Urban Policies and Citizenship: Some Mechanisms for the Production of Urban Space in the City of Sao Paulo

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Further continuation of theoretical and practical propositions for achieving local and regional identity took place during the 1950s in England. These initiatives were largely associated with the townscape approach which emphasises the visual perception of the urban environment.

Very much embedded in the English picturesque landscape school of thought and the work of Cullen (1961) this method assumes that the visual perception of the urban environment, and consequent improvements of it, can be accomplished in an objective way. These improvements can be achieved through an understanding of the emotional effects created by the juxtaposition of its physical and visual elements. Architectural and urban design components of the physical form are seen as an art of ensemble.

Urban design themes that evolved from this approach found a firm application in the development of urban design guides and urban design briefs in England. The guides were largely used by local planning authorities (Essex Design Guide, 1973) to promote the design of new settlements in the spirit of the local and regional built form character.

Noake Bridge, Brentwood and South Woodham Ferres are typical examples of efforts made by Essex County Council to promote a particular regional character through new designs. Urban design principles ranging from landscape to large and small scale built form cues such as layouts, materials, characteristic grouping of dwellings and building detailing, were derived from the existing Essex settlements. Following the recommendations contained in the 'guide' was a pre-condition for obtaining planning or building permits. 'New Essex' identity is today widely appreciated by its many residents who see it as a positive departure from the earlier built 'anywhere' type speculative housing developments or shopping precincts.

Equally important has been the use of urban design briefs which contain urban design guidelines for specific sites. Some of the best examples of the British briefing practice designed specifically to promote a particular local character have been used in the designs of Broadgate Arena and Richmond Riverside developments in London. In these examples contextual reference is made to the existing morphological and typological patterns in order to create new places that would reflect the identity of that locality. Broadgate Arena, designed by Peter Foggo and Arup Associates "echoes great Georgian Squares, in this case the nearby Finsbury Circus" (Butina Watson, 1993, p.67) whilst Quinlan Terry's Riverside Development fits well into the overall Georgian morphological tissue of the area.

Some recent attempts have extended the practice of guidance and briefing into the sphere of local plans. The identification of 'design areas' as proposed by Hall (1996) or methods advocated by Evans (1996) make a significant contribution to the planning and design of local urban areas and small new settlements. Evans discusses a range of urban design qualities which are important in the achievement of local distinctiveness and sustainable settlements. He also proposes instruments and methods for achieving these qualities. Specific design guidelines, developed by Evans, are tested and incorporated into the Purbeck District Plan which will direct future planning and design of both the existing and new small settlements in Dorset.

Similar attempts to reinforce and achieve local identity of places are also being made in other developed and developing countries. Aldo Rossi's Centro Direzionale in Perugia, Jimmy Lim's houses in Malaysia or Boston's redevelopment strategy for its downtown artery are only a few examples that illustrate well the current directions being explored by designers and other professional and user groups. What seems important now is to develop conceptual frameworks for both articulating what local identity means in specific cultural contexts and to develop tools for the potential exchange of ideas and practices employed. Especially important in this debate and exchange of ideas are the views of the local users as they are the critical groups that decode messages put forward by designers and other producers of the built environment.

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Figure 1: Finchingfield village in Essex
Figures 2, 3: Noake Bridge in Essex
Figures 4, 5: South Woodham Ferres in Essex
Figure 6: A typical 1960s speculative development in Essex

Roberto ROCCO

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1. Introduction

Modern Brazil, was the result of a commercial venture. The territory of what is today the Federative Republic of Brazil, was "discovered" in the year 1500 by the Portuguese captain Pedro Alvares Cabral, who was, of course, searching for a passage to India and its immense riches of spices, precious stones and metals. Victim of a virulent exploitative colonial system, the country saw its original inhabitants eliminated by massacre and disease, and large populations transplanted from Africa to the new plantations of sugar cane and later to the gold mines. As many Portuguese sought prosperity in Brazilian lands, it became evident to the metropolis that the colony was no more than an easy opportunity for profit, and thus did not allow the building of a domestic economy. This is the historical frame in which the Brazilian identity was formed.

Slovenia on the other hand emerged as a modern nation with an established cultural identity, which we could largely identify by certain aspects of common heritage, such as language and religion.

2. Recent Historical Background

It was not until the independence of the country and the abolishment of slavery that massive currents of Europeans, Japanese and Syrio-Lebanese emigrants found their way to the southern part of the country, working first in agriculture and then migrating to the urban centres, where they soon constituted a solid middle and upper class. However, the prerogatives of power remained with the ancient Portuguese aristocracy, whose source of economic success and power in the country was always based on the external market. The aristocracy remained tied to its bonds of external capital, thus finding its specific place in the international division of labour as supplier of coffee. The "coffee elite's" of Sao Paulo and Belo Horizonte (Belo Horizonte is the capital of the state of Minas Gerais, in southern central Brazil; today it has a population of around 5 million inhabitants) found some kind of pre-eminence in such a balance of power.

However, Europeans brought with them revolutionary ideas, culture and initiative, and soon the signs of industrialisation begun to be felt. Meanwhile, the ancient bonds that united international capital to the national elite suffered a great coup, when in 1929, the New York stock exchange market crashed, taking with it the fortunes and the lives of many. In order to keep the price of coffee in the international market high, thousands of tons of coffee were burnt or used as fuel for locomotives. The coffee elite took to industry as an alternative for investment.

This coincided with the emergence of a new cultural elite, largely composed of Italians and Jewish immigrants, as well as members of the ancient elite who had been educated in Europe. Industry and modernism solidified together.

Meanwhile, in the Northern part of the country, the ancient sugar aristocracy conducted their business in the usual way. Although slavery had been abolished, the conditions of rural workers had not improved at all. The region of the Nordeste remained a colonial enclave. As opposed to the events in USA, where the industrial North won in the civil war against the agrarian South, thus imposing its hegemony, industrial Brazil would never take complete leadership in the country's political network and would be forced into alliances and concessions to the agrarian North. Eventually this led to a "dual" situation in civil society.

The Second World War gave a new impulse to industry, as well as to agriculture. The gap left by England, yet to be filled by the USA, gave space to Brazilian industrialists to affirm their position in the internal market. However, capital remained tied to international interests and it was not until 1960, with the installation of the first entirely Brazilian car plant (a Volkswagen plant which produced "Beatles"), that the industrial revolution really reached this part of the World.

From the 50s to the late 70s, mass migration took place from the Nordeste region to the more industrialised regions of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Millions of peasants left their land, bought by rich landowners at very low prices, who thus increased their power and wealth. Social issues were being discussed by a certain part of the elite, but when socialist vice president Joao Goulart took power in 1963, the ancient "owners of power", as described by Brazilian intellectual Mario de Andrade, frowned. At the peak of the Cold War, United States had already occupied a place of hegemony in the Americas, with the exception of Cuba. Any talk of socialism in the Continent would be regarded as a threat to the very own existence of the United States. Since the ancient elite's of Brazil feared loosing their "divine" control over the destiny of the country, a military coup was organised with the assistance of American specialists and supported by large sectors of the Army, for whom Socialism was somehow "anti-Christian" and "dangerous to the Brazilian family and Brazilian values". The middle-classes, overwhelmed by the perspective of a socialist government in Brazil and guided by American propaganda, supported the coup and gave it legitimacy. They soon discovered their error when their sons started disappearing in the dark basements of the dictatorship.

The chasm between the ruling classes in Brazil and the "people" (a term used to disqualify citizens of the lower classes) got larger and larger, and no social policy was ever implemented. Brazilian capitalists were even more tied to International Capital after massive investment to the country and International indebtedness increased spectacularly, in the 80s becoming the highest in the world. The petroleum crisis of 1973 only reinforced the dependence of Brazilian capital. Meanwhile, the city of Sao Paulo, the epicentre of industry in the country, received millions of destitute migrants from the Nordeste, impoverished by successive droughts.

The city jumped from 1 million inhabitants in the 30s to 16 million at the end of the 20th century. Large numbers have never found their place in the industrial revolution experimented by the country in the 60s and 70s. They constitute a non-class of disinherited people. The elite's have never made any attempt to include these populations in the concept of true citizenship, as it became clear, specially after redemocratization in the late 80s. Uneducated and deprived people were easier to control in a so called "democracy". Therefore, the country exists on a dual basis: a part of its population enjoys a high standard of living while a larger part dwells in complete poverty, comparable only to the poorest countries in the world.

These are the circumstances from which the scenario for the Production of Urban Space in the City of Sao Paulo was developed: complete separation of classes and therefore completely different projects of nationality and citizenship.

3. A Master Plan for the Megalopolis

3.1 A new (unsuccessful) approach to urban planning

The city of Sao Paulo has had several proposals for new Master plans since 1971, when the last one was voted on. None of them has been approved, mainly for political reasons. In 1990, the socialist administration of Luiza Erundina ("PT", Workers Party) proposed a new Master plan, which has been discussed with passion since then. Some of the proposed mechanisms were actually adopted later on by following administrations.

The most important contribution of the latest Plan were proposals for more democratic relations between the civil society and government. The idea was to emphasize the eminently political character of any Master Plan proposed by any administration, thus rejecting any technocratic conceptions that could have prevailed.

One of the concepts was that the Master Plan should be understood as a plan intended to guide the global process of physical development of the city according to certain social, economical and political aims previously chosen. Such a conception represented a great step in the direction of an ensemble of laws and rules less committed to technical issues (often used as an ideological instrument). The new concept would help create a dynamism of popular participation in the production of urban space and allow continuous changes in the perspectives of the plan itself, at the same time admitting the complexities of the processes of the production of urban space and the appropriation and use of such space. This would be achieved through various instances of popular participation and consultation.

The Master Plan would create the grounds for "transformation from the dynamism of urban space", both in the socio-economical and physical-territorial fields. These transformations would be taken as objectives in order to alter the historical tendencies of worsening of life conditions in the metropolis. Such an "historical tendency" is the progressive marginalisation of the populations with low income in relation to the benefits of urban life considered to be "universal", such as housing, public transportation and public services. Worsening of life conditions in the city is also related to the increasing costs of urbanisation, which make the city more and more expensive for all society and thus make it impossible for the government to operate on an acceptable level, causing degradation of services, public spaces, natural environment and the destruction of natural and cultural heritage.

Another objective was to "condition" the private sector (landowners and investors) to take responsibilities for the externalities of their actions, which are actually funded by the whole society, e.g. big developments, which need public investment in infra-structure. At the same time, it would direct the distribution of land-use in the ensemble of the urban territory, aiming at the optimisation of existing infra-structure, redirecting the processes of urbanisation and reurbanisation, whose uncontrolled tendencies of occupation, density, and land value generate undesired effects for the city as a whole.

This would be done by encouraging private investors to locate housing developments and some commercial and service activities in areas where the infra-structure of roads, electric power, sewage, etc., is currently under used, at the same time preventing the increase of density in regions where infra-structure is insufficient or already at full use. This would be organised by defining the current **"stock" of buildable area** in each part of the city, according to the installed infra-structure, as well as to others factors such as history, environment, preservation of landscape, etc. Apart from permitting a better usage of currently installed infra-structure, new developments would only be allowed in areas where more infra-structure was to be built with the participation of private investors. Speculation over property would, therefore, be directly connected to the capacity of investment of the Municipality and to the infra-structure already installed, and not exactly the contrary, as is the case nowadays.

The city would also be able to influence investors to direct investment in some strategic areas, by means of the **Urban Operation**, which is going to be discussed later.

The actual decrease of urban space prices resulting from this strategy would result in a tender for new housing developments and buildings in general. Such a decrease in prices would also coincide with the proposed increasing of the Urban Zone of the Municipality, cutting into rural land, which would increase the offer of land for development. Moreover, speculation would be inhibited by introducing a new form of taxing: **The Progressive Urban Territorial Tax**.

Finally, a **Fund for Urbanisation** was proposed. This Fund would be financed by a new form of taxation: The **Created Soil**.

Urban Planner Carlos Luiz Costa, one of those who helped elaborate the Plan, defines what he calls a "covenant" between the various social classes and the social agents involved in the construction of the city. Such a covenant would be based on "conditions of objectivity and trust acceptable by all social forces". In order to fulfill such conditions of objectivity, the Master plan would have to be explicitly polarised by precise objectives of a deep and evident significance to society as a whole and specifically for the "popular" classes fighting for better life conditions. Such objectives are extremely difficult to define in the Brazilian society, where there is no common denominator between the various social strata. The absence of such a "common social project" resulted, finally, in the rejection of the Plan by the powerful economical forces who dwell in the city, such as entrepreneurs, real estate societies, construction companies, landowners, etc...

In short, this "covenant" was made impossible by the elite's, who, in the propositions of the Plan, couldn't see any real opportunity for gain. Moreover, the redistribution of wealth, caused by such a plan, would represent a menace to the hegemony of certain political and economic groups.

3.2 Some of the mechanisms

The "Created Soil"

Created Soil constituted the most polemic mechanism proposed by the Master Plan. It implied the general reduction of the coefficient for building in the city, which generally represented from 2 to 4 times the total area of the plot. The new proposed coefficient would be 1 time the total area of the plot for new edification's. Every investor wishing to build more, would have to buy this right from the Municipality, which would be the one and only proprietor of all aerial space in the metropolis. This strategy would coincide with the previous strategies already described here, that is to say, the Municipality would be able to control speculation and occupation of saturated areas by tightly controlling the density in the areas where infra-structure was considered inadequate or inefficient. Each district of the city would have a **"stock of created soil"**, which would set the limit for new investments. Beyond that limit, investors would be asked to contribute to construction of new infra-structure if they wanted to invest in a saturated area. Some areas, considered to be over-saturated, would simply have no new developments, until conditions changed. The periodical revision of such conditions would be carried out by a **Paritary Committee**, with members from the Public and Private sectors (investors, landowners. citizens, architects, urban planners, commercial associations, etc.). This committee would also be in charge of the definition of the so called "stock of created soil".

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The Progressive Urban Territorial Tax

This mechanism, already in use in many cities all over the world, would allow the municipality the taxation of vacant plots, which are not being developed for speculative and other reasons. The taxation would be progressive according to the size of the plot, the existing infra-structure, but also progressive in time, discouraging speculation in areas well served by public infra-structure.

The polemics generated around the Progressive Tax had their origin in the misunderstanding and maldefinition of certain aspects of the Tax in relation to the Brazilian Constitution, which defines the "**Social Use of Urban Soil**" (it applies to the notion of productivity through use and doesn't infer the benefits of production of wealth to the society as a whole, i.e. an exclusive luxury condominium also has aspects of "social use"). Investors and Companies feared over taxation of plots and big landowners and companies violently rejected the new tax, fearing big losses in the real estate market. In fact, the strategy of such landowners and companies included heavy speculation with large plots in well served areas. Their activities somewhat explain the dynamics of occupation of soil in the metropolis of Sao Paulo, i.e. under the pretence of clearing illegal developments (slums) in distant areas, public investment is "attracted" to areas situated farther and farther away, which are then developed mainly for upper and middle class residents. This causes a continuous expansion of the urbanised area making infra-structure more and more expensive.

The "Urban Operation"

This was to be one of the main tools of government for directing investment into some "key" points of the city. In such operations, the usual building coefficient would be temporarily annulled in a specific area and investors would be able to build big developments, as far as they paid for the right of building vertically and financed the new infra-structure required. The urban operation would generally be connected to the construction of a new avenue or the occupation of industrial or public plots, which are generally very vast in a city in the process of de-industrialisation. Such urban operations could also be suggested by private persons such as developers and urban planners, or even district associations. Such projects would then be analysed and tested in public hearings.

The idea was that the local government would get back the money invested in the construction of the avenue or in the required infra-structure. The amount of new developments would be controlled by the "Paritary Committee", so that they wouldn't affect adversely the quality of life, environment and landscape undergoing change.

Since it would be impossible to conduct such an operation in a short period of time, the Municipality would issue *bonds* which would allow the construction of a set quantity of space at any time in the area of the urban operation. These *bonds* would be negotiated in the Stock Market, therefore allowing the general public to invest. The transaction of such bonds would be a source of revenue for the Municipal Administration and by good management of an urban operation the Municipality could in a relatively short period repay the initial investment.

3.3 Two Experiences

Two Urban Operations were actually conducted in the last years by right wing administrations: **Aguas Espraiadas** and **Avenida Faria Lima**. The former was an operation proposed by investors in order to remove a large slum on the banks of a small river, therefore liberating the area for large commercial developments. The area around it was already considered to be the new pole of attraction for ultra modern offices and multinational companies headquarters. A new avenue was build over the small water course, which was run through a pipe. Investors offered to build houses in faraway periphery for some of the 50.000 people removed. Since the slum occupied a public area, there were no legal constraints for their removal, and "of course" all the former dwellers of the slum would get better houses, although faraway.

A research conducted by architect and planner Mariana Fix showed that reality was not so rosy. Some dwellers were able to engage lawyers, who, supported by the Brazilian constitution, achieved large indemnities for their clients. At the same time, other dwellers were completely helpless and were forced to move to the periphery up to 50km from their previous homes, which in certain cases caused a complete brake of family and work ties. Public transportation being quite expensive in Sao Paulo, living near one's workplace constitutes a matter of great importance. It was proved that many families were not given any houses at all, and were simply forced to move to other slums in less privileged areas in the outskirts of the city. Many were removed by the Municipality itself to a supposedly ecologically protected area, where the city water reservoirs are. The area is subject to frequent floods.

Nevertheless Aguas Espraidas was considered to be a success. Middle class dwellers of the area were extremely thankful and their opinions were shown on interviews on TV and in the main newspapers. Only some voices of the removed people were heard, but not enough to change public opinion. Large buildings were erected in the area called "The Post-Modern City", housing banks and international companies.

The Avenida Faria Lima was proposed by architect Julio Neves, the "official" architect of the Sao Paulo right wing administration. It consisted of extending a very prestigious existing avenue into a residential areas and connecting it with other commercial avenues to the South and to the North, creating a super avenue called the "South Boulevard". This time the dwellers affected by the project were middle class and were able to establish an important movement for the defense of their neighbourhoods. Their activity was given media coverage where they questioned the necessity of the project. In fact, the Avenida Faria Lima was not a major traffic corridor, but building companies were eager to create new opportunities for investment in a prestigious area.

The local government started a large programme for convincing the population of Sao Paulo that the city needed its own "5th Avenue" and that the construction of new avenues was absolutely necessary for the functioning of a city plagued by constant traffic jams, although its own investments in public transportation are considered to be irrelevant. The economically driven groups also involved the media, where they stigmatised their opponents as romantic and backward people who wanted to deter "progress". Meanwhile, the organised civil movements engaged urban planners to present alternative proposals to Julio Neves'

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project. These had their counterpart in "public caravans" organised by the local government, who would transport people from distant peripheries in order to demonstrate their support for an avenue which their would probably never use, in exchange for snacks, T-shirts and colourful caps.

The resistance of the civil movement began to fail when some of its members were offered large sums of money for plots which would actually not even be used in the avenue, but would remain on its borders. Again, those who could bargain did so. Others, such as elderly people and single mothers, had to accept minimal prices from the Municipality for the purchase of their plots, and were not able to find similar houses in the vicinity. Even then, from the total amount of USD 120 million spent in the project, only ten million were actually spent on the building of the avenue itself, the rest being used in the various indemnities required. Those who had plots near the future avenue, and who at the beginning had fought against it, found themselves being offered enormous quantities of money by private investors, in some cases millions of dollars.

Again, the Avenida Faria Lima was considered to be a success, even though a small amount of bonds had been actually sold. Mr. Julio Neves, apart from being commissioned by the Municipality to complete the whole project of the avenue, also did some very important buildings that now stand on it.

4. Conclusion

There is no such a thing as a perfect mechanism for the development of Capitalist cities. Simply because mechanisms are not "good" or "bad" in themselves. Such mechanisms depend on a number of other factors, such as a diligent administration, a strong civil society, and above all, a common social project, which would allow society to sort its priorities and to protect the weak.

We can say, notwithstanding, that some mechanisms can be very "bad" if they are used ideologically, hiding the true motives of an administration or of the dominant classes behind it. It is very difficult to talk against "progress", because those groups that strive for domination, use the term to disqualify those who oppose their projects. In fact, what these hegemonical forces call "progress" is generally merely another opportunity for investment and the multiplication of capital and will not necessarily represent an improvement in the quality of life of the majority. In some cases, the contrary is true. "Progress", as it is understood by some, causes irreparable losses for society as a whole, but even greater losses for those who are not able to defend themselves.

Creating new opportunities of investment is therefore not necessarily the main role of a public administration, if it is not able to conduct the process properly, and to redirect private gain into public benefit.

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Figure 1: Avenida Paulista - business and commercial area
Figure 2: A recent housing developement
Figure 3: Structuring of urban space

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The Image of Ljubljana: Problems, Needs and Questions on Development

1. Introduction

Ljubljana, the capital city of a new country and a typical midsize Central European town is interesting for scientific and professional comparisons. For the city itself, relevant comparative research are beneficial, when they enable a reliable choice between development strategies, which are based on a real estimate of possibilities and maintaining comparative advantages of the city in the family of European cities. The process of European political and economic integration and the parallel process of strengthening regional differentiation also raise the issues of position, role and competitiveness between urban centres, the bearers of economic development and social transformation.

In the last years, emphasis has been given to cities, the dominant economic factor in the developed World. Namely, 80 % of all goods and services, in the European Union and North America, are produced in urban economies, i.e. cities and their pertaining areas or suburban regions. With the abolishment of trade barriers urban regions of the developed World have become true arena's of global economic competitiveness.

In all cities, especially in the most developed areas of the World, we can see, that they are the place of numerous and profound economic, social, sometimes even ethnic-racial differentiation, that hinder effective competition, thus hindering development on the national level. Today, problems of unemployment, pollution, uncontrolled immigration, even ageing of the population, coupled with obsolete economic and communal-technical infrastructure, weakening of social programmes, meaning less training for modern production needs and social activities, are in the forefront. Many of these problems connect and manifest themselves as synergetic effects, e.g. ageing and immigration, education and unemployment, etc.

Slovenian cities, especially the larger ones, operating under transition conditions, present concentrated problems in areas such as: reform of government and local self-government, privatisation, development of partnerships between the public and private sector, promotion of new housing policies in construction, renewal, maintenance etc.

2. The Background of the Project (European Urban Observatory)

The European Urban Observatory (in continuation EUO) was established in 1992 in the framework of the DG XVI RECITE programme of the European Union. The goals of the project were:
– establishing an integrated tele-communicational network and a decision support system to encourage strategic management of European cities,

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