

What is new in the 'south'?

Consumer culture and the vicissitudes of poor youth's identity construction in urban Brazil

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Abstract

This study analyses the specificities of youth identity construction in Brazil in the context of global transformations and the particularities of the Brazilian model of development. Poor urban Brazilian youngsters' demands to consume, as a 'mode of inclusion' in society, achieve short-term gains that narrow down prospective visions of the self. A 'logic of survival' hypothesis is proposed to account for the process of identity construction whereby encapsulated and rigid, rather than hybridized and creative, identities are constituted. The hypothesis is illustrated with a discussion of the cases of the drug dealer, the religious fanatic and the labourer. New cultural forms of consumer culture also convey claims for recognition and justice, shown by the musical expressions coming from the peripheries of big cities. It remains to be seen whether musical and artistic expressions, as possible factors that can enhance self-respect and group solidarity among poor youth, will not be consumed just as a new item of the culture industry.

Keywords

citizenship, consumer culture, peripheral countries, social class, youth identities

Youth identity construction is embedded in the specific cultural dilemmas of nations and regions of the world, thereby, creating both particular opportunities and constraints for subjective transformation. This article examines youth identity construction in Brazil, considering a two-fold perspective: on the one hand, the impact of the adhesion to modern values, such as progress and development in its material and symbolic realizations, and ultimately in its postmodern version of consumer culture, in countries in the 'periphery' of the world economy, like Brazil; and, on the other hand, the interplay between such values and enduring social inequalities ingrained in the history of the country. This two-fold perspective leads to an unfair structure of opportunities for self-construction for an enormous contingent of youth, especially those coming from the lower social strata.

'Periphery countries' seem to be at a crossroads captured by demands to follow their northern counterparts in their strife for industrial, technological and social advancements. Indicators of development, which originally stem from northern countries' trajectories, play a paradigmatic role establishing, for other countries, the 'viable' and the almost inexorable route ahead. As John Morss has ironically put it in relation to ontogenetic (individual) development, the point of view of those considered not yet developed is that 'if you are ahead of me, you are my superior' (1996: 150).

However, 'periphery countries', Latin American and, especially, Brazil, which is the target of the present analysis, are caught in contradictory demands that, on the one hand, push the country's investments towards ever more sophisticated development in order to overcome the distance in relation to 'developed' nations, whereas, on the other hand, very basic needs of the majority of the population such as housing, health and education remain unattended and are not prioritized.

These contradictions produce and reproduce long established social inequalities, radicalized in the context of overall transformations accelerated by globalization processes. Brazil, at present, is a 'modern' country in its own sense. It is a de-traditionalized society where old values related to an agriculturally-based rural society were replaced by values of a postmodern world, a liberal free-market economy, though only partially modernized with respect to other values of the Enlightenment rationality: universal rights, individual freedom and equality.

The study of youth identities in countries like Brazil is set up in a scenario of enormous social inequalities that steer the effects of other important subject positions such as gender, ethnicity and others. In a most appropriate expression coined by Francisco Oliveira (1984), urban Brazil is the space of 'unfinished social classes'. From 1950, when the Brazilian urban population was about 18 million, to the present figure of 142 million urban dwellers (IBGE, 2003), urbanization in Brazil has not produced the expected swelling of the lower classes positioned in the industrial sector, but, rather, a bulging contingent of unemployed and sub-employed people who have migrated from rural areas to live in the periphery of the big cities. The result was the formation of an urban social structure with a numerically small social occupational stratum obtaining a very high income, but also a large mass of poor with very little purchasing power (Faria, 1991). The present level of informalization of the Brazilian economy is estimated to maintain about 20 million job positions in urban areas (Faria, 1991) aggravated by a persistent unemployment rate of around 7 to 15 per cent in the big cities of Brazil. Present figures show that 38 per cent of families with children and youth up to 14 years of age receive about

US\$50 of income per month, whereas only 2.9 per cent of families in the same situation receive about or over US\$500 of income per month (IBGE, 2000a). Thus, the examination of youth identities in Brazil must be contextualized within the scenario created by gross social inequalities, which introduce particular issues in how youth get along with their identification processes and make choices about life and work.

Especially in urban areas, differences concerning access to material and symbolic goods between lower and upper classes are most visible and disparate. Life in the cities concentrates on technological, informational, as well as cultural and educational advantages. In the big cities of Brazil, such as São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro, economic and social disadvantages have produced a scenario of glaring contradictions: postmodern skyscrapers displaying the most sophisticated technological facilities are surrounded by shacks where thousands live with no running water or drainage facilities. Examining the situation of the city of São Paulo, Wagner Iglecias concludes that this metropolis has suffered from a process of 'incomplete and selective internationalization', that is, the convergence of economic opulence and the backward state of social and political structures, as 'everything that is up to date can be found there, as well as the most glaring backwardness' (2002: 50). He wonders 'until when the Brazilian model of development will persist in leaping ahead, aiming at international insertion in novel economic cycles without solving the unbalanced state produced by earlier cycles?' (2002: 50).

Looking at Brazil from the point of view of a foreigner, Paul Rabinow writes:

Driving into Rio through the major highway system the military had constructed: reverberating memories of Casablanca; long wide avenues leading through the mottled texture of the city; old cars; long lines of fuming buses; hodge-podge mix of 1970s skyscrapers, shanty towns undatable to a tourist, and palm trees; ample graffiti, the product of a recent soccer championship. Today, despite its pockets of enormous wealth, Rio is infrastructurally shabbier and less coherently laid out than Casablanca (both topography and politics involved in that). (1993: 249)

From the point of view of educational and cultural rights the situation is the same. An inspection of figures about Brazilian youth gives an objective frame within which to evaluate the contradictions that embed opportunities for self-construction through education. Of a total population of 170 million inhabitants, 33 million are between 15 and 24 years of age; if one considers the 10–14 age interval, then Brazilian youth count about 50 million. Of this total, about 7 per cent between 10 to 14 years of age, 30 per cent between 15 to 17 and 51 per cent between 18 to 19 are already out of the educational system. Furthermore, there is a significant association between monthly income per capita and school attendance indicating that the higher the family income, the better the chances that the child/youth attends school (IBGE, 2003: 45). If one considers the 10 to 14 years of age interval, then about 1.6 million are not at school, or have never been (IBGE, 2003).

This means that persistent educational inequalities prevail in Brazil severely limiting the possibilities for the majority of young people to expand their self-construction projects through education. Educational opportunities are also differently distributed among black, white and brown youngsters: for those white youngsters between 15–17, 60 per cent attend secondary school, whereas for blacks and browns of the same age, only 32 per cent attend.

Education of children and youth has been a 'modern' indicator of nations' development, given legal status under the International Convention on the Rights of the Child Convention of 1989. The impetus to modernize Brazil has surely not secured such prerogatives for *all* children and youngsters, pointing at pre-modern enclaves in a society whose economy has shown a robustness, measured by the national gross product, as the 12th in the international rank.

The aim of this study is to analyse the vicissitudes of identity construction of poor Brazilian young people constrained by the demands of a postmodern consumer culture that is not, however, modernized in relation to equality of opportunities, universal education and rights. In this sense, Brazilian culture lags behind modernization in the cultural and normative sense. I argue that, for many poor urban Brazilian youngsters, demands to consume, and thereby become part of society through the adequate markers of distinction, embed identity in a process of 'psychological survival'. This means that, as consumption establishes 'modes of inclusion' in present capitalist societies, urban poor youngsters are positioned in a liminal location subjectively experienced as not being able to come up to society's demands. Conflicts deriving from not being able to cope can induce rigid psychological responses when young people are seduced by immediate gains and all - or none - self-transformations unravelling pressing demands to consume and be included. To survive in the midst of very adverse material and existential conditions leads then to short-sighted evaluations of oneself and of one's life-chances, embracing what appears to be most advantageous in the short-term and relinquishing prospective visions of the self. In the cases here analysed, that of the drug dealer and the religious fanatic, identification strategies seem to be established round rigid and 'encapsulated identities'. Moreover, a systematic erosion of work values seems to take place under the impact of consumerism radically changing the nature of the relationship between these youth and work. Notwithstanding, their impoverished repertoire for identification and self-construction poor Brazilian youth are increasingly finding in musical expression and its diffusion a way to force their entrance in a society that excludes their participation. Popular music made by youth themselves - particularly the funk and the rap - have become powerful instruments of social criticism, 'conscientization' of injustices and claims for a 'new social contract'.

The positive perspective on consumer culture, that it can enhance multiple subject positionings and favour the resolution of 'local-global contradictions' in a creative way, needs to be qualified. I argue here that the interaction between the impoverished living conditions of a large majority of Brazilian youth with pressing demands to consume, most felt in big cities, does not favour an interpretation of identity construction in terms of a creative hybridization out of the many possibilities opened to the young person by postmodern consumer culture. For these youngsters, a depleted, rather than a creative, response resolves such contradictions where short-term gains appear more appealing. It is argued that these young people are not allowed 'to borrow and mix and match elements from a range of ethnic and gender identities', as Ali Rattansi and Ann Phoenix (1997: 129) have put it concerning youth identities' construction in the general context of postmodern consumer cultures. Rather, they tend to take up consumer values and ideology in a monolithic way faced with the dearth of other narratives and discourses that can mediate the impact of consumerism.

YOUTH IDENTITIES AND CONSUMER CULTURE: HOW GLOBAL DEMANDS MAKE THEIR WAY TOWARDS THE SOUTH

In the new international order of late capitalism, demands to consume have become central for subjects to establish their own identities. Consumer culture in Western countries, Brazil included, promotes a growing salience of leisure activities, emotional pleasures related to bodily experiences, aesthetic enjoyment, dreams and desires. The seemingly endless production of new articles makes possible a process of social differentiation as goods become markers of individual taste and lifestyles related to particular constellations of consumption practices. An economic order, based on the continual renewal and commodification of goods, brings forward values based on obsolescence, ephemerality and continuous change. Young people become subjected to the persistent claims of consumerism that appeal to self-fulfilment through the renewed incorporation of goods – the introjective logic of consumption (Falk, 1994).

Global demands of 'inclusion'¹ in the culture of commodities and enjoyment have become an overall determinant of youth identities. Although, as this new basis of articulating identities emerges, a differential impact on Brazilian youth can be noted, considering the large number who are debarred from commonplace consumption practices, such as going to the cinema, having digital and computer experience, or, simply, riding a car. As consumption and its external indicators become landmarks of 'inclusion' and citizenship (Canclini, 1995), for poor Brazilian youth the construction of the 'inclusive self' (Falk, 1994) becomes problematic.

Consumption expectations of Brazilian youth are mostly directed to items such as clothes and leisure. Inês Sampaio (2000) notes the potential capacity of the 10–18 year-old segment of the population by showing that they were responsible for purchasing 70 million out of the 120 million pairs of tennis shoes in 1990. In a study about consumption practices of adolescents in the city of São Paulo (PROCON – SP & UniFMU, 2001), poor youth were found to spend more on going-out clothes than on the outings themselves, indicating that looks were specially important to show off a favourable self-image. The importance of clothes for poor youth in promoting their free circulation in the city has also been observed in other studies (Lurie, 1997; Zaluar, 1985). Dressing properly, and that includes fashionable items, allows entrance into malls, cinemas and other places of leisure. Therefore, before leisure can be consumed, the adequate clothes must be at hand. This explains how, for poor youngsters, it is pointless to have money to spend on outings if one is not properly dressed up. Alba Zaluar (1994) has also shown that, for poor youngsters, fashionable clothes become the essential antidote for not being identified as 'poor'. She comments that clothes are the foremost items of young people's consumption, often in opposition with their parents' values and priorities and the family's budget capacity. It is then through 'building-up' the desired self-image that poor youth can manage their access to better-off places and, above all, avoid humiliating looks and attitudes from others.

Looks and appearances become central to communicate to others who one is and to identify others in the midst of the complex urban landscape. Circulation in urban environments demands the development of skills to manage impressions on others in order to enhance visual decoding of group affiliations and life styles, even if these are context-dependent and do not necessarily last for long (De Castro and Lehmann, 1999).

In Brazil, given the gross and disparate social inequalities, life-styles and looks provide signs to locate people on one side or the other of the dividing line between the worse and the better-off. They represent the most straightforward way to decode social positioning in a society marked by one of the greatest gaps between incomes among the richest and the poorest.² This is an intricate process, as impression management is the result of many factors besides the intentions of the actors, but adolescents, especially poor ones in big Brazilian cities, know that this can be a device to overcome prejudice against their social origin. In this sense, appearance is of the utmost relevance for social recognition and identity. In a study with poor youngsters who were arrested for illicit activities (Cordeiro and Menezes, 2001), wealth was found to be associated with capacity to consume, with a comfortable life-style, with cars, clothes and women, whereas poverty was associated with debasement, shame and a sense of inferiority for not being able to materialize personal power in terms of the adequate social signs. As one of the youngsters dramatically put it: 'We, poor, can die as a dirty dustcloth and nobody will care' (Cordeiro and Menezes, 2001: 52). Another youth comments on 'how one is looked down upon even if one is carefully and properly *dressed*' (p. 48, my emphasis). Thus, the provisional negotiation of one's identity in the context of Brazilian cities hinges on the omnipresent contention among social classes dramatized by the very unequal access to material and symbolic goods.

The impact of consumerism on poor youngsters has dramatic effects once the imaginary world of acquisitions and enjoyments opened up to them is, in fact, not possible. For many of them, who are excluded from most pleasures of consumption, social inequalities result in a source of class resentment. As shown elsewhere (Castro, 2001b), children and youth regard those who are better-off (the bourgeois consumers) as having 'stony hearts' because they seem indifferent to the fate of the poor. They also feel resentful towards 'legal representatives', such as judges, policemen and politicians, who are never able to defend the poor in their demands for a more equal share of society's wealth (Cassab, 2001; Soares, 2004). Therefore, it is on account of considering oneself excluded from the circle of desirable consumption that youth and children of poor social origin gradually internalize their subaltern social positioning and a devalued self-image. Even considering the wide variation of consumption practices among poor youngsters, it seems important to remark how consumption practices reinforce and reproduce social hierarchies based on occupational status – a point made by Rosemary Crompton for whom 'the simple point that the maintenance of consumption practices is heavily dependent upon economic class position should not be forgotten' (1996: 118).

Strategies of impression management by poor youth are related to attempts to be included as part of a society whose values put emphasis on happiness, success and material advantages. Consumerism has brought forward a new type of *summum bonum* (most important thing) based on the enjoyment of the present and the search for happiness (completeness), regarded as an individual project of self-building by means of 'taking-in' or 'filling-up' the self with good objects or commodities (Falk, 1994). Accordingly, ideals and moral expectations based on values such as self-renouncement, collective realizations above individual ones, compassion and solidarity seem to go in the counter-current of the established consumerist *modus vivendi* (the way of living). Studies of middle-class youth in Brazil (Almeida and Tracy, 2003; Fiuza, 1990) have shown how daily life becomes centred round the

discovery and enjoyment of new forms of emotions and the consumption of new commodities.

It is not surprising then that poor youth also attempt to take part in this world of enjoyment. A study with poor urban youngsters who were given a free opportunity to have professional training at a dancing institute (De Castro, 2001a, 2001b) showed how poor female teenagers tried to act out a better-off economic situation by imitating the dress, body language and speech of the middle/upper classes. For middle-class youth, the poor can be recognized easily in the city by their looks and life-style: 'they are always at home watching TV, they look sad, they live in shabby places and they do not talk properly'. For the poor youth, they are always the target of prejudice and suspicion, and so their solution is to disguise the markers of poverty. As one of these girls put it: 'The rich think that the poor are inferior, and in the end the poor begin to feel like this . . . if one is rich, or *looks like* rich, nobody will ever look down on you' (De Castro, 2001a: 131, emphasis added). These poor girls imagine that by trying to imitate the middle-class life-style they could become more equal, and experience less suspicion and humiliation from their bourgeois counterparts. They doubt, however, how effective they are in manipulating their own image: even disguised, and not looked down upon, 'are they really accepted as equals?' Therefore, even if social inequalities can be partly aestheticized, equality would need a sounder basis to take place really. By overrating outward signs as markers of self-respect and value, such as fashionable 'fake' clothes, make-up and hair-styles, these girls played and experimented with a would-be identity, acting as if they could mask their poor social origin. Their identification with a better-off lifestyle can be understood as a dramatic attempt to solve conflicts posed by social inequalities by means of an individual, rather than a collective, attempt to come to terms with the disadvantages that embed their lives. In this case consumption practices provide emblems for attempts to diminish social distance and build up more equal relationships, even if sustained by a game of appearances. This reminds us of the point made by Scott Lash and John Urry (1994) as to the importance of consumption practices in shaping consciousness.

Even considering that, among poor urban youngsters in Brazil, a considerable amount of heterogeneity with respect to values, attitudes and parental behaviour can be observed, their underprivileged situation related both to income per family and to their geographical situation in shanty towns, of the periphery and of the inner city, tends to insert them in a net of adverse conditions that produce negative effects on how and what they think of themselves and their life-chances. Illustrative testimonies given by youth themselves can be found in Daniela Assis's (2005) study:

One cannot respect the police anymore. I am tired of seeing them spanking innocent kids, just as they go around wearing a cap. (p. 81)

The problem of the youth here is that they grow without a chance, a perspective for the future. I feel that the people who live in shanty towns grow up like that: I do not have anything anyway, then I'll steal. (p. 83)

The youth are entering a career as outlaws. The government should provide more schools and courses for them. I myself went looking for a place in a school for me and my brother and I didn't find any. (p. 84)

There is no place for children to play here. The government should build up a sports centre, or just a football field for us to have some leisure. (p. 92)

For us here there are no professional training courses. Then it is impossible to get the first job. We keep idling around. (p. 95)

In this study a scenario is shown where lack of educational opportunities, degradation of the urban environment, violence and criminality and idleness set up a gloomy perspective on poor youth's lives.

SHORT (AND ILLUSORY) CIRCUITS 'TO BE INCLUDED': THE CAREER OF THE DRUG-DEALER

The spatial segregation of the lower classes in areas completely deprived of urban infrastructure in the big cities of Brazil (Villaschi and Medeiros, 1990) not only favoured the construction of a collective perspective on individual suffering and social disadvantage of those living under similar adverse material conditions, but also set the 'underclass' in a specific location of social, educational and juridical configuration. In these areas, public services – schools, health services, police assistance and so forth – are either nonexistent or of very bad quality. Insulated from access to public services, these areas have been invaded by organized forces associated with illicit activities, such as drug dealing, robbery and arms smuggling. This means that the poor, living in shanty towns and *favelas* have to cope daily with the vicissitudes imposed by criminal organizations on their lives – one important issue being the fate of poor youngsters who see drug dealing as an opportunity to earn easy money and to buy commodities that are not usually available to them. It is estimated that, in the 15–24 age range, about 20.3 per cent neither study nor work, and are probably idle in the communities in which they live (IBGE, 2000b).

Most importantly, however, is the psychological proximity that drug dealing offers as a 'career' – both as an identity and as a perspective on life-chances – for poor youngsters who see very few opportunities to 'be somebody in life'. Maria Aparecida Cassab (2001) quotes some of the youth she investigated whose lives and relationships are constantly permeated by the imminence of being co-opted into trafficking:

My mother warns me not to become like the other guys of the street we live. She knows a lot of people and when they say, 'Oh look there, X's not working, he's not studying', then she does not want that they talk like that about me. If I stay doing nothing then she gets angry, she scolds me. (p. 55)

The most of my friends smokes cannabis, smells drugs and steals. They smoke in front of me, they smell in front of me, they don't offer me, they know about my 'reality' now. Yes, I have done just like them, but now it is over. It was hell in the beginning, I was disgraced, but now I'm working, I earn very little but I am more at peace. (p. 59)

Illicit activities in drug trafficking stand out as an option for making easy money, and can be taken either as a 'career' or as an occasional or opportunistic task. Often poor youth living in communities see illegal activities, especially those of traffic dealing, as an on/off activity to earn some money to buy the new brand of tennis shoes, a T-shirt and other fashionable items (Dowdney, 2003; Fraga, 2003; Zaluar, 1997). This means that the domination of drug dealing in poor urban communities of Brazil invades households in such a way that is, in practical terms, impossible to keep oneself totally apart from it. Youth see their own relatives, neighbours or colleagues 'entering the traffic', many of them having already been killed by the police on that

account. Therefore, even for those who would want to keep out of illicit activities, drug dealing seems to mesh with their own lives. Above all, easy money and the possibility of enhancing consumption practices become attractive to come to terms with material deprivation in the present. For those who enter drug trafficking as a career, advantages in the present are obtained at the cost of medium-term survival and personal freedom.

The normative basis for illicit activities in drug traffic consists of a radical rejection of the work ethic. Thus, taking up the 'career' offered by drug traffic and the identity of the drug dealer and outlaw is also signified in terms of 'being smart' and bypassing conventional moral codes in favour of present fruition. For parents and other poor youngsters who see their friends and colleagues entering the world of illicit activities, this is regarded as the 'wrong path' (Novaes, 1997) or a pre-determined destiny of someone who was born 'mixed' (De Castro, 2004).

A point to note is that social burdens to exhibit 'signs of inclusion' lead a great number of poor young people into illicit activities, which are considered the easiest and most attractive way to satisfy consuming desires. In this sense, consumption as a basis of identification possibilities also offers a 'world vision' to poor Brazilian youngsters – its power to attract poor young people is also due to the fact that it helps them 'act' before enormous disadvantages and internalize justifications for anti-social behaviour.³

In some way, poor youngsters taking up drug dealing contest, by their transgressing behaviour, the exploitative economic system that will never allow them to earn enough to enjoy material goods and pleasures. They regard their fellow workers as 'dumb' or 'slow'. In this sense, they act out their revolt by imposing terror and assuming 'the evil'.⁴

Furthermore, as Zaluvar (1994, 1997) has shown in her various studies, a 'transgressing' or an outlaw identity in drug traffic is only assumed when the youngster is disposed to take up guns, make illegal activities a permanent way of living and admit a disposition to kill. She points out that this gendered activity is taken up by 'poor young men, blacks, browns and whites who have left school very early on account of repeated failures and have not attained the educational level necessary for a globalized economy. . . ' (Zaluvar, 1997: 52). Therefore, it is mainly those who have been marginalized and excluded from the global system of investments and rewards that are captured by another 'economy': that of maximum intensity of pleasure even in face of eminent danger and enormous personal risks. Here, too, the situation of having been excluded requires understanding and meaning-construction, as repetitive personal failures in the domain of educational achievements, family rejection and abandonment, plus the indifference of society at large to the fate of poor children and youth, needs to be personally elaborated and signified.

Besides the allure of making lots of easy money, whereby an enviable status is achieved, these young men live out a life of orgiastic pleasure by becoming an object of desire for women. A young woman offered this explanation for being in company of drug dealers: 'It is a real protection. When with them, no other man dares to approach' (quoted in Figueiredo, 2003: 97). Youth who enter the drug business also inspire awe and terror among neighbours as, in the absence of any other effective public services (including the police), they become the 'law-makers' of the community. To quote a trainee psychologist working in one of these communities:

One cannot deny that there is a war. And one can hardly imagine how the dwellers of these communities live. Here he who commands is the emperor of the traffic, who governs where the 'government' does not come in and is not willing to come in. (Figueiredo, 2003: 99)

Material deprivation and exclusion from educational and cultural networks open up ways for more immediate identification and make demands to consume more pressing. Immediate rather than long-term satisfaction comes together with values related to violence, aggressiveness and intolerance. In these circumstances, psychological alternatives to identify with the 'good' in society are narrowed down, since what seems most pressing is the attempt to recover what can be enjoyed right away without any further delay, in the present moment. Thus, the incapacity to think of oneself as anything else but 'the evil' can be understood as the abject reduction of identification possibilities, and is reminiscent of Michael Rustin's cautionary remarks that 'humiliation, rage and mental pain lie at the roots of callous and sadistic behaviour' (1991: 36). In the void of significant social and cultural networks, such as those provided by the school system, youth clubs and other institutions for young people, which could provide alternative conditions for identity construction directed to other social goals and practices, these young people are attracted by immediate gains, such as power over others and consumerist satisfactions, that social insertion in drug traffic networks offers to them inside their own communities. They become part of a selected group who, empowered by gains derived from drug traffic, want to enjoy the material and symbolic advantages of consumerism disregarding what society at large considers socially approved or not. They also ignore the enormous personal risks involved in entering the career of drug dealers.

Identity positions in drug traffic seem crystallized and centred round easier chances to survive and become included. Some youngsters refer to the difficulties of remaining out of illicit activities: 'There are many who don't succeed [not getting involved in illicit activities]. Because it's very difficult, one feels tempted all the time' (De Castro and Correa, 2005). Even considering that a youth's career in drug trafficking begins at about 11 years of age and usually ends by 22 years of age by violent death or imprisonment, the economy of maximum gains and fruition in the shortest possible time seems to attract youth into the career of drug dealing. It is estimated that about 6000 youth have opted for armed drug trafficking in poor communities in the city of Rio de Janeiro (Dowdney, 2003). Besides, for these youth, the lack of discourses and narratives deriving from cultural and educational practices narrows down their possibilities to confront and problematize the appeal of self-transformations allowed by conspicuous consumption.

Considering the fact that a great number of youngsters have an occasional link to drug dealers to earn some money for the weekend or to acquire new items (e.g. fashionable clothes), one could wonder why so many of them do not get more seriously involved. On this account, Zuenir Ventura writes:

One does not know what prevents these youngsters, jobless and without any earnings, from entering the drug traffic career. In terms of poor youth, the question is not why so many of them enter such a career, but why many of them don't. Or, why some do and others don't? (1994: 178)

The same combination of factors may generate opposite extreme counter-behaviours built upon anti-consumerist, anti-pleasure identity positions. In this sense both drug

dealing and its antithetical existential position, that of the religious convert, resume identities of psychological survival, depleted of prospective visions of oneself and life-chances. It is possible to argue then that this 'logic of survival' hypothesis accounts for two equally rigid and crystallized identity positions: one which entails immediacy of pleasure irrespective of long term consequences; the other which denies any possibility of pleasure and satisfaction, abhorring consumerist appeals, for fear of its unforeseen consequences.

ABHORRENCE OF CONSUMPTION: RELIGIOUSNESS AS A DEFENCE AGAINST THE PLEASURABLE PRESENT

An identity position as a religious person entails the renouncement of enjoyments and pleasures, a turning back to the temporal world and a reduction of identification possibilities with the diverse cultural forms opened up by consumption practices. It is estimated that in the last decades a high increase in religious conversions, especially to fundamentalist sects, has taken place (Fernandes, 1996) in particular for the socially disadvantaged youth of the urban areas (Florida, 2001; Novaes, 1997).

Religious conversions generally take place after some violent and traumatic experience where death appears to be imminent. Either the police or chief drug dealers are involved as the main protagonists of violence against these youth. Zuenir Ventura (1994) reports the case of Boi, a man who had had a previous 'career' as leader of a gang who, in face of a severe punishment for stealing and after leaving a funk ball, became a religious fanatic. He described this change: 'I was astray in the world, and couldn't imagine how the world was dirty. It was Jesus who caught me' (p. 244). Religious conversion seems to function as a barrier against transgressing behaviours and a life of pleasures indicating a defensive manoeuvre against a state of helplessness in face of extreme danger. Identity positions of converts are constructed within discourses of self-sacrifice and rejection of consumerist pleasures, as well as induce a rigid conduct of obedience to rules. The identification with an omnipotent figure like God gives spiritual relief and protection against unforeseen dangers.

Social practices deriving from such conversions entail a life without mundane pleasures, such as dancing, smoking, drinking, or any sort of vice, securing a firm and objective limit concerning moral behaviours. It also protects the subject against *the other* of impulses and desires (Kristeva, 1994) encapsulating identities in an all or none position where ambivalence has no place – either one is good or one is evil.

As argued by Frank Parkin, one of the effects of religious beliefs is to bring about an alignment between mental and material conditions of life by 'lowering the material and social desires of the underclass to conform to the existing structure of rewards' (1978: 70). In the case of disadvantaged Brazilian youth who become religious converts, their frustrations derived from social inequalities are 'solved' by a reduction of their personal aspirations, a turning back to everything which might entice them to desire what is not already given. In this sense, one could say that, for religious converts, conscious desire itself becomes repressed, as the latter brings forward whatever is not there and can possibly activate the search for pleasurable experiences. Religion acts as an over-arching system of meaning for the small, as well as the deep, frustrations and events of daily life furnishing the subject with an all-embracing

and unidirectional sense of one's possibilities which cancel out other narratives of self, life and others.

In my own research religious discourses and practices seem to position subjects in locations where, empowered by discourses of strong affiliative and in-group boundedness, they find resources to struggle against the forces of consumption, pleasure and fashion. Religious conversions also follow a traumatic event. One of the cases observed was that of the 16-year-old who, on his return home from a funk ball late at night, saw someone being robbed and killed. As he was on the same bus, the police caught him and accused him of participation. He and his family struggled to prove that he had nothing to do with it, and he was released eventually after 15 days. When he was back home, he decided 'to get rid of the world' and become a convert together with his mother. He explains that conversion was the correct decision in face of the innumerable temptations that a youth has to deal with that can have disastrous consequences on one's life (De Castro, 2004: 113).

The way of dressing, as a visible and most significant demonstration of distancing from more fashionable styles, often changes radically for people that have been converted – black traditional shoes instead of tennis shoes, white buttoned-up shirts instead of T-shirts, and black traditional trousers instead of jeans. The strong religious identifications emphasize a refraining from material pleasures based on in-group resemblance and solidarity, a submissive respect for the leader and a permanent fear of punishment. A religious identity remains an alternative for urban poor youth to master strong demands, which instigate them to enjoy pleasure and withhold visible signs of wealth and success.

The majority of poor Brazilian youngsters manage to stay away from illicit activities – as a 'career' – despite the enormous appeals they might have. A career as a worker seems to await them in the long run despite the severe difficulties in entering the formal market and the great frustrations related to income expectations. Consumer culture also exerts a strong impact on how poor youth of the big Brazilian cities identify with work positions that will provide them with very little gains and poor possibilities for consumption. Therefore, it is in a substantially different value context that work stands as the most probable field for identification possibilities of poor youth.

THE MAKING OF THE MODERN 'UNWILLING' LABOURER: WORK IN THE CONTEXT OF CONSUMPTION PRACTICES

The construction of a social identity centred round work, as a normative reference, is the most probable option for poor Brazilians who, by virtue of their disadvantaged social situation, cannot take their time 'experimenting' with life-styles and a multiplicity of positions characteristic of an adolescent situation. The 'logic of survival' retains its restrictive impact, in an opposite direction, pushing lower class youngsters into subaltern occupational positions as soon as possible, or making them wish for a job position as the means to cope with the adverse present. A few studies carried out with urban poor youngsters (Frigotto, 2004; Gouveia, 2000) have shown that their expectations generally hold an urge to obtain a job, even before finishing basic education (eight years of schooling). Therefore, technical training is very much appreciated as it is expected to increase the chances of finding a job. Besides the

income that jobs provide, it is also associated with more autonomy and freedom from parental control and access to commodities (Souto, 1997).

In a large research project run at 20 poor areas in Rio de Janeiro with 1700 youth, the mother was by far the most admired person in a family group, on account of qualities such as courage, determination, will to struggle with difficulties, and affection for those she cared for (De Castro and Correa, 2005). Identification with the mother, or the grandmother, as well as with the values she stands for, debar poor youngsters from a 'career' as law offenders. As some youngsters put it: 'it is because of my mother, not to shame her, that I would never do something to get myself in trouble . . . to see her visiting me in jail' or 'when I think of my mother, I certainly refrain myself from doing "certain things" . . . '.

Therefore, identification with the mother, both for boys and girls, entails positioning in accordance with traditional values of individual effort, work, and to some extent, subordination to the dominant ideology that hard work and personal merit will compensate for inequality of opportunities among social classes. Accordingly there is a belief that, even if one is born poor, one will be able to succeed in life by strenuous effort and hard work.

However important such identification with the mother and the values attached to her figure is, it remains only a partial trait, as is the case in most identificatory processes (Freud, 1921/1996), and potentially in conflict with other traits. This can be demonstrated by another result shown by this same group of youngsters who indicate media and sports figures, as the people they most admired outside the family circle (De Castro and Correa, 2005). The reason they put forward for such a choice was because these figures were successful. Hard work was not mentioned as a cause of their successful career – what seemed at stake was the need to justify, in terms of inborn personal qualities, their presence in the media: 'he [a singer] is good at everything, he hasn't got defects'; 'she [show woman] has reached her position because she is a humble, sincere and lovely person'; 'he [football player] plays very well and never lets people down' and 'he [football player] is caring for other people, specially worse-off children and youth'. Thus, the sheer fact that singers, football players and showmen/women appear on the TV made them necessarily good and deserving, retrospectively securing for them both inborn qualities and a merited career that need not be scrutinized for its real worth, but was taken for granted.

These results show that although primary identification with the mother figure provides resistance to the overwhelming power of identity figures related to drug dealing, secondary identifications related to the world of entertainment are offered as ready-made identities, which do not demand effort and need not be cultivated. They put their expectations and chances on already-given talents to be 'discovered' and shown in the media, in contradiction with normative appeals of labour and personal effort which stand as underpinnings for self-construction.

Work can, at best, confer on a poor youngster the status of a labourer who earns one's life honestly and avoids getting into trouble with the police. By the same token, study is considered to lead to a better life eventually, but the gap between the adverse present to the very remote future does not seem surmountable through the active participation of the actor. Therefore, there are very remote chances of climbing up the social ladder – the mother's example of work and struggle is also connected with her subordinate position in the social structure. To work honestly can, at most, secure the identity of 'a labourer' (in opposition to that of 'an outlaw'), but will never lead

to a life of wealth, prestige and success. As quoted in Helena Abramo's research, the 16-year-old office boy who is employed at an office believes that 'as an office boy he is fucked up, but as he becomes a punk, dressed as one of them, then everybody will look and recognize you' (1994: 103).

On the one hand, a critical distancing from work as a normative reference for the construction of social identities is realized on account of its mean impact on present possibilities of fruition; on the other, its centrality and dominance as a legitimated self-concept is still maintained. For poor youth, to be a 'labourer' means not only to embrace a recognized social standing and the assumption of the role of an adult and a citizen (Frigotto, 2004) but also, most importantly, a defence against being taken as an idle person or an outlaw. In an expression coined by Aparecida Gouveia, for poor kids 'work is affirmed as the necessity transformed in virtue' (1983: 57). By having to work anyway, the poor can, when identifying themselves as workers, stand up to their only means of being recognized as honest and deserving.

Even if poor youth dream of being professionals, this seems to be a distant and utopian project with apparently no real consequences on the present. For instance, many of them who express such dreams are out of school and, when questioned, do not intend to resume their education because they seem unaware that study and labour are directly connected to the realization of this dream (De Castro and Correa, 2005).

Sallas et al. (2003) in their study of 900 urban youngsters between 14 and 20 in the city of Curitiba (southern Brazil) report that 50.8 per cent of the youngsters were working or had worked at the time they were interviewed. Considering those coming from families of skilled and unskilled manual workers, 52 per cent of them were already out of school. This means, that for a large number of poor youngsters who are out of school, to find a job as fast as possible aggregates two important values: first of all, it improves the family budget and makes it possible for them to spend on clothes and other fashionable items; and, secondly, it avoids 'idleness', 'bad companies', 'temptation to earn easily with drug dealing' and, consequently, a protective status against police abuse. As it has been reported in other studies (Soares, 2004), to identify oneself as a 'labourer' means a password to be invoked in face of the most frequent attitudes of abuse and humiliation by police who are socialized to regard poor youngsters as suspect and dangerous becoming thus the favourite targets of policemen's attacks.

In this context what seems to have changed is the meaning of work as an identification possibility for poor youngsters. Rather than a legitimate source of collective identity or a means of self-realization, it constitutes a necessary, pragmatic and instrumental device to go on living by making possible the necessary protection against police abuse or the purchase of necessary items. In a study that interviewed middle-aged unionized workers, Heloisa Helena Martins presents the views of the older generation of workers on the younger one:

These young kids that have just arrived, many of them are the sons of the manager, sometimes the father has been already working for some twenty and so years. They own their houses . . . the only thing that worries them is to change their cars. The kid arrives and in a year or so, he buys a car. These kids do not give a damn to the union, they do not worry about anything, what they earn is to spend. (2000: 104)

Therefore, in a critical tone, this middle-aged worker pinpoints the changes between his own and the present generation of workers concerning motives to work and

bonds that come to be established among workers. An individualist, rather than a collective, and an instrumental rather than a value in itself, perspective becomes predominant in youth's identification with work positions which can hardly be said to relate exclusively to the condition of the poor youth.

Educational opportunities that could enhance self-construction via professional identities also become shattered when faced with the need to work. As mentioned before, a great number of poor youngsters between 14 and 20 years of age are already out of school.

One could wonder then about the impact of school on disadvantaged youth, especially its potential mediating effects in terms of opening up other and diverse self-construction possibilities. An extensive review of research in the area by Gomes (1993, 1994, 1997) instigated by the recurrent problem of poor youth's early abandonment of school shows that formal education, despite its idealized rhetoric by the lower classes, does not constitute a value in itself. Therefore, in all dilemmatic moments where a choice has to be made – between school and domestic labour, between school and motherhood, and between school and work – it is always the school that is left behind. Gomes also notes that social representations of the relevance of school activities are restricted to an elementary learning of reading and writing, abilities considered important for guaranteeing the acquisition of a job. Furthermore, Gomes' qualitative investigations concerning the prerequisites for being selected for a job in the industrial sector also confirm the lowered educational expectations that poor youth have about themselves. For positions in the line of production, the main criteria remain moral and psychological ones (honesty, cleanliness, activity, flexibility), good motor coordination, to be a non-smoker and, at last, have elementary education. Gomes concludes that as knowledge and learning cannot be grasped as intrinsically valuable, and as the perceived impact of extended formal education remains minimal, the effort to stay at school might seem excessive and pointless.

By and large, work remains invested by ambiguities. As far as poor youth are concerned, it remains the sole means of an early socialization into 'a deserving and honest life', experienced by parents and youth alike. As a 15-year-old puts it: 'I need work. Otherwise I'll feel like doing shit' (Assis, 2004: 97). It is then the antidote against the easy money promised by illicit activities, consisting of a rigid and crystalized option against a career as an outlaw. Alternatively, the value of work as enhancing self-expansion possibilities is minimized, or even not recognized at all, being considered the necessary means to achieve the wished for aims: a good and comfortable life. To undertake work, unwillingly, is a must, and the route to it is often the shortest as possible given that for poor youth permanence at school is not regarded as providing additional advantages.

Restricted as the path whereby poor Brazilian youngsters cope with the values of consumption might be, some new possibilities are slowly opening up. Critical distancing from the normative framework of labour and merit has found in artistic, mainly musical, expression voiced by a few groups of poor young people, the necessary wordings, rhythms and emotions to counterpoise the restricted and impoverished identification possibilities open to them.

CONSUMER CULTURE RE-SIGNIFIED: FROM ENTERTAINMENT TO THE DEMAND FOR A NEW 'SOCIAL CONTRACT'

The decades of 1980s and 1990s have seen an upsurge of musical groups and bands whose songs were directed at criticizing social injustice, lack of opportunities for poor young people, prejudice, racist social practices, social alienation caused by consumerism, police violence, citizenship and lack of rights, unfair globalization practices of international capitalism and the indifference of Brazilian élites. Musical movements such as those of hip hop and rap, punk, dark, funk enhanced new opportunities for a collective symbolic elaboration concerning both social exclusion as well as the loss of expectations about the future (Cecchetto, 1997; Dellasoppa, 2003; Sposito, 1996). Besides, musical groups conveyed, through their creative language, both verbal and bodily, a sense of belonging and identification for millions of young urban poor Brazilians who have very few hopes of a better and more satisfying future.

In the majority of Brazilian big cities' miserable suburban areas, a large contingent of poor youth, away from school and employment, has found strong group affiliation and identification mediated by the signs of these new musical movements emerging in the poor peripheries of Brazilian urban areas. In this sense to have been born poor is a fact that can be re-signified: it can become a condition to be valued, rather than to be ashamed of.

Funk music, *funk* balls and the *funk* movement have gained particular force in Rio de Janeiro (Souto, 1997) (it is estimated that funk balls gather more than half a million youth during weekends in Rio de Janeiro), as they put forward in a crude way the symbolic violence against poor youth, their fears, their hopes and their frustrations. At the same time, in-group solidarity and friendship are glorified as values to be fostered as a response against the indifference of the society at large. The funk movement in Rio de Janeiro, Olodum in Salvador, Mangue Movement in Recife and the hip hop Movement in São Paulo have opened up new possibilities to urban poor youth for new identifications affirming a positive self-concept in the identity of poor youth as well as denouncing the oppression and the social injustice of their social condition.

Musical expression has become the ample, and perhaps the sole, cultural means whereby poor youth can voice and express the silent and perverse conditions to which they are subjected. As very distant and disempowered spectators of consumer culture, poor youth can, as a collectivity, through their songs construct consumption from a different point of view. Therefore, the 'right' to consume and to be included as participants in the world of goods and pleasures of society, as well as the mocking at consumerism and their bourgeois dupes, can both be strategies with which frustrations and anxieties can be dealt with. Most importantly, however, is the fact that a collective image of who 'we are' is brought forward and affirmed, built upon feelings of pride, self-respect and demands for a fairer society.

It is not surprising then that Souto (1997) has granted the funk movement a civilizing effect. Others, like Kehl (2000), have also noted the 'civilizing effort' of rap in the periphery of São Paulo city taking the example of the Racionais MC's band. In her analysis, Kehl notes how important it is the dissemination of the ideology of survival in the verses made by this band (one of its most important CDs being *Surviving in the Hell*). Such an ideology does not stimulate transgression (drug activities, for instance) as a way of self-affirmation or the solution for poor youngsters' problems. Neither does it preach revolution, armed confrontation nor elusion from

daily life through drug consumption. Rather, it convokes youngsters 'to stay alive to invalidate the statistics'⁵ and to develop a sense of collective brotherhood and solidarity. Interestingly enough, the vocalist of this band calls himself Mano Brown, 'mano' in Portuguese meaning brother. Thus, according to Kehl, 'in the absence/lack of a recognition from the father [be him the real or the symbolic father, the State] it is the libidinal circulation among members of a brotherhood that produces a position where the subject can see himself and can be seen by the others' (2000: 229). Accordingly, it is within the scope of this symbolic brotherhood that poor youth can develop a sense of being and identify with a collective endeavour and ideals that allow them to grasp some meaning of who they are, where they have come from and what they want.

It is not surprising that this collective endeavour overcomes strict national frontiers to amplify identification with a wide spectrum of 'exploited brothers' of other countries. The names of the vocalists as well as those of the bands themselves convey this transnational orientation by the adoption of Americanized nicknames: Mano Brown, MV Bill, Chico Science, Planet Hemp and others.

In addition to creating emotional and social bonds among destitute youth, united around an ideology of survival, many of these bands have begun to work in these poor communities offering cultural activities to children and youth to counteract the enormous seduction that illicit activities have on them. Anderson Sá, vocalist and composer of the Afro Reggae Band, was himself a poor youngster who became a Director of the Afro Reggae Cultural Centre in Vigário Geral, a poor district in the periphery of Rio de Janeiro. He calls himself an activist artist (Sá, 2003) whose task is to act out on stage the life of millions of Brazilians who live below the poverty line. Others, like MV Bill, also run social and cultural centres for children and youth in poor peripheral communities.

What is new in this contemporary scenario is that poor youngsters can find in musical/cultural production and expressions an identificatory field whereby they can collectively construct a sense of self-esteem and solidarity, even if their practical orientation in life remains attached to their devalued work positions. Furthermore, the poetic and the emotional components of songs and music can create new moral expectations in face of the frustrations and lack of meaning of their oppressed life. In this vein, identity construction for poor urban Brazilians would not really resolve local-global contradictions producing hybridized outcomes. Rather, these contradictions remain alive and fuel, not revolutionary, but musical expressions. It is art, popular art that materializes hope of social transformation and utopia.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The disparate and enormous gap between rich and poor in Brazil and the overwhelming demands of a consumer culture concur to crystallize self-perspectives and life-chances of disadvantaged Brazilian youth around immediate opportunities in detriment of more elaborate and creative identification possibilities.

With consumerism, some authors believe that Western societies have moved to a postmodern stage (Lyotard, 1979) and, accordingly, other bases for identification and organization, other than social class, can be found. Rather than a predominant axis from which the subject sees his/her position in the world, multiple points determine the differentiated and fractured position of the subject today (Bradley, 2000). In this

vein, the concept of 'hybrid identities' (Bradley, 2000) accentuates mobility, instability and creativity in the making of social identities.

However important these suggestions may be in terms of deconstructing views about identity, the discussion that was brought here argued for the significance of class divisions in Brazil, in terms of their differential access to material and symbolic wealth, to understand processes of youth identification and belonging. Considering the way that Brazilian society has developed, this article points at the common ground of experience (or better, lack of it) of the disadvantaged youth isolated from other enriching cultural and social elements that could enhance possibilities of identification and recognition. Poverty, as well as social and cultural disadvantages, narrows down their self construction to the most immediate and instrumental level, be that of the drug dealer to consume or the labourer to consume. In both cases, available discourses and practices emphasize a closure of self-possibilities, an immediate resolution of conflicts, in detriment of long term prospects. In this sense, it is argued that identities become encapsulated in these monolithic discourses. It might seem the case that the multiple positioned self emerges from a scenario that is more fluid and complex itself, than that in which poor urban Brazilians are embedded. Maybe multiple positions can only be sustained and made available by a corresponding amplification of discourses and practices by which subjects are constituted. Situated at the borders of society, glimpsing from outside at the material and symbolic wealth of an ever more equipped city – technologically, culturally and socially, poor urban youth in Brazil have been ostracized from significant experience of the postmodern world.

Conflicts about one's social position and meagre life-chances are ultimately resignified through musical and other artistic expressions. Paradoxically, it is through cultural forms of consumer culture that such encapsulated identity positions can find some oxygen and suffer some instability. A conscientization of poor youth's own marginalized position in Brazilian society is often intended through musical and cultural expressions. In this sense, it is again class belonging and consciousness that lead to claims for recognition.⁶ As discussed above, not only citizenship issues come to the fore, but also, most importantly, the demands for a fairer society by attacking the bourgeois self-complacent happiness through the continuous announcement that all is not well. Thus, survival is transformed into an ideology opening up a new and important field of possible identifications.

It is doubtful, however, whether 'survival as an ideology' will be appropriated to politicize social relationships using emotional and discursive elements, or will be consumed just as another entertainment of the culture industry. For middle-class youth who listen to such musical expressions, there might be a chance for them to obtain a more lucid political understanding of their own and others' social identities, and not just to consume these musical expressions as new commodities which are part of a classless consumerism (Eagleton, 2000).

At a local level, global effectiveness of international capitalism is zealously looked after by the dominant Brazilian élite. However, installed in subject positions that guarantee advantages, dominant élites remain, despite past and present contingencies, ever subject to decentration and othering. In this sense, agreeing with Laclau and Zac (1994), I would say that such an unstable character of all identities makes possible the permanent incompleteness of Brazilian society and safeguards a place for politics, that is, for struggles based on supposedly transient 'rich' or 'poor' identities.

Brazil, or more specifically the south of the world, cannot escape from the 'identity problem' since our trajectories seem very much determined by what others (more developed countries) have done before us. Underlying this logic is the metaphor of development that seems to establish a necessary course of action from initiators to followers. Such a metaphor has also moulded our thinking concerning youth conceiving it as a stage in the trajectory from childhood to adulthood. This has made the project of growing up and becoming a developed, civilized adult appear worthwhile and valuable. Today this project seems at risk as youth would rather embrace the eternal present that would fix them forever in the beatitude of a non-ageing subjectivity.

We certainly need a new metaphor that, by freeing nations and subjectivities of the determinacy of development, can open up ways for more creative and hybrid identities.

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Notes

- 1 The notion of globalized consumer culture entails a transnational/transterritorial organization of commodity production and distribution allowed by an ever more hierarchical and asymmetrical international order based on concentration of capital, information and technology. For some southern scholars, such as Milton Santos, 'internationalized capitalism has brought forth a momentum of internationalization of products, money, credit, debt and consumption in a systemic way' (2000: 30).
- 2 The 40 per cent of the poorest population receive about 18 times less than the 10 per cent of the richest population in Brazil measured by median income level (IBGE, 2003: 132–9).
- 3 By 'acting' here I mean the psychoanalytic concept of 'acting out' where the subject avoids anxiety, doubts and internal conflict in favour of manifest behaviour that often gives him/her the feeling of having done something and 'being active and alive'.
- 4 A well-known incident in Rio de Janeiro during October 1992 was the mass robbery on Ipanema beach by a gang of poor youngsters from a *favela* called Vigário Geral. They imposed terror on everybody as they robbed and shouted: 'It is the wagon of evil of Vigário Geral'.
- 5 It is estimated that the number of poor youth who suffered a violent death often in the hands of the police is about 612 deaths alone in the city of Rio de Janeiro between November 1999 to December 2001. As a comparison, in the same period, armed conflict between Israel and the Palestinians killed about 250 Palestinians and 72 Israelis (Dowdney, 2003).
- 6 Here I would come closer to Bradley's argument that class injustice can result in claims for both redistribution and recognition. Nevertheless, I would say that it is class division and inequalities, over and above other possible differences, that set the conditions for such claims.

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