

Food oppression – What are Rio’s favela youth eating?

by
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Abstract

Food consumption patterns have been acutely changing in Brazil since the 1980's. As food consumption is representative of the material conditions and living standards of a particular group or society, consumers from different socioeconomic backgrounds will not have the same access to foods. Low-income individuals will be restrained to basic foods while more affluent consumers will be able to afford a wider variety. Diets make social disparities and structural domination explicit. I have presented the systemic mechanisms that reinforce oppression through food consumption. This study analyzed the structural relations between food consumption and social classes in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. I have focused on youth, which is the group more acutely moving away from traditional food consumption patterns. Specifically, I focus on low-income teenager residents of the favelas as they are also the most socially vulnerable group in the city. The overarching research question I have tried to answer is: In what ways is food becoming a new form of oppression for the already vulnerable low-income populations in Rio's favela? From my research I found the ways in which the political structure, market organization and socioeconomic status are translated into this new form of oppression, not from the deficiency of food but abundance of low-quality unhealthy food items. The narratives collected from Rio's residents during the research showed the discrepancies in access and agency among different social classes. From my research, I found the connections between the food system and systemic oppressions that appear on the food consumption patterns of the population.

Keywords: food consumption; neoliberal diet; Brazil; low-income; Rio de Janeiro; favela

I dedicate this work to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who dared to dream we could be more.
To my beloved city, Rio de Janeiro, the best and worst place on Earth. And, finally, to my
husband, Marcelo, and his never-ending patience.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

This study aims to analyze the structural relations between food consumption and social classes in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The focus will be on youth, which is the group more acutely moving away from traditional food consumption patterns. Specifically, I focus on low-income teenager residents of the favelas as they are also the most socially vulnerable group in the city. Food consumption is representative of the material conditions and living standards of a particular group or society (WINSON, 2003). Consumers from different socioeconomic backgrounds will not have the same access to foods. Low-income individuals will be restrained to basic foods while more affluent consumers will be able to afford a wider variety. Diets make social disparities and structural domination explicit.

This research will distance itself from the idea that food consumption is fully linked to personal choices, which tends to blame the individual for supposedly making the wrong decisions regarding food. Instead, I will consider the concept of food oppression as: “a form of subordination that builds on and deepens pre-existing disparities along race and class lines” (FREEMAN, 2007, p. 2245). The study will be built from systemic dynamics to explain how oppression is translated in food consumption patterns. By focusing on the structural issues of changes in food consumption patterns, this work will contribute to broaden the existing literature on contemporary social and consumption behaviors in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. I will demonstrate how the food system developed in a way that leaves almost no space for conscious personal choice, particularly among those who cannot purchase the new neoliberal healthy substitutes of fresh foods. Junk food was made cheaper and addictive by the system. “Food choices are structurally conditioned by income and wealth inequality (...) we eat what oligopolistic food producers and distributors have to offer” (OTERO, 2018, p. 7).

To show the structural determinants of food consumption, I will use the concept of neoliberal diet described by Gerardo Otero (2018, p. 1) as “a new form of food insecurity that has less to do with quantity and more with quality”. This diet high in calories and low in nutrients is based on industrialized and highly processed foods (OTERO, 2018, p. 172). Main ingredients of these preparations include agricultural commodity products, such as

soy, corn, sugar, meat and dairy. The neoliberal diet is “the globalization of the US industrial diet” (OTERO, 2018, p. 13) that started to be largely adopted by the Brazilian population on the 1990s.

More broadly, this research aims to answer the question of how contemporary food consumption is becoming a new form of oppression for the lower classes. To address this issue, I have analysed what teenagers from Rio de Janeiro are eating and why. Also, the analysis of the interviews will show the different eating habits among teenagers from different classes. At first glance, those differences may not seem significant. But a closer look at the market dynamics and the explanations given by the interviewed adolescents and some parents about their food intake demonstrate great disparity in the quality of the food they consume.

Rio de Janeiro's favelas are a trademark of the city. The favelas are slums which grew on the hills of Rio de Janeiro as a result of the housing shortages for low income populations near the city centre. There is one favela in almost every neighbourhood of the city. This fact does not reduce the inequality gap between those living ‘on the hills’ – the higher altitudes where favelas are typically located – and those living ‘on the asphalt’, which is how favela residents informally call those who live outside of their communities. Although living conditions in the city's favelas have improved since the 1990's, with prefecture projects like *Favela Bairro*¹ (Slum Neighborhood), which started in 1995, bringing urbanization in the form of paved streets, property titles, sewage networks and street lighting, this population remains the most vulnerable in the city. The perception apprehended from Rio de Janeiro's population in the 1970s by Janice E. Perlman was that the city would be better off if the favelas no longer existed.

There are two main historical events that drew those populations to favelas. First was the end of slavery in Brazil in 1888. Brazil was the last country in the Americas to abolish slavery. Together with the abolition came the Law of the Lands (Law 601, 1850) that prevented the recently freed slaves from acquiring any land through purchase or any other means, such as by donation or occupation. With this legislation, the only recourse that these people had was to sell their labour to survive. Without any land to work on, the ones already established in the city started forming the slums. Later, starting in the 1930's,

¹ Source: Rio De Janeiro's City Hall http://www0.rio.rj.gov.br/habitacao/favela_bairro.htm

Brazil experienced an economic structural shift as workers began to move from the countryside and formed an even bigger group of laborers in the city without proper housing, therefore increasing the number and the size of the favelas in Rio de Janeiro (PEARLMAN, 1976, p. 68). This migration from the Northeast is similar and linked to the rural exodus Brazil experienced throughout the rest of the twentieth century, and still continues today. But this migration has the added feature of the recurring drought that the Northeast suffers every few years, which makes the number of migrants from this area significant and is the reason why poor Northeasterners constitute a significant group in Rio's favelas. The Brazilian agrarian history and rural exodus will be covered more extensively on Chapter 1 when I will discuss how the development of Brazilian agriculture impacted the systemic oppression in food consumption.

The vulnerability of favela residents is not restricted to class and economic issues. Racism against the Afro-descendent population is prevalent, making this population the most affected by violence in the country, especially black youth (ARAUJO, 2015). The population in the favelas is mostly composed of Afro-Brazilian ethnicities, and migrants from Brazil's Northeast, which is one of the poorest regions of the country. This means that favela residents not only have lower living standards but face structural racism that prevents them from being likely to achieve class mobility regardless of their efforts. As explained by Silvio Almeida (2018, p. 43):

The different processes of national formation of the contemporary states were not produced by chance, but by a political process. Consequently, racial classifications played an important role in defining social hierarchies (...) in Brazil, besides the physical appearance of African ancestry, class belonging becomes explicit through consumption capacity and social circulation. Thus, the possibility of 'moving' towards a white-related aesthetic plus middle-class consumption habits can make someone racially 'white'. The same does not happen in the USA [using] the one drop rule, which means a drop of blood, causes those with 'black blood' to be considered black.

As anticipated by the explanation above of racial relations in Brazil, race is an element that will appear quite often during the interviews. As I have asked the interviewees to self-identify their race, there were many African descendants that declared themselves to be white as they had fairer skin. Although this element will not be extensively discussed in this study, it demonstrates how class and race relations are still an intrinsic part of Brazilian society which in turn aggravates food oppression.

The case study selected was low income adolescents from the Andaraí favela in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro. Despite being a favela, the population of Andaraí does not rank among the lowest income of the city. Compared to other areas of Rio de Janeiro, its residents have enough purchasing power to be considered part of the neoliberal diet consumer group. These families are still considered low income, but the adolescents in that group were not facing profound poverty. Most of their families were beneficiaries of governmental cash transfer programs, such as Bolsa Família.

According to the Brazilian Federal Government, responsible for Bolsa Família, which started in 2004, this program consists in “a direct income transfer program aimed at families living in poverty and extreme poverty throughout the country, so that they can overcome the situation of vulnerability and poverty”². The program mainly targets families with children and adolescents (SPERANDIO, RODRIGUES, FRANCESCHINI, PRIORE, 2017, p. 1774). In order to receive the cash transfers, families must make sure that kids attend school and have health checkups regularly. If those conditions are not met, the financial support is suspended.

Cash transfer programs were responsible for raising part of the Brazilian population above the poverty line. They are also relevant as a tool to create a group of low-income consumers who are now capable of buying goods beyond their basic needs (SPERANDIO, RODRIGUES, FRANCESCHINI, PRIORE, 2017). Having an extra income allows those families to buy items that would otherwise be out of their reach. The increase in the purchasing power frequently means buying industrialized foods that were unavailable to that segment of the population before (SILVA, DE PAULA, 2003; SPERANDIO, RODRIGUES, FRANCESCHINI, 2017; HOFFMANN, 2010; LIGNANI, SICHIERI, BURLANDY, 2010; GOUVEIA, 2006). Together with the increase in purchasing power, the decrease in food prices (FARINA, NUNES, 2002, p. 5) also made food products more broadly available to the Brazilian population, “favoring greater participation of lower-income individuals. In general, as a country's per capita income increases, the degree of sophistication in food consumption increases, with that, people opt for the more elaborate foods, such as the processed foods” (AQUINO, PHILIPPI, 2002, p. 656). This shift in food

² Source: Brazilian Federal Government <http://www.caixa.gov.br/programas-sociais/bolsa-familia/Paginas/default.aspx>

consumption was intensified by income gains as illustrated by Sperandio, Rodrigues, Franceschini e Priore (2017, p. 1772):

The participation of the program [Bolsa Família] in changes in the dietary pattern may be influenced by family dependency on the income derived from it and the place of residence of the beneficiaries, that is, families residing in regions with unfavorable socioeconomic contexts, such as the Northeast, tend to purchase more basic and lower cost food, while those residing in more economically developed regions, have greater access and acquisition to industrialized foods.

The impact mentioned above, related to unfavorable socioeconomic contexts was identified even between the two low income areas compared by this study. Andaraí and Jardim Gramacho, the latter will not be used as a second case study but introduced only for comparative purposes due to its poorer population in relation to Andaraí. Jardim Gramacho, which was the largest landfill in Latin America until its official closure in 2012³ and is one of the poorest areas in Rio de Janeiro, was the lowest of the two low-income areas visited during my field research. Residents of Jardim Gramacho and Andaraí favela reported similar dietary differences encountered by Sperandio, Rodrigues, Franceschini e Priore (2017, p. 1772) between the Northeast and the Southeast (where Rio de Janeiro is located). Despite the small geographical distance between Andaraí and Jardim Gramacho, about 20-30 minutes drive from each other, the socioeconomic disparities between these two poor neighbourhoods were significant. Most residents of Andaraí were part of the rising middle low-income population and positioned themselves as the “new consumers”. This new purchasing power can be linked to the paradox between poverty and obesity (FERREIRA, MAGALHÃES, 2005) in which low-income populations suffer more from obesity than high income individuals (BATISTA FILHO, RISSIN, 2003, p.184). In fact, the “increase in the consumption of processed foods and beverages is being considered as one of the factors that contribute to the increase of the prevalence of obesity and chronic diseases” (BIELMAN, MOTTA, MINTEN, HORTA, GIGANTE, 2015, p. 3). This consumption increase was acutely perceived on the narratives of the interviewees.

The literature is not unanimous on the topic of diet, income level and obesity. There are allegations that household availability of the neoliberal diet is more associated with

³ Although the landfill has officially closed, the area is still illegally used as a landfill. Also, a significant number of Jardim Gramacho residents still work in jobs related to the garbage such as recycling.

higher income. And, therefore, the risk of obesity would be more severe among the higher-income population (MONTEIRO, LEVY, CLARO, CASTRO, CANNON, 2011; BIELEMAN, MOTTA, MINTEN, HORTA, GIGANTE, 2015; CANELLA, LEVY, MARTINS, CLARO, MOUBARAC, BARALDI, 2014). According to Bieleman, Motta, Minten, Horta and Gigante (2015, p. 3), however, “studies of individual consumption of the neoliberal diet are unknown”. This study, therefore, sets out to find out more about the individual level of consumption, the kinds of processed foods available and the reasons for the food choices. My hope is to shed light on the class relations and the neoliberal diet.

The extensive qualitative research carried out during this study will contest the ideas proposed by the authors mentioned on the paragraph above on the presumed ambiguity of the relation between class and diet. The data collected through the interviews clearly indicate that the low-income population is at a higher risk of food-related diseases. This is not necessarily because they eat a larger quantity of the neoliberal diet, but because they increase their intake of processed foods on the same rate at which their income increases. More importantly, the literature does not distinguish the qualities of the consumed processed foods. “The type of industrial processing can influence the forms of production, distribution, commercialization, as well as the nutritional composition” (SPERANDIO, RODRIGUES, FRANCESCHINI, PRIORE, 2017, p. 1777). As will be discussed on the analyses of the interviews, impoverished individuals tended to consume higher quantities of lower quality foods than those more affluent ones.

1.1. Changes in the food consumption pattern among the low-income population

The first topic addressed in this literature review regards the changes in food consumption patterns among low-income individuals. Most of the literature that investigates these patterns is related to changes derived from public policies aimed at reducing poverty and hunger in Brazil, which started in the 1990s and were expanded in the 2000s. Due to the reach of these public policies, especially among families with kids and teenagers, the results from those investigations will be regarded as viable for comparison and analysis of the low-income population studied in this thesis.

Conditional cash transfers have been showing positive impacts on the reduction of food insecurity and increase on the food intake of families that benefited from them

(LIGRANI, SICHERI, BURLANDY, SALLES-COSTA, 2010, p. 786). The food consumption pattern changes among beneficiaries of conditional cash transfers and other low-income individuals are both linked to the overall increase in the purchasing power of the Brazilian population since the Real stabilization plan in 1994 (FARINA, NUNES, 2002; SILVA, DE PAULA, 2003) and the increase on the income generated by either the heating up of the economy or the cash transfers. Furthermore, the participation in the cash transfer programs creates benefits that have an impact beyond the direct recipients. Those programs have multiplier effects for the whole community by boosting the local economy.

As of 2019, Brazil has a number of conditional cash transfers under the umbrella of the Zero Hunger Program. According to Catia Grisa and Sergio Schneider (2015, p. 138):

The Zero Hunger Project started from the premise of the human right to food and from the diagnosis that this right was not being fulfilled because of the insufficient demand, the incompatibility of food prices with the purchasing power of the majority of the population and the exclusion of the poor from the market. To change this scenario, a set of structural policies aimed at improving the income and the increase in the supply of staple foods were proposed, that is, changes were needed on the production's side, giving priority to family-farming, and on the consumption's side, preferably articulating both.

As I will document in the analyses of the Brazilian agricultural system in Chapter 1, the structural relations regarding agriculture and the prioritization of family farming were not fully achieved by the Lula's government (2003-2011) or his successors. But on the end of the consumer, the public policies introduced to combat hunger and improve the capacity of low-income individuals to have access to food have been quite successful. This improvement meant that "with regard to the types of food most consumed by families, the increase in real income of the last 20 years allowed the diversification of the consumption pattern of the lower income classes and the creation of a new popular consumption market" (GOUVEIA, 2006, p. 34). Impoverished individuals were then able to consume more, but increase in quantity not necessarily translated into better quality on the long-term, as exemplified by Sperandio, Rodrigues, Franceschini and Priore (2017, p. 1779):

[The] results indicate that the beneficiaries of the program [Bolsa Família] comply with the recommendation of the new Food Guide for the Brazilian Population, which emphasizes the importance of *in natura* or minimally

processed food consumption. However, temporal analysis of food consumption in the Brazilian population, show the increase in the consumption of ultra processed foods especially among the lower socioeconomic strata, which calls for the monitoring of food consumption trends for beneficiaries of Bolsa Família, based on the level of industrial processing, so that measures are adopted for the promotion of adequate and healthy food.

The increase in the purchasing power of the low-income population had many consequences, as stated above. “Despite some controversy over how families spend the money [from Bolsa Família], buying food is the priority way to use the resource. However, food choice is a multi-determined process and involves social, political, economic, and cultural issues” (SPERANDIO, RODRIGUES, FRANCESCHINI, PRIORE, 2017, p. 1778). For policies to have impact that go beyond slightly increasing the purchasing power of vulnerable populations they must incorporate all the aspects mentioned above. The financial support provided by the government through policies such as Bolsa Família was not followed by a relevant element - adequate nutritional education. Even though education alone is not enough to fully overcome nutritional problems that derive from inequality, it is still an essential support for the success of policies regarding human development.

One of the necessary aspects for a government to achieve success in feeding its population and not only increasing its caloric intake, are nutritional education actions, fundamental for the promotion of adequate eating habits. Additionally, these actions must be articulated with structural strategies from production to food consumption (SPERANDIO, RODRIGUES, FRANCESCHINI, PRIORE, 2017, p. 1778). Food education needs to be adapted accordingly to the situation of the people the action is trying to impact. Implementing nutritional education at schools just by adding it as another subject is not enough for impoverished populations to be able to understand which possible diet improvements would be achievable considering their financial reality. Besides, the information and the policies that sustain the current system, based on commodity production and consumption, are well communicated to the consumers (CAROSELLA, 2019⁴). So, the government needs to communicate healthier habits while combating the ones advertised by the food industry. The governmental limitation or lack of regard towards impoverished populations is vividly described by Alicia Elliott, a Canadian indigenous writer (2019, 101):

⁴ Source: Fru.to Seminar <https://fru.to/palestrante/paola-carosella/>

There's a certain shame in learning about the food pyramid when you're poor (...) the teachers who preach the gospel of the food pyramid assume that if you're eating unhealthy, you have a choice. (...) I felt this shame acutely when I was in high school. We had to track our food for a few days in health class to measure our diet against what we were supposed to be eating (...). My diet, like the diets of so many poor and racialized families, consisted mostly of carbs, dairy and fat. There was very little protein, fibre, fruits and vegetables. As I filled out the work-sheets, I knew I was failing, that my family was failing. I lied to make myself seem healthier.

As this work will argue, the reality described above is not constrained to developed countries. "The socioeconomic and political forces behind the production of processed, energy-dense foods that largely make up the neoliberal diet" (OTERO, 2019, p. 8) have been detected in developing countries like Brazil as well. Since the adoption of neoliberalism as an economic practice in the 1990s, the country had been moving in the direction of the consumption patterns of developed countries such as the United States and Canada. As it appears, impoverished populations are also reproducing the unhealthy consumption patterns of these nations.

In a study carried out in 2010 about beneficiaries of conditional cash transfers, the observed food consumption pattern changes that came with the increase in purchasing power were not in accordance with the parameters of a healthy diet. It found that "increases in fruit and vegetable consumption were smaller than were those for cereals (mainly rice), beans, meat and milk. Processed foods and high-density, energy-rich foods demonstrated the largest increase" (LIGRANI, SICHIERI, BURLANDY, SALLES-COSTA, 2010, p. 788). Showing that wealth distribution alone does not imply better quality of life in all aspects of the human experience.

Furthermore, the distributional gains should impact the populations power of choice as "it is a presupposition of healthy eating, to expand and strengthen decision-making autonomy of individuals and groups through access to information for choosing healthy eating practices" (BEZERRA, SCHINEIDER, 2012, p.50). But there are two forces pulling the low-income population in two opposite directions: the affordability of low-quality foods and the dietary recommendations presented to those individuals that "provide guidelines for food consumption, but tend to be directed towards nutrients, to some extent disregarding the elements favoring food choice" (BIELEMAN, MOTTA, MINTEN, HORTA, GIGANTE, 2015, p. 2). This element based approach is not necessarily relatable to the

possibilities in the daily lives of low-income individuals and their limited access to different kinds of foods.

In a discussion about eating habits, in 2018, Brazilian Chef Bel Coelho⁵ shared her experience from when she decided to enroll her kids in a public school as a form of social activism. According to Coelho, the eating culture is linked to the food system and this is presented in many forms. Sometimes when sugar was suppressed from the fruit juices given to public school kids during their meals the cooks started to buy the sugar from their own pockets because they could not conceive serving that juice without any sugar. Coelho also reported her own misunderstanding of the condition of the parents who counted on the school meals to feed their kids. When she proposed eliminating chocolate milk from the meals, she was met with strong resistance from other parents. The different mindset between a middle-class parent and other low-income parents of the public school is very representative of the cultural dynamics related to food consumption in Brazil.

Low-income parents were not coming from a totally uninformed standpoint. As of 2019, lack of information is not necessarily the main issue. It is how this information is provided to the consumer and how they will use this information that is the most important aspect. As stated by the governmental Food Guide for the Brazilian Population (2014, p. 73) in regard to industrialized foods:

The main problem with reformulated ultraprocessed foods is the risk of being seen as healthy products, whose consumption would no longer need to be limited. Advertising these products explores their alleged advantages over regular products ("less calories," "added vitamins and minerals"), increasing the likelihood that they will be viewed as healthy by people.

Despite supporting the increase in food intake, public policies do not aim to restrict the consumption of foods that have negative impacts on people's health, even as the government restricts the access to unhealthy items such as cigarettes (GIL, 2019⁶). On top of that, according to Congressman Nilto Tatto⁷, we "have no State support mechanism to make healthy foods reach the population". The Brazilian government openly recognized the implications of the access to the neoliberal diet for the population. As expressed by the last governmental Food Guide for the Brazilian Population, "advertising of

⁵ Source: Fru.to Seminar <https://fru.to/es/palestrante/bel-coelho-es/>

⁶ Source: You Tube Canal da Bela <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYniWc9sPEw>

⁷ Source: Fru.to Seminar <https://fru.to/palestrante/nilto-tatto/>

ultraprocessed food dominates commercial food advertisements, often misreporting or providing incomplete information on food and especially affecting children and young people” (2014, p. 117). Still, action is emphasised on the side of the financially constrained consumer, who should navigate publicity and highly marketized supermarkets and by their will power choose the foods who are healthier for them. In spite of their limitations as presented by Ligrani, Sichieri, Burlandy and Salles-Costa (2010, p. 789):

Energy cost has been identified as a major constraint in decisions regarding food, especially in the lower-income classes, because industrialised energy-dense foods are cheaper than fresh foods. Moreover, considering the socially constructed parameters surrounding flavour and taste, sweets and high-fat foods are more practical and appetising.

The socially constructed parameters indicated in the quotation above were very similar to the ones observed in the present research. This is the case especially among teenagers, to whom the appeal of the foods they chose to eat were much more linked to how appetising they seemed regardless of whether the food was healthy or not. Most of the times the interviewees were at least minimally aware of which foods were more or less healthy.

To present the discrepancies in the food consumption habits among low-income populations does not expose the systemic dynamics that led to the shift towards the consumption of the neoliberal diet. If income level and access were satisfying explanations for the increase in the consumption of the neoliberal diet, we would see an increase in the intake of those foods according to income. However, this hypothesis does not apply to higher income families. On the contrary, as income increases from middle to high income families we see an acute differentiation and shift towards a healthier diet constituted mostly of whole and fresh foods.

As Brazil entered a neoliberal economic phase, foreign products such as sweets and prepared foods became widely available. Additionally, international food producers and vendors had incentives to enter the Brazilian domestic market, which included lower import taxes and lower market entry barriers. In looking at the role of structural oppression as an aspect of this hypothetical vulnerability of low-income people, my goal is to investigate what are the factors that are influencing this group to move from traditional food patterns to a globalized diet composed of energy dense ultra-processed foods, the so-called neoliberal diet (Otero, 2018). As this research is beginning to show, the reasons

for this pattern change are more linked to the food system, inequality and the resulting systemic oppressions. My overarching research question is: **In what ways is food becoming a new form of oppression for the already vulnerable low-income populations in Rio's favelas?**

To further answer this question, in the following section I will review the literature related to the dynamics between the consumer and the food industry. In subsequent chapters, I will add to this initial answer and articulate how systemic issues relegate low-income families to a secondary role in the food system. This will be done through the analyses of the agricultural system, the development of agroindustry and the modern food consumption patterns in Brazil.

1.2. The food industry and the consumer

This research now turns to the relations between the consumer and the food system. Needless to say, low-income individuals are also consumers in the sense that they do purchase goods. Although these are usually cheaper goods and they buy in smaller quantities than those bought by individuals with a higher income, low-income individuals are still part of the market dynamics. In the literature, however, the identity of low-income individuals falls into a void. Their place is one of absence, of almost non-existence.

The literature constantly mentions the influence of the consumer on the food industry (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p. 90; BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER, 2012, p. 50; SOUZA, 2001, p. 9; SILVA, DE PAULA, 2003, p. 3) but when talking about consumers the groups that are being mentioned are middle and high-income individuals; low-income ones are not included. This omission is quite relevant when analysing the systemic oppression in relation to food consumption. For this reason, I highlight this omission in the literature below and fill in this gap by analysing the discourse of the low-income population interviewed and reported in a following chapter.

Systemic inequality appears in the food system when we look at the relation between its industries and its consumers. "One of the simplest reasons for the relation of socioeconomic status and obesity is that industrial food producers have made tremendous efforts to maximize the neoliberal diet's appeal and create products that are relatively low

in cost” (OTERO, 2019, p.173). The food system operates in a way that makes commodity-based unhealthy foods more affordable while transforming fresh foods such as fruits and vegetables into luxury foods, only available for higher income individuals.

Brazil remains a highly inequitable nation. According with Index Mundi⁸, in 2018, Brazil was ranked 10th in the world on income inequality measured by the Gini index. For the food industry (and other industries) the Brazilian population is segmented in five main classes that represent their income market. “These are high-income, middle-income, middle low-income, low-income and extremely poor. The changes in Brazilian consumer behavior are dictated by segments that act similarly to consumers in industrialized countries, the high and middle-income groups, which represent 23% of the Brazilian population” (SILVA, DE PAULA, 2003, p. 3). The remaining classes merely follow the dictated patters or are disregarded by the market as influential consumers. The food consumption pattern changes from top to bottom, but it is clear that despite an increase in purchasing power, the low-income and extremely poor populations are unable to catch up on the food trends. This is particularly the case for the healthy foods, which are increasingly expensive due to the maximization of profit pursued by the food industry through added value, market research and advertising. The following extract from a Brazilian Development Bank article illustrates well the dynamic between the society and the market (BNDES, 2013, 351):

Traditionally, consumers are conservative about new food products. Culture and eating habits are rigid. However, globalization, reduced food prices, socioeconomic changes, changes in lifestyle, entry of women into the labor market, increased life expectancy and health concerns have been encouraging changes in eating habits and search for more practical products, healthy, functional, light, dietary, organic and environmentally sustainable foods.

The demand and habit changes mentioned above are related to the middle and high-income consumers as the rest of the population has limited access to such goods. Regarding food access, “the income of the population is still one of the fundamental aspects in [determining] the acquisition of food” (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p. 92). Even though they are a small portion of the population, high-income consumers constitute a better possibility of profit for the food industry. Therefore, the industry tends to concentrate its improvement efforts on this segment. Marginalized segments remain excluded from

⁸ <https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/indicators/SI.POV.GINI/rankings>

adequate foods while a minority of the population has lifestyle standards and consumption levels like the ones of developed societies (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p. 92).

This systemic exclusion of middle-low to poor population is not solely related to access. As conveyed by many of the teenager interviewees, they do have access to some fresh foods, or their parents would be willing to purchase more of those foods if they requested them to do so. But the diversity of the fresh products and the preparation was significantly different from middle and high-income households. Upper classes had access to many different varieties and tended to use more sophisticated preparations for the vegetables. In low-income households the staple salad consisted of lettuce, tomato and onions. This can indicate a different level of attractiveness of healthier foods. But as a rule, low-income teenagers expressed disinterest in the healthier options and did not know why.

One of the pieces to explain about this apparent personal choice can be linked to the level of awareness in relation to foods and its health consequences. Information is one of the most important assets consumers currently have, but the level and quality of information regarding food consumption presented by the research participants was significantly different. All interviewees had relatively easy access to information through school, internet and television. But while low-income individuals relied solely on these sources, middle and high-income individuals had family and professional (nutritionists and doctors) support to transform this information into acts and implement it on their routines.

According to Rubens Antônio Mandetta de Souza (2001, p. 12):

The easy access to information makes the consumer more demanding, specially regarding the effects of food on their personal health. This factor can become a threat for the companies that are less focused on the consumer and a big opportunity to the ones that have learned that satisfying its consumer is the best way to increase profits.

The dynamics presented by the quote above are related to the demands of more affluent individuals that the food industry tries to meet. But what is often disregarded by the literature is the quality of the information and the tools the individual has to process and implement it. The Food Guide for the Brazilian Population was created by the Brazilian Health Ministry together with the World Health Organization (2014, p. 13-22). It

Examines factors that may be obstacles to people's adherence to the recommendations of the guide - information, supply, cost, culinary skills, time and publicity - and proposes to overcome the combination of actions

on a personal and family level and on the exercise of citizenship. Other factors may hinder the adoption of these standards, such as the higher cost of minimally processed foods versus ultraprocessed foods, the need to have meals in places where healthy eating options are not offered, and intense exposure to unhealthy food advertising.

The presented limitations and their obvious link to socioeconomic class refute the idea that “consumers came to represent the active economic agents of the process” (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p. 89). There is a portion of the Brazilian society who is able to influence the food market, but most of the population remains vulnerable to the processes occurring around them. When the change in the food consumption patterns are described by the literature that mentions search for “convenience, promotion of health, vitality and individuality” the low-income population is not being taken into consideration and is not part of the group of target ‘consumers’. Therefore, “market rules are not established by the final consumer” (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p. 90); they are established by some consumers from the upper-income socioeconomic class.

Another societal aspect of the food consumption pattern changes that very clearly excludes the low-income population is the discourse that attributes the demand for convenient and ready-made meals to the numbers of women joining the workforce. Disregarding the fact that most poor women already worked outside their homes for a wage. Using middle and high-income women as a default designation for women displays the invisibility of impoverished females for the market. This sheds light on the different places delegated to each socioeconomic segment in its relation to the food industry. As stated before, the dynamic of food consumption goes beyond the availability of food products on supermarket shelves; it includes a range of economic, cultural and behavioral aspects such as communication and the ways each individual sees herself in relation to the system.

The mentioned aspects are manipulated with the power of communications inducing social persuasion and “in affecting the behavior of consumers, it encourages, as a consequence, changes in habits, generating preferences for the consumption of certain products” (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p. 90). This persuasive power was expressed more acutely among middle and high-income individuals during the interviews conducted for the present research. Even though access to television and internet is widespread among all classes in Rio de Janeiro, not many interviewees mentioned media communication’s as sources of nutritional information and influence. However, among the middle and high-

income interviewees, those who had evidently healthier food consumption habits mentioned, mostly, their parents as a source of information. The dynamics that influence the parents' decision-making process could not be evaluated, but it can be inferred that by being better educated and part of wealthier classes they had more access to privileged and trustworthy information from academic articles, newspapers and magazines.

Contemporary market interactions are defined by the dissemination of information in ways that go beyond the old marketing campaigns openly aimed at convincing the consumer to buy a certain product. In the food industry, as in other industries, "the brand management is done by creating and maintaining an organized set of functional characteristics and symbolic aspects, in a relationship in which a competitive advantage occurs for the company" (LEITE, WINCK, ZONIN, 2012, p. 111).

Marketing strategies are no longer restrained to mere advertisements on television or billboards. The science of influencing consumers is more refined and discreet than it was on the gold years of propaganda on the 1950s and 1960s. This might be one of the explanations for the uncertainty of the interviews regarding their preferences. Although they were sure of their choices when a product or preparation was more appealing because of its taste. They were not necessarily confident when explaining choosing industrialized item over fresh or healthier ones when they enjoyed both.

Analyzing the geographical spaces where food was bought can provide some explanation for these somewhat unconscious choices. Granting that among all classes teenagers did consume industrialized products, their relationship with other foods varied more widely. Middle and high-income individuals were more prone to eating fresh foods. A visit to the supermarkets and farmers market cited by the interviews can shed light on marketing strategies that go beyond straightforward advertisement.

On supermarkets frequented by low-income individuals, fresh foods were mostly unappealing. There was not much diversity, the presentation was random, and many fruits and vegetables were either unripe, going bad or would be in the category of not perfect in shape, size and color that would make them go to waste in other circumstances. Whereas in middle and especially in high-income supermarkets fresh foods were shiny and appealing. Fruits and vegetables were presented in many forms: as in elaborate juices and salads, cut to be eaten on the go, and dehydrated. Their benefits were often clearly

advertised on those spaces and clients could take part in tastings and cooking classes. Besides, there was a larger diversity of industrialized healthy items – in very attractive packaging - that should accompany the fresh foods. Therefore, what leads people to choose one item over the other is not necessarily forthright, but a closer look allows us to draw systemic relations that do not seem present on the moment of the selection.

The symbolic influence of brands and the perception of the status they carry was found by this study mainly in middle-class discourse. While both low-income and middle and high-income adolescents have the habit of going to shopping malls (although in very different locations), the first group would eat at Mc Donald's and Burger King and did not express links between eating at those restaurants and status. In contrast, some middle-income adolescents, specifically some girls, expressed that going to Starbucks and walking around with their branded cups was part of their lifestyle.

The use of company names as a symbol of status indicates that “a brand can still express different personalities in different contexts, and it is necessary to understand the context in which it is used” (LEITE, WINCK, ZONIN, 2012, p. 115). According to Maurício Antônio Lopes, EMBRAPA's president (2009⁹), there is a significant tendency for the sophistication of the food demand in Brazil, the perception about some luxury foods change depending on socioeconomic class. The class variable in the country is so meaningful that low-income individuals feel disconnected from the possibility to consuming these more expensive and less accessible luxury foods. During the interviews, some individuals clearly expressed that those foods were not for them.

One of the answers from a mother from the Andaraí favela was quite illustrative of this product branding and added value dynamic. She told me that her husband worked for a small high-end farmers market / natural store in Ipanema¹⁰ and that on Christmas the owner gave her employees a basket with store products. In her words, “those products did not interest” her at all, adding that her family did not like them. Her teenager son added that his dad's employer “made everything organic, the food was horrible” and explained that he did not like food without salt. Their rhetoric expressed both their understanding that those products did not have them as target consumers and their lack of knowledge of

⁹ Source: Fru.to Seminar <https://fru.to/palestrante/mauricio-antonio-lobes/>

¹⁰ High-income neighbourhood in the South Zone of the city, near where most of the higher income interviewed adolescents live.

what those products meant. None of the low-income individuals interviewed was able to define what organic products were.

Data regarding changes in the consumer's preference present an interesting contrast to the resistance mentioned above. For higher-income people, fruit consumption "presented a curious situation of decreasing the consumption per capita of tropical fruits and, simultaneously, an increase in the consumption of fruits of temperate climate" (SILVA, DE PAULA, 2003, p. 12). This is a clear expression of the type of higher-income individual reproducing the behaviour of developed countries (VIGLIO, 1996, p. 8). The introduction of berries and other temperate climate fruits in the Brazilian market dates from the mid-1990s. By 2019, they are easily found in vegetable and fruit stores in middle and high-income neighbourhoods. Still, they remain expensive in comparison to tropical fruits.

This trend is quite restricted, as overall fruit consumption numbers show (LIGRANI, SICHIERI, BURLANDY, SALLES-COSTA, 2010, p. 789):

A low intake of fruits has been observed in nationwide Brazilian surveys. Although fruit intake increases with family income, the overall availability of fruits and vegetables is equivalent to 30% of the WHO recommendation of 400 g/d. Even in the highest fifth income quintile of the Brazilian population, the purchase of fruits and vegetables is below the recommended level. This finding could be explained by the greater cost of these food groups compared with other food groups.

For the companies, "knowing closely the trends of consumption helps to acquire a rapid capacity of readjustment of the business, avoiding the loss of participation of the company in the market" (MANDETTA, SOUZA, 2001, p. 7). Therefore, it became mandatory for the food industry to develop itself in areas other than production and product development. In the 1990s, "with the increase in urban income reaching mainly the population of middle and high incomes, the food industry dynamized itself" (VIGLIO, 1996, p. 6). The food industry came to realize that its profits were no longer tied to the quantity it produced. They needed to improve research methods to investigate and understand consumer behavior and the findings led to adjustments on the industry (MANDETTA, SOUZA, 2001, p. 7).

But the mentioned transformations of the industry were to satisfy affluent consumers. In agreement with the thesis developed by the present study, Vilela and Macedo (2000, p. 91) indicate that:

There is no average consumer. Market segmentation is increasingly creating opportunities for products targeting higher income consumers. In this way, all segments of the agribusiness must mount real radars on the market trends, to identify the attributes of the goods that have the most value from the point of view of the final consumer, to take advantage of the real market opportunities.

This market specialization in products directed to consumers with high purchasing power tends to increase prices of the products linked to a healthier diet, such as vegetables, fruits, fish, non-commodity grains and seeds. In turn, this makes a healthy balanced diet largely unavailable for the low-income population. As a consequence, the food industry excludes low-income individuals from its target consumers at the same time that it limits the access of the low socioeconomic classes to a healthy and diversified diet.

1.3. The case study

The case study selected was low income adolescents from the Andaraí favela in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro. The choice of the case study was based on the relatively higher income status the low-income that families who live in the area have. Despite being low income, the adolescents in this group were not facing profound poverty. Most of their families were benefited by governmental cash transfer programs, such as Bolsa Família and had purchasing power that allowed them to be consumers of goods beyond their basic needs. Those characteristics made them the ideal group to be analysed regarding food consumption patterns. As the interviews with lower income teenagers showed, who live in a much more precarious way than those in Andaraí, closer to the poverty line, have not fully joined the group of consumers of the neoliberal diet. As my field study will demonstrate the lower income of the low-income segment, the comparison group interviewed at Jardim Gramacho, tends to remain closer to the traditional Brazilian food consumption pattern.

To investigate the social causes of unhealthy eating habits, I will analyse the accessibility to both healthy and unhealthy food options, considering prices, availability and proximity to consumers. And, based on the interviews, I will discuss what foods are more widely available and easily accessible for this population, and why this type of food is more available. I will also analyse in which ways food “choices” are conditioned by income inequality.

1.4. Why study food consumption on Brazil?

Economic changes and increases in income per capita allowed a mass of new consumers to enter the market with increasing purchasing power. A range of new food products became available to those who could afford refrigerators, freezers and microwaves. Since the 1990s, Brazil's main concern related to poor nutrition moved away from hunger and food insufficiency issues towards too much consumption of energy-dense but less nutritious diets and obesity. The pattern of food consumption has shifted its focus significantly away from traditional staple items like manioc flower, rice and beans, towards prepared foods.

According to IBGE (2009), teenagers consume more sodium, lipids and sugar in the form of processed foods than any other demographic. This group exhibits a more dramatic shift in food consumption patterns than the rest of the Brazilian population. Seventy percent of Brazilian teenagers ingest more sodium than recommended by government standards (IBGE, 2009). Among boys between 10 and 13 years old who live in urban areas, this percentage increases to eighty-three percent (Analyses of Personal Food Consumption – POF/IBGE, 2009).

Many of the questions regarding change in the food consumption patterns have been addressed in research conducted in developed nations (DARMON, DREWNOWSKI, 2008; DIXON, 2009; FREEMAN, 2007). But the similar changes in the Brazilian population are yet to be extensively researched. Developed countries, especially the United States, experienced transformations in its food consumption patterns decades before developing countries. While households in the United States started to have access to an increasing diversity of prepared foods in the 1950's (WINSON, 2013), developing countries such as Brazil were quickly impacted by the drastically-increased amount of cheap food products upon opening their markets to foreign goods after the 1980s when neoliberalism was widely adopted by those countries (DE PAULA, GOMEZ, TRACZ, 2017).

The economic development achieved by Brazil since the 1990s allowed its population to have access to a number of industrialized foods that were unthinkable for poorer citizens before (VIGLIO, 1996; FARINA, NUNES, 2002; SILVA DE PAULA, 2003; AQUINO, PHILIPPI, 2002). Availability and the increase in purchasing power are two aspects, but there are additional conditions that drive consumers from healthy to unhealthy

options. Legislation, how the government participates in the food system through subsidies, laws that benefit agribusiness and implementation of policies that expand its domain also play a role in tandem with marketing and the use of financial leverage to influence consumers into buying more of whatever is more profitable for the food system.

On the one hand, the Brazilian government has shown concern over the increasing indices of food-related diseases by signing the Organic Law of Food Security, Law 11.346 in 2006. The law created the National System of Food Security (SISAN) which aims to secure the human right to adequate nutrition as inherent to human dignity and indispensable for the realization of the rights enshrined in the Federal Constitution. On the other hand, a big part of the current picture is how the food industry is working to make its products more attractive to consumers while pressuring the government to allow more room for the industry to increase its profits. The Coca-Cola Company, for example, produces its syrup in Manaus where there are no taxes for industrialized products and then distributes its base liquid to the rest of the country for production into soda. This represents a government practice of incentives for the corporations that is directed to an unhealthy product which has been accompanied by a significant increase in consumption of those food products in Brazil. This phenomenon can be observed even in the short term between two Family Budget Studies conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) carried out in 2002-2003 and again in 2008-2009.

The consumption of highly-processed foods is a behaviour ingrained in developed countries that is now becoming a normalized habit in developing nations. The food industry is imprinting unhealthy habits on society that encourage people to eat larger quantities of lower quality food more often (OTERO, 2018). The present study aims to contribute to the discussion of this ongoing phenomenon.

1.5. Methodology

To expose structural conditioning of food consumption, as more determinant than individual choice, I will develop a comparison of primary and high school students from the following three different categories as proxies for social classes: (1) low-income, (2) middle-income and (3) high income. The two first segments were further divided into two sub-segments. The low-income was divided into low-income and middle low-income. The former were the individuals from Jardim Gramacho and the latter from Andaraí favela, all

public-school students. The middle-income category was divided into middle-income and middle-upper income, all private school students: the former were individuals from Tijuca, a middle-class neighbourhood in Zona Norte near Andaraí favela, and the latter were individuals from more expensive schools residing in Zona Sul, a wealthier area of the city. The sub divisions were necessary as even the slight difference in income impacted on their life experiences regarding food consumption.

The investigation focused on these groups because they are representative of the teenage population which tends to show more acute and easily-observable changes in food consumption patterns among the Brazilian population (IBGE – POF, 2009). Whenever possible, parents were part of the interviews. I was also able to interview the cooks from one of the public schools that serves the Andaraí community, Escola Municipal Baptista Pereira. As meals are not included in the tuitions of private schools and none of the private school students interviewed chose to eat at school I decided not to include the private school cooks.

In Brazil, the division among public and private schools is very representative of class. Lower classes are more likely to attend low quality public schools, while parents from any other class will try to make an extra effort to pay for private education. There are high quality public schools, but those are not the norm and usually poor students have to compete for seats with children from middle-class families. This is the reason behind this research's class division based on school type.

The interviews exposed a more personal level of reasoning and rationalization for adolescents' food consumption. The class division took into consideration tuition prices in each educational institution; students that receive scholarships in private schools were not selected. By relying on less structured interviews and prioritizing dialogue, I intended to create space to allow for more personal narratives to be expressed (BAIOCCHI, 2005) and reveal the potential impositions of class structure and its impacts on food consumption.

Open-ended questions were employed to learn about the families' different experiences. Questions asked included: a description of daily personal food consumption, who cooks the meals, the decisions that take place when selecting foods, responses to the availability of industrialized unhealthy items, perceptions about the access to healthy

foods, unhealthy foods, and options for physical activity or exercise. The aim of the interviews was to obtain detailed insight into the differences in food consumption among classes and to investigate how structural oppression is translated into unhealthy eating habits. Participation in this study was voluntary and did not involve any payment. The on-site research contributed to the assessment of social determinants and conditions behind what people eat in Rio de Janeiro's favelas and why. Interviews were semi-structured and meant to be exploratory in nature.

1.6. The study in chapters

In chapter 2, I will discuss political circumstances that shaped the agricultural system in Brazil, from how the land was historically distributed to how it created concentration of wealth in the country. I will also discuss the modernization of the agricultural industry and the development of the agroindustry, one of the most powerful industries in Brazil. These aspects are intrinsically related to food access as, in a system focused on agro-exports, feeding the population appropriately becomes secondary to profit. I will discuss how this powerful industry determines what reaches the Brazilian tables.

Food consumption pattern changes are intrinsically linked to how food is produced. Despite being a commodity exporter since its invasion by Portuguese colonizers, in 1500, for centuries Brazil was able to combine its commodity crops with a diverse production of food for internal consumption. Traditional staples such as rice, beans and manioc were grown - by the then large rural population – next to fruits and vegetables – now luxury expensive foods. The expansion of profitable commodity crops over most of the productive land and the expulsion of a large portion of the rural population from the countryside are two of the factors that explain why Brazilians are currently moving away from the country's traditional diet and incorporating the neoliberal diet of products based on commodity items such as soy beans, corn and wheat now widely available in the country.

As the mentioned rural exodus impacts on the supply of food in the country, at the end of chapter 2, I will present the importance of family-farmers for the food system, for feeding the Brazilian population, and the issues these producers face. Most of the fresh foods that feeds the population are produced by family-farmers, however, despite the many policies that will be analysed, they remain vulnerable.

On chapter 3, I will present the Brazilian Neoliberal era, starting at the end of the 1980s. The introduction of neoliberal economic policies is one of the strongest factors that contributed to the adoption of the neoliberal diet in Brazil. I will discuss specific neoliberal economic policies and how they impacted food supply and demand. With the economic improvement, items such as candy, chocolate and chips became available and affordable. In no time, the population started to substitute staples such as the traditional combination of rice and beans for hamburgers and noodles. Together with the changes in the food system, it is the economic improvements achieved in Brazil since the 1990s that are responsible for the supply of the neoliberal diet in the country and the increasing demand and consumption of these food products by the population.

Chapter 4 consists of the analysis of the interviews I conducted during July and August of 2018. These narratives will establish a connection to the first two chapters by demonstrating how both political and economic circumstances were translated into food oppression. I will draw a comparison among the social classes and discuss the discrepancies of their food consumption patterns.

In chapter 5, I will work with the intersectionality of class and gender oppressions in regard to food consumption. Through feminist lenses I will discuss three key topics: food production, free domestic labour and body image. During my research on what *cariocas*¹¹ are eating and why, these three topics were insistently brought up. While it might initially appear as if they do not necessarily belong in a food consumption discussion, it is in fact impossible not to present the impacts domestic labour and body image have on people's eating habits. Excluding these matters would contribute to the invisibility of women's issues and I would be disregarding a big component of the systemic oppression I intend to show.

In this work I have tried to explain the most relevant parts of the food system in Brazil in order to argue that there is little choice on what people eat. Food choice diminishes according to socioeconomic status. I have discussed how the food system was designed in a way that lead to systemic oppression where food-industry corporations are the main responsible for deciding what will end up on the plates of Brazilian families. While this decision making is somewhat concentrated regarding all social classes, those

¹¹ Individuals born in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

individuals who achieved a level of purchasing power to be considered as consumers by the market have some leverage to influence the food supply. In contrast, low-income individuals suffer the highest level of oppression, being fed by the system foods that will be more profitable regardless of their possible health impacts on the population. The food consumption patterns of the Brazilian population are changing, and the discussion of the present work will try to shed light on the reasons and structural determinants for that shift.

Chapter 2.

Food Production – transformations of the agrarian structure

The transition of Brazilian agriculture occurred from a system based on the pre-modern plantation that started during the colonial period (1500-1815). In the pre-modern system, land ownership characteristics facilitated the export of the two main products: coffee and sugar cane. That is, the way land was divided by the Portuguese Crown, in latifundium owned by very few elite members, facilitated the single crop production from the beginning of the colonial exploitation. At that point, large part of the production was exported and coexisted with a smaller production of foods to be sold in the internal market.

The objective of the colony, which did not change with independency, was to produce goods to be exported. Meaning that most of the goods produced in the country were directed to the nascent international market. Despite the focus on the international market, power and decision making remained with the local farmer. It allowed space for small production, subsistence agriculture and family farms. The transition from labor intensive agriculture to a modern agriculture further concentrated land and wealth. This resulted on the technology intensive commodity driven agriculture seen on the 21st Century, with most of the country's productive land on the hands of big corporations. To look at how agriculture developed in Brazil is the first step to understand contemporary patterns of foods consumption in the country. And for that it is necessary to discuss the slave system and the consequences of abolition.

Early changes in Brazilian agriculture, led to the agricultural market as we know it in 2019, these changes started with the transition towards paid labor. This shift began slowly before the abolition of slavery in 1888, with some liberated African descendants joining the paid work force. This was enabled by the Law of the Free Womb (Lei do Ventre Livre, Lei 736), passed in 1871, which ruled that all newborns born from slaved women since that date would be born free. In 1888, Brazil abolished slavery and a mass of workers joined the paid work force. With governmental support of European immigration, which will be discussed in more detail bellow, many former slaves were unable to find employment.

With the shift towards paid labor, two distinct processes of the agricultural evolution started to emerge and defined the modes of agricultural production in Brazil. First, predominantly agricultural land was converted to areas of capitalist exploitation based on latifundia – large extensions of land under single ownership. This type of land distribution predominated in the Northeast, Midwest and Southeast regions of Brazil. The Northeast and Southeast, the first areas occupied in the country, were mainly colonized by Portuguese settlers who developed them into latifundia based on the slave economy. Second, in some areas, mainly in the Southern region, a family-based agriculture was developed (GONTIJO, 1988, p.3). The divergent path followed by the Brazilian South is related to its very distinct style of colonization, for which the government brought in white settlers from Europe to colonize the region.

The agricultural modernization process, changes in labor and land ownership, shaped the evolution of agriculture and, finally, culminated in its industrialization. Claudio Gontijo (1988, p. 2) details the main aspects of this early transition:

The universality of the logic of the capitalist expansion was revealed in Brazil between 1850 and 1930, through a process that, in general terms, meant the generalization of the mercantile production. This process takes place together with the deepening of the social division of labor, the development of capitalist relations of production, the liberation of extra-economic impositions, the concentration of the means of production and subsistence, the expansion of the productive forces, with the emergence of capitalist cooperation, the technical division and mechanization of labor, the separation of the agricultural industry and the expansion of large urban industry, the liquidation of independent craftsmanship units and of the rural domestic industry, the disintegration of small-scale peasant production and the transformation of the plantation exploitation type, the specialization of certain regions in certain agricultural products, the splitting of pre-capitalist land income into profit and capital income, the transformation of pre-capitalist forms of exploitation of land and the flourishing of capitalist exploitation, and the progressive industrialization of agriculture, with its transformation into capital-specific field.

The changes mentioned by Claudio Gontijo resulted in great land concentration, which, “created an artificial ‘scarcity’ of land (...) the peasant property was hampered in its expansive dynamics” (Gontijo, 1988, p. 6) directly affecting the rural exodus process that began to take shape at the same time of the agricultural revolution in Brazil. This rural-to-urban migration began to materialize in the turn of the 20th Century and was consolidated later with the Green Revolution. The latter accounted for the great increase in cereal-grain yield aimed at sustaining a growing population (KHUSH, 2001, p. 815) in

the 1950's and 1960's. "The marked achievements in world food production were caused by applying advanced technology to the development of high-yielding varieties of cereals" (KHUSH, 2001, p 815) and will address the scarcity of food in this period. But the fast modernization process also drove a mass of rural workers to the urban areas. This process resulted in reducing the number of workers producing food for internal consumption, inflating prices while overcrowding cities which were not prepared to receive such a contingent of migrants. This reality can still be attested in 2019 by the great number of remaining favelas in Rio de Janeiro and the creation of slums on the outskirts of the city.

The process of capitalist development in Brazil was led by great land exploitation, which gradually replaced slave labor for a partnership with wage labor, replacing the pre-capitalist modes of exploitation by those of bourgeoisie (Gontijo, 1988, p.11). Even though Brazil eventually became a democracy, even in 2019 there are significant contingents in both chambers of Congress dominated by those same types of oligarchs – the *ruralistas*. The difference is that in the 21st Century they live under the banner of the highly profitable agribusiness.

As Claudio Gontijo (1988, p. 14) points out, the evolution of capitalism in Brazil was deeply conservative in order not to disrupt the status quo:

Capitalism in Brazil was not born from a downward movement caused by the expansion of small peasant exploitation that, having clashed with the pre-capitalist latifundium system, replaced it by an act of force with a system of small farmers, in a fast capitalization process. Also, there was no free occupation of the virgin land by small property, except in small areas, since, from an early age, the large land property occupied, by force and by systematic robbery, the land available for commercial exploitation. On the contrary, capitalism in Brazil was born of a movement imposed from above, effected under the control of former slaveholders, who immediately opposed agrarian reform and the generalized development of small property.

The fact that the implementation of the capitalist system, as detailed by Claudio Gontijo, developed from the elites meant the maintenance of the agricultural oligarchs in power. This preservation of control did not allow opportunities for class mobility, a reality that still has consequences in 2019. Concentration of power, wealth, land and resources will likely remain a defining characteristic of Brazil.

2.1. Rural Brazil moves toward modernization

In the 1950s, the needs of the agricultural sector still had to be met by imports of more advanced means of production, such as tractors and other machinery. But only a decade later, in the 1960s, with a more developed industrial sector, Brazil was capable of producing equipment and supplies for the growing agricultural industry (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p.3). This capability was supported by a new economic framework. "The 1960s marked the beginning of a new Brazilian economic model, replacing the so-called import substitution model with the modernization of the agrarian sector and the formation of the agroindustry complex" (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p. 3). The implementation of the new model and the self-sufficiency of Brazil in some sectors would give the country's modernization an important push.

Regardless of industrial modernization, politics in Brazil was still deeply conservative. In 1964, one of the short Brazilian democratic periods came to an end by military coup. Under military rule, the Land Statute (Law 4504, from 1964) was passed. It was a way for the authoritarian military government to curb the peasant movements that had gained strength in the beginning of the 1960s, during João Goulart's presidential mandate (1961-1964). When the Land Statute was being shaped, oligarchs, especially the owners of sugar cane industrial plants in the north and coffee farmers in the South, blamed the military government for following the same allegedly communist intentions of the previous government (Bruno, 1995, p.6). The worry was that the agrarian reform would harm property rights through confiscation. The counter argument was that Brazil had no agrarian issue, "but a rural issue which did not derive primarily from the ownership structure" (BRUNO, 1995, p. 8). The Land Statute had two pillars: land reform and agricultural modernization. The first was mainly abandoned by a government which had its support basis in the conservative middle and upper classes. The latter would build the foundations for the agriculture potency that Brazil became later in the twentieth century.

According to Regina Bruno (1995, p. 13):

Finally, the more general economic policy strategy, which would define the frameworks of a productivist political orientation, already pointed to the option that would prevail in the 1970s, through what is conventionally called "conservative modernization" - a model of development with concentration of land, capital and power.

Despite its achievements in modernizing the country's agriculture, the model was not capable of feeding the growing population. Regarding agricultural development, "inefficiency in the field created problems throughout the country. Brazil was experiencing a period of strong industrialization, with cities expanding, population growth and higher purchasing power. The context was food shortages" (EMBRAPA, 2018, p.19). The government invested in policies directed to improve agricultural productivity. It was during this period that Brazil began to see a significant increase in the use of agrochemicals and fertilizers (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p. 5).

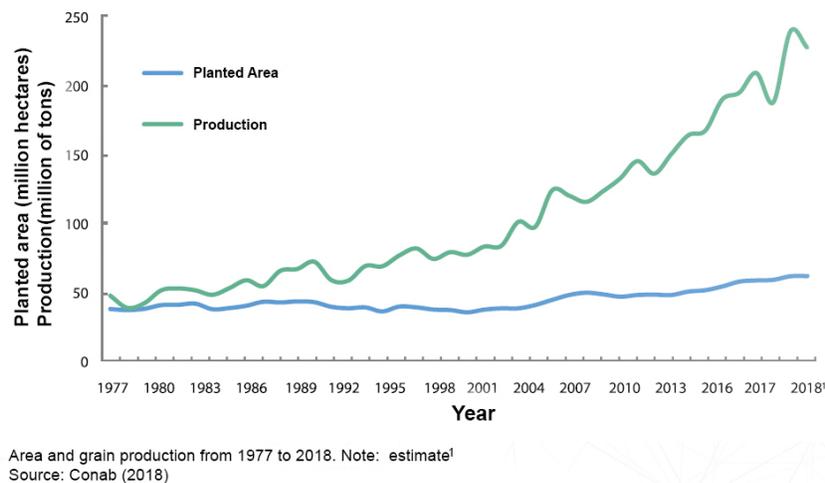


Figure 1. Area and grain production from 1977 to 2018

The government has a central role in the increase of agricultural production, supporting agroindustry through research, policies, credit and infrastructure. According to Jodenir Calixto Teixeira (2005, p. 35):

What really promoted the transformation of the agricultural production's technical base was the governmental incentive via Rural Credit, that was made available on the second half of the 1960s. Governmental programs have also been set up to provide direct subsidies to rural activities to make the purchase of inputs cheaper. This was achieved through the partial payment of industrial products by the government. In addition to subsidized credit, tax exemptions were also essential.

A bold example of the mentioned policies focused on agricultural development is the creation of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), which was responsible for the introduction of soy beans in the Brazilian Cerrado (a biome similar to the savannah where the soil was not appropriate for cultivating soy bean crops) in the

1980s (EMBRAPA, 2016). In the crop of 2017/2018, Brazil (the second soy bean produced in the world – just behind the United States¹²) produced 116,996 millions of tons (EMBRAPA, 2018). Mato Grosso alone, the biggest state in the Midwest Cerrado area, produces 31,887 millions of tons of soy beans. This example illustrates how government investments had a great impact on the development of the Brazilian agriculture.

Investments as the one mentioned above were mainly financed by international loans. Those loans were facilitated by the international financial market. The international financial market was responsible for feeding the intake of debt from developing countries with the overflow of dollars resulting from oil revenues. Before the Oil Crisis of 1979, when the oil barrel prices reached record high levels, there was plenty of liquidity in the world economy due to the petrodollars. This easy accessibility to international credit pushed the military government to borrow cheap currency to accomplish its development goals and maintain a political regime that was being severely questioned by the population. The consequences of this mindless borrowing with non-pegged rates were felt during the so-called economic lost decade of the 1980s, during the first years of the new democratic period which started in 1985. Although harmful for the economy in the long run, the great flow of credit had positive impacts on agricultural development as Jodenir Calixto Teixeira points out (2005, p.36):

With advances in credit lending, demand for modern inputs increased, opening the market for the consolidation of the Agroindustry Complex. (...) Between 1969 and 1979 the voluminous resources from rural credit contributed to a greater consolidation of the rural-urban relationship and an effective change in the technical base. However, in the 1980s, the situation was not the same, presenting a reduction in agricultural credit mainly due to the critical phase of the Brazilian economy. The decrease in the granting of credit deeply harmed the upstream industry.

Despite the economic crisis that followed the 1979 oil crisis and all the debt left to be paid in the next decades, the loans were important to further develop the agricultural sector and brought long lasting benefits to it. The critical phase of the Brazilian economy, including high rates of inflation and low growth, was rather long. The crisis was stemmed in 1994 with the *Plano Real*, as will be discussed on the next chapter. But the basis to develop the country into an agricultural power were laid.

¹² According to EMBRAPA the United States produced 119,518 million of tons, only 2,522 millions of tons more than Brazil.

The role of the agricultural economy in Brazil began to shift with its approximation and amalgamation to the industrial economy, a process supported by the government's agricultural policies (DELGADO, 2001, p. 164). This tendency had as a significant consequence: the further economic exclusion of small land owners and peasants, as Calixto Teixeira indicates (2005, p.28)

The framework which is formed in the Brazilian countryside is a land structure that is highly focused on the concentration of land in the hands of a minority, with a production focused on exports and/or to serve as raw material for industry, with an increasing decrease in food production for the internal market and the marginalization of small rural producers.

The marginalization of small rural producers had a great impact on the next issue that will be analyzed by this study, the Brazilian rural exodus.

2.2. Rural Exodus

The massive transformations in rural Brazil could not occur without great effect on Brazilian society at large. As the relationships in the countryside shifted, the rural-urban relations were also impacted. Between 1950 and 1970 rural population began to decrease in significant numbers while the urban population grew. In 1950, the Brazilian population residing in rural areas grew 1.6%, while the population in urban areas grew 3.91%. By 1970, rural population increased only 0.57% while the urban population grew 5.22% (IBGE). From 1980 until 2019, the rural population has had a negative growth. Even though from 1980, the urban population started to increase at a slower rate as a reflection of the decrease in the country's birth rate.

According to Gonçalves Neto (1997, p. 109):

Along with the forced transference of populations to urban areas, promoted by a broad set of factors, such as mechanization, substitution of intensive labor crops for livestock¹³, the closure of the frontier, the application of the labor legislation in rural areas, or simply the use of violence. There was also a reformulation in the work relations for those who remained on the rural properties, with the elimination of partnerships and tenancy. These were substituted for paid labor, particularly on larger properties, that were modernized and transformed in corporations. For small properties the last resort was the possibility of subordination to the industrial capital,

¹³ This is closely related to the needs of the infant agribusiness which will shape how food is produced and what is available for consumption in Brazil.

marginalization, division of the land or the sale of the property and migration to urban centers.

Rural migration to urban areas in Brazil is related to the expulsion of peasants and further land concentration. As Gonçalves Neto (1997) mentions on the quote above, there are varied forms of expulsion, from coercive ones, to ones that may feel more like attractive forces than repulsive ones, that might be the increase in opportunity big cities promise in face of rural areas. Jodenir Calixto Teixeira (2005, p. 29) articulates this dynamic of expulsion:

Workers who are "expelled" from the field form an immense mass of landless people, who gradually move to urban areas or other regions, especially to the border areas of agricultural expansion. Incentives for migration to these areas in the north [north of the Midwest] of Brazil are immense, constituting the famous "march to the west". Part of the workers remaining in the city form a group of workers, the so-called "*bóias-frias*"¹⁴, who sell their labour in the countryside, but reside in the cities.

The numbers of the most acute migration movement are staggering. They offer some insight on the impossibility of urban centers to adapt fast enough in such a short period of time, to accommodate the increasing number of additional residents. Between 1970 and 1980, 30% of the rural population moved to urban areas (ALVEZ, SOUZA e MARRA, 2011, p.81). Those new residents either joined family, who had moved to the city before them, and were able to build a life in the suburbs, slums or favelas. Others showed up in the cities without any contacts or money, ending up in makeshift shacks in the favelas, the only place where they could find shelter.

Despite being the smallest of the five Brazilian regions, the Southeast, which is the geographical region where the city of Rio de Janeiro is located, is the most industrialized. The state of São Paulo is the industrial hub and the city of São Paulo is Brazil's financial centre. Rio does not account for the same volume of industries or financial relevance as São Paulo does, but it was the capital of Brazil from 1863 to 1961. For this reason, it was also a center of political power and until today harbors many core federal institutions which were not moved to the new capital, Brasília.

¹⁴ The name *bóia-fria* which in a literal translation means "cold-packed lunch" is related to the way those workers feed themselves. As they leave in small and medium cities surrounding the rural area they must wake up and pack their lunches at dawn, so they can be picked up by the trucks which will take them to the fields. By lunch time, their food is cold, hence the name.

As the most developed region of the country, the Southeast is the area that emanates the greatest power of attraction for migrants. The promise of a better life attracts people from rural Southeast. “In the 1960s and 1970s, the Southeast lost 43.2% of its rural population and, in the 1970-1980, 40.3%” (ALVEZ, SOUZA e MARRA, 2011, p.82). The region also draws migrants from other parts of the country, particularly from the North and the Northeast, the two most impoverished regions. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization for the United Nations (FAO), in 2017, only 13,8% of the Brazilian population remained in rural areas.

The 2017 Agricultural Census data related to the Midwest region sheds light on one of the aspects of agribusiness. It tends to attract less workers that live in small- and medium-sized cities, not in rural areas. Because the agribusiness is technology intensive not labor intensive it attracts a small number of high skilled workers not peasants. The latter are usually pushed out of the region by the expansion of highly productive single-crop farms. The Agricultural Census shows that the Midwest, despite being the largest agricultural producer in the country, has the lowest number of rural workers of the five main Brazilian regions. The Midwest has only 346.261 agricultural workers, in contrast with the poor Northeast that has 2.303.268 people working in agriculture.

Given that agribusiness tend to spread throughout the remaining land, more peasants and rural workers migrate to the cities. From “2000 to 2015, 5,6 million Brazilians left rural areas, which amounts to 17.6% of the existing rural population in 2000” (ALVEZ, SOUZA e MARRA, 2011, p.81). The capitalist market solution is to force those who are marginalized by the expansion of the agribusiness to migrate by sheer economic necessity.

2.3. Agroindustry and food

The agroindustry complex is the force behind the huge effort the Brazilian government puts towards the modernization of the country in the second half of the 20th Century. This force is mainly aimed at placing Brazil, once again, as a relevant agricultural exporter in an attempt to balance the country’s trade balance. “All the change that occurred in the agricultural production process in Brazil, in the period after 1960, in the sense of modernization and restructuring of the countryside is related to the formation of the so-called Agroindustry Complex” (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p.32).

The formation of the agroindustrial complex meant the approximation and sometimes fusion of both the agricultural sector and the industrial sector creating a highly interdependent dynamic. The shift from labor-intensive crops to extensive livestock production and also towards energy-dense grain crops is a characteristic that favours the processing industry. “Agroindustries grew as product processors of agricultural primary products and modernized, becoming more demanding” (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p. 32). Processing primary products meant producing goods with higher value. The addition of value puts Brazil in a position above that of a mere raw-commodity exporter. This improvement translated into higher profits for the industry. The issue is that higher value-added production started to create an emphasis on a small number of highly profitable commodities.

As mentioned above, one of the ways in which agriculture expanded was by transforming labor-intensive crops into areas to produce livestock. Food production for humans was switched into feed production for livestock. Brazil was thus being developed not necessarily to supply food for its people but to enrich commodity exporters and to feed cattle: there are now more cows in Brazil (Agência Brasil, 2016) than people (IBGE, 2018). In a short span of time, the increase of one of the biggest Brazilian agroindustry exports is impressive. On the first trimester of 1997 Brazil slaughtered 3,510,085 bovines. On the first trimester of 2018, this number more than doubled reaching 8,279,055 animals.

According to the U.S Department of Agriculture (2018), only in 2018 Brazil exported 665 tons of meat more than the United States. And it has been the biggest exporter in the world since 2017. Nevertheless, in total of production, in 2018, the United States produced 2,386 tons more than Brazil. This difference is related to meat consumption and exports in each country. While in the United States, in 2018, 12,206 tons of meat were consumed, in Brazil the consumption in the same year dropped to 7,850 as the country exports most of its production.

This is due to the relation between class and meat consumption in Brazil. Data from the IBGE’s Analysis of Personal Food Consumption in Brazil from 2008-2009¹⁵ shows that low income households (income under CAD\$105 per month) consume 54.7 grams/per day of bovine meet. In contrast, those with income above CAD\$202 to

¹⁵ The research was delayed in three years due to financial difficulties. Data from the 2017-2018 is not available yet.

CAD\$385 per month consume 70.9 grams per day. The words of one of my interviewees is illustrative of this reality. The quote is from a Gramacho resident¹⁶, one of the poorest areas on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro:

I buy always what we eat every day. Rice, beans, these things. Sometimes we can't buy the mix (meat)¹⁷. I don't buy meat and legumes, so I can buy what is needed more for the house. Rice, beans, pasta, sugar. [sighs] it's really hard. Usually for us here meat are eggs, which are cheaper. Real meat, is really really difficult. Sometimes two or three months goes by without [real meat].

This reality is the extreme opposite of high-income households where meat consumption drops drastically but this decrease is related to health and aesthetical concerns. The same IBGE analysis show that families with income above CAD\$385 per month consume 63 grams per capita of meat per day, only 8.3 grams more than the lowest income group. The different patterns of consumption will be further explored when the data collected for this research is analysed. This deliberate digression was done to illustrate how the described agricultural developments directly impact the population.

2.4. From Agroindustry to agribusiness

The national modernization patterns began to happen towards the end of the authoritarian period, in the 1980s, with the gradual political opening and economic changes implemented as a result of the deep economic crisis. Brazil started to move in the direction of a more liberal economic approach while maintaining its conservatism regarding politics and social issues. The new neoliberal model would be achieved only a decade later in the 1990s. Guilherme C. Delgado (2001, p. 166) illustrates the deep socio-political shifts happening in the period:

In the two decades that separate us from the "golden age" of our conservative modernization, we had a new change of direction in the agrarian debate with return of the agrarian issue to the center of the political and economic debate after the end of the military regime; and the inauguration of the new social-political order with the 1988 Constitution, under tension from the new world order, of liberal-economic character.

¹⁶ Interview # 03.

¹⁷ Low income interviewees will often refer to the mix of rice, beans and meat as mix. This represents a proper full meal.

The new political framework encompasses the end of a dictatorial regime and its elitist political agrarian project, a political scenario with a brand-new Constitution guaranteeing civil liberties, and a chaotic economy.

This study does not aim to address all the questions about agrarian reform. My more modest goal was to discuss the rural exodus as it is closely related to the formation of the geographical areas it focuses on. Furthermore, rural migration is deeply linked to food production, whether it is focused primarily on the domestic or the export market. It can be mentioned as a conclusion of the migration process that, despite the 1988 Citizen's Constitutional aims to address the agrarian issue it fell short of its ideals. Industrial stagnation, low external demand, widespread unemployment would deepen the agrarian issue (DELGADO, 2001, p. 167). The literature that examines this process has a tendency to be sceptical regarding the real possibilities of agrarian reform in a context of great economic distress and the continuation of conservative powers, despite the advancements of political liberties (DELGADO, 2001; ALVEZ, SOUZA e MARRA, 2011).

Although it is impossible to know how the Brazilian agriculture would be configured if agrarian reform was achieved, we know the framework that prevailed. "The formation of the Agroindustry Complex involved the internalization of the machine, equipment and supplies industry and the expansion of the agroindustry system which was made possible by state policies" (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p.33). The new Agribusiness model would therefore involve the advancement of monopoly capital and the Brazilian insertion in the world of big agro-exporting.

2.5. The Brazilian Agribusiness

The definition of Agribusiness goes beyond the mere production of agricultural goods: it involves many sectors of the economy and is linked to what happens worldwide. According to the Brazilian Institute for Applied Economic Research (Ipea, 2006, p. 8):

The Agribusiness is seen as the productive chain that involves the production of inputs, production on agricultural establishments and its transformation, to its consumption. This string incorporates all support services: research and technical assistance, processing, transport, marketing, credit, export, port services, dealers, stock exchange, industrialization and the final consumer. The added value of the agroindustry complex passes, necessarily, through five markets: that of

supplies; production; processing; distribution; and that of the final consumer.

The mentioned system of production is rooted in the logic of the business system, in which agriculture is incorporated by the logic of the industrial process (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p.89). This new system changes completely the intentions of how food is produced and the relationship between the producer and the consumer. The industrial integration described by Ipea in the previous quote relates to the “congregation of broad organizational strategies to seek profit maximization” (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p.89) internalized by the Brazilian agribusiness.

It is relevant to be attentive to the market logic here. Despite the economic benefits the Agribusiness brings to Brazil, as in any country, its main goal is to generate profit not necessarily to further the develop the country. When agricultural production becomes dominated by powerful corporations disconnected from the needs of the population, this tendency becomes concerning to the country’s food security. In Brazil “between 60 and 70% of a families’ purchases are produced by ten large companies, among them Unilever, Nestlé, Procter & Gamble, Kraft and Coca-Cola” (SANTOS, GLASS, 2018, p. 30). This number gives an insight on where the power lies when considering what the population is eating. It becomes hard to argue that the consumers have much power of choice over what is provided to them as food.

According to G. Barros and M. Moraes (2002 apud SOUZA, 2009, p. 155):

In Brazil, throughout the 1990s, the deregulation of the economy and the imposition of a new competitive reality submitted the agricultural sector to a new dynamic, from which emerges the speed of incorporation and expansion of land use; the adoption of practices that promote the exhaustion of productive subjects, greater exploitation of labor, resulting in increased productivity.

The pattern mentioned above puts new pressure on the land concentration process this study has been discussing from the 19th Century. “Land concentration, which is shaped by a lack of taxation on land, illegal private encroachment on public lands (vacant lands and secured lands), and the absence of official data on the actual situation of rural estates, can be seen as an important feature of the Brazilian countryside” (LEITE, SAUER, 2012, p. 875). In a neoliberal market, land concentration gained extra tension

from powerful multinational companies and foreign investment: this is directly linked to more concentration of production and wealth (ALVEZ, SOUZA e MARRA, 2011, p. 86).

To some extent, Brazil's GDP growth achieved in the beginning of the 2000s, allowed conservative sectors to accept some policies aimed at distributing a small part of the new wealth that was being created, through cash transfers and investments in programs that allow the lower classes to get a higher education. Nevertheless, resource concentration remains high and in the countryside this scenario is even more concerning. In a briefing from 2016, Oxfam Brasil points out that less than 1% of the agricultural properties owns almost 50% of the agrarian land in Brazil. We have a high concentration of wealth, income and power in the hands of a few businessmen to the detriment of the wellbeing of small land-owners. On top of that, there is the huge gender disparity. According to IBGE (2006)¹⁸, 87,32% of the rural establishments are owned by men. Gender issues on food production and consumption will be further discussed in chapter 5.

The changes in the agricultural system undoubtedly benefited the Brazilian economy. But the contemporary scenario indicates those benefits were not shared equally among the population. Although large grain crops might have been useful to feed a growing urban population in the middle of the twentieth century, by 2019 agricultural production does not reach Brazilian tables in a healthy manner. For the average Brazilian, the transformation of agriculture into Agroindustry meant the shift from the consumption of foods to the consumption of food products. On the next section, I will discuss the implication that these transformations have had on small-producers.

2.6. Family-Farms

The concept of family farms in Brazil includes different agricultural systems: indigenous agriculture, quilombola¹⁹ agriculture, riverside agriculture and peasant

¹⁸ Data from the 2017 Agricultural Census is still being processed, until the present moment only data from 2006 census is widely available.

¹⁹ *Quilombos* were a place of refuge for enslaved populations who were able to escape forced labor and liberated slaves. Their social dynamics goes much further than that, being an effervescent space for African culture, agriculture and trade. In 2003, president Lula signed a decree to finally begin the "identification, recognition, delimitation, demarcation and titling of definitive ownership of lands occupied by remnants of quilombo communities" (Decree n 4.887). Since 2017, there have been no demarcations of *quilombola* or indigenous land, however. This

agriculture. According to preliminary results from the 2017 Agro Census, 70% of the agricultural establishments have between 1 and 50 hectares. Despite having 350 million hectares of planted area, an increase of 5% from the previous 2006 Census, the number of workers decreased 9.2% in the same period.

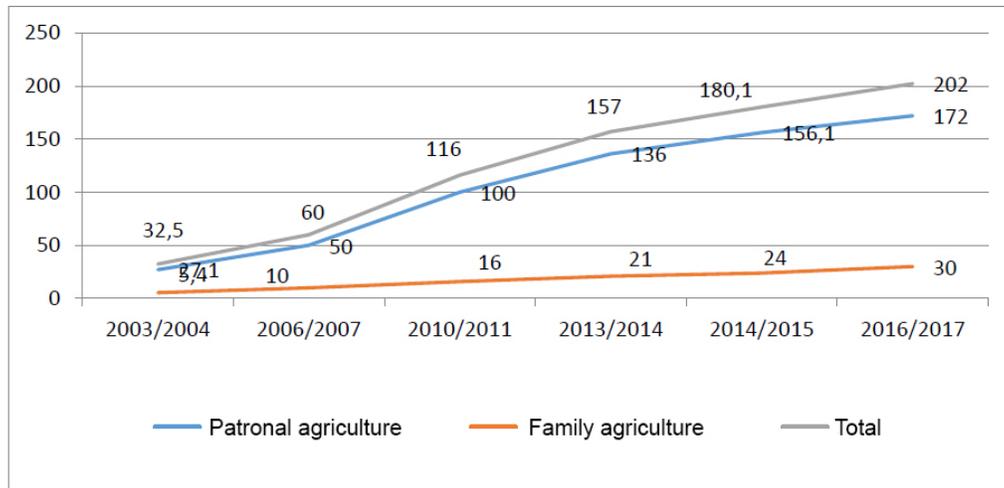
Table 1. Number of agricultural establishments and workers by type of worker (preliminary results 2017)

Number of agricultural establishments and workers by type of worker - preliminary results 2017			
Variable - Number of agricultural establishments (units)			
	Year x Type of worker		
	2017		
	Total	Workers with kinship ties with the producer	Workers without kinship ties with the producer
Brazil	5043186	5,028,392	1,104,321
Source: IBGE - Agricultural Census			

The numbers above provide some understanding over the labour divisions in the Brazilian agricultural system. The overwhelmingly higher number of workers who share familial ties with the producers demonstrate the relevance of family production in a country obsessed with its flourishing Agribusiness. Taking into consideration that many of those workers working for family members are not necessarily part of the small producer group or that there are families out of the small farm type of establishment; the numbers still point towards a prevalence of familial labor mainly in small properties. Despite this

communities still make up a significant portion of what is considered in Brazil family-farming. http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/decreto/2003/d4887.htm

importance, there is no balance between State incentives for Agribusiness and for family-farms.



Graph of the evolution of rural credit for family agriculture and Patronal agriculture from 2003 to 2016 in Reais Billion.
Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock apud PAULA, GÓMEZ, TRACZ, 2017, p. 64.

Figure 2. Graph of the evolution of rural credit for family agriculture and Patronal agriculture²⁰ from 2003 to 2016 in Billion Reais

Although the government has revised its understanding about what family-farms are, small producers still receive inadequate governmental investment. For a long period of time, family-farm agriculture in Brazil was understood as subsistence agriculture. This production sector was a supporting activity to the main monoculture system (MATTEI, 2014, p.2). The exporting sector remained a priority throughout Brazilian history, as Lauro Mattei describes (2014, p. 84):

Initially located in disadvantaged regions (dry northeastern areas) this activity establishes an initial rural development pattern in a dichotomy that runs through the whole historical trajectory of the country: large areas of concentrated fertile land growing products for export next to an immense amount of rural workers with little land, under harsh climate conditions, abandoned by the public administration.

The scenario portrayed above did not change much during the agrarian modernization in the 1960s and 1970s. However, a shift in the governmental approach

²⁰ Patronal agriculture encompasses all work relations where workers do not have kinship ties with the producer.

regarding family-farmers is related to the re-democratization process which started in the late 1980s. This development involved the decentralization of governmental actions along with increasing intervention of social actors.

In 1991, some of the rural workers' demands were met by the Agricultural Law (Law 8171, from 1991). It recognized the diversity of the family-farm workers and created an original agricultural policy designed for the family-farm system. "However, these achievements did not satisfy the claims of the rural workers, with the prevalence of ideas, interests and the power of patronal agriculture employed in the construction of public policy. Not a coincidence, the Agricultural Law institutionalized, to a large extent, the interests of the large producers" (GRISA, SCHNEIDER, 2015, 130). Even though the policies were designed to meet the needs of the family-farmers, the power of the large land owners was sufficient to shift the dynamic to benefit mainly themselves. But at least, for the first time, small farmers were gaining some rights and empowering its social fight. According to Lauro Mattei (2014, p. 86):

It is in this context that in the last two decades (1990s and 2000s) public policies aimed at combating poverty and the promotion of rural development, as well as those policies that interface with the rural world, had strong momentum. With this, the instruments of public policy aimed at the wide family farming public have gained space on the government agenda, especially during the Lula Government (2003-2010).

As pointed out by Lauro Mattei, the centrality of family-farmers on public policies grew in the decades after re-democratization. The strategy of those policies was improved with time and the changes in the political scenario. According to Catia Grisa and Sergio Schneider (2015, p. 128), the first generation of public policies, which preceded the liberalization of the economy, were based on the construction of an agrarian and agricultural framework. By the end of the 1990s, those policies were aimed at the construction of a social and welfare framework. It is only in 1996, with the Family Agriculture Strengthening Program (PRONAF), that some of the demands from the small producers were substantially met by the Brazilian government. The "PRONAF constituted the main family-farm agricultural policy (in numbers of beneficiaries, national reach and applied resources)" (GRISA, SCHNEIDER, 2015, 132). The program will be discussed in more detail, later in this chapter, with the increment of public policies directed to family farmers in the early 2000s.

2.6.1. Flirting with Agribusiness

Family farming does not exist in a void apart from the agribusiness system, as it is integrated with the Agribusiness productive chains. Family-farming is a heterogenous segment, with many subdivisions. Although not all producers have enough capital to be part of the Agribusiness chain, the ones who can develop a modern agriculture, in a business framework, with production scale are able to gain part of the profits generated by the many chains of agribusiness (GUANJOLI, BUAINAIN, SABBATO, 2012, p. 357).

The consequence of being part of the food system is that capitalized family-farmers able to join agribusiness will move away from planting foods to produce commodities such as soy beans, wheat, livestock and sugar cane. This leaves the great mass of uncanceled producers to grow food (GUANJOLI, BUAINAIN, SABBATO, 2012, p. 358). The issue with the production of commodities by family-farmers is linked to land concentration that also exists in this sector. According to the 2006 Agricultural Census (IBGE), 17% of the family-farmers concentrate 63% of the land of this group, making them the owners of the largest amount of land, which translates into capital capacity. As stated before, it is left to the remaining family-farmers to feed the population with non-commodity foods. It is not a coincidence that the low-income populations analyzed in this research have their diet based on grains, sugar, meat and processed foods. All these products are characteristic of agribusiness.

This market dynamic brings out two main issues for food consumption in Brazil. First, the Agribusiness' businessmen possess the decision-making power over much of what is produced in the country, as much of the production is concentrated on their hands. "This decision-making power is intrinsically linked to the food consumption patterns of the Brazilian population" (ALVES, SOUZA, MARRA, 2011, p. 86). As a result, the agricultural system puts in the hands of huge private corporations the control over the country's food security. Second, it harms small family-farmers as "the producers of raw foods receive only a fraction of the price that consumers pay at the supermarket" (NESTLE, 2003, p. 17). This confines the smaller family-farmers to a dynamic of continued social assistance dependency with "repercussions for rural development under a logic that is not of the productive inclusion or the labor market stimulation" (GRISA, SCHNEIDER, 2015, 137). Small producers remain in a dependent position. Unless they join the Agribusiness chain, they will not be competitive enough inside the food market. To scape the Agribusiness

logic of commodity crops and profit, small farmers need governmental support. This support would enable them to join the labor market in a competitive position while remaining in their own productive logic of multiple crops oriented towards feeding the local population with more variety.

Although being part of agribusiness can be, to some extent, financially beneficial for those farmers who are capitalised enough and decide to join the large producers as suppliers, it is still a decision linked to financial security and long-term survival. Despite being more capitalized than other small producers, regarding the food industry, they remain unable to compete with the agricultural corporations on their own. So “the peasants begin to produce commodities in order not to run the risk of incurring in debt because of some problem related to the property or caused by unexpected climatic events, entering the agribusiness, leaving the farmers totally subordinated to it” (PAULA, GÓMEZ, TRAZ, 2017, p.70). The commodity production system entails larger amounts of invested money, which can lead the family-farmer to debt due to market price oscillations. Debt followed by defaults many times leaves the family-farmer without other choice but to sell part of their property (PAULA, GÓMEZ, TRAZ, 2017, p.69). This logic will result in more land concentration as the capitalized owners will often acquire the land. This dynamic is responsible for creating great anxiety and finally expelling the remaining family-farmers from their land.

2.6.2. Living off public policies

For those without the capacity or will to join the Agribusiness, considering the way the food system is designed, there are not many survival strategies other than relying on governmental assistance. Despite the discrepancies in support received by agribusiness and family-farmers, since re-democratization there have been a number of successful policies directed at the most impoverished rural workers, which will be discussed in the present section. But there is also wide criticism in the literature regarding the actual success of those public policies (GUANJIOLI, BUAINAIN, SABBATO, 2012; BEZERRA, SERGIO, 2012). According to Adriano de Paula, Jorge Gómez and Caroline Traz (2017, p. 58):

Several public policies have been developed in recent years with the objective of strengthening peasant agriculture, such as: the Program for the Strengthening of Agriculture Family (PRONAF) which gained resources

and was modified, the National School Feeding Program (PNAE) that became a public policy and the Program for the Acquisition of Food (PAA) that was inserted within the policies to combat poverty. Officially, all those transformations were designed to guarantee rural survival. Nevertheless, in practice, it was verified that none of them has effectively guaranteed its promises and in some cases they accelerated the expropriation process.

Notwithstanding the problems and need for adjustment that accompanies any ground-breaking public policy, these public initiatives were responsible for great advancements regarding poverty levels in Brazil, to such an extent that in 2014 Brazil left the United Nation's Hunger Map. Unfortunately, in response to inquiries made by Brazilian journalists (UOL, 2017), José Graziano da Silva, director-general of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, exhibited worry over the possibility of hunger becoming again one of the chronic and structural issues for Brazil due to the economic crisis that returned in 2014.

In the following paragraphs I will briefly present the main public policies aimed at both combating poverty in rural areas and feeding the Brazilian population. It is necessary to indicate that all those policies are included in a framework of several programs against poverty created since the Cardoso administration (1995-2003) and expanded by the Lula government (2003-2011).

Poverty reduction in rural areas is linked to the "creation, expansion and social legitimation of the Bolsa Família Program and of a net of social protection and promotion, in which the Rural Social Security Program stands out" (MATTEI, 2014, p. 87). To some extent, before the creation and or strengthening of programs such as PRONAF, PAA and PNAE, the logic behind financial assistance to family-farmers did not include generating productive inclusion. "In this agriculture-centered perspective, much of family agriculture - or 'small-scale' production - should be the subject of social policies and other policies that increase the possibilities of non-farm income, targeting agricultural policies only for the economically structured agribusiness" (GRISA, SCHNEIDER, 2015, p.137). Catia Grisa and Sergio Schneider (2015) defined the development of the productive inclusive policies as the "third generation of public policies", focused on the construction of markets for food security and environmental sustainability. This is a new direction for public policies that go beyond the satisfaction of the Agribusiness needs and are more linked to the population's needs and the enhancement of the productive capabilities of small peasants.

As mentioned before, the Family Agriculture Strengthening Program (PRONAF), regarding rural production, is the most relevant public policy for family-farmers. According to the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES), which provides the funds for the program, PRONAF's mission is financing the implantation, extension or modernization of the production structure, processing, industrialization and services in the rural establishment or in nearby rural community areas, aiming to generate income and to improve the use of family labour. "It does not seem exaggerated to affirm that PRONAF has become a fundamental tool, for the discussion of rural development in the country, as its meaning for the definition of strategies of social reproduction of family-farmers is absolutely fundamental" (MATTEI, 2015, p. 87). But critics who consider the Lula administration "neodevelopmentalist" see PRONAF as part of the "monocultural logic encouraged by the Agribusiness, which decreases food supply" (PAULA, GOMÉZ, TRACZ, 2017, p. 61). As discussed before, sometimes joining Agribusiness is the only option for the family-farmer. This becomes more complicated when considering the distribution of funds throughout the country.

The distribution of funds from public policies has been historically unequal from North to South. Regardless of being one of the poorest regions and hosting the largest amount of small rural producers, 50% of the national total, the Northeast receives only 4% of the funds of PRONAF, while 73% of the funds are destined to the South of Brazil (PAULA, GOMÉZ, TRACZ, 2017, p. 66). Farmers who do not grow commodity crops also have issues accessing PRONAF funds, reinforcing the agribusiness logic.

According to Adriano de Paula, Jorge Gómez and Caroline Tracz (2017, p. 62):

Having a specific plan was a gain for these subjects in the sense of being inserted in the objectives of the State, gaining visibility. However, the contradictions that materialize when these policies such as PRONAF come to them, not bringing about changes that really strengthen them (...) has made farmers vulnerable to market oscillations, capitalist enterprises, debt, further excluding poor peasants from politics by the bureaucracies that are imposed upon them.

In comprehending the bureaucracy producers must navigate in order to have access to PRONAF it should not come as a surprise that the more capitalized producers will be a step ahead. They tend to be more educated and have access to technical assistance and agricultural policies in general (GUANJOLI, BUAINAIN, SABBATO, 2012, p. 368). Unfortunately, PRONAF was unable to fully accomplish its intent. On the contrary,

it seems to have made some discrepancies more severe by strengthening producers who were already more capitalized.

The second public policy which will be discussed is the Program for the Acquisition of Food (PAA). The PAA has two basic goals: to stimulate family-farming and to promote access to food. Brazilian cities, supported by the federal government, purchase from family-farmers the food which will be distributed for use in the municipal institutions, such as schools and hospitals and food security programs. It allows family-farmers to sell their production to the government without having to refer to the bureaucracy of governmental biddings, which tends to benefit larger, more competitive sellers. It is considered as a food-safety policy tool (BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER, 2012, p. 46).

Yet again, the PAA also suffers from pressures from agribusiness. Municipal governments suffer great pressure from companies already structured in the market for them to supply the foods to the detriment of family farmers. Those pressures come in two ways, either by decreasing the prices under market value or guaranteeing an assumed quality standard (PAULA, GÓMEZ, TRACZ, 2017, p.75; BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER, 2012, p.54). There is also the high probability of corruption, an endemic problem in Brazil.

Since the mid-2000s, some of the cities gave up on the PAA, for example, some from the states of Sergipe and São Paulo (SCHMITZ, MOTA, SOUSA, 2016). Congressman Nilto Tatto pointed out in a 2018 lecture (Semiário Fru.to) that, in the city of São Paulo, the PAA generated 5 million Reais for the producers distributing food to the city's schools and hospitals. But the program is not part of the São Paulo municipal government's budget for 2019. This is not only a problem for the family-farmers who lose part of the governmental support. It also affects the community which was able to consume healthier foods as many of those producers are non-certified organic farmers (PAULA, GOMEZ, TRACZ, 2017, p.76). Additionally, "the circulation both in production and in the consumption of food in the local scope, potentializes and/or facilitates other social relations that go beyond the simple resistance to the process of disconnection from the agri-food system" (BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER, 2012, p. 44). By buying locally, the population gets closer to the farmer and might be able to reconnect to the places where their food is grown.

Changes on the PAA directly affect the next public policy this study will discuss: the National School Feeding Program (PNAE). Since 2009, at least 30% of the items purchased by governments through the program must come from family-farmers (BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER, 2012, p. 53; PAULA, GOMEZ, TRACZ, 2017, p. 61). In addition to providing foods at public schools and day cares, the PNAE promotes actions for nutritional education of its students. The funds are passed on from the Federal Government directly to the municipal administrations showing how food acquisition by governments is intrinsically linked to the quality of food that low-income families consume.

Finally, the last public policy to be outlined is the National Policy on Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (Pnater). This program and the issues it tried to tackle have a direct influence on the small-producer's ability to insert themselves in the food chain as a competitive player. Consequently, their technical development will be a good indicator of whether and how their produce will reach the consumer. José Gilberto de Souza (2009, p. 158) understands the productive logic of the family-farmer as distinct from the capitalist one, as follows:

The peasant model stands in a diametrically opposed direction since its technological base is founded on a model of life that understands the dimension of work and production as one. Its production approach respects the limits of the environment, inducing new models of control, intervention and appropriation of nature.

Different from other forms of market insertion, the Pnater contemplates the peasant logic as a viable one and has its basis on sustainability principles, considering diversity among family-farmers and their activities. But it is undeniable that "in recent years, there has been an ample movement to restructure the agribusiness world, mainly on technological impacts in different areas, with the constant search for competitiveness" (VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p. 90). And family-farmers must work in this market driven spectrum.

The modernization of agriculture, that increased land concentration as discussed above, is the main cause of concentration of production (ALVEZ, SOUZA, MARRA, 2011, p. 86) and as a consequence concentration of income and wealth. Additionally, new technologies are used as production control strategies through the dependency of family-farmers, which puts both diversity and food security at risk (SOUZA, 2009, p. 158). The continuous search for modernizing systems demanded by the market is damaging

ancestral knowledge related to food production, leaving modern production restricted to very few crops. Those crops are transformed into food products high in calories and low in nutrients contributing to the ongoing obesity crises (CAROSELLA, 2018).

As the “current productive model is linked to important health risk factors and [poor] quality of food” (BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER, 2012, 39) it becomes imperative that family-farming and its links to organic agriculture and ancestral production systems, that have the respect of the environments on its core, are celebrated and supported. But there are still low incentives for family-farmers to stay away from conventional agriculture. They are aware that food produced from conventional agriculture is contaminated by agrochemicals and many would prefer to work in an agroecological system (BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER, 2012, p. 51) but, as previously discussed, the agribusiness market is tempting for those small producers capable to join it.

This section analysed the formation of family-farming in Brazil and its interaction with the dominant agribusiness market. It focused on issues that are directly related to and affected food consumption. It was necessary to discuss public policies in this section as this is the sector with the greatest need for government support and because these are the public policies more intertwined with food consumption. On the next chapter I will discuss other policies. This time economic ones that impacted the country’s food supply and consumption.

Chapter 3.

The Brazilian path to Neoliberalism

Food consumption pattern change in Brazil is intrinsically linked to the shifts in the country's economy. The latter has impacted both food demand and the supply. As to demand, whenever the income or purchasing power increased, new kinds and more elaborated foods were demanded by the population. For the supply, when import barriers were lifted or the exchange rate was favorable to imports, new food products entered the Brazilian market.

The most significant shifts for the Brazilian economy since the 1980s were the introduction of neoliberalism and the 1994 stabilization plan, the *Plano Real*. Neoliberal changes began to take place during General Figueiredo's (1979-1985) and José Sarney's (1985-1990) administrations. But the changes became significantly more acute with the first elected president of the new democratic period, Fernando Collor de Mello, who took office in 1990²¹.

3.1. The implementation of neoliberal policies

The Collor administration put in place several neoliberal policies in order to open the country's economy. "In Latin America the so-called neoliberal ideology found its most finished expression and systematization in the meeting held in November 1989 in the United States capital, known as the Washington Consensus" (GENMARI, 2002, p. 32). As many of its neighbours, Brazil tried to comply with the "one fits all" economic recipe of the Washington Consensus, more widely known as neoliberalism. This led to an effort to implement some basic solutions prescribed by the Bretton Woods institutions to try to achieve economic stability. For Brazil this new economic model meant "a process of transnationalization of the great national economic groups and their strengthening inside the dominant block, besides expressing the financial fragility of the State and the growing subordination of the Brazilian economy to the flows of capital" (FIGUEIRAS, 2006, p. 183)

²¹ Fernando Collor was impeached in 1992 after corruption allegations.

The original list of neoliberal reforms, created by John Williamson, is constituted by 10 points: fiscal discipline, re-ordering public expenditures priorities, tax reform, liberalizing interest rates, competitive exchange rate, trade liberalization, liberalization of inward foreign direct investment, privatization, deregulation and, finally, strengthening of property rights (WILLIAMSON, 2004, p.17). According to Williamson (2004, p.14), the concept behind the Washington Consensus was to “examine the extent to which the old ideas of development economics that had governed Latin American economic policy since the 1950s were being swept aside by the set of ideas that had long been accepted as appropriate within the OECD”. At the time, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), did not include any of the Latin American countries (whose futures were being decided in Washington) as members. Even today, Chile, an early adaptor of neoliberalism, and Mexico are the only OECD members in Latin America.

Williamson’s list was not fully implemented in Brazil or in many other developing countries. There is no consensus among economists if the partial implementation of those policies were the cause of the continuous economic despair. But, once again, the weight of lack of success was put solely on the behaviour of developing countries disregarding systemic implications. As expressed by Pedro Malan, the Brazilian Finance Minister from 1995-2003 (1991, p. 7):

the failure of development programs has become synonymous with the failure of the public sector to adopt efficient, healthy and appropriate policies which could have ensured its ability to attain, in the future, the levels of economic and social development characteristic of more advanced societies. The self-incriminating and protective paternalistic visions reinforce each other, in a depressing vicious circle that could only be broken by the Latin Americans themselves.

In the 1990s the main governmental objective in implementing stabilization policies was to fight the increasing inflation rates that resulted from economic issues inherited from the decade before. Given the focus of this thesis, I will concentrate on the neoliberal policy aspects that have had an impact on the food consumption patterns of the population.

Brazil’s definitive entry into the realm of neoliberalism was kicked off by the new president, Fernando Collor de Mello. “After more than thirty years of absence of direct elections for the most important position of the Presidential Republic” (GENNARI, 2002, p.34), Collor was elected based on a campaign for the country’s modernization and the

persecution of corruption. He proclaimed himself the “maharajah hunter”. But his neoliberal ideas were not unanimous. According to David Macial (2011, p. 101) there was:

consensus in relation to the cut in the State expenses, including social rights, reduction of public employees, control of public deficit, and revision of social and labor rights guaranteed by the Constitution, and dissension on the issues of bank and trade liberalization, and the privatization of State-owned companies.

The first policy implemented by Collor to tackle the hyperinflation issue was the forced liquidity reduction which generated great social and political discontent. After the major failure of the *Plano Collor I*, in 1991, the *Plano Collor II* was implemented. The plan was “markedly orthodox, based on rising interest rates, restricting credit, cutting public spending, liberalizing the financial area, and renegotiating foreign debt, with the latter measures aimed at favoring capital inflows and improving relations with the international financial system” (MACIEL, 2011, p. 103).

In relation to food consumption, the most relevant change brought by the neoliberal economic model was the liberalization of trade. This opening impacted both the quality and quantity of the supply of national products and the new increasing supply of foreign goods. For national industrial and agricultural producers, trade liberalization meant great impact on competitiveness. Unsurprisingly it generated great controversy. According to Luiz Figueiras (2006, p. 185):

(...) the process of commercial opening - which reached quite differently the various branches of industrial and agro-industrial production – in particular, the dispute was around the pace and extent that the liberalization should take. This contradiction was expressed conjunctively as follows: the liberalization should be used as an instrument to combat inflation (as it actually occurred) or, alternatively, it should be constituted through an active industrial policy in an instrument of modernization and increase of competitiveness of the country's productive structure (as the majority of industrial entrepreneurs pleaded).

The reality at the time was that Brazilian goods lacked competitiveness and were about to enter an open market where many of its products would be unable to face imports at the same level of price and, particularly, quality. This discrepancy regarding competitiveness was fundamentally related to previous protective policies implemented in the decades before. Since the 1960 and more intensely in the 1980s, the Brazilian national industry had been protected by the government. Government intervention included

agricultural subsidies, minimum price guarantee, monitoring of agricultural prices, control of wheat trade, import allocation, among others (IPEA, 2004, p. 16).

Due to the historical power of the agricultural sector, as previously discussed, it was the industry that suffered most changes with the neoliberal policies. According to the Brazilian Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA, 2004, p. 16-17):

Reforms in foreign trade were made to further liberalize the Brazilian agricultural market. They began to be introduced as of 1987, when the government created standards for the opening of agricultural markets. However, most of the reforms were implemented in 1990 and 1991. On the last year, a schedule for the reduction of the average tariff for groups of agricultural products, inputs and equipment, was introduced. Creating the expectation of a reduction in tariffs from 32.2% to 14.2% over three years. (...) At the same time, reforms were implemented to speed up trade operations, the most significant ones occurred between 1991 and 1996. In 1991, legislation was introduced on compensatory measures to reduce the delay in the analysis of anti-dumping cases, eliminate export taxes and implement the quota system and prior export license. The elimination of this pre-existing licenses was extended to sugar and alcohol in 1992. Direct and indirect subsidies, with the exception of those in duty free zones and in the drawn-back system, were eliminated. The Merchandise and Services Tax (ICMS) was only withdrawn from exports in 1996 and represented, on average, 12% of the value added.

For consumers, the reforms mentioned above were responsible for bringing more diversity of products to the national market while forcing Brazilian producers to provide better quality goods to their buyers. Despite these meaningful changes on market dynamics, the differences felt by the consumers were more significant among higher income individuals who were not so affected by the still not overcome inflation, harsh job market and not yet improved economic conditions. For the rest of the population, the focus was reaching the dreamed stabilization. "The poor majority in Brazil wanted inflation to end, and quite rationally held this view with a ferocity not felt by those who were at least partially protected by their incorporation into the web of indexation and benefits available only to the formal sector workers" (ARMIJO, 2005, p. 2022). Without these benefits provided by the formal job market, a large portion of the population remained excluded from the advantages brought by the new policies.

3.2. The Plano Real

It is only in 1994 with the Plano Real that the economic changes reached a larger portion of the Brazilian population. With price stabilization, the trend towards a neoliberal eating pattern based on food commodities, industrialized foods, and the disconnection between the food and its rural product began to emerge. It would take almost another decade until the bonanza reached the lowest income families, but still, the food consumption pattern of the Brazilian population was changing significantly. “The foods that showed the greatest sales growth since 1994 were ready-to-eat preparations, dehydrated soups and instant noodles, demonstrating a strong tendency to choose more elaborate products” (AQUINO, PHILLIPI, 2002, p.656). This represents the movement of middle and high-income families towards eating habits similar to those existing in developed countries.

Since 1979 the Brazilian government had tried to implement twelve unsuccessful stabilization plans (BRESSER PEREIRA, 1994, p. 129), including the two *Planos Collor* mentioned above. Some of the plans were economically orthodox, some heterodox and others a mix of the two. It was only in 1994 with the *Plano Real* that hyperinflation was controlled, and the economy had a long-lasting positive result. There were some downturns, but the country has not returned to the economic chaos seen before 1994.

Before 1994, “the long history of inflation in Brazil reflects the existence of a struggle for shares among societal interests and a weak state, unable or unwilling to solve the collective action problem of sharing out the sacrifices necessary to balance the public budget” (ARMIJO, 2005, p. 2015). It is the redemocratization that allowed the implementation of policies to control hyperinflation. As mentioned before, the economic distress was felt more acutely by the low-income population who before the Civil Constitution of 1988 was largely excluded from the political process. With the introduction of mass democracy in Brazil, “the net political cost of stabilization finally came to be less than the net political costs of continuing inflation, though it took nearly a decade of political as well as economic learning for this fundamental shift to work its way through the system” (ARMIJO, 2005, p. 2021). Mass democratization eventually resulted in new economic policies.

The difference between *Plano Real* and the previously failed stabilization plans was related to political timing, economic position and the monetary international reserves that allowed the plan to defend itself against speculation and stick to its pre-defined exchange anchor²², and the transparency with which the plan was made public and implemented. The *Plano Real* allowed for a predictability that was non-existent in the earlier stabilization plans, that often were announced by the government on TV the night before the implementation without previous warning.

One of the main issues causing hyperinflation was the economic indexation that created a self-fulfilling prophecy of inflation increase. There was expectation that inflation would rise, so when trying to protect prices and salaries by indexing them, inflationary inertia²³ was created. Relying on a predictable, timed and slow adjustment, the Itamar Franco government²⁴ solved the indexation problem by coordinating relative prices in advance to a new system. As explained by Luiz Carlos Bresser Pereira (1994, p. 130) the plan:

Predicted the total indexation of the economy as a strategy of prior coordination of price increases, accompanied by a monetary reform, through which the economy was disindexed (...) there would be a transitory coexistence of the old currency and a new currency, which would be indexed to the inflation index and made constant in relation to the dollar.

The new currency mentioned above by Bresser Pereira was the URV (Real Unity of Value) which would later become extinct, in a predetermined day, and replaced by the new final currency, the real. The URV changed daily based on the rate of the dollar. By indexing the currency to the URV it was possible to eliminate the inflationary inertia. Another benefit of the URV was the transparent environment it formed. When doing simple tasks as grocery shopping, consumers would find a conversion table by the cashier and were able to calculate the final price. Very different from the previous changes in price

²² And later from 1995 to 1998 exchange bands.

²³ "The neo-structuralist theory of inertial inflation, which was developed between 1980 and 1983, was probably the most original contribution that Latin American thought and particularly Brazilian thought gave to macroeconomics" (BRESSER PEREIRA, 1994, p.129).

²⁴ Fernando Henrique Cardoso was the Finance Minister of the Itamar Franco administration and the face of the *Plano Real*. On the plan's success account he would be elected and re-elected for presidency after Itamar Franco's mandate.

demarcation that occurred several times a day causing customers to buy as much as possible at once to avoid going back to the stores and finding increased prices.

Together with the stabilization of the prices, the parity between the new currency, the real, and the dollar had immense impacts for the medium and high-income Brazilian consumers. With the idea of one for one, as it became commonly known the exchange parity of one Real for one dollar, Brazilian consumers were able to purchase a number of imported goods not available when the dollar was too expensive in relation to the national currency. Also, international travel became affordable for the medium-class who flocked to destinations like Disney World and New York. It was the American lifestyle entering the Brazilian reality. When Orson Wells visited Brazil in 1942, in the occasion of the Second World War, to advertise the American way of life and gain Brazilian hearts and minds, this idea was only a dream. With the neoliberal policies, the foreign modernity was now affordable for a section of the Brazilian population. The currency substitution process is detailed by Eliana Cardoso (2001, p. 151):

As the Cruzeiro Real and the URV suffered an almost equal devaluation in relation to the dollar, most prices and contracts were implicitly established in dollars. Finally, on July 1st, 1994, a new currency was launched, the Real²⁵, used to convert all the contracts expressed in URV to one by one. The Cruzeiro Real ceased to exist and was converted from CR \$ 2,750 to R\$ 1.

In addition to the two mentioned variables, inflation control and an anchored exchange rate, what changed the life of the Brazilian consumers and was responsible for the economic expansion was the real increase in salaries. “Between 1993 and 1995, several salary adjustments occurred (including increase of the minimum salary and the public service salaries). These gains in income were reflected in the boom in imports and the consumption of durable goods” (CARDOSO, 2001, p. 151). Joselis Moreira da Silva and Nilson Maciel de Paula (2003, p. 2) further explain the structural changes that took place and its relations to food consumption:

with the implementation of the Real Plan in 1994, there was a rapid acceleration of these structural changes in the eating habits of Brazilians. The abrupt fall in inflation and price stability have led to an increase in purchasing power, favoring the planning of intertemporal family consumption and making it possible to recompose the consumer’s food

²⁵ The real remains the Brazilian currency until the present, 2019. From 1942 to 1994 Brazil had eight currencies. Six of them in the period between 1967 and 1994.

baskets. A large contingent of consumers were incorporated into the market, while some segments of the population raised their consumption pattern, migrating to more sophisticated foods. Thus, there is the emergence of a more demanding and active consumer, reducing the chasm that separates us from the more developed countries.

The neoliberal policies of the Collor administration that liberalized trade followed by the stabilization and increase of purchasing power achieved by the Plano Real were the combination that allowed for the beginning of the sharp transformation in the Brazilian food consumption pattern. The population started to move away from staples such as rice and beans and started to consistently consume neoliberal food products. These consumption changes were also supported by a flourishing agricultural industry that was no longer “forced to operate in an environment of high and unstable inflation. Plano Real should be seen as a breaking point in the analysis of the potentialities of agriculture in Brazil” (IPEA, 2004, p.19).

Economic stability was beneficial for all industries able to adapt to the new competitive environment. As agriculture has always been a strong sector in the Brazilian economy, one of the outcomes that was reinforced by the Plano Real was the increase in the investment in cash crops. As discussed on the chapter on agriculture, the higher profits behind commodity-based cash crops are extremely attractive for the Brazilian producer. Also, there is significant, both direct and indirect, government support for the commodification of the national agriculture following a North American model. The result of this combination for the population is the increase in supply of commodity-based foods and the drastic decrease in the price of food (FARINA, NUNES, 2002, p.5). Despite its sudden increase, the demand for food was fulfilled by both the reduction of the idle industrial capacity and the increase in imports.

As a direct consequence of its productive expansion, Brazil's agroindustry food production reached 81% of its installed capacity in 1994, one of the highest levels ever since the end of the 1980s. In parallel with this increase in the domestic supply of foodstuffs, imports expanded in increasing volumes (SILVA, DE PAULA, 2003, p. 6).

During the stabilization period, “data on the increase in the consumption of processed foods were used as indicators of improvement in the quality of life of the population. Foods such as yogurt and chicken have become product ‘icons’ that have become accessible to the poorest layers of the population” (AQUINO, PHILIPPI, 2002, p. 658). They translate two aspects of the food consumption pattern’s modernization related

in both cases to the already mentioned increase in purchasing power and the new diet trends focused on weight loss or “healthy” food products (GOODMAN, SORJ, WILKINSON, 2008, p. 74). This approach is quite significant for how the food consumption pattern of the Brazilian population will evolve: with a focus not necessarily on the population’s health but on market opportunities. Consequently, as Joselis Moreira da Silva and Nilson Maciel de Paula point out (2003, p. 5-6):

the post-Real consumer profile change can be seen visibly. (...) Brazilians have not only started to consume more, but also opted for the acquisition of more elaborate and better-quality products. A large contingent of low-income consumers has been incorporated into the food market, while some segments of the population have raised their consumption, migrating to more sophisticated foods.

The overall consumption of food based on commodities had increased significantly by 1993. But despite the incorporation of the low-income population into the food market, their purchasing power remained low. Many neoliberal food products continued to be inaccessible for this sector of the population. The more significant increases in the purchases of neoliberal foods, from 2003 to 2013, show the extensive incorporation of low-income individuals to the neoliberal food market, acutely changing the numbers associated to food consumption. The generation born at the beginning of the 21st Century is the one that presents the most substantial variations in the type of food consumed. Neoliberal changes, stabilization and income distribution were unambiguous factors for the shift in the relations Brazilian have with food.

3.3. The Lula years

Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the name behind the *Plano Real*, intensified the process of liberalization and privatization during his presidency, from 1995 to 2003 (GENNARI, 2002, 38). He was succeeded by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. It was the first time in history that Brazil had a left-wing president. Catia Grisa and Sergio Schneider (2015, p. 137) detail some basic principles that changed from one administration to the other:

From a government identified with the principles of the global neoliberal framework and backed by a political alliance with the most conservative sectors of national politics, an elected government was promoted with the support and participation of several parties and social movements situated to the left of the political spectrum without, however, failing to contemplate

ideas and interests of groups representing the national banking, industrial and agricultural bourgeoisie.

The great fear introduced in the population by the elites and the international market were overcome by the new president's mentioned commitment to maintaining economic stability and continuous support of powerful actors. Despite some compromises, Lula's government was able to accomplish a larger distribution of income at the base of the pyramid (CARVALHO, 2018, p.19). This meant that at that time, almost a decade after the implementation of the *Plano Real*, the low-income population was included as new consumers. Although this thesis argues that the low-income population is disregarded as consumers by a great portion of the food industry concerning its marketing and focus, there is no doubt that this group was now able to buy a diversity of foods in a quantity never available to them before. In the 2000s, Brazil experienced a significant income distribution at the base of the socioeconomic pyramid. This new wealth allocation was the result of both distributive policies and economic growth based on services and civil construction. Unfortunately, the achieved economic growth did not promote technological advancements and productivity gains for the Brazilian economy. But it had an important benefit – to include in the formal labor market the less skilled labourers, abundant in the country, increasing their bargaining power and salaries in relation to the other workers (Carvalho, 2018, p. 25).

In relation to income distribution, the result of the Lula years was that the access to food, made available for the middle class in the 1990s, was now spread to the lower-income population. This does not mean that low-income individuals had no access to industrialized foods before. But their consumption of these foods exploded during the 2000s. The basic shift in relation to food consumption that occurred between the two governments was the definitive inclusion of the low-income population in the neoliberal diet. The outcomes of this inclusion will be further analysed next with the qualitative data collected during my interviews.

Chapter 4.

Interview analyses

As the fieldwork component of this research, I conducted personal interviews in Rio de Janeiro between the months of July and August of 2018. In total, I have spoken with 52 individuals. The participants were firstly divided into three basic categories: (1) low-income, (2) middle-income and (3) high income. The first two groups, (1) low-income, (2) middle-income, were further divided in two sub-categories. (1) low-income was separated by place of residence: the six individuals from Jardim Gramacho were labeled as lower low-income and the twenty-six individuals from Morro do Andaraí will be referred to as middle low-income. For the second group (2) middle-income, the division was also based on place of residence. Eight individuals who reside in Tijuca neighbourhood became middle-income, and the remaining four individuals who reside in the South Zone of the city will be referred to as high middle income. In addition, I have interviewed two high income individuals, five public-school cooks and one NGO employee who has extensive experience with Rio's low-income population.

Throughout my fieldwork I have encountered people living very contrasting realities within the city of Rio. I have talked to families living in shacks with no basic sanitation, and with youngsters from the most prestigious schools in Rio - who frequently enjoyed their meals in expensive restaurants.

The distinctive experiences, narratives and routines of such individuals are analyzed in the following pages. When necessary, quotes from the interviews are used and identified but in no manner do they disclose the participants' identity.

4.1. Profile of the interviewees

The participants were asked to identify themselves by race or colour²⁶ – the Brazilian population descent from blacks, white and indigenous, with most people

²⁶ I have used the same identification framework as IBGE. Color and race are used as interchangeable. As per: <https://cnae.ibge.gov.br/en/component/content/article/95-7a12/7a12-vamos-conhecer-o-brasil/nosso-povo/16049-cor-ou-raca.html>

identifying with at least two of these three groups. Despite being known for its miscegenation, racism is a strong characteristic of the Brazilian society. The government has historically made efforts to white-wash the population, making it common to encounter individuals of mixed race who identify as white because of their fairer skin.

Amongst the interviewees who chose to self-identify their race/color, eight declared themselves black, twelve identified as brown and fourteen individuals were white. It was clear that black and brown participants struggled to choose how they identified, whereas white or fairer-skin interviewees immediately identified as white. For mixed-race individuals there was a clear uncertainty with self-identification - a usual display of confusion around race in the country.

Although racial issues are existent in all social classes, it was only within the low-income group that racial confusion had arisen. Only two individuals from the medium and high-income groups did not identify as white. One was from Jewish Arab descent. The other was a black mother (ethnically mixed) whose daughter identified as white.

Another aspect that differentiated the social classes were their housing condition, with the low-income and high-income groups having the largest gap. When families reached medium-income they had similar habits and housing of those in the high-income group. The most significant differences were in relation to how many people shared the same residence, safety, and services available to residents at home or within their neighbourhood.

Those living under extreme conditions were the Jardim Gramacho residents. This former dumping ground has developed into a neighbourhood with no proper infrastructure to shelter the regular flow of new-comers. Sanitary conditions are terribly poor. When I visited the site, kids, stray dogs and chickens played with dirt by the open sewage systems and the piles of garbage. Out of six residents from Jardim Gramacho interviewed, four²⁷ did not have running water available, and two²⁸ individuals chose not to disclose information.

²⁷ Interviews #03, #31 and #32.

²⁸ Interview # 21.

One of the young girls²⁹ who mentioned not having running water also described ongoing stomach issues and symptoms that suggested the proliferation of worms. This is a pathology very common in Rio de Janeiro in areas lacking proper basic sanitation. Inadequate infrastructure directly impacts food consumption. Preventing people from properly cleaning their hands and food. Inadequate sanitation can also reduce the amount of fresh food ingested, leading people to avoid them due to the higher risk of contamination. This last aspect was emphasized by a NGO³⁰ member who works with the locals.

The number of residents per household also differed between social classes. Among medium and high-income individuals, homes shared only by the nuclear family were predominant. If any, other family members included an aging grandparent who recently moved in with the family. Whereas in low-income families, it was common to find more individuals living in the same household. Multigenerational households were mentioned by seven low-income families³¹, in residences with up to eleven people, as exemplified by the Andaraí family where a mother to six children was also financially responsible for three of her daughter's children³². This financial circumstance was a common narrative from poorer families. It was also common to encounter aunts, uncles, cousins and boyfriends living with the family, as well as low-income adolescents being raised by their grandmother.

The grandmother was a figure constantly brought up during the interviews. These women were presented as providers and care givers only in low-income households, where their income³³ was often either the single one or the main source for the family. The financial situation was attributed to the unemployment of the other adults, job informality or employment irregularity. Out of thirty-two low-income individuals, ten reported unemployment among their parents or income producers in their household. Three had lost their jobs six months prior to the interview. Six described their care giver work as

²⁹ Interview #31.

³⁰ Interview #38. <https://www.techo.org/brasil/>

³¹ Interviews #2, #3, #7, #12, #13, #17, #24.

³² Interview #02.

³³ This can be related to the policies of the Lula years when “the set of social security benefits and transfers (aid, grants, unemployment insurance, etc.) was responsible for reducing the GINI index (which measures income inequality) by 7.7% in 2009, in the face of a reduction effect of 4, 3% in 2003” (CARVALHO, 2018, p. 52).

informal. The recent unemployment reported reflects the economic crises Brazil has been facing since 2008-2009. The restrictions created by the crisis for the middle-income group were limited to food prices and the need to visit more than one supermarket in search for accessible products, a practice recently incorporated to their lives.

Along with irregular employment, the cash transfer program *Bolsa Família* was cited as one of the most important income sources for low-income families. More than half³⁴ of the low-income families were beneficiaries of *Bolsa Família*. A resident from Jardim Gramacho briefly described their life before *Bolsa Família* as more difficult, when they worked at the dumping ground. In their words “when it rained, if it rained for a month, we could not work, and things started ‘to get tight’³⁵ at home”³⁶. They also mentioned experiencing hunger before *Bolsa Família* – similar stories were shared by five low-income individuals. This is coherent with the country’s overall hunger index improvements, specially in major cities like Rio de Janeiro. Amongst the fifteen beneficiaries of *Bolsa Família*, ten were certain that their families spent the cash transfer money on food.

4.2. Diet and routine

When talking to the participants, I was primarily focused on their food consumption routine. They described a typical day of their diets, how food was prepared at home, what type of industrialised foods were usually purchased, and if they went out to restaurants. The answers reflected the findings of the last Brazilian Family Budget Research 2008-2009 (IBGE, 2010, p.106), the research concluded that the base of the Brazilian diet is constituted of: rice, beans, coffee, white bread and bovine meat. The interviews also confirmed the tendencies detected by IBGE of increased intake of sugar amongst adolescents, higher consumption of unhealthy items typical of neoliberal diet by low income individuals, and higher consumption of healthy items by higher income individuals. “Unable to afford quality diets and with insufficient time to prepare healthful food, the working classes are the most exposed to this diet’s low-cost yet energy-dense traits” (OTERO, 2019, p.187).

³⁴ Some adolescents were unaware if their families received the cash transfer or not, so these number might be higher.

³⁵ Meaning they would have less food at home and no money to buy more.

³⁶ Interview #03.

Nonetheless, what is innovative about the present research is the possibility to draw systemic class relations from the narratives that go beyond family income and food items. I have found four main differences relative to class and diet routine amongst the studied groups; 1) how school influences students' diet, 2) differences on the quality of processed foods eaten by different income groups, 3) the meaning of eating out, and, finally, 4) access and use of information.

I have come across a tendency that I definitely did not anticipate in my readings: at least six³⁷ of the low-income adolescents who study in public schools reported eating lunch twice on a daily basis - at school and at home. All middle and high-income individuals only ate one meal as lunch. Despite consistently describing their public-school lunches as healthy and adequate public-school students often use the school lunch as their mid-day snack. In Brazil, schools usually start at 7am and in public schools' lunch is served at 10-11 am, serving lunch early in the day might be one explanation for doubling this meal. From the routines described, this aspect certainly increased the calorie consumption of the group. The extra food intake was also mentioned by the public-school cooks: "It depends on the schedule, but I have noticed that more children eat in the morning than in the afternoon. There is another problem that I saw while working for the townhall, children who are getting obese. They eat lunch at school, snack at school, go home and eat again"³⁸.

In contrast to the above pattern, five students³⁹ from prestigious private schools talked about the need to eat their lunch at restaurants because of their intense study schedules. For many of these students, this means a higher consumption of unhealthy food. Students thought of the food provided by their schools as low-quality and raised concern about the unhealthy snacks sold by the school cafeteria. This is the only circumstance I have encountered in which low-income adolescents had healthier options as compared to wealthier students.

The accounts about public-school meals show how having a free universal meal program at public schools is relevant in an unequal country like Brazil. The public-school

³⁷ Interviews #2, #7, #10, #28.

³⁸ Interview #27.

³⁹ Interview #4, #15, #20, #23, #29.

students are served portioned meals prepared by professional cooks and planned by nutritionists. Unfortunately, there were mentions of the decreasing quality of the public-school foods which is linked to the government's financial issues⁴⁰. "The Mayor cut the budget of the schools, so we eat chicken every day. There is no more paper for exams, the teachers must take it out of their pockets"⁴¹ said one of the students.

Although public schools are facing financial issues, the cooks defended the quality of their food. They described receiving fresh ingredients and direct instructions for balanced meals. The government sends them a direction card with quantities of salt and oil to be used in preparation of meals. There were accounts⁴² of improvements in the last four years, when the municipal government took items such as cookies and industrialized juices out of the meal plan. The cooks also help the students with food education. One of the cooks shared her vast experience:

I worked at a school for 14 years and the kids did not know [anything about food], they mistook potatoes for carrots, they never saw leaf vegetable. But in no time, they were learning and eating. Sometimes I would hear that they prefer to eat at school rather than at home, that food at school was more delicious than at home⁴³.

There was a sense of duty that went beyond their job description as cooks. "We are introducing vegetables and other foods to them. (...) we feel its our responsibility to show them⁴⁴ what they are eating"⁴⁵. They have also noted the consequences of inadequate diets some students got at home. "Something we notice, on Friday they eat and go home. On Monday, they come back *eating the pan*⁴⁶. They must go through the weekend without the food they have at school. They come back hungry, wanting to repeat"⁴⁷. As mentioned many times by them, this is not necessarily related to not having food at home. Only a very few cases of hungry adolescents were reported. They

⁴⁰ Both state and municipal government of Rio de Janeiro, which are responsible for public schools, have faced severe financial issues due to corruption and the country's financial crises.

⁴¹ Interview #28.

⁴² Interview #27.

⁴³ Interview #27.

⁴⁴ Explaining what the foods are and what they are made of.

⁴⁵ Interview #27.

⁴⁶ As in eating everything they could find in the pots and pans.

⁴⁷ Interview #27.

connected the student's Monday appetite to the low-quality food they have at home. Which is linked to my second finding.

Although it was more common to find industrialized foods part of the main meals of lower-income individuals, they were usually substituting for meats, typical items include chicken nuggets, hamburgers, and sausages. Some low-income families relied mostly on processed meats as their protein source. Higher income families would only use processed meats when in a hurry or on weekends. Nevertheless, in all groups what accounted daily as the largest number of unhealthy calories were not meals consisting of highly industrialized food products but snacks. The extra calories between low-income individuals came from low quality candy, gum and lollipop, items almost unanimous between this group. While medium-income individuals relied on chocolate, a considerably more expensive sugary item.

A concern was raised when participants from all social classes were asked about industrialized foods, they all mentioned items such as processed meats, candy and cookies. Interviewees usually did not include other items that were a consistent part of their basic diet. The overlooked items, that appeared on their routine descriptions but not on their list of industrialized items, were mostly sugar, milk chocolate, processed cheeses, yogurt, juice concentrates and white bread. The adolescents also made a clear distinction about sugar, it was never included among the industrialized items. Without exception between low-income interviewees all reported intaking sugar in the form of soda, cookies, candy or *brigadeiro*⁴⁸ every day. In the other income groups the amount of sugar intake was lower. Some middle and high-income interviewees, mostly girls, mentioned trying to curb their urge to eat sugar for aesthetic reasons, at least during week days.

When eating out, low-income families would opt for fast-food chains, the two most common being Mc Donald's and Burger King. Some individuals mentioned going to fast-food restaurants to celebrate kids' birthdays or because children enjoyed the toys that came with meals. For the group interviewed in Jardim Gramacho, even fast-food chains were out of their reach. One teenager⁴⁹ mentioned having gone once to a Mc Donald's when taken by an NGO. The other five did not report leaving the community to go

⁴⁸ Typical Brazilian sweet made with sweetened condensed milk and cocoa powder.

⁴⁹ Interview #31.

anywhere. Jardim Gramacho was the only community where I have encountered an unequivocal definition of here and out there⁵⁰. All Jardim Gramacho residents reported going to one of the informal community joints to eat hamburgers, pizza or *salgado*⁵¹. These three items were the only ones mentioned both in Jardim Gramacho and Andaraí as ready to eat meals sold in the community.

Despite the recent growth of fast-food chains in Brazil, local vendors continue to play an incredibly significant role in providing food for low income families. Only middle and high-income groups reported going to formal⁵² restaurants. Likewise, they were the only group who went to restaurants other than fast-food chains. The accounts from wealthier individuals indicated that they ate more expensive, healthier and more diverse meals when not at home. While low-income individuals were restricted to the neoliberal diets in the form of North American fast-foods.

Finally, the last divergent aspect in relation to class and food consumption was information. Not necessarily access to information but its use. It was said by several low-income individuals that if they had more information they would eat better. Followed by the comments that they would eat less sweets and fried foods and add more fruits and vegetables. The additional comment showed that they were aware of what was unhealthy, but when questioned, most individuals did not seem to know how to translate that information into healthy meal-planning. They also showed an interest in diversifying their diet if given more information.

Most low-income individuals mentioned school as a source of information on nutrition. Many being able to precisely report at which grade they began to learn about health and food. Television and internet followed as the most cited sources by this group. Out of twenty-six low-income interviewees, only one individual⁵³ mentioned his grandmother as source of information and one⁵⁴ other interviewee mentioned her mother as source. In contrast, among fourteen middle and high-income individuals, six mentioned

⁵⁰ Being a former dumping ground there is still stigma for those who live in the community.

⁵¹ Typical snack foods in Brazil, are highly caloric, usually deep fried, made of wheat flour dough with some sort of meat filling.

⁵² I will use the word formal to define restaurants where one is served by waiters and only pays the bill at the end of the meal.

⁵³ Interview #7.

⁵⁴ Interview #10.

their parents as a frequent source of information and assistance on planning their diets. This discrepancy displays the class oppression that is passed through generations. The present study was unable to identify the reason for this difference. But backbreaking jobs, insufficient education and income limitations are probably linked to the parents' limitations.

Chapter 5.

Feminist Analyses of food production and food consumption in Rio de Janeiro

The present work was not conceived in its first drafts to include women's struggles among its analytical objectives. The need to do so arose both from the literature review, resulting in the feminist discussion of food production in Brazil, and the fieldwork that brought up varied narratives of women's oppressions.

While researching about the changes in the food consumption patterns in Brazil, I have frequently come across one explanation. That one of the reasons why Brazil was embarking on the neoliberal diet was that women were joining the workforce (SOUZA, 2001, p.8; AQUINO e PHILLIPI, 2002, p. 656; SILVA e DE PAULA, 2003, p. 4). While I am not trying to fully discard this affirmation, there are other aspects that must be considered.

First, women have always been part of the workforce, doing work at home that allowed the men in the family to join the job market (BENSTON, 1969, p.15). But whereas the modern women's participation in the job market might be new to middle and high-income females, most poor women, who lived in urban areas without access to land, were usually wage workers (BELL HOOKS, 1981, p.79). Secondly, I was surprised to observe how this judgment on women was passed without further acknowledgment (SILVA, DE PAULA, 2003, p. 4; SOUZA, 2001, p. 15; VILELA, MACEDO, 2000, p. 93). The presented logic was: women left the house, therefore people started eating more industrialized foods and ready to eat meals. There was no questioning of whose responsibility it was to feed one's family. This discourse undoubtedly moves away from oppressive market dynamics, that are the target of my work.

The limited explanation described above and the stories I have heard from interviewees raised the need to address this other side of the social systemic oppression. In the next pages, I will discuss three circumstances in relation to food production and consumption that came about persistently during my research.

5.1. Food Production and Women

In this first part of the analysis of food production and women, I will look into the production of food outside of the home. Family agriculture and food processing plants will be the focus of this discussion. First, women are part of the structure of the family farm because they are part of the division of labor inside the family that delegates to each member of the family unit a certain responsibility related to the group's survival (DELPHY, 1984, p. 20).

Second, the growing participation of rural women in the workforce (working outside of their homes and farms for a wage) is, to a large extent, a consequence of neoliberal policies (Brumer, 2008, p. 17). Despite the fact that women are entering the workforce in great numbers, they are relegated to predetermined gendered positions. While men get the best positions as a continuity of male privilege, women tend to be hired for more precarious jobs (Graf and Coutinho, 2010, p. 778). "These jobs fit in the International Labor Organization's definition of 3D jobs: jobs that are dirty, dangerous and degrading (Allen and Sachs, 2012, p. 28). In the intersection of class and gender oppressions, women are left without much choice and power in the job market.

5.2. Family-Farm Agriculture and Women

As in any area of the economy, gender relations play a role in the dynamics of family agriculture. In Brazil, men own four times the number of establishments women own (IBGE, 2017), therefore having the majority of the control over the means of production. It is important to note that the formal ownership of an asset by a woman does not necessarily translate into its actual ownership and control⁵⁵. This means the numbers collected by the Agricultural Census (IBGE, 2017) are based on formal ownership of the productive unit regardless of who in fact commands its operations. Women may own establishments that were passed along to them by means of inheritance. But "in family farming it is custom that predominates" (Brumer, 2008, p. 24) and in this sphere, husbands, sons or brothers tend to be the ones responsible for the decision making.

⁵⁵ In many cases the women are legal owners of the land, but it is their husbands, brothers or sons who have the decision making power over the property.

Although according to the Brazilian laws men and women have the same rights to inheritance and ownership of assets. But in reality, women are less likely to inherit land and make it profitable. There are three main issues that illustrate how women's control of agricultural assets is compromised. First, women are not trained to be the controllers of the family-farm. From a young age they learn to perform jobs that are similar to the ones their mothers do. They will predominantly be restrained to domestic work.

Second, there is the gender-asset gap. Even if they formally own the family establishment, women are less likely to own other assets that can be used as collateral for bank loans. As the prevalence of neoliberal relations in agriculture entails that the farmer will need to rely on loans in order to make ends meet from season to season, to buy seeds and update capital goods, not having assets makes it challenging for women to succeed on their own. This makes women more vulnerable to bankruptcy and therefore less likely to take chances advancing their businesses.

Finally, as a result of the lack of training in the ruling positions, women seldom have existing relationships with people outside of the family that are vital to running the business. "It is generally the men who has contact with the extension workers, banks, union, cooperative, firms selling inputs and purchasers" (Brumer, 2008, p. 21). Such deficiency of contacts leaves women lacking the necessary knowledge to the administration of their own businesses.

Those vulnerabilities are a direct result of the division of labor based on sex. "Agrarianism is a gendered ideology that projects different ideals for men and women. Women have been expected to support the farm, men, and children ahead of their own needs or aspirations" (Allen and Sachs, 2012, p. 27).

Furthermore, gendered division of labor also impacts the rural exodus. Unable to be part of the decision making, struggling to manage their units of production or being relegated to the worst or most extenuating jobs, women tend to find the option of moving out of the rural areas more appealing than men (Brume, 2008). Worsening economic conditions and the fact that agribusiness needs less 'hands' in order to function both become expelling factors for rural women. Neoliberal policies also influence the need for rural women to participate in the workforce receiving a wage. This reality reflects the "need of rural households to increase and diversify their income sources" (Brumer, 2008, p.17).

There are three main causes for the feminization of migration in Brazil. First, a tendency that exists since the beginning of the rural exodus in Brazil in the 1950's is the need for "domestic servants by the expanding urban middle class" (Brume, 2008, p. 15). Second, the previously discussed inheritance issues such as formal ownership versus actual ownership. Third, as previously discussed in this work, "the modernization of agriculture due to subsidized credit, economic incentives, and institutional support for production techniques and crops promoted land concentration and, as a result, endangered the survival of small family farms" (Brume, 2008, p. 15).

One of the possibilities for the women who do not wish to migrate from rural areas is to take jobs in food-processing plants. Largely, women find jobs in the agroindustry in plants that process vegetables, fruit and chickens (Allen and Sachs, 2012, p. 28). The work relations in the industrial domain will be analysed on the next sub-section.

5.3. Processing Plants

Working relations in the agroindustry processing plants should also be analysed through feminist lenses. The dynamics of control, power and vulnerability play an important role in this sector of the food industry. "Gendered divisions of labor also characterize food processing and manufacturing. Global commodity chains, especially in horticulture, rely on women as disadvantaged workers in processing and packing houses" (Allen and Sachs, 2012, p. 28).

The industry uses women's vulnerability generated from oppression, while aggravating the gender divisions. Females are placed in "seasonal, part-time, and flexible" (Allen and Sachs, 2012, p. 28) positions or in the informal market without any benefits or protection, which worsens their ability to resist and make demands. This type of work in unstable low-paid activities increases the negative impacts on women's mental and physical health (Graf and Coutinho, 2012, p. 264). Those features reinforce the oppressive system that characterizes women's insertion in the workforce.

In Graf and Coutinho's (2012, p. 771) research on a Brazilian poultry processing plant, they found men placed in a variety of positions. In contrast, all 46 women working in the plant were placed in only three positions: evisceration aid, production aid, and slaughterer. Changes in the researched plant occurred at the time of the industrialization

and specialization of the company. The authors point out that before the insertion in a more competitive agroindustry the plant was family managed and most of the workers were family members. During this period, workers that had been in the company since then say the stratification of the positions was not so strict. The worsening of systemic oppressions was accompanied by the 'modernization' and search for profitability. If the division of labor relegates the worst low-paying jobs to women, this pattern reinforces the wage gap and consequently the asset gap between men and women.

5.4. Domestic work

For women, the systemic class oppression addressed in the previous chapters are intertwined with another kind of oppression. Often understood as the sole provider of free labor in the household, women have to endure a double workload – working both at their wage jobs and at home. The first facet of this oppression was expressed by the number of adolescents for whom the father was not present in their lives. These absences signify that the mother or grandmother became fully responsible for raising them. Eight⁵⁶ families were headed by women, three⁵⁷ of them clearly mentioning they did not receive any alimony from their fathers and/or had no contact with them. No family had their father as the single head of the family or was left to the care of a man. As explained by Cristina Carrasco: "it is always assumed someone is present (one woman) at home to organize and solve people's problems; that is, the State and society continue to rely on the family (women) as a basic institution for the care and security of people" (apud SILIPRANDI, 2004, p.9).

As expressed by the interviewees, among households of all incomes, it was the women who were the main responsible for doing all the house chores. Even in the cases of more affluent women who employed other women as maids, whenever the maid was not present they became responsible for any housework that was left. Comments such as: "my mom hires people to work at our house, but she wants to do the work herself"⁵⁸ from middle income adolescents were fairly common. Indicating that it is a women's job to oversee the domestic work even when it is not her doing the work. While also bringing up

⁵⁶ Interview #1, #2, #3, #7, #12, #17, #25, #29.

⁵⁷ Interviews #1, #3, #29.

⁵⁸ Interview #4.

the idea that the woman of the house must have certain standards. Therefore, they must keep a closer eye on the domestic worker more so than one would do in any other job.

Among low income families, when it was mentioned that someone worked as a “domestic worker” it was understood that they were employed by middle and high-income families. It is usual for domestic workers in Brazil to do both the house chores and take care of the employer’s children. Only between high-income families there is a clear distinction between the babysitter and the domestic worker. Whenever a woman provides child care inside the favela, the language used to describe their informal work was quite different, in those less frequent cases it is said that they “take care of some neighbours”.

Mostly, low-income families rely on relatives to provide child care while they work. That includes both adults and older children that must look after siblings and cousins. It was only among low-income individuals that dynamics such as the following one were described: “I wake up early, tidy things up, cook and go to school. When I come back I still take care of him [younger brother]. My mom gets home only at 6 or 7pm. And my dad comes in after her, around 8 pm”⁵⁹. There are not enough free childcare facilities for low-income children in Rio de Janeiro. For the Andaraí community, I could only find two facilities. One on the favela provided by the government and a second one down on the asphalt provided by the Catholic Church. Still, they were unable to meet the needs of the community, having long waiting lists. By law, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, children must be 5 to enter the public-school system. But even when they are old enough to attend school, public schools are part-time. From 7 am to noon or from 12 pm to 5 pm and usually not inside of the favelas. This means that the families must have someone to take care of the children when they are not at school.

Another aspect related to the domestic routines, in which low-income children must become independent earlier than middle and high-income ones, is their understanding regarding the importance of learning to cook. While only two⁶⁰ middle-income adolescents reported that they did know how to cook, between low-income individuals seven⁶¹ individuals mentioned that not only they did know how to cook but they did so quite often.

⁵⁹ Interview #5.

⁶⁰ Interviews #15, #16.

⁶¹ Interview #2, #5, #10, #11, #12, #13, #14.

The discrepancies were related to the numbers but also to their understanding of the reasons why cooking is important.

For middle and high-income individuals, the importance of cooking was related to the possibility of being healthier and eating more diverse meals. For low-income individuals, learning how to cook was linked to independence and necessity. As mentioned above, child care and domestic work is significantly different among classes. This has a direct effect on the routines of low-income children. It was mentioned by one interviewee⁶² that when his mothers went to work he had to ask his grandmother to cook for him, as there was no other adult. Or as narrated by a 12-year-old⁶³ from Andaraí: “when I come home from school and there are no rice and beans because there is no one home, I have nothing to eat so I drink some chocolate milk”. Similar narratives were brought up by low-income kids throughout my field work.

With respect to gendered labor divisions, whenever a man was mentioned as doing some house work it was described as help. Instilling the idea that it was intrinsically the women's responsibility to do house chores, therefore, this work's relations are part of a historical and cultural process (SILIPRANDI, 2004, p.8). As stated by Betsy Warrior (2000, p. 530):

The oppression of females who work outside the home is more easily recognizable because general standards that are accepted for male workers can theoretically be applied to females also. Thus their inequality in relation to male workers can be exposed. There are no such standards for houseworkers nor has the labor they perform ever been recognized as such.

In over 90% of the researched households the domestic chores were done solely by women. In twenty-one of these cases the mother or grandmother also had wage jobs. Four individuals mentioned that despite having their father living with them, the men did not do anything at the house. In the families where the children did do chores, the girls tended to be responsible for most of the work.

As they do work that is not remunerated, the subjective value of their work diminishes. Whenever someone is not compensated for her work, the labor loses value.

⁶² Interview #5.

⁶³ Interview #7.

As Christine Delphy mentions (1984, p.88): the same activities are remunerated if performed outside of one's home when this person is employed as a cook, a cleaner or a maid. For middle and high-income families in Brazil, it is usual to employ a maid. Nine of the middle and high-income families I have interviewed declared employing a maid at home – all maids were women. Four low-income adolescents mentioned their mothers worked as maids. These numbers reinforce the mentioned gender roles implied on this type of work.

5.5. Body Image

Another aspect of women's oppression is expressed by their relations with their bodies. Although I have noticed a number of male adolescents display some concern over their bodies, it is among women that this internalized oppression is more evident. When questioned about their food habits, many interviewees, mostly middle and high-income girls, started to demonstrate some level of distortion about their own body image. "Body size has some really compelling connections to cultural anxiety about class, race and gender" (TOVAR, 2018, p. 75). When discussing this issue with the adolescents, four⁶⁴ low-income individuals mentioned they would prefer to gain weight. Four of the middle low-income interviewees reported being clinically obese during their infancy, three of them have gone through medical treatments to overcome the issue. Only one middle-income adolescent mentioned being underweight (due to health issues).

Eleven adolescents out of twenty-eight, who disclosed their feelings about their bodies, expressed they felt they were gaining weight, or they were fat. On these cases, the narrative around their weight was often combined with a concerning self-deprecating discourse. From my personal perspective, from all the adolescents interviewed, only one seemed to be overweight. Still this individual would not be considered obese and, for him, it was acceptable to be a little overweight during his growing period, he mentioned the support of his grandmother regarding this perception.

Although the aspiration for a "pretty body" or "fitness look" – expressions repeatedly used by the interviewees - was mentioned by both boys and girls, it was among the females that action was being taken to achieve the aspired body. "The current

⁶⁴ Interviews #3, #18, #34, #35.

paradigm of beauty, centered on the slender and slim body, determines eating practices that correspond to it" (TEO, 2010, p. 334). One of the youngest interviewees mentioned increasing the time she played with her neighbours just to have the opportunity to run and lose weight. Another older teenager had fasting during school hours as a daily practice.

During the interviews the subjects emphasized that being thin or overweight was a personal decision. And with that they expressed some guilt and shame over their bodies. These individuals expressed they should or would change eating habits to achieve the body pattern they considered ideal.

Chapter 6.

Conclusion

The present work has tried to demonstrate how the food system was built in Brazil and the impacts of this design on the population's eating habits. I have discussed the most relevant aspects that explain the changing food consumption pattern seen in Brazil since the neoliberal turn in the 1990s. In a country such as Brazil, that presents itself to the world as a great agricultural producer, the historical conditions that help to build this identity had to be addressed. This reputation was constructed on a history of exploitation and oppression as demonstrated by the present work. Systemic oppression also determines the lack of choice in what impoverished individuals eat.

The design of the food system resulted in the food consumption patterns presented by the Brazilian population in 2019. While the traditional diet was based for many decades on rice, beans, meat, manioc and fruits, changes in production affected what is offered in the internal market. The Brazilian staple duo, rice and beans, a healthy source of protein and other nutrients, is not regarded as a profitable commodity crop. Therefore, it is mainly small farmers who produce these two items. With the rural exodus and the expansion of the highly profitable monocrop farms, the area dedicated to the production of those items is shrinking. At the same time, the growth of commodity crops is determining what the food industry is producing.

While the population is consuming less of the traditional staples, the variety of food products based on commodity crops such as soy beans, corn and wheat is increasing. Besides, there is also the pressure on the prices of luxury foods. Brazil has an immense diversity and production of fruits. When fruits became a luxury food item and consequently its prices increased in the international market, it meant that Brazilians would have to pay more for fruits and also that they would be likely to find in their supermarkets the "ugly" fruits that did not meet the international market standards. These market dynamics will have a direct impact on what reaches the tables of Brazilian families.

Changes in production combined with economic stabilization and growth gave way to the manner the Brazilian population understands and consumes food. Economic improvement is allowing a larger parcel of the people to join the residents of developed

countries regarding their levels of consumption. Although this is partially positive for a country that struggled with hunger for so many years, the consequences of the adoption of the neoliberal diet are concerning.

If hunger is no longer the main issue in relation to food in Brazil, it does not mean we achieved development indices that resulted necessarily in better quality of food for the population. As I have demonstrated, the Brazilian population is moving towards the unhealthy neoliberal diet. In a big city, such as Rio de Janeiro, I have not encountered insufficient amounts of calories being consumed. This indicates that Brazil, to a large extent, has overcome the quantitative issue in food access that was so common only decades ago. With the eating habits encountered in 2018-2019, inadequate amounts of nutrients become the new food insecurity issue.

The extensive research done for this work demonstrated the connections between the food system and systemic oppressions that appear on the food consumption patterns of the population. To some extent, the neoliberal diet impacts all socioeconomic classes. Middle-to-low income people do not have the same access to the neoliberal diet as more affluent individuals have because of the high cost of industrialized products, still they are the ones making the most relevant changes in relation to it. An example of that is the increasing substitution of meat for ultra processed meat products on the meals of low-income individuals. With much more restricted choices, this group tend to consume cheap and low-quality products. The middle and high-income families, on the other hand, having the greatest possibility of making a choice about food, mostly rely on neoliberal food items as extras and in lower quantities. Although they are both concerning trends, they show that low-income individuals are increasingly taking their nutrients from food products that might not be adequate to meet all humans needs.

This trend is the result of market impositions that makes food oppression explicit, this dynamic renders low-income individuals unable to have the power to choose. While this decision making is somewhat concentrated regarding all social classes, the market will consider the needs of those consumers who can pay more for specific food products. This means that low-income individuals are not seen by the market as consumers capable of influencing the supply. Low-income individuals are consumers inasmuch as they do consume food products, but they lack the status of market influencers more affluent individuals have. As a consequence, the food market will be focused on selling

impoverished groups cheap low-quality foods that are highly profitable for the agroindustry. Differently, the profitability of middle and high-income individuals is in meeting their demands for new food products with more quality and nutritional value.

Those differences are explicit in the divergent lifestyles promoted by the industry for each class when purchasing food. Middle and high-income individuals will find attractively presented fresh foods and healthy industrialized food products on their supermarkets. The packaging of the healthy products offers more than a product but a lifestyle to the consumer who is concerned with health, weight and even ethical shopping. Through packaging and the product's market placement, the consumer will achieve some reconnection with the rural product and what they are eating.

Low-income individuals will encounter a less aesthetically pleasing environment in their box store supermarkets. For this group, the food industry will focus on offering cheap foods that can be bought in larger quantities. The trick is that despite being able to buy more quantity, low-income consumers will be getting less nourishment from the commodity-based food products than they would get from fresh or less adulterated foods. As a result, their bodies will often crave for more, increasing even more their purchases and the market's profits. When entering the supermarkets frequented by low-income individuals, the consumer will find bright packaging, mainly in primary colors. These are red, yellow and orange bags with easily identifiable brands, internationally recognizable, and sometimes adorned with kids' motifs. Comparing the environments frequented by different classes when buying food, it becomes clear how the two consumer experiences are in opposite sides of the spectrum.

The differentiated strategies of the food industry used for low-income individuals and middle and high-income individuals should be more extensively explored in the future. I have identified a trend that leads low-income individuals towards more neoliberal food fare. And another trend that induces middle and higher-income individuals to demand healthier food products. As addressed in chapter 5, concerns over body image are significant among teenagers. It would be interesting to follow the evolution of this pattern as it can lead to serious health issues such as anorexia and depression. As a worsening trend, the concern with body image could become a widespread public health issue, therefore the need to deepen the understanding regarding this phenomenon.

The theme of food consumption and oppression has several angles and can be approached in various forms. I have chosen to look at the discrepancies of the food consumption patterns among socioeconomic classes in Rio de Janeiro, one of the most unequal cities in Brazil. The outcomes of the research demonstrate that, in relation to food consumption, Brazil is in fact following paths similar to developed countries such as the United States and Canada. The trend is that the low-to-middle-income population is increasingly sick from the consumption of the neoliberal diets while more affluent individuals are able to consume luxury foods such as vegetables and fruits. As predicted, class turned out to be a defining factor in food consumption and oppression. Unfortunately, it appears this new form of food oppression is only on in its beginning.

From the research carried out for this work I could anticipate worsening conditions in the near future. It seems that the political choices made in Brazil in 2018 are leading to the increase in the power of the agribusiness and disregard for the needs of the population. Instead of correcting the course and expanding access to quality foods to all income groups, the politicians elected in 2018 are allowing a new rise on inequality levels, while strengthening agricultural corporations and consenting the expansion in the use of agrochemicals. Democracy is once again in danger. Only when we overcome our socioeconomic and political issues will there be hope for change.

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#01 (Adults, Tijuca, 2 female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 02, 2018.

#02 (Adolescents, Andaraí, 2 male; 2 female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 03, 2018.

#03 (Adolescent, Gramacho, female); (Mother, Gramacho). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 05, 2018.

#04 (Adolescent, Tijuca, female); (Mother, Tijuca). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 06, 2018.

#05 (Adolescent, Andaraí, male); (Mother, Andaraí). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 06, 2018.

#06 (Adolescent, Andaraí, male);(Mother; Andaraí). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 09, 2018.

#07 (Adolescent, Andaraí, male). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 10, 2018.

#08 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 11, 2018.

#09 (Adolescent, Humaitá, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 12, 2018.

- #10 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 13, 2018.
- #11 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 13, 2018.
- #12 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 16, 2018.
- #13 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female); (Mother, Andaraí). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 16, 2018.
- #14 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 17, 2018.
- #15 (Adolescent, Tijuca, male). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 19, 2018.
- #16 (Adolescent, Tijuca, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 19, 2018.
- #17 (Adolescents, Andaraí, 2 male). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 20, 2018.
- #18 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 23, 2018.
- #19 (Adolescent, Botafogo, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 24, 2018.
- #20 (Adolescent, Botafogo, male). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 25, 2018.
- #21 (Adolescents, Gramacho, 2 male). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 25, 2018.
- #22 (Adolescent, Andaraí, male). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 26, 2018.
- #23 (Adolescent, Tijuca, male). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 26, 2018.
- #24 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 30, 2018.
- #25 (Adolescent, Andaraí, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, July 31, 2018.

- #26 (Adolescent, Andarai, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 01, 2018.
- #27 (5 School Cooks, Andarai, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 02, 2018.
- #28 (Adolescent, Andarai, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 03, 2018.
- #29 (Adolescent, Botafogo, male). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 06, 2018.
- #30 (Adolescent, Andarai, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 07, 2018.
- #31 (Adolescent, Gramacho, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 08, 2018.
- #32 (Adolescent, Gramacho, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 08, 2018.
- #33 (Adult, Tijuca, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 09, 2018.
- #34 (Adolescent, Andarai, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 09, 2018.
- #35 (Adolescent, Andarai, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 10, 2018.
- #36 (Adolescent, Ipanema, female). Interview by Thabata da Costa. Personal interview, Rio de Janeiro, August 10, 2018.
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