

Daniel Robins  
Department of Geography & Sustainable Development, University of St Andrews, Fife, UK

**Correspondence**  
djr23@st-andrews.ac.uk

# **Brazilians in London: ideology, social class and motivations for migration, settlement and return**

## **Abstract**

The United Kingdom now boasts the largest Brazilian population in Europe (Margolis, 2013) but so far the processes behind this relatively new migration stream remain under theorised (Kubal et al., 2011). . In response, this article analyses the relationship between class, capital and ideology. The topic of Brazilian migration to London will therefore serve as a lens through which to examine questions around why people emigrate and why, especially to cities like London. Although increased access to economic capital certainly plays a role, this article argues that what is often overlooked is that what migrants do with this acquired capital can differ significantly and further, that these differences are related to social class and ideological outlook. The likelihood and manner in which they choose to settle or return is also linked to how closely that migrant identifies with the dominant ideology of the destination society.

**Keywords:** Brazil, ideology, migration, social class, London

## **Introduction**

Although numbers are difficult to gauge (Evans et al., 2007), the United Kingdom now boasts the largest Brazilian migrant population in Europe (Margolis, 2013) with estimates ranging from 150,000 - 300,000 Brazilians living in the United Kingdom, the majority of whom reside in London (Evans et al., 2011). Although there are several studies which address the topic (Evans et al., 2007, 2011, 2015; McIlwaine 2007; 2010 Kubal et al., 2011, McIlwaine, 2011), Kubal et al. report that Brazilian migratory processes have thus far been under theorised. In response, this article analyses the relationship between class, capital and ideology - is there a relationship between different motivations for migration and a migrant's ideological allegiance and social class and, if so, how do ideology and social class affect the way migrants perceive their migration experience?

The topic of Brazilian migration to London will therefore serve as a lens through which to examine questions around why people emigrate and why, especially to cities like London. The article is structured as follows: part one will provide a review of the literature on Brazilian migration to the United Kingdom. Part two will explain the research methodology employed in producing this article. Part three provides a brief chronology of recent Brazilian migration to the United Kingdom. Part four will draw on interviews with Brazilian residents of London. It will situate the findings within the context of migration theory, with a view to examining the relationship between migrants' social class, their ideological outlook and migration processes.

### **1. Literature on Brazilian migration to the United Kingdom: economic, social, political and cultural factors.**

There have been to date, three population studies (Evans et al., 2007, 2011, 2015) and one explicit attempt at recording the history of Brazilian migration to London (Kubal et al., 2011). There has

also been a good deal of qualitative research conducted. The following are of note: Torresan (1994) is credited with pioneering the topic of Brazilian immigrants in London. Roesch (2000) also wrote of the experience of those who immigrated, highlighting the contrast between the realities of the immigrant experience against the expectations of the migrants. Cwerner (2001) used the example of Brazilian migrants to explore how concepts of time are affected by and affect the migration experience. Aguiar (2009), Barcellos et al. (2009) Frangella, (2010) and Brightwell (2011) examined the interplay between Brazilian food and other cultural artefacts and migration to the United Kingdom. Sheringham (2011) chose to focus on the role of religion in the migration experience. More recently, Lima and Martins (2012) have written about the motives behind migration and resettlement. There have also been a few empirical attempts at examining Brazilian migration to the United Kingdom (Jordan and Düvell, 2002; Jordan and Vogel, 1997; Bloch et al., 2009). Kubal et al. (2011) note that these have been lacking any theoretical analysis (3).

Wider literature on Brazilian migration examines a diverse range of factors influencing people's decisions to migrate, settle or return. In, *Goodbye Brazil* (2013), Margolis focuses on the phenomenon of Brazilian emigration from a global perspective, and examines migration to Japan, North America and Europe. Chapter Two, entitled 'Why They Go' recounts the key 'push' factors which led to Brazil experiencing comparatively large scale emigration for the first time. Margolis cites the economic crises witnessed in the 80s and 90s which led to hyperinflation and low salaries, combined with the general disillusionment with Brazilian politicians. Sales (1999) termed this the 'triennium of disillusionment'. Jordan and Düvell (2002) also note the role of the economic problems Brazil faced in the 1980s and 1990s as key explanatory factors in accounting for emigration during this period.

Dias and Martins (2013) and Martins (2014) explore how Brazilian migrants to London, who may initially frame their decision to migrate in economic terms often begin to re-evaluate their aims beyond purely economic factors. They thus seek to establish the limits to traditional migration

theories which privilege economic 'push-pull' factors in explaining migration patterns. Similarly, in their study of return migration from the United States and Europe back to Brazil, Pereira and Siqueira (2013) attribute only partial causality to economic factors in explaining the motivation to return. Instead, they highlight the effect of emotional and familial factors. They also draw attention to what they term, 'life-style migrants' who frame their migration decisions in terms of personal enrichment rather than economic motivation. Roman-Velazquez (1999) writing on Latin American migration to London, emphasises the importance of politico-institutional policy developments in shaping migration history (29-45). When answering the question, 'Why Britain?' (33) as a destination for Latin American migration, Roman-Velazquez examines the key institutional 'pull' or demand side factors and the role of mesostructures in spurring immigration from Latin America. She highlights the role of travel agents and recruitment agencies who began to specialise in helping Latin Americans enter the United Kingdom to find work. In his examination of the use of tourist visas as a method of entry, Dias (2013) also explores the role of institutional mesostructures in aiding and shaping migration streams.

## **2. Methodology**

This article uses census data, first hand semi-structured interviews which contain elements of oral history, answers to written questionnaires, informal unrecorded interviews with Brazilian migrants, primary archival research, as well as secondary literature.

A total of seventeen face-to-face recorded interviews conducted either in person or via Skype and two written interviews were completed. The semi-structured interviews were used to examine the importance of social and cultural factors in explaining migration patterns. In addition, data gathered from interviewees helped to map changes in the Brazilian population. Occasionally interviews would be conducted informally without being recorded. Using field notes proved to be

useful since it allowed for greater flexibility regarding how and when informal interviews could take place rather than being limited only to situations where it would have been possible to conduct a recorded interview.

### **3. A history of Brazilian migration to London: 2000 – present day**

The late 1990s to the early 2000s witnessed the peak of Brazilian economic migration to the United Kingdom. There are several factors which help to explain this phenomenon. Pellegrino (2004) identifies the economic recession which gripped the Southern Cone countries as a key factor in increasing the pressure to emigrate from the region. The impact of September 11 on United States immigration policy was also significant (Margolis 2009, 2013). Many migrants elected to move to London as an alternative to the United States, a response to the extensive restrictions introduced after the event. It is also possible that the increase was, at least in part, caused by 'chain migration' (Piore, 1979) or 'network migration' (Massey et al., 1998), whereby migration streams are intensified due to the influence of social networks in encouraging others to emigrate; but there have been no studies specifically testing this hypothesis in the case of Brazilian migration to London.

The demographic of Brazilian migrants also began to diversify. From the 1990s until around 2000 most Brazilian immigrants had been young, middle class and predominantly from Southern and South-Eastern states. After 2000, migration flows from poorer central and north-eastern regions began to increase (Evans et al., 2011; Frangella, 2010; Brightwell, 2010). As it happens, Torresan's prediction from 1994 proved accurate: as well as a 'downward shift' in the economic demographic of migrants, evidence of a more permanent immigrant population began to surface such as the founding of migrant institutions such as ABRIR (Brazilian Association for Educational Initiatives in

the United Kingdom) in 2006 and *Casa do Brasil* (Brazil House - an immigrant advisory service) in 2008. Families were also beginning to migrate. (Kubal et al., 2011).

The 2000s also witnessed the appearance of a ready supply of cheap and legal labour from Europe and there is evidence that Europeans began to take over many of the jobs previously held by Brazilians. One interviewee recalls:

the doors were closed to non-European people in England because of opening up to Europe. There were more Polish people and other countries joining the European Union. There was a significant amount of Brazilians working the services industry here, catering for example. Lots of us in construction as well. So my friend said, 'Marcelo, I went to work on Monday and I was told I don't have a job there', so he had to leave because of that... so I believe at that time quite a lot of Brazilians left (Marcelo, interview, London, June 06, 2014).

These developments happened to coincide with a change in attitude from the Home Office which began to turn its attention to the 'problem' of Brazilian migration as if it was a newly discovered phenomenon. This is despite evidence that it had been fully aware of the situation since the early 90s (Torresan 1994: 32). Home Office statistics are revealing. In 1998, 177,000 Brazilians arrived to the United Kingdom with only 477 refused entry. In 2006, 182,000 arrived and 4895 were refused. In 2005 it was revealed that immigration authorities had in fact been secretly targeting Brazilians since 2003. This is reflected in the figures. 2002 saw 130,000 Brazilians enter with 2400 refused. 2003 saw 127,000 enter with 4385 refused. The 'crackdown' was said to have been instigated, 'after a tip-off that gangs of people traffickers were smuggling them in' (McSmith, 2005).

Blanchette and Silva (2012) take issue with the claim that Brazil is a problem country for human trafficking. They found that all claims that Brazil is a major exporter of trafficked sex workers, from the United Nations' 2010 report on 'The Globalization of Crime', to the United

Kingdom Home Office's own research (Marsh et al., 2012), were based on a single citation: a 2002 Brazilian Government sponsored study - PESTRAF: *A Pesquisa Nacional sobre o Tráfico de Mulheres, Crianças e Adolescentes* (National Research on the Trafficking of Women, Children and Adolescents) (Leal, 2002 *seen in* Blanchette and Silva, 2012). Unconvinced by the methodologies the study employed, Blanchette and Silva argue that PESTRAF did not so much discover the problem of human trafficking in Brazil, but invent it.

There is also evidence that the social demographic of Brazilian migrants is shifting again. Almost all interviewees had noticed an increase in middle class migrants, and a decrease in poorer migrants in recent years. A comparison of the three population studies conducted by Evans et al in 2007, 2011 and 2015 also indicates a decrease in those who came to the United Kingdom primarily looking for work, an increase in those with European Union passports, and an increase in those coming to study. Not only are poorer, economic migrants finding it harder to be accepted into the country by United Kingdom immigration authorities but since the economic crash of 2008, it has also become more difficult to find employment which will pay sufficient wages to save money. One interviewee, describes the situation:

I came across a lot of people in those days, 1994, who were, I think, up to 2003, 2004, people still coming with this idea that it was easy to get work and make money quickly. That idea is, I think, is less valid now. You have more restrictions now, and what they found, the economy changed here. They have to work much harder to make the same amount of money they were making ten years ago (Maria, interview, London, June 01, 2014)

Consequently, many have been prompted to return to Brazil (Margolis, 2013). This resulted in a decrease in remittances to Brazil by migrant workers of 23.6 percent from 2008 to 2010 (Peixoto,

2010 *seen in* Margolis, 2013). Although rates of emigration to the United Kingdom have been decreasing since 2008 (Kubal et al., 2011), the population is continuing to grow. Brazilians continue to migrate to the United Kingdom, either from Brazil or from other European countries such as Spain and Portugal (Plummer, 2012). As one immigrant put it, 'I remember when I first came here in 2008 and people were talking about crisis in the U.S. crisis in Europe. When they asked me I would say: crisis?! I lived in Brazil for twenty-six years, there is no crisis here: crisis was my life before' (Martins, 2014: 29).

#### **4. Ideology, social class and motivations for migration, settlement and return**

This section will examine the motivations behind Brazilian migration to London. The concept that a person's ideological beliefs can play a role in influencing international migration streams is one that has received little attention in academia. Wang (2005) is one of very few to have written at length on the subject in her study of the link between Chinese academics' ideological allegiance and their migration decisions. When it comes to Brazilian migration, some have touched on the importance of taking ideological motives into account. Margolis (2013) asserts that there is often more to a migrant's motivations the simple economic gain. She notes the cultural reasons for many Brazilians wanting to emigrate which she ties to the, 'widespread ideology that all that is modern is located abroad in the United States and in Western Europe' (18). For many Brazilians, the only way for them to enjoy a consumerist lifestyle, is to emigrate.

This concept of ideological migration in the Brazilian context is explored by Beserra in her study of Brazilian migration to Los Angeles (2003). She makes two important contributions. First, she tackles the ideological underpinnings behind individuals' motivations to migrate. Specifically, she draws a link between the penetration of, what she terms American ideology into Brazilian society and the motivations behind migration. For Beserra, 'migration is a clear outcome of

economic and cultural disorders produced by capitalism' (2003: 210). Second, inspired by Bourdieu's (1987), idea that the concept of 'capital' does not have to remain confined merely to the economic, Beserra calls for the inclusion of types of capital other than economic ones in understanding migration processes (10). Specifically, the acquisition of cultural, informational, social and symbolic forms of capital are often the end goal of which the acquisition of economic capital is only a means. While noting that economic reasons have been the primary factor in sparking Brazilian emigration she warns that:

economic reasons... must not be mistaken by simple, empty, and straight expressions such as, "to make money" and "to improve life". Especially because behind the need for "making money" and "improving lives" lies a very particular ideology that must be unveiled to allow a deeper understanding of the immigration process from the perspective of its actors, the immigrants (2003: 10).

She argues that American and capitalist ideology are effectively identical, and goes on to propose that, "Brazilian immigration to the United States [and by extension, the United Kingdom] be understood in terms of the ways American imperialist ideology has penetrated Brazilian society' (13). Further, this same ideology is responsible for the uneven development of global capitalism thus creating economic 'push' and 'pull' factors. Beserra also draws attention to the concept of capitalist globalisation as modernisation in its positioning of itself as developed, since, to be functional, this position necessarily relies on an undeveloped 'other'. In the contemporary context, the place of the 'other' is filled by that of the migrant, 'from whom fellow citizens have to defend their space and culture' (14). Despite their role as the 'migrant other', the social class which Brazilians occupied back home still plays an important role in determining the place that the migrant will occupy in their destination society.

#### 4.1 Social class

In the case of Brazilian migration to London the issue takes on new dimensions due to the context and demographics involved. First, there are, broadly speaking, two groups of Brazilian migrants in London: those from the middle class and those from the lower middle class. The rich have no need to migrate and the poor cannot usually afford to come to a destination like London (Margolis, 2013; Van Hear, 2014). Brazilian migrants thus tend to come from a rather narrow band of society. Since, as Kearney and Beserra note, within migrant groups, 'the borders between class identities are typically blurred or even non-existent' (2004: 4), the fact that the two are so close to each other demographically means it is more helpful to view it in terms of a spectrum rather than a hard and fast duality. Second, this lack of a sharply defined class boundary is exacerbated by the way migrants are perceived in their destination society. Margolis writes:

In London, the simple fact of living in England... connotes middle class independent status regardless of the type of jobs Brazilians hold there. Then, too, Brazilians in middle class and otherwise – are part of an undifferentiated mass of immigrants from Latin America (2013: 107).

Interviewee comments mirrored Margolis' claim that migrating has a levelling effect on Brazilian migrants since, in the beginning at least, the two groups often find themselves working side by side. These factors result in an emphasis on the divide between the two groups: a reaction to the sudden blurring of social boundaries which were previously held rigid in Brazil. As Martins (2014) writes, 'the greatest differentiation occurs among Brazilians themselves' (15). Horst et al.'s (2016) research into the role of social class in Brazilian migration points to similar findings. Horst et al. revealed

that they found a distinct emphasis within the migrant's rhetoric of the differences between the two groups. This was most pronounced in cases where, outwardly at least, the differences appeared hard to detect, when the two groups found themselves working in the same jobs for example.

#### **4.2 Cultural migrants vs. 'the transnational ethnic community'**

The majority of Brazilians who migrate to London form part of what Roberts (1995) terms the 'transnational ethnic community'. They view their migration as temporary, which, 'discourages their making long-term commitments, economic, social or cultural in their host country' (63). For this group, material, social and cultural transnational connections to their home country are of vital importance. It has been noted that one of the defining aspects of Brazilian migration to the United Kingdom is the temporal flexibility which many migrants display regarding the length of their stay (Cwerner, 2001: 17). However, it seems that those who do eventually view their stay in more permanent terms often, do so for cultural or social reasons (Dias and Martins, 2013; Martins, 2014; Torresan, 1994). Those who migrate predominantly for economic reasons tend to stay for less time (Cwerner, 2001: 29). There is thus a distinction between those whose migration project is motivated by economic factors and those who privilege cultural or ideological factors. This distinction can be used to shed light on the differing ways in which transnational social, cultural and ethnic institutions and networks are viewed by migrants. Economic migrants, often come to London *despite* the huge difference in culture compared to that with which they are familiar. For those who come for these reasons, transnational social networks or the 'economy of *saudade* (which can be loosely translated in this context as 'homesickness'), manifested in Brazilian cafés, shops, churches, social institutions such as *Casa do Brasil*, provides a valuable source of practical help in finding employment and accommodation as well as psychological cushioning against the trauma of being removed from one's home culture (Brightwell, 2012; Frangella, 2010).

Van Hear's (2014) study on the role of social class in the context of forced migration comes to a similar conclusion. He observes that for migrants from less wealthy backgrounds, 'what they lack in financial capital or wealth they must find in social capital...the poor are here converting social capital into financial capital' (29-30). For other migrants, usually those from more middle class backgrounds, the move to London is less likely to be articulated as economically motivated and more by the desire to acquire other forms of capital be they cultural, informational or symbolic. For this group, it is not a priority to establish a sense of belonging to a wider Brazilian community while they are living in London. As several interviewees noted they often deliberately avoid other Brazilians precisely to discover new social perspectives and experiences. This notion is also reflected in Brightwell's (2012) research into the relationship of the Brazilian immigrant to Brazilian food while living in London. For many, Brazilian food acts an important transnational link to their home country. She notes that Brazilian food, 'became a way of giving form to diasporic culture and a means to "transport" consumers "home"' (70). Still, she also encountered those who displayed the opposite attitude to consuming Brazilian food. Quoting one interviewee, Brightwell writes, 'I honestly don't eat *coxinha* and *Guaraná* and I'm not going to pay for it. It is not that I don't like it, but I am not here to live the Brazilian life. I came to broaden my tastes (Interview with V. female, 40 years old, lives in Harlesden, 7 October 2009) (72). Similarly, when it was suggested to a middle-class interviewee, that for many migrants, recreating Brazilian cultural artefacts and experiences was an important aspect of their psychological armour against the trauma of migrating she exclaimed, 'But all the Brazilians I know came to London to escape Brazilian culture!'. Two recent large scale quantitative studies on the United Kingdom's Brazilian population (Evans, 2015; Carling and Jolivet, 2016) confirm these themes of ambivalence towards transnationalism and an emphasis on cultural rather than economic reasons for migrating.

#### **4.3 Problematizing Transnationalism: the case of Brazilian migrants**

‘Diversidade de Oportunidades: Brasileiras no Reino Unido, 2013 -2014’ is the most recent large scale quantitative survey of Brazilians living in the United Kingdom conducted by Evans et al. (2015). The survey was not random and it cannot be said with certainty that it represents the entire Brazilian population of the United Kingdom. Still, with 700 responders, the authors are confident that ‘it is indicative of the characteristics and experiences of many Brazilians that live in the United Kingdom’ (8). It is thus a useful document in demonstrating that there exists a sizeable number of Brazilian migrants whose social and cultural practices do not conform to established conceptions of transnational migrant communities and whose motivations to migrate, settle and return are difficult to account for using traditional theories of migration.

Although social networks often help Brazilian migrants find initial employment (Evans et al., 2015: 29), many respondents in the survey stated that it was unimportant for them to socialise with Brazilians (46 percent) while some avoided socialising with Brazilians altogether (34 percent). Similarly, when questioned on their leisure activities, the majority chose non-Brazilian venues and consumed non-Brazilian entertainment media. In fact, within the categories of social activity recorded, responders were much more likely to partake in activities such as sports, cinema and bars with non-Brazilians and in non-Brazilian venues and contexts. Amongst migrant populations, the two most common forms of social engagement with transnational support networks are sending remittances and helping others migrate (Horst et al., 2016). But it seems that middle class Brazilians in London do not commonly engage with either of these practices. As Horst et al. (2016) observed, ‘those in affluent positions feel that their networks are not in need of either form of assistance’ (104). This discovery by Horst et al. is important because, as Margolis (1995) notes, those who send regular remittances are more likely to have a closer identification with their community of origin, than that of their host nation and are thus more likely to return to their country of origin. This suggests that middle class Brazilians in London are not only of a much more individualistic bent, but are more likely to settle in the host country.

#### 4.4 Emigration

People from the south, they usually come to further their studies. It's usually a career move, or a self-improvement project. It's never for money (Andrea, interview, London, July 01, 2014).

As noted in the previous section, the historical reasons for most Brazilian emigration have been mainly economic. However, there is a degree of disagreement in the existing literature about the reasons why Brazilians have migrated to London more recently. Jordan and Düvell's (2002) study of Brazilian undocumented migrant's records that, 'the great majority of the interviewees from Brazil ... told us that their main or only reason in coming to London was to work' (86). Jordan and Düvell (2002, 1997) identified three categories of response from undocumented migrants regarding their stated reasons for migrating which they frame in terms of 'narratives'. The first they name 'the traveller's account' in which migration is framed in terms of personal development and adventure. The second is the 'learners account' which portrays migration as an investment in human capital, a way to gain new skills (like speaking English) and professional experience which would aid the migrant upon returning to Brazil. The third, 'the earners account' framed their migration as a way to earn and save money for some future project. Amongst all three groups, Jordan and Düvell found that, within their sample of irregular migrants, the ready availability of informal employment in London compared to other more heavily regulated destinations, often proved to be the determining factor.

While Jordan and Düvell treat the 'travellers' and 'learners' accounts as 'narratives', Bloch et al. (2009) are more ready to take their interviewees at their word. Their study of Brazilian migrants

notes that Brazilians' motivation to migrate usually stemmed more from social considerations than economic or political ones. (23).

Unlike Jordan and Düvell 's experience (2002), it was rare for my interviewees 'narrative' to break down upon further questioning as to why they migrated and how they came to live in London on a more permanent basis (128 - 132). Only one interviewee's responses seemed to fit with Jordan and Düvell's experience. Although he had been living in the United Kingdom since 2004 and had stated that one of his motivations for choosing the United Kingdom was 'to experience the English language', his English was still poor enough for the interview to be conducted in Portuguese. This suggests that the other stated motivation that, at that time the migratory laws gave students the opportunity to work while studying legally, was the dominant consideration. It is important to emphasise that for a substantial number of migrants, explicit economic motivations are not cited as the primary factors (Torresan, 1994 and Martins, 2014). There were diverse explanations from the interviewees in response to the question of why they had chosen to leave Brazil. There were of course those who stated they had moved to London 'for a better life' or, simply, 'to work' but a wealth of other motivations were also apparent. Some cited the breakdown or formation of personal relationships as the key factor. Others cited academic or professional study and other 'self-improvement' related goals. Some, like 'Andrea', even explicitly stated that their migration was not economically motivated, 'I certainly did not move to Europe for money. I used to earn very good money in Rio. I can't compare. I was earning good money. I was living a good life. It was never for money, that I left' (Interview, London July 01, 2014).

How then are we able to explain the discrepancy between the findings of Jordan and Düvell (2002) and those of others who emphasise non-economic motivations for coming to London? Regarding stated reasons for migrating there appear to be two distinct groups: those who frame their decision to migrate in economic terms and those who frame it in other terms be they social, personal or cultural. Are there any useful distinctions between these two types or does the distinction largely

exist only within the discourse of the migrants? Are Jordan and Düvell right to view these non-economic motivations merely as a kind of 'narrative' or 'discourse' (*see also* Margolis, 2013: 22) which only serves to obfuscate the more fundamental economically driven motivations behind migrant's actions? A key source of information on Brazilians migrants in the United Kingdom comes from a recently completed study conducted as part of the THEMIS (Theorising the Evolution of Migration Systems in Europe) project at the IMI (Institute for Migration Studies) based at the University of Oxford. It is also notable because it is one of the only studies to allow us to directly compare Brazilians with other migrant groups. The study collected data from Brazilian, Moroccan and Ukrainian migrants who had moved to three destinations in Europe: Norway, Portugal and the United Kingdom. Between 2010 and 2013, a total of 3221 migrants in the three destination countries were interviewed as well as 1517 people in the origin countries who were either return migrants themselves or somehow related to those who had migrated. The project thus provides the largest scale quantitative study of Brazilians in the United Kingdom to date. The statistical breakdown of the interviewee responses reveals some interesting information about the motivations and characteristics of Brazilian migrants in the United Kingdom suggesting that Brazilian migrants to the United Kingdom and to Europe in general are something of an anomaly when compared to other groups, in terms of their motivations to migrate.

Regarding the findings of the study, Carling and Jolivet (2016), note that, 'Brazilians stand out as the most heterogeneous group in terms of motivations for migration' (37). In particular, the concept of Brazilians being primarily economically motivated migrants (Jordan and Düvell, 2002) is called into question. First, 72 percent of the Brazilians interviewed had a positive perception of the economic opportunities in their own country. Comparatively, only 53 percent had a positive perception of economic opportunities in Western Europe (Carling and Jolivet, 2016: 34). In fact, 'opportunities for work' was only the third most popular reason given for the decision to migrate to the United Kingdom amongst the Brazilian subjects. 'Learning a language' and 'experiencing

culture' are cited as the most popular answers. This renders the Brazilian migrants to the United Kingdom (most of whom are based in London) as unique amongst both their peers who moved to other European cities as well as the other migrants groups under observation. Carling and Jolivet go on to observe that the Brazilian migrants in general, 'tend to be more satisfied with the quality-of-life impacts of migration than with the financial benefit' (39). The lack of emphasis on economic motivations amongst Brazilian interviewees is also reflected in Evans et al.'s research (2015). When asked for their primary reason for emigrating, the most popular answer (34 percent) was, 'for a life/cultural experience'. Further, 39 percent of respondents stated they had specifically chosen the United Kingdom for the 'adventure/language/ culture/ quality of life' (Evans et al., 2015: 18). It is worth noting that although it may appear that 'quality of life' denotes an economic motive, there is often an underlying ideological element (Torresan, 2007; 2012).

Here, it becomes vital to consider the role of social class. The greater exposure to economic capital the migrant has had the more likely they will be to be able to successfully direct their migration goals towards accumulation of other forms of capital. This exposure to economic capital may not necessarily be direct in the sense of access to money. It has often already been translated into informational, cultural or social capital via quality of schooling, family influence and other environmental factors. Because capitalism forms the background in which these different forms of capital are sought after, accumulated and exchanged, this means that, to varying degrees, they are all dependent upon economic capital (social capital being the least dependent). For many middle-class migrants then the continued acquisition of economic capital may not be the end but simply a means to acquire other forms of capital. Class positioning also affects how deeply one has internalised the values of western liberal ideology. Margolis (2013) notes that many middle-class Brazilians have bought in to the idea that, 'Brazil still has not metaphorically shifted into what is thought of as "modernity"'. Brazilians can achieve such a transition only by moving to an industrialised country, that is, relocating away from all that is Brazilian' (18). Conversely, the true

economic migrant, in the sense of a migrant who has not bought into the notion that they can only 'succeed' in places like the United Kingdom does not view their movement abroad as anything other than to earn capital for a project back in Brazil.

#### **4.5 Settlement**

The reasons why people decide to settle permanently are often complex. It seems that those who do migrate purely for economic reasons rarely stay for long (Cwerner, 2001). The migrant who sees their migration and employment as, 'asocial... purely a means to an end' (Piore, 1979: 54) can rarely maintain this attitude for any concerted length of time (62). The settlement of migrants thus seems to be informed more by cultural and social factors than economic ones. For those who do experience an improvement in their economic or social status, the reasons why they would stay appear obvious but even here it is not necessarily only an increase in wages which dominates. Torresan (1994) points out that those migrants who do manage to make the transition from low skilled work to employment more in keeping with what they would engage in back in Brazil still cannot be said to settle purely because of economic gain. She points out that the concept of 'a better job' is not necessarily linked only to economic factors. It often encompasses factors such as being more applicable to one's knowledge base or simply providing a more enjoyable environment in which to work. Torresan goes on to cite other factors such as financial independence from family, the possibility of marriage and even the reinvention of identity as being of equal or greater importance than economic ones (101).

It is this access to other forms of capital which seems to determine the decision to stay then. These other forms of capital are dependent upon economic capital in the sense that the migrant can most easily access them in areas which boast a concentration of economic capital such as London. This explains why migrants specifically must move to a city such as London to successfully re-

invent their identities' as independent from their families and their original society (Torresan, 1994). For Beserra, this process is most accurately viewed in terms of the migrant identifying with Western liberal ideology in their willingness to engage with and become a part of a consumerist society. The goals migrants set themselves, be it acquiring skills or earning money, are ultimately to, 'socially reposition themselves higher than they were in Brazilian society before migrating. This means far more than just acquiring money or prestige in general. It means getting closer to the coloniser's stereotype and detaching oneself from the fate of a colonised person' (2003: 58). Even in cases where love and marriage are given as reasons for staying Beserra argues there is still an ideological influence. She notes Brazilians almost always end up marrying someone who through citizenship will enable them to reside permanently.

Let us return to Horst et al.'s (2016) observations about the emphasis in class differences within migrant discourse. They recorded many instances of middle class wives of European citizens talking dismissively of those 'economic' migrants who they suggested, had married their European partners for reasons other than love. 'We are not like them', they declared (Horst, 2013). Following Beserra then, it seems that while the motivation for marrying may be more directly economic in the case of lower middle class migrants, for the richer ones the motivation appears to be ideological: an identification with western culture and its citizens as superior to that of Brazil. Yet many of those who stay not only experience no rise in economic or social status, but may even experience a decline over time. Describing the situation of his friends who were still living in London, one interviewee stated:

The ones that are still here, not many of them had social mobility especially job mobility. They're still doing the same and to be honest some of them have even downgraded because of document issues as well. So, of the ones who are still here, just a few of them got a better

job. (Tiago, interview, June 07, 2014)

For Jordan and Düvell (2002) the relative ease with which migrants can find work in London is the primary factor for staying when it comes to those who are undocumented. The problem with Jordan and Düvell's emphasis on the 'pull' of the shadow labour market is that it seems to treat employment as an end rather than as a possible means to benefit in other ways from the experience of living in a city like London. In this vein, Dias and Martins (2013) and Martins (2014) argue for an understanding of migrants' motivations to stay that extends beyond traditional 'push-pull' conceptions of migration. Martins found that, although people may initially be motivated to migrate to London for economic reasons, either to earn money for a future project or as an investment in human capital via learning English for example, the reasons why people decide to settle are often tied to their identifying with the modern, urban consumerist lifestyle that living and working in a city like London allows (2014: 93-124). In this sense, the motivation to stay is often ideological rather than simply economic.

Take the example of two friends of an interviewee named 'Fernanda'. Both had been living in London for many years with no plans to return, had poorly paid jobs and were undocumented. In each case the availability of work for those in their situation was simply a means to satisfy other ends. The fact that they had not progressed economically was not a priority. 'Fernanda' explained that the first friend had stayed for so because the amount he earned was simply enough to satisfy his modest needs. He was not interested in earning to save or other 'self-development' goals. It was enough for him, 'Just to survive, just to get some money to pay the rent.... and, you know, be happy. He really feels satisfied with so little'. The situation of the second friend was more complicated. She was from a wealthy family in Brazil but had rejected this background. Despite having been recently diagnosed with a potentially serious medical condition, her parents were begging her to return to

Brazil for treatment, she preferred to remain living in London. For her, the importance of having her own financial independence and the freedom to assert her own identity outside the influence of her family, took priority over anything else. She had totally severed her identity from her original position with her family and society in Brazil and embraced her life as a free individual in a global city.

#### **4.6 Return**

As we have seen in the previous section there have been many 'macro' economic and political developments in recent history which have contributed to return migration, but, as I will demonstrate, at the level of individual experience, the reasons for returning are much more diverse. Pereira and Siqueira (2013) acknowledge that while, 'the current economic condition in Brazil and Europe is undoubtedly an important factor driving the return' (9), they argue that this is only one determinant amongst many. They found that factors such as changing family or relationship circumstances and the emotional longing (the Portuguese concept of *saudade*) caused by being away from one's homeland often played a major role in influencing the decision to return. Other issues such as the dramatically different weather and even societal conceptions of time (Cwerner, 2001) are also related factors in the migrant's rejection of the prospect of settling in London. These migrants find themselves unable to adapt, to re-invent their identity as a citizen of a global city like London. Their social, cultural and perhaps most importantly, ideological allegiance to Brazil proves to be the determining factor. The experience of one interviewee, 'Daniel' aptly illustrates this. 'Daniel' after several years living in London, had married a European and had secured a well-paid job working in a school. However, upon returning from a holiday in Australia he decided to have himself deported back to Brazil when re-entering the United Kingdom by refusing to properly

answer the immigration authorities' questions. He cited personal problems with his marriage but more fundamentally for him, a profound homesickness and longing to be with his family again after spending five years away from Brazil.

## **Conclusion**

This article provided an account of the history of Brazilian migration to the United Kingdom, specifically London. It dealt with the historical 'macro scale' factors which have affected Brazilian migration. It traced its origins to the turn of the century when migrants consisted primarily of students, to the first real influx via the political exiles in the 1960s, to the beginning of economic migration at the end of the 1970s, enabled by the Immigration Act of 1971 and the shortage of cheap labour in the United Kingdom. It recorded how a series of political and economic crises in Brazil in the 1980s such as hyperinflation, low salaries and disillusionment with the newly democratised political system conspired to create the first major exodus of Brazilian economic migrants. It then shifted its focus to the 1990s and 2000s which saw the peak of Brazilian migration to London, considering how factors such as September 11<sup>th</sup> and United Kingdom immigration policy helped to shape migration streams. It examined how and why the Home Office displayed such leniency to Brazilian migrants arriving on visitor visas. It concluded with Torresan's (1994) remark that the Home Office appears to be less concerned with preventing economic immigration, than controlling which demographic of economic migrants which are (officially or otherwise) accepted. Further, it seems that the inclusion of countries like Poland into the European Union had a significant impact on the attitude of the Home Office towards Brazilians as well as Brazilians' ability to find work in London. In addition, while the United Kingdom's economic downturn has made it harder for Brazilians to find employment, it has had little impact on the rate of migration.

The article then examined migration on the scale of the individual focusing on the interplay between ideology, class and attitudes to various forms of capital. It analysed migrants' decisions to emigrate, settle and return which extended beyond the confines of purely economic motives. In this respect, Beserra's (2003) use of Bourdieu's expansion of the concept of capital to encompass not only economic but cultural, social and political, proved fruitful. In addition, her framing of migrants' non-economic motivations in terms of their identification with Western liberal ideology allowed for a deeper understanding of migrants' decision making processes and offered an alternative to the economic explanatory models offered by those such as Jordan and Düvell (2002). Although increased access to economic capital certainly plays a role, it seems that an important, and often overlooked factor that affects a migrant's decision to settle or return is how closely that migrant identifies with the dominant ideology of the destination society. In turn, this identification with Western consumerism seems to be strongly correlated with the social class which the migrant hails from in Brazil. This mirrors Wang's findings regarding her studies of Chinese middle class migrants to the United States (2005). As such, a more thorough investigation is required into the role that ideological outlook plays in affecting both 'macro-scale' migration streams and the subjective experience of migration.

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