-room 'matchbox' house that Duduzile had inherited from her parents. The forty-six year old isiZulu-speaking woman details that her parents migrated to Johannesburg from the Transkei in the 1960s. At first, they went to 'Old Pimville' and in 1967 the apartheid government assigned them a four-room council house in a new extension of Pimville. Duduzile explains to me that she was born in the main house in 1969 and that since she married Damian they lived in one of the backyard rooms. After her father passed away in 2004, they eventually moved into the main house, which was quite shabby. However, at that time, Damian was still working at Pick n Pay. The family economy was doing well and they could afford to refurbish the house. Damian's firing in 2012 undid the family's economic steadiness. Duduzile recalls that Damian bought himself a new car just after his job termination with the settlement agreement. Sometime later, with the family's economic situation getting more and more uncertain, they ultimately decided to sell it. With a note of resignation, Duduzile explained: 'We do need a car but… what can we do?' Damian's family had to tighten their belts as continuous expenditures did not match their decreased income. Duduzile told me how the family slowed down its spending spree in order to avoid bankruptcy. No more superfluous outings. No more nice cars. No more shopping weekends at the nearby Maponya Mall. Notwithstanding the adversities, the girls were doing well at school and not on drugs.

Certainly, a series of particular events corresponds to Damian's and Duduzile's daily family life and we should not simply generalize from it. It would be misleading to argue that it is somehow representative of how Sowetans in general live. However, Damian's and Duduzile's everyday existence, opinions, and personal histories tell us relevant things about Soweto. First, the township has gone through substantial change. For good and for bad, 'almost now now' Soweto is not the same Soweto. Soweto is not just an underserviced peripheral location south of Johannesburg anymore. Despite old problems like poverty and ongoing poor service provision, Soweto now has its own universities, malls, hospitals and other services and economic activities that were simply unthinkable during apartheid. Bank loans, university loans, mortgages and housing reforms are part of the recent transformation in the township. Just as the pre-paid meters for water and electricity are. Virtually none of these things were in place during apartheid. In addition, high unemployment and economic hardship are crude realities of present Soweto. Sowetans can sometimes perceive current problems, like high unemployment and drug abuse, as 'new' problems, which somehow made room for Duduzile's fond recollection of the apartheid period. In an autobiographical account of growing up in a South African township, Dlamini (2009) discusses this kind of nostalgic recollection of the apartheid order by African township inhabitants. He shows how the sense of insecurity might dispose some to recall the past order with fondness. However, there is another aspect tied up with Soweto's recent transformation that I would like to highlight here: The relative mismatch between Soweto's recent transformation that encompasses a series of improvements – in service provision, freedom of movement, transportation, and so on – and the poverty characteristic of the everyday life of many Sowetans.

The malls, billboards, and all other consumption claims that are part of the landscape of present-day Soweto are in some way placed alongside the economic hardships many people in the township still have to go through. The township's recent transformation evolves across two parallel stories. It comprises two juxtaposed dimensions. The erection of backyard shacks and rooms that accompanied the original planned plots and standard 'matchbox' houses indicates the less visible side of Soweto's recent transformation. At the end of the day, backyard accommodation remains unseen in backyards; it is not noticeable in the way that cellphone billboards and malls are. However, backyard accommodation is still commonplace in contemporary Soweto (Gilbert et al., 1997; Gilbert and Crankshaw, 1999; Crankshaw et al., 2000; Bank, 2007; Lemanski, 2009). And as such, it is a relevant aspect of the built environment that reveals

the ways in which the township has been changing after apartheid. Another relevant issue is that, like Damian, Duduzile, and Nandi, many Sowetans spend most of their days within the confines of the township, which indicates a significant degree of segregation from the rest of the city. Despite the obvious advances in transportation and the official freedom of movement for all Africans in the contemporary South African city, and despite the fact that the idea of a better life very often lies beyond Soweto, in practice, a sense of isolation, seclusion, and segregation persists. It can be even stronger for those who do not work. Soweto is still a place apart.

### 7.2.4. Commodification and market expansion

In Johannesburg's townships, commodification, monetization, privatization, and consumerism go hand in hand with (urban) development. We can find instances of it all in the brief description I have offered of Damian's family daily life some paragraphs above: pre-paid meters, the Maponya Mall, bank loans, and a long list of consumer goods, such as the flat-screen television, new lounge furniture, microwave, new cars, mobile phones and even smartphones. Of course, the list can be shortened or expanded according to the purchasing power of the household at stake. For instance, like many people in the township, Damian's family had no satellite TV, locally called DSTV. But many other people I interviewed did, in some cases without having an indoor toilet or piped water into the main house. What seems relevant is that the inhabitants of 'almost now now' Soweto do partake in several markets as consumers. Many households have basic goods, durable consumer goods, and high-tech goods as well. However, as we shall see in the next sections, the commodification pushes go beyond Sowetans' living rooms and garages. Based on the theorizations of Harvey (2014) and Lefebvre (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) (Chapter 5), I will focus on a set of determinate aspects of township life, namely, housing and service provision, tourism, and shopping malls, in order to argue that – although commodification and the correlate dynamics of monetization, privatization, and consumerism advance unevenly – they have been extending from living rooms to real estate to the entire township. In talking about commodification in what follows, I will be referring, for instance, to the commodification of land, including peripherally located land, which can be theorized as the capitalist production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]). But under the umbrella of recent (urban) development everything that comes to be on that land tends to be somehow encompassed by the commodity form. The everyday life of

townships, the fertile soil of ordinary people's everyday existence, is, thus, overload by the commodity form and the myriad relations it embodies.

### 7.2.4.1. Housing and service provision

In Soweto, commodification follows the improvement in service provision and stimulates the progressive transformation of the built environment. For example, one main change in the built environment of Soweto relies on its housing stock. During my time in Soweto, I could see how several houses were renovated or expanded in line with good standards of construction.[131] Some of the Sowetans I interviewed claimed that after apartheid the situation changed for the better in the township: 'We're now part of the city, we're proud of Soweto,' said a sixty year old woman who lives in Dobsonville, a township bordering Mofolo.[132] Ms. Emma told me that her husband had an important political position in government and recognized that this was key for the economic welfare of the family. But, like other interviewees, Ms. Emma also recalled all her family's efforts to change the original four-room brick house into the double-storied house with all facilities that three generations of her family now inhabits. This kind of narrative reflecting positive change over time emerged in several of the interviews I conducted, including those with inhabitants of peripheral townships like Mofolo, Zondi or Chiawelo.[133] In fact, the diversity of Mofolo North's housing stock illustrates well the transformation that Soweto has undergone. Mofolo does have old council houses that remain virtually untouched but there are many others that have been entirely refurbished. My landlord's house was one example among many others on the very same street.[134] The changes in the built environment are even more impressive when one has in mind that, until deep into the apartheid period, every family in Mofolo North inhabited the standard 'matchbox' house delivered by the apartheid authorities.

Studies like those by Beall and colleagues (2003), Nieftagodien and Gaule (2012), and Alexander and colleagues (2013) have shown that, since the 1990s, Sowetans have lived under increasingly differentiated housing conditions. These days the landscape of places like Mofolo is even more diverse than it was in the 1990s. The diversity of colors,

---

[131] Among other days, participant observation on 10 October, 11 October, and 2 November 2015.
[132] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 14 October 2015.
[133] Interviews conducted on 2 October, 19 October, 20 October, and 28 October 2015.
[134] Fieldwork note on 3 October 2015.

styles, and structures is even more visible if you compare the housing standards of different locations that are part of Soweto, such as the affluent houses of Diepkloof or Orlando West with the many upgraded but simpler houses of townships like Mofolo or Crossroads. It is clear that the new affluent houses are far from being the general norm in Soweto. A considerable part of the old standard housing stock remains unchanged, as many Sowetans have not accrued the material conditions necessary to improve their homes (see pictures 15 and 16 above). This explains why some houses are permanently under reform.[135] When you walk the streets of Soweto, it is common to see sand and bricks stocked in front of houses.[136]

Patrick's unfinished house in Orlando East is an example of this trend. Patrick drives someone else's taxi from Monday to Saturday in Soweto. Close to his fifties, he complains because he cannot afford to finish his house.

> It's been five years now. Yes, you see, here we'll have two rooms, there the living room. (…) The matter here is that I've no money left to get it done. I just... we go as fast as we can. So, once I get a better-paid job, I'll get it done. I dream of it each day (Interview with inhabitant of Orlando East on 23 October 2015).

Patrick mentioned that people are getting loans in order to reform their houses. He said he had not because he does not earn enough to get a bank loan. Two informants mentioned that they borrowed money in order to refurbish their houses. Dumisani told me that he knew some people that had been evicted from their homes for nonpayment of bank loans. I asked him to arrange for an interview but it never happened. The vast majority of people I talked with during my fieldwork did not get a bank loan to reform their houses. In any case, the loans could be seen as an instance of the annexation of 'almost now now' Soweto by the logic of capital accumulation. Without any doubt, private companies, urban developers, and financial institutions have been actively involved in the rencent expansion of Soweto. Protea Glen and its several extensions are a good example of this. Picture 19 below portrays the housing standards of the fast-growing middle-class neighborhood on the southern border of Soweto.

---

[135] Interviews conducted on 2 October, 11 October, 15 October, 23 October, and 28 October 2015.
[136] Participant observation between September and November 2015.

266

*Picture 19 – Protea Glen, Soweto*



Source: The author, 2015.

*Image 5 – Promotional material of developer-driven housing in Soweto*



Source: The author, 2015.

Whenever you walk through Maponya Mall or Jabulani Mall you stand a good chance of encountering flyer distributers or mobile salesmen marketing the new houses in Protea Glen.[137] Image 5 above offers an example of this class of promotional material targeted at Sowetans. I picked it up during one of my field visits to Jabulani Mall in 2015.[138] Jabulani Mall and other malls that have been popping up in Soweto are certainly a key subject for us. I will come back to the 'malls phenomenon' in a moment. Before this, let me conclude our examination of the commodification of housing in the township.

Huchzermeyer (1999, 2002, 2010, 2011, 2014) has discussed how homeownership has been actively promoted by the government in postapartheid South Africa. Neoliberal policies guided the replication of developer-driven, standardized housing schemes on low-priced, peripherally located land. In other words, postapartheid governments have promoted homeownership schemes fostering a profit-seeking housing market in existing townships. Frequently, private developers have benefitted from public subsidies on these massive-scale cost-recovery investments. Image 5, for instance, shows

---

[137] Participant observation on 4 October, 8 October, 18 October, 27 October, and 31 October 2015.
[138] Participant observation on 18 October 2015.

how private developers build their participation in government-subsidized housing initiatives into their advertising, including the allusion to regulatory bodies such as the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC).[139] The Despite government's action on the demand side, in this kind of enterprise, construction firms produce the house as a commodity. The housing unit is produced to be sold in the housing market, which private developers then benefit from.

*Picture 20 – Gated communities in Jabulani and Pimville*



Source: The author, 2013 and 2015.

From the point of view of the home purchaser, the change to the formal housing market may be perceived as undeniable personal progress. During an informal conversation, one inhabitant of Jabulani told me of how she started living in a small wooden shack in the backyard of a council house in Chiawelo four decades ago, whereas now she and her family live in one of the walled and gated residential complexes that

---

[139] The goal of the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) is to regulate the homebuilding business in South Africa and to assist and protect housing consumers from private entrepreneurs who deliver substandard housing units.

have been built in Soweto, the Jabulani Flats.[140] The woman mentioned that she had to move from one backyard shack to another, from one plot to another. She remembers it as a hard time. Nowadays, in her forties, the hairstylist and small entrepreneur is paying for the small apartment where she now lives in Jabulani. She has a mortgage and is glad about not being periodically expelled by abusive landlords anymore. But the greatest improvement in her opinion is that her family is safe now. 'Now, I can go outside and hang my washing up whenever I want. Sometimes I do it at night,' remarked the woman.[141] Like elsewhere in Johannesburg, commodification and fear of crime go hand in hand in Soweto too. Nowadays, there are at least two gated and walled communities within Soweto, the Jabulani Flats and another one in Pimville (picture 20).[142] The latter was under expansion during my last fieldwork, in 2015.[143] My interviews indicate that usually people are willing to pay more to be in a place that is perceived as safer.[144]

Although the gated and walled communities of Soweto are not of a high standard and may not be that large, they are thought-provoking since they show how the 'privatopias' (Murray, 2008: 187) and the 'paranoid urbanism' (Murray, 2008: 61) that mark the expansion of Johannesburg after apartheid are finding their way into townships. While favoring homeownership over affordable rental housing, the government promoted the commodification of housing even in the lowest layers of South African cities. Despite the occasional rhetoric around the right to the city, which cannot be understood as anything other than an empty slogan in this case, public authorities envisioned the eradication of slums and other forms of informal cheap accommodation in South African cities (Huchzermeyer, 1999, 2010, 2011, 2014). The unstoppable expansion of backyard shacks and even entire shack settlements within and around established townships makes manifest that official eradication policies have failed (see pictures 21 and 22 below). As I have said earlier (Chapter 2), backyard accommodation is one of the most common types of shelter in contemporary Soweto. Informal settlements have also grown into vast areas to the south of Soweto, like in Orange Park. Not to mention the embryonic backyard subletting in the RDP houses, which is the exact opposite of what the government intended.[145] As Lemanski (2009: 473) argues, South Africa's formal housing policies

---

[140] Informal conversation on 4 October 2015.
[141] Fieldwork note on 4 October 2015.
[142] Participant observation on 28 October 2013, 18 October, and 24 October 2015.
[143] Participant observation on 24 October 2015.
[144] Informal conversation on 28 October 2013. Informal conversation on 4 October 2015. Interviews conducted on 1 October, 7 October, 18 October, 31 October, and 2 November 2015.
[145] Participant observation on 27 October and 31 October 2015. Interview conducted on 27 October 2015.

have encouraged backyard housing and have thereby augmented informality in South African cities, which contradicts the government's prioritization of homeownership over on-site upgrading and rental housing. Despite to public authorities' anti-slum rhetoric, slums and informal settlements did nothing but grow in the postapartheid period. Pictures 21 and 22 show, respectively, backyard shacks in Orlando West, Jabulani and Kliptown informal settlement in Soweto.

*Picture 21 – Backyard accommodation in Orlando West and Jabulani*



Source: The author, 2015.

*Picture 22 – Kliptown informal setlement*



Source: The author, 2015.

Let me make a brief observation here. Akin to the situation we have considered in Rio de Janeiro's favelas, the trade with portions of self-built space is as old as the backyard accommodation itself. Most of those benefiting from the trade of informal housing are locals and it is difficult to relate their activity with the production of space or other forms of capitalist accumulation. There is an interesting logic of mobility behind the corrugated-iron shacks in the backyards of Soweto, however.[146] Unlike the situation I found in Rio's favelas, in Soweto many shack dealers rent only the plot of land. Most of time, the tenant has to build his/her own shack. When he/she leaves the place, he/she has to do away with the shack. People have to move their shacks from one plot to another.[147] This mobility stimulates a market for corrugated-iron metal sheeting, locally called *zozo* (picture 21, lower-left photo). The scarcity of two-floor houses also caught my attention in Soweto, just like the fact that many houses have no indoor toilet, no sink or basin, no shower or water tank. The availability of space and this precariousness contrasts greatly with the situation in Rio de Janeiro's consolidated and dense favelas. I shall compare favelas and townships in a moment in Chapter 8.

There might be room for debate about whether postapartheid public authorities have succeeded in the commodification of electricity and water supplies but it seems plain that monetization and privatization of basic services have waxed in townships. Lemanski (2009: 477), for instance, shows that, unlike the apartheid years, postapartheid public housing schemes usually use pre-paid meters as an alternative to payment through periodic billing, which complicates illegal individual electricity and water connections, public subventions for the poor, and collectively organized boycotts like those of the 1980s and 1990s. The progressive introduction of pre-paid meters has been spreading not only in RDP houses but also in established townships like Mofolo, Orlando, Meadowlands, Nalendi and Zondi.[148] The same applies to the several extensions of Protea Glen that were integrally built by private developers.[149] The introduction of pre-paid meters follows the general rationality of privatization and commercialization of municipal services under the 'cost-recovery' axiom adopted by postapartheid governments. Huchzermeyer (2002, 2003, 2010, 2011, 2014) and other scholars (Beall et al., 2002; McDonald and Pape, 2002; Harrison et al., 2008) have denounced it as part of a broader

---

[146] Fieldwork note on 14 October 2015.
[147] Interviews conducted on 7 October, 18 October, and 2 November 2015.
[148] Observation in situ and interviews conducted on 3 October, 10 October, 11 October, 17 October, 18 October, 19 October, 20 October, and 1 November 2015.
[149] Participant observation and interviews conducted on 17 October and 1 November 2015.

change toward commodification, privatization, and neoliberalism. Just like other business-led enterprises – in housing, for instance – with the pre-paid schemes the benefits of the private sector prevail over both the welfare of the lower classes and the interests of South African society. Resistance and grassroots movements against these dynamics, like the Anti-Privatisation Forum (see Parnell and Webber, 1990; Harvey, 2007; Dawson, 2010; McKinley, 2016), have developed in the townships but they do not underestimate the powers they want to oppose.

*7.2.4.2. Tourism*

Tourism is an evolving activity in Soweto. Tourists, mostly foreigners, are regularly to be found wandering, with their cameras, throughout certain spots of Soweto. Orlando West is undoubtedly one of the most important areas in this regard.[150] In this historical township, one can find guesthouses and restaurants along with museums like the Mandela Museum and the Hector Pieterson Museum. It is very common to find tourists, buses, and private vans parked at Vilakazi Street around Nelson Mandela's house. The upper-right photo in picture 23 below shows a group of travelers touring Orlando. There are several travel agencies operating in Soweto nowadays, many of them led by Sowetans (see picture 23, lower photos).[151] The tours usually include visits to the main museums and to historical sites such as the place where Hector Pieterson was killed when the police opened fire on protesting students during the 1976 uprising. Nevertheless, in addition to the heritage sites and historical attractions, poverty has itself been turned into a tourist attraction in the postapartheid era. Some tours bring tourists to deprived areas within the township, for instance, to the informal settlement at Kliptown.[152]

Tourism epitomizes the commodification of Soweto. Everything enters into the tourist pack. Soweto's history, past oppression, as well as its grassroots and anti-racist movements, are now merchandized. Poverty too. As I have just mentioned, there are locals benefiting from tourism and this has consequences for Soweto's built environment. In order to benefit from opportunities related to tourist activities, residents of Soweto have changed their houses into B&Bs or guesthouses. A young woman who works in one of

---

[150] Participant observation on 29 October 2013. Participant observation on 10 October, 11 October, 15 October, and 23 October 2015.

[151] Participant observation and informal conversation on 29 October 2013. Participant observation and interviews conducted on 11 October and 15 October 2015.

[152] Participant observation and informal conversation on 27 October 2015.

the guesthouses of Orlando West told me that she was happy because she had a job near her house.[153] She also mentioned that the owner of the guesthouse, a young Sowetan like herself, left the township for a new suburb in northern Johannesburg. In an interview, a local woman who now runs a guesthouse in Orlando West explained to me how she started to think of reforming her place in order to receive tourists after her husband died, in the early 2000s.[154] Despite her plans, she was able to do so only some years later. As we talked, the sixty-five year old woman guided me through the guesthouse. Thembi described how she turned her husband's house into a small business. 'I'm a businesswoman,' she said. She also mentioned that nowadays she lives unaccompanied because her two sons left Soweto after the economic condition of the family had improved.

*Picture 23 – Tourist economy*
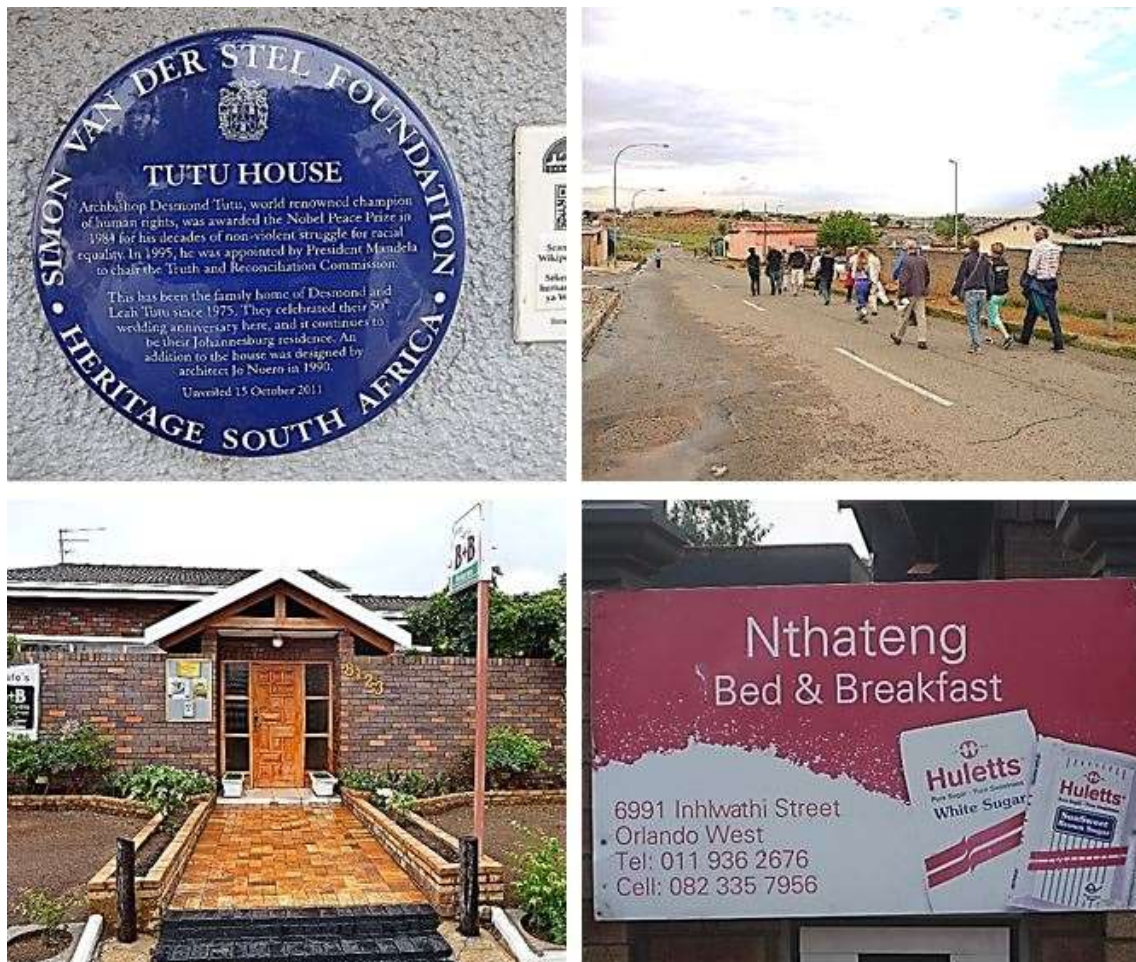


Source: The author, 2015.

---

[153] Participant observation and interview conducted on 29 October 2013.
[154] Participant observation and interview conducted on 15 October 2015.

275

Despite consistent infrastructural upgrading in specific locations, like in the tourist spots in Orlando West, many members of the township's elite and middle-class young people have been leaving the township for other locations. Moving out of Soweto, or aspiring to do so, was a subject often mentioned by the people I interviewed during my fieldwork. This seems to validate the view advanced by Ceruti (2013: 55) that the township is simply a sort of surplus labor dump. However, there are too many economic activities evolving within 'almost now now' Soweto to accept this idea. At most, we can state that the current socio-spatial changes in the township are contradictory. 'Almost now now' Soweto is increasingly stratified, and at the same time new accumulation processes evolve unevenly across the township's social space in a myriad of ways. I hope this section and the preceding one about the privatization of housing and public services have helped us to gain a preliminary grasp on it all. Following the same lines, the next section about the township's malls makes the argument more palpable. The transformation of the landscape of Johannesburg's townships after apartheid substantiates neither the idea advanced by Ceruti (2013: 55) that Soweto is a surplus labor dump nor the interpretation advocated by Seekings (2010, 2011) that there has been significant decommodification in townships like Soweto and Alexandra. I will come back to Seekings's (2010, 2011) propositions in Chapter 8. For now, I just want to suggest that, instead of decommodification, townships have seen an unsuspected enlargement of commodification, monetization, privatization, and consumerism that – albeit unevenly distributed – encompass several aspects of their everyday life. My fieldwork in South Africa in 2013 and 2015 indicates that not decommodification, but rather commodification, monetization, privatization, and consumerism have been progressing in Soweto and Alexandra. In various ways, capitalist accumulation has been inflicted upon them.

### 7.2.4.3. The 'mall phenomenon'

One morning in early October 2015, I decided to take an excursion to the largest and most famous of the new malls of Soweto: the famous Maponya Mall.[155] I had a sense of beginning to realize what has happened to the township during the last two decades or so. Maponya Mall is certainly one of the milestones of Soweto's recent transformation.

---

[155] Participant observation on 4 October 2015.

Resulting from the joint enterprise of Richard Maponya, a well-known African businessman and property developer, and two big real estate companies, Investec and ZenProp property holdings, it was opened in September 2007 by former South African president Nelson Mandela himself. It is advertised as 'the soul of Soweto' and is said to be the biggest mall in South Africa. Maponya Mall has a huge elephant as its emblem (see picture 24 below). Sipho and I walked from our place in Mofolo toward the Ikwezi train station. Once there, we took one of the minivans that cross Soweto on the way to Pimville. Sipho got off the taxi a few stops before me. He had to catch another taxi that would take him to his final destination, his mother's house in Protea South, on the southern edge of Soweto. I stayed aboard the minivan all the way long until its last stop at a taxi rank already inside the parking lot of the Maponya Mall. The taxi went through the mall's gates and parked in a row of vehicles. I left the taxi and walked toward one of the entrances, seeing the huge elephant sculpture that typifies the mall. Once inside the famous Maponya Mall, I had the sense one usually has in malls elsewhere, that is, the double feeling that you are segregated from the world out there at the same time as you are somehow shielded by glass walls and metallic parapets from the bad tempers and threats of the outside world. The 70,000 square-meter development has nearly 200 shops and, like in malls elsewhere, the exhibition of commodities seems to organize the entire space.

If we are to tackle properly issues such as commodification, the production of space, stratification, and new consumption patterns in townships like Soweto and Alexandra, we have to get a grip on the 'malls phenomenon.' Large malls in Soweto, like Maponya Mall and Jabulani Mall, have a vast array of leading stores, selling local and international brands. Additionally, some of them house banks and governmental facilities like post offices, job centers and home affairs offices, which altogether makes life much easier for Sowetans than it was during apartheid (see pictures 24 and 25 below). The vast majority of my informants stated that they buy their groceries in one of the many malls the township possesses nowadays.[156]

> Where do you do your groceries? Shoprite. Over the train station there, up there… there is a Mini-Shoprite. We walk until there. Sometimes we go to Jabulani Mall… Dobsonville Mall too. But I'm quite unhappy with the malls because there are too

---

[156] Many other interviewees also gave a similar response regarding this subject.

many beggars around them. Every time you go there those people come and start to ask you for things. I don't like it. (Interview with an inhabitant of Mofolo North on 3 October 2015).

Currently, we do Shoprite because Woolworths is too expensive. We're alright now but we're not that rich, we can't afford it. Then, yes, we've to do Shoprite. We've to take taxis to Dobsonville Mall, Meadowlands… You see, in Mofolo there's no Shoprite. We still have to travel, we still have to pay taxis to do our groceries. (…) Soweto has improved but it could be better. I think Mofolo could be better. Much better. (Interview with an inhabitant of Mofolo North on 19 October 2015).

Whenever I asked people to describe a relevant change in Soweto after apartheid, almost invariably they alluded to the new malls, usually mentioning the sizeable Maponya Mall. In current Soweto, malls represent the clearest and nearest consumption site for many of the about one and a half million people that dwell in the township. In this regard, many inhabitants of the township assume that malls represent an improvement vis-à-vis the situation during apartheid. But there is another dimension to this situation. The new malls have led local marketers and small traders into bankruptcy.[157] Since the malls appeared, Sowetans have tended to stay within Soweto's boundaries, as people do not have to go elsewhere to shop.

It is unavoidable to think of the eruption of new malls and shopping centers all over Soweto and across other townships like Alexandra as a clear instance of capitalist expansion over the social space of these historically marginalized areas. At least since Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project* (2002 [1927-40]), we are capable of recognizing in places like department stores and malls the archetypal scenery of the commodity kingdom. Malls are cathedrals of (commodity) consumption. And it is good to mention here that some decades earlier Marx (2011 [1857-58], 2017 [1885]) had shown how consumption entails the realization of the surplus value commodities incarnate. As such, consumption is a key moment of the contradictory unity of production and realization characteristic of capitalist accumulation.

---

[157] Interviews conducted on 1 October, 2 October, and 20 October 2015.

*Picture 24 – Maponya Mall*



Source: The author, 2015.

*Picture 25 – Diepkloof Square Mall , Soweto*



Source: The author, 2015

Massive malls, billboards, and all other consumption claims are noticeable in the landscape of present-day Soweto. In addressing the expansion of commodities and their visibility in urban space, especially through advertising, but not only, Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 31) speaks of the colonization of urban space. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) argues that capitalism produces its own space, which, in the case of the mall, means too that it shapes landscapes of spectacularity. As Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 31, 1991 [1974]: 139-40) says, under capitalist rule, there is an ever-growing hegemony of vision, of the visible and the legible, to the detriment of other human senses, amidst which the city space is overpopulated by signs that invite consumption. But commodity exhibitionism does not mean factual acquisition. The malls are spectacularly there, the commodities and goods are there to be seen and sold, but not everybody in the township can afford them. Contemporary consumerism is not within everybody's range. Just like I have suggested earlier while discussing the economic situation of Damian's family, countless Sowetans must live within the limits of their modest purchasing power. Many others are almost entirely excluded from formal consumer markets, having to rely on their extended families and other solidarity networks. Many people spend their days sitting by the front door, in shebeens or wandering the streets. Many people in the township are unemployed or working in the informal sector. It is easy to come across people digging in the garbage across Soweto's streets. Every day, many street vendors establish themselves around Dobsonville Mall or Jabulani Mall. They offer a vast array of products and services, hairdressing, fruits, phones, plastic bathtubs, and so on. Amidst the street vendors, there is an uncountable number of beggars and youngsters who try to coax some money from buyers on their way out to their cars or the bus stops. In this sense, the new malls make evident how social stratification has been developing within Soweto. Malls are a sort of point of encounter between the several social layers of 'almost now now' Soweto. Social inequality meets and condenses around them. The contradictory unity of production and realization that characterizes the historical-geography of capitalism is evidenced in the starkest conceivable terms in the landscape of 'almost now now' Soweto: People made redundant to capital lie side-by-side spectacular consumerism.

Even if the connection between malls and consumption is quite evident, townships malls might be linked to production as well. Developments like Maponya Mall, Jabulani Mall, Dobsonville Mall, Diepkloof Square and Protea Glen, all of which lie within Soweto, and the Pan African Mall in Alexandra, relate to both surplus value realization

and surplus value production. The very construction of all these malls involves surplus value production and may be related to what Lefebvre theorized as the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]). Wage labor is exploited throughout their production and consumption (in the sense that a building has to be used for the surplus value produced during its construction be realized). Many workers are hired for the construction works, expansions, and reforms – architects, engineers, electricians, bricklayers, plumbers, and so on – and for the daily upkeep of buildings and overall infrastructure – gardeners, plumbers, security guards, cleaners and so on. Moreover, malls generate thousands of direct jobs in the township, ranging from administrators to salespersons to supermarket cashiers, from bank clerks to merchandising personnel to shop assistants, from public officers to cookers to bakers to waiters, and so on.

For both reasons – consumption and production – one consequence of township malls is to keep people within townships. The first time I heard an interpretation along these lines was during an informal conversation with a South African researcher and activist in my first weeks in South Africa in 2015.[158] She stated that the upper classes and white minorities alike want to keep the majority of Africans dwelling in townships, away from the northern suburbs. She mentioned that it all started with Southgate Mall, which was erected between Soweto and downtown Johannesburg as early as 1990. According to her, the construction of malls right inside townships in the 2000s and 2010s has simply reinforced the tendency. Even if this understanding seems too saturated by a sort of conspiracy theory, my fieldwork in South Africa corroborates that many Sowetans live their lives within the (vast) confines of the township. The sense of seclusion can be even stronger for the too many Sowetans who do not work – and unemployment is an intractable problem in contemporary Soweto.

We shall further address segregation patterns in a moment, in Chapter 8. In fact, we have almost progressed far enough to undertake our point-by-point comparison between favelas and townships. Before doing so, however, I would like to close this chapter by describing one of the first times I went to a township. A small group of locals steered me in the right direction when I stepped into Alexandra on 30 October 2013. Originally, I had organized the visit only with Anderson, a Sesotho-speaking neighbor that I had met at Marlboro train station a couple of days earlier. I had contacted only him

---

[158] Informal conversation on 2 October and 4 October 2015. Interviews conducted on 2 October, 3 October, 10 October and 24 October 2015, among many other interviews.

but he showed up with two more people.[159] For the duration of an afternoon, we went to several spots in the township, and the presence of Anderson's friends turned out to be useful for our circulation from one point to another (one of them was driving a car) and for our ability to access certain zones safely (Anderson's other friend was an isiZulu-speaking man and had a handgun on him). Everything went well and my short excursion ended at a well-known fast-food chain in one of the new malls on 1st Avenue. I had offered to buy some food for them and Anderson and the other two said that they wanted to go there. 'It was the best place ever,' our driver said with enthusiasm.[160] Together with the malls, global fast food chains like Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) and McDonalds have also found their place within the townships, and in their inhabitants' taste. This same man also commented on the importance of the Pan African Mall for Alexandra, as now people have to travel less far to shop. He recognized that it brought problems with it too. We were in the middle of a traffic jam when he said something like: 'The bad side of it is the traffic jams and robberies around the mall. Every evening it happens.'[161] Malls and their trademarks are now an irremediable part of township landscapes (see, again, pictures 24 and 25).

Soweto grew up surrounded by mines and succeeding mining dumps. Nowadays, most of the mines are gone, only a few of them remain open and functioning illegally, but the yellowish-colored mountains that make up the mine dumps are irremediably part of the landscape of the township (see picture 25, lower photo, again). Even without many of its old dusty roads, whenever the wind blows hard Soweto is sprinkled by the dust that comes from the mine dumps that surround it. Interestingly, those mountains of yellow sand, made by residues from past mining activities, residues from past times, are always in sight almost wherever you are in Soweto. Just like the green northern section of Johannesburg, which many South Africans very proudly brand 'the largest urban manmade forest in the world,' those inescapable yellowish mountains are manmade as well. From my point of view, there is an element of exaggeration in calling all that northern greenish landscape a 'forest,' but there is no doubt that the northern suburbs are

---

[159] Participant observation on 30 October 2013. I had first walked around Alexandra a few days earlier, on 19 October 2013, when I joined a group of workers in their walk back home from Sandton. That day, I only went to 1st Avenue, the area close to the Pan African Mall. I went back to the township on 26 October 2013, the day I met Anderson at the nearby Marlboro train station in his shift as an engine driver. On that day, I talked to Anderson about my idea of going to Alexandra and we arranged the visit that happened on 30 October 2015, when he had a day off.

[160] Informal conversation on 30 October 2013. Fieldwork note on 31 October 2013.

[161] Informal conversation on 30 October 2013. Fieldwork note on 30 October 2013.

covered with many green areas. Their quiet, clean and shady streets are in fierce contrast with most parts of Soweto. In any case, I think it would be hard to find someone that would be proud of the Mars-like landscape those mountains make up. Nevertheless, they are a space produced by humankind; they are material witnesses of human activities in shaping their world. They are reminders of previous power relations, domination, and exploitation. They are physical testimonies of townships' pasts. Shopping malls and billboards have come to add a new layer to previous township landscapes. They symbolize well the spirit of the latest chapter in their urban trajectories.

**Chapter 8 – Toward a Comparative Analysis of the Case studies: Exploring similarities and differences between favelas and townships**

In the introductory chapter, I mentioned that in this thesis I intend to compare the urban trajectories of Johannesburg's townships and Rio de Janeiro's favelas (Chapter 1). Nevertheless, how could we progress from the uniqueness of each case study and bring them together into direct dialogue? How shall I move forward with the comparative analysis of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships? My choice here is to start by establishing a point-by-point comparison around the recent transformation and contemporary condition of these tow urban settings. Any comparison entails the search for similarities and differences between case studies. Accordingly, the comparison will evolve through a selection of integrative themes that might facilitate our work of disentangling similarities and differences between our two cases: (a) Welfare expansion within the 'overall positive contexts' that have marked the recent history of Brazil and South Africa; (b) segregation patterns along race and class divides; (c) the contemporary locational attributes of favelas and townships; and, finally, (d) the manifestation of criminality in each of these two urban contexts of marginalization. We could refer to this as a kind of synchronic appraisal of the two case studies regarding (urban) development and (de)commodification.

The first of the four integrative research themes relates to a background similarity between the two case studies, namely, the recent expansion of welfare policies in Brazil and South Africa. While exploring this contextual commonality of our case studies, I shall have the opportunity to critically address recent debates about (de)commodification dynamics in Brazil and South Africa. Together with the urban trajectories of favelas and townships as historically marginalized urban spaces (see Chapter 1), recent welfare policies and the dynamics of (de)commodification are shared aspects among our case studies. Wacquant's (2008) study of 'advanced marginality' will be a background theoretical reference here again. On the other side, the comparison across the remaining three dimensions should help us to depict differences between favelas and townships. Thus, the latter three aspects of our point-by-point comparison of favelas and townships – segregation patterns, the locational attributes of favelas and townships, and criminality – shall help us in disentangling particularities entailed in recent (urban) development and (de)commodification. Even if the point-by-point comparison across these four, crosscutting, integrative themes clearly implies a certain degree of abstraction, I will rely

upon the qualitative data I produced during my fieldwork when suitable. The selection of these dimensions relies on the analysis of the data I produced in the field and on the consideration of the two case studies individually in the two previous chapters.

## 8.1. Welfare expansion, (de)commodification, and urban marginality

In his comparative study of 'advanced marginality,' Wacquant (2008) analyzes the ghettos of the United States and French *cités périphériques* at the close of the twentieth century. Despite marginality being a characteristic of these two urban contexts, one of Wacquant's main aims is to show that there is no convergence between them. According to him (2008: 2-5, 150, 272-76), the superficial similarities between ghettos and *banlieues* do not allow for the neglecting of structural and functional differences that emerge from the historical matrix of labor market, ethnoracial segregation, and state action characteristic of each society and metropolitan order they belong to. Wacquant portrays and discusses these differences drawing upon a diverse range of methodological resources, among them qualitative research. The French social scientist claims that, in spite of the damages of deindustrialization and the disconnection of macroeconomic growth from the attenuation of urban marginality, with the ugly prospect of structural unemployment materializing across the so-called 'advanced world,' urban marginality is decidedly more resilient in the hyperghetto of the United States than in the French *banlieues*. Even though deindustrialization and labor market retrenchment are common tendencies in both countries, Wacquant suggests that the welfare range and the ethnoracial and ethnonational diversity characteristic of French *banlieues* reveal the non-convergence of urban marginality on the two sides of the North Atlantic.

Wacquant (2008) explains the variegated urban marginality of the hyperghetto and the *banlieues* by the degree of retrenchment and dissolution of the welfare state, that is, by the extent of service cutbacks in social policies and their replacement by mechanisms of surveillance and control of the urban poor in the form of a 'penal state' (Wacquant, 2008: 276-79), something that came to be much more prominent in the United States than in Western Europe (Wacquant, 2009, 2013, 2014). In France, urban marginality has been attenuated by state structures and policies whereas, by contrast, in the United States, it has been aggravated by the same powers (Wacquant, 2008: 5). Wacquant (2008: 4) argues that in view of the sharper welfare reductions in the United States, and of the biased housing policies and narrow-minded regional planning that prevail in the country, the

extreme marginality of the hyperghetto is economically underdetermined and politically overdetermined. He maintains that 'the highly peculiar physical and demographic configuration of the urban purgatory that is the US hyperghetto is a political creature of the state' (Wacquant, 2008: 80). To put it briefly, Wacquant (2008: 6) sees the state as the main vector commanding the genesis and trajectory of urban marginality.

The intersection of welfare range and urban marginality has a very dissimilar configuration in Brazil and in South Africa. First of all, neither Brazil nor South Africa has ever developed powerful welfare state systems. Despite the existence of social policies, like those established by the authoritarian government of Getúlio Vargas in Brazil between the late 1930s and 1940s and the racially biased welfare policies of apartheid, none of the two countries has achieved even the ungenerous welfare state that the United States had instituted before the mid 1970s. As Costa (2002: 178-79; 2004: 90, 95-6) seems to suggest in his critical exchange with Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck, societal uncertainty and social insecurity are not precisely new developments but rather long-standing historical realities in most parts of the world. But what is perhaps more relevant is that precisely because of the non-existence of well-established welfare systems, Brazil and South Africa have not followed the route of welfare rollback in recent years but, instead going the way of welfare construction/expansion.

At a time in which the United States and many states in Western Europe have been cutting back on welfare expenditure, there has appeared to be a commitment to state-led redistribution in Brazil and South Africa.[162] This common trend in social policy is a background similarity between our two case studies that materializes within the 'overall positive contexts,' which, as we have seen before, stem from the successful resistance to oppressive regimes in Brazil and South Africa, providing some objective justification for the adoption of confident views about both countries (chapters 1 and 3). Therefore, amidst high levels of political participation, innovative policies – like participative urban planning – economic prosperity, and greater international recognition, the recent welfare expansion/construction in Brazil and South Africa suggests the reverse tendency of welfare shrinkage prevailing in the United States and Western Europe. The question then is in what manner the recent welfare expansion has affected urban marginality in Brazil

---

[162] Tillin and Duckett (2017), for instance, have collected papers that show that Brazil, China, India, and South Africa have expanding, not shrinking, welfare states. While dialoguing with Wacquant's work, Perlman (2010: 158-61) offers a similar view. She shows that Brazilian policies such as the *Bolsa Família* (Family Grant) and the *Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento* (PAC), the Growth Acceleration Program, meant welfare state expansion rather than welfare state withdrawal.

and South Africa.[163] How could the recent welfare policies be related to urban marginality in both countries? What consequences have they had for those living in places like Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships?

Some years ago, Jeremy Seekings (2010, 2011) advanced a provocative interpretation of race, class, and inequality in the contemporary South African city. After overviewing the creation and evolution of the ordered apartheid city, he describes the persistence of social inequality in contemporary South Africa, observing that 'the legacy of the past could not be undone overnight' (Seekings, 2010: 4). Despite acknowledging that South African cities have remained deeply segregated along racial lines (Seekings, 2010: 9-12), Seekings (2010, 2011) develops his central argument in a different way. In opposition to the relatively well-established view that the South African city has been subjugated by neoliberalism after apartheid, Seekings (2010: 6-8, 13-4) maintains that there has been decommodification in the South Africa city due to the expansion of welfare policies. He mentions government grants, non-contributory pensions, and the redistributive financing of public services as vectors of decommodification: 'The most important element of decommodification in South Africa is the government's set of social assistance programmes' (Seekings, 2010: 14). Seekings concludes by stating that, at the end of the day, decommodification has been in course in South Africa, having positive outcomes for poor urban dwellers. In his own words: 'there has been a widespread and rising decommodification of service provision for poor people in many parts of South Africa's major cities' (Seekings, 2010: 13). In short, despite South African public authorities' emphasis on 'cost recovery' and public-private partnerships (PPPs), Seekings maintains that 'there has been a massive improvement in services in poorer parts of the city, and this has not been funded along market principles' (Seekings, 2010: 14).[164]

Seekings's (2010, 2011) argument is far from uncontroversial. Patrick Bond (2000a, 2000b, 2004a, 2004b, 2011), for instance, has advanced the convincing interpretation that the South African state dismantled apartheid in order to embrace neoliberalism. But even if we are convinced by Seekings's interpretation, this does not mean that there are no problems with the recent welfare expansion in the country. In view

---

[163] Some studies indicate that Brazil has put forward better policies in form and outcomes, for instance, regarding city planning and informal settlements (see Huchzermeyer, 1999, 2004). My own words in this section will very likely reflect this kind of understanding. The comparative examination of recent public policies in Brazil and South Africa is beyond the scope of this thesis, however. I will limit myself to focusing on the intersections of recent welfare expansion with urban marginality and with (de)commodification.

[164] A couple of years later, Seekings (2015: 13-6) reworked this argument. I will keep the focus on his first formulation, however.

of our examination of Johannesburg's townships in Chapter 7, I would regard Seekings's (2010, 2011) judgment of the contemporary South African city as overly enthusiastic. We have seen in the previous chapter how transformation is clearly evolving in places like Orlando West, Diepkloof, Jabulani, and Pimville (Chapter 7). Even relegated areas within Soweto, like Mofolo, have seen improvements in service provision after apartheid. As a rule, we could say that transportation, street paving, electricity supply, garbage collection, health care, sport facilities, schooling, and other public amenities have been improved in historical townships vis-à-vis apartheid times. However, does this mean that decommodification has been finding a way amidst the neoliberal order? Does it mean that decommodification is at least possibly on the horizon? And, what happens with urban marginality?

At variance with what Seekings (2010: 6-8, 13-4; 2011: 1132-35) has maintained, my fieldwork in Soweto and Alexandra suggests that instead of decommodification there has been a deepening of commodification, and of correlated dynamics such as monetization and privatization, on the urban margins. Notwithstanding the expansion of welfare policies, which might be related to the (partial) decommodification of labor power (Esping-Andersen, 1990), several events signpost that commodification has taken root at the bottom portions of the urban order. While talking about commodification, I am not referring to the commodification of labor, which happened long ago in South Africa, but to the commodification of urban space, including peripherally located urban land, and of everything that comes to be on it (for details on this theoretical perspective, see chapters 4 and 5). Whereas many of the changes in townships landscapes indicate that development is on the way, we should not overlook that the private sector has been leading it all (Huchzermeyer, 2002, 2003, 2010, 2011, 2014).

We have examined in the previous chapter several changes in townships that may be connected to the expansion of (capitalist) markets in these territories of historical marginalization: From the privatization and monetization of service provision, to the commodification of heritage and poverty by the tourist industry, to the erection of massive malls and private-led housing developments, which means the production of space as a commodity. Here we observe a wider dynamic, common to cities of both the South and the North, that has been of central concern in the critical urban literatura: 'The commodifications in the housing markets of the world have opened up a vast field of capital accumulation through the consumption of space for social reproduction' (Harvey, 2014: 190). Besides, in this panorama, inasmuch as the urban poor see their probable

engagement in markets as consumers (of goods, electricity, water, housing… of the city), rights of citizenship appear to take the form of inclusion via consumption. And we should not forget either that consumption implies the realization of surplus value embodied in commodities (Marx, 2011 [1857-58], 2017 [1885]). In short, the recent transformation of townships, which includes (urban) development and involves welfare policies, indicates the expansion of capitalist relations into the everyday life of townships, not a reversal of commodification.

*Picture 26 – RDP housing*



Source: The author, 2013 and 2015.

On the other hand, my empirical data fully corroborates Seekings's (2010, 2011) arguments regarding the reproduction of social inequalities and the permanence of racial segregation in the South African city, which means that the recent welfare expansion has had little impact upon urban marginality and inherited segregation patterns. It is easy to realize this all when you stay for a while in a place like Mofolo. I will address this issue in a moment in the sections that follow. But before discussing the persistence of racial and class divides in Brazilian and South African cities, and even before turning to the evaluation of the recent welfare expansion in Brazil, I want to recall here that many people are still languishing at the bottom of the network of places that make up the unequal metropolitan order of contemporary Johannesburg. Despite all the massive improvements in services in poorer parts of Johannesburg and other South African cities, and notwithstanding the recent expansion of welfare policies in the country, when we go to the ground it is not difficult to realize that urban marginality remains an overpowering reality. The mushrooming of informal housing within historical townships conceivably epitomizes it (see, again, pictures 21 and 22 in Chapter 7, picture 26 above, and picture 30 further below).

More than two decades after the official end of apartheid, present-day inequalities in South African cities may not be explained exclusively by the legacy of the past. Instead, we should assume that postapartheid policies have been either reproducing the inequalities of the past or engendering new ones. For instance, living conditions can be really hard in postapartheid public housing projects, most of which have been erected within or next-door to historical townships, that is, on peripheral land. In some cases, public-housing schemes can resemble informal settlements considerably. In the upper photo and lower-left photo of picture 26 above, we see a temporary camp erected by public authorities on the borders of Alexandra. People living there were supposed to be assigned free-standing RDP houses. But it never happened. Instead they were given only small serviced plots and compelled to construct their homes with cheap materials.[165] The lower-right photo in picture 26 displays the streets of another RDP project in Kliptown, Soweto. Like other RDP housing areas across Soweto, such as Braamfischerville or Snake Park, there too, the dusty roads promptly recall the townships landscapes of the apartheid years.[166] The general standard of living in all these postapartheid public-housing schemes appears not to be so different from that of townships during racial segregation. Actually,

---

[165] Observation in situ and informal conversation on 26 October 2013.
[166] Participant observation on 24 October, 27 October, 31 October, and 1 November 2015.

some of my interviewees claim that it is worse now.[167] In a word, in spite of all recent welfare policies, social inclusion through consumerism is at most only a partial achievement. To say the least, contemporary townships reveal deep ambiguities, with the commodity kingdom flourishing side-by-side with urban marginality (Chapter 7).

Now let us have a look at welfare extension and its (dis)connections with urban marginality on the other side of the South Atlantic. I should probably start by mentioning the establishment of the poverty-targeting program *Bolsa Família* (Family Grant) in the early 2000s in Brazil. During the two first terms of Workers' Party rule, with Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva as the country's head (2003-2010), conditional cash transfers – social grants to low-income families, usually conditional on them attending to children's education or health – were expanded and consolidated into the program that come to be known as *Bolsa Família*. The *Bolsa Família* unified three former programs created by preceding administrations of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) and one program created by the Workers' Party itself. Widely credited for raising living standards in the country, the *Bolsa Família* turned out to be a significant source of income for millions of poor Brazilians. By the end of 2010, the nationwide program to fight poverty had already reached almost thirteen million families, with a clear focus on the poorest layers of Brazilian society (Paiva et al., 2013: 29). It has been regarded as one of the largest programs of its kind in the world (Sugiyama and Hunter, 2013; Langou, 2013). Together with the increase of wages and educational advances in the 2000s, the program fostered social justice and, above all, poverty alleviation in Brazil (see, for instance, Seekings, 2012b; Campello and Neri, 2013; Sugiyama and Hunter, 2013; Langou, 2013; Pereira, 2015; Maiorano and Manor, 2017).

In view of the expansion of welfare policies under the recent 'overall positive context,' debates about the emergence of 'new middle classes' have arisen in Brazil.[168] Neri (2009, 2012) and Neri and colleagues (2013), for instance, have suggested that programs like the *Bolsa Família* rescued millions from poverty, propelling them into the

---

[167] Interviews conducted on 27 October and 1 November 2015.

[168] The supposed emergence of 'new middle classes' fostered a series of debates in Brazil (see Souza, 2010; Neri, 2012; Pochmann, 2013; Tible, 2013). In South Africa, the 'new middle classes' has been a subject of great topical interest too (see, for instance, Selzer and Heller, 2010). In the South African case, we could surely mention the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and other affirmative action programs when approaching this issue. Seekings (2008) and Selzer and Heller (2010: 178) indicate that the postapartheid racial mixing in middle-class neighborhoods has likely been accelerated by policies such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), which provided non-white South Africans the potential economic means to move from historical townships into white middle-class areas. On the other hand, it is undeniable that racial segregation has persisted at the bottom of the South African city. Soweto, for instance, remains a 'black continent' to the south of downtown Johannesburg (see Chapter 7, along with the next section).

middle ranks of Brazilian society. On the other hand, critics have denounced the limits of social inclusion via participation in (capitalist) markets in a context in which labor exploitation has been neither abolished nor lessened but deepened (Jardim, 2009; Souza, 2010; Pochmann, 2011; 2013; Saad-Filho, 2015). As Jardim (2009) argues, the recent social inclusion via market expansion endeavors to realize the project envisioned by the Workers' Party of 'taming capitalism' in Brazil. In 2010, Lula praised himself for making capitalism work properly in Brazil.[169] The point is that while pursuing this project, commodification has not been curbed but enlarged at the bottom tiers of Brazilian society. In the end, Keynesianism and the welfare policies that may come along with it go hand in hand with economic growth and mass consumption. The likely upliftment of the poor in the social structure as consumers, rather than as citizens, via extemporaneous Keynesian-inspired counter-cyclical economics, generates aggregate demand, which, at best, means the promotion of mass consumption. To use the Marxian vocabulary again, recent changes in Brazil relate to the realization of surplus value.

In broad terms, recent Brazilian welfare expansion is analogous to that occurring in South Africa. Yet, to the best of my knowledge, nobody has claimed that there has been decommodification either in Brazilian cities or in Rio de Janeiro's favelas. And this is so despite the fact that, unlike in the case of Johannesburg's townships, the state has played a leading role in the recent transformation of Rio de Janeiro's favelas. Comparable to what has happened in South Africa, the expansion of (capitalist) markets into the everyday lifeworlds of the poorest Brazilians entails the enlargement of the commodity kingdom, not its annihilation. Moreover, welfare policies and other public interventions, like the PAC and the UPPs, have not ensured positive outcomes for all those inhabiting the bottom of the network of places that make up contemporary Rio de Janeiro. To say the least, recent policies have had ambiguous consequences. Thousands of people in the city have been victims of forced evictions and market-driven displacement in recent years because of development projects and urban upgrading in the city's favelas (Chapter 6). After a short on-site observation in Santa Marta, and in accordance with my own approach here (Chapter 6), Fleury (2012) has shown how the formalization of services and market relations have emerged together. In the context of recent (urban) development in Rio de Janeiro, the *asfalto* has been harassing the *morro*, making land and markets hitherto out

---

[169] See, for instance, http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/803607-brasil-era-um-pais-capitalista-sem-capitalismo-diz-lula.shtml [Accessed 13 April 2018].

of reach available for capitalist accumulation. Despite all improvements, general living standards are still low in most of Rio's favelas, with inherited segregation patterns being largely reproduced across the city.

*Picture 27 – Minha Casa, Minha Vida*, Cidade de Deus



Source: The author, 2014.

The residential supply and the opening of credit lines within the framework of the Brazilian housing program *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* (MCMV), 'My House, My Place', relate to an increasing process of monetization of social life and to the inclusion of the urban poor into the formal city not as citizens but as consumers, in this case, consumers of space. A handful of big real estate companies has produced the five million housing units for the program. In short, always in accordance with the Workers' Party ideal of 'taming capitalism,' housing has been produced and traded as a commodity. Furthermore, the vast majority of uniform housing erected under the umbrella of the program since its introduction in 2009 as a Keynesian-inspired counter-cyclical measure has been on cheap, underserviced, peripheral land, reinforcing, therefore, the unequal segregation pattern in Brazilian metropolises around the polarization between center and periphery (see, for instance, Maricato, 2009; Cardoso, 2013; Amore et al., 2015; Rolnik et al., 2015). The

broadminded urban legislation embodied by the *Estatuto da Cidade* (the City Statute), sanctioned in 2001, has done little to remedy the situation. Akin to the spatial pattern set during the wave of favela eradication policies of the 1960s and 1970s, Cidade de Deus and other far-flung quarters across Rio de Janeiro's metropolitan area, and in other Brazilian metropolises, have been beneficiaries of projects linked to the *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* program (see picture 27). Ribeiro (2016) goes as far as to suggest that twenty-first century Rio de Janeiro remains pretty much the same segregated metropolis that was engendered during the preceding century. He argues that, after the recent welfare expansion and economic prosperity of the 2000s, the double pattern of segregation based on 'social distance/territorial proximity' and 'social distance/territorial distance' characteristic of the city remains virtually untouched.

In sum, relying upon our case studies, we could surely suggest here that the recent welfare expansion in Brazil and in South Africa has not accomplished much by way of attenuating urban marginality, which may pose a problem for Wacquant's (2008) thesis concerning the state. I am completely sympathetic to his (2008: 6) idea that the state is a main power commanding the genesis and trajectory of urban marginality. The previous chapters indicate that this certainly applies to favelas and townships. Either by action or omission, the state has set up the general circumstances for the existence of townships and favelas from both outside and above.[170] However, in view of the recent transformation of favelas and townships, we could argue that Wacquant (2008) overestimates the state's capacity to cope with urban marginality.[171] Our cases suggest a disconnection not only of

---

[170] The dissimilar role of the state in the genesis and expansion of each of these two territories of urban marginalization is crucial here. In Johannesburg, the state comprehensively shaped the organization of urban space around race, whereas in Rio de Janeiro the action of the state was weaker and class prevailed over race in the organization of city space. In this sense, townships were not created by their own residents in the gaps of the land market but were created on the margins or beyond the city by state authorities precisely to cope with land occupations. Townships are a direct creation of the state while favelas emerged on the back of state power. As such, the original location of townships was mainly determined by the state whereas the location of favelas was mainly determined by the land market. In Johannesburg, the state placed most townships far away from the city, whose amalgamation led to the formation of Soweto. By contrast, in Rio de Janeiro, despite sporadic attempts to eradicate favelas, the state very often has neglected them, which has led to the present fact that some favelas have come to be situated side by side with upper- and middle-class neighborhoods. My experience of everyday life in Pavão-Pavãozinho and Mofolo contrasted significantly because of their different locational attributes. In the former, everything was close-by, with the city lying just a few minutes down the hill, whereas in the latter the only suitable way to get around was by taking the vans or minibus taxis. The sense of seclusion was clearly prevalent in Mofolo. For details, see chapters 6 and 7.

[171] Wacquant (2008) takes no notice of Lefebvre's work, particularly of Lefebvre's criticism of French postwar urbanism. Was the social housing of the French postwar period beautiful? Did it solve urban segregation? Did it offer a good life? Lefebvre (1972 [1968], 1978 [1968], 1991 [1974], 2002 [1970], 2008 [1972], 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) showed convincingly that that was not the case. It was no more than a creation of modern functionalism, no more than crude habitat: 'Machines for living in' (Lefebvre, 1991

the concrete dynamics of urban marginality from labor markets (and of macroeconomic growth cycles) – like Wacquant (2008) himself indicates – but also from welfare arrangements. Urban marginality still is an overwhelming reality in both favelas and townships.

If we tackle wider debates around (de)commodification while relying upon our two case studies, thereby seeking to theoretically extrapolate beyond the specificities of these cases, we could go as far as to suggest that even far-reaching welfare expansion, of which the introduction of a universal basic income is probably the most comprehensive proposal nowadays – a proposal to which Wacquant (2008: 7, 254-55, 279) subscribes – may not be enough to eradicate urban marginality. The reason for this is that improvements in service provision, urban development, housing, and welfare expansion might leave the underlying logic of the commodity untouched (Marx, 2011 [1857-58]; Jappe, 2016 [2003]), which ought to lead to the commodification of other dimensions of social life – land, city, heritage, everyday life, and so on (see Harvey, 2014).

As we have seen in Chapter 5, we should focus not only on the dual opposition between capital and labor. We need to take the third element, land, into account too. The potential decommodification of labor on its own does not mean any sort of comprehensive decommodification. The examination of the everyday life of favelas and townships allows us to claim that although there might have been a partial decommodification of labor with redistributive effects – in the ways Seekings (2010, 2011) has suggested for South Africa – commodification pushes have evolved in other realms of social life. Unless we can somehow tackle the uneven development of the capitalist economy (Smith, 2010 [1984]), which triumphs in our cities, measures like basic income, traditional welfare policies, progressive housing policies, local urban development, and leftist urban planning might end up doing little more than enlarging (capitalist) markets with all the socio-spatial contradictions this usually implies. Without the end of the imperative of endless growth, welfare reforms will do little good for the urban poor. Another problem is that colonial legacies and racial divisions might remain virtually untouched.[172]

---

[1974]: 303, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 248, 372-3, 605). The experience in the global North shows that, at most, the state (re)shapes segregation but does not end it.

[172] Incidentally, one of the most intriguing gaps in Wacquant's (2008) approach is that he is completely attentive to racial discrimination and stigmatization but ends up advocating for an eminently economic and monetary measure: Basic income.

## 8.2. Segregation patterns: The race–class axis

Unlike what happened in South Africa (and the United States), in Brazil, after the abolition of slavery in 1888, there have never been racially based laws nor straightforwardly racial segregationist urban planning initiatives. Actually, there were times when, while in South Africa (and the United States) racial segregation was institutionalized and enforced by law; in Brazil, there were laws against racial discrimination (Skidmore, 1993 [1974]). However, this does not mean that there has not been either racism or racial separation in the Brazilian city. Nothing could be more wrong. The porousness of the Brazilian racial order does not negate the existence of either racism or racial separation. As Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes (1959), Florestan Fernandes (1965), and Abdias do Nascimento (1950, 1978, 1982 [1968]) have argued, the myth of racial democracy is in fact nothing more than a myth. Many other scholars have shown that racial prejudice and racial inequalities have remained vigorously alive under the veil of legal equality (Schwarcz, 1993; Telles, 1995, 1999; Munanga, 1996; Guimarães, 1996, 2002; Costa, 2002). Even though in the legal-formal realm there may be some norms and institutions endowed with more or less equal rights of citizenship, racial inequalities exist and are reflected in the Brazilian urban landscape. Abdias do Nascimento (1982), writing at the end of the 1960s, was among the first to point out how the conditions of the Brazilian social structure ended up benefiting the white elite while cornering Afro-Brazilians in the Brazilian city, driving them away into the doomed reality of the favelas. He argued that precisely in Rio de Janeiro residential segregation reached its highest point (Nascimento, 1982: 79). The very constitution of Rio's favelas can be hardly delinked from the end of slavery in 1888. Racial homogeneity is not precisely the reality on the margins of the unequal Brazilian city, however. In addition, racial discrimination should not be explained (exclusively) by the legacies of slavery and previous racial inequalities (Costa, 2002: 132).

From a historical viewpoint, Rio de Janeiro's favelas could be depicted as a well-known space of urban poverty in the city, with class being the leading element behind their genesis and evolution (see Chapter 6). It is true that poverty can be discursively conflated with determinate racial or phenotypic features, which very often goes hand in hand with the stigmatization of the urban poor. Despite the complete inaccuracy of these kinds of understandings, I would say that they have framed the social imaginary about

Rio's favelas inhabitants repeatedly.[173] Be that as it may, it is also problematic to fully separate class and race while examining Brazilian urban milieus. For instance, it is difficult to detach the origins of Rio's favelas from historical events that have an obvious racial component, such as the abolition of slavery (see Chapter 6). Granting all that, what needs to be pointed out here is that Rio's favelas have provided shelter for the lower strata of the population and have consolidated as a space of multiracial concurrence on the margins of the formal city. The situation is quite different for the many townships that make up Soweto. In this case, race surely comes to the fore over class. Racial homogeneity was forced upon township residents from the beginning by the state (see Chapter 7). Thus, from a historical point of view, while Rio de Janeiro's favelas, although in many cases less heterogeneous originally, have evolved toward configurations that are more diverse regarding race and class; in townships such as Soweto and Alexandra, class diversity progressed a long time within the overpowering framework of racial segregation. Perhaps the question now is to try to illuminate how such dissimilar segregation patterns historically constituted have been affected – if ever – in each one of the two urban contexts in recent times. Let me try to do it from my fieldwork and by focusing on the racial side of the axis.[174]

Every time I went out on my own through the streets of Mofolo North, I had the odd sensation that all eyes were on me.[175] People used to turn their necks to look at me when I was walking the streets of the township. My earliest sensation was that there was something 'wrong' with me.[176] I assumed that the reason for all that was that I was too visibly an outsider. Whether I liked it or not, it was just not possible to go unnoticed. Straightaway, I pondered if my irremediable 'prominence' might possibly be a problem to me. Fortunately, before long, I realized that this would not be the case. After more than

---

[173] Despite the fact that stigma always relies upon biased representations that do not do justice to social reality, it is usually built up from determinate aspects of the social. In this case, the partial coincidence between class and race in the social space of Rio's favelas is turned into an unconditional overlapping: Favelas are depicted as black spaces, dangerous places, inhabited by black people that are dangerous classes too, and so on. For more about the social imaginary around Rio de Janeiro's favelas see Valladares, 2005.

[174] I am focusing on race here because I address class in other parts of this thesis (see chapters 5 and 6). See also the next section about locational attributes. Moreover, it is probably good to clarify that, while developing my reasoning here, I do not subscribe to any essentialist notion of race. Although race very often involves the consideration of phenotypic features, it is always a social construction. On the other hand, it does exist and those being categorized into a determinate racial category in daily life situations may suffer discrimination because of this. Race in itself is a sort of fiction that has material consequences for those classed in one race or another, however. Costa (2002: 125, 132), for instance, mentions how dark-skinned individuals are systematically disadvantaged in Brazilian society.

[175] Participant observation between September and November 2015.

[176] Fieldwork note on 30 September 2015.

one month of living in the township, I came to understand the precise sense in which I was seen by local people. Following an interview, a Mozambican migrant and inhabitant of Mofolo since the 2000s stated that he that he saw me walking around nearby Ikwezi Station a few weeks earlier.[177] Paulo said that at that moment he became a little disconcerted. The fifty-two-year-old man's first thought was that I ought to be lost there. Paulo meant that he assumed that I ought to be on my way to somewhere else. Paulo said that at that moment he asked himself why a 'white guy' would be walking around such a place by himself. What for? For Paulo, I did not fit into that context. Paulo's words help to apprehend the extent to which senses of place are still largely racialized in current South Africa. My incurable noticeability in the township had something to do with my skin color.

The idea that I was out of place was expressed during my first days in the township.[178] I was sitting by the door of my backyard room in the afternoon while another tenant greeted me on his way back home. 'Come on, you can find something better for yourself,' asserted the man.[179] Daniel said it in a friendly way, like always, with a smile on his round face. Nevertheless, he made his point clear: A 'white guy' must be able to afford something better than a modest backyard room in Mofolo. Locals regard the township as a place in which a white person habitually does not search for shelter because whites are supposed to be capable of affording better-off housing.[180] This idea emerged during many interviews that I conducted with Sowetans. On another occasion, when I was walking back home from the taxi rank a few blocks down my street, an old man expressed how proud he was of me, how proud he was of seeing 'a person like myself' walking up that very street. [181] The old man must have thought that I was South African because, at first, he addressed me in Afrikaans. But, again, to see a light-skinned person, that is, 'someone like myself,' in that particular part of Soweto is fairly uncommon.

There is some degree of racial diversity in postapartheid Soweto. In middle-class areas like Moroka, Pimville or Orlando West there are many Indian and Asian shopkeepers and even a few white residents. The ethnographical study conducted by Krige (2011, 2012) in Moroka in the 2000s exemplifies this well. Notwithstanding all

---

[177] Informal conversation on 25 October 2015.
[178] Observation participation and informal conversation on 28 September 2015.
[179] Fieldwork note on 29 September 2015.
[180] The point emerged, for instance, during the interviews I conducted on 1 October, 4 October, and 17 October 2015 with Soweto's dwellers.
[181] Participant observation and informal conversation on 4 October 2015.

that, it is hard to claim that racial diversity is characteristic in current Soweto. While living in Mofolo in 2015, I never came across a white South African in that outlying area of Soweto. This is a rather trivial observation, but it might have more meaning than one initially thinks. It suggests that even though, since the final days of apartheid, there have been black South Africans that have left the townships for areas previously intended exclusively for whites, there have been very few white South Africans – if any – moving into places like Mofolo. In addition, the many migrants from other African countries like Somalia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, among whom are Paulo and other informants of this study, illuminate Soweto's current diversity: The vast majority of migrants coming from African countries and settling in townships can be categorized as blacks according to criteria that currently prevail in South Africa, that is, most of them recognize themselves as blacks and are categorized as such by Sowetans.[182] Diversity is shaped by race. Many poor people are still living in monoracial neighborhoods in which interracial contact is fairly uncommon.

This sense of racial homogeneity applies even to new areas envisioned for the so-called new middle classes. Attending a wedding in Protea Glen made this palpable to me.[183] While the bridegroom's uncle, who had taken me there, was busy introducing me to people, including children and youngsters, he expressed how my presence glorified the event.[184] The old man, Eugene, seemed very grateful. I let him know that his words were an exaggeration. Eugene explained that it was very important for the new generations to see 'a white person' in the township at a Zulu wedding.[185] The truth is that, again, I was the only light-skinned person around.[186] Without intending to provide an exhaustive analysis of the dismantling of racial segregation after apartheid here, altogether, the data coming from my everyday experiences in Soweto points to the strong persistence of inherited segregation patterns. Overall, it corroborates the statistics at hand about how

---

[182] Maybe it is good to remark here that, as we have seen before, Paulo perceived me as a 'white guy' just like in my eyes he seemed to be a Soweto-born person. I would say that most of the migrants in townships coming from African countries could be categorized as blacks according to criteria that currently prevail in South Africa. All three migrants from Mozambique interviewed saw themselves as black (interviews conducted on 25 October, 30 October, and 2 November 2015). One of them said that the whites from his country, many of which are Portuguese expats, do not reside in Soweto, instead choosing other areas of Johannesburg such as around Observatory (interview conducted on 30 October 2015).

[183] Participant observation and informal conversation on 31 October 2015.

[184] Fieldwork note on 4 November 2015.

[185] The man confirmed that the importance my presence there had to do with the fact that I was 'white.' Participant observation and informal conversation on 31 October 2015.

[186] Participant observation and informal conversation on 31 October 2015. Fieldwork note on 4 November 2015.

little historical townships have changed their racial composition since the end of apartheid. Available data show that the overwhelming majority of Soweto's population is still categorized as 'Black African.'[187] Two decades after the end of apartheid, and of the end of policies of systematically separating people on the basis of their race/ethnicity, racial segregation remains strong in Soweto's everyday life.

The segregation pattern apartheid secured decades ago (see Chapter 7) remains largely effective for masses of people inhabiting places at the bottom of the urban order. The former highly racialized segregation pattern has continued with the city's recent expansion toward an extended, disjointed, and non-dense metropolitan region (Murray, 2008, 2011). Johannesburg's recent growth, which comprises the construction of numerous new neighborhoods, retains the racial divide at the same time it promotes segregation along class lines. Soweto and most of Johannesburg's townships are still distant locations on the outer rims of one of the poles of a vast and non-dense metropolitan region that has come to be more and more divided across a north–south axis (Murray, 2008, 2011). As Seekings (2012) has suggested, the reproduction of old patterns of racial segregation in completely new historical circumstances suggests the existence of a neoapartheid city rather than a proper postapartheid city. Soweto is still lived as a place apart.

The vortex between class and racial divides has a different character in the context of Rio de Janeiro's favelas. Without any doubt, racial segregation in the space of the Brazilian city does exist, but it is also true that it has been muscularly modulated by class. In 2014, Pavão-Pavãozinho's residents perceived me as someone from elsewhere, but, unlike in Mofolo, this had nothing to do with skin color or other phenotypical features. Multiracial coexistence is quite apparent in the day to day of Rio de Janeiro's favelas. So much so that it is often taken for granted. Race remains a hidden issue. During an interview conducted with a resident of the Santa Marta favela, the issue was unexpectedly broached. Carlos, a thirty-seven-year-old Afro-Brazilian man, nodded his head toward some children that were playing soccer in front of us in a small square between the houses of the favela. Then he pointed at one of the children: 'Do you see that little guy there? Do you see? The skinny white one. Do you see that nobody messes with him? So, he is the

---

[187] In 2011, more than ninety-eight per cent of Soweto's population consisted of 'Black Africans.' Mofolo North's figures echo those for Soweto as a whole. More than ninety-nine per cent of the 13,000 inhabitants of Mofolo North are categorized as 'Black Africans' (Stats SA, 2011).

prince of the hill.'[188] Without fully understanding what Carlos was referring to, I asked for a clarification. I asked Carlos if what he had said was connected to the child's skin color. Clearly amused, Carlos answered that what he meant was that the father of that boy is the 'owner of the hill,' that is, the boss of the drug trade in the favela. I pressed the point by asking if the kid's father was from the northeast region of Brazil, to which Carlos answered with an assured yes. For Carlos, the point in question had nothing to do with the child's skin color and rather pertained to his family bonds – although he had referred to the racial issue while using the expression 'the white one.'

A substantial portion of the contemporary residents of Rio de Janeiro's favelas comes from the huge contingent of poor migrants sidestepping regions plagued by the drought in the northeast region of Brazil. Many of the migrants from northeastern Brazil that established themselves in the main industrial hubs of the southeast region of the country from the 1930s onward, mainly in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, are not Afro-descendants. Indeed, northeast emigration has been composed of various racial groups encompassing many racial categories that apply in Brazil: Afro-Brazilians, mulattos, and whites.[189] This enormous migration flux is a concrete and important component of the interpenetration of class and race in the social space of Rio de Janeiro's favelas. Today northeastern migrants are well integrated into the daily life of the favelas, and have consolidated positions in them. Ms. Aparecida's relations of kinship and friendship of elucidate this. The woman, one of the oldest residents of Pavão-Pavãozinho, already has three generations of northeastern godchildren. She said that when the first of them arrived on the hill, more than half a century ago, there were no whites on the hill, but that, since then, they have been coming and going without stopping.[190] Today they are indisputably part of the place. Ms. Aparecida mentioned that to all those people, to all of them, men, women, boys and girls, she professes an enormous affection.[191] She had them as part of her family. Ties between Ms. Aparecida and her godchildren were strong. The reciprocal support in the difficulties of daily life and the parties and joint celebrations testify to the

---

[188] Interview conducted on 25 October 2014.

[189] It is worth clarifying that neither northeastern migrants nor their descendants were protagonists in the migratory policies of whitening that were promoted by the Brazilian state. The vast majority of European immigrants who, within the framework of whitening policies, immigrated and settled in Brazil, did so decades before the massive internal emigration from the northeast. European immigrants came to Brazil, especially in the final decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, and, in addition, had as a destination the south and southeastern regions of the country. For a comprehensive analysis of the formation of the northeastern people of Brazil, see Darcy Ribeiro's (2008: 306-29) classical book *O Povo Brasileiro* (*The Brazilian People*).

[190] Interview conducted on 16 September 2014.

[191] Informal conversation and fieldwork note on 15 October 2014.

strength of these bonds. Many of the northeastern migrants living in Pavão-Pavãozinho arrived there in the 1940s and 1950s. Today they are fully integrated into the favela. Nowadays Pavão-Pavãozinho is predominantly occupied by poor migrants from the underprivileged and arid northeast region of Brazil, many of which may be classified as whites according to Brazilian standards. As when chatting with Carlos about the children playing soccer in the small square in Santa Marta, so too did my conversations with people like Ms. Aparecida in Pavão-Pavãozinho throw up deeper indications of the current multiracial character of Rio's favelas.[192]

Nonetheless, as I have already said, we should not assume the multiracial order that usually characterizes places at the bottom of the metropolitan order as a resolute proof of racial equality. Internally, favelas' racial coexistence is not always peaceful or free from prejudice. For instance, it is common to hear verbal abuse with racial connotation in the everyday life of favelas, such as '*preto desgraçado*' (miserable nigger) or '*paraíba cabeçudo*' (bigheaded Paraiba-born person), sometimes uttered in a jolly tone.[193] Social stratification in Brazilian cities has been strongly hierarchical and persistent throughout history. In denouncing the myths around the racial democracy and whitening policies in Brazil, Florestan Fernandes (1966: 26) maintained that it is erroneous to see in the racial mixing in Brazil an index of social integration, fully accomplished racial fusion, or societal equality, precisely because race relations have always been strongly shaped by socioeconomic stratification. As such, currently, both people with a northeastern background and Afro-Brazilians suffer either from racism or from the stigma of living in favelas. The stigmatization and discriminatory treatment of the residents of Rio's favelas, whether they are Afro-Brazilians or not, is a persistent reality. The heterogeneous racial composition of Rio's favelas also does not mean that their residents are not discriminated against or criminalized in the space of the city. For example, two young men from Pavão-Pavãozinho declared that they thought it was better not to say where they live during job interviews. 'If you say you live in here, they do not choose you anymore,' one of them

---

[192] This goes against the 'myth of racial homogeneity' of Rio's favelas, which has been mobilized by both the cinema and the tourist industry. 'In contrast to the common but inaccurate conflation of favela, racial homogeneity, and Afro-Brazilian culture, I think it is worth mentioning that, Pavão-Pavãozinho's neighbors did not usually sing sambas or chop African drums, nor did they practice Candomblé, nor other Afro-Brazilian religions. To this day, I have not heard a single samba in the favela. The predominant musical styles are the *forró* and *brega* [both typical in the northeast region of Brazil]. In the religious field, I found myself with many more Neo-Pentecostal prayers than any other believer expression…' (Fieldwork note on 30 October 2014).

[193] Participant observation and fieldwork note on 31 October 2014.

told me.[194] The heterogeneous racial composition of Rio's favelas does not mean that their inhabitants are not discriminated or criminalized in the space of the city.

Whereas favela youths suffer stigma by being *favelados*, poor young Afro-Brazilians are targeted as suspects by police in the city's streets and other public spaces. Fábio, a young Afro-Brazilian man, expressed this clearly while narrating an episode in which he was going to the internationally-known Ipanema beach with two white friends, all of them inhabitants of Catagalo: 'Everyone was dressed up the same way, you know, shirtless, only in beach sandals and shorts... They picked me… That is why I say they [the police] come after us, blacks. In the *asfalto* [asphalt, the formal city], a black *favelado* is always targeted by the police, I mean, eh… You are treated worse than a white *favelado*. Everyone knows that.' Even while *morro* and *asfalto* lie side-by-side, in visible contrast in the complex geography of the city of Rio de Janeiro – which means that for many *favelados* the famous beaches of Copacabana and Ipanema, shops, services, bus stops, schools, hospitals, pharmacies, and job opportunities, lie just some steps down the hill – the criminalization of the favela and its residents happens all over the (almost-exclusively white) formal city.[195] As for that, it is enough to remember the regrettable cancellation proposals for bus lines that connect some of the peripheries to the southern part of the city in 2015. Passengers of these buses suffered indiscriminate police raids on buses and beaches in the south zone of the city. From a perspective that often articulates belonging and place-making in quite restrictive ways, Brazilian society tacitly accepts a logic that when made explicit out would be: 'Let us keep these marginal blacks away in their favelas! They do not belong here in the city.'

From the perspective of the everyday experiences of favela and township inhabitants, one comes to understand that race is still very much at stake in the structuration of everyday life in Brazil and South Africa. Thus, even though at the legal level there are now norms and institutions endowed with equal rights of citizenship, and even if policies of affirmative action have been introduced in Brazil and South Africa, racial inequalities still exist and are intentionally and unintentionally replicated and systemically reproduced in South African and Brazilian urban milieus. Even if there have been changes in the race-class axis in Brazil and South Africa in recent times, Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg have followed parallel trajectories regarding segregation

---

[194] Interviews conducted on 20 October and 21 October 2014.

[195] As I have indicated earlier, the favela-neighborhood dichotomy that characterizes the geography of Rio de Janeiro is locally expressed by the terms *morro* and *asfalto* (hill and paved street).

patters. Despite the end of apartheid in the 1990s in South Africa and the series of leftist governments in the 2000s and 2010s in Brazil, urban segregation along racial lines still characterizes cities in both countries. Everything points to the fact that the recent political steadiness, economic prosperity, and the expansion of welfare policies in Brazil and South Africa has had no more than a tangential influence in reducing the enormous class and racial divides that still characterize cities in the two countries.

Favelas and townships may occupy homological positions in their respective urban contexts – as the bottom edges of the unequal material and symbolic network of places that make up their respective metropolitan orders, to use Wacquant's (2008: 203) expression – but favelas and townships have quite diverse racial compositions. In Rio de Janeiro, poor districts, among which are the near one thousand favelas in and around the city, are mainly occupied by non-whites – which does not mean, however, that they are inhabited exclusively by Afro-Brazilians – while the residential areas of the upper-classes are spaces occupied virtually exclusively by whites. The reverse is valid for Johannesburg's townships inasmuch as very few whites have settled in them while at the same time better-off Africans have left the townships behind. In this case, while Johannesburg's middle- and upper-class neighborhoods are now increasingly multiracial – that is, there are households of several races living side-by-side in them – the city's historical townships are still largely racially homogeneous.

In sum, fieldwork in Rio's favelas and Johannesburg's townships suggests that there is a significant discrepancy between any sort of postracial rhetoric and the everyday life of people inhabiting marginalized urban areas in Brazil and South Africa.[196] Although differently arranged, racial divides persist in both cases, affecting how place is experienced and lived. And, whereas it is crucial to understand how both institutional and everyday nonracial discourses work to erase or obscure the power relations of race and, thus, enable race to persist, one needs to note as well that, in both contexts, nowadays,

---

[196] It is true that it is hard to link this debate straightway with either favelas or townships. The postracial discourse became visible in the United States in the context of the presidential election of Barack Obama in 2008. The notion has been shaping public policies and rendering debates around race in the United States outdated. On the other hand, even if the recent post-racial rhetoric has only barely echoed in Brazil and South Africa, I would risk suggesting here that both countries have bent comparable understandings. Despite the existence of alternative views that do take racial discrimination and racism into account in both countries, Brazil and South Africa share, in their own ways, the project of a society where conflicts around race are somehow circumvented. In fact, the idea that Brazil is a 'racial democracy' dates back to the first half of the twentieth century, what perhaps makes it the utmost example that by merely avoiding racial categories we do not create a society free from racism. In South Africa, Nelson Mandela's election in the mid 1990s and the move away from apartheid's oppressive racial regime propelled a new national self-understanding, that one of the 'rainbow nation,' which may share elements with the post-racial.

racial segregation is a persistent reality increasingly imposed by economic and class dynamics. Both of these intertwined forces must be taken into account for the effort that still needs to be made to produce an urban realm genuinely free of racial division. Even though differently configured and in transformation, *de facto* racial segregation is a vivid reality in both favelas and townships.

## 8.3. Locational attributes and (urban) development: Successive displacement? Perpetual seclusion?

I have shown in the previous chapters that both Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships have experienced both (urban) development and commodification in recent times (chapters 6 and 7). In Johannesburg, the private sector has driven urban transformation in townships, whereas in Rio de Janeiro's favelas the public sector has played a leading role. I have already argued in chapters 6 and 7 – and in the preceding sections of this chapter – that recent economic prosperity in Brazil and South Africa, and the associated process of (urban) development, have had ambivalent consequences for the everyday life of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. But what I want to highlight here is that, if we bring the two case studies together, we should realize that outcomes vary substantially across favelas and townships. The outcomes of (urban) development have been dissimilar across these two contexts of urban marginalization, with the expansion of markets having more unsettling effects for many people living in Rio de Janeiro's favelas than for those inhabiting Johannesburg's townships.

The worst consequence for the urban poor accompanying the recent transformation of Rio de Janeiro's favelas is the threat of being expelled from good locations toward peripheral zones in the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro. Both infrastructure construction/upgrading and the increasing price of land have put many favela dwellers under the threat of compulsory displacement (see Chapter 6). Conversely, forced evictions and gentrification have not been main consequences of the recent (urban) development of Johannesburg's townships. Rather, in this case, urban seclusion, that is, isolation from the rest of the city, appears to be a far more significant effect of recent (urban) development for many people in 'almost now now' Soweto (see Chapter 7). For different reasons, from pervasive unemployment and extended material deprivation to the current availability of services within the township, many Sowetans spend their days

within the confines of the township. Even if this seclusion is more debatable in the case of Alexandra, it is a genuine reality for many people dwelling in one of the several townships that make up Soweto (Chapter 7). Now, while approaching the locational attributes of favelas and townships comparatively, I shall seek an explanation for the dissimilar consequences of recent (urban) development in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships.

Urban transformation is usually incremental and, indeed, it encompasses material and symbolic dimensions. I will emphasize the material aspect of it here, which is certainly bound to the symbolic one. I have already shown that Rio de Janeiro's self-built favelas and Johannesburg's planned townships are not ahistorical but dynamic territories that have undergone substantial transformations over time (chapters 6 and 7). The same fully applies to the conurbations they belong to, namely, Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg. Accordingly, urban transformation relates to two interconnected underlying forces: Firstly, improvements/changes that happen within a given territory that is part of the broader city and, secondly, changes concerning what could be called the extended network of places that together makes up the urban fabric. We must encompass both of these dynamics – locally-based and citywide – if we want to understand the contrasting consequences of recent (urban) development for those inhabiting Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. If we are to follow Marx's (2017 [1894]) terminology in the third volume of *Capital*, the former aspect relates broadly to what Marx conceptualizes as differential rent II (DRII) and the later to what he designates as differential rent I (DRI).

The kind of transformation I have mentioned previously that recalls Marx's DRII could be named 'locally based change', as it depends strongly on improvements that take place within a given neighborhood. It occurs, for example, when people living in a given district experience upward social mobility and decide to stay there and 'invest' in the locality by either improving their houses or opening business activities or struggling for the betterment of the neighborhood. In addition to incremental improvement, locally based transformations can also occur more rapidly, for instance, via public policies.

In this case, the territory in question might undergo wide-ranging upgrading – which we might wish to call 'urban development' – in a relatively short lapse of time. Improvement may occur in several domains: the physical infrastructure, for instance, road paving and public lighting; basic services provided in the neighborhood, such as garbage collection, water and electricity supply, housing, schooling, policing, transportation and

health facilities; and other activities available in the area, ranging from commercial activities to job opportunities. This face of urban development – that is, in situ infrastructural/service upgrading – usually has a strong bearing on the locational attributes a given neighborhood acquires within the extended network of places that constitutes the urban fabric. It changes the immediate conditions of life in the neighborhood for the better. But improvements in a given neighborhood may lead to growing land prices linked to market dynamics that, even if regulated and occasionally mitigated by other measures, tend to confine the poorest to localities where service provision and infrastructure is worse and the price of land is lower.

The other aspect of urban transformation, the one that resembles Marx's DRI, is eminently relational because it depends largely on how the city as a whole goes through transformations, which in our two case studies means to think of the huge twin processes of industrialization and urbanization that made Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg the vast metropolises that they are today. Relational transformations come about always vis-à-vis other parts of the city and are common when we observe how a given city grows into a metropolitan conurbation. In this case, a particular neighborhood may remain relatively unchanged internally or may engage in slow and gradual modifications (which was the case in most Rio's favelas and Johannesburg's townships until fairly recently), but areas outside or around it may undergo a deeper transformation. Therefore, a place that started out as a peripheral location on the city's fringe may become a central location over time as a consequence of either urban growth or the expansion of transportation networks. It is perhaps not too much to remember here again that, unlike the majority of goods, in capitalism, the exchange value of urban land, or better, the price plots of land receive in the land market, is almost completely relational, in such a way that real estate market price is established on the basis of a variety of networks, uses, and activities adjacent to the plot of land in question and in which it is relationally embedded and is part of (Smith, 2010 [1984]: 184).

Now let us turn to our two case studies. First, it is worth recalling that in Rio de Janeiro the slow and fragmentary improvements that the favela dwellers themselves have made, sometimes over the timespan of generations, is a relevant source of local change (Chapter 6). Even though favelas are spaces that habitually experience gradual change and are always in the making, they show improvements over time. Consequently, most of Rio's consolidated favelas are superior now than they were three, four, or five decades ago in terms of infrastructure and service provision. It is true that new problems such as

308

densification have arisen too. The situation is analogous in the many historical townships that make up Soweto or in Alexandra: Despite signs of progress after apartheid, particularly regarding infrastructure and service provision, housing conditions are dire for many in the new informal settlements or even in RDP housing. The presence of entrenched inequalities is such that, despite the progressive betterment of immediate living conditions, in general terms, Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships exhibit severe levels of deprivation both in absolute and relative terms. Thus, we should not forget the scale and pace of urbanization in Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg and the wider context in which it happened – colonialism and the end of slavery in Brazil; colonialism, racial segregation, and apartheid in South Africa; and industrialization under (dependent) capitalism in both cases. I will come back to urbanization and other key research topics in the critical literature in urban studies, such as the production of space, in Chapter 9, but for now I wish to further pursue the dynamics of urban change.

While examining how favelas and townships have developed, we need to also engage with how Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro have changed. Rio de Janeiro is a city polarized across a center–periphery axis, showing a complex pattern of segregation that amalgamates territorial distance and social distance. As Ribeiro (2016) argues, socio-spatial divisions in Rio de Janeiro have indeed a double character – social distance/territorial proximity and social distance/territorial distance – that result from relations of social, economic, and political power. Often this spatial configuration manifests itself by the stigmatization of favela inhabitants in the city's space (see the previous section). The urban growth of Rio de Janeiro has progressively amalgamated certain favelas into good locations within the city, which means that many of them are not as peripheral nowadays as they had been in the past. The pattern of urban segregation is visibly distinct in Johannesburg. Johannesburg follows the center–periphery segregation pattern more sharply, which is due, to a large extent, to apartheid planning and comprehensive segregation (Chapter 7). In a situation of territorial and social distance regarding 'better-off' parts of the city, most townships are placed to the South of downtown Johannesburg – which has itself seen a significant decay from the 1980s onward.

*Picture 28 – Locational attributes of favelas and townships*
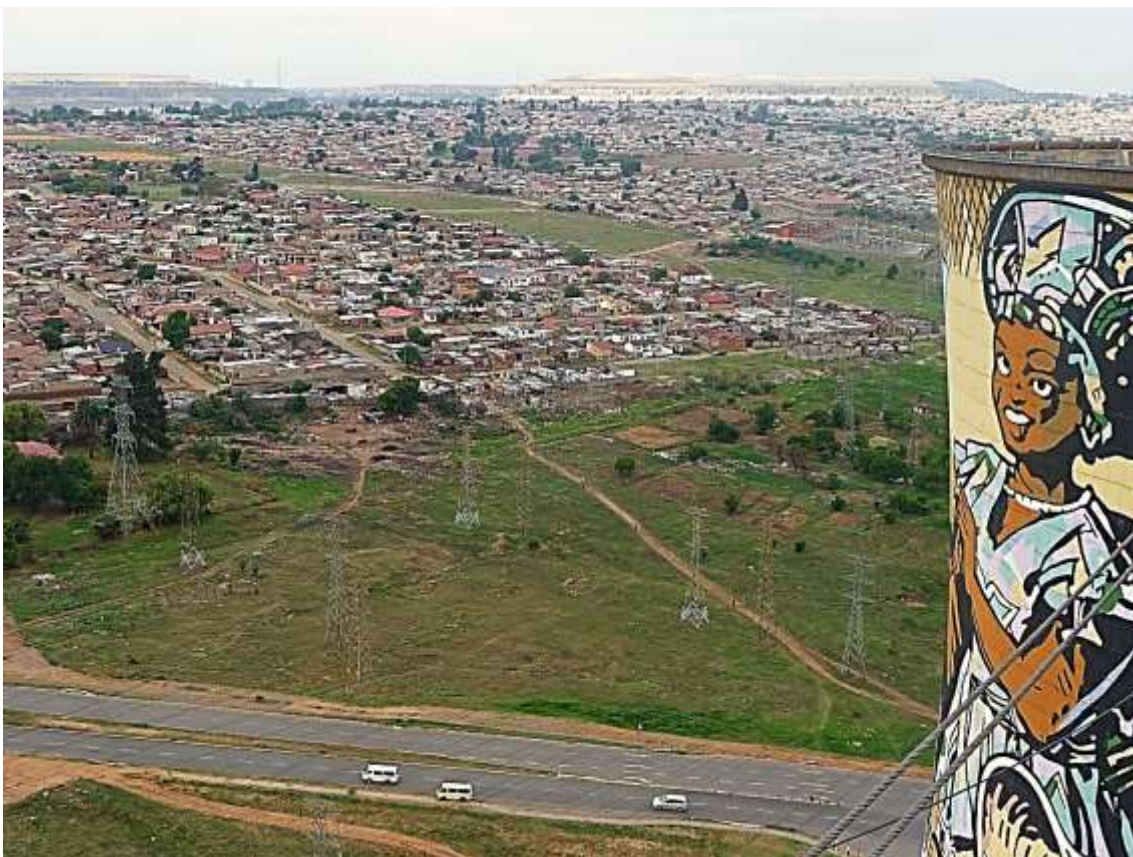
Source: The author, 2013 and 2014.

Past racist planning does not explain everything in this case. Johannesburg's urban growth after apartheid has reinforced segregation, with the city spreading toward a vast and non-dense metropolitan region (Murray, 2008, 2011). Johannesburg's low-density and far-reaching postapartheid expansion restructures segregation into a north–south polarization. The displacement of economic activity northwards contrasts with the expansion of affordable housing for the lower classes taking place from Soweto southwards. Within this new urban pattern, despite obvious improvements, Soweto and most of Johannesburg's townships are still far away from Johannesburg and furthermost away from the new-fangled rich suburbs flourishing in the north of the city.

Picture 28 above depicts the disparity between the locational attributes of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. The upper photo displays the territorial proximity between Pavão-Pavãozinho and Copacabana. The lower photo shows Orlando East from former Orlando Power Station. In the background, we see the mine dumps that surround Soweto, and behind them, we can just make out the building of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the Sentech Tower, in Brixton, and the Hillbrow Tower kilometers away in downtown Johannesburg.

The two dissimilar spatial configurations that characterize Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro have set up the broader contexts for recent (urban) development in townships and favelas. On the one hand, both of these territories – although differently constituted and in transformation – occupy corresponding positions in their respective metropolitan orders as historically marginalized urban spaces. On the other hand, favelas and townships have quite divergent locational attributes within their corresponding metropolises. The contemporary locational attributes of favelas and townships find their roots in previous patterns of socio-spatial segregation, which were completely distinct in Rio de Janeiro and in Johannesburg (chapters 6 and 7). Roughly speaking, Rio's favelas can be correlated to 'islands' or even 'archipelagos' – of multiracial poverty – sprinkled all over the city space, including in rich areas, while, by contrast, Soweto resembles much more a – racially homogeneous and economically heterogeneous – 'continent' to the South of Johannesburg. On the one side, numerous favelas in Rio benefit from a good location whereas, on the other, the vast majority of Johannesburg's townships do not (see picture 28).

The locational attributes that each of these two territories of marginality gains within the extended network of places that makes up the metropolises they belong to is a

311

significant factor for understanding more recent dynamics in favelas and townships. Pavão-Pavãozinho and other favelas in Rio de Janeiro have become attractive settings for investment precisely because of their good location within the city. This means that the favela, which has been commonly labeled as the realm of the 'outlaw,' the space of crime and moral degeneracy, on the 'lawless' margins of the city, started to be envisioned too as a kind of 'reserve market,' a stock of well-located urban land susceptible to being profitably integrated into circuits of capitalist accumulation. Rio de Janeiro's favelas (the well-located ones) have received better-off inhabitants, most of whom bear only remote familial connections to Brazil's Afro-descendant population. If this tendency advances further, in combination with the substantial erection of popular housing on cheap, underserviced, peripheral land, it may lead to a modification in the double pattern of segregation characteristic of Rio de Janeiro (Ribeiro, 2016) toward a sharper center–periphery polarization. By contrast, Soweto and most of Johannesburg's townships are still distant locations clustered around one of the poles of a vast and non-dense metropolitan region that is becoming more and more divided across the city's north–south axis. Soweto and most townships within it, like Mofolo, are still too far away, at least for most investors that make their profits by seizing rent-gaps in the ground-rent system (Smith, 2010 [1984]: 184). It is true that some real estate developers have reached Soweto. But this just widens the north–south divide because we are talking about developments targeting lower- and lower-middle class African families. In addition, the recent proliferation of malls within Soweto shows that there are underexploited consumer markets while revealing a strengthening of urban seclusion, reproducing the new patterns of segregation (see Chapter 7).

Because of either citywide or locally based transformations, or a combination of both, which is indeed the most typical, it seems indisputable that both Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships have witnessed substantial urban transformation in recent decades. Nonetheless, the specific locational attributes of favelas and townships within their respective metropolises have influenced recent development in each of these two urban settings. As Milton Santos (2004 [1978]) says, there is a 'spatial inertia,' a 'force of locational conditions of the past' that outlines future developments (Santos, 2004 [1978]: 170). Overall, despite (urban) development having (re)structured the locational attributes of favelas and townships, it has not undone unfair spatial divisions in any of the two cases. By different means, the recent (urban) development in favelas and townships has strengthened urban segregation. Precisely because of (urban) development, in Rio de

Janeiro the urban poor are now dislodged from good locations. There (urban) development puts into motion a kind of centrifugal force, drawing the urban poor away from the place they have safeguarded for themselves in the city toward peripheral zones. The poorest favela inhabitants are, therefore, once again under threat of compulsory displacement (Chapter 6). In Johannesburg, because of the same forces, the urban poor are compelled to remain in the peripheral locations to which they were expelled long ago (Chapter 7). At bottom, Soweto is still a 'black continent' to the South of Johannesburg. Even if it is well known that racial segregation is not always functional to capitalism (Posel, 1983), the neoapartheid city makes its way through the twenty-first century. The interplay of locational attributes and developmental processes in favelas and townships suggests, for each site respectively, the poor's continuous displacement and the poor's perpetual urban seclusion.

## 8.4. Organized criminality, ordinary criminality

The utilization of favelas as drug selling points and headquarters by big criminal syndicates such as the *Comando Vermelho* (CV), 'Red Command,' the *Terceiro Comando* (TC), 'Third Command,' or the *Amigos dos Amigos* (ADA), 'Friends of Friends,' is not something new. It goes back at least to the mid 1970s. Notwithstanding the presence of the UPPs in Rio's favelas, the chance to profit from illicit activities related to drug trafficking has never ceased to exist completely. Organized criminal gangs went no further than, in some cases, suspending their activities for a short period of time, generally in the initial phase of implementation of the UPPs. Soon afterward they managed to resume their operations in favelas, coexisting, thus, with the military occupation of the territories by the so-called 'police pacification.' In areas outside the reach of the UPPs, mainly across the city's north and west zones, paramilitary squads composed by (ex)policemen, (ex)penitentiary agents, and (ex)firefighters, all of whom possessed military training, started to dispute the *de facto* control over favelas. Everywhere these groups, locally known as *milícias* (militias), succeed in expelling the commandos; they took over the drug trade and set up a mafia-like rule – based on intimidation and extortion – over local business and neighbors.[197] They aim to control all economic activities in the territory: From gas bottle distribution to clandestine internet and cable TV services to

---

[197] For detailed studies on the issue, see Misse (2011) and Cano and Duarte (2012).

illegal public transport to drug dealing. This has been the overall situation in the city in the 2000s and 2010s.

During my time in Pavão-Pavãozinho in 2014, occasionally I went through challenging situations.[198] I knew the favela had a UPP unit, which supposedly made the place safe. On that basis, and from my previous talks with Vilma and Agenor, I decided to explore the topmost parts of the hill. It was my first week in the favela and I was not acquainted with the place yet. But I was eager to explore it and progress with my fieldwork. There was no one to join me, so I did so on my own. At night, after carefully reflecting upon the situation I found myself in that morning, I sat down in my room to write down my experience in my field book. Let me transcribe here my first impressions of that episode.

This morning I embarked on a walk to the top of Pavão-Pavãozinho. I'm already living on one of the highest parts of the hill, but I wanted to see what the topmost houses were like. One of my neighbors, Sandra … was sweeping the leaves off the stairs that lead up to her house. Like many other residents, the woman who works as a cashier in a butcher's shop in Copacabana took care of the public space on the hill before starting her workday. After talking to Sandra a bit, I asked her if it was alright to walk up the hill. Sandra nodded, saying yes, and then showed me which pathway to take … After ten minutes trotting up stairs and along alleyways on my way up, I decided to go into a bar to confirm that I was on the right track and to make sure it was safe to continue my walk. I went into the bar and talked to the owner, Zé. We talked briefly about the nice views he has from there. I introduced myself and told him that I was living at Ms. Aparecida's house. Between one customer and another, we talked. Zé sold a soda to a boy of about seven years old, cigarettes and mobile phone credit to an old woman. Zé was born on the hill. He told me about his plans to expand his business. At a given point of our conversation, I asked him if his bar was near the top of the hill. He answered, yes, that it wasn't far. I started to conjecture about the way to get up there and he asked me if I wanted to go to the top. I responded, yes, and Zé said something like: 'Really? Why? There's nothing special to see there.' I replied that I was curious. I was about to leave

[198] Participant observation between September and November 2014.

when Zé asked me to wait. Zé told me he was going to escort me to the place. The man closed his small business and we hiked together along a cement pathway that soon turned into a mud-covered footpath. At one point, we had to step around the raw sewage water that fell from a pipe and flowed abundantly down along the muddy path. The more we went up, more precarious the houses were. Most of them were shacks made of stucco and wood. Some of them were newly built, but I could see from the old tiles that others were long-standing. Already at the top of the hill, we came across a group of young men sitting in a corner along the way. One of them knew Zé, and they talked briefly. The others just stared at us from above without saying anything. I think that there were more people inside one of the nearby shacks also sizing us up. Zé explained to the man that I was a friend of his and that he wanted to show me the soccer field. The men stepped aside and we got to the top. When I got back home, Ms. Aparecida was waiting for me with a worried face by the front door. She told me not to go there again. The old woman told me that they call that part of the hill Vietnam. 'It's very dangerous. It's dangerous, believe me,' she said. Sandra had told Ms. Aparecida that I had gone to the top of the hill. Even Vilma, who was at work, called to find out if everything was alright with me. At the top of the hill, there is no Olympus. To move around in here [Pavão-Pavãozinho] is challenging. Like a minefield, it seems tranquil but there may be surprises. 'Unknown land, you better tread slowly!' (Fieldwork note on 17 September 2014).

That day I leaned that the top of the hill was one of the most precarious areas of Pavão-Pavãozinho. I also saw that there were potentially dangerous spots for me on the hill. When Vilma came back home from work at night, we had a talk about my chancy undertaking. I told her that I had gone up there with Zé, and that everything was fine. Her response was something like: 'Up there, it's one of the most devastated areas of the hill, it always has been: By the porverty of people, mobility problems, the entrance of the police, by the dispute between armed groups, the torture and executions… There's nothing that goes right up there.' She added that there were people from elsewhere hiding

up there, gangsters fleeing from persecutions 'Bad people with the evil in their hearts,' she alleged.[199]

The presence of criminals is not restricted to the top of the hill, however. Very soon, I realized that, despite the UPP, they dominate the place. On more than a few occasions, I was stopped by men associated with the *Comando Vermelho*, one of the big drug trafficking syndicates in the city.[200] Carrying on and showing off firearms, generally they happened to stop me on my way back to the backyard house I had rented. They asked me questions like: Who are you? What are you doing here? Where are you going? Whom are you with? On one occasion, my backpack even came to be 'inspected' by two young men.[201] At times, I watched as another member of the criminal organization communicated by walkie-talkie my due arrival at the place that I had just declared as my destination at the first 'checkpoint' some stairways down.[202] These kinds of procedures are not altogether unexpected in view of the aspiration for control over the territory by the criminal organization. Within the hierarchical order of the criminal organization on the hill, the 'soldiers' are the ones that have to detect and deal with potential invaders or spies from either rival criminal organizations or the police. I was aware from the beginning that these kinds of situations might eventually arise. But I was relatively alright because I knew that my landlord had somehow communicated to the 'rulers' of the place about my presence there.

I was able to deal with these circumstances relatively well until one of the 'soldiers' stopped me when I was passing near one of the *bocas de fumo* (selling points) on my way back home. On that occasion, I had to walk the up the hill late at night. It was around midnight.[203] It was impossible for me to get back home earlier because of a rainstorm. It was dangerous to walk up the stairs with the strong flood of water, sewage, and garbage streaming downhill. Since my first days there, I had learned that every time it rains you have to deal with this situation due to the garbage that clogs the sewage channels.[204] I had no choice but to wait, and then I found myself in another bad situation. After the rain rats come out.[205] But this time I had to deal with bigger problems than

---

[199] Informal conversation on 17 September 2014.
[200] Participant observation between September and November 2014.
[201] Participant observation on 19 September 2014.
[202] Participant observation on 22 September 2014.
[203] Participant observation on 29 September 2014. Fieldwork note on 30 September 2014.
[204] Participant observation between September and November 2014. Fieldwork notes on 16 September and 17 September 2014.
[205] Participant observation between September and November 2014. Fieldwork notes on 16 September, 17 September, and 8 October 2014.

rodents. The 'soldier,' who ought to be barely sixteen, started by asking me the usual questions, to which I answered back as I had gotten into the habit of doing. But this time the young man did not believe me, and, waving his gun, said that there was no way I could go further. The young man threatened to shoot me. Nothing happened because of a teenager who happened to know the facts. She intervened in my favor, telling the young man that I was indeed living in Ms. Aparecida's backyard, that she had seen me there, that 'I was cool,' and so on. After some insistence on the part of the young woman, he let me go. I spent half of the night awake, worrying whether someone would come for me. At daybreak, I was eager to share the incident with my landlord. I told Vilma what happened. To my surprise, she downplayed the event and limited herself to saying: 'Oh yes, these boys, they don't know when to behave themselves. Oh, these boys….'[206]

The unpleasant encounter overwhelmed me. I was not sure if it was safe to conduct my fieldwork there anymore. In the coming days, Agenor, an old community leader, managed to introduce me to someone who would make my life easier. The 'meeting' happened in a restaurant on the upper parts of the hill.[207] I was meant to meet only with Agenor but when I got to the place he was already talking with someone else. In his forties, the man was a thin person with brown skin and protuberant eyes. Agenor kindly introduced him to me as one of his fellow neighbors and the three of us spent some time chatting about trivial matters. Agenor told him that I was born in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais and that I was going to be around for a while for my research. He also told the man that I was already living in Ms. Aparecida's backyard. The man was nice to me during our short conversation. He called me '*mineiro*' (a person from Minas Gerais) and expressed how he loved Pavão-Pavãozinho and its people, explicitly mentioning his respect toward Ms. Aparecida and Vilma. He said a few words about the nice views and the yellowish-red mangos in the trees below us, the mangos were almost ready-to-eat…. After the man left the restaurant, Agenor said to me that he had to leave as well. I did not understand why he did so. But I just let him go. I realized Agenor's purpose with that 'meeting' some days later. That thin man with protuberant eyes was one of the local bosses of the criminal organization that rules the hill. I surmised this when I saw him giving directions to the 'soldiers' in view of what seemed to be an imminent police operation on the hill. Not much later, I mentioned what I had seen to Agenor and he confirmed it all to

---

[206] Fieldwork note on 30 September 2014.
[207] Participant observation on 2 October 2014.

me with a smile on his face.[208] In fact, since our smooth talk in the restaurant the 'soldiers' on the stairways let me go up the hill without much discomfort and questioning. At times, they greeted me with the usual salutation among members of the *Comando Vermelho*, '*tudo dois*' ('everything two'), which I interpreted as a gentle reminder of who rules the hill.[209]

*Picture 29 – The entrenched presence of organized crime*
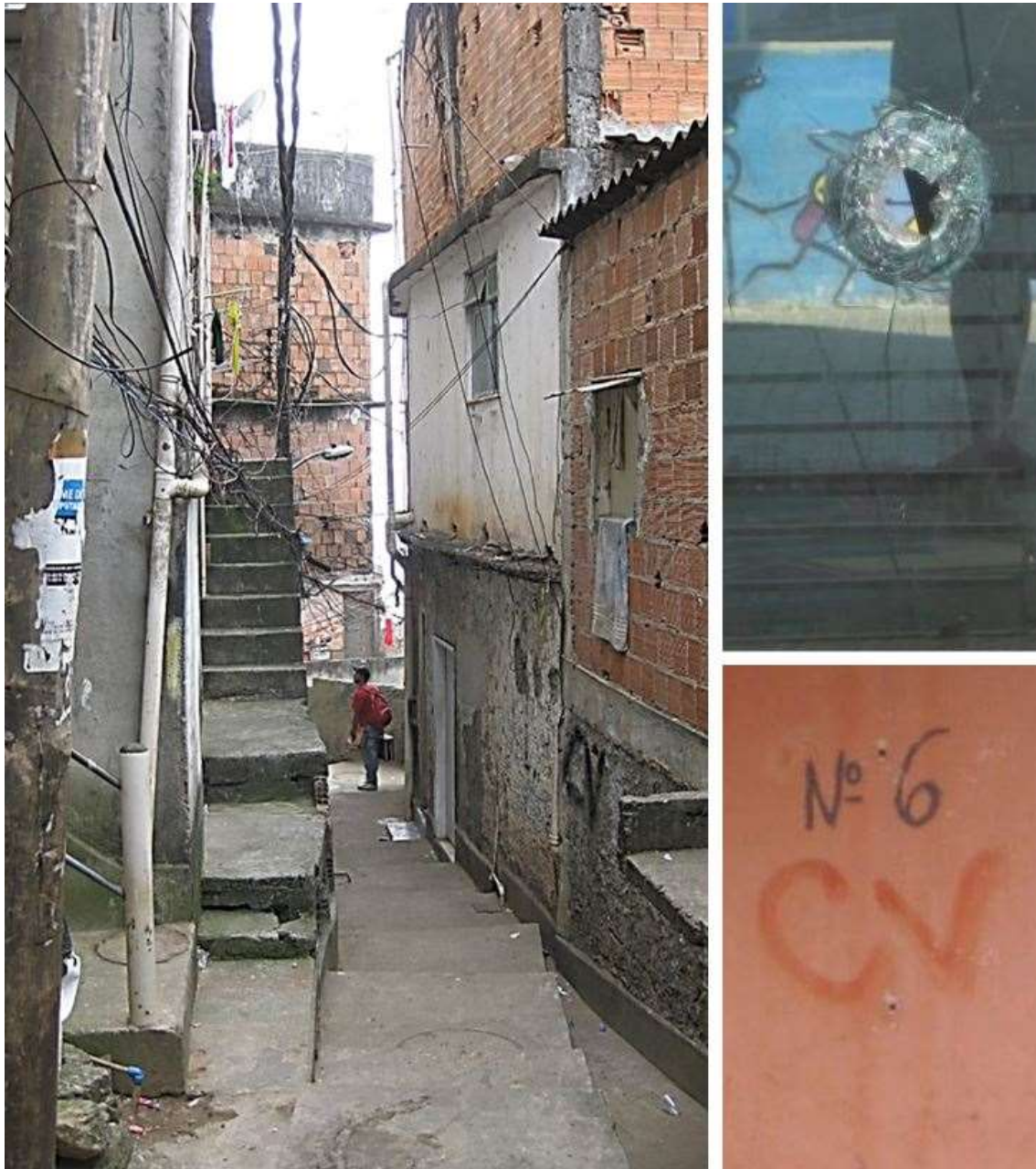


Source: The author, 2014.

---

[208] Informal conversation on 8 October 2014. Fieldwork note on 9 October 2014.
[209] Fieldwork notes on 10 October, 12 October, 17 October, and 21 October 2014.

Despite the UPP and the presence of military policemen on a permanent basis, the *Comando Vermelho* had *de facto* control over the favela. In addition to the presence of armed men at the main entrances and stairways of Pavão-Pavãozinho, there were many other daily interactions that indicated this: the graffiti with the initials of the organization (CV) all over the place (see picture 29); the constant presence of armed men on certain slabs that provide unobstructed views of the main entrances to the favela; interviewees who lowered their voices while talking about drug-related issues; people that advised me not to speak to any member of the police forces present on the hill;  and stories of punishments related to the rough justice delivered by the commando against traitors (locally called '*X9*') that may range from public humiliation – such as shaving women's heads or making men wear women's clothing while walking down the hill – to banishment, lynching or death.[210]

Moreover, numerous events involving UPP police officers in the favelas – including the disappearance of Amarildo Dias de Souza, a bricklayer from the favela of Rocinha, who was last seen alive entering a UPP police station in July 2013 – indicate that the police seem not to always act in accordance with the rule of law (HRW, 2014, 2015). To put it straightforwardly: Insecurity and urban violence still pervade the everyday life of Rio de Janeiro's favelas. Beyond the strict control of the territory and the daily life of its residents, the presence of organized crime leads to armed confrontations, which certainly has negative consequences for the various economic activities in expansion in the favelas, from tourism to the real estate market. On at least five occasions, I could not walk up the hill to my room in Pavão-Pavãozinho because of shootouts between drug dealers and the police. The marks of machine gun bullets here and there serve as silent testimonies to the clashes between rival gangsters, or between criminals and the police (see picture 29, upper-right corner). Even if there is pressure to formalize 'the informal,' deep-rooted informal rules in the territories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas will possibly persist. Rules of a 'parallel power' that, if not taken into due consideration, can have serious consequences.

In July 1999, Janice Perlman (2010: 93-8) came across the high-handed rule of organized criminals in Rio de Janeiro's favelas when going back to a favela in one of the city's northern zones in which she had carried out part of her research nearly three decades earlier. In her 1976 book, *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de*

---

[210] Participant observation and informal conversations between September and November 2014.

*Janeiro*, Perlman denounced how favela inhabitants had been marginalized, suffering all sorts of stigmatization, including the stigma of criminality. However, after her dicey venture in July 1999 (Perlman, 2010: 93-8), she has argued that whereas marginality was an outrageous myth in the 1970s, the gangs had turned it into a horrendous reality at the new century's eve (Perlman, 2002; 2005, 37; 2010: 98, 147, 158-99). Almost one in five people living in favelas report that a member of their family has been the victim of homicide (Perlman, 2002: 2). Perlman (2010: 165) refers to violence, fear, and loss, while summarizing the contemporary condition of everyday life of Rio's favelas.

> The most dramatic and devastating change for Rio's poor over the last three decades has been the growth of lethal violence. In 1969 the poor living in favelas feared that their homes and communities would be demolished. Today, they fear for their lives. They are afraid that they will be caught in the crossfire of the turf wars among rival drug gangs or that they will be in the wrong place during a police raid. They are terrified that their children will not return alive at the end of the school day or that their baby will be shot while playing on the front steps of their home. (…) Favelas are appealing locations for the drug gangs, with their narrow, winding alleys, abundant hiding places, and unemployed youth (Perlman, 2010: 165).

There are diverse interests in dispute on the ground. There is no doubt that the activities and *de facto* power of drug trafficking organizations operating in the territories of Rio's favelas must be taken into account. After all, no tourist wants to lose his/her life, just as no investor wants to lose his/her investment. By the time of my 2014 fieldwork, the unrest triggered by the possibility of obtaining fast and high profits with the emerging 'business of the favelas' seemed to have already passed its peak. During an interview, which, by the way, was interrupted by armed drug dealers on a contiguous rooftop, a Pavão-Pavãozinho inhabitant declared that real estate transactions and real estate buying and selling prices began to decrease in the previous year (2013), after they had risen for five straight years.[211] This informant also indicated that some buyers from outside the area were trying to sell off properties acquired in previous years and which, by all appearances, had not resulted in satisfactorily advantageous investments. Incontestably, the armed conflicts between rival criminal organizations, and between these organizations

---

[211] Interview conducted on 8 October 2014.

and the police, along with uncertainty about the future of public policies like the UPPs, explain the downward turn in property prices in favelas like Pavão-Pavãozinho.

Now let us turn to our other case study. Crime, violence, and fear are part of the everyday life of Johannesburg's townships.[212] The high walls, barbed wire, and electrified fences encircling the fancy houses in the rich spots of Soweto – like Diepkloof and 'Beverly Hills' in Orlando West – make this pretty clear.[213] However, urban violence is something that shapes daily life all over Soweto: From Orlando West to Diepkloof to Pimville to Mofolo to the humblest areas like the informal settlement in Kliptown. From my talks with Damian's family and the woman who now lives in Jabulani Flats (see Chapter 7), it is easy to realize that criminality and the sense of insecurity are significant features of 'almost now now' Soweto. Let me now focus on my own experience in Mofolo in order to further engage with this issue.

During my time in Mofolo in 2015, nobody used to go out at night.[214] At 9:00 p.m. the streets were empty.[215] Sipho and Dumisani explained this to me from the beginning. On my first day in the township I asked Dumisani where I could buy some food nearby.[216] It was Sunday, around 9:00 p.m., and Dumisani believed that it was too late. Dumisani had a short conversation in isiZulu with his brother, Sipho. Subsequently, Dumisani said to me that Sipho knew a place that probably remained open but that it was not safe to go there on foot. He gave his car keys to Sipho, who drove us to get our meal. After no more than ten minutes, Sipho was back with a cargo of beers, sodas and the much-loved *kotas* and *bunny chows* – township street sandwiches that consist of a quarter or half loaf of white bread filled up with inexpensive ingredients such as sausages (locally known as 'viennas'), eggs, and cheese, and always served with a generous portion of chips. At the end of the day, my request for a meal became a good excuse for everybody to have something other than the ordinary pap, a kind of maize flour that is the most regular dish in the township.[217]

As with other parts of Johannesburg, in Soweto outdoor life starts and ends early. Public transportation, buses, trains and minivans stop around 8:30 p.m. and it is not very

---

[212] Participant observation and informal conversation on 26 and 30 October 2013 in Alexandra. Informal conversation on 4 October 2015. Interviews conducted on 11 October and 24 October 2015, among many other interviews from my 2015 fieldwork in Soweto.
[213] Observation in situ on 10 October, 11 October, 15 October, 23 October, and 2 November 2015.
[214] Participant observation and fieldwork notes on 28 September and 27 October 2015.
[215] Fieldwork note on 28 September about participant observation and informal conversation on 27 September 2015. Fieldwork note on 27 October 2015.
[216] Fieldwork note on 28 September 2015.
[217] Participant observation between September and November 2015.

common to find a taxi driver on your way after this hour.[218] Although nowadays the township is not in darkness at night, as it was during most of apartheid, street life seems to follow daylight diligently.[219] At night, even going to the outside toilet in Dumisani's backyard seemed a chancy move. More than once, either Dumisani or Sipho woke up to check on me when I did so.[220] I was sorry for disturbing their sleep. With time, I realized that they slept lightly. Any noise in the yard or in the street and Sipho would wake up promptly and go to the window to inspect what was going on. It was not alright to go out there in the middle of the night. When I asked Sipho and Dumisani if they had encountered crime in Mofolo, Sipho told me that Dumisani's house had been robbed twice, always when no one was at home.[221] In a later conversation, Sipho explained that his brother's sumptuous consumer behavior made them a potential target for burglars.[222] Dumisani had a nice car in the garage and a state-of-the-art TV right next to a powerful sound system on display in his living room.[223] Just like many other of my interviewees in Soweto, Sipho and Dumisani blamed local drug addicts for the crimes, mentioning *nyaope* as a real problem for the township.[224]

The sense of insecurity is quite widespread in Soweto but it appears to be more intense in the informal settlements and squatter camps that have been emerging across the township since the 1980s. Sipho's and Dumisani's mother, Dolly, lives in a self-built shack in Protea South, a large informal settlement that emerged in the 1980s on the southern edge of Soweto. Dolly is a social activist and was among the first people to occupy a plot of land in the empty zone between Soweto and the Indian township of Lenasia decades ago.[225] She told me that she has been *toyi-toying*, a local expression for grassroots mobilization or struggle, for improvements for Protea South ever since. She was delighted to discuss the many actions in her long *toyi-toying* trajectory with me, some of which have rendered good results, such as the opening of streets or the partial, but progressing, installation of a public sewage system in the area. Nowadays, Dolly has a relatively spacious shelter in Protea South informal settlement, a three-room self-built

---

[218] Participant observation between September and November 2015. Fieldwork note on 27 October 2015.
[219] Fieldwork notes on 29 September and 1 October 2015.
[220] Participant observation between September and November 2015.
[221] Informal conversation on 29 September 2015.
[222] Informal conversation on 5 October 2015. Fieldwork note on 5 October 2015.
[223] Observation in situ on 29 September 2015. Interview conducted on 2 October 2015.
[224] Informal conversations on 30 September and 5 October 2015. Interviews conducted on 3 October, 10 October, 20 October, 24 October, 28 October, and 1 November 2015.
[225] Observation in situ and interview conducted on 27 October 2015.

shack in which Sipho was born and raised. Sipho moved to Mofolo around three years ago when his older brother, Dumisani, erected the room for him in the backyard.[226]

During our conversations, Sipho mentioned numerous ways in which life in a place like Protea South can be really dangerous.[227] On one occasion, he showed me the hollow scar at the back of his head and told me the story behind it in order to drive his point home. Below I quote the fragment of our conversation in which Sipho narrates the story behind his scar.

> Once I arrived home, I thought: I need to go buy airtime [phone credit]. The time was... past 1 to 2 a.m. …. I need to go buy airtime. I need to call the mother of my son. I need to call her and ask if she needs anything from me for tomorrow. And then, Thulani and I… (Inaudible). It was me, Thulani and Zenzele. Zenzele stayed back, stayed behind since his head wasn't cool… Thulani and I were walking to buy airtime, to the garage [petrol station], next to the mall [Protea Gardens]. And then, in my very same street two guys came behind us. One was carrying a gun and one was carrying a knife. OK, we ran. Then the one that was carrying the gun started to shoot but he missed, he missed. He shot at Thulani, but he missed Thulani (…). We fought back. I said to Thulani, I take this one. The one carrying the gun was on Thulani's side and the one with the knife was on my side. When the guy next me realized the other one missed, he stabbed me here. He stabbed me in the head. That's when I got this scar here (Interview with ex-inhabitant of Protea South on 11 October 2015).

The hardships of living in an informal settlement just add more drama to the whole picture. As I have explained before, in Chapter 7, most informal settlements in townships lack public sanitation, garbage collection is nonexistent, and they are disconnected from the public lighting system. If some shacks have electricity, it is because of illegal connections to the main network.[228] Although many informal settlements have now been in existence for decades, there are only a few permanent brick houses amidst a sea of precariously erected shacks. The vast majority of their dwellers find shelter in shacks
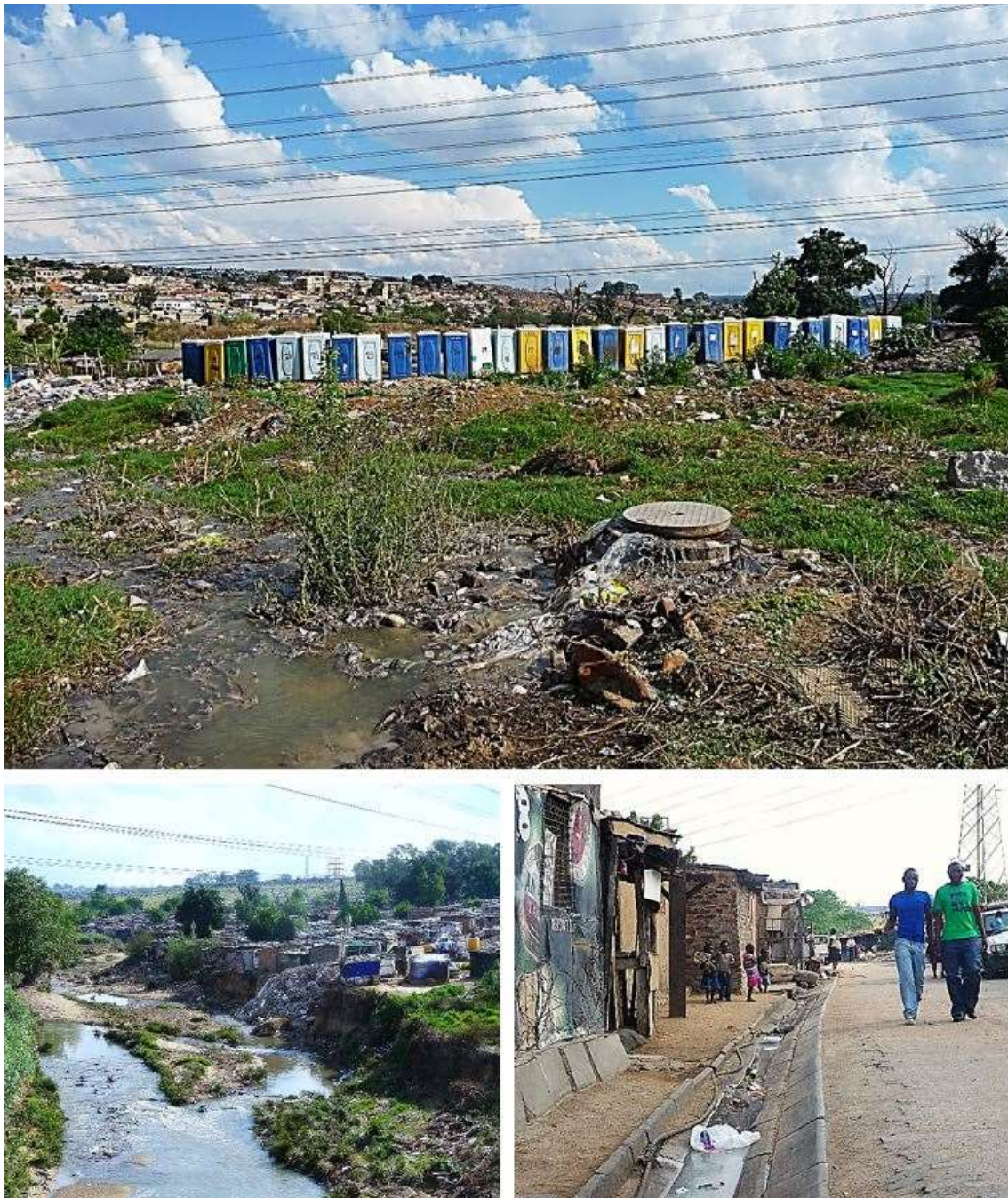
---

[226] Interviews conducted on 2 October, 7 October, and 11 October 2015.
[227] Interview conducted on 11 October 2015.
[228] Observation in situ and interviews conducted on 24 October and 27 October 2015.

made up of corrugated iron sheeting, wood or even rubbish (see, for instance, picture 22 in Chapter 7, and picture 30 below).[229]

*Picture 30 – Setswetla squatter camp, Alexandra*



Source: The author, 2013.

If Sipho was sure of anything, it was that he was not moving back to an informal settlement anymore, be it in Protea South or anywhere else. He mentioned that it is true that shacks can vary in size and in the quality of materials employed. But, almost

---

[229] Observation in situ on 30 September 2013, and 24 and 27 October 2015.

immediately, he stated that no (informal settlement) shack can be superior to any sort of backyard accommodation in regular townships. I asked him why this was so, and he compared his life in Mofolo with his previous life in Protea South. Like in Protea South, in Mofolo he does not pay for shelter – actually, in Mofolo he gets paid for it because he splits the rent with his brother – he sleeps in a bed rather than on the floor, and he has an accessible toilet and tap water at hand in the backyard. Just like other young people I talked to during my field trip in Soweto in 2015, the only acceptable upcoming move for Sipho would be a combined upward (in the social structure) and outward (out of the township) itinerary.[230] Until Sipho finishes his degree and gets a proper job that allows him to realize his 'upward-outward' ambitions, he shall strive to stay in Mofolo.

Those living in informal settlements seem to always be in a subordinate position within the symbolic and material hierarchy of places that make up contemporary Johannesburg.[231] Informal settlements represent the lowest level of the contemporary urban order. Precariousness and indigence frames social life in them, which has consequences for their inhabitants. The lack of street lighting, the complete lack of garbage collection, sewage handling and sanitation (which includes problems in the water supply) , are the rule in places like Protea South or in Kliptown in Soweto and Setswetla squatter camp on the border of Alexandra (see, again, picture 22, in Chapter 7, and picture 30 above).[232] Probably the main difference between Protea South and Kliptown is that the former occupies a larger area and has more space, whereas in the latter roads and a river leave less space for streets and other areas in-between shacks. In both cases, however, the overall situation is that most shacks have no toilets, which represents an additional risk for women, especially at night.[233] I heard of the same problem at Setswetla squatter camp on the margins of Alexandra (picture 30).[234] Sexual offenders target women on their way to public toilets, which are usually placed at the entrances or borders of informal settlements. This shows that even though *nyaope* and *dagga*, and other drugs like mandrax, might be behind many crimes in Johannesburg's townships, violence is not always drug related.[235] It ranges from ordinary criminality related to small robbery to drug

---

[230] Interviews conducted on 3 October, 7 October, 10 October, 11 October, 17 October, and 18 October 2015.

[231] Interviews conducted on 7 October, 10 October, 11 October, and 18 October 2015.

[232] Observation in situ on 30 October 2013. Observation in situ on 24 October and 27 October 2015. Interviews conducted on 7 October and 27 October 2015 with inhabitants of Protea South and Kliptown.

[233] Interviews conducted on 27 October 2015 with two female inhabitants of Kliptown.

[234] Informal conversation on 30 October 2013.

[235] In July 2017 the South African police dismantled an industrial-like drug laboratory in Dobsonville, Soweto. See, for instance, https://city-press.news24.com/News/330-kilograms-of-mandrax-discovered-in-

trafficking with *nyaope* and *dagga* to sexual offenses. Unfortunately, due to a widespread sense of lack of justice and police ineffectiveness, violent forms of crowd justice are common in townships like Soweto too.[236] Ordinary criminality, in its several forms, impregnates and shapes the everyday life of Johannesburg's townships.

To conclude this topic and the chapter: Crime and violence permeate everyday life in both favelas and townships but they take diverse forms across the two contexts. Criminality is an organized matter in the former whereas it is a much more ordinary affair in the latter. But what is of most importance here is that criminality unleashes quite different kinds of dynamics in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. The interconnection of criminality, everyday life, and (de)commodification acquires dissimilar profiles in each of these two contexts of urban relegation.

Standard gentrification analyzes fail to incorporate embedded and enduring phenomena that intervene in how urban renewal and displacement might advance. Community struggle against urban renewal and forced displacement is surely important, and in many of Rio's favelas it has succeeded in resisting the undesired effects of development. However, in Rio's favelas very often commodification has been diverted not by any sort of 'autonomous geographies' (Pickerill and Chatterton, 2016) or by communitarian 'resiliencies' (DeVerteuil, 2016: 70-1). Instead, the experience of Rio's favelas shows that it has been diverted by the operation of criminal groups. As I have said before (chapters 1 and 5), despite its ubiquitous presence, I assume that commodification is not something unstoppable or irreversible. But, in the case of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, the countermovement (Polanyi 2001 [1944]) is not that of society as a whole against the soulless forces of self-regulating markets but that of criminal organizations in their egoistic defense of their unlawful business. Consequently, even if community struggle against bigoted development is in place too, the steadfastness of criminal organizations, and the 'negative externalities' that come along with their illegal activities, have proven themselves to be effective hindrances to the commodification of everyday life, gentrification, and forced displacement in Rio's favelas.[237] If, on the one hand, favelas

[236] Informal conversation on 10 October 2015. Interview on 31 October 2015. Participant observation and informal conversation on 1 November 2015.

[237] Drug trafficking organizations entail complex global networks. Local drug dealers that turn favelas into selling points and/or headquarters produce neither the guns they carry on nor the cocaine, crack, and marihuana they trade. The bulk of profits coming from drug trafficking do not remain within favelas. The fat cats of the drug trade have fun elsewhere. But the point to be noted is that, even if drug trafficking relates

across the southern zones of Rio de Janeiro cannot be regarded as peripheries anymore (see Chapter 6, and the previous section), on the other hand, there can be no doubt that they are territories in dispute. In the aftermath of the 2014 Brazil World Cup and the 2016 Olympics, and all the correlated speculation over land prices in favelas, the real estate euphoria has given way to a more sober sense of caution and uncertainty.

By contrast, the ordinary criminality that saturates the everyday life of Soweto and Alexandra is a well-known and predictable state of affairs to those residing there. It is best depicted as a steady reality, rather than an evolving one. But the main difference from what has happened in Rio is that, in the case of Johannesburg's townships, criminality has not inhibited commodification. On the contrary, the quasi-ubiquitous certainty of ordinary criminality has nurtured commodification within townships. In this respect, the fear of violent crime is surely one of the aspects of the recent proliferation of private spaces of socialization – from gated housing complexes to malls – in townships (Chapter 7). Just like elsewhere in Johannesburg and far beyond it, the economy of fear has found its way into the everyday life of townships too.[238]

---

to capitalist accumulation, it has upturned determinate forms of commodification (that is, of everyday life, of land, and so on) across the urban margins.

[238] Caldeira (2000), for instance, showed that gated communities and other walled places are an entrenched reality in Brazilian cities.

**Chapter 9 – Conclusion**

We have reached the final step of our argument in this dissertation. By way of conclusion, I will convey my comparative effort back toward the consideration of the broader urban trajectories of favelas and townships. In doing so, I shall seek to deepen the intercommunication between the theoretical debates of chapters 3, 4, and 5 and the historical and ethnographical accounts I have developed about favelas and townships in chapters 6 and 7 respectively. Thus, my aim in this concluding chapter is to develop a comparative-historical account of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships with a view to reassessing key research themes in critical urban studies. The comparison should redirect us toward retheorization. To be exact: I will refer to the long historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships in order to suggest new ways of engaging with key research topics that we approached from a theoretical point of view in the first part of this study: Urbanization, the production of space, accumulation by dispossession, (de)commodification, (urban) development, and so on. Unlike the bulk of postcolonial scholars in urban studies (see Chapter 3), while engaging with these well-known research topics in light of the social topographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, I will not avoid Marxian categories like accumulation and surplus value.

Comparative analyzes usually imply the analytical separation of aspects of social life that are intrinsically connected. This means that, while comparing, we have to abstract from the empirical material and concrete historical-geographies from which case studies are usually made. My comparative effort in this thesis progresses through a degree of abstraction that starts from the local histories of favelas and townships and the empirical data I produced in each of these two settings of urban relegation (chapters 6 and 7), moves into the point-by-point comparison (Chapter 8), and culminates in the consideration of the wider urban trajectories of favelas and townships with a view to fostering retheorization (Chapter 9). Even if theoretical insights have already arisen in the preceding point-by-point comparison of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships (Chapter 8), and even if in chapters 6 and 7 I go beyond the mere observation of my case studies, in what follows I shall seek to 'come back to theory again' (Robinson, 2011a) more directly and, thus, to contribute to advancing the rudiments of the retheorization of key concepts in the critical literature in urban studies.

**9.1. The urban trajectories of favelas and townships and the rudiments of retheorization**

It is time for us to place the wider urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships side-by-side with a view to deriving new insights on key research topics in critical urban theory. In view of the urban trajectories of favelas and townships (see chapters 6, 7, and 8), in what follows I will return to Lefebvre's two key hypotheses that I discussed in Chapter 4 (that is, the complete urbanization of society and the production of the entire space) and to the Marxian-inspired hypothesis, developed by Harvey (2014), among others, that there is a potential commodification of everything (Chapter 5). These three stimulating research themes will guide my exposition here.

When approaching major questions about urbanization, I will try to underline the central role that colonial dynamics and their socio-spatial legacies might have played in the formation and development of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. To develop this point, I shall refer to Latin American authors like Quijano (2000, 2014 [1968-2010]) and Coronil (2000, 2003, 2007) and rely on the notions of 'spatial inertia' and 'space's roughness' developed by Milton Santos (2004 [1978]). The reference to Santos, Quijano, and other Latin American authors here should be understood as a way of moving beyond the diagnosis I have presented in Chapter 3, according to which postcolonial scholars in urban studies have largely overlooked and/or marginalized Latin American theorists. The Latin American literature might help us to avoid both relativism and false universalism while nurturing the theorization of what Brenner and Schimd (2015: 162) termed 'the context(s) of contexts' (see Chapter 3). Accordingly, I will try to call attention to the long-lasting patterns of inequality, domination, and expropriation that have emerged over time and have been embedded one way or another into social space. My argument here is that these patterns have, to a large extent, framed urbanization in Brazil and South Africa.

This initial focus on colonial dynamics and their socio-spatial legacies will prepare the ground for my next point: The most recent dynamics of exploitation, commodification, and dispossession should be retheorized in historically attentive ways. The urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships suggest that either the production of space or recent (urban) development, or the correlated pushes for (de)commodification, should be grasped as the backdrop of previous rounds of capitalist accumulation, socio-spatial segregation, and urban marginalization.

Unquestionably, we are not starting from scratch here. Since the groundbreaking works of Henri Lefebvre (1978 [1968], 1991 [1974], 2002 [1970], 2008 [1972]), Neil Smith (1979, 1996, 2002), and David Harvey (2003, 2014) there has been a growing scholarship on urbanization, the production of space, the right to the city, gentrification, accumulation by dispossession, primitive accumulation, commodification, and related topics (see, for instance, Caffentzis, 1995, 2011; Bonefeld, 2001, 2014; Federici, 2004, 2010; Dalla Costa, 2004, 2005; De Angelis, 2007, 2010; Brenner and Schmid, 2011, 2014; Sevilla-Buitrago, 2015), a good portion of which is directly informed by the various contexts of the so-called global South (see, among many others, He, 2007; Hsing, 2010; Lee, 2012; Doshi, 2013; Desai and Loftus, 2013; Wu et al., 2014; Shin, 2015, 2016; Ghertner, 2014, 2015, 2017; Lee et al., 2016; Ortega, 2016; Bhan, 2016; Diener et al., 2016; Huchzermeyer, 2016, 2017; Moreno and Shin, 2018). Even if much of this 'look southwards' among critical (urban) scholars may not be explicitly connected to the recent postcolonial calls to 'provincialize urban studies' (Chapter 3), both of these bodies of literature are at the cutting-edge in urban studies and I recognize them as unavoidable backgrounds for my analyzes in this study.

I would like to clarify that I do not mean to be either exhaustive or ground-breaking while treading the challenging path of retheorization. In the end, as Mabin (2014) has pointed out, it is not easy to say something new or essential about such well-known research themes as urbanization, the production of space, accumulation by dispossession, gentrification, (de)commodification and (urban) development, so the bar is already set high here. Besides, for reasons of time and space, I will have to focus on some of these topics while leaving others largely aside. Still, the positive side is that at the end of our itinerary in this doctoral thesis we can see the outlines of an emergent research agenda. That is the reason why I think it is reasonable to speak of a determination to offer the rudiments of retheorization of well-known research topics from other social topographies, namely, from the vantage point of Rio de Janeiro's self-built favelas and Johannesburg's state-planned townships.

### 9.1.1. On urbanization

Even though it has so often been undervalued by both critical urban thinkers and postcolonial scholars in urban studies, the element that is crucial to understanding Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships is that their urban trajectories have been

fundamentally shaped from the outset by colonial relations. In this regard, the general dynamics of coloniality (Dussel, 1993, 2000; Coronil, 2000, 2003, 2007; Quijano, 2000, 2014 [1968-2010]; Mignolo 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2009), which can be understood as grounded in the world-wide arrangement of race/racism and division of labor (Quijano, 2000, 2014 [1968-2010]), must be somehow brought to the forefront of the analysis of urbanization. This means, for instance, that it is necessary to take into account the colonial histories of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg, and the spatial consequences they have had for them. It is crucial to assume that colonial rule, colonialism, and imperialism generate dynamics of domination – such as the institution of slavery or control over affairs in the colonies/subjugated countries – that are relevant for urbanization. What is at stake here is the necessity of examining spatiality diachronically while focusing on the interaction between economic, political, and social processes. Coloniality has had consequences for the spatiality of the city – and beyond the city – which must be regarded as long-term processes, and which might be encompassed by the dialectical understanding of the urban as an ongoing possibility (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968], 2002 [1970]). In any case, it is necessary to situate past and present urban misfortunes, and socio-spatial inequalities – like, for instance, the housing crisis, urban violence, and urban segregation – within theoretical frameworks that take history into account. When doing so, it is essential to go beyond economic reductionism: Beyond economic extraction, coloniality entails racism and always establishes racial divides. Racial patterns of segregation accompany the establishment of these divides.

To be sure, we should not explain current socio-spatial inequalities in our cities and beyond exclusively by past relations of domination and exploitation. Inequalities are always in the process of reproduction and reshaping. The relentless and disruptive forces of creative destruction (Harvey, 1982, 1985, 2001, 2006, 2014) and ongoing planetary urbanization (Brenner and Schmid, 2011, 2014) make this manifest. However, we should not go to the other extreme of ignoring past domination and its spatial legacies either. Instead of asserting either the ordinariness of every single city or the multiplicity (or even the virtual impossibility) of the urban – as postcolonial scholars such as Roy (2009, 2015, 2016) and Robinson (2006, 2014a, 2015) have done – present and past asymmetries and power relations should be taken into account when theorizing cities in our urbanizing world.

By considering contributions such as those by Milton Santos (2004 [1978]), it is possible to relate society to space in the long term, connecting many of Rio de Janeiro's

332

and Johannesburg's particular urban patterns and spatial features with processes in different historical periods. As Santos (2004 [1978]: 173) says, there is a kind of 'roughness' to space, that is, a persistence of spatial forms from previous historical moments.

> The roughness is the space built, the historical time that turned into landscape, embedded into space. The roughness offers, even without immediate translation, remains of a division of labor, expressed locally by particular combinations of capital, techniques and of the work used. (...) The mode of production that (...) creates fixed spatial shapes may disappear (...) without such fixed forms disappearing (Santos, 2004 [1978]: 173).

The formation and evolution of cities such as Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg relate to particular arrangements of 'spatial inertia' and 'roughness' formed amidst a myriad of modern and colonial relations. For instance, in Rio de Janeiro, several events are directly related to Portuguese colonial rule, among them: The decision to establish the city in that specific location, within a context of dispute between European colonial powers; the transfer of the colonial capital from Salvador to Rio de Janeiro in order to control the exploitation of mineral wealth; as well as the installation of the Portuguese court in the city and the elevation of Brazil to the status of Kingdom along with Portugal and Algarves. Furthermore, we should not overlook the huge mass of African slaves introduced into Brazil.[239] Appealing to Milton Santos's idea of 'spatial inertia' (2004 [1978]: 166-71, 185), it must be recognized, for instance, that with the end of slavery in 1888 and without access to land, much of this workforce flowed toward the Brazilian capital, Rio de Janeiro, searching for means of living, which set the foundations for the city's favelas. Similarly, Johannesburg lies where it is and not somewhere else because of the discovery and extraction of gold in the Witwatersrand ('Rand') region in the 1880s. Johannesburg was founded as a mining city. With the rapid growth of the city, inner-city

---

[239] It is worth paying attention to the consequences for Rio de Janeiro of the huge mass of African slave labor introduced in Brazil during the colonial period, and even after the formal political independence in 1822. The African slaves were the labor force of the entire Brazilian economy: First in sugar plantations, then in gold and precious stones mines and later in coffee farms. Under such particular conditions, how to disregard the effects of slavery, a characteristically colonial institution, on the structuring of a city like Rio de Janeiro? It is not a coincidence that Rio de Janeiro's favelas appeared after the abolition of slavery. Neither it is not by chance Rio de Janeiro's favelas are a striking reality of the city ever since, and most of their inhabitants are still poor non-white people. We have seen in chapters 5 and 7 that favelas propagated and consolidated as the space per excellence of (racialized) poverty in the segregated city.

slums flourished. Very soon, racial segregation and pass controls were forced upon Africans, which continued virtually for a century. Townships have their very roots in these arrays of colonial and modern relations.

These 'germinal' events cannot be simply disconnected from the particular spatial *forms*, urban *structures*, and economic *functions*, to use Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) triadic terminology, that were emerging in both Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg. They should not be detached from the socio-spatial relations that have developed since then in both cities either, which means we should take them into account when retheorizing urbanization in light of their historical-geographies. Even if we cannot understate the huge transformation of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg into vast metropolitan regions over the last half of century – something that they share with many other cities across the world, and that Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 26-7) theorized as the implosion-explosion of the city – the urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg differ enormously from the concrete historical experiences Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 20-9) had in mind while tracing his imaginary continuum that goes from the complete absence of urbanization to the potential culmination of the process.

Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 15-32) formulated his theory of the urbanization of society – that is, the imaginary axis that runs from zero percent urbanization to one hundred percent urbanization – chiefly from the particular historical experience of the European city. He started his continuum from the political city, which, he suggests, coincides largely with the ancient Roman and Greek cities. For Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 22), the Roman forum and the Greek agora epitomized the political city. Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 23) proposes that, between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, the political city evolved into the medieval city or merchant city, initially as a point of encounter and exchange of surplus production around the market square. The market square assumes the central place that the agora and the forum had in the previous political city.[240] On this account,

---

[240] Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) redevelops this analysis in Chapter 4 of *The Production of Space*, while discussing the transition from absolute space to abstract space. Here he (1991 [1974]: 253, 262-8) offers a quite interesting interpretation of the emergence of abstract space that reminds us of Max Weber's propositions about the origins of capitalism. However, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 275-8) explains the emergence of abstract space (and the world market) through endogenous processes developing in Europe. In the European twelfth century, the economic is turned into the main principle of organization of society (and space) on the basis of commercial exchange and private property. Exchange nurtured rationalization, and in the process 'the time and space of commodities and merchants gained the ascendancy' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 277). In the market square, social space was secularized. It lost its links with the religious-political Cosmos, with the sacred (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 253, 262-8). The market square is a space of exchange that matured the exchange of space. That is how Lefebvre explains how abstract space was born.

afterward, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the European medieval city changed into the commercial city, which constitutes the first dialectical inversion in the relationship between countryside and city (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 23-7). For the first time in human history, the city prevailed over the countryside. The commercial city slightly precedes the emergence of the industrial city, when the city is engulfed and dismembered by market forces. The industrial city promotes the implosion-explosion of the city at the same time as it opens up the horizon of urban society. It is a critical moment that announces the possibility of the second dialectical inversion: The complete urbanization of society. It suggests the prospective termination of the opposition between city and countryside into a new totality. Thereafter we live under these kinds of circumstances, that is, the critical moment between the industrial and the urban, a time marked by the proliferation of fragmentations and segregations. In Lefebvre's (2002 [1970]: 15-32) dialectics, the city as *œuvre* is the thesis, industrialization is the antithesis, the anti-city, and the urban is the potential synthesis, which can take the city to a new and higher level.

In the cases of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg, any dialectical theory of urbanization should unfold in a different way: The initial thesis is incarnated by the colonial city-warehouse and the city-mining complex respectively. Both cities started as material expressions of European colonial and imperial endeavors across the world. In Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg the starting point of the long and contradictory progression toward (planetary) urbanization should be placed in the context of historical colonialism, which obviously precedes industrialization, which in turn precedes their metropolitan expansion and insertion into neoliberal globalization. This ought to have consequences for the retheorization of urbanization. Along with many other cities all over the world, Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg could be seen as embodying the other side of the European commercial city and the European industrial city. In fact, while relying on authors like Quijano (2000, 2014 [1968-2010]) and Mignolo (2000, 2005, 2009), one might even ask whether the very emergence of the commercial city in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and its subsequent transformation into the industrial city as Lefebvre conceives it, can be really conceived without a clear grasp of the transatlantic connections through which these cities emerged. Lefebvre never relates the development of the European commercial city to the historical event of 1492 in a strong way, however. While at one point in *The Production of Space* he says that the 'geometrical urban space in Latin America was intimately bound up with a process of

extortion and plunder serving the accumulation of wealth in Western Europe' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 152), later on he equates commercial cities in Italy, Holland, England and France with cities in Hispanic America, all of them emerging as a sort of 'unified entity' within a system of cities (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 271). Even if one could accept without much debate that the emergence of abstract space (and the commodity form) may be related to the development of market exchange in twelfth century Europe, it is hard to delink industrialization and the emergence of the industrial city in Western Europe from what had been happening in the Americas. The Lefebvrian dialectical continuum does not encompass the potentially dissimilar socio-spatial consequences entailed in each different moment in the long and contradictory movement toward complete urbanization.

If, on the one hand, I accept the heuristic value of Lefebvre's (2002 [1970]) hypothesis of the complete urbanization of society, on the other, I think we need to take the entire myriad of colonial-modern relations and their respective spatial legacies into account when retheorizing urbanization from the global South. We must be attentive to varieties of patterns of urbanization that might be related to the 'colonial wound' (Mignolo, 2005, 2009). We can therefore assume that there is a difference of content (and of meaning) that has had consequences for the *form*, *function*, and *structure* of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg. Both cities were founded 'looking' outwards, that is, toward their respective colonial and imperial powers, with race being a key element in their segregation patterns. This state of affairs has had consequences for succeeding transformations (that is, industrialization, metropolization, and so on).

What is more, it is hard to maintain from the experience of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg that the city is, at any given point, an *œuvre*, understood here as some kind of self-directed creation of its own inhabitants on the basis of a self-imposed organizing principle.[241] It is hard to grasp it as a sort of 'unified entity' (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 271). There were, so to speak, no 'good times' back there, but rather colonialism, domination, exploitation, dispossession, racism, and the like. Yes, there was domination in the ancient European political city, but, in being underpinned by Roman Law and by Greek Logos, it was mostly internally-structured and, as such, did not entail heteronomy.[242] The

---

[241] Incidentally, Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 46-9, 63-8, 1991 [1974]: 73-9, 229-50, 278, 412) also refers to the European city (the ancient Greek and Roman city, but, above all, the Italian Renaissance city) while conjecturing that the city is more comparable to a work of art, an *œuvre*, than a product – even though he (1991 [1974]: 165, 421) manages to extended this comparison to other periods.

[242] Here I refer to heteronomy as externally-imposed rule. In Chapter 4 of *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 239-40) strangely downplays ancient slavery while discussing the case of the

creation of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg relates to the external forces of European expansion.[243] From the beginning, they were already part of an emergent world capitalism, which set the conditions for their subsequent transformation across the Lefebvrian continuum of urbanization. No religious-political principle (that is, absolute space) underpinned the creation and organization of their space; instead, it was premised on the needs of an expanding market economy (that is, abstract space). A world-market economy was their main organizing principle. But it was not the only one.

Thus, lastly, one needs to note that, although the racial structuration of city space differed between Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg, the organization of the internal space of the city reflects, in both cases, the 'racial encounter' between Europeans and non-Europeans. In this regard, the two cities signpost different collective ways of 'being-in-the-world' (Wagner, 2012: 486).[244] They exemplify different ways of organizing racial and social difference in societies in which the racial difference and economic dependence of non-European labor are major societal characteristics. Racial cleavages are an organizing principle of urban space in both of them. At the beginning of the twentieth century, a formative moment for both Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, Brazil and South Africa were already no longer entirely heteronomous but had developed an 'inner political logic,' all the while occupying a dependent position within world capitalism. The industrial city takes form within this context, with urban agglomeration being virtually neglected by Brazilian elites whereas it was controlled and curbed by their South African counterparts. The expansion and consolidation of unbidden favelas and state-planned townships personify to a large extent these diverse ways of dealing with class and racial inequality in a historical moment that precedes and evolves within the context of the second Lefebvrian dialectical inversion.

---

ancient European city. Along with the city-state mastery of the countryside, and other territories, it surely lends a negative connotation to the ancient European city, and, by extension, to absolute space.

[243] Certainly, one could question whether something similar could not be said in relation to several cities in the United States. Indeed, Brazil and the United States, as well as other countries in the Americas marked by a long and fateful experience of slavery – Cuba, for example – do share certain characteristics. Racism and racialized urban segregation are probably the hallmarks of this shared history – though configured differently in each case. However, there are substantial differences as well. It suffices to think of all the debate around the so-called 'U.S. divergence.' We might assume that the diverse paths have been constituted depending on the particular insertion of each of these countries (and their cities) into the 'colonial-modern world economy' (Quijano and Wallerstein, 1992), which should be assumed to exist in a state of continuous transformation.

[244] Wagner's (2012) comparison between Brazil and South Africa focus on societies as a whole while I am focusing on cities and spaces within cities.

Even if Chakrabarty's (2000) concept of History 1 implies much more than capitalism (for example, logics of domination, state oppression, and so on), we must agree with Schmid (2018: 9) when he says that History 1 and History 2 always go hand in hand – they presuppose one another. Otherwise, while examining the dynamics of urbanization, we can easily fall into a totalizing universalism completely inattentive to local/regional differences. Thus, a potential limitation of critical North-biased theories of space, including Lefebvre's (2002 [1970]: 27) urban continuum, is that even if they articulate general tendencies that may apply to cases in the South, they usually do not properly consider the emergence of the global South in itself, its particular historical insertion into the international division of labor over time, and, above all, the spatial consequences of this. While some authors, like Harvey or Davis, consider imperial expansions in their analyzes, they do so by focusing on more recent imperialist expansion, from the nineteenth century onward, and do not pay much attention to previous modern/colonial practices, such as those that took place in Latin America. In addition, Davis (2004, 2006) offers a descriptive overview that does not take into account the specific history of the several cities in the global South that he talks about (see chapters 1 and 3). Indeed, Davis argues that structural adjustment programs are the main common explanatory factor for the 'planet of slums' emerging from the 1960s onward. Alternatively, extrapolating from the case of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, I think it is possible to hold that, to achieve a critical theorization of urbanization, it does not suffice to talk about the negative effects of neoliberal globalization over the vast and diverse peripheries across the global South, and the world, however relevant they are.

In order to address the oversights of such a flattened approach, it is necessary to approach the various urbanizing realities of the global South historically, setting the focus on expressions of long-lasting patterns of inequality, domination and expropriation that grew historically out of colonialism and coloniality (Quijano, 2000, 2014 [1968-2010]). At the end of the day, the contemporary settings of present-day planetary urbanization (Brenner and Schmid, 2011, 2014) are accumulative products of such historical developments. Space is not just a reflection of current social relations because it also carries the 'memories' of past social relations (Santos, 2004 [1978]). Despite the difficulties that a retrospective approach to urbanization may involve, we should overcome any kind of aversion to factoring in the temporal dimension of spatial phenomena.

Through the historical analysis of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg, I want to hold that there are certain characteristics related to modern and colonial dynamics present in the making and shaping of both cities. To sum them up: Before achieving the deeply unequal metropolitan socio-spatial configurations that characterize them today, which for clarity's sake I shall not examine here again, Rio de Janeiro was first a colonial enclave and then an important city in a region under the direct influence of imperial powers, whereas Johannesburg was founded as a mining city and evolved as such for a long period on the rim of the British Empire. As a result, a proper understanding of their spatialities, which incorporate favelas and townships, entails considering their respective colonial systems of rule, with their international (and racial) division of labor and their spatial ordering of racial groups. Such an understanding must also engage with the international (and racial) division of labor after the political independence of Brazil in 1822 and South Africa in 1910 – which in the case of most countries of the global South means peripheral or dependent participation in the world market – and its spatialization over, against, and alongside previous colonial spatial backgrounds. Industrialization and the strong push for urbanization that usually comes with it occurred in both cities within this context. Finally it is also necessary to look at the more recent international (and racial) division of labor, that of 'globalitarism' (Santos, 2000, Santos in Tendler, 2006) and 'globalcentrism' (Coronil, 2000), distinctive, maybe, by the potential commodification of everything (Harvey, 2014), under which Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg have spread into extended and fragmented metropolitan regions, and its spatialization over, against and along with previous spatial legacies in each one of these two cities.

All these sets of historical circumstances have ramifications for the long urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships. They have molded the overall context in which favelas and townships were created and have developed as well as the contexts of recent (urban) development and (de)commodification taking place within them. The urban trajectories of favelas and townships progress across asymmetrical relationships of power that show parallel developments (that is, colonial/imperial rule, dependent economies, industrialization, metropolitan growth, and so on), but, at the same time, they present dissimilarities, of which the main one is the particular patterns of racialization of urban segregation.

It is perhaps worth noting that Lefebvre (2002 [1970]: 20) himself states that the proposed axis from zero percent to one hundred percent urbanization is to a large extent arbitrary. After mentioning that the axis is both spatial and temporal, Lefebvre clarifies

that he shall focus on one of these dimensions: 'This schema presents no more than an aspect of this history, a division of time that is both abstract and arbitrary and gives rise to operations (periodizations) that have no absolute privilege but are as necessary (relative) as other divisions' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 28). We should, therefore, assume that there must be more than one pathway toward complete urbanization and that periodization and divisions from other social topographies are welcome. Lefebvre sometimes takes account of other urban realities beyond Europe and the global North, the so-called 'underdeveloped' countries, in relation to the dialectical continuum that runs from the rural to the industrial to the urban (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 40). At times, he refers to 'modalities of urbanization' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 28) or to 'various forms of urbanization' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 29). He says, for instance, that 'we should not overlook the fact that the onset of urban society and the modalities of urbanization depend on the characteristics of society as it existed during the course of industrialization' (Lefebvre, 2002 [1970]: 28). I would add that it depends also on what happened before so-called industrialization.[245]

My argument here is that one way of incorporating variety and plurality into the Lefebvrian urban continuum without overlooking entanglement and connectedness would be to give more visibility to the consolidation and evolution of the 'colonial-modern world economy' (Quijano and Wallerstein, 1992). Of course, one can imagine key moments in such a long-term and ongoing process: 1492, around 1800, around 1945, the 2000s with the emergence of China and the BRICs, and so on. Ideally, all of them

---

[245] By focusing on the role of exchange in the process of the urbanization of society, Lefebvre overlooks (at least partially) the destiny of cities outside the European spectrum. All of them are more or less concealed behind the general label of the 'Asiatic mode of production.' Even assuming the Lefebvrian continuum as valid, how can we disregard the catastrophic consequences of the European expansion for cities and urban ways of life in all continents? In many cases, it has meant deurbanization. A clear example is the disarticulation of exchange networks in the Indian Ocean before the Portuguese conquest. But there are many others: From the loss of importance of well-established and commercial cities across the Western portion of the African continent, such as Loango City and Timbuktu, to the destruction of many other cities across Africa, to the invasion and overthrow of the Mayan, Inca, and Aztec cities in the Americas, to the reconfiguration of the urban network in consonance with colonial needs and rhythms everywhere. For example, at its height, the mining town of Potosi in Bolivia was one of the most populous in the world. After the convulsive silver extraction decreased, the place became no more than a poor city around a potholed mountain. Even if, without all this 'historical detail', the (to a great extent, Eurocentric) urbanization continuum may flow more smoothly, we should not forget that to omit it implies a huge simplification that blurs the role slavery and other forms of compulsory work played in clearing the path towards urbanization. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 268) says that in the critical moment in which the city rules over the countryside there is no absolute discontinuity. This could be a valid proposition, but only for Europe. Polanyi (2001 [1944]), for instance, calls attention to the disturbing consequences of market expansion beyond Europe. Indeed, the transition out of the so-called political city, to use Lefebvre's term, was far more catastrophic outside Europe. At least Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 31-2) recognizes the limitations of Western thought and the abysmal lack of knowledge regarding the 'East' and its cities.

should be included in our effort to retheorize the long route toward the urban. The relative explanatory power of certain periods and historical events can certainly be debated, but it is no longer possible to ignore the variety of trajectories toward (planetary) urbanization. Informed by my two case studies, I have made an attempt at doing so here, with each particular trajectory being traced and examined in view of the framework Latin American scholars have chosen to name as 'coloniality-modernity.'

Along with this Latin American literature, world-systems approaches (Wallerstein, 1974a, 1974b, 1980, 1988, 2011), and other historically attentive traditions of thought in historical sociology, world history might be of special help for urban scholars attempting to pursue this research agenda (see, for instance, Mann, 1986, 1993, 2012a, 2012b; Pomeranz, 2000; Wagner, 2010a, 2010b, 2012, 2014). Darcy Ribeiro's (1971 [1969]) interpretation of the world variety of societal configurations emerging from European expansion might provide us with worthy clues here too. As Wagner indicates, the Brazilian author 'recognizes one crucial differences between Europeans and non-Europeans: the former generated their modern commitments from problems they were facing internally; the latter experienced European expansion as external domination, and their modernity as commitment to individual and collective self-determination thus needs to work through the trauma of being long deprived of the possibility to self-govern their lives' (Wagner, 2014: 308-9). In a word, urbanization ought to be retheorized in plural terms. Each particular case (socio-spatial configuration, neighborhood, city, countryside, region) needs to be posited within the vast historical constellation of planetary urbanization (Brenner and Schmid, 2011, 2015), which means to place it among (and in relation to) other varieties of urban trajectories. As Brenner (2018) has stated recently: Positionality necessarily lies at the very heart of any critical attempt at advancing critical urban theory.

## 9.1.2. On the production of space, accumulation by dispossession, and (de)commodification

We have seen before that Lefebvre suggests that throughout the process of urbanization of society the point of reference changes little by little from the sphere of production, from the factory itself, toward the sphere of consumption and everyday life (see chapters 4 and 5). Lefebvre (1991 [1974], 2002 [1970]) points to the assault of industrialization on the old city, the assault of exchange and exchange value on use and use value, which

happens in the diverse spheres of social life and gives rise to the production of the whole space. Lefebvre's (2002 [1970]: 15-32) dialectical reasoning proposes that industrialization conquers the previously-existing city (the thesis), penetrates it, promoting its implosion-explosion, and, thereby, causes it to spread haphazardly, leading to the urbanization of society, the urban fabric covering the vestiges of the city prior to industry (Lefebvre, 2003 [1970]: 13-4). This process, promoted by industrialization (the antithesis), denotes the generalization of exchange value and the logic of the commodity, applied to the production of the city space and forced upon the daily life of its inhabitants, in such a way that the city as *œuvre*, wherever it has existed, virtually vanishes. It subsists as a residue. The capitalist production of space prevails. Space (which includes the city) is turned into a product. Lefebvre (1991 [1974], 2002 [1970]) argues critically that one of the consequences of this process is the incorporation of preindustrial cities and historical urban centers, which predate capitalism, into the reign of the exchange and exchange value, for instance, as tourist attractions or leisure areas. He suggests that historical cities and old town areas now have a dual *function*: Place of consumption and consumption of place (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]: 27-8).

I embrace the theoretical proposition of the unyielding expansion of the commodity form, which was first formulated by Marx (2011 [1857-58], 2017 [1867]) and further developed by many others ever since, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) and Harvey (2014) among them. As Harvey argues, 'everything under the sun must be in principle and wherever technically possible subject to commodification, monetisation and privatisation' (Harvey, 2014: 71). Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 27-8, 1991 [1974]: 31, 46-7) shows how capital, in its *ad infinitum* expansion, produces a new space – of which long-range urban expansion and space's interminable fragmentation into pieces (for trading) are two sides of the same coin – at the same time that it takes over whatever had preceded it: Nature, land, art… the city. But the main point to be noted here is that if, on the one hand, the relentless movement of capital produces a qualitatively new form of space (that is, abstract space, habitat) and encompasses historical and natural spaces that preceded capitalism – as Lefebvre (1978 [1968]: 27-8, 1991 [1974]: 31, 46-7) argued – on the other, it also places strains on built spaces that emerged on the margins of the capitalist economy. The territories of urban relegation in which favelas and townships have emerged are also subject to the force of commodity expansion.

But we cannot neglect the fact that favelas and townships were created and evolved under capitalism, not prior to it. Favelas and townships are cannot usefully be

described as 'spatial remainders,' 'timeworn upshots,' of vanished modes of production. Nor do they fit into the operationalization of landscapes, which encompasses hinterlands and wilderness, of the sort that Schmid and Brenner (2011) call attention to in their considerations about extended urbanization. On the contrary, as I have just said in the previous section, favelas and townships are the socio-spatial outcomes emerging on the city's margins from successive rounds of accumulation that arise from colonialism and proceed until current neoliberal globalization. One could go as far as to claim that favelas and townships have in one way or another always been integral to capitalism. The last step in their urban trajectories, that is, the potential absorption of their space and everyday life into the reign of exchange value – albeit contradictory and uneven – happens on top of other rounds of accumulation. The long urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships suggest that spaces that have been on the margins (of the city, of the state, and of the economy) might develop new connections to the capitalist economy. The question then is how to interpret and theorize the successive and multiple entanglements of favelas and townships with the capitalist economy.

First of all, the experience of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships seems to corroborate what I have said previously in chapters 4 and 5 about Lefebvre's (2002 [1970], 1991 [1974]) explanation for the 'survival of capitalism' (Lefebvre, 1976 [1973]). In observing the capitalist production of space, that is, surplus value production in the construction sector, he overemphasizes one aspect of the capitalist economy. The urban trajectories of favelas and townships, including their recent transformation by (urban) development and (de)commodification, show that the more or less coercive 'takeover,' through accumulation by extra-economic means, has very often been in place too. It is true that on occasions Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) tempers the relevance of the production of space for capitalism with other factors like the annexation of the historical city. But, in this regard, it is Harvey's (2003, 2014) understanding of accumulation by dispossession that seems to be largely pertinent here. He asserts that accumulation by dispossession lies at the dynamic core of capital, and it has never ceased to exist. Not only the production of surplus value and the exploitation of the worker in the labor market and in the workplace, including the production of surplus value involved in the production of space, would be relevant for capitalist accumulation, for the 'survival of capitalism,' if we want to use Lefebvre's words (1976 [1973]), but also the various forms of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003; 2012; 2014).

Harvey's (2003, 2014) conceptions of fictitious capital, nearly-ubiquitous commodification, and accumulation by dispossession are surely useful for us but I want to extend our interpretation further back in time. My intention is to encompass the entire urban trajectories of favelas and townships. We already know from comparing the transformation of favelas and townships from the perspective of (urban) development (Chapter 8) that we should not overlook deep-seated historical characteristics embedded in each of these territories of urban marginality. This means that, if we want to put forward here the rudiments of a retheorization of key research topics in critical urban studies, such as commodification, accumulation by dispossession, and the production of space, we need to adopt a diachronic perspective. This leads me to another proposition. The long historical-geography of favelas and townships evolves across different types of connections with capitalism that overall suggests the succession of variegated practices of accumulation by dispossession over time. To be precise: The most recent modes of capitalist accumulation that relate to the (urban) development happening within favelas and townships – including the production of space, commodification, monetization, privatization, gentrification, tourism, mass consumption and accumulation by dispossession, in varying intensities and configurations – ought to be interpreted and theorized against this wider historical background.

Now let us consider the relationship of townships and favelas with the urban fabric in each historical moment. Let us think of the significance of townships and favelas for accumulation processes across time – and let us do so without disregarding the two urbanizing contexts each of them belongs to.

We have seen in chapters 6 and 7 the ways in which these two spaces of urban relegation have been connected to the capitalist economy. For instance, in the early 1970s, Francisco de Oliveira (2003 [1972]: 59) advanced the thesis that the self-guided creation and more or less autonomous expansion of Brazilian favelas might be related to what Marx referred to as primitive accumulation because housing costs were simply excluded from the calculations of capital while remunerating the urban workforce employed in industries and factories (Chapter 6). In South Africa, around the same time, authors like Harold Wolpe (1972) and Martin Legassick (1974, 1975) (see also Wolpe and Legassick, 1976) developed analogous interpretations of both old African reserves and townships in rural areas under separate development. According to them, the apartheid economy relied on both repression and the lowering of the wage structure by externalizing the costs of the social reproduction of labor onto families in rural areas, which, as in Brazil, could be

related to primitive accumulation (Chapter 7). What is most interesting, however, is that, to satisfy the 'new regime of accumulation' (Aglietta, 1979, 1982) of separate development, townships were meant to exist in relative proximity to the so-called 'Bantustans.' Thus, the legacies of previous racial segregation – such as the historical townships established from the early 1900s onward to the south of downtown Johannesburg – somewhat curbed apartheid's plans for African deurbanization. If in the 1970s Rio de Janeiro's favelas were part of a kind of accumulation *without* direct dispossession, around the same time Johannesburg's townships represented hindrances for the blueprints of industrial decentralization and separate development. But we could say that Johannesburg's early locations and old townships – in conjunction with the old African reserves – had previously played a comparable role to Brazilian favelas. At any rate, the creation and expansion of favelas and townships can be related to extra-economic coercion and to various methods of lowering of the cost of reproducing the labor force. Although for different reasons, in both contexts the social reproduction of the labor force was pushed to the lowest level. Thus, despite the variety of methods for accumulation by dispossession, and despite the dissimilar *form* and *structure* of unplanned favelas and planned townships, one could say that both of them have accomplished a similar *function* within their respective urban contexts, to use Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) triadic terminology of *form*, *structure*, and *function*. Back then, favelas and townships contributed to capitalist accumulation chiefly through what Harvey (2003) has renamed as accumulation by dispossession.

There is something else I want to highlight here while taking the historical-geography of favelas and townships into account: Both favelas and townships were bound to the capitalist economy in ways that meant accumulation did not happen within their own boundaries but somewhere else. Favela and township inhabitants were exploited in mines, factories, and other business activities, which were usually located outside their territories. Capitalist accumulation – to be precise, surplus value production – did not happen on the spot in any of these two spaces of urban relegation but rather occurred elsewhere. In this sense, neither Rio de Janeiro's favelas nor Johannesburg's townships were at the forefront of capitalist accumulation, so to speak. On the contrary, both of them must be regarded as being the reproductive backdrops of (dependent) capitalist economies. From a historical point of view, Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships might be regarded as territories of reproduction of the labor force rather than places of exploitation. The labor forces living in them have been remunerated below the

general standards of their societies, which means their populations have had the lowest levels of consumption, which means their contribution to effective demand (that is, to surplus value realization) has been fairly tangential. In sum, from a historical point of view, Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships can be only scarcely regarded as places in which surplus value is either produced or realized. One consequence of this is that, whereas both favelas and townships were produced under capitalism, and while both of them might have favored capitalist production, none of the two was produced as a commodity (chapters 6 and 7). In a different way, but paralleling most of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, the built environment of African townships like Soweto was not originally erected as a commodity for sale in the market. Apart from freehold townships like Alexandra and Sophiatown, land and real estate property occupied by Africans were usually owned by the state (Chapter 7). Therefore, Johannesburg's townships share a characteristic with Rio de Janeiro's favelas: For a long time, their inhabitants were obstructed, albeit in different ways, from engaging in markets beyond the labor market. Until fairly recently, favelas and townships have evolved on the margins of markets, on the rims of the city.

The situation has changed significantly in recent times, with (urban) development taking root in favelas and townships. Nowadays both favelas and townships take part in accumulation processes that are materialized within their own boundaries. From the backstage of workforce reproduction, Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships – not without ambiguities – were linked in different ways to the capitalist economy. Similarly to Rio de Janeiro's favelas but not exactly in the same way, against the backdrop of their past times – marked by social exclusion and racial oppression – Johannesburg's townships are now being integrated in increasingly complex ways into the puzzle of the urban factory. My interpretation in chapters 6 and 7 corroborates these kinds of understandings. But if, on the one hand, our examination of the recent (urban) development of favelas and townships shows that capitalist accumulation has begun to make inroads into them, on the other, it takes diverse forms and has diverse effects across the two urban settings.

A main difference between favelas and townships at the current juncture is that many of Rio's favelas have found themselves at odds with capitalist development (Chapter 8). Their current locational arrangement represents a prospective hindrance for upcoming accumulation. As such, favelas face stronger pressures for the regularization of services and land, which prompts market-driven gentrification and forced evictions,

that is, accumulation by dispossession (Chapter 6). On the other side, in townships, we see the production of space and the promotion of consumption (of commodities) on the spot, something that township malls epitomize, and also accumulation by dispossession, for instance, in the form of privatization of basic services (Chapter 7). Despite these differences, the recent foundation on consumption is a common feature across the two contexts of urban marginalization. Within the 'overall positive context' of the 2000s and 2010s, townships and favela residents have been recognized as consumers while their social spaces were merchandised and consumed, as tourist attractions, for instance (chapters 6 and 7). Indeed, a thought-provoking finding that emerges from my examination of the recent transformation of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships is that, just like in earlier times, nowadays, both of these territories engage in various ways with what Harvey (2003) has termed accumulation by dispossession. But perhaps the main theoretical insight here is that the most recent connections of favelas and townships to the capitalist economy, which include current accumulation by dispossession but go beyond it, should be theorized in view of the previous entanglements of these territories with capitalist accumulation, which, as we have seen, was founded on various forms of accumulation by dispossession.

From the well-grounded description of living conditions in Rio's favelas and Johannesburg's townships and from a consideration of their local histories (chapters 6 and 7), I want to suggest here, precisely, that the overall urban trajectories of favelas and townships are patterned by different waves of (primitive) accumulation. Following the characteristic mood of recent postcolonial literature in urban studies, Ghertner (2014, 2015) denounces the use of concepts that have been coined in the contexts of what he terms Western cities by transplanting and straightforwardly applying them, sometimes with quite problematic theoretical consequences, to cities elsewhere. He (2014, 2015) condemns the misguided use of the concept of gentrification to examine slum demolitions through extra-economic means in urban contexts of India and China. He is certainly correct, at least in analytical terms, in claiming that slum clearance through extra-economic means is not the same as market-driven gentrification.

A first issue, however, is that, as Ghertner (2014) himself recognizes, market-driven gentrification does take place in the global South as well. Even if in contemporary India slum clearance might be the main cause of displacement among the urban poor, this may not be the case in other contexts of the global South. For instance, I found both forms of displacement happening concomitantly in Rio de Janeiro (Chapter 6). Both of them

have deleterious consequences for the poorest in society. I would risk saying that, very likely, in Rio de Janeiro displacement through market-driven forces has been the most forceful in recent times, with its concrete forms having a lot to do with the formalization and expansion of markets across the urban margins (Chapter 6). Ghertner (2014) is most likely correct in approaching slum eradication practices through concepts such as accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003) rather than global gentrification (Smith, 2002). What he overlooks, though, is that contemporary forced dislocations and other forms of accumulation by dispossession, such as the privatization of basic services, might be only the latest expressions of accumulation by dispossession, which are now happening against the backdrop of previous cycles of accumulation. The same should apply to the production of space, commodification pushes, and gentrification, where they indeed are to be found. Contemporary accumulation by dispossession means the dispossession of those who have already been dispossessed in the past. It entails also the resegregation of those who have already been segregated, which means the reinstatement of socio-spatial injustice.

Harvey (2014: 174-5, 188-98) has shown convincingly how the margins of the capitalist economy might play functional roles for accumulation. For instance, in contexts of 'partial proletarianization,' unpaid labor absorbed in social reproduction reduces costs of production by lowering the cost of living, just as resources might be freely extracted from nature and capital is not charged for the side-effects of production, such as environmental damage or air pollution.[246] But there are pressures for so-called 'full proletarianization' and the full integration into the capitalist economy, basically because of the need to realize surplus value (Harvey, 2014: 182-98). What is puzzling, however, is that Harvey (2014: 174-5, 188-90) refers to 'partial proletarianization' and the 'vast amount of unpaid labor absorbed in social reproduction' but does not count self-construction or domestic labor as entailing, at least potentially, primitive accumulation.[247] So, favelas and townships, the hitherto neglected reproductive backdrops of the capitalist economy in their respective contexts, now meet surplus value production and surplus

---

[246] To a great extent, Harvey is elaborating on Rosa Luxemburg's (1913, 1925) ideas about 'non-capitalist' and 'capitalist' interconnections – even though there are obvious differences between their approaches, with Harvey demonstrating a far less linear understanding of the fortunes of social formations of the global South.

[247] See Oliveira (2003 [1972]) regarding Brazilian favelas and radical feminists regarding reproductive labor (Dalla Costa and James, 1972; Beneria, 1979; Dalla Costa, 2004, 2005; Federici, 2004).

value realization. The everyday life of favelas and townships has been overloaded by the commodity form and the myriad relations it embodies.

Dispossession is still commonplace in favelas and townships, yet it takes new forms nowadays. But what should be noted is that recent socio-spatial dynamics, peculiar to the capitalist city and the contemporary global economy, including those of near-ubiquitous commodification and of the production of space, are important, but they do not occur in a vacuum. Over the more than one hundred years in which townships and favelas have existed, there are structural changes that must be considered if we are to accurately grasp recent developments in a comparative way. Any attempt to retheorize the production of space, accumulation by dispossession, and commodification should lead us to reconsider each of these processes in each historical moment. The urban trajectories of favelas and township follow a parallel path that starts with accumulation by dispossession (based on unpaid labor in the sphere of reproduction, self-help construction, networks of mutual aid, extended families), and evolves into diverse economic dynamics (that is, surplus value production, surplus value realization, accumulation by dispossession, commodification, monetization, privatization, gentrification, and so on). And it is worth noting that, in both contexts, urban marginality still exists alongside the new forces of commodification (chapters 6 and 7). In the contemporary historical-geography of townships and favelas the contradictory unity of production and realization characteristic of capitalism is stridently spatialized. Therefore, the latest potential reassertion of capital through the 'conquest' of the 'marginal,' and all it brings about, all it replaces and displaces, the whole thing, appears to indicate the perpetuation of diverse waves of (primitive) accumulation across the urban margins. Forthcoming uneven development overlays previous rounds of erstwhile uneven development.

An uncomfortable question remains unanswered: 'How could a "right to difference" be realized in a situation in which processes of commodification and incorporation of urban differences advance to an unprecedented extent?' (Schmid, 2018: 14). Favelas and townships combine in their social space the result of successive waves of accumulation (by dispossession) and, at the end of the day, none of them appears to announce what Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 352-400) envisioned as differential space. They do not even seem to express any sort of counter-space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 349, 367, 380-3). At most, they embody 'induced difference,' but very hardly 'produced difference.' Differential space, which Lefebvre (1991 [1974]: 352-400) designates as peculiar to urban society, must be under construction elsewhere. The search for counter-spaces

(Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]) shall go on, alongside the hope for 'possible urban worlds' (Harvey, 1996) emerging in the course of 'alter-urbanizations' (Brenner, 2016). But there is one thing that seems certain. The recent transformation of the *function* of favelas and townships (from particular forms of accumulation by dispossession to multiple forms of accumulation) shall have consequences for their *form* and *structure*, which in the end ought to be 'non-unifying,' to use Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) triadic terminology again.

The transformations of favelas and townships are not quite the same but they seem to converge toward a new regime of urban seclusion in which the polarization between center and periphery is incrementally secured and reinforced. It is surely better to reserve any strong judgment, but the recent transformation of favelas and townships suggests that a 'new regime of accumulation' (Aglietta, 1979, 1982) – one that would combine accumulation by dispossession, the production of space, and accumulation driven by internal demand – might be developing amidst the new patterns of urban seclusion. It suggests the emergence of a multifaceted (urban) regime of accumulation that would reconfigure the geographies of production, consumption, and dispossession. In any case, the urban poor are again and again alienated from the city, which means that, right now, despite progressive legislation and/or welfare policies, which appear to be one of the faces of the new urban regimes of accumulation, it is very hard to argue that there is any sort of right to the city on the way in either Brazil or South Africa. As we have seen before in chapters 6, 7, and 8, in one way or another the urban poor are perpetually pushed out from the good locations toward peripheral zones.

## 9.2. Final words: Between exceptionalism and universalism

My work in this dissertation has attempted to find a middle path between postcolonial grammars and critical grammars in the field of urban studies. As such, I have tried to avoid two sorts of jeopardy that Das and Fasenfest (2018: 46) have signposted recently in relation to Marx's relevance for the global South, namely: (a) 'World-regional exceptionalism' (which in our case would mean basically absolutizing the specificity of favelas and townships); and (b) 'Eurocentric universalism' (which in our case could be understood as mechanically applying Lefebvre's or Harvey's ideas as if urban realities across the global South were no more than 'underdeveloped' variations of those in Europe or more broadly in the global North). Clearly, not everything Marx, Lefebvre, Harvey, and many other critical (urban) thinkers have said applies straightforwardly to the global

South, but, given that capitalism and its contradictions are everywhere, we should at least assume that some of it might apply. The diagnosis of capital's relentless expansion, which Marx (2011 [1857-58]) first formulated long ago, seems to still offer a means of detecting major historical trends that are neither fully exceptional nor fully universal. Thus, similarly to what Das and Fasenfest (2018: 46-7) argue regarding Marx's relevance beyond his own time and place, I also reject the claim that Lefebvre's and Harvey's works are limited only to their own immediate settings, and, therefore, insignificant for the examination of urban configurations emerging and evolving across the global South, such as favelas and townships. In short, I have sought to avoid both the orthodox Marxist notion that the urbanizing realities of the global South are merely 'infantile' or 'miscarried' versions of their counterparts in Europe and in the global North and the postcolonial and postmodern idea that all cities are ordinary, at least in the sense that all of them should be approached as sorts of loosely connected fragments that in the end are rendered near-incommensurably dissimilar (Chapter 3).[248] To avoid the first mistake, we need to reintroduce History 2 into History 1 (Chakrabarty, 2000), whereas to prevent the latter, we must reinsert History 1 into History 2 (Chakrabarty, 2000).

I hope the last step in our itinerary in this study, that is, my attempt at retheorization in chapters 8 and 9, albeit manifestly exploratory, has been useful for making critical perspectives in urban studies more attentive to urban trajectories beyond the global North. I have confidence as well that this dissertation has assisted in re-establishing critique and historical attentiveness into the grammars of postcolonial theory in urban studies. Schmid has recently stated that the term 'ordinary cities' (Robinson, 2006) epitomizes the idea that 'there are no privileged places for the generation of insights into the urban: every city can potentially serve as a legitimate and valuable starting point for the construction of urban theory' (Schmid, 2018: 11). I unhesitatingly affirm that the postcolonial diagnosis must be taken into account. Theorization, and above all, radical critique, can and should happen from variegated social topographies. On the other hand, our task should be to continue engaging with critical (urban) theory in ways that allow us

---

[248] Critical (urban) theorists can no longer make the old 'Marxist-led' mistakes. For instance, there is no reason to insist either that colonialism and imperialism lead to progress or that capitalism and industrialization (and urbanization) are required steps towards complex communal societies yet to come, or even that we must focus on the 'more developed' societies if we want to grasp the inner logic of capitalism. Not even the methodological orientation according to which we must give pristine priority to the abstract over the concrete stands anymore without problems. I think my own methodological orientation here clearly bears out this last point (see Chapter 2). The dissertation should exemplify the others to some degree as well.

to go beyond rhetorical declarations of good intentions – such as Roy (2009, 2015, 2016) and Robinson (2006, 2014a, 2015) have done so far – and to do so while informed by the histories and geographies of the global South.

This implies, for instance, interpreting the urban experiences of the global South without appealing to any kind of temporal dislocation (Fabian, 1983). In fact, a contribution of the present research is precisely the organization of a comparison of two urban realities of the global South in relatively symmetrical ways, while using qualitative data and without disregarding their respective histories. Similarly to my corporeal immersion in the everyday life of favelas and townships, arranging the comparison between the two urban settings has constituted a major challenge for me. I believe that such a comparison represents a clear breakthrough in relation to the mere enunciation of the need to compare (see Roy, 2009; Robinson, 2014a, 2015) and also to the option of doing so using the juxtaposition of cases that in the end are scarcely compared – as McFarlane (2010), Farías (2010), Caldeira (2016), Richmond (2018), and many others, have done in recent years.

The comparison I have prepared in the preceding chapters has a clear and necessary historical framework that seems to me to be fundamental to avoiding the naïve relativism that, as we have seen in Chapter 3, can lead to really problematic theoretical deviations. But I believe that the comparative analysis of the urban trajectories of favelas and townships is also relevant because it opens up new horizons of reflection on themes such as (urban) development, (de)commodification, the production of space, gentrification, and accumulation by dispossession. Comparison propelled us from our case studies toward theory again.

The comparative effort I have set up between favelas and townships can in itself be considered a relevant contribution of this dissertation. Theoretical insights have emerged already from the point-by-point comparison of favelas and townships across a selection of integrative dimensions in Chapter 8. For example, Wacquant's (2008) analysis of urban seclusion patterns in the United States and France indicates that the stripping down of the social welfare system is behind the expansion of urban marginality. According to him, the more social welfare policies, the less urban marginality. This does not apply straightforwardly to our case studies, though. The recent experiences of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships suggest that the connections between social policies and urban marginality are not so unequivocally positive. Given that social welfare systems have expanded in South Africa and Brazil in recent decades, my

empirical research points to the fact that social policies and (urban) development have not been able to significantly flatten out deep-rooted inequalities that are characteristic of their cities. In this sense, in a manner resembling critical development scholars' approaches – for instance, Hart's (2001) distinction between big 'D' and little 'd' development – I would like to suggest here that there is a real strength in showing that (urban) development and welfare policies fail to achieve transformative effects because of how underlying processes of capital accumulation are playing out in particular contexts.

The experience of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships suggests that, at best, (urban) development, under present-day social conditions, eventually expands commodification: It helps to create markets where they did not exist or to expand them where they were not properly consolidated. Any improvement, however necessary, tends to be incorporated into the price system (which, in the end, characterizes what Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) theorized as abstract space). This has consequences for those who cannot engage in the relevant markets or, at most, manage to do so only precariously. The question is: Would it be possible to achieve the right to the city (Lefebvre, 1978 [1968]) without tampering with the iron laws of land and real estate markets – the center of the urban question (Maricato, 2001)? The problem is that, when basic infrastructure is in itself designated as a means to claiming the right to the city, this right loses its utopian and transformative horizons and is reduced to the right to admittance into markets. Therefore, the improvement of the basic infrastructure only extends commodification and markets without challenging the logic of accumulation which they rely on. In short, favelas and townships show that even supposedly well-developed processes of (urban) development and welfare expansion can be severely limited by (land) market institutions and capitalist (uneven) logics of development (Smith, 2010 [1984]). The match occurs at most for the 'democratization' of markets, of housing, water, electricity, and so on, in a word, of the city. Despite being in some measure affected, the expansive logic of capital accumulation has not been dethroned. Instead, it has incorporated into its dynamics recent (urban) development and the progressive advances of welfare policies.

This seems to signal the need for a paradigm shift. 'Partial decommodification' (only of labor, for instance) is not enough. This means, for instance, that Polanyi's (2001 [1944]: 211) deference to the New Deal decades ago or Wacquant's (2008) much more recent keen confidence in welfare state systems should be seriously rethought. What is

clear, however, is that we should be able to leave what Polanyi (2001 [1944]: 36) theorized as '*improvement*' aside while restoring the '*habitation*' in the course of a new great transformation. Emancipation depends on the 'full decommodification' that could be advanced through the gradual decommodification of basic needs provision. In a world of multiple alienations, emancipation must take place in relation to work and consumption (Lefebvre, 2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]: 83-4, 619). It must be total or it will not be. All this depends on freeing the economy from the requirement of endless growth that is endemic to capitalism. Production and consumption must be guided by social needs, not the needs of capital. Surplus value realization must be replaced by social need. From this angle, Marx's (2011 [1857-58], 2017 [1867] [1885] [1894]) old arguments are indeed still very pertinent to the present. But there are similar arguments from other positionalities. Grosfoguel's (2008) pluriversalism and Escobar's (2014) and Quijano's (2014 [1968-2010]: 425-580) retrieval of the notion of '*Buen Vivir*' within a post-developmental perspective, for instance, should inspire our future engagement with critical (urban) theory. Accumulation must give way to life; the contemporary factory of everyday life must give way to good (everyday) life.

Certainly, the comparison of the long urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships in the scope of this research, and my attempt at retheorization emerging from it, fall far short of offering a complete and definitive analysis of issues such as the production of space, urbanization, accumulation by dispossession, (urban) development, and (de)commodification. Moreover, while looking back on what I have done in this study, I must recognize that certain parallels between the two cases could have been explored in more detail, such as the way in which the inhabitants of these two spaces of urban relegation are stigmatized in the context of their respective metropolises. It would be particularly interesting to scrutinize how the several components of stigmatization, among them race and place, link to contemporary economic dynamics in each context, for instance, to the production of space or to commodification pushes. Such delimitations leave certain important issues open to further comparative research.

Another potential source of criticism may come from those who do not understand commodification as a multifaceted, near-ubiquitous reality of our urbanizing present. I just want to say that, in working with the comprehensive notion of commodification that Harvey (2014) develops out of his reading of Marx, there are at least three relevant ways to operationalize empirical studies about it. The first is to consider, from historically

attentive points of view, how commodification has gradually extended over the social and natural realms that were previously out of its reach. The second relates to disentangling types of commodification, in the sense of what has been commodified (labor, land, everyday life, nature, history, and so on) and when. The third involves the consideration of decommodification, that is, the reversal or at least hindrance of the several sorts of commodification, which can lead to contradictory combinations. For instance, in Rio's favelas, organized drug-dealing has stopped the recent extension of commodification over land and everyday life but drug-dealing entails trading in (illegal) commodities (see Chapter 8). While comparing favelas and townships I have tried, as far as possible, to encompass all of these diverse aspects of commodification.

Despite all the limitations of my work here, I consider that, together with qualitative research, comparative approaches prove to be absolutely necessary in order to advance critical research in the field of urban studies. There are many relevant findings emerging from my research that are underpinned by these methodological orientations.

Qualitative research allowed me to problematize many understandings about favelas' and townships' political economies: From dystopian narratives (Davis, 2004, 2006) to claims that Soweto is a surplus labor dump (Ceruti, 2013) to overly-positive interpretations about social policies and (urban) development in Brazil and South Africa in recent times (see, for instance, Seekings, 2012b; Neri, 2012). Another relevant empirical finding emerging from my comparative exercise is, precisely, that there might be numerous entanglements between criminality, welfare policies, and (de)commodification in contexts of urban marginality. In Chapter 8 we have seen that in Rio de Janeiro's favelas organized crime has imposed unsuspected limits on the advancement of particular forms of commodification, whereas, by contrast, in Johannesburg's townships widespread ordinary criminality seems to stimulate them. Our comparison of the urban trajectories of favelas and townships has also shown the relevance of locational legacies for (urban) development (chapters 8 and 9). From the comparative analysis of the linkages of favelas and townships with the capitalist economy over time there arises, for instance, an indication that accumulation that has taken shape recently in favelas and townships overlays previous rounds of accumulation. The recent (urban) development of favelas and townships should be theorized without disregarding the social and spatial relationships they have had in the past. The historical-geographies of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships show as well that critical theorization of urbanization must be somewhat pluralized, decentered, which I have tried

to do in dialogue with Lefebvre's work while relying on the work of Latin American theorists such as Milton Santos (2004 [1978]) and Aníbal Quijano (2000, 2014 [1968-2010]). But there must be many other theoretical (and practical) routes toward critical plurality in urban studies. This thesis could be read as an incitement to pursue them.

Building on my analysis of the urban trajectories of Rio de Janeiro's favelas and Johannesburg's townships, I have argued for adopting a fairer view of the relevance of critical urban theory for the urban realities of the global South, which means too that these two urban contexts of the global South might have helped us to start to reassess critical urban theory. After my journeys between Rio de Janeiro's favelas spontaneous alleys and stairways and Soweto's arid apart-planned landscapes, the middle ground, the 'somewhere' between the critical and postcolonial grammars in the urban studies to which I have referred earlier, might now appear a little less fuzzy (see Chapter 3). In other words, what I hope to have achieved to some degree with this thesis is, firstly, to bring the grammars of critical thought and postcolonial thought in urban studies closer together and, secondly, to contribute to a process of retheorization from the margins of our urban fabric (and academic industry), which at present seems to have gone little beyond its rudiments. I believe that such an agenda should be developed in the form of a critique of capitalist (urban) development. The critique of (urban) development must continue. And it should be envisioned through postcolonial lenses.

## 10. References

Abreu, M. de A. (1986) 'Da habitação ao habitat: a questão da habitação popular no Rio de Janeiro e sua evolução', *Revista Rio de Janeiro* 1(2): 47-58.

Abreu, M. de A. (1987) *Evolução Urbana do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: IPLANRIO/J. Zahar.

Abreu, M. de A. (2010) *Geografia Histórica do Rio de Janeiro (1502-1700).* Rio de Janeiro: Andrea Jakobsson Estúdio & Prefeitura do Município do Rio de Janeiro.

Abreu, M. de A. and VAZ, L. F. (1991) Sobre a Origem das Favelas. Conference Proceedings of the IV Encontro Nacional da ANPUR, Salvador, Brasil (28-31 May).

Acuto, M. (2011) 'Putting ANTs into the mille-feuille', *City* 15(5): 552-62.

Adorno, T. W. (2009 [1966]) *Dialética Negativa*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar.

Adorno, T. W. and Horkheimer, M. (1972 [1944]) *Dialectic of Enlightment*. New York: The Seabury Press.

Aglietta, M. (1979) *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation*. London: New Left Books.

Aglietta, M. (1982) 'World capitalism in the eighties', *New Left Review* 136: 3-4.

Alexander, P., Ceruti, C., Motseke, K., Phadi, M., Wale, K. (Eds) (2013) *Class in Soweto*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Amin, A. and Graham, S. (1997) 'The ordinary city', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 22: 411-29.

Amore, C. S., Shimbo, L. Z., Rufino, M. B. C. (Eds) (2015) *Minha Casa... E a cidade? Avaliação do Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida em Seis Estados Brasileiros*. Rio de Janeiro: Letra Capital/Observatório das Metrópoles.

Angotti, T. (2006) 'Apocalyptic anti-urbanism: Mike Davis and his planet of slums', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30(4): 961-67.

Arnason, J. P. (2003) *Civilizations in Dispute: Historical Questions and Theoretical Traditions*. Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Arnason, J. P., Eisenstadt, S., Wittrock, B. (Eds) (2005) *Axial Civilizations and World History*. Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Avritzer, L. (2002a) 'Modelos de deliberação democrática: uma análise do orçamento participativo no Brasil', In Santos, B. de S. (Ed) *Democratizar a democracia: os caminhos da democracia participativa*, pp. 561-88. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Civilização Brasileira.

Avritzer, L. (2002b) 'O orçamento participativo: uma comparação entre Belo Horizonte e Porto Alegre', In Dagnino, E. (Ed) *Sociedade civil e espaços públicos no Brasil*, pp. 17-45. São Paulo: Ed. Paz e Terra.

Avritzer, L. (Ed) (1994) *Sociedade Civil e Democratização*. Belo Horizonte: Ed. Del Rey.

Baiochhi, G. and Ganuza, E. (2014) 'Participatory Budgeting as if Emancipation Mattered', *Politics & Society* 42(1): 29-50.

Bank, L. (2007) 'The rhythms of the yards: urbanism, backyards and housing policy in South Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 25(2): 205-228.

Barcellos, C. and Zaluar, A. (2014) 'Homicides and territorial struggles in Rio de Janeiro favelas', *Revista de Saúde Pública* 48(1): 94-102.

Barnett, N. (1989) 'A Chapter in the History of Cape Town's District Six: Destruction Planned, 1940', Unpublished Paper, Department of History, UCT.

Bastide, R. and Fernandes, F. (Eds) (1955) *Relações Raciais entre Negros e Brancos em São Paulo*. São Paulo: UNESCO/Anhembi.

Bates, C. and Rhys-Taylor, A. (2017) *Walking thru Social Research*. New York and London: Routledge.

Beall, J., Crankshaw, O., Parnell, S. (2000) 'Victims, villains and fixers: the urban environment and Johannesburg's poor', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 26(4), 833-55.

Beall, J., Crankshaw, O., Parnell, S. (2002) *Uniting a divided city: Governance and social exclusion in Johannesburg*. London: Earthscan.

Beall, J., Crankshaw, O., Parnell, S. (2003) 'Social differentiation and urban governance in greater Soweto: A case study of post-apartheid reconstruction,' In Tomlinson, R. et al. (Eds) *Emerging Johannesburg: Perspectives on the Postapartheid City*, pp. 197-214. New York: Routledge.

Beavon, K. (2004) *Johannesburg: The making and Shaping of the City*. Pretoria: University of South Africa Press.

Beinart, W. and Delius, P. (2014) 'The Historical Context and Legacy of the Natives Land Act of 1913', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40(4): 667-88.

Beinart, W., Delius, P., Trapido, S. (Eds) (1986) *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa, 1850–1930*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Benchimol, J. L. (1990) *Pereira Passos: um Haussmann Tropical. A Renovação Urbana do Rio de Janeiro do Início do Século XIX*. Rio de Janeiro: Secretaria Municipal de Cultura, Turismo e Esportes, Departamento Geral de Documentação e Informação Cultural.

Beneria, L. (1979) 'Reproduction, production and the sexual division of labour', *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 3: 203-25.

Benjamin, W. (2002 [1927-40]) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Berman, M. (1988 [1982]) *All That is Solid Melts Into Air. The Experience of Modernity*. New York: Peguin Books.

Bhan, G. (2016) *In the Public's Interest: Evictions, Citizenship and Inequality in Contemporary Delhi*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan; Athens: University of Geia Press.

Boatcă, M. (2009) 'Desigualdad social reconsiderada – descubriendo puntos ciegos a través de vistas desde abajo', *Tabula Rasa*, 11: 115-40.

Bond, P. (2000a) *The Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa*. London: Pluto Press.

Bond, P. (2000b) *Cities of Gold, Townships of Coal: Essays on South Africa's New Urban Cities*. Africa World Press

Bond, P. (2004a) *Against Global Apartheid: South Africa Meets the World Bank, IMF and International Finance*. London: Zed Press.

Bond, P. (2004b) *Talk Left, Walk Right: South Africa's Frustrated Global Reforms*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Bond, P. (2011) 'What is Radical in Neoliberal-Nationalist South Africa?', *Review of Radical Political Economics* 43(3): 354-60.

Bond, P. (2016) 'BRICS banking and the debate over sub-imperialism', *Third World Quarterly* 37(4): 611-29, DOI: 10.1080/01436597.2015.1128816.

Bonduki, N. (1997 [1996]) *Habitat: as práticas bem-sucedidas em habitação, meio ambiente e gestão urbana nas cidades brasileiras*. São Paulo: Studio Nobel.

Bonduki, N. (2000) *Habitar São Paulo: reflexões sobre a gestão urbana*. São Paulo: Estação Liberdade.

Bonefeld, W. (2001) 'The Permanence of Primitive Accumulation: Commodity Fetishism and Social Constitution', *The Commoner* 2(September). Available at http://www.commoner.uk/02bonefeld.pdf [Accessed 26 July 2018].

Bonefeld, W. (2014) *Critical Theory and the Critique of Political Economy. On subversion and negative reason*. New York/London/New Delhi/Sidney: Bloomsbury.

Bonner, P. (1989) 'The Politics of Black Squatter Movements on the Rand, 1944-52', *Radical History Review* 46(7), 89-116.

Bonner, P. and Nieftagodien, N. (2008) *Alexandra: A History*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Bonner, P. and Segal, L. (1999) *Soweto: A History*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.

Bonner, P., Delius, P., Posel, D. (1993) *Apartheid's genesis, 1935-1962*. Braamfontein: Ravan Press; Johannesburg : Witwaterstrand University Press

Boudreau, J. Gandy, M., Kaika, M. (2015) 'IJURR Editorial', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 39(1): 1-1.

Braig, M., Costa, S., Göbel, B. (2015) 'Desigualdades sociales e interdependencias globales en América Latina: una valoración provisional', *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* 60(223): 209-36.

Bremner, L. (1999) 'Crime and the Emerging Landscape of Post-apartheid Johannesburg', In Judin, H. and Vladislavic I. (Eds) *Blank Architecture, Apartheid and After*, pp. 48-63. Rotterdam: Nai Publishers.

Bremner, L. (2004) *Johannesburg: One City Colliding Worlds*. Johannesburg: STE.

Brenner, N. (2009) 'What is critical urban theory?', *City* 13(2-3): 198-207.

Brenner, N. (2013) 'Theses on urbanization', *Public Culture* 25(1): 85-114.

Brenner, N. (2014a) 'Introduction: Urban theory without an outside', In Brenner, N. (Ed) *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, pp. 14–33. Berlin: Jovis.

Brenner, N. (2016) *Critique of Urbanization: Selected Essays*. Basel and Boston: Birkhäuser Verlag/Bauwelt Fundamente Series.

Brenner, N. (2018) Debating planetary urbanization: For an engaged pluralism. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 0(0): 1-21, E-pub ahead of print, DOI: doi.org/10.1177/0263775818757510.

Brenner, N. (Ed) (2014b) *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*. Berlin: Jovis.

Brenner, N. and Schmid, C. (2011) 'Planetary urbanization', In: Gandy, M. (Ed) *Urban Constellations*. Berlin: Jovis, pp. 10-3.

Brenner, N. and Schmid, C. (2014) 'The "urban age" in question', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38(3): 731-55.

Brenner, N. and Schmid, C. (2015) Towards a new epistemology of the urban. *City* 19(2-3): 151-82.

Brenner, N., Madden, D. J., Wachsmuth, D. (2011) 'Assemblage urbanism and the challenges of critical urban theory', *City* 15(2): 225-40, DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2011.568717.

Brown, E. and Shortell, T. (2014) *Walking in Cities: Quotidian Mobility as Urban Theory, Method, and Practice*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Brum, M. S. (2012) 'Ditadura civil-militar e favelas: estigma e restrições ao debate sobre a cidade (1969-1973)', *Caderno das Metrópoles* 14(28): 357-79.

Brum, M. S. (2013) 'Favelas e remocionismo ontem e hoje: da Ditadura de 1964 aos Grandes Eventos', *O Social em Questão* 16(29): 179-208.

Bunnell, T. and Maringanti, A. (2010) 'Practising urban and regional research beyond metrocentricity', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 34(2): 415-20.

Burawoy, M. (2000) 'Introduction: Reaching for the Global', In Burawoy, M. et al. (Eds) *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imagination in a Postmodern World*, pp. 1-40. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Burawoy, M. (2001) 'Manufacturing the Global', *Ethnography* 2(2): 147-59.

Burgess, R. (1977) 'Self-Help Housing A New Imperialist Strategy? A Critique of the Turner School', *Antipode* 9: 50-9.

Burgess, R. (1978) 'Petty commodity housing or dweller control? A critique of John Turner's view on housing policy', *World Development* 6: 1105-34.

Burgess, R. (1982) 'Self-Help Housing Advocacy: A Curious Form of Radicalism: A Critique of the Work of John F.C. Turner', In Ward, P. W. (Ed) *Self-Help Housing: A Critique*, pp. 56-97. London: Alexandrine Press.

Caffentzis, G. (1995) 'The Fundamental Implications of the Debt Crisis for Social Reproduction in Africa', In eds. Dalla Costa, M. and Dalla Costa, G. F.

(Eds) *Paying The Price: Women and the Politics of International Economic Strategy*, pp. 15-41. London: Zed.

Caffentzis, G. (2011) 'The Future of the Commons. New Formations', *Imperial Ecologies* (69): 23-41.

Caldeira, T. P. R. (2000) *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation and Citizenship in Sao Paulo*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Caldeira, T. P. R. (2016) 'Peripheral urbanization: Autoconstruction, transversal logics, and politics in cities of the global south', Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 0(0) 1–18, E-pub ahead of print, DOI: doi.org/10.1177/0263775816658479.

Campello, T. and Neri, M. C. (Eds) (2013) Programa Bolsa Família: uma década de inclusão e cidadania. Brasília: Ipea.

Campos, A. (2005 [2003]) *Do quilombo à favela: a produção do "espaço criminalizado" no Rio de Janeiro.* Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil.

Cano, I. (2012) 'Os donos do morro; uma avaliação exploratória do impacto das Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora (UPPs) no Rio de Janeiro', Relatório do LAV-CAF, Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, Rio de Janeiro.

Cano, I. (2013) 'Violence and Organized Crime in Brazil: The case of 'militias' in Rio de Janeiro', In Böll-Stiftung, H. and Schönenberg, R. (Eds) *Transnational Organized Crime: analyses of a Global Challenge to Democracy*, pp. 179-188. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

Cano, I. and Duarte, T. (Eds) (2012) *'No sapatinho': a evolução das milícias no Rio de Janeiro (2008-2011)*. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Heinrich Böll.

Cano, I. and Ribeiro, E. (2014) 'A seletividade das Políticas de Pacificação', In Penalva Santos, A. M. S and Sant Anna, M. J. G.  (Eds) *Transformações territoriais no Rio de Janeiro do século XXI*, pp. 129-59. Rio de Janeiro: Gramma.

Cardoso, A. L. (Ed) (2013) *O Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida e seus Efeitos Territoriais*. Rio de Janeiro: Letra Capital/Observatório das Metrópoles.

Carr, W. J. P. (1990) *Soweto: Its creation, life, and decline*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR).

Castells, M. (1977 [1972]) *The Urban Question. A Marxist Approach*. London: Edward Arnold.

Castriota, R. and Monte-Mór, R. L. (2016) 'How Inclusive is the Urban? Which Urban are We Talking About?', *Regions Magazine* 303(1): 9-11.

Castriota, R. and Tonucci, J. (2018) 'Extended urbanization in and from Brazil', *Environment and Planning D, Space and Society* 36(3): 512-28.

Castro-Gómez, S. (2000) 'Ciencias sociales, violencia epistémica y el problema de la "invención" del otro', In Lander, E. (Ed) *La colonialidad del saber: Eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas*, pp. 145-62. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales.

CDURP – Companhia de Desenvolvimento Urbano da Região do Porto do Rio de Janeiro (2012) *Porto Maravilha*. Rio de Janeiro: CDURP. Available at http://portomaravilha.com.br/mapa_empreendimentos [Accessed 10 May 2017].

Certeau, M. de (1984 [1980]) *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ceruti, C. (2013) 'A proletarian township: Work, home and class', In Alexander, P. et al. (Eds) *Class in Soweto*, pp. 96-126. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Chakrabarty, D. (2000) *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Chatterjee, P. (1997) *Our modernity*. Amsterdam/Rotterdam/Dakar, SEPHIS-CODESRIA.

Chibber, V. (2013) *Postcolonial Theory and the Spectre of Capitalism*. London: Verso.

Chipkin, I. (2013) 'Capitalism, city, apartheid in the twenty-first century', *Social Dynamics* 39(2): 228-47, DOI: 10.1080/02533952.2013.796123.

Choplin, A. (2012) 'De-Westernising urban theory', Metropolitics, 5 December. Available at http://www.metropolitiques.eu/IMG/pdf/MET-Choplin-en.pdf [Accessed 26 July 2018].

Christopher, A. J. (1989) 'Spatial Variations in the Application of Residential Segregation in South African Cities', *Geoforum* 20(3): 253-67.

Christopher, A. J. (1994) *The Atlas of Apartheid*. London: Routledge.

Christopher, A. J. (1997) 'Racial land zoning in urban South Africa', *Land Use Policy* 14(4): 311-23.

Coggin, T. and Pieterse, M. (2012) 'Rights and the City: An exploration of the interaction between socio-economic Rights and the City', *Urban Forum* 2*3*(3): 257-78.

Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. L. (2012) *Theory from the South: How Euro-America is Evolving toward Africa*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm.

Comitê Popular da Copa e Olimpíadas no Rio (Comitê Popular) (2014) Megaeventos e Violações dos Direitos Humanos no Rio de Janeiro. Dossiê do Comitê Popular da Copa e Olimpíadas do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro. Avaliable at http://bit.ly/DossieRio2014 [Accessed 13 August 2015].

Connell, R. (2009 [2007]) *Southern Theory*. Cambridge: Allen and Unwin.

Conway, D. (1982) 'Self-Help Housing, the Commodity Nature of Housing and Amelioration of the Housing Deficit: Continuing the Turner-Burgess Debate', *Antipode* 14(2): 40-6.

Cook, I. and Ward, K. (2011) 'Trans-urban Networks of Learning, Mega Events and Policy Tourism. The Case of Manchester's Commonwealth and Olympic Games Projects', *Urban Studies* 48(12): 2519-35.

Coronil, F. (2000) 'Naturaleza del Poscolonialismo: del eurocentrismo al globocentrismo', In Lander, E. (Ed) *La colonialidad del saber: Eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas*, pp. 87-112. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales.

Coronil, F. (2003) '¿Globalización Liberal o Imperialismo Global? Cinco Piezas para Armar el Rompecabezas del Presente', *Revista Temas* 33(34): 14-27.

Coronil, F. (2007) 'El Estado de América Latina y sus Estados: Siete piezas para un rompecabezas por armar en tiempos de izquierda', *Nueva Sociedad* 210: 203-15.

Corrêa, R. L. (1995 [1993]) *O espaço urbano*. São Paulo: Ática.

Costa, S. (2002) *As Cores de Ercília. Esfera pública, democracia, configurações pós-nacionais*. Belo Horizonte: Ed. UFMG.

Costes, L. (2014) 'Neoliberalization and evolution of the "right to the city"', *Justice Spatiale/Spatial Justice*, Online Publication No. 6 June. Available at: http://www.jssj./article/neoliberalisation-et-evolution-du-droit-a-la-ville/ [Accessed 13 August 2016].

Crankshaw, O. (1996) 'Social differentiation, conflict and development in a South African township', *Urban Forum* 7(1): 53-68.

Crankshaw, O., Gilbert, A., Morris, A. (2000) 'Backyard Soweto', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24(4): 841-57.

D'Orsi, R. N., Paes, N. M., Magalhães, M. A., Silva Junior, L. R. da, Valente, L. R. S. (2016) Os 50 Maiores Acidentes Geológico-Geotécnicos na Cidade do Rio de Janeiro entre 1966 e 2016. Rio de Janeiro: Instituto de Geotécnica do Município do Rio de Janeiro/Fundação Geo-Rio.

Dalla Costa M. (2005) 'Development and reproduction', *The Commoner* 10(Spring/Summer). Available at http://www.commoner.uk/ [Accessed 26 July 2018].

Dalla Costa, M. (2004) 'Capitalism and reproduction', *The Commoner* 8(Autumn/Winter). Available at http://www.commoner.uk/ [Accessed 26 July 2018].

Dalla Costa, M. and James, S. (1972) *The power of women and the subversion of community*. Bristol: Falling Wall Press.

Damazio, S. F. (1996) *Retrato social do Rio de Janeiro na virada do século*. Rio de Janeiro: EDUERJ.

Das, R. and Fasenfest, D. (2018) 'Marx and the Global South', *Global Dialogue. Magazine of the International Sociological Association* 8(1): 46-7.

Davenport, T. R. H. and Saunders, C. (2000 [1977]) *South Africa: A Modern History*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Davis, M. (1990) *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. London and New York: Verso.

Davis, M. (1999 [1998]) *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Davis, M. (2000a) *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*. New York: Verso.

Davis, M. (2000b) *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the US City*. London/New York: Verso.

Davis, M. (2004) 'Planet of slums: urban involution and the informal proletariat', *New Left Review* 26: 5-34.

Davis, M. (2006) *Planet of Slums: Urban Involution and the Informal Working Class*. London: Verso.

Dawson, M. C. (2010) '"Phansi privatisation! Phansi": The Anti-Privatisation Forum and ideology in social movements'. In Beinhart, W. and Dawson, M. (Eds) *Popular Politics and Resistance Movements in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

De Angelis, M. (2007) *The Beginning of History: Value Struggles and Global Capital*. London: Pluto.

De Angelis, M. (2010) 'The production of commons and the "explosion" of the middle class', *Antipode* 42(4): 954-77.

De Soto, H. (2000) *The mystery of capital: why capitalism triumphs in the West and fails everywhere else*. New York: Basic Books.

Desai, V. and Loftus, A. (2013) 'Speculating on Slums: Infrastructural Fixes in Informal Housing in the Global South', *Antipode* 45(4): 789-808, DOI:10.1111/j.1467-8330.2012.01044.x.

DeVerteuil, G. (2016) 'Pace and place: Resilience in an age of urban and theoretical churn', *Geoforum* 68: 69-72.

Diener, R., Herzog, J., Meili, M., et al. (2006) *Switzerland: An Urban Portrait*. Zürich: ETH Studio Basel/ Basel: Birkhäuser.

Diener. R., Gunnarsson, L., Gunz, M., et al. (2016) *Territory. On the Development of Landscape and City*. Zürich: ETH Studio Basel/Park Books.

Dlamini, J. (2009) *Native Nostalgia*. Auckland Park: Jacana Media.

Doshi, S. (2013) 'The Politics of the Evicted: Redevelopment, Subjectivity, and Difference in Mumbai's Slum Frontier', *Antipode* 45(4): 844-65.

Dussel, E. (1992) *1492. El Encubrimiento del Otro*. Bogotá: Antropos.

Dussel, E. (1993) 'Eurocentrism and modernity', In Beverly, J. and Oviedo, J. (Eds) *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, pp. 65-76. Durham: Duke University Press.

Dussel, E. (1996) *The Underside of Modernity*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press.

Dussel, E. (2000) 'Europe, modernity, and eurocentrism', *Nepantla* 1(3): 465-78.

Edensor, T. and Jayne, M. (2012) 'Introduction: Urban theory beyond the West', In Edensor, T. and Jayne, M. (Eds) *Urban Theory Beyond the West: A World of Cities*, pp. 1-27. London: Routledge.

Eisenstadt, S. N. (2002) *Multiple Modernities*. News Brunswick: Transaction.

Eisenstadt, S. N. (2003) *Comparative Civilizations & Multiple Modernities*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

Eisenstadt, S. N. (2009) 'Multiple modernities and multiple forms of civil society', in Oyen, S. A. and Slaattelid, R. T. (Eds) *Multiple Democracies in Theory and History*, pp. 5-14. Bergen: SVT Press/University of Bergen.

Escobar A. (2014) *Sentipensar con la tierra. Nuevas lecturas sobre desarrollo, territorio y diferencia*. Medellín: Ediciones UNAULA.

Escobar, A (2001) 'Culture sits in places: Reflections on globalism and subaltern strategies of localization', *Political Geography* 20: 139-74.

Escobar, A. (1995) *Encountering development. The making and unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Escobar, A. (2003) 'Mundos y conocimientos de otro modo: el programa de investigación de modernidad/colonialidad latinoamericano', *Tabula Rasa* 1: 51-86.

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990) *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Fabian, J. (1983) *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Fabinyi, M. (2013) 'Social Relations and Commodity Chains: The Live Reef Fish for Food Trade', *Anthropological Forum* 23(1): 36-57.

Fahmi, W. (2013) 'Bloggers' rights to Cairo's real and virtual spaces of protest', In Samara, T. A., He, S., Chen, G. (Eds) *Locating Right to the City in the Global South*, pp. 264-84. London: Routledge.

Farías, I. (2010) Introduction: Decentering the object of urban studies. In: Farías, I. and Bender, T. (Eds) *Urban Assemblages: How Actor-Network Theory Changes Urban Theory*, pp. 1-24. London: Routledge.

Farías, I. (2011) 'The politics of urban assemblages', *City* 15: 365-74.

Farías, I. and Bender, T. (2010) *Urban assemblages: How actor-network theory changes urban studies*. Londres: Routledge.

Federici, S. (2004) Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation. New York: Autonomedia.

Federici, S. (2010) 'Feminism and the Politics of the Commons in an Era of Primitive Accumulation', In Team Colors Collective (Ed) *Uses of a Whirlwind: Movement, Movements, and Contemporary Radical Currents in the United States*, pp. 138-49. Oakland, CA: AK Press.

Ferguson, J. (2006) *Global Shadows. Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. Durham/London: Duke University Press.

Fernandes, E. (1999) 'A regularização de favelas no Brasil: problemas e perspectivas', In Saule Jr., N. (Org) *Direito à cidade: trilhas legais para o direito às cidades sustentáveis*. São Paulo: Ed. Max Limonad.

Fernandes, E. (2001) *Direito urbanístico e política urbana no Brasil*. Belo Horizonte: Del Rey.

Fernandes, E. (2007a) 'Implementing the urban reform agenda in Brazil', *Environment and Urbanization* 19(1): 177-189.

Fernandes, E. (2007b) 'Constructing the "Right to the City" in Brazil', *Social & Legal Studies* 16(2): 201-19.

Fernandes, E. and Alfonsin, B. (Eds) (2006) *Direito Urbanístico. Estudos Brasileiros e Internacionais*. Belo Horizonte: Del Rey.

Fernandes, F. (1965) *A Integração do Negro na Sociedade de Classes*. São Paulo: Dominus.

Fernandes, F. (1966) *O Negro no mundo dos brancos*. São Paulo: Difusão Europeia do Livro.

Fitoussi, J. and Rosanvallon, P. (1997) *La nueva era de las desigualdades*. Buenos Aires: Manantial.

Fleury, S. (2012) 'Militarização do social como estratégia de integração – o caso da UPP do Santa Marta', *Sociologias* 14(30): 194-222.

Franco, S. H. R. (2017) 'Human Dignity and the Right to Adequate Housing in the Global Mega-Events Era: A Discussion from the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro', In Sieh, E. and McGregor, J. (Eds) *Human Dignity. Establishing Worth and Seeking Solutions*, pp. 263-77. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Franco, S. H. R. and Assis W. F. T. (2019) 'Participatory Budgeting and Transformative Development in Brazil', *Geoforum* (Forthcoming).

Freidberg, S. (2001) 'On the Trail of the Global Green Bean: Methodological Considerations in Multi-Site Ethnography', *Global Networks* 1(4): 353-68.

Freidberg, S. (2004) *French Beans and Food Scares: Culture and Commerce in an Anxious Age*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Freire-Medeiros, B. (2007) 'A favela que se vê e que se vende: reflexões e polêmicas em torno de um destino turístico', *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* 22(65): 61-72.

Freire-Medeiros, B. (2009) 'The favela and its touristic transits', *Geoforum* 40(4): 580-88.

Gandhi, L. (1998) *Postcolonial Theory: a critical introduction*. St. Leonards N.S.W: Allen & Unwin.

Germani, G. I. (1993) Cuestión Agraria y Asentamiento de Población en el Área Rural: La Nueva Cara de la Lucha por la Tierra. Bahia, Brasil (1964-1990). Tesis de Doctorado en Historia. Universidad de Barcelona: FGH/UB.

Ghertner, D. A. (2008) 'Analysis of new legal discourse behind Delhi's slum demolitions', *Economic and Political Weekly* 43(20): 57-66.

Ghertner, D. A. (2014) 'India's Urban Revolution: Geographies of Displacement beyond Gentrification', *Environment and Planning A* 46(7):1554-71.

Ghertner, D. A. (2015) 'Why Gentrification Theory Fails in "Much of the World"', *City* 19 (4): 546-56.

Ghertner, D. A. (2017) 'When Is the State? Topology, Temporality, and the Navigation of Everyday State Space in Delhi', *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 107(3): 731-50.

Gilbert, A. G., and Crankshaw, O. (1999) 'Comparing South Africa and Latin American experience: migration and housing mobility in Soweto', *Urban Studies* 36(13): 2375-400.

Gilbert, A. G., Mabin, A., McCarthy, M., Watson, V. (1997) 'Low-income rental housing: are South African cities different?', *Environment and Urbanization* 9(1): 133-147.

Giliomee, H. (1985) 'The changing political function of the homelands', In Giliomee, H. and Schlemmer, L. (Eds) *Up against the fences: poverty, passes and privilege in South Africa*, pp. 39-56. Cape Town: David Philip.

Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago, Aldine Publishing Company.

Glass, R. (1964) 'Introduction: aspects of change', In Centre for Urban Studies (Ed) *London: Aspects of Change*, pp. xiii–xlii. London: MacKibbon and Kee.

Gluckman, M. (1961) 'Anthropological Problems Arising from the African Industrial Revolution', In Southall, A. (Ed) *Social Change in Modern Africa*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Golay, C. and Özden, M. (2007) The Right to Housing: A Fundamental Human Right Affirmed by the United Nations and Recognized in Regional Treaties and Numerous National Constitutions. CETIM, Ginebra.

Goldfrank, B. (2012) 'The World Bank and the Globalization of Participatory Budgeting', *Journal of Public Deliberation* 8(2), Article 7. Available at http://www.publicdeliberation.net/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1228&context=jp d [Accessed 17 May 2018].

Gordon, S. (2015) 'Xenophobia across the class divide: South African attitudes towards foreigners 2003–2012', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 33(4): 494-509, DOI: 10.1080/02589001.2015.1122870.

Gorodnov, V. P. (1988 [1983]) *Soweto: Life and Struggles of a South African Township*. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Grant, R. and Nijman, J. (2002) 'Globalization and the coporate geography of cities in the less-developed world', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 92(2), 320-40.

Graziano da Silva, J. F. (1980) *Estrutura Agrária e produção de subsistência na agricultura brasileira.* São Paulo: Hucitec,

Gregory, D. (2010 [2009]) 'Vanishing points: law, violence, and exception in the global war prison', In Boehmer, E. and Morton, S. (Eds) *Terror and the postcolonial: a concise companion*, pp. 55-98. Blackwell, Malden, MA.

Grosfoguel, R. (2002) 'Colonial Difference, Geopolitics of Knowledge and Global Coloniality in the Modern/Colonial Capitalist World-System', *Review* 25(3): 203-24.

Grosfoguel, R. (2006a) 'From Postcolonial Studies to Decolonial Studies: Decolonizing Postcolonial Studies: A Preface', *Review* 19(2): 141-3.

Grosfoguel, R. (2006b) 'World-System Analysis in the Context of Transmodernity, Border Thinking and Global Coloniality', *Review* 24(2): 167-87.

Grosfoguel, R. (2008) 'Hacia un pluri-versalismo transmoderno decolonial', *Tabula Rasa* 9: 199-215.

Guber, R. (2004 [1991]) *El salvaje metropolitano. Reconstrucción del conocimiento social en el trabajo de campo*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.

Guber, R. (2011) *La etnografía. Método, campo y reflexividad*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI.

Guimarães, A. S. A. (1996) 'El mito del anti-racismo en Brasil', *Nueva Sociedad* 144(4): 32-45.

Guimarães, A. S. A. (2002) 'Democracia racial: el ideal, el pacto y el mito', *Estudios Sociológicos* 20(59): 305-33.

Guimarães, A. S. A. (2005) 'Racial democracy', In Souza, J. de and Sinder, V. (Eds) *Imagining Brazil*, pp. 119-40. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Guimarães, A. S. A. (2006) 'Depois da democracia racial', *Tempo Social* 18(2): 269-87.

Guimarães, A. S. A. (2012) 'The Brazilian System of Racial Classification', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35(7): 1157-62, DOI:10.1080/01419870.2011.632022.

Haarhoff, E. J. (2011) 'Appropriating modernism: Apartheid and the South African township', *ITU  A/Z* 8(1):  184-95.

Habermas, J. (1987 [1981]) *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. II: Lifeworld and System*. Boston: Beacon.

Halperin, S. (2004) *War and Social Change in Modern Europe The Great Transformation Revisited*. Cambridge/New York/Melbourne/Madrid/Cape Town/Singapore/São Paulo: Cambridge University Press.

Harrison, P., Todes, A. and Watson, V. (2008) *Planning and Transformations: Learning from the Post-Apartheid Experience*. London: Routledge.

Hart, G. (2001) 'Development debates in the 1990s: Culs de sac and promising paths', *Progress in Human Geography* 25(4): 649-58.

Harvey, D. (1982) *The Limits to Capital*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Harvey, D. (1985) *The Urbanization of Capital*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1989) *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1996) *Justice, Nature and the Politics of Difference*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (2000) *Spaces of Hope*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Harvey, D. (2001) *Spaces of Capital. Towards a Critical Geography*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Harvey, D. (2003) *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (2005a [2003]) *Paris Capital of Modernity*. New York and London: Routledge.

Harvey, D. (2005b) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (2006) 'Neo-liberalism as creative destruction', *Geogr. Ann.* 88B(2): 145-58.

Harvey, D. (2008) 'The right to the city', *New Left Review* 53(Sep/Oct): 23-40.

Harvey, D. (2009 [1973]) *Social Justice and the City*. Athens and London: The University of Geia Press.

Harvey, D. (2012) *Rebel Cities. From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. London and New York: Verso.

Harvey, D. (2014) *Diecisiete contradicciones del capital y el fin del neoliberalismo*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños.

Harvey, E. (2007) 'The Commodification of water in Soweto and its implications for social justice'. PhD Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Hassim, S., Kupe, T., Worby, E. (2008) *Go home or die here: Violence, xenophobia and the reinvention of difference in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

He, S. (2007) 'State-sponsored gentrification under market transition: the case of Shanghai', *Urban Affairs Review* 43(2): 171-98.

He, S. and Lin, G. C. S. (2015) 'Producing and consuming China's new urban space: State, market and society', *Urban Studies* 52(15): 2757-73.

He, S. J. and Wu, F. L. (2009) 'China's emerging neoliberal urbanism: Perspectives from urban redevelopment', *Antipode* 41(2): 282-304.

Henriques, R. and Ramos, S. (2011) 'UPPs Sociais: ações sociais para consolidar a pacificação', In Urani A. and Giambiagi, F. (Eds) *Rio: A Hora da Virada*, pp. 242-54. Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier.

Hindson, D. C. (1985) 'Orderly Urbanization and Influx Control. From Territorial Apartheid to Regional Spatial Ordering in South Africa', *Cahiers d'études africaines* 25(99): 401-32.

Hindson, D. C. (1987) *Pass Controls and the Urban African Proletariat*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Hindson, D. C., Byerley, M., Morris, M. (1994) 'From Violence to Reconstruction: The Making, Disintegration and Remaking of an Apartheid City', *Antipode* 26(4): 323-50.

Holston, J. (2008) *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Holston, J. (2009) 'Dangerous Spaces of Citizenship: Gang Talk, Rights Talk and Rule of Law in Brazil', *Planning Theory* 8(1): 12-31, DOI: 10.1177/1473095208099296.

HRW – Human Rights Watch (2009) World Report 2009 – Events of 2008. New York: Human Rights Watch.

HRW – Human Rights Watch (2012a) Brazil: States Should Act on Killings by Police. Human Rights Watch. Available at https://www.hrw.org/news/2012/11/29/brazilstatesshouldactkillingspolice [Accessed 20 August 2015].

HRW – Human Rights Watch (2012b) World Report 2012 – Events of 2011. New York: Human Rights Watch.

HRW – Human Rights Watch (2013) World Report 2013 – Events of 2012. New York: Human Rights Watch.

HRW – Human Rights Watch (2014) World Report 2014 – Events of 2013. New York: Human Rights Watch.

HRW – Human Rights Watch (2014) *World Report 2014 – Events of 2013*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

HRW – Human Rights Watch (2015) *World Report 2015 – Events of 2014*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Hsing, Y. (2010) *The Great Urban Transformation*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Huchzermeyer, M. (1999) 'The Exploration of Appropriate Informal Settlement Intervention in South Africa: Contributions from a Comparison with Brazil'. PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2002) 'Informal Settlements', *Latin American Perspectives* 29(1): 83-105.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2003) 'A Legacy of Control? The Capital Subsidy for Housing, and Informal Settlement Intervention in South Africa', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27(3): 591-612.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2010) 'The Policy Context for Informal Settlements: Competitiveness, Slum Eradication and a Right to the City?', TRIALOG 104 1/2010: 25-8.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2011) *Cities with 'Slums': from informal settlement eradication to a right to the city in Africa*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2014) 'Invoking Lefebvre's 'right to the city' in South Africa today: A response to Walsh', *City* 18(1): 41-49, DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2014.868166.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2015) 'Reading Henri Lefebvre from the "global south": The legal dimension of his right to the city', UHURU Seminar Series, Rhodes University, 20 May.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2016) 'Informal settlements at the intersection between urban planning and rights: Advances through judicialisation in the South African case', In Deboulet, A. (Ed) *Rethinking Precarious neighborhoods*, pp. 195-210. Paris: Les éditions de l'AFD.

Huchzermeyer, M. (2017) 'The legal meaning of Lefebvre's the right to the city: addressing the gap between global campaign and scholarly debate', *GeoJournal* 83(3): 631-44.

IBGE – Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (2010) Censo Demográfico de 2010 (2000 Demographic Census). Rio de Janeiro: IBGE.

Ingold, T. and Vergunst, J. L. (2008) *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

IPP – Instituto Pereira Passos (2014) Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora. Instituto Pereira Passos (IPP), Rio de janeiro.

Jacobs, J. (2012) 'Urban geographies I: still thinking cities relationally', *Progress in Human Geography* 36(3): 412-22.

Jameson, F. (1991) *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Jappe, A. (2016 [2003]) *Las aventuras de la mercancía*. Logroño, La Rioja: Pepitas de Calabaza.

Jardim, M. A. C. (2009) 'Domesticação e/ou moralização do capitalismo no governo Lula: inclusão social via mercado e via fundos de pensão', *Dados* 52(1): 123-59.

Jenks, C. and Neves, T. (2000) 'A walk on the wild side: Urban ethnography meets the Flâneur', *Cultural Values* 4(1): 1-17.

Khomyakov, M. (2016) 'BRICS Network University: A New Paradigm of the BRICS Collaboration in Higher Education?', In InBRICS. BRICS Sudies Centre Newsletter, winter-spring, Issue 1, pp. 18-26.

Kipfer, S. (2016) 'Neocolonial Urbanism? La Rénovation Urbaine in Paris', *Antipode* 48(3): 603-62

Kipfer, S. and Goonewardena, K. (2013) 'Urban Marxism and the post-colonial question: Henri Lefebvre and "colonization"', *Historical Materialism* 21(2): 76-117.

Kowarick, L. (1979) *A espoliação urbana*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.

Kowarick, L. (2000) *Escritos urbanos*. São Paulo: Editora 34.

Krige, D. (2011) '"We are Running for a Living": Work, Leisure and Speculative Accumulation in an Underground Numbers Lottery in Johannesburg', *African Studies* 70(1): 3-27, DOI:10.1080/00020184.2011.557571.

Krige, D. (2012) 'Fields of Dreams, Fields of Schemes: Ponzi Finance and Multilevel Marketing in South Africa,' *Africa* 82(Special Issue 1): 69-92.

Kurz, R. (2000 [1993]) 'Dominação sem sujeito: sobre a superação de uma crítica social redutora'. Paper presented at the Seminário Internacional: Teoria Crítica Radical, a Superação do Capitalismo e a Emancipação Humana. Ceará: Instituto de Filosofia da Práxis. Avaliable at http://www.obeco-online./rkurz86.htm [Accessed 18 May 2018].

Lander, E. (2000) 'Ciencias sociales: saberes coloniales y eurocéntricos', In Lander, E. (Ed) *La colonialidad del saber: Eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas*, pp. 11-40. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales.

Lander, E. (2006) 'Marxismo, eurocentrismo y colonialismo', In Boron, A., Amadeo, J., González, S. (Eds) *La teoría marxista hoy: problemas y perspectivas*, pp. 209-243. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales.

Landmark Properties Participações Ltda. (2013) Trump Towers Rio. Rio de Janeiro: Landmark Properties Participações Ltda. Avaliable at http://www.trumptowersrio.com/about/ [Accessed 10 May 2017].

Langou, G. D. (2013) 'Validating one of the world's largest conditional cash transfer programmes. A case study on how an impact evaluation of Brazil's Bolsa Família Programme helped silence its critics and improve policy', *Journal of Development Effectiveness* 5(4): 430-46, DOI: 10.1080/19439342.2013.861501.

Lapegna, P. (2009) 'Ethnographers of the World…United? Current Debates on the Ethnographic Study of "Globalization"', *American Sociological Association* 15(1): 3-24.

Larkins, E. R. (2015) *The Spectacular Favela: Violence in Modern Brazil.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lawhon, M., Silver, J., Ernstson, H., Pierce, J. (2016) 'Unlearning (Un)Located Ideas in the Provincialization of Urban Theory' *Regional Studies* 50(9): 1611-22, DOI: 10.1080/00343404.2016.1162288.

Le Corbusier (2007 [1923]) *Toward an Architecture*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.

Lee, L. (2012) 'The geography of gentrification: Thinking through comparative urbanism', *Progress in Human Geography* 36(2) 155-71.

Lee, L., Shin, H. B., López-Morales, E. (2016) *Planetary Gentrification*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Leeds, A. and Leeds, E. (1978) *A Sociologia do Brasil urbano*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores.

Lefebvre, H. (1971) *Le manifeste différentialiste*. Paris: Gallimard.

Lefebvre, H. (1972 [1968]) *La vida cotidiana en el mundo moderno*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Lefebvre, H. (1976 [1973]) *The Survival of Capitalism. Reproduction of the relations of production*. New York: Allison and Busby.

Lefebvre, H. (1978 [1968]) *El Derecho a la Ciudad*. Barcelona: Península.

Lefebvre, H. (1991 [1974]) *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Lefebvre, H. (2001 [1972]) *O Pensamento Marxista e a Cidade [A Cidade do Capital]*. Rio de Janeiro: DP& A.

Lefebvre, H. (2002 [1970]) *A Revolução Urbana*. Belo Horizonte: Ed. UFMG.

Lefebvre, H. (2008 [1972]) *Espaço e Política: O Direito à Cidade II*. Mimeo. Belo Horizonte: UFMG.

Lefebvre, H. (2013 [1974]) *La Producción del Espacio*. Madrid: Capitán Swing.

Lefebvre, H. (2014 [1947] [1961] [1981]) *Critique of Everyday Life*. Vols. I, II, III. London/New York: Verso.

Legassick, M. (1974) 'South Africa: capital accumulation and violence', *Economy and Society* 3(3): 253-91, DOI: 10.1080/03085147400000014.

Legassick, M. (1975) 'South Africa: Forced Labour, Industrialization, and Racial Differentiation', In Harris, R. (Ed) *The political economy of Africa*, pp. 262-3. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Legassick, M. and Wolpe, H. (1976) 'The Bantustans and capital accumulation in South Africa', *Review of African Political Economy* 3(7): 87-107.

Leite, R. P. (2013) 'Consuming Heritage: Counter-Uses of the City and Gentrification', *Vibrant: Virtual Brazilian Anthropology* 10: 165-89.

Leite, R. P. (2015) 'Cities and Gentrification in Contemporary Brazil', *Current Urban Studies* 3: 175-86, DOI: 10.4236/cus.2015.33015.

Leitner, H. and Sheppard, E. (2016) 'Provincializing critical urban theory: extending the ecosystem of possibilities', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40(1): 228-35.

Lemanski, C. (2009) 'Augmented Informality: South Africa's Backyard Dwellings as a By-product of Formal Housing Policies', *Habitat International* 33(4): 472-84.

Lester, A., Nel, E. T., Binns, T. (2000) *South Africa, Past, Present, and Future: Gold at the End of the Rainbow?* London and New York: Routledge.

Lin, G. C. S. (2007) 'Chinese urbanism in question: State, society, and the reproduction of urban spaces', *Urban Geography* 28(1): 7-29.

Lin, G. C. S. (2009) *Developing China: Land, Politics, and Social Conditions*. London: Routledge.

Lin, G. C. S. (2011) 'Urban China in transformation: Hybrid economy, juxtaposed space, and new testing ground for geographical enquiries', *The Chinese Geographical Science* 21(1): 1-16.

Lodge, T. (1983) *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*. London: Longman; Johannesburg: Ravan.

Lucas, P. (2008) 'Disarming Brazil: Lessons and Challenges', *NACLA* Report on the Americas 41: 2 (March/April 2008): 27-31, DOI: 10.1080/10714839.2008.11725399.

Luxemburg, R. (1925) *Introduction to Political Economy*. Redtexts.org. Available at https://www.redtexts.org/html/luxemburg_1925_political_economy.html [Accessed 26 August 2018].

Luxemburg, R. (1913) *The Accumulation of Capital*. Archive (marxists.). Available at https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1913/accumulation-capital/accumulation.pdf [Accessed 26 August 2018].

Mabin, A. (1986) 'Labour, capital, class struggle and the origins of residential segregation in Kimberley, 1880-1920', *Journal of Historical Geography* 12(1): 4-26.

Mabin, A. (1990a) 'Doom at one stroke of the pen: planning and Group Areas, 1935–1955'. Paper Presented at the History Workshop Conference, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (6-10 February).

Mabin, A. (1990b) 'Origins of segregatory urban planning in Soweto, 1900-1940', *Planning History* 13: 8-16.

Mabin, A. (1992) 'Comprehensive segregation: the origins of the group areas act and its planning apparatuses', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18(2): 405-29, DOI: 10.1080/03057079208708320.

Mabin, A. (1995) 'On the Problems and Prospects of Overcoming Segregation and Fragmentation in Southern Africa's Cities in the Postmodern Era', In Watson, S. and Gibson, K. (Eds) *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*, pp. 187-198. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Mabin, A. (2000) 'Varied Legacies of Modernism in Urban Planning,' In Bridge, G. and Watson, S. (Eds) *A Companion to the City*, pp. 555-67. Oxford UK and Malden MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Mabin, A. (2014) 'Grounding Southern city theory in time and place', In Parnell, S. and Oldfield, S. (Eds) *The Routledge Handbook on the Cities of the Global South*, pp. 21-36. London: Routledge.

Mabin, A. and Smit, D. (1997) 'Reconstructing South Africa's cities? The making of urban planning 1900–2000', *Planning Perspectives* 12(2): 193-223.

MacCann, E. and Ward, K. (Eds) (2011) *Mobile Urbanism: Cities and Policymaking in the Global Age*. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press.

Machado da Silva, L. A. (2004) 'Sociabilidade violenta: por uma interpretação da criminalidade contemporânea no Brasil urbano', *Sociedade e Estado* 19(1): 53-84.

Machado da Silva, L. A. (Ed) (2008) *Vida sob cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira.

Magalhães, A. F. (2013) 'O "Galo cantou", mas não foi para os moradores das favelas: problematizando a política estadual de titulação de favelas', *Cadernos do Desenvolvimento Fluminense* 1(fevereiro): 86-114.

Maiorano, D. and Manor, J. (2017) 'Poverty reduction, inequalities and human development in the BRICS: policies and outcomes', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 55(3): 278-302, DOI: 10.1080/14662043.2017.1327102.

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007) 'Sobre la colonialidad del ser: contribuciones al desarrollo de un concepto', In Castro-Gómez, S. and Grosfoguel, R. (Orgs) *El Giro Decolonial. Reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global*, pp. 127-67. Bogotá: Universidad Javeriana-Instituto Pensar, Universidad Central-IESCO, Siglo del Hombre.

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2006a) 'La topología del ser y la geopolítica del saber: modernidad, imperio, colonialidad', In Schiwy, F. and Maldonado-Torres, N. (Eds) *(Des)colonialidad del ser y del saber (videos indígenas y los límites coloniales de la izquierda) en Bolivia*, pp. 63-130. Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Signo.

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2006b) *Against War*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Mann, M. (1986) *The Sources of Social Power: Volume 1, A History of Power from the Beginning to AD 1760*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mann, M. (1993) *The Sources of Social Power: Volume 2, The Rise of Classes and Nation States 1760-1914*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mann, M. (2012a) *The Sources of Social Power: Volume 3, Global Empires and Revolution, 1890-1945*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mann, M. (2012b) *The Sources of Social Power: Volume 4, Globalizations, 1945-2011*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Marcus, G. (1995) 'Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95-117.

Marcuse, P. (2009) 'From critical urban theory to the right to the city', *City* 13(2-3): 185-97, DOI: 10.1080/13604810902982177.

Marcuse, P. (2014) 'Reading the Right to the City', *City* 18(1): 4-15, DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2014.878110.

Maricato, E. (1996) *Metrópole na periferia do capitalismo: ilegalidade, desigualdade e violência*. São Paulo: Hucitec.

Maricato, E. (1997) 'Reforma urbana: limites e possibilidades de uma trajetória incompleta', In Ribeiro, L.C. de Q. and Santos Júnior, O. A. dos S. (Orgs) *Globalização fragmentação e reforma urbana: o futuro das cidades brasileiras na crise*, pp. 309-27. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.

Maricato, E. (1999) 'Cidades no Brasil, qual gestão urbana?', In Magalhães, I., Barreto, L., Trevas, V. (Eds) *Governo e cidadania, reflexões sobre o modo petista de governar*, pp. 129-48. São Paulo: Fundação Perseu Abramo.

Maricato, E. (2000) 'As idéias fora do lugar e o lugar fora das idéias', In Arantes, O. B. F.; Maricato, E.; Vainer, C. B. (Eds) *A cidade do pensamento único: desmanchando consensos*, pp. 121-92. Petrópolis: Vozes.

Maricato, E. (2001) *Brasil, cidades: alternativas para a crise urbana*. Petrópolis: Vozes.

Maricato, E. (2009) 'Minha Casa Minha Vida é um avanço, mas segregação urbana fica intocada'. Carta Maior, 27 May. Available at https://www.cartamaior.com.br/?/Editoria/Politica/O-Minha-Casa-e-um-avanco-mas-segregacao-urbana-fica-intocada/4/15160 [Accessed 17 May 2018].

Maricato, E. (2009) 'Globalização e política urbana na periferia do capitalismo', *VeraCidade* 8: 89-105.

Maricato, E. and G. Tanaka (2006) 'O planejamento urbano e a questão fundiária', *Ciência Hoje. Revista de divulgação científica da SBPC* 38(227): 16-24.

Martins, J. de S. (1981) *Os camponeses e a política no Brasil*. Petrópolis: Vozes.

Martins, J. de S. (1996) *Henri Lefebvre e o retorno à dialética*. São Paulo: Hucitec.

Martins, S. M. M. (2000) 'O Urbanismo, esse (Des)conhecido Saber Político', *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Urbanos e Regionais* 3: 39-59.

Marx, K. (1978 [1863-66]) *O Captial. Livro I. Capítulo VI (Inédito)*. São Paulo: Livraria Editora Ciências Humanas.

Marx, K. (2009 [1844]) *Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. Archive (marxists.). Available at https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1843/critique-hpr/intro.htm [Accessed 07 December 2018].

Marx, K. (2011 [1857-58]) *Grundrisse. Manuscritos Econômicos de 1857-1858. Esboços da crítica da economia política*. São Paulo: Boitempo Editorial.

Marx, K. (2017 [1867] [1885] [1894]) *El Capital. Crítica de la economía política*. Vols. I, II, III. Madrid: Siglo XXI.

Marx, K. and Engels, F. (2000 [1848]) *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Archive (marxists.). Available at https://www.marxists./archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf [Accessed 07 May 2018].

Massey, D. B. (2001 [1994]) *Space, place, and gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Massey, D. B. (2005) *For Space*. London: Sage.

Mather, C. T. (1987) 'Residential degradation and Johannesburg's "locations in the sky"', *South African Geographical Journal* 69: 119-28.

Maylam, P. (1990) 'The Rise and Decline of Urban Apartheid in South Africa', *African Affairs* 89(354): 57-84.

Maylam, P. (1995) 'Explaining the Apartheid City: 20 Years of South African Urban Historiography', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 21(1):19-38.

Mbembe, A. and Nuttall, S. (2004) 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', *Public Culture* 16: 347-72.

McDonald, D. and Pape, J. (2002) *Cost Recovery and the Crisis of Service Delivery.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council Press.

McFarlane, C. (2008) 'Urban shadows: materiality, the 'Southern city' and urban theory', *Geography Compass* 2(2): 340-58.

McFarlane, C. (2010) 'The comparative city: Knowledge, learning, urbanism', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 34(4): 725-42.

McFarlane, C. (2011a) 'Assemblage and critical urban theory', *City* 15(2): 204-24.

McFarlane, C. (2011b) *Learning the City: Knowledge and Translocal Assemblage*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

McFarlane, C. (2011c) 'On context: Assemblage, political economy and structure', *City* 15(3-4): 375-88.

McFarlane, C. and Robinson, J. (2012) 'Introduction—Experiments in Comparative Urbanism', *Urban Geography* 33(6): 765-773, DOI: 10.2747/0272-3638.33.6.765.

McKinley, D. (2016) 'Lessons in community-based resistance? South Africa's Anti-Privatisation Forum', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 34(2): 268-81, DOI: 10.1080/02589001.2016.1202558.

Melo, E. S. O. de (2017) 'Lefèbvre and the periphery: an interview with professor Marie Huchzermeyer', *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 9(3): 365-70, DOI: 10.1080/19463138.2017.1339046.

Merrifield, A. (2002) *Metromarxism: A Marxist Tale of the City*. New York: Routledge.

Merrifield, A. (2011) 'The Right to the City and Beyond: Notes on a Lefebvrian Re-conceptualization', *City* 15(3-4): 473-81.

Middleton, J. (2016) 'The socialities of everyday urban walking and the "right to the city"', *Urban Studies* 55(2): 296-315. DOI: https://doi./10.1177/0042098016649325.

Middleton, J. (2010) 'Sense and the city: Exploring the embodied geographies of urban walking', *Social and Cultural Geography* 11(6): 575-96.

Middleton, J. (2011) 'Walking the city: The geographies of everyday pedestrian practices', *Geography Compass* 5(2): 90-105.

Mignolo, W. (2000) *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mignolo, W. (2001) 'Local histories and global designs: An interview with Walter Mignolo', *Discourse* 22(3): 7-33.

Mignolo, W. (2002) 'The geopolitics of knowledge and the colonial difference', *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101(1): 57-96.

Mignolo, W. (2005) *The Idea of Latin America*. Malden: Blackwell.

Mignolo, W. (2009) 'Coloniality: The Darker Side of Modernity', In Breitwisser, S. (Ed) Modernologies: Contemporary Artists Researching Modernity and Modernism, pp. 39–49. Barcelona: Catalog of the Exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art.

Miles, M. and Huberman, M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers.

Miraftab, F. and N. Kudva (Eds) (2014) *Cities of the global South reader*. Routledge, London.

Misse, M. (2011) 'Crime organizado e crime comum no Rio de Janeiro: diferenças e afinidades', *Revista Sociologia e Política* 19(40): 13-25.

Mitchell, J. C. (1956) *The Kalela Dance: Aspects of Social Relationships among Urban Africans in Northern Rhodesia*. Manchester: Manchester University Press/ Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

Mitchell, J. C. (1987) *Cities, Society, and Social Perceptions: A Central African Perspective*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.

Molotch, H. (1976) 'The city as a growth machine: The political economy of place', *American Journal of Sociology* 82: 309-32.

Molotch, H. and Logan, J. (2007 [1987]) *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. University of California Press.

Monteiro, M. (2004) O avô das favelas – publicado em 19/04/2004. Available at http://www.favelatemmemoria.com.br/publique/cgi/cgilua.exe/sys/start.htm?info id=63&tpl=printerview&sid=4 [Accessed 11 June 2018].

Monte-Mór, R. L. (2003) 'Outras fronteiras: novas espacialidades na urbanização brasileira', In Castriota, L. B. (Ed) *Urbanização Brasileira: Redescobertas*, pp. 260-71. Belo Horizonte: Editora C/ Arte.

Monte-Mór, R. L. (2004a) 'Urbanização e modernidade na Amazônia contemporânea', In Limonad, E*., Haesbaert, R., Moreira. R. (Eds) Brasil* Século XXI por uma nova regionalização?, pp. 112-22. São Paulo: Max Limonad.

Monte-Mór, R. L. (2004b) 'Modernities in the Jungle: Extended urbanization in the Brazilian Amazonia'. PhD Thesis, University of California Los Angeles, UCLA.

Monte-Mór, R. L. (2014) 'Extended urbanization and settlement patterns: An environmental approach', In Brenner, N. (Ed) *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, pp. 109-20. Berlin: Jovis.

Moreno, L. and Shin, H. B. (2018) 'Introduction: The urban process under planetary accumulation by dispossession', *City* 22(1): 78-87, DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2018.1442067.

Morris, A. (1999) *Bleakness and Light: Inner-city Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Mouffe, C. (1993) *The return of the political*. NewYork: Verso.

Munanga, K. (1996) 'As facetas de um racismo silenciado', In Schwarcz, L. M. and Queiroz, R da S. (Orgs) *Raça e Diversidade*, pp. 213-29. São Paulo: EdUSP.

Munanga, K. (2004) *Rediscutindo a Mestiçagem no Brasil: Identidade Nacional Versus Identidade Negra*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica.

Murray, C. (1987) 'Displaced urbanisation: South Africa's rural slums', *African Affairs* 86: 311-29.

Murray, M. J. (2008) *Taming the Disorderly City: The Spatial Landscape of Johannesburg after Apartheid*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Murray, M. J. (2011) *City of Extremes: The Spatial Politics of Johannesburg.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Myers, G. (2011) *African Cities: Alternative visions of urban theory and practice*. London: Zed Books.

Myers, G. (2014) 'From expected to unexpected comparisons', *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 35: 104-18.

Napier, M, Berrisford, S., Kihato, C. W., McGaffin, R., Royston, L. (2013) *Trading Places: Accessing Land in African Cities*. Cape Town: African Minds.

Nascimento, A. do (1978) *O Genocidio do Negro Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.

Nascimento, A. do (1982 [1968]) *O Negro Revoltado*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira.

NEAD – Non-European Affairs Department (1955) Report of the Manager For period 1st July, 1953, to 30th June, 1955. City of Johannesburg.

NEAD – Non-European Affairs Department (1968) Annual Report 1997/1968. City of Johannesburg.

Neri, M. C. (2009) 'Income policies, income distribution, and the distribution of opportunities', In Brainard, L. and Martinez-Diaz, L. (Org) *Brazil as an economic superpower?: Understanding Brazil's changing role in the global economy*, pp. 221-26. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Neri, M. C. (2012) *A nova classe média – o lado brilhante da pirâmide*. São Paulo: Saraiva/FGV.

Neri, M. C., Vaz, F. M., Souza, P. H. G. F. (2013) 'Efeitos macroeconômicos do Programa Bolsa Família: Uma análise comparativa das transferências sociais', In Campello, T. and Neri, M. C. (Eds) *Programa Bolsa Família: uma década de inclusão e cidadania*, pp. 193-206. Brasília: Ipea.

Nieftagodien, N. and Gaule, S. (2012) *Orlando West, Soweto: An Illustrated Hi*story. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Nijman, J. (2007) 'Introduction: comparative urbanism', *Urban Geography* 28(2): 92-107.

Nkooe, E. S. (2018) 'A Lefebvrian Analysis of Public Spaces in Mangaung, South Africa', *Urban Planning* 3(3): 26-39.

Oliveira, F. de (2003 [1972]) *Crítica à razão dualista / O ornitorrinco*. São Paulo: Boitempo.

Ortega, A. A. C. (2016) 'Manila's metropolitan landscape of gentrification: Global urban development, accumulation by dispossession and neoliberal warfare against informality', *Geoforum* 70: 35-50.

Paiva, L. H., Falcão, T. Bartholo, L. (2013) 'Do Bolsa Família ao Brasil sem Miséria: Um resumo do percurso brasileiro recente na busca da superação da pobreza extrema', In Campello, T. and Neri, M C. (Eds) *Programa Bolsa Família: uma década de inclusão e cidadania*, pp. 25-146. Brasília: Ipea.

Parbhoo, L. and Pirie, G. H. (1985) 'Group area proclamations in South Africa', *South African Geographical Journal* 67: 127-29.

Parnell, S. (1991) 'Sanitation, Segregation and the Natives (Urban Areas) Act: African Exclusion from Johannesburg's Malay Location, 1897-1925', *Journal of Historical Geography* 17(3): 271-88.

Parnell, S. (1997) 'South African Cities: Perspectives from the Ivory Tower of Urban Studies', *Urban Studies* 34(5-6): 891-906.

Parnell, S. (2002) 'Winning the battles but losing the war: the racial segregation of Johannesburg under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923', *Journal of Historical Geography* 28(2): 258-81.

Parnell, S. (2003) 'Race, Power and Urban Control: Johannesburg's Inner City Slum-yards, 1910–1923', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29(3): 615-37, DOI: 10.1080/0305707032000094947.

Parnell, S. and Oldfield, S. (Eds) (2014) *The Routledge Handbook on the Cities of the Global South*. London: Routledge.

Parnell, S. and Pieterse, E. (2010) 'The "Right to the City": Institutional Imperatives of a Developmental State', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 34(1): 146-62, DOI:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00954.x.

Parnell, S. and Pieterse, E. (2016) 'Translational global praxis: Rethinking methods and modes of African urban research', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40(1): 236-46.

Parnell, S. and Pieterse, E. (Eds) (2014) *Africa's Urban Revolution*. London: Zed Books.

Parnell, S. and Pirie, G. H. (1991) 'Johannesburg', In Lemon A. (Ed) *Homes Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities*, pp. 129-45. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Parnell, S. and Webber, H. (1990) 'The Privatisation of Secondary Schooling and the Desegregation of Central Johannesburg', *GeoJournal* 22(3): 267-73.

Parnell, S., Pieterse, E., and Watson, V. (2009) 'Planning for cities in the Global South: A research agenda for sustainable human settlements', *Progress in Planning* 72: 232-40.

Patel, S. (2014) 'Is there a 'south' perspective to urban studies?', In Parnell, S. and Oldfield, S. (Eds) *The Routledge Handbook on the Cities of the Global South*, pp. 37-47. London: Routledge.

Peck, J. (2015) 'Cities beyond compare', *Regional Studies* 49: 160-82.

Peck, J. and Theodore, N. (2010) 'Mobilizing policy: Models, methods, and mutations', *Geoforum* 41: 169-74.

Peck, J. and Theodore, N. (2015) *Fast Policy. Experimental Statecraft at the Thresholds of Neoliberalism*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Pereira, A. W. (2015) 'Bolsa Família and democracy in Brazil', *Third World Quarterly*, 36(9): 1682-99.

Perlman, J. (1977 [1976]) *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Politics and Poverty in Rio de Janeiro*. Oakland: UC Press.

Perlman, J. E. (2002) The Metamorphosis of Marginality: The Favelas of Rio de Janeiro: 1969-2002. Presentation, pp. 1-3. The Mega-Cities Project, Rio de Janeiro (10 October). Available at https://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu-projects/drivers_urb_change/urb_society/pdf_liveli_vulnera/Perlman_Metamorphosis_Marginality.pdf [Accessed 1 August 2018].

Perlman, J. E. (2005) 'The Myth of Marginality Revisited. The Case of Favelas in Rio de Janeiro, 1969-2003', In Hanley, L. M., Ruble, B. A., Tulchin, J. S. (Eds) *Becoming Global and the New Poverty of Cities*, pp. 5-53. Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center For Scholars.

Perlman, J. E. (2010) *Favela. Four decades of living on the edge in Rio de Janeiro*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Pethe, A., Nallathiga, R., Gandhi, S., Tandel V. (2014) 'Re-thinking urban planning in India: Learning from the wedge between the *de jure* and *de facto* development in Mumbai', *Cities* 39: 120-32.

Picker, G. (2014) 'Rethinking Ethnographic Comparison: Two Cities, Five Years, One Ethnographer', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 46(3): 263-84.

Pickerill, J. and Chatterton, P. (2006) 'Notes towards autonomous geographies: Creation, resistance, and self-management as survival tactics', *Progress in Human Geography* 30(6): 730-46

Pieterse, E. (2011) 'Grasping the unknowable: coming to grips with African urbanisms', *Social Dynamics* 38: 5-23.

Pieterse, E. and Simone, A. (Eds) (2013) *Rogue urbanism: emergent African cities*. Jacana Media, Pretoria.

Pinheiro, C. (2016) 'Moral Geographies of Development: A Preliminary Approach', In InBRICS. BRICS Sudies Centre Newsletter, winter-spring, Issue 1, pp. 3-9.

Pirie, G. H. and Silva, M. da (1986) 'Hostels for African Migrants in Greater Johannesburg', *GeoJournal* 12(2): 173-82.

Platzky, L. and Walker, C. (1985) *The surplus people: forced removals in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan.

Pochmann, M. (2011) 'Políticas Sociais e Padrão de Mudanças no Brasil Durante o Governo Lula', *SER Social* 13(28): 12-40.

Pochmann, M. (2013) *Nova classe média? O trabalho na base da pirâmide social brasileira*. São Paulo: Boitempo.

Pohlandt-McCormick, H. (2006) *"I Saw a Nightmare ..." Doing Violence to Memory: The Soweto Uprising, June 16, 1976*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Polanyi, K. (2001 [1944]). *The Great Transformation*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Pomeranz, K. (2000) *The great divergence: China, Europe, and the making of the modern world economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Porto de Oliveira, O. (2017) *International Policy Diffusion and Participatory Budgeting. Ambassadors of Participation, International Institutions and Transnational Networks*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Posel, D. (1983) 'Rethinking the 'race-class debate' in South African historiography', *Social Dynamics: A journal of African studies* 9(1): 50-66, DOI: 10.1080/02533958308458333.

Posel, D. (1991) *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961. Conflict and compromise*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.

Pradilla, E. (1974) 'La Politica Urbana del Estado Colom- biano', *Ideologia y Sociedad* 9: 3-67.

Pradilla, E. (1976) 'Notas Acerca del "Problema de la Vivienda"', *Ideologia y Sociedad* 16: 70-108.

Proctor, A. (1979) 'Class Struggle, Segregation and the City: a History of Sophiatown 1905-1940', In Bozzoli, B (Ed) *Labour, Townships and Protest: Studies in the Social History of the Witwatersrand*, pp. 19-48. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Proctor, M. P. (1994 [1987]) 'Capital, State and the African population of Johannesburg', In Cordell, D. D. and Gregory J. W. (Eds) *African Population and Capitalism. Historical Perspectives*, pp. 255-65. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Quijano, A. (2000) 'Coloniality of power, Eurocentrism and Latin America', *Nepantla* 1(3): 533-80.

Quijano, A. (2014 [1968-2010]) *Cuestiones y Horizontes. Antología Esencial. De la dependencia histórico-estructural a la colonialidad/descolonialidad del poder*. Buenos Aires: CLACSO.

Quijano, A. and Wallerstein, I. (1992) 'Americanity as a concept or the Americas in the modern world-system', *International Social Science Journal*, 134(November), UNESCO.

Revista Illustrada (1893) 'Cortiço Cabeça de Porco', capa, fevereiro, 18(868). Rio de Janeiro: Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira. Available at http://bndigital.bn.br/acervo-digital/revista-illustrada/332747 [Accessed 07 December 2018].

Ribeiro, Darcy, (1971 [1969]) *The Americas and Civilization*. New York: Dutton.

Ribeiro, L. C. de Q. (1997) *Dos cortiços aos condomínios fechados: as formas de produção da moradia na cidade do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira; IPPUR/UFRJ/FASE.

Ribeiro, L. C. de Q. (2016) 'Metamorfoses da Ordem Urbana da Metrópole Brasileira: o caso do Rio de Janeiro', *Sociologias* 18(42): 120-60.

Ribeiro, L. C. de Q., Lago, L. C. do (1991) 'Transformação das metrópoles brasileiras: algumas hipóteses de pesquisas'. Paper delivered at the XV Encontro Anual da ANPOCS, Caxambu (15-18 October).

Ribeiro, L., Lago, L. C. do (2001) 'Oposição favela-bairro no espaço social do Rio de Janeiro', *Cadernos Metrópole* 5: 29-46.

Riccio, V., Ruediger, M. A., Ross, S. D. and Skogan, W. (2013) 'Community policing in the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro', *Police Practice and Research: An International Journal* 14(4): 308-18, DOI: 10.1080/15614263.2013.816494.

Richmond, A. M. (2018) 'Rio de Janeiro's favela assemblage: Accounting for the durability of an unstable object', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 0(0): 1-18, E-pub ahead of print, DOI: 10.1177/0263775817753155.

Rivera Cusicanqui, S. (2010) *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores*. Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón.

Robinson, J. (2002) 'Global and world cities: A view from off the map', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26(3): 531-54.

Robinson, J. (2003) 'Postcolonialising geography: Tactics and pitfalls', *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 24: 273-89.

Robinson, J. (2006) *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*. London: Routledge.

Robinson, J. (2008) 'Developing ordinary cities: city visioning processes in Durban and Johannesburg', *Environment and Planning A* 40: 74-87.

Robinson, J. (2011b) 'The spaces of circulating knowledge: City strategies and global urban governmentality', In McCann, E. and Ward, K. (Eds) *Mobile Urbanism - Cities and Policymaking in the Global Age*, pp. 15-39. Minnesota: Minnesota University Press.

Robinson, J. (2012) '"Arriving at" urban policies/the urban: Traces of elsewhere in making city futures'. In Söderström, O. (Ed) *Critical Mobilities*. London: Routledge.

Robinson, J. (2014a) 'New geographies of theorizing the urban: Putting comparison to work for global urban studies', In Parnell, S. and Oldfield, S. (Eds) *The Routledge Handbook on Cities of the Global South*, pp. 57-70. London: Routledge.

Robinson, J. (2014b) 'Introduction to a Virtual Issue on Comparative Urbanism', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 0(0): 1-18, E-pub ahead of print, DOI:10.1111/1468-2427.12171.

Robinson, J. and Roy, A. (2016) 'Global urbanisms and the nature of urban theory', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 0(0): 1-18, E-pub ahead of print, DOI: 10.1111/14682427.12272.

Robinson, J. (2011a) 'Cities in a world of cities: the comparative gesture', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35(1): 1-23.

Robinson, J. (2015) 'Thinking cities through elsewhere. Comparative tactics for a more global urban studies', *Progress in Human Geography* 40(1): 3-29.

Robinson, J. (2016) 'Comparative urbanism: new geographies and cultures of theorizing the urban', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40(1): 187-99.

Rodríguez, G., Gil, J., García, E. (1999) *Metodología de la Investigación Cualitativa*. Málaga: Aljibe.

Rolnik, R. (1997) 'Planejamento urbano nos anos 90: novas perspectivas para velhos temas', In Ribeiro, L. C. de Q. and Santos Júnior, O. A. dos S. (Orgs) *Globalização fragmentação e reforma urbana: o futuro das cidades brasileiras na crise*, pp. 351-61. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.

Rolnik, R. (1999a) 'É possível uma política urbana contra a exclusão?', In Magalhães, I., Barreto, L., Trevas, V. (Eds) *Governo e cidadania, reflexões sobre o modo petista de governar*, pp. 121-29. São Paulo: Fundação Perseu Abramo.

Rolnik, R. (2000) 'Instrumentos urbanísticos: concepção e gestão', *Oculum Ensaios - Revista de Arquitetura e Urbanismo Gestão da Terra Urbana e Habitação de Interesse Social* 1: 5-12.

Rolnik, R. (2002) 'É possível uma política urbana contra a exclusão?', *Serviço Social e Sociedade* 23(72): 53-61.

Rolnik, R. (Ed) (1999b) *Regulação urbana e exclusão territorial*. São Paulo: Pólis.

Rolnik, R. and Cymbalista, R. (Eds) (1997) *Instrumentos Urbanísticos contra a exclusão social*. São Paulo: Pólis.

Rolnik, R., Pereira, A. L. dos S., Moreira, F. A., Royer, L. de O., Iacovini, R. F. G., Nisida, V. C. (2015) 'O Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida nas regiões metropolitanas de São Paulo e Campinas: aspectos socioespaciais e segregação', *Cadernos Metrópole* 17(33): 127-54. Available at https://doi.org/10.1590/2236-9996.2015-3306 [Accessed 10 December 2018].

Roy, A. (2005) 'Urban informality: Toward an epistemology of planning', *Journal of the American Planning Association* 71: 147-58.

Roy, A. (2009) 'The 21st-century metropolis: New geographies of theory', *Regional Studies* 43(6): 819-30.

Roy, A. (2011a) 'Slumdog cities: Rethinking subaltern urbanism', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35: 223-38.

Roy, A. (2011b) 'Conclusion Postcolonial Urbanism: Speed, Hysteria, Mass Dreams', In Roy, A. and Ong, A. (Eds) *Worlding Cities. Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*, pp. 307-35. Oxford: Blackwell.

Roy, A. (2014) 'Worlding the south: Towards a post-colonial urban theory', In Parnell, S. and Oldfield, S. (Eds) *The Routledge Handbook on Cities of the Global South*, pp. 9-20. London: Routledge.

Roy, A. (2015) 'What is urban about critical urban theory?', *Urban Geography* 37(6): 810-23.

Roy, A. (2016) 'Who's afraid of postcolonial theory?', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40(1): 200-09.

Roy, A. and Ong A (Eds) (2011) *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments in the Art of Being Global*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Saad-Filho, A. (2015) 'Social Policy for Neoliberalism: The Bolsa Família Programme in Brazil', *Development and Change* 46(6): 1227-52, DOI: 10.1111/dech.12199.

Sadian, S. (2018) 'Consumer agency and social change: Experiences from post-World War South Africa'. PhD Thesis, University of Barcelona, Barcelona.

Samara, T. A., He, S., Chen, G. (Eds) (2013) *Locating Right to the City in the Global South*. London: Routledge.

Sánchez, F., Bienenstein, G., Lima Jr, P., Oliveira, F. (2007) 'Jogos Panamericanos Rio 2007. Uma análise transdimensional do projeto urbano'. Conference Proceedings of the XII Encontro Nacional da ANPUR, Belém do Pará (21-25 May).

Santos, B. de S. (2014) *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*. Boulder and London: Transaction.

Santos, B. de S. (Ed) (2007) *Another Knowledge is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*. London: Verso.

Santos, M. (2000) *Por uma Outra Globalização: Do Pensamento Único à Consciência Universal*. Rio de Janeiro: Record.

Santos, M. (2004 [1978]) *Por uma Geografia Nova. Da crítica da Geografia a uma Geografia crítica*. São Paulo: EdUSP.

Santucci, J. (2008) *Cidade Rebelde. As Revoltas Populares no Rio de Janeiro no início do Século XX.* Rio de Janeiro: Casa da Palavra.

Sassen, S. (1991) *The global city: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Schindler, S. (2017) 'Towards a paradigm of Southern urbanism', *City* 21(1): 47-64, DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2016.1263494.

Schmid, C. (2018) 'Journeys through planetary urbanization: Decentering perspectives on the urban', *Environment and Planning D: Space and Society* 36(3): 591-610.

Schwambach, K. F. (2012) 'Mega-events in Rio de Janeiro and their influence on the city planning', Proceedings of the 15th International Planning History Society Conference, São Paulo (15-18 July).

Schwarcz, L. M. (1993) *O espetáculo das raças: cientistas, instituições e a questão racial no Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.

Scott, A. J. and Storper, M. (2015) 'The nature of cities: The scope and limits of urban theory', *International Journal of Urban Theory* 39: 1-15.

Seabra, O. C. L. (1996) 'O pensamento de Henri Lefebvre e a Geografia', *Boletim Paulista de Geografia* 74: 7-22.

Seabra, O. C. L. (2003) Urbanização e fragmentação: cotidiano e vida de bairro na metamorfose da cidade em metrópole, a partir das transformações do bairro do Limão. Tese (Livre-Docência). Faculdade de Filosofia Letras e Ciências Humanas, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo.

Seabra, O. C. L. (2004) 'Territórios de uso: cotidiano e modo de vida. Revista Cidades', *Grupo de Estudos Urbanos* 1(2): 181-206.

Seekings, J. (2008) 'The continuing salience of race: Discrimination and diversity in South Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 26(1): 1-25, DOI: 10.1080/02589000701782612.

Seekings, J. (2010) 'Race, class and inequality in the South African City'. Centre for Social Science Research, Social Surveys Unit, Working Paper No. 283. Cape Town: UCT.

Seekings, J. (2011) 'Chapter 47: Race, Class, and Inequality in the South African City,' In Bridge, G. and Watson, S. (Eds) *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, pp. 1112-41. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Seekings, J. (2012a) 'Editorial', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* Virtual Issue Latin American Cities. Available at http://www.ijurr./virtual-issues/latin-american-cities/ [Accessed 26 July 2018].

Seekings, J. (2012b) 'Pathways to Redistribution: The Emerging Politics of Social Assistance Across the Global "South"', *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik* 28(1): 14-34.

Seekings, J. (2013) 'Economy, society and municipal services in Khayelitsha'. Report for the Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of Police Inefficiency in Khayelitsha and a Breakdown in Relations between the Community and the Police in Khayelitsha, pp. 1-27. Cape Town: Centre for Social Science Research, UCT.

Seekings, J. (2015) The 'Developmental and Welfare State in South Africa: Lessons for the Southern African Region'. CSSR Working Paper No. 358. Paper prepared for the CROP workshop, Cape Town (9-11 February).

Seekings, J. and Keil, R. (2009) 'The International Journal of Urban and Regional Research: An Editorial Statement', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33(2): i-x.

Segura, R. (2014) 'El espacio urbano y la (re)producción de desigualdades sociales. Desacoples entre distribución del ingreso y patrones de urbanización en ciudades latinoamericanas', desiguALdades.net Working Paper, Series 65. Available at http://www.iai.spk-berlin.de/fileadmin/dokumentenbibliothek/desigualdades/workingpapers/65_WP _Segura_Online.pdf [Accessed 07 December 2018].

Selzer, A. K. and Heller, P. (2010) 'The spatial dynamics of middle-class formation in postapartheid South Africa: enclavization and fragmentation in Johannesburg', In Go, J. (Ed) *Political Power and Social Theory (Political Power and Social Theory*, Volume 21, pp.171-208. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Sevilla-Buitrago, A. (2015) 'Capitalist Formations of Enclosure: Space and the Extinction of the Commons', *Antipode* 47(7): 999-1020.

Sheppard, E., Leitner, H., Maringanti, A. (2013) 'Provincializing global urbanism: A manifesto', *Urban Geography* 34: 893-900.

Shin, H. B. (2009) 'Life in the shadow of mega-events: Beijing Summer Olympiad and its impact on housing', *Journal of Asian Public Policy* 2(2): 122-41, DOI: 10.1080/17516230903027872.

Shin, H. B. (2012) 'Unequal cities of spectacle and mega-events in China', *City*, 16(6): 728-44, DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2012.734076.

Shin, H. B. (2015) 'Urbanization in China', In Wright, J. (Ed) *International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioral Sciences*, pp. 973-79. New York: Elsevier.

Shin, H. B. (2016) 'Economic Transition and Speculative Urbanisation in China: Gentrification Versus Dispossession', *Urban Studies* 53(3): 471-89, DOI: 10.1177/0042098015597111.

Silva, F. E. da. (2004) 'Aproximar Sem Reduzir: As Derivas e a Pesquisa de Campo em Geografia Urbana', *GEOUSP - Espaço e Tempo* 15: 139-49.

Silva, M. L. P. (1992) *Os transportes coletivos na cidade do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca Carioca.

Simkins, C. (1983) *Four Essays on the Past, Present, and Possible Future of the Distribution of the Black Population of South Africa*. Cape Town: Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town.

Simmel, G. (2002 [1903]) 'The Metropolis and Mental Life', In Bridge, G. and Watson, S. (Eds) *The Blackwell City Reader*. Oxford and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Simone A (2014) *Jakarta, Drawing the City Near*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Simone, A. (2004) 'People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg', *Public Culture* 16(3): 407-29.

Simone, A. (2010) *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar: Movements at the Crossroads*. London: Routledge.

Simone, A. (2011) 'No longer the subaltern: Refiguring cities in the global south', In Edensor, T. and Jayne, M. (Eds) *A World of Cities: Urban Theory Beyond 'the West'*. London and New York: Routledge.

Sintomer Y, Herzberg, C. and Allegretti, G. with the collaboration of Röcke, A. and Alves, M. (2013) 'Participatory Budgeting Worldwide – Updated Version'. Dialog Global, No. 25 Bonn, Germany: Engagement Global and Service Agency Communities in One World. Available at http://www.ces.uc.pt/myces/UserFiles/livros/1097_DG-25_bf.pdf [Accessed 17 May 2018].

Sintomer, Y., Herzberg, C., Allegretti, G. and Röcke, A. (2010) 'Learning from the South: Participatory Budgeting Worldwide – an Invitation to Global Cooperation'. Dialog Global, No. 25 Bonn: Capacity Building International, Germany/Service Agency Communities in One World. Available at http://www.buergerhaushalt.org/sites/default/files/downloads/LearningfromtheSouth-ParticipatoryBudgetingWorldwide-Study_0.pdf [Accessed 17 May 2018].

Skidmore, T. E. (1993 [1974]) *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Smith, N. (1979) 'Toward a Theory of Gentrification A Back to the City Movement by Capital, not People', *Journal of the American Planning Association* 45(4): 538-48, DOI: 10.1080/01944367908977002.

Smith, N. (1996) *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. London: Routledge.

Smith, N. (2010 [1984]) *Uneven Development. Nature, Capital and the Production of Space*. London and New York: Verso.

Smith, R. G. (2013) 'The ordinary city trap', *Environment and Planning A* 45: 2290-304.

Smith, N. (2002) 'New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy', *Antipode* 34 (3): 427-50, DOI:10.1111/anti.2002.34.issue-3.

Soja, E. (1989) *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso Press.

Soja, E. (1996) *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Soja, E. (2001 [2000]) *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Soja, E. (2010) *Seeking Spatial Justice*. Chicago: University of Minnesota Press.

South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR). (2013) 'Non-European Housing'. Historical Papers Research Archive. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand. Available at http://www.historicalpapers.wits.ac.za/inventories/inv_pdfo/AD1715/AD1715-8-3-5-001-jpeg.pdf [Accessed 10 November 2017].

Souza e Silva, J. de and Barbosa, J. L. (2005) *Favela: alegria e dor da cidade*. São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro: SENAC / X – Brasil.

Souza, M. (2000a) 'O orçamento participativo e sua espacialidade: uma agenda de pesquisa', *Terra Livre* 15: 39–58.

Souza, M. (2002) *Mudar a cidade: uma introdução crítica ao planejamento e à gestão urbanos*. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil.

Souza, M. L. de (1996a) 'As drogas e a "questão urbana" no Brasil. A dinâmica sócio-espacial nas cidades brasileiras sob a influência do tráfico de tóxicos', In Castro, I. et al. (Orgs) *Brasil: questões atuais da reorganização do território*, pp. 425-67. Rio de janeiro: Bertrand Brasil.

Souza, M. L. de (1996b) 'Redes e sistemas do tráfico de drogas no Rio de Janeiro', *Anuário do Instituto de Geociências/UFRJ* 19: 45-60.

Souza, M. L. de (1998) 'Tráfico de drogas e fragmentação do tecido sociopolítico-espacial no Rio de Janeiro'. Paper presented at the XXII Encontro Anual da ANPOCS, Caxambu (27-31 October).

Souza, M. L. de (2000b) 'Revisitando a crítica ao "mito da marginalidade". A população favelada do Rio de Janeiro em face do tráfico de drogas'. In Acselrad, G. (Org) *Avessos do prazer. Drogas, AIDS e direitos humanos*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora da Fundação Oswaldo Cruz.

Spivak, G. (1985) 'Can the subaltern speak?', In Nelson, C and Grossberg, L. (Eds) *Marxist Interpretations of Culture*, pp. 271-313. Basingstoke: Macmillan Education.

Spivak, G.C. (1999) *A critique of postcolonial reason: toward a history of the vanishing present*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Stats SA (Statistics South Africa). (2011) 2011 Census. Pretoria: Stats SA.

Storper, M. and Scott, A. J. (2016) 'Current debates in urban studies: A critical assessment', *Urban Studies* 53(6): 1114-36.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990) *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. London, Sage Publications.

Su, X. (2011) 'Commodification and the selling of ethnic music to tourists', *Geoforum* 42(4): 496-505.

Su, X. (2014) 'Tourism, modernity and the consumption of home in China', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 39(1): 50-61.

Su, X. (2015) 'Urban entrepreneurialism and the commodification of heritage in China', *Urban Studies* 52(15): 2874-89.

Sugiyama, N. B. and Hunter, W. (2013) 'Whither Clientelism? Good Governance and Brazil's Bolsa Família Program', *Comparative Politics* October: 43-62.

Tendler, S. (2006) 'Encontro com Milton Santos ou o Mundo Global Visto do lado de Cá'. DVD (89 min). Rio de Janeiro: Caliban Produções.

Tester, K. (1994) *The Flâneur*. London and New York: Routledge.

Theodoro, M. (Ed) (2008) *As políticas públicas e a desigualdade racial no Brasil: 120 anos após a abolição*. Brasília: IPEA.

Tible, J. (2013) '¿Una nueva clase media en Brasil? El lulismo como fenómeno político-social', *Nueva Sociedad* 243: 4-17.

Tillin, L. and Duckett, J. (2017) 'The politics of social policy: welfare expansion in Brazil, China, India and South Africa in comparative perspective', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 55(3): 253-77, DOI: 10.1080/14662043.2017.1327925.

Tonkiss, F. (2011) 'Template urbanism: Four points about assemblage', *City* 15: 584-88.

Trapido, S. (1971) 'South Africa in a Comparative Study of Industrialization', *Journal of Development Studies*, 7(3): 309-20.

Trebitsch, M. (2014a) 'Preface', In Lefebvre, H. *Critique of Everyday Life*, pp. 5-24. London and New York: Verso.

Trebitsch, M. (2014b) 'Preface: The Moment of Radical Critique', In Lefebvre, H. *Critique of Everyday Life*, pp. 277-94. London and New York: Verso.

Trimikliniotis, N., Gordon, S., Zondo, B. (2008) 'Globalisation and Migrant Labour in a "Rainbow Nation": a fortress South Africa?', *Third World Quarterly* 29(7): 1323-39, DOI: 10.1080/01436590802386476.

Turner, J. F. C. (1968) 'Housing Priorities, Settlement Patterns, and Urban Development in Modernizing Countries', *Journal of American Institute of Planners* 34: 354-63.

Turner, J. F. C. (1976) *Housing by People. Towards Autonomy in Building Environments*. London: Marion Byers.

Última Hora (1983) 'Tristeza e revolta no enterro', Jornal Última Hora, pp. 3-4. Rio de Janeiro (28 December).

Vainer, C. (2000) 'Pátria, empresa e mercadoria: a estratégia discursiva do Planejamento Estratégico Urbano', In Arantes, O., Maricato, E., Vainer, C. (Eds) *A Cidade do Pensamento Único. Desmanchando Consensos*, pp. 75-103. Petropolis: Vozes.

Vainer, C. (2011) 'Cidade de exceção: reflexões a partir do Rio de Janeiro', Proceedings of the XIV Encontro Nacional da Anpur, Rio de Janeiro (23-27 May).

Vainer, C. (2014) 'Disseminating "best practice"? The coloniality of urban knowledge and city models', In Parnell, S. and Oldfield, S. (Eds) *The Routledge Handbook on Cities of the Global South*, pp. 48-56. London: Routledge.

Valladares, L. P. (1978) *Passa-se uma casa: Análise do programa de remoção de favelas do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores.

Valladares, L. P. (2000) 'A gênese da favela carioca. A produção anterior às ciências sociais', *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* 15(44): 5-34.

Valladares, L. P. (2005) *A invenção da favela – Do mito de origem à favela*. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Fundação Getúlio Vargas.

Van Tonder, D. (1990) 'First Win the War, Then Clear the Slums: the Genesis of the Western Areas Removal Scheme, 1940-49,' History Workshop Paper, Act 1/1/2/3/10 Representations from public Transvaal – South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand.

Vannuchi, L. and Criekingen, M. V. (2015) 'Transforming Rio de Janeiro for the Olympics: another path to accumulation by dispossession?', *Journal of Urban Research* Special Issue 7, DOI: 10.4000/articulo.2813.

Vaz, L. F. (1985) 'Contribuição ao Estudo da Produção e Transformação do Espaço da Habitação Popular. As Habitações Coletivas do Rio Antigo'. PhD Thesis. Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ.

Vaz, L. F. (1994) 'Dos cortiços às favelas e aos edifícios de apartamentos – a modernização da moradia no Rio de Janeiro', *Análise Social* 29(127): 581-97.

Wacquant, L. (2008) *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Wacquant, L. (2009) *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Wagner, P. (1994) *A sociology of modernity. Liberty and Discipline*. London and New York: Routledge.

Wagner, P. (2001a) *A History and Theory of the Social Sciencies. Not all the is solid melts into air*. London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Wagner, P. (2001b) *Theorizing Modernity: Inescapability and Attainability in Social Theory*. London: Sage.

Wagner, P. (2008) *Modernity as Experience and Interpretation. A New Sociology of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Wagner, P. (2010b) 'Multiple Trajectories of Modernity: Why Social Theory Needs Historical Sociology', *Thesis Eleven* 100(1): 53-60.

Wagner, P. (2011) 'From Interpretation to Civilization — and Back: Analyzing the Trajectories of Non-European Modernities', *European Journal of Social Theory* 14(1): 89-106.

Wagner, P. (2012) *Modernity: understanding the present*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Wagner, P. (2014) 'World-sociology beyond the fragments: Oblivion and advance in the comparative analysis of modernities', In Arjomand, S. A. (Ed) *Social Theory and Regional Studies in a Global Age*, pp. 293–311. New York: Suny Press.

Wagner, P. (2016) *Progress: A Reconstruction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Wagner, P. (2010a) 'Successive Modernities and the Idea of Progress: A First Attempt, Distinktion', *Journal of Social Theory*, 11(2): 9-24, DOI: 10.1080/1600910X.2010.9672761.

Walker, C. (2013) 'Commemorating or celebrating? Reflections on the centenary of the Natives Land Act of 1913', *Social Dynamics* 39(2): 282-89, DOI: 10.1080/02533952.2013.796117.

Walker, C. (2014) 'Critical Reflections on South Africa's 1913 Natives Land Act and its Legacies: Introduction', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40(4): 655-65, DOI: 10.1080/03057070.2014.931059.

Walker, C. (2010) 'Looking Forward, Looking Back: Beyond the Narrative of Loss and Restoration in the History of Land', In Godby, M. (Ed) *The Lie of the Land*, pp. 8-23. Cape Town: Iziko.

Wallerstein, I. (1974a) *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: Academic Press.

Wallerstein, I. (1974b) 'The rise and future demise of the world capitalist system: Concepts for comparative analysis', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16(4): 387-415.

Wallerstein, I. (1980) *The Modern World-System II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600–1750*. New York: Academic Press.

Wallerstein, I. (1988) *The Modern World-System III: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World Economy (1730-1840s)*. New York: Academic Press.

Wallerstein, I. (2011) *The Modern World-System IV: Centrist Liberalism Triumphant, 1789–1914*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Walsh, C. (2007) 'Shifting the Geopolitics of Critical Knowledge,' *Cultural Studies* 21(2): 224-39.

Ward, K. (2010) 'Towards a relational comparative approach to the study of cities', *Progress in Human Geography* 34: 471-87.

Warf, B. and Arias, S. (2008) *The Spatial Turn: interdisciplinary perspectives*. London: Routledge.

Watson, V. (2009) 'Seeing from the South: Refocusing urban planning on the globe's central urban issues', *Urban Studies* 46: 2259-75.

Weber, M. (2017 [1903-17]) *Methodology of social sciences*. London: Routledge.

Weid, E. (2010 [1997]) 'A cidade, os bondes e a Light: caminhos da expansão do Rio de Janeiro (1850-1914)'. Phd Theis in History, Niterói, UFF/ICHF.

Wirth, L. (1938) 'Urbanism as a way of life', *American Journal of Sociology* 44: 1-24.

Wolpe, H. (1972) 'Capitalism and cheap labour-power in South Africa: From segregation to apartheid', *Economy and Society* 1(4): 425-56.

Worden, N. (2012 [1994]) *The Making of Modern South Africa Conquest, Apartheid, Democracy*. Malden, MA/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Wu, F. (2015) 'Commodification and housing market cycles in Chinese cities', *International Journal of Housing Policy* 15(1): 6-26, DOI: 10.1080/14616718.2014.925255.

Wu, F. L. (2007) *China's Emerging Cities: The Making of New Urbanism*. London: Routledge.

Wu, Q., Cheng, j., Chen, G., Hammel, D. J., Wu, X. (2014) 'Socio-spatial differentiation and residential segregation in the Chinese city based on the 2000 community-level census data: A case study of the inner city of Nanjing', *Cities* 39: 109-19.

Yi, S. (2016) Center of BRICS studies. Fudan University. , In InBRICS. BRICS Sudies Centre Newsletter, winter-spring, Issue 1, pp. 27-8.

Tibisi : Sex Domiti
Solstitium MMVII