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Fragmentation as a Threat to Social Cohesion?
A Conceptual Review and an Empirical Approach to Brazilian Cities

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Abstract

Our paper reflects on urban fragmentation as a theoretically only poorly outlined and empirically hardly analyzed concept with regard to its production and perception in daily practices. When reviewing social science literature, the abundance of different usages of the term is striking, either related to the transformation of social structures and experience, or to morphological, territorial and geographical structures and how they again relate to social structures (in terms of socio-spatial analysis), as well as decentralizing changes in power relations. Urban fragmentation has to be queried as both a process *of deconstructing the perception of a former urban 'entirety' and of reconstructing a fragmentary urban space, as well as the fragmentary* state *of interwovenness of those parts that form urban societies and their space. In drawing upon Brazilian cities and the perception of favelas as 'disordering fragments', we will develop a perspective that seeks to combine the analysis of fragmentation as a perceived threat with a focus on daily social practice. This, we believe, is an important task of research to understand fragmentation which, so far, has been generally outlined from the viewpoint of globalizing networks and the isolation of urban elites, where favelas are being constructed as the 'rest' or threatening 'other'. Concerning Brazilian favelas, we may conclude that their disconnection lies in the fact that their inhabitants pursue lifestyles and life choices (e.g. leisure time, social networks) that are very focused on the favela's space, whereas interwovenness is primarily produced in economic and work-related aspects.*

Current debates on urban realities claim that today's cities suffer from ongoing processes of fragmentation. As an operational term, urban fragmentation is used by scientists to describe the phenomenon of increasingly differentiated societal and spatial polarization within cities, which seems yet difficult to grasp or to calculate in its further dimensions and effects. Thus, fragmentation seems to represent a threat to social cohesiveness on a political-planning as well as on a subjective-perceptive level. Our paper starts from the assumption that the concept of urban fragmentation is theoretically only poorly outlined so far and empirically hardly analyzed with regard to its production and perception in daily practices. To point out the potentials and pitfalls of the term, we start by reviewing the conceptualizations within sociological and geographical research, and their empirical relevance for the understanding of cities as socially constructed products.

Concerning urban societies, the "fragmented city" seems to replace terms like the "dual/divided city" or the "quartered city", but it is unclear if this fragmentation is seen to be the new structural socio-spatial form, or if it is a mere temporary and auxiliary term for a process which is threatening us by its new complexity due to the sizes of cities today. Within this context, we seek to combine geographical and sociological approaches, as we believe the disciplinary disconnection to be a source of the

ambiguity of the term. As a new analytical term, the theoretical and empirical validity of fragmentation concerning social, economic, political, and spatial structures is not yet clear. To shed some light on the term as a conceptual tool, our paper addresses fragmentation empirically in the context of Brazilian cities, focusing on the daily life in its apparently most "threatening fragments", the favelas. Thus, we will critically question if and how fragmentation is produced in daily social practice. Through their everyday-life practices, favela-dwellers connect different living and working realities (e.g. domestic workers, doormen). These *de facto* existing different realities cannot be seen as disconnected, but must be analyzed with regard to their interrelations. Speaking of fragmentation, though, involves the risk of conceptualizing individual fragments by their disconnections rather than by their connections. Single fragments thereby are being evaluated differently in terms of their possible threat or not to social order.

1. Conceptual reflections – the fragment as witness/evidence, representation and indicator

Reviewing social science literature on the term or engaged with the phenomenon of fragmentation, the abundance of different usages is striking. Francoise Navez-Bouchanine (2002a, b) has offered a rich overview of the history of the term itself and the different forms of understanding. She distinguishes between approaches to fragmentation as a general social or societal phenomenon, the fragmentation of urban form as a physical-spatial and as a socio-spatial phenomenon, and political fragmentation (Navez-Bouchanine 2002b). In the first case, we might think of fragmentation as a new or newly accentuated term for social structures. The second and third relate to morphological, territorial or geographical structures and how they again relate to social structures. The fourth, sociologically speaking, analyzes decentralizing changes in power relations. If we look at the current topics or fields of social science research that refer to fragmentation as one of the defining characteristics and that coincide in a number of ways, we may find four main areas: research on globalization, on new media and the so-called information society, urban studies, and development theory. Still, fragmentation is not a new term – it appears together with conceptualizations of pluralization and differentiation of modern societies long before it experienced a renaissance within theorizations of late, radical or reflexive modernity and post-modernities.

When dealing with a term that suffers from multiple usage and seems so difficult to grasp, it comes as a useful tool to reflect upon its etymology to concentrate on its original meaning, in order to avoid connotations or metaphorical meanings for a moment: Fragment (Latin *fragmentum*), of course, means "broken piece", to fragment (Latin *frangere*) "to fall to pieces", or simply "to break". Fragmentation, therefore, refers to both, the fragment as a result of the cleavage and the process of breaking into pieces. The fragment appears as part of an original entity which may no longer appear as such. There is, we might conclude, a dialectic relation between deconstruction and reconstruction (Brunner 1997, 13), the fragment evidencing a former, deconstructed entity, representing a current state or at least its perception, and indicating a process of reconstructing a newly emerging pattern. The connecting aspect between past, present and future is (social) heterogeneity: it may not only be seen as a consequence of fragmentation, but also as its cause (cf. Holtz-Bacha 1998).

Research on fragmentation should, therefore, correlate these three elements, a former entity, a current perception, and an emerging pattern. If both, the deconstructing process *and* its consequent pattern, may be seen as fragmentary, will depend on social practice. Where the former entity is perceived as fragmented, deconstructed, non-existing, an emerging pattern is being reconstructed in daily social practice. Classic sociological approaches on social structuring have related to fragmentation as a process of disordering, in the sense of a dismantling and a disaggregation of formerly coherent societal structures. Fragmentation may either appear as a temporary re-structuring with fragments as remnants of former structures, or as an intrinsic process of increasingly polarized modern (and post-modern) societies with fragments as both, highly interrelated and disconnected parts of society as a whole. In the first case, fragmentation as a term is related to a lack of understanding of newly emerging structures. In the second, it seems to disguise or negate hierarchical structures of society, which have to be analyzed in their specific power-related capacities and the social significance of spatial production. The central question is whether fragmentation may be seen as the new pattern underlying socio-spatial structures or even as the new mode of societal differentiation? We claim that the answer may only be found by analyzing daily social practice as related to but not coincident with perception and discursive narratives. Fragmentation as a term should not obscure hierarchies and inequalities of social heterogeneity, but help to analytically distinguish disconnections and interwovenness of societal parts that differ in terms of their power to *manipulate* socio-spatial structures and patterns, even though they may all be essential to their daily production. It is, thus, the dialectic relationship between deconstruction and reconstruction, as well as between connection and disconnection, that underlies the analytical potential of the term.

2. On fragmentation within sociological and geographical thought

Social heterogeneity is an elementary characteristic of social structures, a structure comprising different, but interrelated parts (Blau 1977, 2). Hence, the task of sociological analysis is to understand and explain processes of distinction and connection that produce and reproduce certain social structures.

Classic sociological analyses have described social structures from a macro-perspective as evolving from segmentary to differentiated societies (Durkheim 1977 [1893]), but the differentiation of modern societies has been understood from different angles and levels of analysis in numerous ways: social classes and strata, functional and rational differentiation, social milieus and lifestyles, to name the most prominent. There has been, though, a tendency to describe social structures as increasingly fragmented, breaking up the former social, cultural, economic and political fractions of society. This “radicalization” of pluralization (Welsch 2002) in terms of values, attitudes and possible choices, interwoven with economic restructuring in the second half of the 20th century, has even lead to the assumption, that within this postmodern condition, meta-narratives were no longer credible (Lyotard 1984). Even though the descriptions of pluralizing and fragmentizing social worlds are in some way consensual, their interpretation varies to a great extent.

Consequently, fragmentation was becoming the new paradigm also in development studies, after the failing of the grand theories (Menzel 1992). The geographer Fred Scholz introduced the term at the end of the 1990ies with his Theory of Fragmented Development in the German-speaking disciplinary debate. Fragmentation in this sense is perceived as a new principle of structuration caused by economic, political

and social transformation processes taking place in the so called “Second Modernity” (liberalization, deregulation, privatization of markets and a polarizing division of labor as a consequence of global capitalism, etc.) (Scholz 2004, 7). Within this perspective, fragmentation appears as a new form of segregation on a larger scale. It replaced the term polarization, due to the new complexity of socio-spatial, as well as functional units of varying size, which are being established in the midst of a differentiated environment, often hermetically sealing themselves off against such dissimilar surroundings. In contrast to the term 'polarization', which points to the juxtaposition of the irreconcilable, 'fragmentation' represents the recognition of contrasting, but highly interwoven elements.

These variations are mostly related to the question whether fragmentation is to be seen as opposed to integration (which generally is believed to be a “good” thing) and even questioning social cohesion, or if fragmentation leads to different, multiple forms of integration that may no longer be described solely in the notions of social and systemic integration resting upon – as most sociological concepts – nationally formed societies. The central term for describing new forms of integration is that of networks and it is closely linked to debates on the so-called information society, based on new techniques and modes of communication. Within the latter, emphasis is being laid on its ambivalence between convergence, as “*a similarity and increasing unity of experience*” and fragmentation, as “*a growing differentiation of experience*” (Ludes 2008, 10). Whereas this view emphasizes individual experience as based on modes of communication, the so-called network society thesis (Castells 2001 [1996]) refers to a “*widening gap between connected and unconnected (or disconnected) places and people*” (Coutard 2008, 1816). Even though the term 'network' itself seems to elude spatial fixes, within this conceptualization it is closely linked to places by technical and locally concentrated communication infrastructures. This notion has to be distinguished to a certain extent from the basic concept of social networks which conceptualizes interrelations between individuals or social actors and creates a significant world of its own without depending on interrelations with its surrounding world (Fuchs 2010, 56). In Castell's network society, the network is based on global financial flows, formed by nodes like share markets, political institutions, local production units and service centers and their underlying communication infrastructure (Castells 2001 [1996], 528). Whereas the network emphasizes global connection, this new spatial arrangement produces local disconnection, a tendency seen most vigorously in so called mega-cities by Castells (ibid., 460).

The opposition between fragmentation and integration is central to analyses of globalization. At first sight, the globalization thesis links much more to the promise of a largely integrated world and the hypothesis of a world society, based not only on economic relations, but also on political and cultural convergences, enabled by communication technologies and greater mobility, thereby eliminating obstacles posed by (geographical, spatial) distances. It is, thus, the grand meta-narrative that emerges simultaneously to the claim of the incredulity of such by postmodernist theorists (Harrison 2003, 13). Dealing with this apparent paradox (Menzel 1998) has become one of the big tasks in globalization studies. There are, at least, two sides to the opposition of fragmentation and integration within globalization analyses: One refers to the fact that “*fragmentation is not used as a counter-argument or as a sign of the limits of the globalization processes. Rather, it is used to explain the dynamics of these processes. The more connected and consolidated the global network becomes, that is, the more integrated the 'globalized world', the more fragmented and disconnected becomes the 'non-globalized world' – all those countries and cities*

that are not part of the global network." (Kozak 2008, 244). From this point of view, there is a seemingly irreconcilable divide between global networks and the "rest". Another perspective relates more to the interrelations between globalizing and localizing tendencies in terms of "*challeng[ing] the hegemony of globalization discourse […] [by] confront[ing] it with the empirical reality of multiple local outcomes*" (Harrison 2003, 14).

Fragmentation within these debates is often seen as the "*'natural' counterpart of globalization*", therefore "*a status of the globalized world, which does not comprise the chance of reintegration and re-inclusion, which no longer concedes any way back from exclusion to inclusion*" (Tröger 2009, 258). This argument of an irreversible exclusion appears convincingly concise and became quite successful as a new conceptual approach in geographical research (Scholz 2004). But the binary logic of connection and disconnection has to be analyzed more carefully. Fragmentation highly consists of connectivity due to the worldwide networking in different spheres (social, economical, political). Thus, we cannot speak in general of a non-reversible non-connectivity. We would rather suggest to speak of a new asymmetrical integration from where new patterns of unjust spaces are emerging.

3. Urban fragmentation

It is the disparity between the connectivity of global networks and relationships and the disconnectedness on a local level that shifts the attention to the city, where the articulation between the global and the local is assumed to lead to intensified fragmentation (Harrison 2003, 15). Navez-Bouchanine (2002b) distinguishes between different forms of fragmentation of urban form, as well as of socio-spatial fragmentation within cities. Concerning urban form, she shows that literature on the spatio-morphological fragmentation of cities draws much upon the notion of chaos as a result of this process of fragmentation. It is the detachment of different parts and the establishment of internal boundaries that break with the city (planned and thought) as an entity and lead to "*juxtapositions of very limited and confined, socially specialized spaces*" (Navez-Bouchanine 2002b, 57, translation JH). From another angle, fragmentation of urban form is understood as a disorderly process of development that leads to the splintering of urban space and makes the city a mosaic without a distinguishable centrality. Finally, others have analyzed this process not so much as a disorderly, but as a haphazard multipolarization, leading to an irregular, fractal morphology without a comprising order. So, there seems to be an almost consensual view that fragmentation has something to do with disordering or undoing of the planned city, leading to chaotic or mosaic structures.

From a sociological point of view, one of the central questions is to what extent fragmentation differs from other forms of segregation. As one of the central research fields of urban sociology, segregation refers to the establishment of socially distinct and more or less homogenous (residential, functional) units within the city. As Francoise Navez-Bouchanine points out, there are at least two elements that distinguish fragmentation from segregation: On the one hand, "*fragmentation classifies the breaking, the reversal, the rupture with a social and political ensemble, whereas segregation appears as a principal of hierarchical, but unitary organization*" (Navez-Bouchanine 2002b, 62, translation JH). Residential segregation – referring to a socially homogenous neighborhood – is therefore shown to be obsolete against the background of fragmentation where the neighborhood is seen as "*space of difference rather than of commonality*" (Mommaas 1996, 209). On the other hand,

fragmentation refers much more to a transformation of public spaces than that of residential spaces (Navez-Bouchanine 2002b, 62). Here, an important field of research considers the privatization and surveillance of public spaces as one of the defining elements of the fragmentary city (e.g. Siebel/Wehrheim 2003). Fear and insecurity are also seen as the main driving forces to privatization and gating, probably the most elaborated empirical reference to fragmentation studies (e.g. Low 2005). These, obviously, relate fragmentation to a classic view of segregation, where socially homogenous residential units characterize urban space. Fragmentation in this sense emphasizes the disconnection and exclusivity of distinct elite residential units and serves more as a description of their fortification. Within approaches that seek to classify fragmentation as the new socio-spatial pattern of cities (e.g., "micro-fragmentation", according to Caldeira, 1996, or "multi-fragmentation", according to Fischer/Parnreiter, 2002), it remains mostly unclear how this is supposed to characterize a qualitative shift in the socio-spatial organization of cities. Rather, these approaches relate to fiercer or smaller-scale segregation and a resulting higher grade of complexity. The analytical and qualitative shift, though, as has been shown in the conceptual reflection of fragmentation, lies within its dialectic of connection and disconnection, or, deconstruction and reconstruction.

Probably the most overarching theoretical concept to social science literature on urban fragmentation is that of postmodern urbanism. Notions such as the "splintering metropolis" (Graham 2001) or the "fractal city" (Soja 2000) relate to this conceptual context. Key elements within the different approaches to this field of research are "s*patial fragmentation and disaggregation*" (Murray 2004, 142), mostly within multi-centered urban regions (Soja 2000), characterized by a "*pluralization of former collective identities*" (Mommaas 1996, 209) and/or the fact that "*urban social order can no longer be defined effectively by such conventional and familiar modes of social stratification as the class-divided Dual City of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; the neatly layered Hierarchical City of the wealthy, the middle class, and the poor; or the 'two Americas' Racially Divided City of black versus white*" (Soja 2000, 265). Politically, this is not only related to the breaking up of class-based political affiliations (Mommaas 1996, 210), but also to a shift to neoliberal modes of urban governance (Murray 2004, 142).

In urban geographical research the phenomenon of fragmentation appears mainly as socio-spatial fragments (e.g. spaces of exclusion versus spaces of inclusion), physical-material spaces (e.g. style of housing) or as diverse spatial functions (e.g. spaces for living, consumption or leisure). Within the discipline of geography, urban fragmentation is often limited to determining the polarization of "poor" and "wealthy" or to analyzing access possibilities to public or private spaces (especially privatized, formerly public spaces). Generally, the visible spatial structures are particularly important as they are a product of political, economic or social factors (e.g. changing lifestyles, living arrangements and preferences, consumption patterns, etc.). Thus, fragmentation is mainly used in the sense of connected or disconnected/excluded parts of the city or society.

At the end of the 1990s, urban geography conducted a conceptual shift towards a more political perspective. The correlations between urban planning and society, and the new debates about the interdependency of fragments formerly considered as isolated were identified as the essential issues for understanding cities. The focus of interest shifted to the finding that the built fortification of some parts of the city endangers social cohesion. Therefore, it became clear that not the perception of a

fragmented physical structure but the fragmentation of the political organization of space (Glasze et al. 2005) was threatening urban entirety.

Still, the urban geographical research, specifically speaking of fragmentation, primarily focused on the phenomenon of gated communities in different cultural contexts. “The other side”, i.e. the deprived or marginalized zones of the urban underclass were mainly neglected in empirical research, in spite of its weight for the urban and societal entirety. Though these fragments are representing the far larger part of urban societies and cities today, they are covered behind the denomination of an anonymous mass, like a “Planet” (Davis 2007), labeled by its status of poverty or being subaltern.

In drawing upon Brazilian cities and the perception of favelas as “disordering fragments”, we will develop a perspective that seeks to combine the analysis of fragmentation as a perceived threat with a focus on daily social practice. This, we believe, is an important task of research to understand fragmentation which, so far, has been generally outlined from the viewpoint of globalizing networks and the isolation of urban elites, where favelas are being constructed as the “rest” or threatening “other”. Focusing on the production of space in everyday practice helps, according to Edward Soja (2010, 31), “to ground the search for spatial justice in socially produced contexts rather than letting it float in idealized abstractions and too easily deflected calls for universal human rights or radical revolution.”

4. Favelas and the social production of (uneven) spaces

Favelas are widely known and quoted in urban research as a symbol for the socio-spatial segregation of Brazil's larger cities (Valladares 2002, 213). Apparently they are the visible proof for the “divided city” (“cidade partida”, Ventura 1994), representing the informal part of the urban society and economy.

Favelas, or slums as they are often misleadingly called, are mainly known as the quarters of the urban poor. They are the living quarters for at least a third of Brazil's urban population. People who live there form the lower class, and social mobility is rather restricted, which means that those who are born into these socio-spatial arrangements are those who form and reproduce them throughout their lives. They provide the greater city with a large workforce on a minimal per-capita income. Without them, urban life as it is now would cease to exist. As Beatriz Jaguaribe (2007, 100) characterizes in her considerations about the phenomenon of favelas, they

> …“*are an overwhelming feature of city life in Brazil. The contradictory relations between the favela and the city constitute a key issue of the Brazilian urban experience because they translate how the expectations of the modern metropolis have been both frustrated and partially fulfilled. They have been defeated because the material promise of modernity as access to goods and services has been undermined by the radical economic and social inequality between the rich and the poor. Yet, they have been also enacted because the modernizing urban scenario is a crucial site for the invention of new forms of social identity, democratic struggle, and individual social mobility“.*

On first sight, this means that favelas are economically highly interrelated with other socio-spatial units in Brazilian cities and may not be characterized as disconnected fragments of a segmented urban economy. Still, they are perceived as somehow disconnected or detached fragments. To examine this ambiguity more closely, we

may distinguish between two kinds of social production of the favela: a “materialist production” and a “discursive production”. In their dialectic reciprocity they are essential to understand the production of the “fragmented city”.

4.1 The materialist production of the Favela as “informal city”

What we call the materialist production of space is the result of two production patterns: the “perceived” and “conceived” space, according to the terminology of Henri Lefebvre (2004 [1974]). Everyday practice, conceptual thoughts, images and perceptions of space are inscribed into this kind of space, which is perceived then mostly as “naturalized” urban form. It is the production of the favela which appears in all its “otherness” compared to the notion of a formal city.

Favelas are often associated with the „disorderly city“, a stigma that goes back to the illegal status of their initial emergence as informal settlements. The first favelas were created more than 100 years ago. For a long time, they eluded administrative planning. Generally, legal issues like land ownership have been settled in the meantime. Favelas are often incorrectly referred to as “slums”. However, they are neither slum areas, nor are they marked by disorganized, makeshift housing, but rather residential areas with permanent buildings, the homes of large parts of Brazil’s urban underclass. Due to low incomes, their residents do not have access to the housing market of the “proper” city.

Favelas are considered informal urban settlements – in spite of the “formal” city depending on the services provided by favela residents. The urban underclass is used and accepted as an army of cheap labour. They clean homes, cook or guard office buildings and homes of the middle and upper classes. Most of the favela dwellers spend more time in the residential areas of the rich, than in their own homes. By means of their work force, they incorporate the connections between these different social and socio-economic realities. They are physically present, though socially excluded from that world, concerning their rights and chances in life. Further, they work in construction, do carrier services or are street vendors and thereby keep the urban economy going. The Brazilian geographer Milton Santos (2004) characterizes this as a “bipolarization without dualism” (“bipolarizacao, mas nao dualismo”). He divides the city in developing countries viewing their economic activity in two interacting and interdependent circuits with different logics: the favela, as the urban space of poverty, thus represents the inferior circuit of the city. It faces and interacts with the superior circuit. From an economic point of view, the favelas and their residents are thus fully (even if asymmetrically) integrated into urban society and urban economy. However, these vital parts of urban society are marginalized in terms of rights and social acceptance.[1]

The status of social acceptance of the favelas and their dwellers is reflected in the political and governmental attention. The political organization of space changed over the last decades from a policy of ignorance to a policy of acceptance. These policies relate to different strategies of control: Whereas the former consisted of controlling by undoing (in the worst case by clearance), the current consists of active control strategies in combination with improvement strategies. Governmental and non-governmental initiatives are slowly increasing to improve the living conditions in favelas. Even though favelas are no longer seen only as a problem, but also as a potential for urban society, they still are spaces of poverty (Valladares 2002, 214)

[1] For a discussion of the term 'marginality' see Perlman 1976, 2006

and confine their inhabitants to a different status of citizenship which keeps them from being equally integrated and connected. On this note, Edward Soja lines out in his reflections on the production of unjust geographies: "*[E]very place on earth is blanketed with thick layers of macrospatial organization arising not just from administrative convenience but also from the imposition of political power, cultural domination, and social control over individuals, groups, and the places they inhabit*" (Soja 2010, 32).

4.2 The discursive production of the Favela as a "threat to urban society"

The conception of spaces within a negative discourse, e.g. the stigma of the favelas as violent or dangerous places, can lead to the establishment of a "suffered space" as the passive version of "lived space" (Lefebvre). To illustrate this subtle process we first have to understand the perceived negative significance of the favela for the city. Favelas appear to be a threat to urban order because they are commonly stigmatised as problematic areas, as places of danger, violence and crime. Brazil's cities undeniably suffer from an extremely high level of violent crime. This is mainly a consequence of the high social disparities: "*Since the 1980s, the increase of social violence produced by the globalized drug trade and the flow of media images, consumer goods, and new cultural identities produced a crisis of representation of the 'national imagined community'*", as Jaguaribe (2007, 100) sums up.

Favelas are thought of as the hotbeds of violent crime. This is especially true because violence is predominantly *confined* to the favelas, which means that crime and violence primarily affect the inhabitants themselves, especially black male adolescents. Most Brazilians from the middle and upper classes have never been to a favela. Supported by negative media coverage, these unknown zones easily become branded as suspicious and dangerous quarters. They represent autonomous, ungovernable settlements. Thus, the favelas seem to be "a threat" to the rest of urban society. They symbolize spaces that could imperil the surrounding "formal", capitalist city. In other words the principles of neoliberalism and their ideas of urban space cannot be applied to favelas as they do not combine with the logic of "modernity". Seen only from this point of view, favelas do not so much appear to be *dis*connected fragments, but *un*connected segments that follow an autonomous logic.

But there is another, far more important aspect that influences the inhabitants in coping with everyday life in the favela. It is their stigmatization and in particular its resulting subtle exclusionary practices. On the one hand, favela dwellers are already stigmatized by living in the favelas, these being considered the informal city. Socially and spatially they are separated as the "rest" from "the city". They are conceived as an obstacle to the urban community's social cohesiveness. Not even a change of policy, since the early 1990s, from uprooting to tolerating the favelas as part of Brazil's cities could stop a large part of society from continuing to label them as an urban anomaly. Some also think of the favelas as being a transitional phase on the way to the "formal city". This discourse implies that favelas are not entirely acknowledged as proper, integral parts of urban spaces. As a consequence, exclusion seems legitimate and conflict inevitable. Even if they are not any more regarded as "white stains" in the city maps and at least tolerated as inhabited spaces, they are not completely recognized as legitimate living areas. Therefore, favela-dwellers are perceived rather as a disconnected segment of urban society. They have to suffer the stigmatization of their living spaces which represent the eyesore of the "broken", because "uneven" modernity of Brazil's cities (s. Jaguaribe 2007).

On the other hand there is a social and racial stigmatization, which is closely related to the discrimination that living in the favela entails. These social and racial discriminatory practices lead to the fact that the inhabitants of the favelas are not being recognized as equal citizens, although this is a very subtle process.They are thought of as second class citizens. Thus, they are not necessarily excluded from urban space, however they are excluded from urban society or restricted to living at the edge of society. Nevertheless the urban underclass actively participates in and exhibits the same value and consumption patterns as the rest of Brazil's society. We also have to take into account that the favelas represent enormous markets for the modern consumption pattern (Valladares 2004, 219). At the same time, their economic and political integration is asymmetrical – integrally related to economic and political contexts by standards of their work force and their voting potential, social disparities go along with restricted possibilities in terms of social mobility.

4.3 Coping strategies with everyday life in Favelas

The majority of the favela inhabitants have internalized their experiences with structural discrimination. As a consequence, they have a defensive and deprecating attitude towards the government and higher social classes. This method of self-preservation protects them from more discriminatory experiences but subtly conceals the still existing inequalities. So, some of the main quotidian practices are adaptation to and acceptance of the given living circumstances, as the following quotations of favela dwellers express:[2]

> *"If I wouldn't accept, it's getting worse. You have to live with what you get. I was born in this world, I don't have another"* (doormen, 40 years old).

> *"We are used to it. Though, I think this is the evil. If we wouldn't get used to everything here a lot of all that bad things wouldn't occur. Like that issue with blacks, our race... all that racism couldn't happen… no prejudices. But racism is mostly here inside, against eachother"* (housemaid, 50 years old).

Most people from the underclass feel their social status and circumstances are self-inflicted. Especially when confronted with members of other social classes, they see themselves as inferior and feel ashamed:

> *"I'm not jealous. Sometimes I feel guilty, I'm blaming myself that I didn't worked really hard enough to study, to be trained as something better to have better job opportunities"* (housemaid, 22 years old).

This feeling of humiliation is crucial to understanding the dominance of defensive patterns in their actions. Thus, reactive pragmatism is an essential way of coping with everyday life. This is obvious in the social relationships and how they deal with the restricted opportunities in their lives. Frustration is mainly taken out on their peers within the Favela. Therefore this already pragmatic community and its sense of togetherness is weakened considerably.

Another important aspect, thereby, is the occurrence of interpersonal violence, for what the favelas are so strongly discriminated. What has to be considered to this matter is that violence is mainly directed "inside":

> *"Here inside violence takes place. Because… the youth don't know how to converse. If there is a quarrel, a dispute, they take the knife and kill eachother, or shot them down, just like that! That's happening especially and mostly beyond themselves. It's sad... but I think this is the only disadvantage here in our quarter."* (teacher of Capoeira, 30 years old).

[2] The quotations originate from interviews conducted in the context of a PhD research project (2003-2008) in Salvador/Bahia (cf. Deffner 2010)

The lifestyle and life choices (e.g. leisure time, social networks) of the inhabitants of the favelas are also – with the exception of work related aspects - very focused on the favela's space. The favela is a cosmos, in which the inhabitants can take on responsibility for themselves and organize their daily lives freely. Here they can deal with their everyday struggle for survival in their own way – without being confronted additionally with discrimination and humiliation.

More than the stigma of the favelas as “disordered” fragments in the city, due to their formerly illegal character, the daily life of their inhabitants is afflicted with the reputation for being home to the drug scene and to ruthless and violent people. This negative spatial discourse of the favela as being a criminal, violent, and dangerous place is very powerful. It affects the organization of daily life and places constraints on living chances for the favela dwellers. Moreover, it helps to construct a subaltern citizenship that legitimizes their treatment as second class citizens, especially in justice and law, where the practice of “punishing the poor”, referring to Loic Wacquant (2006), is still valid. Thus, the negative spatial discourse has a powerful impact on the production and reproduction of unjust geographies.

If we transfer Lefebvre’s ideas of the “right to the city” to the favela, it is obvious, that the inhabitants here do not have any chances of social mobility. Instead they live in their own micro-cosmos. This enforces the image of „the city within the city“ and supports the rest of society in their views, that the favela is an unknown, suspicious space. This externally enforced self-organization of the favelas again perpetuates the image of ungovernability to the outside world.

But, we have to take into account, that the favela is not a hermeneutic, separate city within the city. Favela dwellers are highly involved in the whole urban productivity system, they share the value patterns of global consumption, though being only partially able to participate. The formal and the informal city are strongly interdependent, one would cease to exist without the other. This also refers to the profitable drug traffic, which equally relies on its localization within the favelas and its main consumption within the upper classes.

4.4 Favelas: Segmented or fragmented urban spaces?

Brazilian cities of today show signs of increased social dissociation, their critical junctures placing social stability at risk. They are socially constructed along socio-economic frontiers, and perceived as naturalized as a result of their perpetuated reproduction. Urban areas experiencing social conflict endanger the feeling of cohesion within a community. To unveil these underlying causes, we have to think of urban space as a political product influenced by the economy. We have to focus on inequalities that hinder people from entering other spaces and impede their decisions and opportunities in life. To consider space as a dimension of social inequality helps understand how it can be used as an instrument of power. Understanding the subtle effects of constructed space and decoding its social implications helps us to comprehend why the differences in power do not cease to exist. They are usually attributed to economic potential and practices.

The empirical reflections on favelas as integral parts of Brazilian cities show that they represent the dialectic relation between connection and disconnection. Favelas seem to neglect the order of an urban space that is constructed as a formal entity and deconstruct this formal entity by forming essential, but differently organized parts. As disconnected parts, they represent a possible threat to social order, which is

enforced by their importance to the spatial organization of crime. In this sense, favelas are highly perceived and represented in debates on urban security and the restoration of urban order. Within this logic, favelas have to be integrated and transformed into “legal” places. On the other hand, their interwovenness is often neglected, because the maintenance of a cheap and legally subordinate work force is crucial to the maintenance of the economic order of the capitalist city. This is why the connections and disconnections of the favela interrelate and depend on each other – the favela being alternately constructed as both, interwoven and disconnected fragment, as well as a completely unconnected segment.

5. Urban fragmentation as a threat to social cohesion?

Speaking of fragmentation includes the danger that we are indirectly talking of fragments of order and disorder. Thus, we are following the binary code of being included or excluded from the whole spectrum of the urban. In this sense, fragmentation is a normative concept and focuses negatively on disconnections, rather than connections. As an analytical concept, fragmentation bears the potential of understanding newly emerging patterns of simultaneous disconnections and interwovenness. Relating to social cohesion, fragmentation as a *state* of socio-spatial patterns does not question cohesion – but certainly the *process* of fragmentation questions and deconstructs a socio-spatial order that has been shaping cities for so long: functional segmentation and segregation. For further research, fragmentation should be made fruitful as a concept that helps to understand *how* social cohesion in today's cities is being produced and reproduced, and which forms of association and dissociation coexist.

Still, we should bear in mind that fragmentary structures may neglect or hide hierarchical or vertical structures that impede certain connections – and lead to segmentary cleavages. As for the two extremes, favelas and gated communities show certain aspects of strong segmentation even though depending on each other. To use fragmentation as a negative normative concept of dissolution and disorder means to give way to an elite bias, neglecting the interwovenness of the so-called 'formal' units with the 'informal' units and legitimizing fortification as a response to the 'dangerous fragments'. As the analysis of Brazilian favelas has shown, interwovenness is mostly given in economic and work-based aspects, which includes the favela-located drug-economy. Distinction certainly is most accentuated in terms of socio-cultural aspects. We may not confuse them with an “elite culture” on the one side and a “culture of poverty” on the other. In this sense, fragmentation does allow for more careful distinctions, and certainly gives way to understanding more thoroughly how, and by what means, social spaces and their cultural aspects are being produced externally and internally by the social groups that form urban societies. They still produce *one* urban reality, however fragmented – simultaneously disconnected and interwoven – it may be.

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