

The London School of Economics and Political Science

**Who has the right to remain in place?
Informality, citizenship and belonging in Belo
Horizonte, Brazil**

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Abstract

The thesis looks at three conflicts related to the 2014 World Cup preparation in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. In each of the cases, affected groups – informal workers, informal residents and middle-class citizens – engage with the state to claim rights over space. It examines how the entanglements between social class and legal/institutional developments engendered through “peripheral urbanisation” shape the capacities of those groups to affect formal/informal boundaries and have their demands legitimated.

This research draws on the findings from a fieldwork in Belo Horizonte, which lasted eight months in total between 2014 and 2016 and involved archival research, participant observation and semi-structured interviews with relevant actors. Three cases are considered, which include: the Mineirão stadium redevelopment that displaced a group of informal workers while creating a conflict in a middle-class neighbourhood; the demolition of an informal settlement to make way for a transport infrastructure project; the construction of a hotel in a middle-class area against the will of local residents.

The thesis presents three key findings. Firstly, the urban space production is affected by citizens’ capacity to engage with the state. While the state-society boundaries are blurry, citizens are unevenly empowered to have their demands validated and avoid displacement, i.e. the loss of place. Secondly, while informal residents have their rights partially recognised thanks to the “insurgent citizenship” struggles of the past, informal workers are not entitled to compensation because of the disassociation of work informality debates from spatial considerations. Finally, middle-class politics matter, as middle-class residents are better equipped to validate their claims and protect their place in the city.

The research contributes to recent postcolonial debates on urban space production and informality. I show that both informal working and housing practices are interconnected through the place-making strategies of the urban poor as well as of the urban middle-class, all of which generate important implications for the reproduction of socio-spatial segregation and thinking of the Brazilian urban future.

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Abbreviations

ABAEM – Association of the Mineirão Stallholders

ADE – Special Guidelines Area

ADEMG – Management of the Stadiums of Minas Gerais

BNDES – National Bank for Economic and Social Development

BNH – National Housing Bank

CMH – Municipal Housing Council

COMAN – Municipal Environmental Council

COMOVEEC - Commission for Monitoring Violence at Sporting and Cultural Events

COPAC – Local Committee for a People’s World Cup

COPAM – Regional State Council for Environmental Policy

CPT - Pastoral Land Commission

ECLAC – Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

FMH – Municipal Housing Fund

FMHP – Popular Housing Municipal Fund

IAB – Institute of the Brazilian Architects

IPEA – Institute for Applied Economic Research

IBGE – Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics

ISI – Import Substitution Industrialisation

MAM – Movement of the Neighbourhood Associations of Belo Horizonte

MP – Public Ministry

MPL – Free Fare Movement

MRBH – Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte

MST – Landless Workers’ Movement

OUC – Urban Operation Consortium

PMDB – Brazilian Democratic Movement Party

PPP – Private-Public Partnership

PRN – National Reconstruction Party

PSDB – Brazilian Social Democracy Party

PSOL– Socialist Party

PT – Worker’s Party

PUC – Catholic University

PREZEIS – Plan for Regularisation of Special Interest Areas

SAJ–PUC – Legal Assistance Service of the Catholic University

SAP – Structural Adjustment Policies

SMARU–BH – Secretary of Urban Regulation of Belo Horizonte

SMH – Municipal Housing System

SUDECAP – Superintendence of the Capital’s Development

UFMG – Federal University of Minas Gerais

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UPD – Urban Participatory Diagnostic

URBEL – Urbanisation Company of Belo Horizonte

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Chapter 1 : Introduction

The ideological function is extended to a point where conservatives and radicals alike believe that their practice is not directed at each other but at the state; the world of illusion prevails. (Philip Abrams, 2006, p.126)

Brazil's fast-paced peripheral urbanisation (Caldeira, 2016; Maricato, 1979a) has produced socially segregated cities in which a vast proportion of Brazilians live in precarious conditions, excluded from the access to even the most basic services (Fernandes, 2007a). The country's development has generated a regime of differentiated citizenship in which distinct citizens – divided in terms of class, education and race, to cite a few – have unequal access to rights (Holston, 2008). Brazil has one of the most advanced urban legislations in the world, internationally praised for assimilating the “right to the city” (Lefebvre, 1968) as a collective right (Fernandes, 2007a). Nevertheless, the confluent unfolding of urbanisation and democratisation in the country has failed to disseminate the full entitlements of citizenship to all, albeit without leaving conditions of exclusion unchanged. Marginalised citizens emerging from the autoconstructed peripheries have claimed the city they produced by themselves, engendering channels for the recognition of their rights and participatory democracy (Holston, 2008). Urban space production, the state and citizenship are thus mutually constitutive processes that have unfolded in tandem.

The construction of Brazilian cities has happened mainly through informal processes (Maricato, 2010). Rather than an exception, informality is “the main socio-economic way to produce urban space in the country” (Fernandes, 2007a, p.203). According to census data for 2010, at least 11 million people live in informal settlements¹ spread around the majority of cities. Similarly, the Brazilian Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) estimates that 47.3% of the Brazilian labour force was employed in the so-called informal sector in 2014.² Informality is thus a widespread practice in the country, and there is a vast scholarship about the subject (Bonduki and Rolnik, 1982; Costa, 2007; Maricato, 1979a; Oliveira, 2003; Singer, 1982; Ulyssea, 2005). Although this thesis also focuses on informality,

¹ Since 1991, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics classifies illegal occupations of urban land as *aglomerados subnormais* (subnormal clusters).

² According to the IPEA, the informal sector is composed of employees with no contracts (*sem carteira assinada*) and self-employed workers.

I understand the concept in line with recent postcolonial debates that have sought to break apart from formal/informal binaries. This scholarship proposes that informality is a mode of urban governance deployed by the state, emphasising the co-existence of multiple types of “illegal” uses of space that enjoy varying degrees of legitimacy (AlSayyad, 2004; McFarlane, 2012; Roy, 2005, 2009a; Yiftachel, 2009). This literature, has overlooked Latin America (Varley, 2013) and, can elucidate the Brazilian case while simultaneously being informed by the country’s experience. Moreover, most of the urban studies literature about Brazil has focused either on the cases of Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo (Caldeira, 2000; Maricato, 1979a; Vainer, 2011; Valladares, 1981). I thus propose switching the focal point to Belo Horizonte, an “ordinary city” that can contribute to the task of expanding our understand of city-ness (Robinson, 2006). This research is hence concerned with the politics of informality in Belo Horizonte, honing in on the struggles to access and control space among unevenly empowered citizens (Hackenbroch, 2011; Schindler, 2014a, 2016).

In 2014, Brazil hosted the FIFA World Cup, with Belo Horizonte being one of the 12 host cities. The majority of interpretations within the critical urban literature concerning the Brazilian case has highlighted the use of such mega-events³ as a justification to shape cities according to ideals sponsored by state-capital alliances interested in the promotion of capital accumulation (Gaffney, 2013a; Sánchez and Broudehoux, 2013; Vainer, 2015). Although I do not disagree with the main conclusions of these analyses, I propose to use the spatial restructuring engendered by the World Cup as a lens to reveal the contested nature of the city’s production. The preparation for hosting the games has instigated a multiplicity of conflicts over urban space all over the city. I explore three such conflicts in detail, which include: the Mineirão stadium redevelopment that displaced a group of informal workers while creating a conflict in a middle-class neighbourhood; the demolition of an informal settlement to make way for a transport infrastructure project; the attempt to build a hotel in a middle-class area against the will of local residents. This thesis focuses on how such distinct social groups affected by World Cup-related projects have engaged with the state in order to protect their ways of belonging to the city. Although impacted by the same event, the different citizens analysed – informal workers, informal dwellers and middle-class residents – are not equally empowered when it comes to claiming their right to space.

³ Mega-events, as the Olympics and the World Cup, are usually described in the literature as “large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance” (Roche, 2002, p.1).

This research was conducted when the Brazilian society was bursting with contradictions. On June 2013, more than a million people of all major cities in the country took to the streets to protest a number of different things. These were the largest demonstrations since the movement for direct elections (*Diretas Já*) in the early 1980s (Saad-Filho, 2013). Although the 2013 protests are not the focus of this thesis, I believe they provide an interesting picture of the society under analysis and the context in which the research was conducted. The conflicts exposed by the demonstrations were still resonating when I completed my fieldwork. Therefore, before moving on to discuss my research questions and the structure of this thesis, I will briefly outline the events of 2013 to contextualise the moment in which this project was developed.

1.1. Setting the stage: social unrest in times of mega-events

The June 2013 demonstrations exploded in the end of a cycle of economic growth and decreasing poverty and inequality (Saad-Filho and Morais, 2014). During the 10 years of the Worker's Party (PT) federal government, economic growth was coupled with the implementation of social programmes for income redistribution. These initiatives benefited millions of people who supposedly left poverty to join the ranks of the "new middle-class"⁴ (Neri and others, 2008; Saad-Filho, 2013). As a result, until March 2013, the president Dilma Rousseff enjoyed a comfortable 80 percent approval rate. Therefore, when millions took to the streets, politicians of all ideological strands were taken by surprise – "the left, the right, and the government" (Saad-Filho, 2013, p.658).

I was living in Belo Horizonte, when the protests began. I had just submitted my PhD proposal, initially about the impact of the FIFA World Cup in Brazil from a human development perspective. I thus joined the demonstrations not only as a protester but also as a researcher, interested in what was happening and its connection to the mega-event, then my main object of study. I went to all the big demonstrations and also to several meetings and assemblies to discuss the organisation and the strategies of the protests. Being in the eye of the storm, it was hard to interpret what was really happening but impossible not to be drawn towards what seemed to be (and many say that it was) the most important political event of the country since the re-democratisation (Rolnik, 2013a; Saad-

⁴ The emergence of Brazil's "new middle-class" is a contested subject. For a discussion, see Pochmann (2012).

Filho, 2013; Singer, 2013). However, my attention was drawn to the heterogeneity of the demands featured and the consequent “interpretation war” (Rolnik, 2013a) symbolised by the many different contents of the posters carried by an inconsonant crowd.

In Belo Horizonte, most of the protesters were young educated people belonging to the middle-income strata.⁵ However, they were not the only ones marching. While navigating the demonstration, it was relatively easy to spot the division across ideological and class-based groups: people carried signs with particular messages, shouted different anthems and even donned different clothes. As the protests progressed, such differences became more striking. Anti-partisan demonstrators were bothered by the presence of militants from leftist parties who they believed were trying to use the protests to advance their own agendas. Moreover, seeing an opportunity to attack Dilma’s government, the opposition parties started promoting the anti-corruption demand, which was mainly targeted at the PT. Therefore, the multiplicity of interests represented in the protests eventually clashed, exposing conflicts that were latent in the Brazilian society.

The 2013 demonstrations began in São Paulo with protests organised by the *Movimento Passe Livre* (MPL – Free Fare Movement).⁶ Those were aimed specifically against a rise of 20 cents in the public transport fares for the city. The first phase of the protests started with a clear anti-capitalist agenda sponsored by the MPL. As described by the movement’s manifesto, they sought to defy a commodified transport system that constrained the population’s mobility and their free access to the city. The demand for a “free fare” is thus placed in a broader “right to the city” (Lefebvre, 1968) agenda: for the right to experience, to be part of and to participate in the city production (MPL, 2013). On 11 June, it was estimated that five thousand participants were marching peacefully against the fare rise when they were repressed violently by the military police. On 13 June, the scene was repeated, and strong images of police violence were circulated by the mainstream media. Those reports gained the sympathy of a much larger crowd, triggering the second phase of the protests (Singer, 2013). The demonstrations then quickly spread

⁵ According to polls conducted with a sample of protesters in Belo Horizonte on 22 June 2013, 55% of those attending the marches were under 25 years old whereas 29% were aged between 26 and 39. In relation to education levels, 66% were in higher education. Moreover, in terms of income level measured in minimum wages, 20% were in the first range (0 to 2), 36% were in the second (2 to 5) and, 24% in the third (6 to 10).

⁶ According to a manifesto published in the edited volume *Cidades Rebeldes* (Rebel Cities), the June demonstrations were not something new, but the result of many years of organised struggle in several Brazilian cities (MPL, 2013).

around the country, evolving to address such a multiplicity of issues that, as protesters claimed, they could not be listed in one single sign (see Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1. Protester in Belo Horizonte: “There are so many things wrong that they do not fit in a poster”

(Source: Filipe Rivelli, 20/06/2013)

In the following days, the demonstrations reached their peak. On 17 June it is estimated that 200 thousand people were present at protests in several cities across Brazil, and on 20 June more than a million people took to the streets (Winters and Weitz-Shapiro, 2014). Other groups soon joined with their multiple demands, switching the focus from the MPL’s initial agenda. It was no longer “only about 20 cents”, as several participants claimed in their posters (see Figure 1.2). The protests spread to other regional capitals, especially after the beginning of the FIFA Confederation’s Cup on 15 June. As pointed by Singer (2013), São Paulo then lost its centrality and the cities that were hosting the matches (Brasília, Fortaleza, Salvador, Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro) gained the spotlight. The event, which was “the country’s dress rehearsal for the Football World Cup” in the next year “catalysed the protests, just as it provided the perfect global stage” for the demonstrations (Conde and Jazeel, 2013, pp.437–438).



Figure 1.2. Protester in Belo Horizonte: “Do you still think it is about 20 cents?”

(Source: Filipe Rivelli, 17/06/2013)

As argued by Holston (2014, p.890): “A remarkable aspect of the street demonstrations that overtook Brazilian cities in June was that protestors of all classes came together around many common issues”. Others like Saad-Filho (2013, p.657) have observed that “the 2013 protests expressed a wide range of (sometimes conflicting) demands.” Since then, many have tried to provide an answer to what seems to be a puzzling question: why were people with different and perhaps conflicting agendas protesting together?

For Maricato (2013), those that have been closely watching the reality of Brazilian cities were not surprised by this seemingly sudden social unrest. From her perspective, those events were intimately associated with the decreasing living conditions in Brazilian cities observed in the last few decades. A similar point is made by Holston (2014, p.893) who argued that “what brought people together is the generalised demand for a different kind of city, one free and just”. Others have argued that, apart from the urban question, neoliberalism as a form of government could be understood as the common cause of all the heterogeneous grievances voiced by protesters (Magalhaes, 2015). The many different interpretations are not surprising if one considers that the meaning of the demonstrations itself was under dispute (Rolnik, 2013a). As pointed by Singer (2013, p.32): “They became a

kind of 'Journeys of Juno', with each person seeing in the clouds coming from the streets a different goddess."

While many have tried to explain the common ground between those multiple actors, I would like to emphasise their differences, which are symptomatic of the discussions I will develop in this thesis. Although joined in that cathartic moment of thrown-togetherness (Massey, 2005), the citizens, numbering in their thousands, were splintered into groups along the lines of age, education, class, race, etc. Their everyday experience of the urban space was diverse and they had hence distinct ideas of how the city ought to look like. The World Cup has catalysed the protests, revealing the multiple cleavages dividing the Brazilian society. In a similar way, the spatial restructuring led by the mega-event in Belo Horizonte has also revealed the contestations involved in the production of urban space.

1.2. The World Cup as a symbolic (and illusionary) unifier

The first protest in the city happened on 15 June 2013, the day of the first match of the Brazilian national team, when the *Comitê Popular dos Atingidos pela Copa* (COPAC - Local Committee for a People's World Cup)⁷ organised a demonstration at the Savassi square, an important landmark of Belo Horizonte, located in one of the more exclusive areas of the city. The COPAC had been created in 2010 to centralise the local struggles of the populations impacted by the mega-event. Since its creation, the group organised many activities but always with a reduced number of participants – usually activists, the affected groups and a few supporters. That day, however, things were quite different, as narrated by Magalhães (2015, p.225): the activists who were present quickly perceived "a striking heterogeneity in the crowd, which caused some initial strangeness." It soon became clear that many of the protesters were responding to the calls of the mainstream media. Unlike the usual suspects who attended the COPAC's demonstrations, those new faces were attending "events of this nature for the first time." However, he argues that one could not easily locate the newcomers in any "particular social class or socioeconomic profile."

That day, it was estimated that 8,000 protesters marched to the *Praça da Estação* (Station Square) where the FIFA Fan Fest was located and big screens had been installed for

⁷ The COPAC was a movement created to raise awareness regarding the impacts of mega-events. Each host city organised its own local committee. They were connected through the ANCOP, an umbrella organisation that brought together the twelve local committees.

people to watch Brazil's football match against Japan (Trajano and Antunes, 2013). On the next day, a new demonstration was scheduled. It was the first game in Belo Horizonte and a huge crowd marched from the city centre towards the Mineirão stadium. Other similar marches were organised during the two other match days in Belo Horizonte (22 and 26 June). In all the protests, the dynamic was the same: protesters would march to the stadium until they were stopped by the military police. The barricade was protecting what was proclaimed as the "FIFA territory",⁸ a space surrounding the stadium where only those with a ticket or permission from FIFA could enter.

In Belo Horizonte, the FIFA World Cup served as an umbrella that covered a multiplicity of rights-based claims and allowed them to be joined in one single massive protest - not aimed at the World Cup per se but utilising it to connect disparate claims. The mega-event became an amalgamation of everything people thought was wrong about the Brazilian state, the main target of all grievances. Figure 1.3 shows a few signs carried by protesters that represent different claims on the state that can be roughly organised around three topics: (a) corruption, (b) inefficiency, and (c) violence. All three could be associated with the World Cup preparation. Firstly, for protesters, the infrastructure projects fostered perfect opportunities for corruption in the form of bribes, *superfaturamento* (overbilling), and "*caixa dois*" (slush fund). Secondly, many protesters emphasised the large expenditures in stadiums vis-à-vis the poor quality of public services in the country. Thirdly, the violent police repression during protests, as well as the displacement of the urban poor engendered by World Cup projects, compared with the daily violence against marginalised populations. Therefore, although those demands are normally associated with different ideological positions in the political spectrum of the Brazilian society, respectively from right to left, they were all accommodated in a protest against the World Cup, which became the common enemy. The three marches from the city centre to the stadium, when over 100 thousand people completed the twelve kilometres walk together, reveal the importance of the mega-event as a symbolic unifying cause.

⁸ The "FIFA territory" was established by the Federal Law 12,663/2012, which was entitled "The general World Cup law". The law determined the creation of an area of economic exclusivity delimited by a two kilometres radio around the stadiums and other locations of events (e.g. the FIFA Fun Fest). For more information see Repolês and Prates (2015).

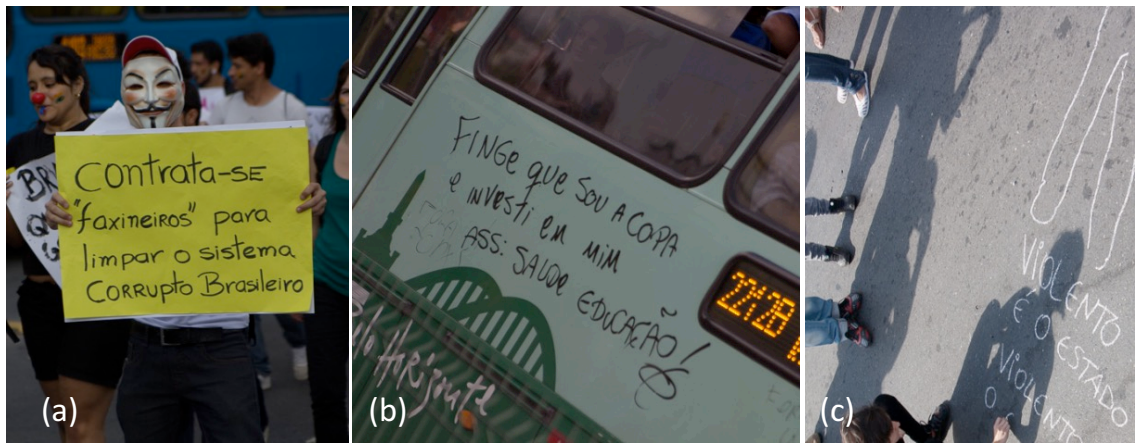


Figure 1.3. Protests in Belo Horizonte: different claims on the state

Source: Filipe Rivelli, from 17/06/2013 to 26/06/2013

Notes: (a) "We are hiring 'cleaners' to clean the corrupt Brazilian system"; (b) "Pretend that I am the World Cup and invest in me. Signed: Health and Education"; (c) "Violent is the state..."

However, although united at that moment in a struggle against the corrupt, inefficient and violent state, those groups were effectively at odds with one another. The different signs and demands reveal conflicting understandings of what the state is, and, more importantly, what it should be. Although the World Cup provided a target that could join multiple demands in one space, once we begin to unpack these divergent claims, it becomes clear that, after the end of the games, there would be no single cause able to reunite those opposing voices. That became more evident once FIFA finally left in 2014, and the conflicting grievances were represented in the federal elections. Brazilians then attended very different demonstrations to support the main candidates for the presidency: Aécio Neves, from the Social Democracy Party (PSDB) and Dilma Rousseff, from the Worker's Party (PT). The tight and contentious election that followed has revealed the divided character of the Brazilian society (BBC, 2014; Watts, 2014). In 2016, the impeachment process further exposed such historically entrenched antagonism fostered across the entanglements between ideology and social class (Philips, 2016a).

The same way that the mega-event has catalysed and revealed the contradictions of Brazilian society, it has also exposed the multiple interests involved in the making of the city. In 2014, I went to the field initially interested in investigating the impacts of hosting the 2014 FIFA World Cup on the everyday politics of urban space production in Belo Horizonte. In order to explore this process, I selected three projects related to the preparation for the mega-event that have either triggered or enhanced conflicts over the use of urban space.

They involved the displacement of informal workers, informal residents and the struggles of a middle-class neighbourhood against a real state project. Nevertheless, throughout the development of the research, the World Cup increasingly lost its protagonism, just like it also did for Brazilians. As I delve into the field, it became increasingly clearer that approaching those groups as populations “affected by the World Cup” was to regard them as that single crowd marching on the streets, ignoring their differences. The spatial restructuring led by the mega-event altered the pre-existent “power geometries” (Massey, 1991), causing groups to re-negotiate claims to space. This process revealed how the right to the city is mediated by categories: the middle-classes are not the same as the urban poor, just like neither of them are homogeneous groups. Those citizens relate differently to the state and are unevenly empowered to shape the city “after their own desires” (Harvey, 2008, p.38). The comparison with the June 2013 demonstrations is again useful in that regard. Although united at that moment, those conflicting voices that protested together for a “better country” have been historically more or less able to influence the routes to “progress”.

1.3. Research questions

In this thesis, I will focus on disputes over urban space production in Belo Horizonte/Brazil, contributing to recent postcolonial debates on the politics of informality. I analyse conflicts between state and non-state actors struggling to access, shape and control space (Cossa, 2016; Roy, 2009a; Schindler, 2014a). Those conflicts expose how different understandings of the urban are negotiated among different citizens who struggle to belong to the city. The main question of this thesis can be thus enunciated as follows:

How different citizens – informal workers, informal residents and middle-class dwellers – engage with the state and the law to claim the right to affect urban space production?

This question raises a set of relevant sub-questions, which this research will also address:

1) *How do different citizens analysed in this research engage with the state to claim rights to urban space production? What does that reveal about the role of the state in the (re)production of informality?*

2) *To what extent has the urban reform movement in Brazil engendered the “right to the city” among the urban poor living and working informally?*

3) *What strategies and discourses are employed by middle-class residents in their attempts to affect urban space production?*

In order to tackle these questions I have critically engaged with the urban informality framework as proposed by Roy (2005, 2009a) and developed by others (AlSayyad, 2004; Crossa, 2009, 2016; Hackenbroch, 2011; Kudva, 2009; McFarlane, 2012; Schindler, 2014a, 2016; Yiftachel, 2009). In this theorisation, informality is approached as the predominant mode of urban space production in the metropolises of the Global South.⁹ I argue that this approach provides an interesting framework to analyse the conflicts this thesis will address, while also being informed and expanded by this analysis. This research is thus concerned with the effort of postcolonialising urban studies by building theory “from the South” (Watson, 2009) and challenging the “geographies of authoritative knowledge” (Roy, 2009b).

In Roy’s (2009a) perspective on urban informality, the state emerges as a central entity, the sovereign capable of suspending its own rules to validate certain exceptions (Agamben, 1998) while suppressing others according to powerful interests at play. Given its centrality in this framework, I pay close attention to the role of the state in producing formal/informal boundaries. I also follow recent formulations (Haid, 2016; Tuvikene et al., 2017) that argue for a more nuanced view, acknowledging the blurriness of state-society boundaries (T. Mitchell, 2006; Painter, 2006) and revealing the centrality of non-state agents in shaping formal/informal boundaries (Hackenbroch, 2011; Schindler, 2014a). Moreover, I am interested in exploring how the citizens analysed engage differently with the state, revealing their uneven abilities to shape urban space.

⁹ In this research, the North/South divide is used critically and strategically to trouble concepts and expand our understanding of city-ness (Robinson, 2002). In this regard, although urban informality is a phenomenon mostly discussed in regards to the Global South, I do not seek to argue that this is a process absent from cities of the Global North. Ward (2004), for instance, discusses the case of Texas/US and shows how the well-known mixture of deep socioeconomic inequality and an absent state has engendered a situation in which unregulated subdivisions become the only alternative for low-income families to solve their housing situation.

A central point being argued in this research is that urban space production evolves in relation to the state and citizenship: those are mutually constitutive processes that affect one another. I thus engage with Holston's (2008) work, which explores the entanglements between democratisation, citizenship and urbanisation in Brazil. Looking at the autoconstructed peripheries of São Paulo, he has investigated the formulation of a new kind of citizenship in which the marginalised working-classes have challenged their exclusion by claiming the right to the city they had built. In the context of Brazil's re-democratisation, the "insurgent citizens" have transformed the state, gaining political rights and creating new spheres of participation. Holston (2008, p.273) has also emphasised that:

[T]he equalities of democratic citizenship always produce new inequalities, vulnerabilities, and destabilisations, as well as the means to contest them. Thus the equal rights to citizens to associate generate organisations of unequal capacities and power. As citizens advance their interests, these groups are set against each other in the arena of citizenship.

In Brazil, the national Urban Reform movement gained momentum in the mid-1980s "within the broader political opening process aiming at promoting the re-democratisation of the country" (Fernandes, 2007b, p.179). According to Rolnik (2011, p.241):

(...) social movements focusing on housing and professionals in various areas, such as attorneys, architects and urban planners and engineers in city halls and universities, as part of the social movement that pressured the 1988 constitution in the direction of increasing housing and citizens' rights.

As a result of such pressure, an urban policy chapter was added to the Constitution in which "the recognition and integration of informal settlements into the city, and the democratisation of urban governance" (ibid, p.241) was reaffirmed. After more than ten years of an intense process of negotiation, the "ground-breaking 2001 City Statute regulated and expanded on the constitutional provisions mentioned above, and it explicitly recognized the 'right to the city' in Brazil" (Fernandes, 2007b, p.182).

In this thesis, I plan to investigate how recent legal-institutional transformations evolving in Brazil since re-democratisation shape the ability of the multiple actors analysed to claim urban space. I argue that new "invited spaces" (Cornwall, 2004; Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2013) that have evolved since re-democratisation are unevenly accessible by informal workers, informal residents and the middle-class. I hence engage with recent analyses, which seek to evaluate the effectiveness of the urban reform movement to reduce

socio-spatial segregation by expanding the right to the city to the urban poor (Arantes, 2013; Caldeira and Holston, 2015; Maricato, 2011; Rolnik, 2013b). The majority of such analyses have focused on the entanglements between democracy and neoliberalism, emphasising how new legal-institutional instruments are co-opted by state-capital alliances to promote capital accumulation (Ferreira et al., 2007; Fix, 2001). According to Rolnik (2013b, p.60), “the redistributive elements potentially contained in Statute (...) are not implemented and the resources that they generate essentially promote real estate value appreciation, concentration of gains and exclusionary practices.”

My own critique, however, stems from the fact that the urban reform movement has conflated the “right to the city” of the urban poor with their housing strategy. Such interpretation overlooks the importance of accessing workspace for those struggling to belong to the city (Brown, 2015; Schindler, 2014a). I thus argue that informal workers are also producing the city, to which they should have the right as well. Moreover, I explore how living and working are entangled practices through the place-making strategies of the urban poor. I hence show how displacement affects the lives of the groups analysed in many ways, contributing to the deepening of socio-spatial segregation.

I also discuss how the critical urban literature in Brazil has followed the trend of most Global South scholarship, focusing either on the practices of the elites or the poor (Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2013; Mercer, 2016). I argue for the need to pay closer attention to those in-between (Lemanski, 2017), contributing to recent efforts to understand the role of middle-class citizens in shaping urban space in Global South contexts (Centner, 2012a; Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2013; Mercer, 2014; Schindler, 2016). In this research, I thus explore how middle-class groups are also struggling to belong to and produce the city. I focus on the middle-class practices to capture how their politics may further exacerbate socio-spatial injustice in Brazil. I show how these citizens are able to engage in participatory arenas, street politics and have privileged access to the state in order to claim a “right kind of city” (Centner, 2012a) that reproduces their own social class while potentially constraining the abilities of the urban poor to belong.

To carry out this investigation, I have selected three case studies in which a conflict over the use of space was engendered or enhanced by the preparation for the World Cup in Belo Horizonte. The first concerns the redevelopment of the Mineirão stadium, which has displaced a group of approximately 150 families of informal workers while creating a conflict at Pampulha, the middle-class region that surrounds the stadium. The second focuses on

the case of the “Vila Recanto UFMG” an informal settlement displaced for the construction of a viaduct to improve the access to the local stadium. Finally, the third looks at a conflict regarding the construction of a hotel at Santa Lúcia, a middle-class neighbourhood in the southern part of the city. The data analysed was gathered during eight months of fieldwork in Belo Horizonte, between 2014 and 2016. It includes semi-structured interviews with relevant actors involved in the three selected cases, complemented with participant observation, and archival research.

1.4. Thesis structure

The rest of the thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 presents the history of Belo Horizonte, focusing on the role of the state in shaping the socio-spatial configuration of the city. Three different moments are analysed in detail: the construction of the planned city, the state-led spatial restructuring in the 1940s, and the post-democratisation period. I pay special attention to the relationship between the state and the reproduction of informality. I also contextualise the moment that is the research’s subject by discussing the World Cup projects in relation to a wider context of recent developments in the city and its metropolitan region.

Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework that will inform the main debates in this thesis. I draw inspiration from recent postcolonial debates in “urban informality” (AlSayyad and Roy, 2004; Roy 2005, 2009a, 2009b), arguing that it provides interesting lenses for the analysis of the politics of urban space production in Brazil. I review this body of literature focusing on how it has conceptualised the role of the state, the law, and non-state actors. The discussion thus engages critically with this framework, arguing for a modified relational approach that allows for a view of urban space production, state and citizenship as mutually constituted processes. I then discuss the Brazilian experience of peripheral urbanisation (Caldeira, 2016) drawing from the work of Holston (2008). The last part discusses the Brazilian urban reform movement and recent trends in the relations between the state and the urban poor living and working informally in the city.

Chapter 4 describes the methodology used for data collection and data analysis. I describe the research design, presenting the motivations of this project and the choice of Belo Horizonte as the main object of investigation. I also present the three case studies while describing the reasons guiding their selection. Apart from this detailed discussion of the

methods used, I will also explore the challenges of doing research at home, examining my relationship with the city and the participants. I will pay special attention to the issue of my own positionality in relation to the Brazilian society.

Chapters 5 to 7 include research findings and discussions. Chapter 5 discusses the politics of urban informality. It focuses on the role of the state, giving its centrality for current debates in this literature. The chapter presents empirical findings for each of the cases, revealing how non-state actors – informal residents, informal workers and middle-class residents – analysed have engaged with the state to validate claims over space. I draw from the findings to argue for a more nuanced view of the state, critically debating its conceptualisation within the urban informality framework. The discussion reveals the multiple instances of the relationship between the state and the (re)production of informality. It also emphasises the porosity of state-society boundaries, showing how citizens analysed are unevenly empowered to affect the formal/informal boundary making process.

Chapter 6 compares two cases in which the urban poor living and working informally are displaced due to projects related to the World Cup preparation. In both cases, marginalised citizens claim their rights through the occupation and production of urban space. Nonetheless, once displaced, their ability to be compensated/relocated by the state are dissimilar, having been shaped by historically embedded relationships. The chapter investigates the distinctive legitimacy of informal workers' and informal residents' claims to space, arguing for an expanded understanding of urban space production. The findings are discussed in relation to debates about the urban reform movement in Brazil and its limitations to promote the urban poor's right to the city.

Chapter 7 focuses on the role of the middle-class in shaping urban space. I analyse two cases in which residents of middle-class neighbourhoods struggle to conserve their areas from change. I analyse their discourses, alliances and strategies to expose the spatial politics of the middle-classes, a topic that has not received enough attention in the Global South context. The discussion emphasises how social class and space are produced in tandem, interrogating how the struggles of middle-class citizens to shape the "right kind of city" may contribute to deepen socio-spatial segregation.

Chapter 8 is the conclusion of this thesis. It summarises the main findings of each chapter while discussing those in relation to the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3. I emphasise how this research contributes to this body of literature and to the

understanding of the politics of urban space production in Brazil. Moreover, I explore how the debates in this thesis can be expanded to other contexts while considering the limits of this exercise. Finally, I explore some limitations of this study, which opens an agenda for further research.

1.5. Summary

This chapter has introduced this research and the context in which it has evolved. The June 2013 demonstrations in Brazil were still resonating when my fieldwork was conducted. More importantly, the many contradictions exposed by those events remain fundamentally entrenched in this divided society, which is the main objective of this thesis. Although united in massive protests, those millions of citizens that took to the streets together are divided across class-based and ideological groups. They present conflicting ideas of what is 'wrong' with Brazil and how one should go about fixing the problems. I believe that the protests provide an interesting parallel to the discussions this thesis intends to address. I argue that similar conflicts are also present in the making of the city, a contested process in which state and citizens interact to shape urban space according to particular views. I thus propose the use of the spatial restructuring led by World Cup-related projects in Belo Horizonte as a lens to unpack the contested nature of the city's production. In the following chapter, I reconstruct the trajectory of the city in a historical perspective, providing further context for this research.

Chapter 2 : Belo Horizonte, the state and the production of urban space

"Each place is, in its own way, the world" (Milton Santos, 2002, p.252)

Belo Horizonte presents a similar pattern of socio-spatial segregation found in most Latin American cities in which neighbourhoods with relatively good access to services coexist with areas deprived of basic infrastructure. In this chapter, I will explore how such pattern has emerged in the city as a result of state action, rather than being a product of its absence. I thus reconstruct the trajectory of Belo Horizonte from its foundation up until recent times, focusing on the role of the state in shaping the socio-spatial configuration of the city throughout different historical periods. I will show how changes in the multiple scales of the state affect the production of urban spaces within the city, while the state itself is affected by spatial processes. The chapter contributes to the main purpose of this thesis by unravelling the urban as the "sedimented crystallisation of earlier patterns of social interaction" (Brenner, 2004, p.75) that will shape the possibilities and constraints of the political actions of citizens and their abilities to affect the production of urban spaces.

The chapter is divided into five main sections. The first part discusses the construction of Belo Horizonte, the first planned city in Brazil. I show how the positivist ideals of the infant republic are spatialised in the urban form, fostering socio-spatial segregation. In the second section, I explore how the centre-periphery pattern is reinforced by the state-led interventions promoted during the national-developmental phase of Brazilian capitalism. Section three discusses the entanglements between re-democratisation and neoliberalism in Brazil. I focus on the emergent urban policies aimed at housing and work informality, exploring how those have evolved in opposing directions. In the fourth section, I discuss recent developments in the Brazilian political economic scenario and the rise of urban entrepreneurialism. In this context, I focus on the recent state-led initiatives to reshape Belo Horizonte and its metropolitan region, with attention to the interventions planned to prepare the city to host the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Finally, section five presents a summary of the discussions.

2.1.A Republican mega-project

Belo Horizonte was the first planned city in Brazil, built to be the new capital of Minas Gerais.¹⁰ Before the city was inaugurated, the political centre of the regional state¹¹ was Ouro Preto (known then as Vila Rica), one of the most important and populous cities of the Brazilian colonial period due to the gold mining activity. According to Julião (1996), although the idea of changing the capital was rather old, the new momentum brought by the Proclamation of the Republic in 1889 created the appropriate conditions for the project.

The atmosphere of political uncertainty and ideological effervescence of the Republic's first years, along with the necessity of legitimizing the regime, installed by a military coup, has undoubtedly designed a favourable horizon to the bold gesture of constructing a capital-city. (Julião, 1996, p.49)

The change of the capital of Minas Gerais was foreseen in the first republican constitution of the regional state in 1891. Mello (1996) argues that the project was part of the Republican strategy of breaking apart from the colonial and monarchical past very much embedded in Ouro Preto.¹² Between 1891 and 1893, an intense debate about the location of the new capital took place¹³ and, within it, a collection of images of the future city emerged. In the political discourse, the new capital appeared as the mark of a new era; as a place of modernity; as the heart of progress and civilisation. Such repertoire of ideas was

¹⁰ The story of Minas Gerais is connected to the mining activity. There, the Portuguese explored gold and precious stones during the colonial period, especially throughout the 18th century. The name of the state can be translated literally as "general mines" and the people born there are known as *mineiros*, or "miners". The mining economy started its decline in the second half of the 18th century and the original mines are no longer in operation. Nonetheless, until nowadays the economy of the state is still strongly associated with the extraction of iron and other minerals.

¹¹ In Brazil, the political system divides the territorial unities in three administrative scales, the municipality, the state and the federation. In order to describe these three scales I will use throughout this thesis, respectively, local, regional and federal/national states. I will use the expression "state" to refer to the broader conceptual definition of the state.

¹² Mello (1996) also argues that this change would open up the future while preserving the past. With the transference, Ouro Preto would be conserved as the sanctuary of the foundational myth of the Republic, the unsuccessful separatist rebellion known as "*Inconfidência Mineira*". This movement took place in Ouro Preto in the year of 1789, but the conspiracy was broken apart by the Monarchy. Most of its participants, the "*inconfidentes*", were sent to prison and its supposed leader, known as "*Tiradentes*", was condemned to death by hanging. For Melo (1996, p.34), the "creation of the new capital – Belo Horizonte – would be part of the synthesis of the new republican nation-state with its origins: the 18th century."

¹³ Apart from the chosen location, other four places were considered (Paraúna, Juiz de Fora, Várzea do Marçal and Barbacena). The old political elites of Ouro Preto had also defended the maintenance of the city as the regional capital. For a discussion about the political debates surrounding this issue, see de Arruda (2012).

associated with the republican ideology.¹⁴ It was not just about building a city, but also about the infant Republic. Both works were inserted in the same logic, as expressions of the renewed will of the Brazilian society (Julião, 1996).

Apart from this important symbolic role, the construction of Belo Horizonte has also served the political purpose of unifying the regional state. With the decline of the mining economy and the rise of the coffee production in the end of the 19th century, there was a strong dispute for political power between the economic elites. Historically, the Centre had concentrated both the economic and political hegemony: the old capital, Ouro Preto, and most of the mining activity were located in the central region of Minas Gerais. Nevertheless, the decay of mining and the rise of the coffee economy turned the South into the most prosperous region. The southern elites were hence eager for more political power. The political dispute between old (Centre) and new (South) elites was represented in the battle to choose the location of the new capital.¹⁵ The politicians, however, feared that changing the capital to the South could threaten the unity of Minas Gerais (de Resende, 1974). This concern stemmed from the strong connection between the coffee economy – an export activity – with the regional states of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

In 1893, the location of the new city was finally chosen. The solution to the dispute was a place in the centre of Minas Gerais where a small village called Curral Del Rey was located. In March 1894, Aarão Reis, the project's chief-engineer¹⁶, established the Construction Commission, and the work officially started on 7 September (Mello, 1996). Belo Horizonte was formally inaugurated on 12 December, 1897, with the important mission of both unifying the regional state and representing the republican ideology. In only four years, the commission managed to transform the small village of Curral Del Rey into a modern city, "constructing the future" (Julião, 1996; Mello, 1996, p.35) The genesis of Belo Horizonte is, thus, embedded in the myth of modernity, which carries the promise of a radical break from the past (Harvey, 2003). Such a break, however, can never possibly occur, as it is rooted in the erroneous conception of "the world as a tabula rasa, upon which the new can be inscribed without reference to the past" (Harvey, 2003, p.1).

¹⁴ For a discussion about the ideological foundation that have legitimized the Brazilian republican movement see Carvalho (2000).

¹⁵ The North region of Minas Gerais has been historically the poorest and less economic significant area of the state. Therefore, the relevant interests at play were represented by the South, where the coffee economy was booming, and the Centre, where the political power had been historically concentrated due to the location of the mining activity.

¹⁶ Aarão Reis resigned from his position in 1895, being replaced by Francisco Bicalho.

In its early years, the Republican regime was characterised by “a period of indefiniteness when different political sectors struggled to dictate directions for the nation while the military fought to put down revolts in several areas of Brazil” (Madden, 1993, p.6). One could interpret the construction of Belo Horizonte, thus, as part of the recent Republican state project and its spatial process. According to Brenner, rather than a platform, the geography of the state is “actively produced and transformed through regulatory projects and socio-political struggles articulated in diverse institutional sites and at a range of geographical scales” (Brenner, 2004, p.76). In this regard, it is possible to compare the “birth” of Belo Horizonte in December 1897 with the “death” of Canudos in October of the same year (Paula, 1997). Canudos was an old farm occupied in 1893 by the preacher Antônio Conselheiro and his followers. The occupation was crushed by a military expedition after being identified by the national state as a threat and an opposition to the infant republic and its ideals. In the most famous interpretation of this event, Euclides da Cunha¹⁷ has described the war against Canudos through the lens of the formation of the Brazilian national state and the obstacles posed against the positivist principles of “order and progress”.¹⁸ While Canudos represented the contradictions of the country, its conflicts, inequalities, backwardness, Belo Horizonte represented modernity, inaugurated with the republic in which the wonders of technology, geometry, planning and calculus would foster progress (Paula, 1997; Raggi, 2015).

2.1.1. Planning socio-spatial segregation

Belo Horizonte’s original project (Figure 2.1), designed by Aarão Reis, was deeply influenced by international architecture, such as the design of L’Enfant for Washington, the intervention of Haussmann in Paris and the Cerdá’s plan for Barcelona (Segre, 1998). According to Julião (1996), the rationale of such endeavours was similar and there was a

¹⁷ Penna (1997) explores the influence that Cunha’s (1944) oeuvre – *Os Sertões* (The rebellion in the Backlands) – had on the historiography of the Canudos war. She discusses how Cunha had joined the military expedition as a reporter, convinced of its merits as a crusade against a monarchic revolt. However, his arrival at the village exposed him to the misery of the population living in the backlands, in direct opposition to the “civilised” coast where he had come from.

¹⁸ “Order and progress” are the words stamped on the Brazilian flag, established as one of the national symbols on 19 November, 1889, that is, four days after the Proclamation of the Republic. The slogan is a positivistic motto and suggests the idea of the republic as an orderly path towards progress. As Penna (1997) argues, the slogan does not represent only the ideals of the Brazilian followers of Comte, but also the thinking of the elite that was not interested in bringing radical changes along with the new regime.

generalised belief in the power of technology and knowledge, dissociated from political matters, to solve issues that were unsettling industrial cities: disease, increasing population density, lack of proper sanitation, poverty and, above all, the potential for social unrest and uprisings. Much of this can be attributed to the persona of the chief-engineer, Reis, who was an active member of the Republican Party as well as a convict positivist and, therefore, a strong believer in the power of reason and science as the instruments of progress.

The project was, thus, aligned with the republican ideals of order and progress and in direct contrast with the irregular urban shape of Ouro Preto and its small alleys and winding streets. The new era also demanded “a new spatiality, capable of attributing to the idea of rupture a material and symbolic sense” (Julião, 1996, p.50). Belo Horizonte’s layout represented a radical break from the past embedded in the colonial urbanism. The urban became the symbolic space of the future, where modernity and progress could be achieved through order. The methodical layout, planned like a chess board, was restricted to the urban zone, limited by a long avenue that encompassed the entire city. The suburban zone was not entirely free from planning regulations, but the established rules were more flexible and less demanding. Finally, the rural zone was reserved for farming that should supply the city with agricultural goods (Costa and Arguelhes, 2009). In the bottom left of Figure 2.1, it is possible to visualise the urban zone, in yellow, completely circumscribed by the suburban zone, in green. The third zone, in the north of the municipality, was reserved for rural use.

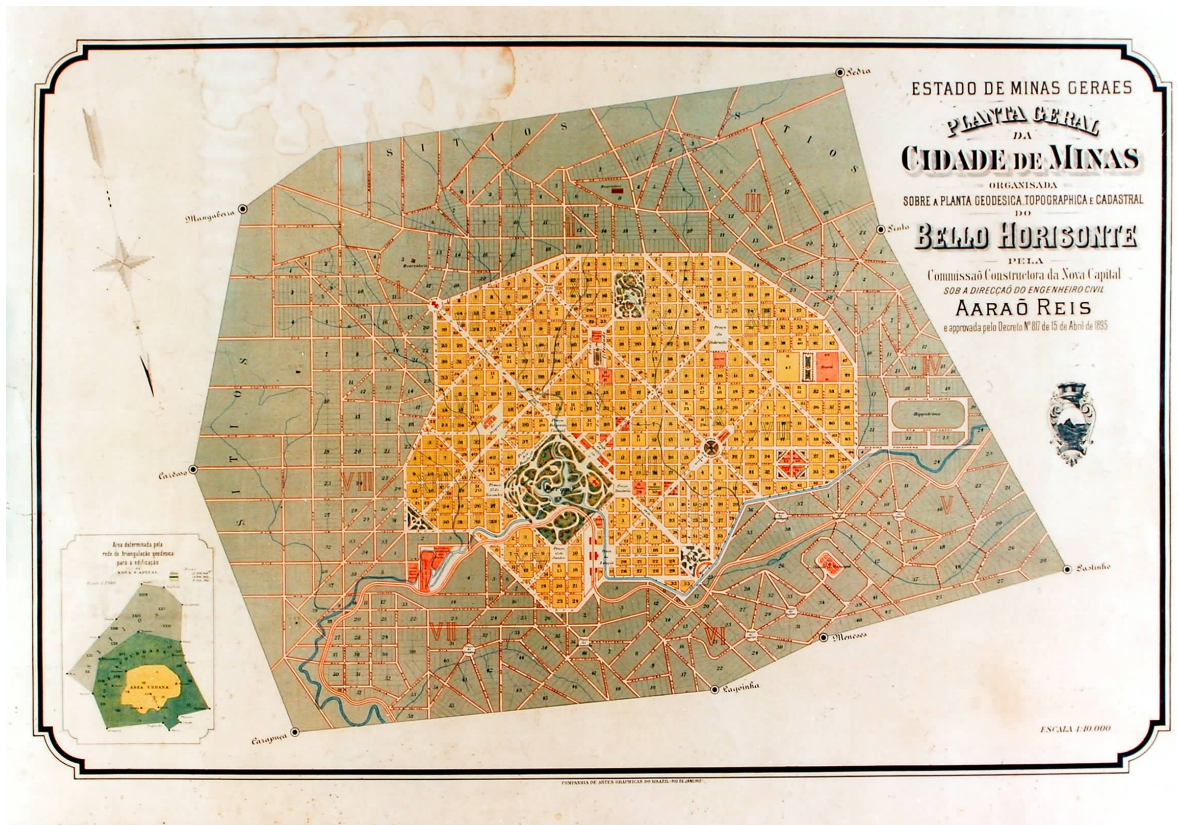


Figure 2.1. Belo Horizonte: original project

(Source: Abílio Barreto Historic Museum. Available at < <http://www.comissaoconstrutora.pbh.gov.br/>>)

The Contorno Avenue surrounding the urban area has been described as a modern version of the medieval wall (Caldeira, 1998). Although it did not block the access to the urban zone, it clearly separated the city from the non-city. It functioned therefore as a subtle frontier between the planned space and the unorganised territory, imprinting a segregationist logic to the city (Julião, 1996). According to Mendonça (2002), since its foundation, the socio-spatial morphology of Belo Horizonte was characterised by the strong presence of the state, which was responsible for the project, the urbanisation and the concession of land. The system designed for the distribution of lots gave priority to the civil servants, the land owners of Ouro Preto, and the former residents of the Curral del Rey village. According to Penna (1997), the latter received very low compensations for their land. In most cases, the amount received was insufficient for buying lots and many of the displaced residents were unable to remain in the new city (Penna, 1997).¹⁹

¹⁹ In total, 428 properties were expropriated by the local state.

Penna (1997) also describes how the process through which the state transferred the land to private owners allowed for speculation. The first bundle of lots was sold in a public auction with no minimum prices established. In the following one, the prices were fixed according to the location of the land in relation to the public buildings, the main roads and the commercial centre. There was a limit to the number of lots each individual could buy, and properties could not be resold for the next ten years. Those rules intended to generate funds for the construction and prevent speculation. In October 1895, the state modified the rules, making resale possible while dropping the fixed prices and the purchases limit per person. The changes were proposed to stimulate the occupation of the city but were also responsible for increasing speculation.

The size of the workforce involved in the city construction was significant, and the workers tended to build their own houses in suburban and rural regions. Nonetheless, considering the scarce mobility options between the outside zones and the construction site, a number of the workers were attracted to the inner area of Belo Horizonte. Fernandes (1995) argues that the city planners did not take into consideration the fact that the workers and their families would remain in the city after the construction ended. According to Guimarães (1992), in 1895, two years before its inauguration, Belo Horizonte already had two informal areas of occupation with approximately three thousand inhabitants. For Monte-Mór (1994):

It was the working-class population, excluded from the central spaces of the city, from power, from citizenship, (...) that determined the production of the city. Belo Horizonte grew in the opposed direction, from the periphery to the centre, in a process that was later reproduced in several planned cities in Brazil. (Monte-Mór, 1994, p.15)

Initially, as the construction was the priority and the workforce was needed, the state not only overlooked the occupation but at times even stimulated it (Fernandes, 1995; Guimarães, 1992). Nonetheless, as soon as the new city was inaugurated, the presence of the lower classes in the city centre became an issue and the local government organised the first *favela* removal in 1902, transferring the workers to the newly constructed “Worker’s Village”, located in the periphery of the urban zone.²⁰ In the first thirty years of the city, the City Hall adopted a similar trend in relation to land invasions. The workers would occupy devalued areas or places where their labour was needed, only to be later removed to designated areas in the peripheries, as soon as their presence was no longer necessary or

²⁰ The area corresponds nowadays to the Barro Preto neighbourhood.

until the city growth would turn the occupied land into a more valuable asset (Guimarães, 1992). The story of Belo Horizonte, in this sense, anticipates what would later happen in Brasília. As Caldeira and Holston (2005) discuss:

The government planned to recruit a labour force to build the capital [Brasília], but to deny it residential rights in the city that it built for civil servants transferred from Rio de Janeiro. By 1958, however, it became clear that many workers intended to remain. In fact, almost 30 percent of them had already rebelled against their planned exclusion by becoming squatters in illegal settlements. (Caldeira and Holston, 2005, p.398)

The working classes were, therefore, excluded from the city they had built. The city, however, could not grow without their necessary workforce. The relationship between the state and the informal occupation of land was, consequently, twofold. If labour was necessary and occupied lands were undervalued, their presence was tolerated. As soon as either of these conditions changed, the local state was quick to remove informal settlements and swipe the urban areas from the dust of poverty. In this process, it is important to underscore the role of the hygienist movement²¹ in the conception of the city and its moralist stands. According to Costa and Arguelhes (2009, p.12): “The elites saw filthiness, misery and disease as the reverse of the promises of well-being.” The new city, a symbol of the emerging republic and its positivist aspirations, could not be stained by the messiness and ugliness of poverty.

One could interpret Belo Horizonte’s foundational aspirations through the “high-modernist ideology”²² described by Scott (1998), that is:

(...) a strong version of the self-confidence about scientific and technical progress, the expansion of production, the growing satisfaction of human needs, the mastery of nature (including human nature), and, above all, the rational design of social order commensurate with scientific understanding of natural laws. (Scott, 1998, p.4)

²¹ The hygienist movement emerged in the industrial European cities in the mid-19th century. It was centred on the idea of improving the health and hygiene conditions of working classes in order to improve their efficiency as labour force. The movement arrived in Brazil in the end of the 19th century and its principals remained relevant until at least the end of the 20th century (Junior and Lovisolo, 2003).

²² Scott (1998) argues that the most tragic episodes of state-initiated social engineering are the result of the pernicious combination of four elements: a legible society, the high-modernist ideology, an authoritarian state and a prostrated civil society. He further states: “In sum, the legibility of a society provides the capacity for large-scale social engineering, high-modernist ideology provides the desire, the authoritarian state provides the determination to act on that desire, and an incapacitated civil society provides the levelled social terrain on which to build” (ibid, p.5).

For Scott, social engineering projects based on this ideology are doomed to be unsuccessful, even when designed in principle as a tool to improve the well-being of society. The main reason was thought to be that the design tends to be oversimplified, ignoring “essential features of any real, functioning social order” (ibid, p.6). Such projects are, therefore, most likely to fail not only their potential beneficiaries but ultimately also their creators.

Most interpretations of the early periods of Belo Horizonte emphasise this contradiction that has crystallised into a centre-periphery segregated pattern (Julião, 1996; Mendonça, 2002; Monte-Mór, 1994). The planned city excluded the lower classes without whom the city proper, as a built and a social environment, could never actually flourish. The positivist design did not account for the extreme inequality of the society it was supposed to order. The appropriation of the city by “marginalised” citizens is hence interpreted as a planning failure but, without them, the (re)production of urban life would not have been possible (Oliveira, 2003; Perlman, 1976). To call such appropriations of the planned space “pre-modern” or backwards would be to reproduce the fallacy that modernity is “an attribute of time itself” (Chatterjee, 2004, p.5). The proliferation of informal settlements in the city is not, therefore, to be regarded as the contamination of the future by the past, of Belo Horizonte by Canudos, but rather as the spatial manifestations of the contradictions that were embedded within society at the time. Informality emerges since the beginning not as the absence of the state – very much present in all stages of the city foundation – but as a product of the state’s own initiatives. This feature becomes more striking in the next period of Belo Horizonte’s history, when state-led initiatives will enable the growth of industry, causing the expansion of the urban fabric and, consequently, of the periphery.

2.2.The making of the metropolis

2.2.1. The birth of the Brazilian capitalist state

During the Old Republic (1889-1930), the main economic activity in Brazil was the production of coffee for the foreign market which was strongly affected by the 1929 international crisis. The economic downturn associated with the general dissatisfaction with the political conjuncture led to a major political change. During this first period, Brazil could

be characterised as a “decentralised federal republic” in which “state oligarchies created a weak national government”, with no dominant national parties (Samuels and Abrucio, 2000, p.44). In this context, “governors autocratically dominated politics within their [regional] states” and two regions were prevailing in the federal arena, Minas Gerais and São Paulo (Samuels and Abrucio, 2000, p.44). According to Love (1970, p.9), “this was a system in which the president assured the governors of the regional states that their parties would always win elections in their respective jurisdictions in exchange for the support of presidential policies in congress (which favoured export agriculture) and electoral support of the president's successor.” This political arrangement, historically designated as the “Politics of the Governors”, was showing signs of weakness in the late 1920s and collapsed soon after the federal elections in 1930, in which Getúlio Vargas was defeated by Julio Prestes (Love, 1970; Samuels and Abrucio, 2000).

Prestes was the former governor of São Paulo and a representative of the rural oligarchies associated with the production of coffee. His candidacy was controversial for going against the tacit rules of the alliance that sustained the “Politics of the Governors”,²³ causing a political crisis. Despite the victory, he never became president, as his government was overthrown by a military coup d'état supported by the “Liberal Alliance” (formed by the elites from Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Sul, and Rio de Janeiro). The coup, historically known as the 1930s Revolution, placed Getúlio in power inaugurating the period known as “Era Vargas” (1930-1945) in which the Brazilian society went through a series of reforms intended to “modernise” the country. In this new context, the coffee activity started to decay, and a series of processes powered the first push towards industrialisation.

Modernisation in this period must be understood in the context of the emergence of the “development project”, in which national industrialisation became the shared development paradigm, especially after the Second World War. Two main features of this paradigm are worth emphasising. First, it was assumed that development involved the displacement of agrarian civilisation by an urban-industrial society. Second, the idea of national development assumed a linear direction for advancement – that is, catching-up with the West (McMichael, 2011). Nevertheless, in the periphery of capitalism, the industrialisation process has not followed the same pattern found in Western countries. For Evans (1979), the Brazilian cases can be taken as a “paradigm of dependent development,

²³ During the elections, Prestes received the support of the president Washington Luís, whereas according to the agreement under the “Politics of the governors”, he should have supported the governor of Minas Gerais. For a discussion about these events, see Ferreira and Pinto (2006).

an ideal case by which to explore the dynamics of capitalist expansion in the periphery” (ibid, p.54). The 1930s Revolution inaugurated the populist phase of the national-developmental regime, followed by the authoritarian phase post-1964, lasting until the collapse of the national import substitution industry (ISI) model in the 1980s.

Although there is an apparent consensus regarding the role played by the state “as an agglutinating agent in the process of industrial accumulation in Brazil” (Fiori, 1992, p.175), some scholars have characterised Brazil as an “intermediate case” between a developmental state and a predatory kind. Evans (1989), for instance, argues that the internal structure limited the capacity of Brazil to mirror the experience of East Asian countries. Moreover, the constant need of the state to negotiate with traditional rural oligarchies has prevented the construction of a real project of industrial elites (Evans, 1989). For Chibber (2005, p.154), the Brazilian developmental state faced “a far more hostile national capitalist class” which explains its weakness, slow consolidation, and timid ambitions regarding state-building.

In the Brazilian historiography, the 1930s Revolution has been interpreted in many ways. Within the Marxist tradition, the coup is said to inaugurate the Brazilian version of the bourgeois revolution (Oliveira, 2003). In opposition to that interpretation, Baretta and Markoff (1986) explore the contributions of Boris Fausto (1997) and Francisco Weffort (1968), whose interpretations are summarised as follows:

(...) [Following] the political crisis that brought down the agrarian oligarchies that had ruled Brazil, (...) no class was capable of assuming political control. (...)The post-1930 Brazilian state, based on a contradictory and unstable alliance of classes, actively promoted industrialisation but opposed change in agrarian structures, oscillated between liberal and authoritarian ideologies, and vacillated between the ambition of promoting autonomous, national development and the acceptance of economic dependence. (Baretta and Markoff, 1986, p.414)

In the Marxist interpretation, however, the “Liberal Alliance” represented the interests of the ascendant industrial bourgeoisie in conflict with the rural oligarchies over the control of the state.²⁴ According to Oliveira (2003, p.35): “The 1930s revolution marks the end of a cycle and the beginning of another in the Brazilian economy: the end of the agro-export hegemony and the beginning of the predominance of the urban-industrial

²⁴ In his work, Vianna (1999) analyses the influence of Max Weber in the main sociological interpretations of the Brazilian state. In particular, his analysis of the East and the pathological forms of access to the modern. Two streams of thought are identified, one focusing on the patrimonial state, with Raymundo Faoro and Simon Schwartzman as the main contributors. The other, focusing on the patrimonial society, with Florestan Fernandes and Maria Sylvania de Carvalho Franco as core scholars.

bases.” Although the industrial sector share of total income only surpassed that of agriculture in 1956, for Oliveira, the processes triggered in the 1930s engendered the transition to “a new mode of accumulation, qualitative and quantitatively distinct” (Oliveira, 2003, p.35).

Florestan Fernandes (2006), a Brazilian Marxist sociologist, explores the passive nature of the Brazilian bourgeois revolution, which does not entail a rupture with the traditional oligarchies and their pre-modern (or pre-capitalist) practices and arrangements. According to Vianna (1999), his interpretation is singular for understanding that modern and traditional interests were not in antagonistic opposition but eccentrically accommodated within the state. For Fernandes (2006), the Brazilian elites were prone to benefit both from the “modern” and the “backward”, and at that moment it was particularly advantageous to profit from the inequality and heterogeneity of the Brazilian society. Therefore, the modern state is born accommodating features that were apparently its antithesis, not as obstacles, but rather as part of the economic arrangement that allowed Brazil’s peripheral insertion in the world economic order, as a dependent capitalist economy.²⁵

2.2.2. *The modernity of Juscelino Kubitschek*

The political scenario that engendered the 1930s Revolution was extremely turbulent and many political interests were at play, culminating in a new coup in 1937 that placed Getúlio as Brazil’s dictator, who inaugurated a new phase of government, known as “The New State” (*Estado Novo*).²⁶ In this scenario, Juscelino Kubitschek, a young politician – known as JK – was appointed by Getúlio as the mayor of Belo Horizonte (1940-1945). According to Paula and Monte-Mór (2004), the rise of Juscelino Kubitschek as mayor inaugurated a new phase of urban restructuring that brought to an end the first cycle of the city’s history.

In the years following its inauguration, Belo Horizonte was described by visitors – both ordinary and notorious – as a boring city, where nothing ever happened.²⁷ Despite the

²⁵ For a discussion about the concept of dependency, see Cardoso (1974).

²⁶ For a discussion about this historical period, see Pandolfi (1999).

²⁷ In this period, the city gained a few depreciating nicknames such as *Poeirópolis* (or Dust City) and *Tediópolis* (or Boredom City), which demonstrated its failure as a metropolis and a capital (Maia and Pereira, 2009).

efforts of Aarão Reis to build a modern capital, the general diagnosis in its first decades was that Belo Horizonte was an old new city, stuck in time (Maia and Pereira, 2009). The goal of Juscelino Kubitschek's administration was, thus, to promote a new round of modernisation that could prepare the city's structure for the industrialisation era. For Raggi (2015), Aarão Reis and Juscelino Kubitschek have both spatialised different ideals of modernity in the city of Belo Horizonte, each in accordance with their own time. Aarão Reis imported the rational city model from Europe, imagined as a response to the obscure medieval times. Juscelino Kubitschek introduced a new ideal of modernity, aligned with the ideals of industrialisation as a path to modernisation, while also emphasising and valuing the aesthetic features of the typical Brazilian version of modernism.

Juscelino Kubitschek's interventions planted the seeds of Belo Horizonte's metropolitanisation through massive public investments that largely influenced the later pattern of urban growth beyond the originally planned urban zone (Mendonça, 2002; Tonucci Filho, 2009). Important avenues were created connecting the different regions of the city and engendering its growth especially throughout the West and the North, which would later become the two axes of the urban conurbation. In Figure 2.2, it is possible to visualise the set of Juscelino Kubitschek's most important interventions in Belo Horizonte. His first work was the conclusion of the Contorno Avenue that circumscribes the originally planned urban zone. To the West, he paved the Amazonas Avenue, which connects Belo Horizonte to the industrial city of Contagem, also created during his government, although having had become operational after the end of his mandate in 1946. To the North, he constructed the Antônio Carlos Avenue, which linked Belo Horizonte to the Pampulha region, where he erected the most famous legacy of his administration, the Pampulha Architectural Complex, designed by Oscar Niemeyer (Tonucci Filho, 2009). The investments in the northern region have helped consolidated a new direction for urban expansion, connecting Belo Horizonte to other neighbouring municipalities such as Ribeirão das Neves, Vespasiano and Santa Luzia.

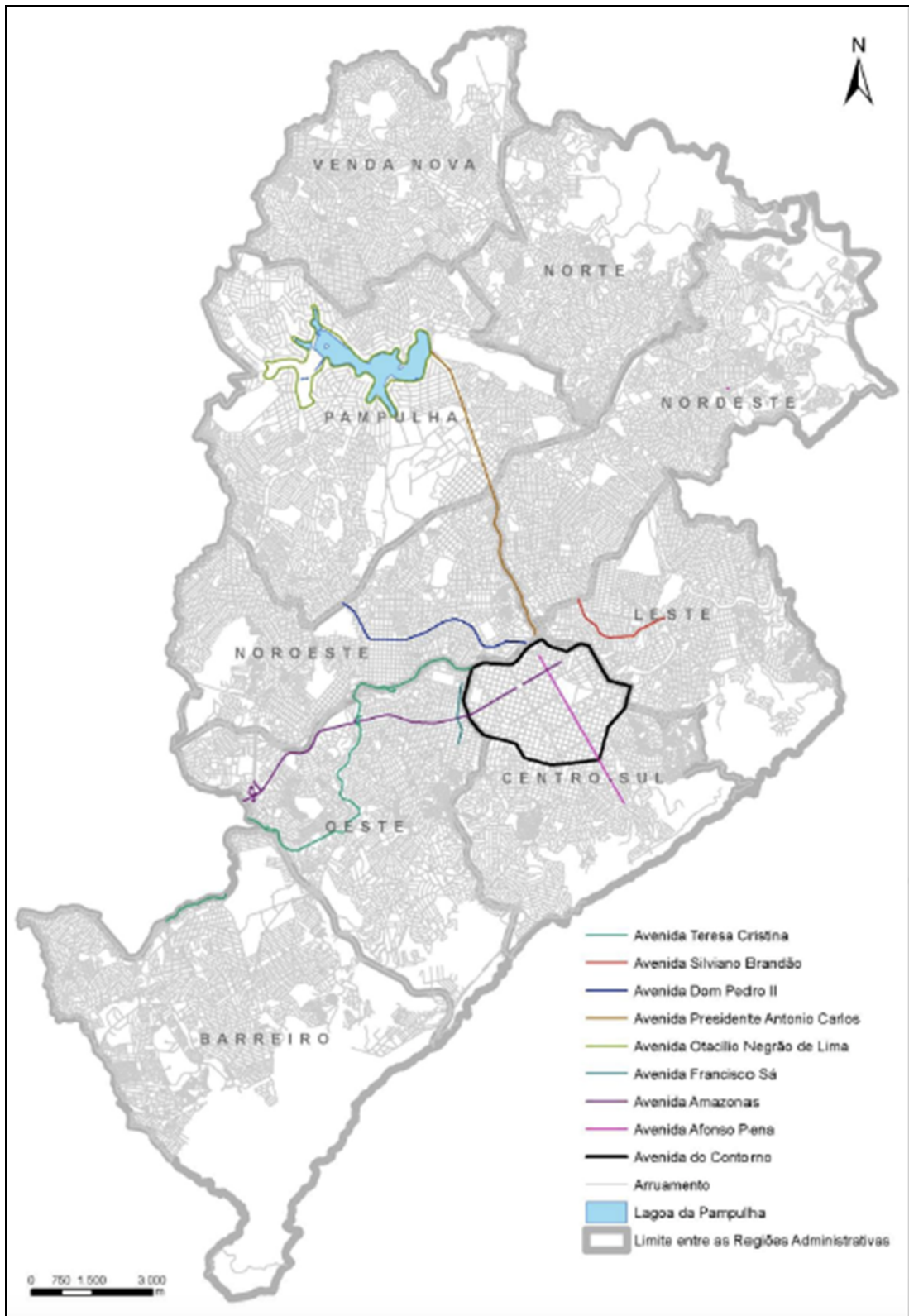


Figure 2.2. Road system implemented by Juscelino Kubitschek

(Source: Raggi, 2015, p.161)

State-led investments were also fundamental for stimulating industrial growth, not only locally but also at the regional level. Most investments were focused on the mineral

extraction industry, which had been central to Minas Gerais from the beginning of the 20th century.²⁸ The industrial growth was mainly concentrated in the region known as the “Iron Quadrilateral” (*Quadrilátero Ferrífero*)²⁹ – where Belo Horizonte is located – due to its richness in mineral resources (Diniz, 1981).

From the mid-1940s, the state government pursued public policies aimed at state-led industrialisation and made extensive efforts to attract foreign capital. This process had its ups and downs but eventually brought about major changes by the 1950s, when the infrastructure for industrial growth increased through direct state investment in highways and hydroelectric plants. With better transportation and access to energy, along with generous government benefits and subsidies, the steel, aluminium, cement, petrochemical, automobile and pharmaceutical industries grew. (Duarte, 2012, p.448)

In his term as Minas Gerais’ governor (1951-1956), Juscelino Kubitschek prioritised energy and transport as the main sectors for investment, attracting funds from the World Bank and forming a wide coalition of politicians, technocrats and businessmen around his project. Throughout the 1950s, many transnational companies were attracted to Minas Gerais, because of the abundance of natural resources, the recently developed infrastructure, the central location and appealing tax subsidies. Most of the firms were based in Belo Horizonte, Contagem and the surrounding region, drawing intense migration and engendering major transformation in Belo Horizonte (Duarte, 2012; Mendonça, 2002).

The modern Pampulha Architectural Complex

Juscelino Kubitschek’s government in Belo Horizonte generated many characteristics that would later be replicated at the federal level in his presidency from 1956 to 1961. His mandates in all three levels of government – mayor of Belo Horizonte, governor of Minas Gerais and president of Brazil – have been characterised by the national-developmentalism agenda that sought modernisation through industrialisation. Nonetheless, his government could also be characterised by substantial initiatives in the cultural and social fields (Paula and Monte-Mór, 2004). Juscelino Kubitschek viewed himself

²⁸ Until the 1960s, the largest share of the regional GDP was generated by the coffee activity. However, the mineral extraction sector has grown steadily (Mendonça, 2002).

²⁹ According to Dorr (1969, p.A1), “The Quadrilátero Ferrífero is an area of some 7,000 square kilometres in central Minas Gerais, Brazil, centered about lat. 20°15' S., long. 43°30' W. For 250 years the region has poured forth a variety of mineral riches, now totalising more than US\$2 billion, and future production will undoubtedly be even greater. The main products are iron ore, manganese ore, and gold.”

as a modern man, connected with the most progressive trends of his time, especially regarding the modernist movement and the ideas of Le Corbusier. He believed in the modern architecture as a path towards the future and found in the young architect Niemeyer the ideas that would make his visions come to life (Nery, 2012). The Pampulha Complex is a symbolic mark of his vision. Consisted of a casino, a yacht club, a ballroom house and a church, it was one of the first important autonomous work of Niemeyer and the birth of the first typically Brazilian modernist architecture.³⁰

The project has become an iconic mark of Belo Horizonte and one of its most important postcard images. According to Duarte (2012, p.441), Pampulha was “the first neighbourhood in Belo Horizonte to offer social spaces to the upper classes.”³¹ Moreover, one can easily identify the modernist style that would be deepened in the construction of Brasília and, therefore, argue that the project of the future nation embedded in the new national capital had its first seed right there, in the first partnership between Juscelino Kubitschek and Niemeyer in Belo Horizonte.

2.2.3. *Economic growth, favelisation and metropolitanisation*

Between 1940 and 1980, the Brazilian economy went through an important growth period, in which the average yearly growth rate was 7 percent (Reis, 2000). Although historically the state of São Paulo had concentrated most of the economic and demographic growth, Minas Gerais also benefited. According to Diniz (1994, p.306):

The state of Minas Gerais, due to its reserves of natural resources and proximity to São Paulo, was one of the few states in the country which managed to retain its relative share during the phase of strong concentration in São Paulo. The Minas Gerais economy played the role of a complementary economy in relation to the largest industrial centre in the country, as a supplier of intermediary goods (steel, cement etc.), foodstuffs, and mineral and agricultural raw materials.

³⁰ Other key names of the modernist movement, such as Burlle Marx and Candido Portinari, were involved in the project (Duarte, 2012).

³¹ Nonetheless, Duarte (2012, p.443) notes that, even after the opening of Pampulha, “a large number of the elite continued living in the central and southern zones.” Not surprisingly, the first gated communities of Belo Horizonte “emerged to the south of the city where the mountainous terrain, the milder climate and the high-altitude forest enabled the advertisers and local elites to romanticise the landscape as European” (ibid, p.443).

The city of Belo Horizonte profited strongly from this vigorous and prolonged period of economic growth. According to Paula and Monte-Mór (2004), two main reasons for that can be emphasised. First, the abundance of mineral resources in its surrounding region provided the city with an interesting locational advantage for the sectors that were leading the industrial growth. Second, Belo Horizonte offered a variety of services that were important for the support of the industrial activities. Such services included schools, universities, research centres, leisure and consumption centres. After the 1970s, the city also benefited from changes in the national economic scenario that led to a “relative decline in the formerly overwhelming dominance of the São Paulo metropolitan area” (Diniz, 1994, p.293). This tendency, associated with the investment efforts of the previous period, led to the consolidation of Minas Gerais’ industrial park, fostering a new industrialisation phase (Mendonça, 2002).

Costa (1994) argues that from 1950 until the mid-1970s, the urban expansion responded to the processes of industrialisation and the structuring of public interventions. This symbiotic state-capital relationship was responsible for creating the general conditions for industrialisation, shaping the urban into the space that concentrated the general conditions for production. Industrialisation and economic growth stimulated intense migration towards Belo Horizonte, engendering two important phenomena: metropolitanisation and favelisation. Considering the first, Table 2.1 shows that after the 1970s, the population growth of Belo Horizonte was slower vis-à-vis its metropolitan region.³² Such growth was more pronounced in the peripheral areas of the MRBH’s municipalities (Costa, 1994). Table 2.2 shows the growth of *favelas* and the population living in informal settlements in Belo Horizonte in comparison with the city’s total population.

³² The MRBH was created in 1973, by the federal law 14/73.

Table 2.1. Belo Horizonte and the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte (MRBH): demographic annual growth (in %)

Local	1950-1960	1960-1970*	1970-1980*	1980-1991*	1991-2000**
Belo Horizonte	7	6.1	3.7	1.1	1.5
Other municipalities of the MRBH	-	6.2	7.5	4.8	3.9

(Source: Mendonça, 2002, p.49)

Notes: (*) Using the MRBH of 1991, (**) Using the MRBH of 2000.

Table 2.2. Evolution of *favelas* in Belo Horizonte vis-à-vis the total population

Year	Number of <i>favelas</i>	Population living in <i>favelas</i>	Total population of Belo Horizonte	(%) of the population living in <i>favelas</i>
1950	18	25,001	-	-
1955	23	36,432	352,724*	10.3
1964	59	116,183	683,908 **	17.0
1970	67	153,921	1,235,030	12.5
1980	73	217,724	1,780,839	12.2
1991	150	406,558	2,020,161	20.1

(Source: Guimarães, 1992, p.17; Ipeadata <<http://www.ipeadata.gov.br/Default.aspx>>)

Notes: (*) Using population data for 1950, (**) Using population data for 1960.

Both movements – metropolitanisation and favelisation – would intensify in the subsequent decades during the economic crisis that followed the collapse of the import substitution industrialisation model in the 1980s, leading to hyperinflation and recession.³³ Belo Horizonte’s productive structure was mainly associated with the leading industrial sectors of Brazil’s national-developmentalism strategy in the period from the 1940s until the 1970s. The city was thus particularly affected by the crisis that caused the dismantling of that model in the late 1970s (Paula and Monte-Mór 2004).

³³ According to Diniz (1994, p.311), whereas “the average annual rate of growth of industry in the 1970s was 9%, total growth of industry output in the entire decade of the 1980s did not reach 10%.”

In the North region of Belo Horizonte, the articulation of public and private initiatives in a context of intense metropolitan immigration, combined with social inequalities and the absence of social housing policies have fostered the growth of the peripheries mainly through “autoconstruction”.³⁴ This process of production of the metropolitan periphery was characterised by “the intensive production of popular settlements with different degrees of land and urban irregularity as the main housing ‘alternative’ for large sectors of the population” (Costa et al., 2010, p.88).

Costa (2007) has analysed this process through the Marxist perspective as developed by the French School of urban sociology, notably by Manuel Castells and Jean Lojkine. In her approach, therefore, the urban is taken as the space of the reproduction of the collective means of consumption. Nonetheless, the process follows a different pattern in the periphery of capitalism, different from the experience of the Western capitalist societies that have first inspired this critical scholarship. She argues that the Brazilian labour market was at that point characterised by the abundance of labour force, available at low wages, combined with the weak bargaining power of the workers’ movement at the political level. The socially necessary requirements for the reproduction of the labour force were qualitatively and quantitatively different from those found in the developed capitalist societies. In this context, the wages were not enough to cover the high costs of adequate housing, whereas the state did not provide an alternative in the form of adequate social housing.³⁵ Her analysis is based on the primary premises “that as far as housing is concerned, the majority of the labour force must reproduce itself at its own expense” (ibid, p.25). The concept of “urban spoliation”, as developed by Kowarick (1979), is applied to describe this process through which the Brazilian working class is exploited not only through the direct channels of capitalist labour-capital relations, but also through “the inexistence and the precariousness of the services of collective consumption” (ibid, p.59).

According to Costa (2007), therefore, in Belo Horizonte, the state has engendered the conditions for the reproduction of capitalism through industrialisation. Economic growth failed to promote greater social inclusion, and it was actually fuelled by the heterogeneity and the inequality of the social structure. The growth of informal settlements

³⁴ According to Holston (1991, p.448), “The term autoconstruction refers to the house-building activity of the poor within a specific set of historical and spatial circumstances, namely, the phenomenal growth of the so-called urban peripheries around Brazil’s metropolitan centres over the last five decades.”

³⁵ Oliveira (2003) has made the same argument for Brazil, in general. Nonetheless, the novelty of Costa’s contribution is that she goes beyond the theoretical discussion, analysing the growth of the metropolitan peripheries and the particular land development schemes, showing how they are integrated to the market circuits.

and peripheries did not happen outside the state or the market. It was rather interpreted as one of the spatial manifestations of the particular forms that the capitalist accumulation system had assumed in Brazil. The growth of informal settlements and the movement towards the peripheries was stimulated after the 1980s, when the national-developmental regime collapses.

One could argue that Costas' (2007) interpretation of Belo Horizonte's peripheral urbanisation suffers from the same issue emphasised by Arantes (2009) regarding the Marxist urban sociology school in Brazil, as it takes the urban as a reflex of political-economic phenomena, downplaying the political agency of those "marginalised" citizens inhabiting the peripheries. Nonetheless, the 1980s and the 1990s would also be characterised by the re-democratisation of Brazil, in which insurgency movements emerging from the autoconstructed peripheries (Holston, 2008) played an important role. The same period is also characterised by substantial changes in the global economy, with the ascendancy of neoliberalism and the imposition of structural adjustment policies on Latin American countries. These processes have conflicting results for the social-spatial configuration of the local state and the city, which will be analysed in the next section, focusing on policies regarding informality and the occupation of urban space for housing and work purposes.

2.3. Democracy, urban policy and informality

2.3.1. Informal housing and the municipal housing policy

During the Brazilian Military Dictatorship (1964-1985), the urban policy "reflected the same techno-bureaucratic character as the public policies adopted in the period as a whole, since they were the result of the same process of political centralisation and authoritarianism" (Fernandes 1995, p.35). Those years were also characterised by intense repression against social movements, but some degree of mobilisation was kept alive. In the 1980s, however, in the midst of growing dissatisfaction with the military regime, social movements gained in strength.

The 1980s witnessed the intense growth of a political phenomenon which had been taking place for some decades in Brazil, that is to say, that of popular mobilisation by means of the constitution of organized social movements. Since the 1970s such

movements had already become significant agents of the general process of urban politics, but it was in the following decade that they were definitely recognised as new forces in the political scene, not only because of their strengthening, but also because they gained a new political dimension. Put briefly, the main change was that, in the 1980s, the state was unequivocally viewed by such movements as the main addressee of their claims. (Fernandes, 1995, p.36)

From 1983 to 1984, the streets of Brazil were taken by protests against the crumbling military regime, demanding direct elections for president. As a result of the campaign – known as *Diretas Já* –, different sectors of the political elite supported the choice of Tancredo Neves, considered a mild opposite to the military regime, to guide a smooth transition to democracy (Sader, 2010). He was then indirectly elected by the parliament in 1985, promising to summon an assembly that would draw a new constitution. Tancredo would be the first non-military president of Brazil but he died before he could begin his mandate (Barroso, 2008). The position was then filled by his vice-president, José Sarney from the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB).

In the end of 1985, following Tancredo's campaign promises, Sarney forwarded a proposal to the national congress asking for a constituent assembly to be formed. In 1986, general elections for federal deputies and senators were organised. Finally, in 1987, the National Constituent Assembly was formed with those elected to draw the country's new democratic constitution. Several sectors of the Brazilian society took part in this process, due to the possibility of submitting popular amendments to the Constitution. That was the case of the Urban Reform Proposal, drafted by urban popular movements from different regions of the country. Although the struggle for better urban living conditions was an old phenomenon, the urban movements were organised as isolated and fragmented local groups. The Urban Reform Movement, therefore, provided a framework to articulate their agenda nationally (Costa, 1989; Maricato, 1988). As a direct result of such mobilisations, the 1988 Constitution included a chapter dedicated to Urban Policy (Fernandes, 1995).

The transition to democracy has also engendered decentralisation, fostering institutional developments at the municipal level³⁶ (Wampler and Avritzer, 2004). The Constitution granted municipalities resources and political independence, which were accompanied by the election of progressive coalitions in various parts of Brazil (Rodrigues

³⁶ Although much has been written about the pioneer experience of Porto Alegre with participatory budgeting (Abers, 2001; Koonings, 2004), this was one initiative in a longer list of experiences in participatory local policies. The creation of municipal councils and forums for discussion and control of social urban policies, and the democratisation of the master plan's elaboration process, are a few other examples (Navarro and de Lacerda Godinho, 2002).

and Barbosa, 2010; Wampler and Avritzer, 2004). Within this context, the movements for popular housing gained momentum, becoming relevant actors in the formulation of new programmes for housing. All over Brazil, these movements were engaging with the government, demanding the recognition of informal land occupation, while also fighting against eviction and repossession (Rodrigues and Barbosa, 2010).

Nonetheless, the new Constitution was not entirely clear regarding which level of government was responsible for the elaboration of housing policies. At the same time, the long standing federal housing policy developed during the dictatorship was discontinued with the dissolution of the National Housing Bank (BNH) in 1986³⁷ (Bonduki, 2008). Within this context of the absence of federal policies for the housing sector and the favourable local contexts fostered by the election of progressive coalitions, many municipalities began to invest efforts and resources in the implementation of local housing policies.

Belo Horizonte already had a history of experimenting with progressive urban policies, as exemplified by the pioneer case regarding the recognition of *favela* dwellers' legal rights of property through the PRO-FAVELA program instituted by a 1983 municipal law³⁸ (Fernandes, 1995). The Urbanising Company of Belo Horizonte (URBEL) was the state agency in charge of implementing the PRO-FAVELA. Although the company existed since 1961, it was completely restructured to execute the new policy. Also in 1983, the city of Recife launched a similar program, the *Plano de Regularização das Zonas Especiais de Interesse Social* (PREZEIS – Plan for Regularisation of Special Interest Areas). Both policies were innovative, contrasting with the then existing policies of eviction and demolition of *favelas* (Rolnik, 2013b). In tandem, they have created the basis for what became known as the “Brazilian formula”, that is, a particular set of policies for the regularisation of consolidated informal settlements (Fernandes and Pereira, 2010).

None of those changes, however, came about without social pressure. In Belo Horizonte, like in other places in Brazil, the *favela* residents were increasingly more organised and in the context of re-democratisation, they were able to achieve important victories. These movements were articulated within neighbourhoods with some degree of

³⁷ Despite the many pertinent critiques, the importance of BNH should not be underestimated. During its existence (1964-1986), the program produced 4.3 million housing unities, of which 2.4 were targeted to the working classes (Bonduki, 2008).

³⁸ The Pro-*favela* program was instituted through the Municipal Law 3,532/1983, which benefited from the legal opening engendered by the Federal Law 6,766/1979 that regulated urban land division.

local and national coordination.³⁹ Another important factor to consider was the role played by local organisations connected to the progressive branch of the Catholic Church in Brazil. As mentioned by Fernandes (1995), of particular importance was the work of the Pastoral movements and the *Comunidades Eclesiais de Base* (Ecclesiastical Base Communities).

In 1992, President Fernando Collor, from the National Reconstruction Party (PRN), was impeached under strong accusations of corruption. He had defeated Lula, from the Worker's Party (PT), in the 1989 federal election. In this context, Patrus Ananias (PT) launched his candidacy in the 1992 municipal elections for the *Frente Popular BH* (BH Popular Front) coalition. Patrus was elected in 1993 with wide support from social movements and progressive sectors of the organised civil society, especially the housing movement.⁴⁰ Additionally, Patrus had strong connections with the Catholic Church and the Pastoral movement. His administration benefited from the first wave of progressive local governments, mostly from PT, after the end of the dictatorship. He was also influenced by pioneer policies in other cities, such as the Participatory Budget in Porto Alegre, which he successfully replicated in Belo Horizonte⁴¹ (Bedê, 2005). Of particular importance for the overall discussion in this thesis is the formulation of the *Política Municipal de Habitação* (PMH – Municipal Housing Policy) that represented an innovative and inclusive legal-institutional framework for social housing policy.⁴²

The PMH was instituted in a context of strong social mobilisation. In the national context, the moment was fostered by the democratic transition, the constituent assembly process, the urban reform moment, the popular mobilisation for the urban policy constitutional amendment, and the president's impeachment. Locally, the approval in 1990

³⁹ The Pastoral Land Commission (CPT), connected to the Catholic Church, was responsible for initiating a unified movement for the urban reform in the 1970s, articulating fragmented groups that had been active since the 1960s all around Brazil (Bedê and de Moura Costa, 2006).

⁴⁰ The movement for housing within the city was divided into two branches, the *favela* movement, in decline after decades of intense mobilisation, and the homeless movement (*movimento dos sem casa*) which was in expansion following its creation in the 1980s (Bedê and de Moura Costa, 2006).

⁴¹ For a discussion about participatory budgeting in Belo Horizonte, see Bretas, (1996), Nylén, (2002), and Wampler (2010).

⁴² Belo Horizonte's PMH was structured through four main actions. Firstly, in 1993/94, the *Sistema Municipal de Habitação* (SMH – Municipal Housing System) was organised. The SMH was constituted by the URBEL, the *Fundo Municipal de Habitação* (FMH – Municipal Housing Fund), and the *Conselho Municipal de Habitação* (CMH – Municipal Housing Council). This new legal-institutional framework was engendered through the approval of the municipal laws 6,326/1993 and 6,508/1994 that instituted the *Fundo Municipal de Moradia Popular* (FMHP - Popular Housing Municipal Fund) and the CMH. Secondly, in 1994 the CMH issued the Resolution No. 2 that regulated Belo Horizonte's PMH. Thirdly, in 1995, the *Orçamento Participativo da Habitação* (OPH – Housing Participatory Budgeting) was created. Fourthly, the first Municipal Housing Conference took place in 1998 (Bedê, 2005; Navarro and de Lacerda Godinho, 2002).

of the *Lei Orgânica do Município* (Municipal Constitution) and the election of a particularly progressive group of politicians have transformed the city council into an arena of debates regarding urban issues (Bedê and de Moura Costa, 2006). Nonetheless, the 1980s was also a moment in which the Brazilian economy, like all Latin America, was facing a deep recession, combined with the rise of neoliberalism, pushed through the structural adjustment policies implemented in exchange for International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank loans. The crisis engendered increasing unemployment and decreasing disposable income. Moreover, during the 1980s, new informal settlements were proliferating around the city. Hence, in Belo Horizonte, the PMH and other policies for increasing participatory democracy were part of attempts to deal with the intensifying issues of homelessness and housing precariousness.

For Fernandes (1995, p.42), in Brazil, “the state has often transformed social ‘needs’ and ‘deficiencies’ into ‘rights’ in order to neutralise the increasing mobilisation – which has not necessarily implied that the state is any better prepared to enforce such rights.” He argues that the 1988 Constitution is a perfect example of such development. Many social rights were recognised, but “the mechanisms of the enforcement of the new constitutional rights are insufficient, if not missing, and the nature of the political process has not been deeply altered” (ibid). Moreover, the inclusion of social movements within the government structure can also have the result of demobilising their struggle. That is particularly relevant if we consider the economic crisis afore mentioned that limited the financial capacity of the local government to actually implement the policy. In Belo Horizonte, therefore, one could argue that the creation of the PMH is a step forward in the direction of creating institutions and legal frameworks necessary to implement the constitutional right to adequate housing. Nonetheless, many obstacles stand in the way of its actual realisation.

2.3.2. *Work informality and the code of placements*

During the 1980s and early 1990s, in addition to the deep recession, Brazil also suffered from hyperinflation. After Collor’s impeachment, in 1992, his vice-president, Itamar Franco (PMDB), assumed his post and Fernando Henrique Cardoso became the Finance Ministry. Cardoso’s team designed the *Plano Real* (“Real Plan”), which was implemented in 1994 and successfully controlled inflation, despite having other consequences that deepened the unemployment crisis (Amann and Baer, 2002; Duarte,

2013). Nonetheless, the success of the plan gave Cardoso huge political leverage and he became the presidential candidate for the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB) in the 1994 election, eventually winning the presidential race after defeating Lula in the 2nd round of votes. During his two mandates as president – he was re-elected in 1998 in another victory against Lula – his government deepened neoliberalism in Brazil, promoting the privatisation of many public companies and the free circulation of trade and capital, among other policies (Novelli and Galvão, 2001).

A direct consequence of the economic crisis and the neoliberal policies was the restructuring of the labour market in Brazil. The share of the industrial wage-worker was reduced, while informality increased (Figueiras, 2006). According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the proportion of workers with no formal contracts in 1981 was 28%. After a decade of neoliberal policies and economic recession, this number jumped to 38% at the end of the 1990s (Ulyseia, 2005). Examining this phenomenon and the effects on working-class forms of contestation, Sandoval (2007, p.82) discusses what he calls the “*neo-camelô*” phenomenon:

In the late 1990s, with formal unemployment at about twenty percent in large urban areas, and the average time workers remained unemployed at around one year in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, unemployed workers turned to other ways to earn a living, like street vending. In the large urban areas, a new type of street vendor appeared and became commonplace on busy commercial streets, often effectively competing with established businesses for customers. This current version of the street vendor (which I have chosen to call the *neo-camelô*) represents a new and different form of what was often seen in Brazil as marginal “penny capitalism.”

Camelôs have been historically a common type of street vendor in Brazilian urban centres, selling products of small commercial value (food, candies, cigarettes, etc.). Nonetheless, the “*neo-camelôs*” was a new type of street “merchant”, composed of former unemployed industrial workers and their families, who invested the compensations received for contractual termination to purchase higher-quality goods (e.g. electronics), for street vending (Sandoval, 2007). That was combined with the liberalisation of international trade which made this kind of imported products cheaper. These new *camelôs* invaded the streets of all big cities in Brazil and, due to their lower costs, they represented a real competition for regular shops. Retail business associations and leaders of commercial workers' unions have since then organised to demand the control of informal street vending from government authorities.

In Belo Horizonte, the situation was no different. The industrialisation and the metropolitanisation of Belo Horizonte unravelling in the 1950s and 1960s led to the abandonment of its central area by the middle classes and to the growing presence of the working classes. Later, in the 1980s and 1990s, the centre started losing population, as well as economic dynamism. In this period, political and media discourses started reporting on the “emptying” of the city centre. Nonetheless, scholars have observed that, in reality, the centre remained a vital space, although catering mostly for the working classes from the peripheries that either work in the centre or use the area to commute daily. Therefore, they prefer to call this process “popularisation” of the centre (de Souza and Carneiro, 2007; Vilela, 2006). This popularisation process was characterised by the swarming of the city centre by different kinds of street vendors, such as *camelôs*, *toreros* and *ambulantes*.

The situation deteriorated due to the 1990s’ unemployment crisis, engendering a difficult situation for the municipal administration. The occupation of public spaces by street vendors generated conflicts with shop keepers and everyday users of urban space (Zambelli, 2006). In the beginning of the 1990s, the municipal government attempted to regulate the informal commerce in the city centre, promoting the registration of a limited number of vendors. This measure created a new conflict between the licensed *camelôs* working in tents, selling authorised products and acting on specifically designated areas, and the non-licensed *toreros* (see Figure 2.3). The local administration, thus, decided to invest in a “definitive” solution with the creation of popular shopping malls for the relocation of licensed *camelôs*.

In 2003, the local government created a new municipal law for the regulation of urban spaces, described by the mayor as an “urban life statute”, aimed at “regulating the coexistence” of different people within the city (Vilela, 2006). The *Código de Posturas* (Code of Placements) was approved by the City Council in 2003 and enacted in 2004. The legislation was the result of discussions held during the Second Urban Policy Conference in 2002 (Morais, 2013). According to the new law, the use of public space for commercial purposes, with no appropriate license, was prohibited. In the same year, the local government launched a program for the “revitalisation” of the city centre (*Centro Vivo*).⁴³ The main goal of such policies was “cleaning” the streets from the “dirty” created by street

⁴³ The program is described in City Hall webpage as “a set of public works and social projects of the city hall aiming at the requalification of collective spaces in the central area of Belo Horizonte. The initiative was created to reinforce the centre as a symbolic region of the city, valuing its diverse activities and consolidating its role as a meeting place for all” (PBH). Available at <<http://bit.ly/2heWjbS>>. Accessed on 08/03/2017.

vendors, while promoting their “formalisation” and transference to the newly constructed popular malls.⁴⁴



Figure 2.3. *Camelôs* in the centre of Belo Horizonte in the late 1990s

(Source: Jornal Estado de Minas)

The *camelôs* licensed from 1998 to 2002 were selected through a lottery process to occupy the new spots at the popular malls. Not all of them were given a place and the attitude towards those that remained on the streets was a policy of “zero tolerance”. In the new shopping malls, the “entrepreneurs” were expected to pay rent and utility bills. Many of them were unable to meet the financial commitments and went back to the streets, where they found a much more hostile environment. Zambelli (2006), who conducted an evaluation of the program and interviewed several of the transferred workers, argues that their evaluation regarding their new situation was mainly negative. In their perception, the main goal of the City Hall was to clear the streets, engendering a non-structured and disorganised transference process, with no technical support. Another critical point was

⁴⁴ The construction of the popular malls was only possible because of the existence of a particular instrument in the city’s Master Plan, the Transference of the Right to Build (TDC – *Transferência do Direito de Construir*). This instrument would be later incorporated in the City Statute approved in 2001. The deal that allowed the construction of the popular malls was connected to the construction of an upper-class shopping mall (Pátio Savassi), built by Tenco enterprises. Ironically Tenco is owned by the same entrepreneur that was involved in the failed construction of the luxury hotel at Musas Street, one of the cases analysed in this thesis.

that, after concluding the relocation, the local government abandoned the everyday management of the malls which became “privatised” spaces.

The whole process described was articulated during the mandate of Fernando Pimentel, a politician from the PT and currently the governor of Minas Gerais (2016-2020). Pimentel’s mandate at city hall started in 2001, after the elected mayor Célio de Castro – member of the BH Popular Front Coalition and former vice-mayor of Patrus Ananias – abandoned office due to medical problems. Therefore, one could argue that his government represented some form of continuity in relation to the BH Popular Front administration that, as discussed, created progressive policies to recognise informal rights to housing. Nonetheless, during his administration, the local government progressively criminalised the work of street vendors and their use of urban public spaces, with support from the media.

The situation is attenuated in the following years, in which the Brazilian economy benefited from favourable external conditions and entered a new cycle of growth. In this context, the Brazilian labour market is impacted positively, with the creation of jobs and a decrease in the proportion of occupations uncovered by labour legislation, that is, informal jobs. Moreover, from 2003 onwards, the new federal government had implemented social policies that, combined with economic growth, generated decreasing inequality (de Andrade Baltar et al., 2010). This new growth cycle is sustained, thus, by a new economic policy under a new political coalition in the federal arena (Rolnik, 2013b). In the next and final section of this chapter, I will draw the recent trends unravelling in the city of Belo Horizonte in this new context.

2.4.Recent trends: entrepreneurial urbanism and the World Cup

2.4.1. Brazil “takes off”

In 2002, after three failed attempts, Lula (PT) was elected president. His victory was met, in one hand, with a “panic attack” from financial markets, fearing a “socialist” turn in Brazilian politics (Williamson, 2003) and, on the other hand, by the euphoria of those hoping for change, after a decade of neoliberal policies (Bianchi and Braga, 2005). During his government, the country benefited from a good external environment, resulting partially

from the spectacular growth of the Chinese economy.⁴⁵ Between 2004 and 2008, Brazil grew 4.7% annually (on average), driven internationally by increasing commodity prices and, internally, by the expanding domestic market.

However, the economic policy of Lula's first mandate did not represent a significant break from the neoliberal policies implemented under his predecessor's presidency. Such policies were "based on an inflation-targeting monetary policy framework, floating exchange rates and tight fiscal policies to secure a primary surplus sufficient to compensate the nominal deficit of the public sector" (Morais and Saad-Filho, 2012, p.789). This decision soothed the fears of international markets while disappointing those that expected a significant change. Nonetheless, debates within the government regarding a stronger intervention of the state in the economy to promote economic growth and economic equality sought to displace economic policy towards a more interventionist paradigm, denominated as "neo-developmentalism" (Ban, 2013; Carrillo, 2014). According to this approach, the state is considered a central player in the implementation of a national development strategy. The result of this debate within Lula's administration was the establishment of a hybrid economic policy that combined neoliberal macroeconomic policies with "neo-developmental" strategies, engendering positive economic outcomes (Morais and Saad-Filho, 2012).

For most of the 2000s, the context in Brazil was marked by great optimism generated by the favourable economic scenario, characterised by recurrent trade balance surpluses, low unemployment rates, and decreasing social inequality. Lula's government was seemingly able to appease the fears of the "market" while corresponding, at least partially, to the expectations of historically excluded groups. In 2007, Brazil was officially confirmed as the 2014 World Cup host country in a celebrated ceremony, full of enthusiasm and optimism regarding the country's future. Despite being affected by the international crisis, in 2008, the country made a "quick recovery" praised worldwide, promoted by state-led counter-cyclical initiatives (Barbosa, 2010). In its November 2009 cover, the magazine "The Economist" portrayed a picture of Rio's Christ the Redeemer statue as a rocket with the headline "Brazil takes off". The article commended Brazil's emergence as a global player, comparing the country favourably to the other BRICS.

⁴⁵ According to Libânio (2008), the Brazilian economy has benefited greatly from the Chinese expansion. Between 2002 and 2007 the exports to China grew four-fold, which contributed greatly for the historical surpluses of the Brazilian trade balance in the period.

Unlike China, it is a democracy. Unlike India, it has no insurgents, no ethnic and religious conflicts nor hostile neighbours. Unlike Russia, it exports more than oil and arms, and treats foreign investors with respect. Under the presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a former trade-union leader born in poverty, its government has moved to reduce the searing inequalities that have long disfigured it. Indeed, when it comes to smart social policy and boosting consumption at home, the developing world has much more to learn from Brazil than from China. In short, Brazil suddenly seems to have made an entrance onto the world stage. Its arrival was symbolically marked last month by the award of the 2016 Olympics to Rio de Janeiro; two years earlier, Brazil will host football's World Cup. (The Economist, 2009)

Initially, 18 of Brazil's 27 capitals announced their will to host the FIFA event. The World Cup was deemed as an opportunity to accelerate infrastructure projects, especially regarding urban mobility, and to boost local economies. According to Gaffney (2010, p.21), in the period between 2007 and 2009, a fierce competition among the 18 initial candidates took place "engendering a bidding war full of political intrigue in which host cities and states scrambled to outspend their competition on new stadiums, highways, and airport terminals." Finally, in May of 2009, the Brazilian Government chose the 12 host cities⁴⁶ and Belo Horizonte was confirmed as one of them.

2.4.2. *Belo Horizonte and the World Cup*

In Belo Horizonte, the 2008 municipal election in the city was characterised by a peculiarity. At that moment, the current mayor was Fernando Pimentel (PT), while the governor of Minas Gerais was Aécio Neves (PSDB). These two parties have, since the 1994 election, polarised the federal political arena in Brazil (De Melo, 2010; Limongi and Cortez, 2010). While the PSDB was in power from 1994 until 2002, the PT has won all subsequent federal elections.⁴⁷ The competition in the ballots has been intense and almost no cooperation between these two parties was ever observed,⁴⁸ with one always acting as the opposition's leader to the other's government. Nonetheless, during Belo Horizonte's election in 2008, Fernando Pimentel and Aécio Neves joined forces to support Márcio Lacerda, an inexperienced politician from the *Partido Socialista Brasileiro* (PSB – Brazilian

⁴⁶ The other 11 host cities were Brasília (DF), Cuiabá (MS), Curitiba (PR), Fortaleza (CE), Manaus (AM), Natal (RN), Porto Alegre (RS), Recife (PE), Rio de Janeiro (RJ), Salvador (BA), São Paulo (SP).

⁴⁷ The PT was in power from 2003 until 2016, when the elected president Dilma Rousseff was impeached.

⁴⁸ From 2002 onwards, the political electoral system in Brazil was "verticalised", that is, coalitions formed in the federal/regional scale must be respected in the regional/local sphere. Before this system was put in place, PSDB and PT formed a coalition in one single regional state.

Socialist Party). According to Souza Telles et al (2009), this atypical coalition – named *Aliança por BH* (“Alliance for Belo Horizonte”) – was constructed around the idea that it was time for Minas Gerais to seize the political control of the country. That would be achieved by the union of “good politicians” around a common national project (Ademir de Oliveira et al., 2015). The slogan “*Meu partido é BH*” (My political party is BH) summarised the idea of an alliance across parties as the main campaign strategy. Although “informal” and not officially recognised by the national leadership of both parties,⁴⁹ the alliance was fundamental to Márcio Lacerda’s victory. At first, his government was presented as a continuity one and the PT was actively involved in the administration. Not only his vice-mayor, Roberto Carvalho, was a PT politician but the party occupied several relevant offices. Nonetheless, the alliance did not last long and in the first year of his mandate, the coalition was undone. His government has been overtly criticised by local social movements for presenting an “entrepreneurial” view of the city (Mayer, 2005).

In 2009, following the announcement of Belo Horizonte as a host city for the 2014 FIFA World Cup, a series of investments in the city’s infrastructure was communicated. The initial set of interventions was encompassed in the *Matriz de Responsabilidades* (Responsibility Matrix), first launched by the Federal Government in January 2010. In the original plan, presented in Table 2.3, eight interventions on urban mobility were foreseen, reaching a total spending of R\$1.5 billion (£310 million). The matrix also accounted for the city’s main stadium reform, which was executed by the regional state government with 70% of the total amount funded by the *Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social* (BNDES - National Bank for Economic and Social Development). Additionally, the reform of the Tancredo Neves Airport was included in July 2010, with an estimated cost of R\$408.6 million (£83.2 million), completely funded and executed by the federal government.

⁴⁹ Prior to the municipal elections, the PT national convention formally rejected the alliance (Souza Telles et al., 2009).

Table 2.3. Original World Cup Responsibility Matrix: January 2010

Project	Value (in R\$ millions)	Value (in £\$ millions)*
<i>Urban Mobility (R\$1.5 billion/£310 million)</i>		
BRT: Antônio Carlos/Pedro I	688.2	140.2
BRT: Pedro II/Carlos Luz	231.5	47.1
BRT: Central Area	56	11.4
Route 210	96	19.6
Route 710	156	31.8
BRT: Cristiano Machado	51.2	10.4
Boulevard Arrudas/Tereza Cristina	213	43.4
<i>Stadium (R\$426 million/£87 million)</i>		
Reform and adaptation of the Magalhães Pinto Stadium	426.1	86.8

(Source: Author's elaboration with data from the Federal Government, available at <<http://www.copa2014.gov.br/pt-br/brasilecopa/sobreacopa/matriz-responsabilidades>>)

(*) Considering the official exchange rate (£1.00/R\$4.91) provided by the Brazilian Central Bank on July 7, 2015.

The original matrix was later altered in May 2012, and it excluded the “BRT: Pedro II/Carlos Luz” and the “Route 2010” project, while including the installation of a traffic corridor at Pedro II Avenue and additional works related to the BRT's of the Cristiano Machado and Antônio Carlos Avenue. Moreover, additional R\$8.33 million (£1.7 million) was expended on projects related to the tourism infrastructure, being mostly funded by the federal government and partially by the regional state. Additionally, 73 projects for the construction of new hotels for the World Cup were proposed after the approval of the municipal Law 9.952/2010 intended, among other things to “safeguard the offer of the requirements and necessary infrastructure for the municipality to fulfil the commitments assumed in the condition of being one of the host-cities for the 2014 FIFA World Cup”. The law has benefited the private sector by making planning guidelines flexible for the construction of new hotels.

Figure 2.4 shows the location of the planned interventions in Belo Horizonte's map. One can notice the concentration of investments in the city's north axis. Since the early

2000s, the northern region has been targeted for major public investments aimed at promoting the expansion of the RMBH in this direction. Firstly, the Tancredo Neves airport located in Confins, a municipality in the North of Belo Horizonte's metropolitan region, was renovated, while a regional law from 2005 transferred most of the flights from the Pampulha airport – located in the Pampulha region within Belo Horizonte – to the newly renovated terminal. Secondly, the regional state has invested in the upgrading of the road system connecting Belo Horizonte to the airport and other municipalities in the north. The *Linha Verde* (Green Line) project consisted of the modernisation of a motorway (MG-10) and its urban extension – the Cristiano Machado Avenue and the Arrudas Boulevard.⁵⁰ Thirdly, the regional government built a new centre to house its administrative apparatus formerly situated at Praça da Liberdade, a square in the central area of Belo Horizonte. The project, known as the *Cidade Administrativa* (“Administrative City”) was designed by Oscar Niemeyer, and it also connects to Belo Horizonte via the newly renovated Green Line (Costa et al., 2010). Moreover, these interventions have been accompanied by private investments in both the real estate and the productive sector (Costa and Magalhães, 2011).

⁵⁰ For a discussion about displacements caused by this project, see Lopes (2010).

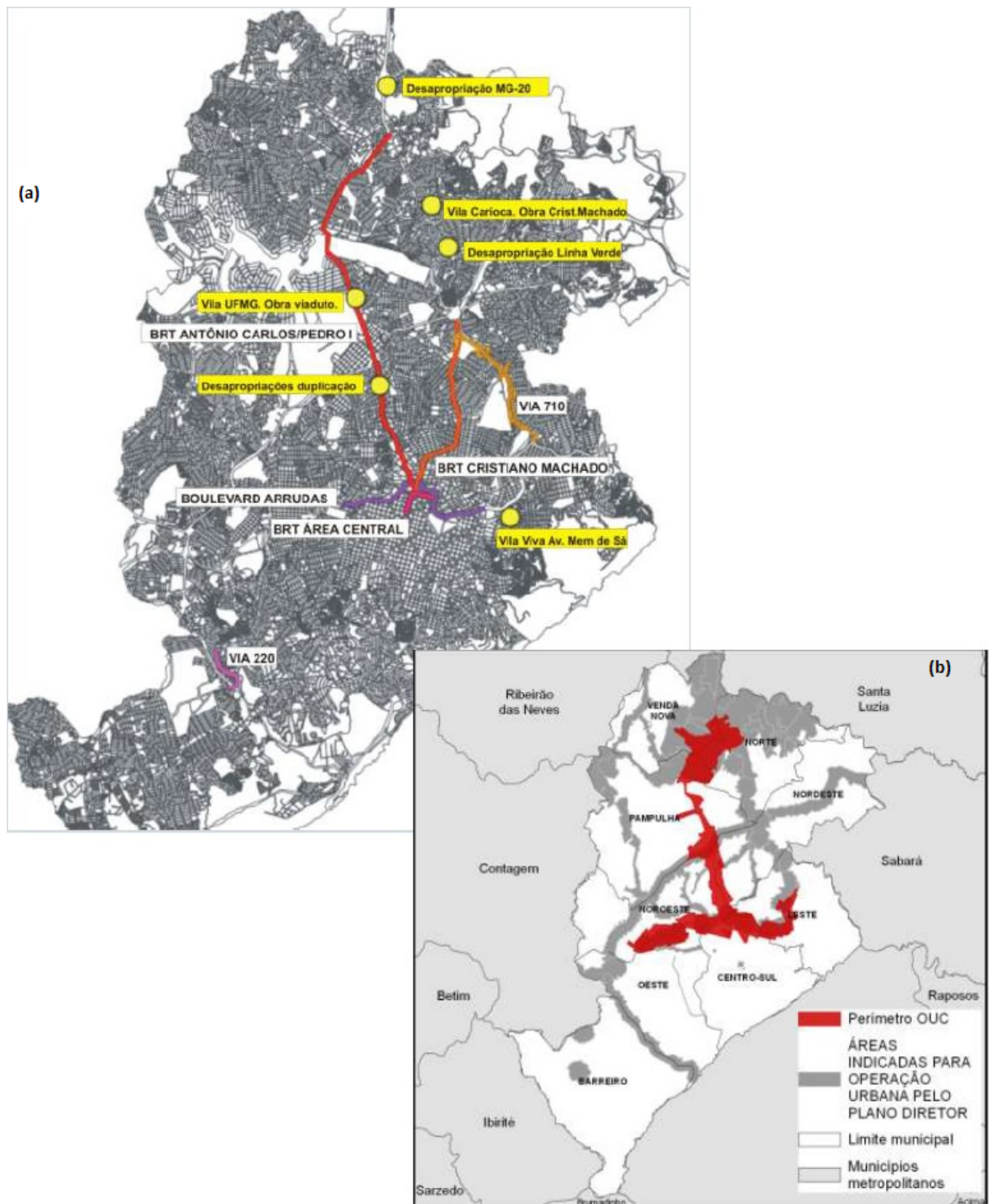


Figure 2.4. (a) World Cup interventions and (b) area affected by the “Nova BH” project
 Source: (a) Tonucci Filho, 2013, p.7; (b) PBH, 2013, p.20

These interventions have been interpreted as part of the regional government strategy to raise the national and international competitiveness of the metropolitan region. Such initiatives are said to be connected with a new “modernity” ideology in which the progress is associated with the region’s insertion in the global circuits of capital (Costa and Magalhães, 2011; Limonad and Costa, 2014). The aim of these initiatives would be,

therefore, to attract foreign private investments to enhance the development of the metropolitan region and the regional state. Furthermore, the investments could be related with forms of strategic planning and management which are linked with ideas of city marketing and of increasing inter-city competition (Harvey, 1996; Vainer, 2009).

In this context, one can discuss the juxtaposition (see Figure 2.4) of the investments associated with the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the “Nova BH” project, an urban operation consortium (OUC – *Operação Urbana Consorciada*) launched by the municipal government in October 2013. The OUC is an instrument regulated by the City Statute, which states that each city’s master plan will delimit areas where such operations can occur. According to Rolnik (2013b, p.60), those areas are then subject to the promotion of mega-projects through public–private partnerships “that are not subject to the general rules of the city’s regulation and that are designed to attract private capital investment and promote the redesign of particular areas.” The “Nova BH” would be the largest urban operation of Belo Horizonte’s history, planned to affect 58 neighbourhoods and 7% of the municipality’s area.

Nonetheless, the initial “Nova BH” was highly criticised by local social movements and the *Ministério Público* (Public Ministry)⁵¹ for bypassing popular participation, required by the City Statute. As a result of popular pressure and the judiciary’s intervention, the City Hall has cancelled the initial plan, which was re-launched in November 2014 with a new name (OUC ACLO – *Operação Urbana Consorciada Antônio Carlos – Eixo Leste-Oeste*), whilst opening new rounds of discussion with the civil society. Although unable to paralyse the process, social activism was able to push for adaptations and for the inclusion of new elements in the project that partially met the demands of the social movements (Mayer, 2005). World Cup-related projects, on the other hand, were carried through, to meet the demands of FIFA and prepare the city’s infrastructure to receive the games. The interventions were not short of social criticism though, as became clear during the Confederations Cup in 2013.

In June 2013, millions of Brazilians in several cities around the country went to the streets in a massive wave of demonstrations. The protests started in São Paulo as a reaction to the raise in public transport fares, but they rapidly evolved, aggregating several demands, especially regarding the poor quality of public services and corruption (Cammaerts and Jiménez-Martínez, 2014). Among the several concerns voiced by protesters, one can also

⁵¹ The 1988 Constitution restructured the MP, guaranteeing its autonomy, expanding both its power and set of attributions. The institution has two main functions, to safeguard the law and to prosecute, in order “to protect the interests of society generally conceived” (de Sousa, 2010, p.116).

point out the growing dissatisfaction regarding the excessive expenditures for the World Cup (Watts, 2013). The temporal coincidence between the demonstrations and the Confederations Cup has brought great international visibility to the protests. Moreover, international media was keen to interpret the movements as being mainly against the World Cup, a surprise for many observers considering the well-known popularity of football among Brazilians.⁵² In Belo Horizonte, the situation was no different and thousands went to the streets, marching towards the recently re-inaugurated Mineirão stadium.

2.5. Summary

This chapter has discussed the political, the economic, and the urban trajectory of Belo Horizonte, the city which is the object of analysis of this thesis. Attention was given to the role of the state and state-led initiatives in shaping the socio-spatial configuration of the city throughout different points in time, while connecting local initiatives with federal/regional politics. The relationship between the state and the reproduction of informality has also been examined, as well as the policies evolving to deal with such “anomalies”. Finally, the last section has set the context that the thesis will proceed to address more closely.

In Belo Horizonte, World Cup-related projects should be understood within the context of the recent state-led redevelopment discussed. Following their implementation, conflicts over the use and occupation of urban space have emerged all over the city. Nonetheless, the population affected by the developments have organised themselves to claim their rights from the state with varying degrees of success. It is the objective of this thesis to analyse selected cases in which such conflicts were observed. Moreover, the context discussed in this chapter will guide the analysis implemented. As will be examined, conflicts over space do not evolve over a plain field, but are rather influenced and determined by local conditions and arrangements, as well as national and global politics.

⁵² “Football supporters fleeing rubber bullets, roads into stadiums blocked by angry crowds, mobs throwing stones at FIFA offices, Confederations Cup placards being ripped down and burned in the midst of mass protests. These are unlikely scenes in a football-mad country and the last thing organisers of the World Cup wanted to see in Brazil before next year's tournament, but for the past week they have become an almost daily occurrence as the country's favourite sport has become the focus of the biggest demonstrations in decades.” (Watts, 2013)

Chapter 3 : Urban informality, state, and citizenship

Discussions about urban informality are back on the international agenda, following claims of the arrival of an “urban age” (Brenner and Schmid, 2014; Burdett and Sudjic, 2007) and the “planet of slums” (Davis, 2006). In the past, informality has been mainly understood as the absence of the state or its failure, a product of disjointed modernisation (Fox, 2014). Recent developments in postcolonial urban studies have sought to challenge such binary views, arguing instead for an understanding of informality as a mode of urban governance reproduced by the state (Roy, 2005; Watson, 2009; Yiftachel, 2009). This chapter joins the debate while proposing a modified relational approach. I discuss how postcolonial studies on urban informality can provide a useful framework through which one can understand how space is produced as an outcome of never-ending disputes involving unevenly empowered state and non-state actors (Hackenbroch, 2011; Schindler, 2014a). Additionally, I engage with debates about the “insurgent citizenship” movement in Brazil (Holston, 2008) to show how informal spaces are not only produced by the state but are also able to modify the state, engendering a new type of citizenship. Institutional developments arising from insurgency movements and incorporated in the Brazilian law and state apparatus affect the way different citizens considered in this thesis – informal workers, informal residents and the middle-classes – are (un)able to claim access to and shape urban space to their own desire. Through this discussion I explore how urban space, state and citizenship are mutually constituted processes.

This chapter consists of five main sections. The first section sets the scene, exploring how debates on informality have evolved. I show how early theorisations emerging from Latin America in the 1970s have been rendered outdated by changes brought about by neoliberalism and globalisation and discuss how more recent debates on informality have tended to reify the view of formal/informal as separate sectors. In line with the postcolonial turn, I thus argue for a disruption in such binary views that stem from a Western-centred tradition that restricts our understanding of city-ness. Section two reviews postcolonial debates that seek to replace the division between formal and informal for an understanding of informality as a mode of governance deployed by the state to control spaces and bodies. This section engages critically with this framework, discussing how it portrays the state as a separate entity, distinct from society. I hence explore how acknowledging the blurriness of the boundary between society and state may affect the analysis of the politics of informality,

opening up room for further investigations regarding the role of the state in this process. The section also explores how legal pluralism debates can complicate the notion of the law as the language of state power, emphasising the law as political terrain open for contestation. Finally, I draw attention to contributions on the informality literature that incorporate the role of non-state agents, exploring how formal/informal boundaries emerge as the outcome of multiple negotiations among unevenly empowered actors. Section three focuses on the relationship between citizenship and informality. I engage with the insurgent citizenship framework, analysing recent institutional and legal developments in Brazil that have impacted the ability of citizens to claim their right to shape space. Section four builds on the theoretical debates outlined in the chapter to propose a modified relational approach to informality, which recognises space, state and citizenship as mutually constituted processes. The last section summarises the chapter and points to the ways the developed framework will inform the main discussions proposed in this thesis.

3.1. Evolving studies on informality: from Latin America to postcolonial debates

3.1.1. Early theorisations from Latin America

Discussions about urbanisation in Latin America have been intertwined with the debate about informality to such an extent that Roy and AlSayyad (2004) call for the need to decouple Latin America as an area of study from urban informality as a subject. Although the concept of the “informal sector” was first developed in the early 1970s to describe the phenomenon of informal work and the dual economy,⁵³ the early debates did not tackle the spatial aspects of informality. It was due to the work of a group of Latin American researchers that the first round of studies on informal housing and land markets was developed. These studies (Maricato, 1979b; Oliveira, 1982; Quijano, 1978; Singer, 1982; Valladares, 1981) were path-breaking as they dismantled common myths about informality

⁵³ According to Alsayyad (2004, p.10): “Any discussion on informality inevitably must begin with the emergence of the ‘informal sector’ as a concept in the early 1970s. The discussion was ultimately rooted in descriptions of the movement of labour to cities in the 1950s and 60s. Among the earliest to identify this trend, W. Arthur Lewis proposed a two-sector model for understanding the new migration of people and the manner of their employment.”

and situated the phenomenon in a wider theoretical context, mainly framed by the idea of economic dependency.⁵⁴

During the 20th century, fast urbanisation was a revolutionary change profoundly affecting Latin American countries (Gilbert, 2004).⁵⁵ Urbanisation was partially engendered by state-led import substitution industrialisation (ISI).⁵⁶ These entangled processes have changed the socio-spatial pattern of the region, with massive migration towards the large industrialising cities. In some interpretations, urbanisation was said to be ‘outrunning’ industrialisation, and growing informality was thus perceived as a manifestation of “disjointed modernisation” (Fox, 2014, p.193).⁵⁷ The result was an oversized tertiary sector, the growth of the informal labour market and the proliferation of irregular settlements⁵⁸ (Kentor, 1981; Lewis, 1954; Morse, 1971). This interpretation, however, has been challenged by the “marginality theory” (Castells, 1973; Quijano, 1973, 1978) that saw the coexistence of formal/modern and informal/traditional modes of social relations as the particular way through which capital accumulation was unfolding under dependency.

Influenced by urban Marxist sociology – especially Manuel Castells – Brazilian scholars have developed pioneering explanations for this process (Arantes, 2009; Maricato, 1979b; Oliveira, 1982, 2003; Valladares, 1981). Marginality was seen not as a sign of a mismatch between industrialisation and urbanisation, but rather as a symptom of the particular arrangements that made the development of a model of dependent capitalism possible. The practices of autoconstruction⁵⁹ and the existence of “pre-modern” forms of

⁵⁴ The dependency school has argued that Latin American economies have always been determined by their adverse terms of inclusion in the capitalist system and its global development. Changes in Latin American economies are, thus, triggered by fundamental changes at the international level (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979).

⁵⁵ From 1900 to 2000, the urban population in Latin America grew from around 10 million to 375 million (Gilbert, 2004).

⁵⁶ State intervention was theoretically underpinned by the underdevelopment theory fostered within the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The commission gathered an important group of Latin American intellectuals that criticized the Rostowian development model and the comparative advantages theory, proposing state-led industrialisation as the path to overcome underdevelopment. In this tradition, underdevelopment is not seen as a stage in the development ladder, but rather as a particular economic-historic condition in which two opposing sectors – “modern” and “traditional” – coexist in society. About ECLAC and the underdevelopment theory, see Prebisch (1949) and Rodriguez (1981).

⁵⁷ “Disjointed modernization” refers to a process in which “urban population growth outpaces urban economic and institutional development” (Fox, 2014, p.193).

⁵⁸ According to Morse (1971, p.22): “Such analyses are riddled with vocabulary (parasitism, marginality, distortion, imbalance, hyper-, exclusion) which implies that urbanisation in Latin America has somehow gone wrong or gotten out of phase.”

⁵⁹ Autoconstruction (*autoconstrução*) is the process through which the house is built by the owner, with the help of family or friends, with or without professional aid. Normally it takes place in “the urban hinterland under precarious material and legal circumstances” (Holston, 1991, p.447).

employment were indeed fuelling capitalism by reducing the costs of labour reproduction. The marginalised class was excluded from the benefits of urbanisation, but they were included in the process of accumulation, and indeed essential to its development (Oliveira, 2003).

Such approaches are, however, prone to the same critiques as faced by Castells's marginality theory and its interpretation of the urban. According to Arantes (2009), the main limitations of these contributions are related to the understanding of urban space as a direct manifestation of economic and political processes. The urban, therefore, does not emerge as a space with its own dynamics and categories, but rather as a reflection of the political economy. Others have advanced such interpretations discussing the functioning of informal housing markets emerging in the autoconstructed peripheries (Bonduki and Rolnik, 1982; Maricato, 1979b; Singer, 1982). Such interpretations were able to show that, although those markets were seemingly unregulated, they were certainly embedded in informal social practices, in which exchange and profit-seeking were common features. Therefore, understandings of a complete separated informal sector ruled by chaos and disorder were dismantled.

In this regard, another important contribution was given by Perlman (1976) in her seminal work, "The Myth of Marginality". Departing from a structuralist perspective, also influenced by Castells's marginality theory, Perlman has written a potent critique of the behaviourist approach that characterised marginality as a personality trait preventing the urban poor from adapting to city life. According to Margolis (1979, p.590):

The psychosociological school, which introduced the term 'marginality' into the social science literature, promoted the idea that a constellation of psychological traits typifies the 'marginal man,' traits which arise by virtue of his marginal status within society. Somewhat later, the concept of the marginal man was applied to entire social groups – particularly ethnic groups – whose degree of marginality was said to be based on the group's status and the obstacles placed in the paths of its members' mobility.

This perspective, which enjoyed some popularity at the time, regarded informal settlements and those inhabiting them as islands of backwardness impairing the modernisation of developing societies. Perlman's analysis, based on ethnographic work in Rio de Janeiro, challenged most of the conventional assumptions, especially the idea that *favelas* were enclaves within cities. She showed that almost half of the people in her sample held jobs in the "formal" city and that many slum dwellers made regular use of several urban

services. Perlman concludes that, despite common belief, the *favelados* – a derogatory term to refer to residents of informal settlements – were very much integrated into society. The issue, however, was the terms of this integration, often detrimental to the disadvantaged classes (Margolis, 1979; Perlman, 1976).

Perlman returned to Rio in 1998 to collect data on the original participants and their descendants to enquire about their social mobility (Perlman, 2004). Between her first study and the new round of data collection, Brazil changed enormously, and urbanisation was unfolding through different dynamics. First, cities were growing more slowly than in the 1950s-1980s period, much because of the deceleration in the rural-urban migration and the decreasing fertility rates.⁶⁰ Moreover, the economic conjuncture changed dramatically with the abandonment of the import substitution industrialisation (ISI) model in light of the Latin American debt crisis (Gilbert, 2004).

The 1980s in Latin America were labelled as the “lost decade”, with most countries experiencing low economic growth and high inflation rates.⁶¹ The remedy for these problems came in the form of neoliberal policies summarised in the Washington Consensus. Latin American countries implemented structural adjustment policies (SAP) in exchange for financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. SAPs were aimed at reducing the state’s participation in the economy through privatisation of state owned companies and overall budget cuts (Margheritis and Pereira, 2007; Roberts, 2012). Moreover, countries were encouraged to open their borders to foreign products and capital, changing the economic strategy from ISI to export-orientation (Caldeira and Holston, 2005; Gilbert, 2004). Most of these reforms were carried out throughout the 1990s as well, which was also characterised by slow-growth, increasing unemployment and precariousness of the labour force.

Between 1981 and 1989 Latin America experienced a decline in income per capita by approximately 8 per cent (Gilbert, 2004). The novelty of this recession was that it affected urban populations disproportionately and, for the first time in decades, poverty increased faster in the cities than in rural areas. In Brazil, Maricato (2003) argues that the expansion

⁶⁰ According to Gilbert (2004, p.96): “By 1980, national populations were growing much more slowly. From 1950 until 1980, Latin America’s population increased annually by 2.8 per cent; from 1980 until 1995, the annual growth rate had fallen to 1.8 per cent. Fertility decline was a significant factor in that change. After 1970, most women in the region bore fewer children. (...) The decline in fertility helped greatly to slow the pace of urban growth.”

⁶¹ The phenomenon in which slow economic growth is experienced in conjunction with high inflation rates has been labelled by the literature as “stagflation”.

experienced in the previous period was supported by an unequal society that produced an extremely fragmented and segregated urban environment. Nonetheless, the fast economic growth was capable of alleviating some of the consequences of such an unequal system. Therefore, when the recession finally hit the country, cities had to cope with new problems, such as increasing unemployment and urban violence, and the deepening of old ones, such as growing informality in the house and labour markets. In sum, urban poverty has grown significantly as a result of economic crisis combined with the neoliberal policies designed to control it. Informality has proved to be an enduring feature of Latin American societies, rather than a transitional feature of an aborted modernisation project.

The new realities brought about by the growing interconnection of cities with a transnational economy, especially after the 2000s, have made the informal city and the informal economy more complex, while altering the scale of the phenomenon. On the other hand, the advent of “urban entrepreneurialism” (Harvey, 1989) and the increasing competition among cities for resources has engendered pressures for the flexibilisation of rules and norms to accommodate the interests of capital accumulation (Vainer, 2009). In this context, new types of “informality” emerge, deactivating narratives and old dualistic debates. This modified panorama calls for the abandonment of the “incomplete modernity” thesis in favour of new conceptualisations that can account for the growing transversal logic that dominates the interstices between formal/informal and legal/illegal practices (Telles, 2010). In the next section, I present more recent discussions on informality, while also revealing the reification of dualisms in such current theorisations.

3.1.2. New debates and old formulas: the persistence of the formal/informal dichotomy

After enjoying a few decades of academic ostracism, the issue of urban informality is back on the international agenda (Roy, 2005). The discussion has often been associated with claims around the “urban age”⁶² (Burdett et al., 2011; Burdett and Sudjic, 2007) and alarming accounts of the chaotic growth of the Global South mega-cities and their “planet of slums” (Davis, 2006). According to UN-Habitat (2003), in 2001 there were approximately 1 billion people living in slums, or 32% of the total urban population in the world. In

⁶² For a critical perspective on the “urban age” discourse, see Brenner and Schmid (2014).

developing countries, 43% of urban dwellers lived in slums, and this number rises to 78% when considering only the least developed countries. The report also shows that the population living in slums has certainly increased during the 1990s and is expected to increase even further in the next 30 years, reaching 2 billion, if no “firm and concrete action is taken” (Un-Habitat, 2003, p.XXV).

Apart from the renewed interest in slums as a growing problem, there is also an increasing tendency to celebrate informal settlements as “an ideal image of anti-authoritarianism, and a flexible, aesthetically desirable and perhaps unavoidable form of urbanisation” (Ballegooijen and Rocco, 2013, p.1795). This phenomenon has been labelled by Roy and AlSayyad (2004) as the “aestheticisation of poverty” in which informality is disentangled from its political and economic causes to be merely seen as an aesthetical and spatial form. The British architect John Turner is often regarded as one of the firsts to publicise among Western academics the idea that informal settlements could be seen as a viable alternative and a solution rather than a problem to be solved (Turner, 1963, 1968). In his work, Turner celebrated the freedom and autonomy of the Peruvian *barriadas* as an alternative model to the modernist-inspired governmental projects. He was essentially arguing against the idea that informal settlements were chaotic places, where criminality and immoral behaviours were widespread.

Despite Turner’s noble intentions and the inspiration his work has provided for new policy approaches, Ballegooijen and Rocco (2013) argue that his ideas might have also led to a depoliticisation of urban informality. Moreover, distorted versions of his conceptions have been recycled by neoliberal accounts of informality that share with Turner nothing more than the disbelief in the state’s authority and efficacy. These approaches reshape the issue of increasing informality as the solution found by the entrepreneurial urban poor who heroically fight against the excessive control of the state in people’s lives. That is, for instance, the idea presented by Hernando de Soto (1989, 2000), one of the most influential voices in the recent studies regarding informality.

In his book, “*The Myth of Capital*”, de Soto (2000) turns to the never-ending and widespread informal settlements of the Global South. Those are described as resources that lack legal recognition and are thus unable to be converted into exchangeable assets. This legalist approach has become increasingly popular, influencing a new shift in public policies

towards informal settlements.⁶³ Based on selective evidence that secure property rights can generate wealth among the poor, the World Bank has promoted policies aimed at providing them with property rights all over the globe.⁶⁴ The efficacy of the World Bank's and local government's policies to distribute land titles have been tested by many scholars in different locations, using both quantitative and qualitative models (Brasselle et al., 2002; Di Tella et al., 2007; Do and Iyer, 2008; Field, 2005; Field and Torero, 2006; Galiani and Schargrotsky, 2010, 2011). The results found are inconclusive, as they often point at opposing directions. Based on his research in recently legalised self-help settlements in Bogotá, Gilbert (2002) questions de Soto's main conclusions. He argues that market transactions are already common in informal settlements and do not necessarily increase with legalisation. Also, informal finance is often available before legalisation and formal finance does not increase afterwards. Moreover, secondary housing markets are not likely to develop, which make it harder for poor people to profit from their properties.

The current debate is, therefore, divided between those who see the growing informality as a challenge to be addressed vigorously by planners, academics and policy makers (Davis, 2006; Hall and Pfeiffer, 2000; Un-Habitat, 2003) and those who see it as the result of the entrepreneurial spirit of the urban poor⁶⁵ (De Soto, 1989, 2000; World Bank, 2011). Although these two approaches seem very different, Roy (2005) argues that they have a similar understanding of informality as a separate "sector" which is to be somehow incorporated into formality. Moreover, Roy (2005) points out at least three problematic corollaries implicit in these accounts; first, they equate informality with poverty; second, both see informality and poverty as isolated from global capitalism; third, within such frameworks, poverty becomes the responsibility of poor people themselves.

3.1.3. *Postcolonialising urban studies: towards a view from the South.*

⁶³ A World Bank report published in May, 2011, discusses projects for increasing land tenure security in five different countries – Thailand, Bolivia, Kyrgyz Republic, Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (World Bank, 2011).

⁶⁴ In 2003 the World Bank launched a comprehensive report entitled "*Land Policies for Growth and Poverty Reduction*" focused on the origins of property rights and its relations with government policies and people's behaviours. It is argued, in line with de Soto's argument, that secure land titles lead to a virtuous cycle of more investments in land, economic growth and increasing welfare (Deininger and others, 2003).

⁶⁵ According to De Soto (1989, p.14) the "informal economy is the people's spontaneous and creative response to the state's incapacity to satisfy the basic needs of the impoverished masses."

For Roy (2009b), part of the problem lies in the way in which urban theory has been produced. She argues that a paradox marks the study of cities; much of the urban growth of the 21st century is taking place in the developing world, but many of the theories of how cities function remain rooted in the developed world. Similarly, AlSayyad (2004) argues that, traditionally, the Chicago School of urban sociology and, more recently, the Los Angeles school dominate the discourse around cities, urbanisation and urbanism. Such frameworks, developed through the experiences of Euro-American cities, are deemed as inappropriate to understand the processes unfolding in the 'Third World' cities where the urban future lies.

According to Robinson (2006), there is a division in the urban studies field between urban theory, focused on the West, and development studies, focused on the so called "third-world cities". She argues that one of the consequences of this dualism is that the theory is informed by the experience of a small group of cities, mostly in the West, which forms the standards by which cities in the whole world are assessed. This dualistic view imposes severe restrictions on how to plan and think about cities. Robinson (2006), therefore, calls for an effort to rethink urban theory and incorporate the experiences of a wider range of cities. In other words, if urban theory is to remain relevant in the contemporary world it needs to expand its understanding of city-ness. Robinson's manifesto has been followed by others in a research effort that calls for a view from the South (Watson, 2009), and the articulation of new geographies of urban theory (Roy, 2009a, 2009b).

Watson (2009) explores how planning is not equipped as a discipline to deal with the issues arising from contemporary urbanisation. She claims that most of the approach towards planning is out of date and still holds on to the mentalities of European and American early 20th century realities. For Watson, not only planning cannot deal with Global South issues, but it also has become inappropriate for dealing with most urban realities. In this sense, she subscribes to the idea of making theory from the South as a way to update planning tools for a more complex worldwide reality.

However, it has also been argued that it is not enough to give visibility to the experiences of cities in the Global South as this endeavour can leave the "geographies of authoritative knowledge" (Roy, 2009b, p.820) unaltered. There is a need to expand the cities informing theory-making, dislocating the centre of knowledge production towards the Global South. It is, therefore, essential to address Robinson's call and overcome the narrative of the Third-World mega-city in crisis (Robinson, 2006). The issue is, therefore, not

to deny the transferability of ideas, but rather to expand the theoretical scope and produce new sets of concepts that can be usefully deployed to analyse cities everywhere.

Many others have made similar points recently (Lees et al., 2016; McFarlane, 2008; Zeiderman, 2016a) and criticising this divide has become almost a cliché (Hentschel, 2015). Nonetheless, much remains to be done to trouble the dualistic thinking that has endured so long in the way we approach cities. It has been argued, for instance, that the postcolonial turn in urban studies has neglected the study of post-socialist cities (Hirt et al., 2016). Those remain “doubly excluded as neither the core – possessed by Euro-American urban studies – nor the source of influential critique as emanating from the perspective of the global South” (ibid, p.508). In the task of filling this gap Hirt, Ferenčuhová, and Tuvikene (2016) have explored the use of “informality” as a conceptualisation able to “bring forth insights and conceptual narratives that are less bound to sites (...) while still maintaining links to regional specificities” (ibid, p.509).

In the next section, I explore new postcolonial conceptualisations of “informality”. I show that this framework can provide useful lenses to shed new light on the discussion about urban space production in Brazil and in other contexts. Moreover, recent theorisations on urban informality, which have focused mostly on South East Asian and African contexts, can also benefit from incorporating the realities of Latin American cities (Varley, 2013). Such an endeavour can broaden the scope of this approach, contributing to the task of building theory from the South (Robinson, 2006; Watson, 2009).

3.2. The politics of informality: the state, the law and the role of non-state actors

3.2.1. “Urban informality” as a mode of governance: the state as the sovereign

Recent developments in postcolonial urban theory have called for an understanding of informality as a mode of urbanisation, rejecting the standard dichotomy of formal and informal as two separate sectors (Roy, 2005; Roy and AlSayyad, 2004; Watson, 2009; Yiftachel, 2009). Roy (2005) makes an important contribution to this effort by proposing a new “urban informality” framework. In her formulation, informality “is not a separate sector but rather a series of transactions that connect different economies and spaces to one

another” (Roy, 2005, p.148). This critique stems from a radical refusal of interpretations that tend to ignore the messy entanglements often existent between “formal” and “informal” (Lombard, 2015; McFarlane, 2012). Although this point was made before (Bromley, 1978; Oliveira, 2003; Perlman, 1976), rigid accounts of informality have been surprisingly enduring in the literature (Lombard, 2015). Against binary and static views, Roy (2005) argues for the understanding of informality as a process.

From this perspective, informality is regarded not as the exception to planning, or what lies outside the realm of planners’ control, but rather as a product of the state – or the “sovereign” – which both sits outside the law and has the monopoly over it (Agamben, 1998). Therefore, the “exception”, or the temporary suspension of the law, is enacted by the state apparatus to (de)legitimise according to the interests at play. This conceptualisation rejects “approaches that associate informality with illegality and precariousness as opposed to formal legality and elite city-making” (Hirt et al., 2016, p.510). Instead, it calls attention to the fact that different deviations from the norm enjoy varying degrees of legitimacy. In this context, some “illegalities” – such as those often found in gated communities or high rise developments – can be even encouraged as desired urban forms in consonance with the “global city” (Sassen, 2001) imaginary. Others, such as slums, however, are perceived as illegal “nuisances” impairing the making of the “world-class” city (Ghertner, 2012) and are consequently prone to repression and demolition.

The distinctive degrees of legitimacy enjoyed by different kinds of informality are perceived as the outcome of an act of discretionary enactment performed by the state, which is itself featured as an informal entity. The planning and legal apparatuses hold power “to determine what is informal and what is not, and to determine which forms of informality will thrive and which will disappear” (Roy, 2005, p.149). Roy (2009b) argues, therefore, that informality has become a strategic tool of urban governance deployed by contemporary states. Part of the challenge for researchers is to uncover the power dynamics underpinning the state’s boundary work, which (re)produces the unplanned and the unplannable through its apparatus.

For the Brazilian case, Telles (2010) has drawn from Roy’s insights to explore the interstices between informal, illegal and illicit practices in the urban spaces, using São Paulo as a case study. She engages with the concept of “differential management of illegal practices” (Foucault, 1977) to discuss the power dynamics and negotiations governing the everyday life of the “globalised modern city”. She argues that:

(...) [In] its most violent forms, it is not properly about a legal-illegal porosity, it is not about uncertain frontiers between the informal, the illegal, the illicit. It is rather about the suspension of such frontiers in the extent to which the difference between the law and the transgression of the law is annulled. The law is somehow disenabled. And that means saying that the whole difference between law and crime is obscured and, in the limit, it [the law] is itself cancelled. (Telles, 2010, p.117)

Such situations characterise what Agamben (1998) has called states of exception, in which some bodies, classified as “delinquents”, are turned into the *homo sacer*, whose execution is “authorised” by the suspension of the law. Therefore, although departing from a distinct context, Telles (2010) arrives at a similar conclusion to the one proposed by Roy (2005) in which informality (illegality) operates as a mode of governance. From Telles’ perspective, illegality is not a straightforward category, but rather a tool for the management of bodies that expose “the way in which state sovereignty is effected through the power of suspending its own law” (Telles, 2010, p.218). In her discussion, the centrality of violence is more striking, considering the entanglement she observes between the informal economy and the issue of drug trafficking, which involves residents, drug dealers, agents of the state and the police in an intricate power game.

The (re)interpretation of informality proposed by Roy (2005) and others (McFarlane, 2012; Telles, 2010; Yiftachel, 2009) has stimulated recent debates regarding the phenomenon around the world.⁶⁶ This growing scholarship has engaged with different aspects of this mode of urbanisation, expanding the analysis beyond the original focus on planning and housing to discuss other types of informal practices. Moreover, theoretical debates regarding the role of the state and non-state actors in the process through which (in)formal practices are legitimised have been central. Others have focused on the role of space and place-making as important vectors of analysis. In the following sections, I review some of the recent contributions, while locating the debates to which this thesis intends to contribute.

3.2.2. *Disrupting state-society boundaries: a nuanced view of the state and the politics of informality*

⁶⁶ Although coming “from the South”, this perspective has been used to analyse cities everywhere. Mukhija and Loukaitou-Sideris (2015) argue that urban informality is a common feature of American cities and “constitutes an important lens for understanding poverty and inequality in the country” (ibid, p.445).

The urban informality approach discussed in the previous section has the merit of re-politicising informality debates. Instead of being understood as the absence of the state, informality is regarded as a tool of urban governance (Roy, 2009a), deployed for the control of populations and spaces (Yiftachel, 2009), thus, fundamental to “the urban planning regime” (McFarlane, 2012, p.93). To understand informality as an “exception” legitimised by the state apparatus and used as a tool to govern bodies and spaces should naturally lead to an interrogation about the nature of the state and how it operates. Why this exception and not a different one? Whose interests are motivating such discretionary choices? Nonetheless, within this tradition, there is a surprising scarcity of investigations focusing on the state, its everyday practices and the mechanisms involved in this formal/informal boundary making process (Tuvikene et al., 2017).

One could argue that such difficulty stems from a wider issue with the study of the state. For Abrams (2006), the only two traditions that have seriously tackled the issue – political sociology and Marxism – suffer from a similar problem:

Political sociology (...) springs from the separation of the political – and more especially the state – from the social. It is constructed as an attempt to give a social account of the state with the latter envisaged as a concrete political agency or structure distinct from the social agencies and structures of the society in which it operates, acting on them and acted on by them. It is, we are told, this ‘distinction... which makes possible a sociology of politics’.

Marxism, sociology’s only serious rival in the search for a contemporary theory of the state, builds, superficially at least, on a very similar distinction. Most varieties of Marxism assume that adequate political analysis must, as Marx put it, proceed on the basis of ‘the actual relation between the state and civil society, that is, their separation’ (Abrams, 2006, p.113).

Abrams (2006, p.113) concludes that both approaches have tended to conceptualise the state as a separate entity, distinct from society. This “separate spheres” assumption is defined by Painter (2006, p.753) as “the idea that the state constitutes or occupies a distinct and identifiable segment of the social whole (‘the sphere of the state’), which then ‘interacts with’, ‘intervenes in’, ‘depends upon’ or ‘regulates’ other distinct social spheres such as ‘the economy’, ‘civil society’, ‘private life’ and so on.”

For the case of Brazil, Vainer (2015) has recently proposed the “city of exception” framework which combines theorisations on the state of exception (Agamben, 2005; Poulantzas, 1986) with discussions about the rise of urban entrepreneurialism (Harvey,

1989). In this account, intense competition for resources among cities creates pressure for the flexibilisation of inefficient and time-consuming political processes (Vainer 2011). Drawing from the case of Rio de Janeiro – a city in crisis⁶⁷ – Vainer discusses the shift from state-led master plan-making to market-led and market-friendly strategic planning. Under this new neoliberal logic, cities are required to function as enterprises and be managed as such (Vainer, 2009). The basis of this city-company model is the idea of making the rules flexible enough to avoid the bureaucracy and seize the opportunities to overcome the potential competitors, that is, other cities. Democratic channels are disregarded and decisions are ad-hoc plans validated by the local state in coalition with the ruling classes.

Underpinning the “city of exception” framework is Poulantza’s theory of the state. For Abrahms (2006), although Poulantzas rejects the traditional Marxist political analysis, focused on the question of how independent the state is from the civil society, he replaces it with “a problematic formulated as ‘the specific autonomy of the political and the economic’ within the capitalist mode of production” (ibid, p.113). His analysis is thus focused on the determination of “the actual forms and modes of dependence or independence that relate it [the state] to the socio-economic [sphere]” (ibid, p.113). This theorisation, Abrams (2006, p.113) argues, reifies the separate spheres hypothesis, a notion that has turned the state into a “remarkably elusive object of analysis”. Scholars are thus advised to approach the state as a social fact, abandoning its reification. One should achieve this aim by investigating the historically constructed nature of the state that can reveal “the ideological device in terms of which the political institutionalisation of power is legitimated” (ibid, p.125). In his conception, the state represents the illusion of society’s common interest, an ideological construction produced through practice. The state is not an apparatus but rather a process, although its idea appears as fundamental reality that acquires a “symbolic identity progressively divorced from practice as an illusory account of practice” (ibid, p.126). He argues that such an illusion is so entrenched in society as an “a unified symbol of actual disunity” (ibid, p.124) that radicals and conservatives alike are often led to believe that their political practices are aimed against the state and not at each other.

For Marston (2004), however, Abraham’s theorisation suffers from a different issue; it has no trace of human agency. To overcome this problem, she argues that we should comprehend the “state and society as mutually constitutive so that the state could be confronted less as an abstraction with autonomy from the rest of society and more as a

⁶⁷ Rio de Janeiro was the capital of Brazil until 1960 when Brasília was inaugurated. After that, the city went into a period of crisis, aggravated by the crisis of 1973.

manifestation of the materialised social practices of human agents” (ibid, p.5). Recognising the link between the state and culture requires a view of the former “as the contested product of the formal and informal practices of multiply situated subjects” (ibid, p.5). In this sense, it is not enough to say that the state (re)produces (in)formality, but also that formal and informal practices (re)produce the state. Moreover, Marston (2004) calls attention to recent ethnographic accounts of the state that “reveal the ways the state is produced and reproduced in everyday life through the embodied practices of social agents within and outside the state” (ibid, p.6). Such interpretations also call attention to the mutually constitutive nature of state and political subjects, which opens possibilities and constrains for their reworking.

On a similar note, Painter (2006) proposes an analysis that focuses on the mundane practices through which what we call ‘the state’ becomes recognisable in everyday life. For Painter the state should be analysed as a structural effect, a point developed by Mitchell (T. Mitchell, 2006, pp.180–181):

We must analyse the state as such a structural effect. That is to say, we should examine it not as an actual structure, but as the powerful, apparently metaphysical effect of practices that make such structures appear to exist. (...) What we call the state, and think of as an intrinsic object existing apart from society, is the sum of these structural effects.

For Painter (2006), four advantages arise when one switches the focus to the “statisation of the everyday” (ibid, p.754). Firstly, such a view provides a strategy to overcome the enduring binary views of state-society formulations in the literature. Secondly, it entails the recognition of the state’s “heterogeneous, constructed, porous, uneven, processual and relational character” (ibid, p.754). Thirdly, it allows for a focus on the “statisation of social life”, which is a tool to move beyond narratives associated with neoliberalism and the declining relevance of state power. Finally, it reveals the geographies of state power and its unevenness, displaying the complexity through which it spreads across territories. In this regard, his argument is particularly targeted against the sovereignty doctrine that approaches state power as uniformly distributed across space.

In this regard, I am also interested in discussing how multiple scales of the state are produced in relation to space and vice-versa. On this subject, Brenner (2004) has made an important contribution, exploring the contemporary scalar organisation and the restructuring of state power. Brenner provides an analysis of the geographies of state space

formation, which “is conceptualised (a) as an ongoing *process* of change rather than as a static thing, container, or platform; (b) as having a *polymorphic* rather than a merely territorial geographical form, and (c) as having a multiscalar rather than merely a national organisational structure” (ibid, p.74). He is thus able to reveal how state power has a particular geography, arguing that the “scalar organisation of state power” is a dynamic, contested and “potentially malleable” dimension of statehood rather than a static background (ibid, p.71). In his account, “state spatiality” emerges as “actively produced and transformed through regulatory projects and socio-political struggles articulated in diverse institutional sites and at a range of geographical scales” (ibid, p.76).

Shin (2014) has critically engaged with Brenner’s contribution to analyse the hosting of mega-events in China in relation to “recent regional development strategies, which have focused on producing megacity regions, each of them centred on key sites of capital accumulation and political influence in respective regions” (ibid, p.3). He focuses on the case of the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou, arguing that hosting the games was an opportunity for the city to achieve the dream of becoming a world-class city, enabling the transformation from a single core city to a multiple-centric one. Furthermore, the games are interpreted as part of a “negotiated scale jump” in the context of Guangzhou’s intra-regional competition with Shenzhen and Hong-Kong. Shin (2014) thus shows how the resulting urban redevelopment also affects the geography of the Chinese state, reshaping the relationship between local and central states. In a similar way, I am also interested in proposing a multi-scalar analysis of how state and space are (re)produced in relation to one another. I engage critically with Brenner’s (2004) contribution, focusing on the everyday mundane practices that (re)produce the multiple geographies of the state.

Recently, a few studies have tried to assimilate a more nuanced view of the state to interrogate its role in the (re)production of informality. Such contributions challenge and complicate Roy’s and others’ perception of the state as the sovereign who solely holds power to create exceptions. Haid (2016), for instance, focuses on different stances of everyday state practices in three parks of Berlin, revealing “how state action produces, provokes and also limits informal practices as well as how everyday state action is to be considered an informal practice by itself” (ibid, p.3). He argues for an understanding of state power as something which is enacted with flexibility by its representatives (Haid, 2016). In this context, although laws and regulations might appear rigid, they are softened and adapted when implemented by state agents in the everyday.

Legitimised by various state instruments, state actors such as bureaucrats and law enforcement officers exercise their power ambiguously: rigidly controlling, prohibiting and preventing behavior seen as inappropriate or illegitimate by the state, turning a blind eye to such activities, or stretching the authoritative reach they are given and implementing measures beyond their legitimate scope; all examples that constitute instants on a spectrum of informality in everyday state action. (Haid, 2016, pp.2–3)

His study reaches two relevant conclusions that are central to the way the state will be treated in this thesis. Firstly, the understanding of the state as the formal instance – or the “sovereign” – legitimising social practices is not valid. The state cannot be perceived as a coherent entity for it often operates in ambivalent and contradictory ways. This conclusion points towards an understanding of the state as fractured (Marston, 2004), operating on the everyday through the practices of agents who might have their own and often conflicting motivations. Secondly, the analysis of informal spaces reveals that state power, as suggested by Painter (2006), is not evenly distributed across space.

Another study that interrogates similar issues is Tuvikene et al. (2017). The paper uses “urban informality” as a strategic conceptualisation to draw comparisons among three cities – Bafatá, Berlin and Tallinn – across the North-South divide. They depart from the understanding that urban processes are affected by “multiple, heterogeneous state actors and institutions” (ibid, p.7) in sometimes unexpected ways that are not necessarily inscribed by laws and regulations (Devlin, 2011; Fourchard, 2011; Lindell, 2008). From this perspective, the state emerges as a nuanced entity, operating through the “disjointed practices of state actors” (Tuvikene et al., 2017, p.7) with varying consequences for informal practices. They thus draw from ethnographic accounts that challenge state-society boundaries arguing instead for a porous account of the state apparatus.

This thesis will follow a similar concept while arguing for a relational approach that perceives state and (in)formal space as mutually constitutive processes. I regard the state as a multiscalar, fragmented and porous entity, whose power is executed by state agents with potentially conflicting motivations. State and (in)formal spaces are imbricated processes. This particular understanding of the state has several implications for the discussion of how the boundaries of formal/informal are drawn through everyday practices.

3.2.3. Legal pluralism and the complex relations between the law and informality

Although the state is involved in the process through which legitimacy is contested and attested, the power dynamics within informal settings can generate internal norms that also regulate claiming and decision-making processes. In this context, another aspect that should be considered is the conflation between the state and the law. According to Marston (2004), the law and the legal discourse are languages of authority through which state power is enacted. Nevertheless, studies in legal pluralism have shown how society is regulated by overlapping juridical orders, which do not emanate uniquely from the state (Fernandes, 1995; Merry, 1988; Nkurunziza, 2008). This issue challenges the understanding of the state as the institution that holds the monopoly of producing and suspending the law.

De Sousa Santos (1987, p.281) discusses a new understanding of plural juridical orders that goes beyond the normative approaches, considering how “law is also imagination, representation, and description of reality.” He proposes a cartographic analogy to unpack the multiple issues at stake:

I will try to show that the national (and the international) territory consists of several social spaces which, though autonomous, interrelate in different ways. Within each social space and across spaces different kinds of juridical capital circulate: nationalised or state juridical capitals and private juridical capitals, sacred and profane juridical capitals, and so on. Each kind of juridical capital prompts a specific kind of actions and symbolic universes. In the modern era, law has become the privileged way of imagining, representing, and distorting, that is to say, of mapping these social spaces and the capitals, the actions and symbolic universes that animate or activate them. (de Sousa Santos, 1987, p.286)

Departing from a less restrictive concept of law, he argues that every context is capable of producing juridical orders and that such non-state law has been denied by the modern institution of state monopoly. Hence, the critique of modern conceptions of law must recognise social contexts strong enough to produce juridical orders that challenge this monopoly. De Sousa Santos (1990) recognises four of such: the domestic context, the production context, the citizenship context and the world context. The citizenship context is ruled by formal state law, whereas the others are ruled by informal agreements between family members, social classes and nation states, respectively.

Legal pluralism emerges, in his approach, as a key concept towards deconstructing the modern/formal view of law. However, it is not only about recognising distinct legal orders that coexist, but rather understanding the process through which different conceptions of legality become “superimposed, interpenetrated, and mixed” (de Sousa Santos, 1987, pp.297–298). This phenomenon is labelled as interlegality and is present both

in extraordinary moments of crisis and in the dullness of everyday life, permeating our thoughts as much as our actions. He thus argues that: “We live in a time of porous legality or of legal porosity, of multiple networks of legal orders forcing us to constant transitions and trespassing” (ibid, p.298).

The interlegality hypothesis troubles the conception that the state holds the monopoly of law production, implicit in the “urban informality” approach. Therefore, one can wonder what are the effects of considering the operation of multiple juridical orders in the (re)production of informality. In Roy’s (2005) account, the state is the sovereign capable of creating an “exception,” that is, to draw the line between formal/informal practices. Moreover, such power is incorporated as an urban governance practice to manage territories. However, if one considers that state’s law operates through a constant negotiation process with other legalities, this action is not straightforward; the formal law that emanates from the state is superimposed, interpenetrated, and mixed with multiple informal legal orders.

In her critique of Roy’s theorisation, Varley (2013) has emphasised that not only informality is present in elite spaces – as this literature often recognises – but also that informal practices are conditioned by the law (Varley, 2013). Drawing from the work of Azuela (1987), she discusses how the informal market of illegally subdivided plots in Mexico is coordinated by agents that contravene state law but at the same time create “legal fictions” (de Sousa Santos, 1977, p.53) that legitimise their actions. In order to be effective “[t]hese norms cannot be chosen at will if they are to be recognised by others and thus legitimise the actions of the developers” (Varley, 2013, p.17). They must, therefore, make reference to existing property regimes within society. Those notions capture “the heterogeneity and legal hybridity of informality” (ibid, p.17), revealing how informal practices “are shaped by participants’ perceptions of the legal situation” (ibid, p.17).

Moreover, one must also consider other studies that have approached how legal discourses and strategies are also employed by those challenging the state (de Sousa Santos and Carlet, 2009; Holston, 2008; O’Brien, 1996). In his work, Holston (2008) has argued that Brazil is characterized by a state of “misrule of law”, emphasising the ways in which the urban poor have learned how to make use of that in their favour and eventually engage with the law by formulating their claims in juridical terms. This movement has had important consequences with the development of legal innovations and institutions that create channels for participatory democracy while partially recognising the rights of informal

dwellers. In this case, therefore, the entanglement between the state law and informal spaces has led to a transformation of the former. One must thus consider not only how state law affects the production of informality in complex ways, as noted by Varley (2013), but also how it can be shaped by informal processes. That idea points towards a view of the law as a political terrain of contestation: it is not only a tool for state dominance, but it can also be employed by those challenging the state.

In this thesis, I will pay close attention to the legal discourses employed by state and non-state actors in their attempts to affect the formal/informal boundary making process. That is a key contribution, as the role of the law in recent postcolonial debates on urban informality has been taken mostly for granted. Two main points are relevant for the debates I will present. First, the meaning of legality is constantly negotiated by different agents analysed in this thesis. Second, state law is present in informal spaces; it affects how those spaces are organised while also being potentially affected by informal practices.

3.2.4. Urban governance regimes and the role of non-state actors

Research on informality has focused on the state as a key category of analysis, despite being often unclear about what the state means. While in more traditional approaches informality was usually conceptualised as the absence of the state, recent theorisations point to the fact that its apparatuses reproduce informality. In both accounts, this entity remains a central reference. Some studies, however, have been critical of an excessive analytical focus on the state, which could potentially hinder our understanding of how other agents also engage in formal/informal boundary making (Schindler, 2016). In this regard, many authors have sought to define (in)formality as the outcome of never-ending negotiations and struggles among distinct state and non-state actors, stressing the dispersed nature of power (Crossa, 2016; Hackenbroch, 2011; Schindler, 2014a).

Schindler (2014a), for instance, looks at the case of street hawkers threatened with eviction from historically occupied spaces in Delhi. His work analyses the negotiations performed by state and non-state actors involved, paying particular attention to the variety of strategies deployed and the multiple spaces in which those struggles evolve. He argues that:

[P]ower is dispersed across a range of sites, and rests in varying degrees with a host of state and non-state actors, none of whom are able to unilaterally impose their preferred vision of formality. Instead, these interest groups negotiate and struggle to define (in)formality and gain control over, or access to, urban space. (Schindler, 2014a, p.2597)

Schindler thus intends to show that “‘formal’ and ‘informal’ are not ontologically given categories,” but are constructed as the outcome of those negotiations (ibid, p.2597). Crossa (2016) makes a similar argument in her explorations of the politics of informal street vendors in Mexico City. Her work compares the struggles against displacement of two groups of informal traders from distinct areas of the city – the Coyoacan neighbourhood and the Historic Centre. She focuses on the multiple identities they mobilise in their movements of resistance. Engaging with the concept of ‘symbolic politics’ (Lindell, 2011), Crossa shows how street vendors in Coyoacan deploy legitimacy discourses to claim access to space. In doing that, vendors in that area actively differentiate themselves from those operating in the Historic Centre, while reproducing state’s discourses used to eradicate informal street vending. In this process, “a politics and a geography of difference is reproduced” (ibid, p.290). She concludes that although the formal/informal split is deployed by the state as a strategic narrative to justify displacement, “it is not only the state who actively participates in the construction of this narrative, but so-called informal people themselves by enacting the formal/informal divide in contexts of displacement and exclusion” (ibid, p.300).

Interestingly, these perspectives challenge the idea that legitimacy emanates uniquely from the state, showing how other agents are involved in urban space governance in multiple ways. According to Stoker (1998, p.17), “governance refers to the development of governing styles in which boundaries between and within public and private sectors become blurred. The essence of governance is its focus on governing mechanisms which do not rest on recourse to the authority and sanctions of the government.” In this context, considering the blurriness of state-society boundaries, one must recognise that “localised governance regimes are as likely to be constructed and imposed by non-state actors as the state” (Schindler, 2016, p.250). Following this hypothesis, Schindler (2014b, 2016) has examined the role of the middle-classes in regulating informal practices in Delhi. Most studies, he says, are preoccupied either with the anti-poor attitude of the middle-classes or with the relationships of both social groups with the state. Therefore, little attention has been given to inter-class politics. He argues that:

In the context of India's post-reform political economy and post-development social formation, the new middle class and urban poor are drawn together in ways that render them interdependent—their interaction allows the new middle class to practice particular lifestyles, while the urban poor are able to secure livelihoods. (Schindler, 2014b, p.558)

His work thus looks at the interactions between street hawkers and associations of the new middle-class. He shows that instead of trying to exclude informal traders from urban spaces altogether, middle-class residents seek to regulate their use of space. The middle-classes impose rules that are accepted by street hawkers who are, therefore, perceived as participants of the making of a “world-class” city, albeit in restrict terms. Schindler's work reveals how class boundaries are constructed mutually by social groups and that, although inter-class relationships can often be conflictive, it is not necessarily always the case. His argument could be taken further to argue that boundaries between social classes are constituted in relation to space.

This last point has been recently made by studies interested in the relationship between the middle-classes and urban space production, a topic that has received uneven geographical consideration (Mercer, 2016). Whereas in the Global North, a vast scholarship has dealt with the middle-classes and their spatial practices,⁶⁸ in the Global South, there is a tendency to focus “on elites and the poor rather than on those in between” (ibid, p.2). Her work makes an interesting contribution to the topic by analysing the relationship between suburbanisation and the middle-classes in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Much like the autoconstructed peripheries in Latin America, these suburbs are informal and not planned. Residents buy the plots of land and undertake construction projects themselves throughout many years. Her work focuses on the process of class ‘boundary work’ in which residents shape the suburban spaces while shaping their distinctiveness as members of the middle-class. Space and class are thus revealed to be produced in tandem.

For the case of India, Ghertner (2012) argues that urban studies in that context have neglected the analysis of “how middle class groups’ mundane, often place-specific constructions of civility gain traction in state policy and the popular urban imaginary” (Ghertner 2012, p.1162). He centres on narratives reproduced in everyday life by middle-class residents who depict slums as “nuisances” associated with dirtiness and uncivility. The “middle class selfhood” is thus constructed in opposition to such symbolical meanings

⁶⁸ Notably here one must point to the studies about gentrification and suburbanisation.

attached to the slum (ibid, p.1167). The novelty here is that those discourses become “agreed upon ‘truths’” (ibid, p.1168) that, once incorporated in urban policy, are used to justify large scale slum clearance. The making of the “world-class” city is then analysed through the contestations over the proper use of spaces in which criteria for inclusion/exclusion are constructed while socially unaccepted practices are doomed “out of place”. In this context, “nuisance talk” emerges as a powerful discursive tool to justify massive evictions in the name of environmental improvement.

Also looking at India, Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal (2013, p.91) argue for a focus on “urban citizens who are neither ‘elite’ nor ‘poor’”, exploring how the practices of these citizens can help disrupt binary categories that have dominated the discussions regarding participatory urban governance. For the Latin American context, an important contribution in this sense has been made by Centner (2012b), who explores cross-class spatial relations and urban belonging in ‘post-neoliberal’ Buenos Aires. He investigates disparate claims that engage with citizenship discourses, “but – counter to normative conceptualisations – can often accentuate inequality, even casting one group’s belonging through the expulsion or spatialised undermining of another” (ibid, pp.355-356). His work sheds some light on the contemporary relationship between social classes and urban space in Latin American cities.

It is commonly accepted that urbanisation in Latin America has produced highly unequal and segregated cities, “largely characterised by the imbalance between central urban areas with plenty of public infrastructure and extended peripheries of deprivation and exclusion” (López-Morales et al., 2016, p.4). This process, however, has been mostly analysed with a focus either on state-capital alliances promoting industrialisation – and more recently, the neoliberal agenda – or the urban poor and their marginalised condition. Writing in the 1980s, when the ISI model was collapsing and the dictatorship was beginning its downfall, Francisco de Oliveira – one of Brazil’s most influential urban Marxists – has declared that “the urban in Brazil nowadays is the middle-classes, that is, the cities are, par excellence (...) the urban expression of this new class structure, where the weight of the middle-classes has emerged with massive strength” (Oliveira, 1982, p.50). For him, the emerging urban middle-class was forming the basis for authoritarianism in the Brazilian society, while the relationship of the state with the urban was “determined by the demands of the middle-classes” (ibid, p.51). Apart from this statement, however, his work follows the Marxist tradition, focusing on the elites (and their coalitions with the state) and the urban poor (included, but exploited), giving no further consideration to the role of the middle-classes and how they actually affect the production of urban space. Urban studies in Brazil

have followed this tradition, neglecting the study of the role of “those in between” in urban governance.⁶⁹

In this thesis, I follow conceptualisations of informality that draw attention to the role of non-state actors in shaping urban space. I understand urban space production as a process that involves multiple and conflictive negotiations between different social groups and the porous state, as well as between and within groups. That, however, does not mean that I see this process as an even dispute in which every actor is equally empowered to shape space. In order to unravel the process through which access and control over space are asserted and legitimised, I focus on the multiple strategies and discourses deployed by state and non-state agents analysed. In the next section, I engage in discussions about citizenship and informality, concentrating on the case of Brazil. This debate shows that not only the state and citizens shape urban space but are also shaped by it.

3.3. Informality, citizenship and the “right to the city” in Brazil

3.3.1. Informality and differentiated citizenships

The strategic use of exception by the state, that is, the decision to let certain forms of informality thrive instead of others or to incorporate informality into urban governance practice, should be understood in line with Agamben’s (1998) thesis of exceptionalism as a regular praxis of modern liberal states.⁷⁰ One could argue that in Roy’s (2009a) approach informality emerges as the “spatial” analogous of Agamben’s “*homo sacer*”.⁷¹ Central to Agamben’s approach is the idea of “bare life”,⁷² or the “naked body” (*nuda vita*) which

⁶⁹ An exception is the work of Vasconcellos (1997) that investigates the transformation of São Paulo into a middle-class city during the dictatorship, based on industrialisation, modernisation and the centrality of automobiles for both ideas.

⁷⁰ According to Mitchell (2006, p.96): “In his [Agamben’s] more recent book, ‘State of Exception’, he takes us up to the present and examines the state of exception as a paradigm of contemporary government. The key insight here is the ways in which democratic liberal governments are becoming totalitarian states through the powers of exceptionalism. No longer temporary or occasional, the state of exception has become the rule.”

⁷¹ “The figure of *homo sacer* is important for Agamben because it opens up the notion of different kinds of life – particularly the idea of a division between bare life (*zoé*) and political life (*bios*); the latter is also conceptualized more broadly as civilization or humanity itself. *Homo sacer* represents bare life (literally one stripped of his or her humanity)” (Mitchell, 2006, p.96).

⁷² De la Durantaye (2009) discusses how “bare life” comes from a translation *das bloße Leben*, a term used by Walter Benjamin.

“designates a life shorn of all qualification and conceived of independent of its traditional attributes” (De la Durantaye, 2009, p.203). It is, therefore, not a natural state, but what is left or “becomes visible through a stripping away of predicates and attributes” (ibid, p.203). It is not a prior substance, but what remains after everything is withdrawn. The *homo sacer* represents bare life, and it is a term borrowed from the Roman period, meaning sacred man or living dead. It is used in relation to “life that can be killed with impunity, but not sacrificed” (K. Mitchell, 2006, p.96). The *homo sacer* constitutes, therefore, an exception to the divine law – because it cannot be sacrificed – and to juridical law – because it can be killed without punishment. The importance of this discussion for Agamben is to understand who holds the power of deciding upon the destiny of the *homo sacer*. He argues that such power lies in the sovereign that sits above the law, but also decides what lies inside the juridical order and, therefore, paradoxically belongs to this same juridical order that can be suspended by its power (De la Durantaye, 2009).

K. Mitchell (2006) notes how Agamben’s thesis is underpinned by the foundational premise of the liberal thought that every rational human being would eventually be included in the political community. The “exception”, or the exclusion from democratic citizenship, emerges as a problem of implementation and, notwithstanding, the potential universal membership holds true. This idea, however, has been criticised by many scholars in many traditions (Baldwin, 1972; Chatterjee, 1993; Du Bois, 1968; Fraser, 1989; Macpherson, 1964; Pateman, 1988; Schmitt, 1985; Young, 1990). Notably, K. Mitchell highlights the contributions of cultural Marxists, feminists, postcolonialists and critical race theorists to this debate. The key point of such critiques is how the conceptualisation of reason as the starting point for democratic citizenship is inscribed into a cultural context produced by specific socio-economic relations and power disputes.

The majority of citizenship studies depart from T. H. Marshall’s classic account. In his 1950 study, “Citizenship and Social Class”, Marshall analyses the development of citizenship in post-war Britain, defining citizenship as “a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed” (Marshall, 2009, p.149). In his account, citizenship is divided in three elements, civil, political and social. He traces the development of those three kinds of rights to distinct historical moments of British society. According to Centner (2012b):

In his classic treatment of citizenship, through a British lens, Marshall outlines three forms of rights that ostensibly equalize national belonging across class lines, despite

the inherent inequalities of a market economy: ‘civil rights’ as the citizenry-wide guarantee of basic legality in treatment by the state, especially protection in a court of law, emerging in the eighteenth century; ‘political rights’ as the ability to participate in government, from the nineteenth century onwards; and ‘social rights’ as the assurance of a modicum of well-being through access to education, healthcare and employment, which coalesced in the twentieth century. (Centner, 2012b, p.341)

Despite the relevance of Marshall’s conceptualisation, his work has been intensely criticised. Wittger (2017) summarises five main stems of critique. Firstly, Marshall’s theorisation takes the English model as universal, disregarding how citizenship might have evolved differently in other contexts. For the case of Latin America, many authors have challenged this assumption (Holston, 2008; Wittger, 2017; Zeiderman, 2016a). Secondly, his model is cumulative, presenting the expansion of citizenship as a linear and progressive process. Thirdly, his concept is attached to the idea of the nation-state. Nonetheless, in the context of globalisation many studies have shown how citizenship is a relevant concept beyond the boundaries of nation-states (Ryburn, 2016; Soysal, 1994). Fourthly, his concept ignores cleavages and stratifications – such as class, race and gender – that mediate citizenship (Fraser, 1989). Finally, scholars have challenged the idea that social citizenship would easily follow civil citizenship, showing how the achievement of social rights may be actually hindered by the hegemonic tradition of civil rights in some societies, such as the United States.

Building on Marshall’s original model and on the subsequent critiques, Wittger (2017) suggests a modified concept of citizenship as a “dynamic concept, incorporating both a historically specific bundle of rights and obligations (formal status), and the constant process of negotiating this bundle and respectively the acts by which these rights are being claimed (practice/process)” (Wittger, 2017, p.44). For Das (2011, p.320) citizenship should be understood as a “claim rather than a status, which one either has or does not have”. In her account, citizenship is thus formed through the interaction with the state. Therefore, the same way that sovereignty is not unevenly distributed across space (Painter, 2006), neither is citizenship.

In a similar way, Yiftachel (2009) discusses the differentiated citizenships emerging from the (de)legitimation of bodies and spaces. In his perspective, the channels of sovereignty operated by the state are mediated through categories such as race, class and ethnicity. Once such patterns of (de)institutionalisation become predictable, one can begin “to discern an *urban regime* – an institutionalised system of controlling space and

population” (ibid, p.94). The result is the production of unequal citizenships, in which it is possible to distinguish the stratification among different members of the urban polity. He labels this process as the “creeping urban apartheid” (ibid, p.88), calling attention to the gradations of rights, and to the unevenness of political power and the access to urban services that it entails. He concludes that “[s]ignificantly for planning theorists, tools for classifying and stratifying groups often derive from the grids and categories laid by urban planning” (ibid, p.94).

Nonetheless, one may ask, once cast outside the “rule of law”, that is, once delegitimised by the state, what remains within the body? As noticed by Butler (2011), being excluded from the political order does not mean to become apolitical, as the body itself is a political construction. If we transpose this idea to “informality”, one could argue that, even when deemed illegitimate, informal practices and those embodying such practices should not be understood as “bare lives” or “reduced to mere being”. If the state is capable of, through the enactment of a particular discourse, delegitimise their practices and cast them outside the rule of law, those bodies still hold some agency and are still able to claim their legitimacy, “more often than not, angered, indignant, rising up and resisting” (Butler, 2011, p.5). In the next section, I discuss how the Brazilian urbanisation has excluded and marginalised certain bodies whose exclusion has become a potential basis for the negotiation of an “insurgent citizenship” (Holston, 2008).

3.3.2. Peripheral urbanisation and insurgency

The insurgent homo sacer: claiming the “right to the city”

In Brazil, the 1988 Constitution extended political, civil and social rights to all. Nonetheless, many are still excluded from the exercise and access to those rights. In another words, formal – having rights in theory – and substantive citizenship – actually having access to those rights – are not coincident categories. In his work, Holston (2008) has explored the historical and geographical process through which a regime of differentiated citizenship has emerged in Brazil. His work focuses on the process of peripheral urbanisation (Caldeira, 2016) that excluded those occupying the informal autoconstructed peripheries from

accessing the entitlements of full citizenship. However, those citizens cast outside the “rule of law” are portrayed as political subjects.

Many have discussed the role of the working classes in the process of building cities from scratch (Fischer et al., 2014) through the practice of autoconstruction in the peripheries (Oliveira 2003; Maricato 1979; Holston 1991). Analysing this process, Holston argues that while socio-spatial segregation reneged the urban poor to the peripheries, reducing those “to a ‘bare life’ of servility, the very same structures of inequality incite these hinterland residents to demand a life worthy of citizens” (Holston, 2009, p.246). The same process that excluded the urban poor from “formal” forms of citizenship has also created new ones, through which the disenfranchised could claim their rights and their place in the city. To this movement, he gives the name of “insurgent citizenship,” while stressing that “insurgent” is used to describe “a process that is an acting counter, a counterpolitics, that destabilizes the present and renders it fragile, defamiliarising the coherence with which it usually presents itself” (Holston, 2008, p.34). Insurgent citizens, however, are not described as necessarily just or democratic.

Holston argues that, “by denying the expectation of equality in distribution, Brazilian citizenship became an entrenched regime of legalised privileges and legitimated inequalities” (Holston, 2008, p.32). He thus seeks to investigate how citizenship has been historically defined in Brazil in association with certain memberships – differences in education, property, race, gender, and occupation – that engendered different classes of citizens. Such paradigm has survived through historical transformations and remains an enduring feature of Brazilian contemporary society. Nonetheless, although not expanding formal kinds of citizenship to all, urbanisation and the specificities of peripheral urbanisation have produced a movement through which a new kind of citizenship has emerged. Holston (2009) discusses three processes through which the segregated residents of the peripheries were able to produce this original type of urban citizenship. Firstly, an agenda of citizenship was created through the participation in grassroots movements in which they could articulate their needs in terms of rights. Secondly, through their participation in such movements they were able to acquire an understanding of the foundation of those rights. Finally, they could transform their relationship with the state, shaping new institutional designs and policies. In this approach, one could argue that insurgency is determined by the membership in the “city,” built by them. Belonging to the city becomes the basis for mobilisation and claims are made on the grounds of their contribution to the city.

The emergence of this new type of citizenship within the peripheries stands in sharp contrast with the apocalyptic views of “planetary degradation due to current urbanisation” (Holston, 2009, p.249). Such views create the stigma of slums as a totalising category that immediately identifies millions of people with awful urban living conditions, overshadowing their agency and innovative capacity. Holston’s approach shows how state, space and citizenship are mutually constituted, a central hypothesis that will guide this thesis. Socio-spatial segregation does not prevent the marginalised from engaging in the process through which the state and its legal order are modified. Nonetheless, the institutional developments and the new channels for participation emerging as a response to insurgency have not erased society’s stratifications and inequalities, but rather become entwined with those.

The City Statute and the limitations of participatory democracy

In Brazil, the entanglement of urbanisation and democracy has thus produced alternative formulations of citizenship, a crowd of marginalised citizens that contested their exclusion. Such processes were unravelling particularly during the 1980s when the country experienced two interconnected developments: economic depression and the reestablishment of democracy. In one hand, the crisis of the model of state-led industrialisation was followed by the adoption of neoliberal policies. On the other, re-democratisation opened a new window for popular participation which culminated in an intense social mobilisation and debate around the elaboration of the 1988 Constitution (Caldeira and Holston, 2005).

In 1987, the National Constituent Assembly was formed to draw the country’s new democratic constitution and the possibility of submitting popular amendments involved several societal sectors in the process. That was the case of the Urban Reform Proposal, drafted by urban popular movements from different regions of the country (Costa, 1989; Maricato, 1988). As a direct result of such mobilisations, the 1988 Constitution included a chapter dedicated to Urban Policy (Fernandes, 1995). Since then, a slow but continuous process of urban reform has evolved, with the introduction of legal and institutional changes at the national level.

After more than ten years of intense debate, “a whole new legal–urban order (...) was consolidated with the enactment of the 2001 City Statute” (Fernandes, 2007, p.177).

This federal law, which was mandated by the constitution's chapter on urban policy, is considered a ground-breaking development that explicitly recognises the "right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1968) as a collective right (Caldeira and Holston, 2015; Fernandes, 2011a). That represented a major change in the "long-standing, individualistic tradition of civil law" (Fernandes, 2007a, p.212). As discussed in the first section of this chapter, Marxist conceptualisations of urban space production have been incredibly influential in Brazil. Fernandes (2007a) discusses this fact while commenting on recent Latin American attempts to incorporate the "right to the city" in the state's legal order.

This socio-legal movement has long been greatly inspired by the seminal work of Henri Lefebvre, and his concept of the 'right to the city' has been embraced by social movements, NGOs, some local and even national governments in the region as their guiding political-philosophical framework. It is largely as a result of this growing mobilization that, since the 1970s, consistent attempts have been made in countries such as Brazil and Colombia to materialize that concept not only in socio-political terms, but in legal terms as well so that the 'right to the city' becomes a legal right, and not only a political notion. (Fernandes, 2007a, p.204)

Lefebvre's right to the city thesis and particularly the interpretations of his work by local scholars have thus influenced the way in which such institutional developments were formulated in Brazil. The City Statute was organised around the three main pillars that were central to the urban reform agenda: "the recognition of security of tenure for low-income squatters, the struggle against real estate speculation and the democratisation of the decision-making process related to urban policies, opening spaces for direct participation" (Rolnik, 2013b, p.55).

Nonetheless, the debates surrounding the statute's elaboration were also influenced by the emergent neoliberal urban paradigm. Despite the progressive institutional change that had come about with re-democratisation, "the same period also witnessed Brazil's entrance into globalised capital and finance circuits and the emergence of a neoliberal urban paradigm of competitive cities and entrepreneurial states" (Rolnik, 2013b, p.54). These congruent, but conflicting projects – neoliberalism and democratisation – have both influenced the course of urban policy making in contradictory ways (Caldeira and Holston, 2015; Rolnik, 2013b).

In her analysis of the ten years of the City Statute, Rolnik (2013) draws a pessimistic picture, in which despite the existence of participative channels, their mere actuality does not guarantee any actual decision-making power. The majority of decisions regarding urban

policy, she argues, are made “within the political electoral game – and its connections to economic interests in urban development” (ibid, p.58). Moreover, the new progressive planning instruments and tools created to “reduce the transference of public revenue and wealth to urban land owners” are appropriated by “local growth machines”, promoting, instead, “real estate value appreciation, concentration of gains and exclusionary practices” (ibid, p.60).⁷³

Caldeira and Holston (2015) present a similar but more nuanced view in their study of the participatory debate evolving around the making of São Paulo’s Master Plan (2002) and Zoning Law (2004). They describe how those participating were organised in three groups representing different social groups.

The *Frente Popular pelo Plano Diretor* (Popular Front for the Master Plan) represented popular movements, planners, consultants and university-based researchers. The *Movimento Defenda São Paulo* (Movement Defend São Paulo) organised the interests of around 50 upper-middle class neighbourhood associations primarily around issues of zoning. The *Frente pela Cidadania* (Front for Citizenship) represented 30 associations under the leadership of Secovi, the powerful organisation of real estate developers – ironically, the only coalition to use ‘citizenship’ in its name. (Caldeira and Holston 2015, 2009)

They show that the participatory process has engendered a competition between citizens divided into class-based groupings with different resources and abilities to affect the results. That, they argue, can potentially lead to the use of the new planning instruments to reproduce existing inequalities. It seems, therefore, that greater “participatory democracy” even when effective in terms of decision making, does not necessarily translate into an equal expansion of the “right to the city” to all. That happens because those inhabiting the “formal” city also engage in this process, claiming their right to affect the way space is shaped. Such results can be understood within the wider criticisms to the right to the city literature and its blindness to the categories – such as gender, race and class – that mediate the capacity of citizens to engage equally in democratic urban governance (Beebeejaun, 2017).

⁷³ For instance, the “urban operations consortium” (UOC) is an instrument that, although potentially redistributive, has been used to fuel real estate speculation. The City Statute establishes the possibility of the government issuing bonds in the form of Certificates of Additional Construction Potential (CEPAC) to fund UOCs. The CEPACs are bonds that give their holder the right to build above permitted limits. The advantage for the government is the possibility of collecting resources in advance. However, recent experiences have shown that, in practice, they engender financialisation and real estate speculation (Maricato and Ferreira, 2002; Sánchez and Broudehoux, 2013).

In Brazil, re-democratisation saw the development of many legal frameworks and channels for citizenship engagement. Nonetheless, a focus on everyday negotiations and place-making strategies reveal how “rights are undermined through unequal experiences of the city in tension with others” (Beebeejaun, 2017, p.331). In this thesis, I consider how different groups of citizens – informal workers, informal residents and the middle-classes – are unevenly empowered to shape space by engaging with the state through formal and informal channels, while using rights-based and legal discourses to legitimise claims. The next section brings together the discussion in this chapter to present the theoretical approach I will be following.

3.4. Concluding discussions: towards a relational approach to informality

To engage with the main question of this research – “who has the right to remain in place” – one must consider the power of the distinct groups under analysis – informal workers, informal dwellers and the middle-classes – to shape space. I argue that the urban informality approach provides a framework to analyse such place-making disputes. Instead of regarding informality as the process through which the state rules over the legitimacy of distinct practices, I follow formulations that emphasise the dispersed nature of power, calling attention to the role of non-state actors in this boundary-making process.

In Roy’s (2005) top-down approach, different “illegal” uses of space are (de)legitimised by the state, which is the sovereign that has the power to create exceptions to its own juridical order, moving the boundaries of the law to incorporate those illegalities that are in accordance with its policy. Mega-projects, although potentially illegal, may be accepted and incorporated into the legal order (Follmann, 2015; Vainer, 2015), while other practices are delegitimised. As already discussed, in this approach the state emerges as a coherent entity, able to impose its interests. Replacing this perception for an understanding of the state as porous, multiscalar and fragmented entails a different framework. Figure 3.1 presents the bottom-up relational approach that this thesis will follow. In this account, space, state and political subjects (citizens) are produced in tandem. In this sense, it is not enough to say that the state (re)produces (in)formality because formal and informal spaces also (re)produce the state and political subjects. The negotiations among distinct agents over the formal/informal establish the criteria for inclusion/exclusion. That boundary, however, just as space itself, “is never permanently fixed, and it is perpetually contested”

(Schindler, 2014b, p.2608). The dotted line separating citizens and state symbolises the elusiveness of state-society boundaries (Abrams, 2006; Painter, 2006). Moreover, the two-sided arrows represent the back-and-forth nature of the relationships, calling attention to the fact that all processes – state, space and citizenship – mutually influence one-another.

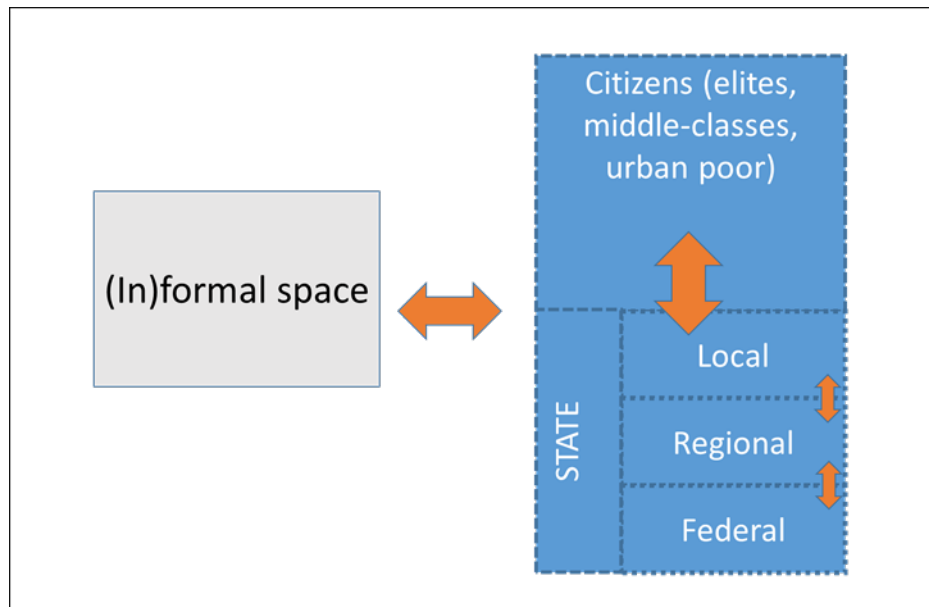


Figure 3.1. Bottom-up relational approach

This approach allows me to focus on the everyday place-making practices of different citizens (informal workers, informal dwellers and the middle-classes) together with the discrepancies in the way they can influence the state process and affect urban space production. Moreover, I seek to understand how spatial restructuring and displacement modifies “power geometries” (Massey, 2005), altering the citizens’ ability to affect formal/informal boundaries. Place-making is thus foregrounded as an active dimension of analysis (Lombard, 2015). Places are conceptualised following Massey’s (1991) relational approach; they are non-static and may hold multiple and potentially conflictive identities. This view, “implies a relation with power, opening the possibility for contestation and conflict among different understandings and experiences of places, and about the idea of ‘place’ itself” (Lombard, 2015, p.95). Therefore, place matters and practices of place-making should be incorporated as an element of study.

Place-making is understood as “the construction of place by a variety of different actors and means, which may be discursive and political, but also small-scale, spatial, social and cultural” (Lombard, 2015, p.86). Space will be approached as a process, which is “always

being made and is always therefore, in a sense, unfinished” (Anderson, 2008, p.229). I concur with Massey’s concept of relational space, which implies that “society is necessarily constructed spatially, and that fact—the spatial organisation of society—makes a difference to how it works” (Massey, 2005, p.70). Such spatial forms may then affect the course of events and alter the very trajectories that have produced it. I hence engage with the concept of “relational place-making”, which entails the recognition of place as “flexible, multi-scalar and always developing (...) produced via socially, politically and economically interconnected interactions among people, institutions and systems” (Pierce, Martin, & Murphy, 2011, p.59). I intend to discuss the place-making practices of different actors – informal workers, informal residents and the middle-classes – showing how they shape and are shaped by pre-existing institutional arrangements. Place is thus understood as socially produced space, the ongoing result of multiple and contentious negotiations.

I am interested in discussing how urban space production happens through the place-making strategies of multiple actors, which may involve several informal practices. This point has been explored by Kudva (2009), who discussed the mutually constitutive political and spatial practices of informality in her study of India. She engages with Lefebvrian conceptualisations of space to emphasise its relevance as a crucial vector in the politics of informality. Kudva argues that switching the focus to space allows a holistic approach that emphasises, for instance, the integration between distinct informal practices. She contends:

Informality studies tend to focus on labor markets, work, and employment, or the production (and displacement) of housing and communal neighbourhood spaces within the segregated city. One result is that the politics of informality and the processes by which city residents assert their rights are conceived in relation either to work or to housing (...) and despite the fact that the everyday lived experience of informality systematically vitiates this separation. Workspaces are embedded in living spaces, and vice versa, at the scale both of the household and of the neighborhood. (Kudva, 2009, p.1614)

That is a fundamental point that will be explored in this thesis in relation to the connections between work and house informality. Departing from a holistic view of urban space production, I intend to reveal how informal practices are entangled. This debate is relevant to interrogate how the rights to urban space of informal residents and informal workers have evolved differently. According to Brown (2015), despite the growing share of population taking part in the so-called informal economy, not much has been written on the struggles of the marginalised urban poor’s rights to secure workspace. Although access to

housing is unquestionably important, for many guaranteeing permanence in the city is also a matter of accessing workspace (Schindler, 2014c). Brown (2015, p.239) has noted that:

While the need for secure tenure for housing land has been widely recognised, land for urban livelihoods has received limited attention although the informal economy provides the majority of jobs in many developing country cities; meanwhile land in the public domain is excluded from land debates despite its central role in accommodating street vending and other urban work.

In Brazil, like in all Latin American countries, the weight of the informal economy is considerable and the debates regarding this phenomenon are almost as old as the urbanisation process itself.⁷⁴ Nonetheless, many cities have strict rules against the activities of informal workers in urban space. In this context, some scholars have analysed how street vendors are constantly threatened with forced eviction. They have weak arrangements with the local states that do not guarantee any kind of social protection or secure access to space (Itikawa, 2016).⁷⁵ Street vendors, however, are also able to resist, challenging and subverting neoliberal entrepreneurial strategies aimed at suppressing their presence in the urban environment (Crossa, 2009). However, at least in the case of Brazil, their struggles have not yet been translated into greater social protection, which is still attached to formal modes of employment.⁷⁶ Moreover, the right to work is not conceptualised in relation to space and the production of urban space through labour does not translate into rights to workspace.

In this thesis, I explore how past struggles of insurgent citizens (Holston, 2008) have distinctively shaped the institutional channels available for informal workers and informal residents to validate their claims upon space. I propose, however, an approach that is attentive to the spatial and relational character of distinct informal practices, emphasising their connection through the life strategies and place-making (Lombard, 2015; Pierce et al., 2011) practices of the urban poor (Kudva, 2009). Place is thus understood as a socially

⁷⁴ In Brazil, according to the latest data available 51.1% of total non-agricultural employment is informal (OECD 2009).

⁷⁵ In fact, many cities have strict rules against street vendors. For a review on the subject see Bhowmik (2012).

⁷⁶ It is interesting to notice that both the housing movement and the labour movement are in the Worker's Party (PT) foundation. Lula, the Brazilian former president and most prominent politician from the PT, has emerged from the movement of unionised workers in São Paulo.

produced space that can legitimise informal practices. Therefore, by focusing on moments of displacement, this research investigates how the disarticulation of place impacts the ability of different groups to have their claims validated. Moreover, I explore how middle-class and marginalised spaces are produced relationally. Therefore, I am also interested in how middle-class discourses inform urban policy (Ghertner, 2012) to produce/conservate middle-class spaces and, consequently, the middle-class status (Mercer, 2016). Such practices may affect the ability of the urban poor to belong. Therefore, urban space production and socio-spatial segregation emerge as the result of such multiple negotiations among unevenly empowered actors. The process through which some practices are (de)legitimised is affected by the urban poor and middle-class residents either through their interaction with the porous and fragmented state or with one another.

3.5. Summary

This chapter has sought to provide a theoretical framework for the analysis of the politics of urban space production that incorporates an array of agents and dimensions – space, state and citizenship – as mutually constituted. I have engaged critically with postcolonial debates that describe urban informality as a mode of governance deployed by the state. A few insights from the literature are emphasised. Firstly, informality is not a separate sector, but a mode of urbanisation in which multiple state and non-state agents negotiate access to and control over urban space. Secondly, the state is not regarded as the sovereign that solely holds power to convey legitimacy to distinct practices. The boundaries between society and state are porous, and state power is implemented by state agents that may subvert state policy. Thirdly, power is dispersed and non-state agents should be incorporated in the analysis of urban governance. Fourthly, state and space are relational processes, meaning that not only the state produces informal spaces, but that those spaces also produce the state and its multiple scales. Fifthly, state law is one of the juridical orders operating in society. Informal practices are not unregulated, and state law is present in informal spaces. Finally, space is an active dimension of analysis, and place-making practices should be foregrounded as relevant aspects of the politics of informality.

Engaging with debates about the Brazilian peripheral urbanisation, I explored the insurgent citizenship thesis to show how the segregated nature of urbanisation has produced a new order of citizenship able to modify the state process. New institutional

developments arising from insurgency movements have sought to expand the channels of participatory democracy while pushing the boundaries of the law to potentially include informal practices of dwelling. Such reforms were influenced by Marxist conceptualisations of urban space production, notably Lefebvre's right to the city framework. Nonetheless, the actual implementation of the instruments in the City Statute are undermined on the one hand by the emergence of the neoliberal paradigm and, on the other, by the uneven capacity of citizens – divided by class, gender and race – to engage with the state and affect urban policy. Moreover, debates around the right to the city have focused on the production of space through dwelling and participatory planning, neglecting the place-making strategies of informal workers, for instance. Taking all these insights into consideration, I have proposed a relational approach to urban informality that considers how space, state and political subjectivity are constructed in tandem.

This thesis will follow this framework to analyse how different citizens – informal workers, informal residents and the middle-classes – affected by three projects connected to the World Cup preparation in Belo Horizonte/Brazil have sought to claim their rights to belonging in the city. Spatial restructuring led by this mega-event modifies pre-existing power geometries, revealing motivations and aspirations of different agents involved in the politics of informality. I propose three main debates. Firstly, I will focus on differentiated engagements of affected groups with the porous and fractured state. The debate reveals the multiple ways in which the state and non-state agents analysed are involved in the production of formal/informal boundaries. Secondly, I will explore how institutional and legal arrangements have affected the abilities of informal workers and informal dwellers to claim their rights to the city. The discussion draws attention to the place-making strategies of those two groups, revealing how informal practices are connected through the strategies of survival of the urban poor. Finally, I will draw attention to the politics of the middle-classes and their central role in urban governance.

Chapter 4 : Methodology

This thesis primary goal is to examine how different groups affected by World Cup-related projects in Belo Horizonte have organised to claim their rights to urban space. Through this endeavour, I intend to reveal different motivations and strategies of organised citizens to protect their place in the city. I focus on their relationships with the state and the use of the law to show how informal workers, informal residents and middle-class residents have distinct abilities to shape space. Space is understood as a relational concept (Massey, 2005). Urban space production is thus a relational process in which different actors are involved and interconnected.

To carry out this investigation, I have selected three case studies in which a conflict over the use of space was engendered or affected by the preparation for the World Cup. In this chapter, I will explain the rationale guiding the research design and the choice of the cases. I also describe the methods used for both data collection and analysis. The last section of this chapter discusses a few aspects of doing research at home, considering challenges and opportunities presented by this particular researcher-subject relationship.

4.1. Research design

4.1.1. *Motivation*

According to Berg (2001), there are two conventional approaches to qualitative research: theory-before-research and research-before-theory. He argues that in both frameworks “you have the feeling that each of these components is a distinct and separate successive stage, that you first derive an idea and then move on to either theory or design and so forth” (ibid, p.18). The impression is that the research moves progressively in a linear way. Each necessary task is completed before the researcher can move to the next. However, Berg argues that the reality of doing research is that theory, data collection and data analysis inform one another throughout the whole process: there is no linearity, but rather a process, in which “you are spiralling forward, never actually leaving any stage behind completely.” (ibid, p.18)

In this research, I have followed a similar approach. The initial design was framed by my interests in the broad theme of mega-events and their relationship with urban politics. The rationale underpinning the choice of case studies was informed by this motivation, as it will be explored in more detail later in this chapter. The research design was further shaped by my incursions into the field in a back-and-forth process.

A preliminary field work was conducted in mid-2014, a few weeks before the beginning of the 2014 World Cup. During this visit to the city, I attended a few meetings of Belo Horizonte's *Comitê Popular dos Atingidos pela Copa 2014* (COPAC - Local Committee for the People's World Cup).⁷⁷ Although ephemeral, this participation was essential for my insertion into the field, as it will become clearer when I discuss this issue. During these meetings, I realised the centrality among the local social movements of the idea that the World Cup had engendered the creation of a "state of exception" (Agamben, 2005) in Brazil. Such trend was constantly evoked during the meetings of the COPAC and in the materials produced by the group.

Moreover, during this period I have also attended a seminar organised by the Federal University's Law School in cooperation with the local COPAC that was entitled *A Copa da Exceção* (The World Cup of Exception) (see Figure 4.1). In this seminar, Agamben's ideas were central and regularly cited, partially because the colloquium was organised by a research group studying the application of his theory to contemporary Brazil.⁷⁸ Additionally, in the same period, the *Articulação Nacional dos Comitês Populares da Copa* (ANCOP - National Coalition of Local Committees for a Peoples' World Cup and Olympics)⁷⁹ organised the National Conference of the Population Affected by the World Cup and Olympics. This event had the participation of members of all 12 local committees and representatives of the host cities' vulnerable populations. The conference was held in Belo Horizonte, from April 30 to May 2 and a demonstration took place on the final day. Figure 4.2 is a picture taken during this protest and it shows one of the demonstrators with a poster attached to his shirt where one can read "stadium of exception", in a quite literal reference to the "state of exception" thesis. That shows how this academic concept had somehow leaked to the streets, becoming part of the repertoire of social movements.

⁷⁷ The COPAC was a committee created in each of the World Cup host cities to fight the negative impacts of the mega-event on vulnerable populations.

⁷⁸ The research group is called *O Estado de Exceção no Brasil Contemporâneo* ("The State of Exception in Contemporary Brazil").

⁷⁹ ANCOP is an umbrella institution that congregates the 12 Local Committee for a People's World Cup (COPAC), located in each of the 12 host cities.



Figure 4.1. Seminar in Belo Horizonte: "World Cup of Exception"

(Source: Photo taken by the author)



Figure 4.2. Street protester in Belo Horizonte: "Stadium of exception"

(Source: Photo taken by the author)

During this seminar, however, while listening to the narratives of those present I could notice that being negatively affected and/or displaced by a World Cup project was perhaps only one more chapter of injustice within lives no short of misfortunes. There was

no exception in what was happening with them. That is not to deny the need to denounce all the interests articulated around mega-events and the harm they can cause for those that do not fit the image that cities and countries are interested in advertising worldwide. Additionally, one cannot ignore certain exceptional features that have permeated the organisation of the World Cup in Brazil, and other mega-events in other countries.⁸⁰ However, what troubled my perception regarding this narrative of “exception” was the underlining assumption that in the absence of a mega-event (or another type of event/crisis), the rule of law would be operating fully. This idea, nevertheless, would be readily challenged by a quick walk around Belo Horizonte (or any Brazilian city, for that matter). The city is overwhelmed with all sorts of exceptions to the law that, nonetheless, enjoy varying degrees of legitimacy. Such disregard for rules and norms are not only found in *favelas* or other spaces labelled as “informal”, but also in many others that are hardly challenged (e.g. gated communities, skyscrapers, etc.). In other words, the disregard for the rule of law – or the exception to the norm that is validated – is widespread around the city.

My discomfort with the “World Cup of exception” thesis led me to explore the urban informality literature, discussed in detail in Chapter 3. This framework also engages with the concept of “exception” as formulated by Agamben to explain how some deviations from the norm are validated by the state while others are repressed. This perspective thus informed the “final” design of this research, and each case was regarded as representing one type of “informality”, in the broader sense this perspective allows. The focus of the research was thus switched from the mega-event and its impacts on urban politics to the processes through which the boundaries between formal and informal practices are delineated and how different state and non-state actors engage in this everyday political practice. Nonetheless, the context generated by the hosting of the World Cup remained as a relevant aspect of the research. In the cases analysed, spatial restructuring led by the mega-event have altered the prevailing conditions, revealing the uneven nature of the distribution of power and the different abilities of those involved to (re)negotiate their claims upon space. New actors, alliances and spaces of struggle have emerged in the same rhythm as old ones have lost their relevance.

In summary, the goal of this thesis is thus to explore how different social groups affected by World Cup-related projects have engaged with the state to have their claims upon space validated. I depart from the perspective that the production and use of urban

⁸⁰ For a discussion about the “exceptional laws” introduced during the preparation for the 2014 FIFA World Cup, see Brito (2015).

space are regulated by informal practices, and thus the analysis focused on the process through which formal/informal boundaries are shaped. Legitimacy arises from the ability of an affected group to push such boundary to incorporate their demands. Therefore, I am also interested in analysing strategies and discourses that enabled legitimacy. To achieve this aim, I have explored three different cases of spatial restructuring led by World Cup projects in the city of Belo Horizonte. In the rest of this section, I will discuss the case study approach, explaining the rationale for the choice of the city as the primary object of study, as well as the criteria informing the selection of the three cases.

4.1.2. *Why Belo Horizonte?*

The World Cup in Brazil was hosted by 12 cities spread all over the country's five regions (see Figure 4.3). Most of the studies regarding this event have either focused on its macroeconomic impacts (Domingues et al., 2011; Proni et al., 2014; Young and FGV, 2013) or on the case of Rio de Janeiro (Gaffney, 2010, 2012, 2013a; Magalhaes, 2016; Richmond, 2016; Richmond and Garmany, 2016; Sánchez and Broudehoux, 2013; Vainer, 2015; Vargas, 2013). Moreover, the urban studies field in Brazil has traditionally focused – with significant exceptions⁸¹ – on the cases of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (Caldeira, 2000; Holston, 2008; Maricato, 1979a; Perlman, 1976, 2010; Valladares, 1981). However, in this research, my intention is to switch the attention towards the city of Belo Horizonte.

⁸¹ The cities of Curitiba and Porto Alegre have also received considerable attention internationally, giving their relevance in the avant-garde of urban policy and urban governance practices (de Sousa Santos, 1998; Navarro, 2004; Novy and Leubolt, 2005; Rabinovitch, 1992; Rabinovitch and Leitman, 2004).

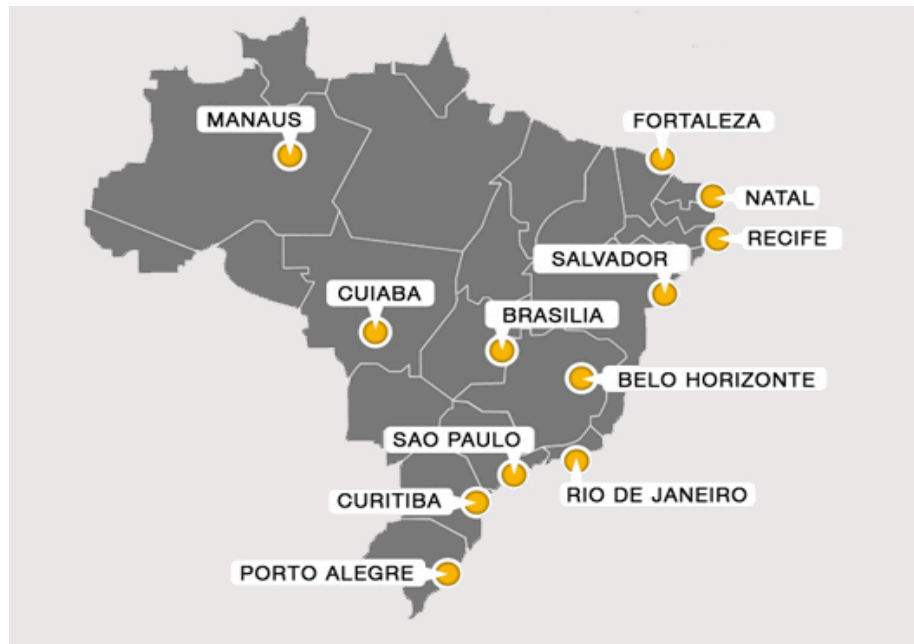


Figure 4.3. The World Cup host cities

(Source: FIFA)

In Chapter 2, I have explored the history of the Belo Horizonte in detail, setting the bases for the discussion of this thesis. Although the city is not very well known in the international literature, it has a few particularities concerning how urban policy has developed in relation to Brazil. Such development was influenced by (and have influenced) changes in the other scales of the Brazilian state, materialising into institutional and legal arrangements that shape the capacity of citizens to affect the way space is produced. It is not my intention to argue that the city is peculiar and non-comparable to others, but rather to highlight the importance of the local scale – as well as its articulation with others – in the process of urban space production. Although the urban theory has recently taken the task of building theory “from the South” (Watson, 2009; Yiftachel, 2009), there is also a tendency to focus on few selected southern cities. I thus argue that moving the focus away from the usual “southern suspects” is also an important step towards the goals of expanding the places informing urban theory and broadening the understanding of city-ness (Robinson, 2002).

Moreover, mostly per the urban studies tradition, the research interested on mega-events has tended to focus on “global cities” (Sassen, 2001).⁸² This literature emphasises how hosting these events have become an important strategy for cities in their pursuit of the “global” status (Short, 2008; Zhang and Zhao, 2009). Therefore, this research also intends to unravel how mega-events play out away from the spotlight, affecting the everyday politics of “ordinary cities” (Robinson, 2006, 2002). This is not to deny the influence of the “global city” imaginary on the strategies of those shaping the future of cities everywhere. Nonetheless, as discussed in Chapter 2, the World Cup projects in Belo Horizonte must also be understood in relation to the local strategy of insertion in the global circuits of capitalism. Therefore, shifting the focus away from “global” cities can reveal how hosting mega-events can serve a variety of purposes.

4.1.3. Case studies

In Belo Horizonte, the projects connected to the World Cup – described in Chapter 2 – have engendered a series of conflicts regarding the use of urban space all over the city. To achieve the aims of this thesis, I have selected three of such conflicts to examine in detail. In this research, the criteria utilised for the selection of the cases can be summarised as follows. Firstly, they involve disputes over urban space that were either caused or enhanced by a World Cup-related project. Secondly, each case is to be characterised by informal/irregular uses of urban space. Thirdly, the state is the primary target of affected citizens’ claims. Finally, there is explicit contention between state and non-state actors over the legality of different uses of urban space.

Figure 4.4 presents the location of each project in the municipality. Firstly, the case of *Rua Musas* (Musas street) looks at the construction of a luxury hotel in a middle-class neighbourhood in the southern portion of the city. Secondly, the “Mineirão” case concerns the redevelopment of the local stadium at Pampulha, in the North region. Thirdly, the “Vila Recanto UFMG”, also at Pampulha, focuses on a mobility infrastructure project.

⁸² Shin (2014) can be cited as an exception. His work looks at the regional city of Guangzhou in China and its use of hosting the 2010 Summer Asian Games, a relatively low-key event, to perform a ‘negotiated scale-jump’ and advance its development agenda.



Figure 4.4. Location of case studies in the city of Belo Horizonte

(Source: Google Earth)

Notes: (1) “Rua Musas”; (2) “Mineirão”; (3) “Vila Recanto UFMG”

(1) “*Rua Musas*”

In 2012, the City Hall of Belo Horizonte sold part of the Musas street – highlighted in red in Figure 4.5 – to a private company. The firm paid R\$ 4.1 million (1.3 million pounds)⁸³ and intended to build a 27-storey hotel (see Figure 4.6) in the empty land divided by the street. The street is located at Santa Lucia, a relatively affluent neighbourhood of Belo Horizonte inhabited mostly by middle and upper-middle class residents. This project has generated a conflict between the local state, the developer and the street dwellers that were unhappy about the construction.

⁸³ Values in pounds calculated using the official exchange rate (£1.00/R\$3.18) for the day the sale was made official – 26/07/2012 (Brazil Central Bank).



Figure 4.5. Musas street

(Source: Batur)



Figure 4.6. Architecture rendering image of hotel project

(Source: Batur)

In this case, the “informality” is related to the local planning norms. The master plan of the city – a municipal law – only allows constructions of up to 9 meters in the area. The hotel was only possible due to the municipal law 9.952/2010 approved in July 2010 that makes the city’s master plan flexible for the construction of hotels and hospitals. This legislation was created by the City Hall to improve the city’s infrastructure in anticipation of

the mega-event. Nonetheless, the legality of the project was challenged by the residents, who organised a movement – *Salve a Musas* (Save the Musas) – to protest the construction. The research has thus focused on the residents’ struggle against the developer and the local state to stop the construction, exploring the strategies and discourses deployed in the dispute.

(2) “Mineirão”

The city’s main football stadium – “Estádio Governador Magalhães Pinto”, popularly known as “Mineirão” – was modernised for the 2014 World Cup. Before this renovation, the stadium was surrounded by an open parking lot (see Figure 4.7) and, during match days, the area was occupied by a traditional “informal” market organised by the *Barraqueiros do Mineirão* (Mineirão stallholders) (see Figure 4.8). Some of these workers began their activities in the stadium when it was first inaugurated in 1965. In Brazil, workers are considered informal when they have no contracts (“*carteira assinada*”) or are self-employed. Therefore, although informal from a strictly legal perspective, these workers were able to remain in place for over 50 years. When the stadium was closed in 2010, this informal local economy was dismantled and, after the stadium was reopened in December 2012, the 80,000 m² space – known as the Esplanade – became privatised and enclosed (see Figure 4.9). In this process, a group of approximately 150 families lost their working space.



Figure 4.7. Old “Mineirão” stadium

(Source: footmanager.net)



Figure 4.8. Informal workers during match days

(Source: O Tempo <<http://bit.ly/2xRAYMU>>)



Figure 4.9. New Mineirão stadium

(Source: Diário do Comércio)

Moreover, after the Mineirão reopened, in the absence of the market organised by the stallholders and any other suitable alternative, the football fans got in the habit of remaining in the outside area, buying drinks from street vendors and even promoting private barbeques in the streets near the stadium (see Figure 4.10). This situation has caused the fury of the residents of the middle-class neighbourhoods that surround the Mineirão. Their interests are defended by a neighbourhood association. Initially, my intention was to focus solely on the struggles of the stallholders for relocation. Nonetheless, the immersion in the field has revealed the prominence of Pampulha's residents and their interests. Therefore, I have also investigated the part played by the neighbourhood association and the discourses and strategies deployed by its members in their attempts to affect the use and the occupation of the public spaces of the area.



Figure 4.10. Football fans invade the streets of Pampulha

(Source: Pró-Civitas)

In this case, the “informality” concerns street vendors' access to urban space. The spatial restructuring of the stadium caused the displacement of the stallholders, who fight for relocation. On the other hand, the residents of Pampulha protest the informal economy that has invaded the streets of their neighbourhood. As it was discussed in Chapter 2, Belo Horizonte has a municipal law from 2003 – the Code of Placements – that criminalises the activities of street vendors with no legal permits. This law is both an impediment for the relocation of the stallholders and an argument for the residents to demand the repression of the activities of street vendors. On the other hand, informal workers base their claims on the constitutionally protected “right to work”. The aim of this research was thus to explore how these two very distinct social groups – informal workers and middle-class residents – have organised to demand the right to place in the face of the changes caused by the stadium’s modernisation.

(3) *“Vila Recanto UFMG”*

The “Vila Recanto UFMG” – red polygon in Figure 4.11 – was an *ocupação*⁸⁴ (occupation) formed by 90 families⁸⁵ who were evicted for the construction of a viaduct. The viaduct is part of the “BRT: Antônio Carlos/Pedro I” urban mobility project (see Table 2.3 in Chapter 2 for details) and it was built to improve access to the Mineirão stadium. The displaced settlement (see Figure 4.12) was formed in the mid-1990s by a group of squatters who occupied a vacant lot – 7070 Antônio Carlos Avenue – after a car shop declared bankruptcy and abandoned the building. In April 2010, the land was expropriated by the municipality for the construction of the viaduct. In this process, a private company was compensated by the ownership of the land, and a new round of negotiations started regarding the displacement of the occupation’s residents by the local government. Eventually, in 2011, all 90 families residing in the space were displaced and relocated. All the former dwellers I interviewed declared to informally own their houses. Although there was a market for buying and selling houses, no one I have talked to discussed the existence of tenants in the settlement.



Figure 4.11. “Vila Recanto UFMG”: satellite view

(Source: Google Earth)

⁸⁴ The term *ocupação*, which translates literally into occupation, will be used in this thesis as a synonym of informal settlement. This choice intends to highlight the political meaning of the term, which is used by social movements “to refer to an area of private or public land that does not fulfil its social function as property and is occupied by poor residents (mostly organized by militant housing movements)” (Nascimento 2016, p.1).

⁸⁵ Number of families registered by the *Companhia Urbanizadora e de Habitação de Belo Horizonte* (URBEL – Urbanisation Company of Belo Horizonte) at time of displacement.

In this case, the “informality” is related to the use of urban space for residential purposes. Before the expropriation, there was an existing legal dispute between the private company claiming the land ownership and the residents of the Vila. The company’s arguments were based on the institution of private property – regulated by the Civil Code. On the other hand, the residents’ rights to the ownership of the land could be validated by the City Statute – a federal law of 2001, discussed in Chapter 3. The research has focused on this conflict, while also analysing the displacement process triggered by the infrastructure project.



Figure 4.12. “Vila Recanto UFMG”

(Source: Barbosa, 2011, p.34)

(4) *Summary*

The case study approach allows for an in-depth understanding, which can complicate the task of building comparisons across cases. One of the challenges of this method is to compare different cases without trivialising elements and, on the other hand, avoid the trap of considering each case as particular and, therefore, not comparable. According to Ritchie et al. (2013, p.52) “case study analysis can become very complex, with comparisons made between different actors within a single case, between cases, and between groups of participants across cases.” In this research, there is the potential for such complexity, with many possible ways of approaching the analysis. The most straightforward way would be to have an in-depth discussion for each case.

Nevertheless, in this thesis, I propose to implement comparisons by focusing on themes of interest and analysing how they are articulated in each case. The comparison, therefore, will emerge from the variables considered relevant to answer my research questions. Cases have similarities and divergences that are both fundamental for the analysis. Table 4.1 summarises data about the three cases. It states the area affected, the type of neighbourhood, the social group impacted, the sort of “informality” under discussion, the laws under contestation, the World Cup project related to the dispute and the agent (public or private) responsible for its execution, and the scale(s) of the state involved in the dispute.

Table 4.1. Summary: three cases

Features	a. “Rua Musas”	b. “Mineirão”	c. “Vila Recanto UFMG”
Size of the area	11,000 m ²	-	4,200 m ²
Families directly affected	c.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stallholders: c.150 • Residents: c.130 	c.90
Social group affected	Upper middle-class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stallholders: poor • Residents: upper middle-class 	Poor
Type of “informality”	Planning	Work	House
Relevant laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “World-cup law” • Master plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of placements • Constitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Code • City Statute
World Cup-related project	Hotel construction	Stadium renovation	Viaduct construction
Project’s execution	Private	Public private partnership (PPP)	Public (local state)
State scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and regional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and regional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local

A few points are worth mentioning. Firstly, all three cases have directly impacted a relatively small population,⁸⁶ which makes the comparisons between cases more feasible. The disputes, however, are escalated by strategies and discourses, which will be a central point of analysis in this thesis. The distinct abilities of such small groups to build alliances and turn local disputes into city/regional issues is fundamental to understand their varying degrees of success. Secondly, the debates in the empirical chapters will focus on the type of informality considered. Different “irregular” ways of occupying urban space enjoy different degrees of legitimacy. Moreover, existing conditions (laws, institutions, culture, etc.) shape the ability of actors (middle-class residents, informal dwellers and informal workers) to validate their claims upon space. Thirdly, the social distinction between affected groups is another crucial point under discussion in this research. Social class plays an important role

⁸⁶ For the case of Pampulha, the estimation in the table relates to the number of associates of the neighbourhood association – Pró-Civitas.

as a lens through which the relationship between citizens and the state can be analysed. Fourthly, the projects considered are executed/funded by different agents/arrangements. That is also relevant to understanding how the struggles have evolved and which options of contestation/compensation were even available for those affected. Finally, although projects are not necessarily public, the claims and strategies of those protesting their impacts were aimed at the state, more specifically at the local and/or regional scales of the state.

In the three cases, it is possible to observe the coalition of divergent interests and the intervention of the state through its institutional apparatus. The non-state agents, however, are also capable of agency and partially successful in claiming their rights, although not necessarily in achieving the most desired outcomes. The strategies deployed by agents and the spaces where such strategies evolve are directly related to their uneven access to power and power relations. Moreover, the different class conditions are also relevant to explain the ways of shaping claims, strategies and discourses. The aim of the research, therefore, was to unpack the power relations and strategies, following the processes and understanding how state and non-state actors have engaged in the process of drawing the boundaries between formal and informal, legal and illegal.

In this thesis, I chose to focus on the formal/informal boundary-making process and compare how they have evolved for each of the conflicts under analysis. Although I have considered these three cases as self-contained conflicts for the research design, it is important to say that they are interrelated. Urban space production is a process evolving simultaneously in multiple scales and, therefore, although conflicts are place-specific, they are also connected and juxtaposed. In this thesis, space is considered as a relational concept (Massey, 2005), and spatiality is thus co-produced through “mobile and mutable interactions between space and the human subject” (Gregory, 2009, p.512). Boundaries between cases are thus blurred and only analytically constructed. To deal with this, I have been attentive to the reverberations of each case on the others, interrogating the connections whenever they appeared.

4.2. Data collection

4.2.1. Access to the field

In 2014 I conducted a preliminary field work for one month and a half. I left Belo Horizonte just a few days before the beginning of the World Cup.⁸⁷ During this period, I was able to participate in the COPAC meetings and, as already mentioned, attend a seminar organised in cooperation with the ANCOP. This engagement, although not very prolonged was fundamental to give me later access to the field.

When the beginning of the World Cup was approaching, the mood within the movement became heavier. The members of COPAC were involved in the organisation of anti-World Cup demonstrations, while there was an open campaign against vandalism sponsored by local and national media. Moreover, rumours of preventive arrests, infiltration of police agents in social movements and the expectation of strong repression against the protests caused tension and the distrust towards strangers or outsiders. I remember one of the meetings, which was particularly tense, just before the first demonstration. Although organised in the same location and time of COPAC's regular meetings, this reunion happened behind closed doors, in sharp contrast to the open character of the regular weekly encounters. I have attended this meeting and each person there was instructed to say their name and the group they represented. Afterwards, in the case of discomfort, anyone present could ask any person to leave. I introduced myself as a COPAC member – despite being there for only one month. In the end, neither I nor anyone else was asked to leave. That for me was proof that I had been somehow “accepted” to the group.

Regarding the specific cases under study, especially the cases of the “Mineirão” and the “Vila Recanto UFMG”, the connections established through the COPAC were essential to give me access to the field. Once I arrived, I immediately got in touch with Lucas, a well-known member of the *Partido Socialista* (PSOL– Socialist Party) and an active participant of COPAC. He then invited me to a meeting scheduled with Pedro. Pedro was the leader of the *Associação dos Barraqueiros da Área Externa do Mineirão* (ABAEM – Association of the Mineirão Stallholders), and Stela, a lawyer and member of the *Cidade & Alteridade* (City and alterity), a university research group that wrote an extensive report about the stallholders'

⁸⁷ I was in the first year of my PhD and, therefore, I had to return to London for my exams.

case. I attended this meeting on July 21, 2015, and from there on, I was in regular contact with Pedro. I was surprised to realise that the ABAEM – partially because of Pedro’s resilience – was still very active, promoting regular meetings and a variety of actions to fight for the stallholders’ right to resume their activity. I started attending their gatherings, which gave me access to the entire group. I also got the contact of the members of Pampulha’s neighbourhood association (Pró-Civitas) from Pedro. From my conversations with members of the ABAEM and Pró-civitas, I gathered information regarding other relevant agents that I needed to interview.

Another member of COPAC, Marcelo, who is also an activist at *Brigadas Populares* (Popular Brigades),⁸⁸ gave me the contact of Maria, a former resident of the Vila UFMG. I called her a few times before I was able to get hold of her. I explained why I wanted to interview her and who had given me her number, which was important to establish an initial trust. After a few rescheduled encounters, we finally met on September 14, 2015. Maria chose the headquarters of the *Pastoral de Rua* (Pastoral) as the meeting venue. The Pastoral is a non-governmental organisation connected to the Catholic Church. On the phone, she told me “Let’s meet there, where everything began”. Through this first contact, I realised the centrality of the Pastoral for the Vila UFMG settlement. There I was able to get the contacts of other former residents and collect documents that also informed this research. On 6 October 2015, I attended a seminar about the situation of homeless people in Belo Horizonte organised by the Pastoral. There I met Ana, who was one of the leaders of the occupation. Maria has thus worked as a gate keeper, who gave me access to the Pastoral that became the principal “node” of the network through which I was able to access other informants and interviewees. The hardest part was the access to the Urbanisation Company of Belo Horizonte (URBEL), the local state company responsible for managing the displacement. I was able to get in touch with three employees through my network connections, one of them was the agent in charge of overseeing the displacement and relocation of the Vila settlers.

Considering the “*Rua Musas*” case, I had a bit more difficulty in getting in touch with the residents. I first emailed Prof Antônio, who was the leader of the “*Salve a Musas*” movement and the only person I knew *a priori* to be directly involved with the case. This

⁸⁸ The Popular Brigades is a socialist movement organised by activists divided in different thematic groups. In Belo Horizonte, the group was founded by students of the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) who were members of a study group about Marxism. Locally, they are well known for their involvement with the occupation movement. See Mayer and Assis (2006) for more information about the Brigades.

first contact was unsuccessful. I then got in touch with another professor of UFMG, who I have a good relationship with due to my status as an alumna. He put me in touch with Prof Antônio, who then gave me the contacts of others, while also providing me with detailed documents regarding the case. My interview with him, which lasted for over two hours, was incredibly informative and from there I also became more knowledgeable regarding who were the other relevant actors. Ironically, I was able to get the contact of the developer – a prominent local businessman – from Pablo (Professor Antônio's son). After talking with Antônio and Pablo, I realised who were the state agents involved in the case. I was able to contact a local councilwoman and a state deputy who participated in the dispute. However, the most prominent politicians involved were the mayor (Márcio Lacerda) and his chief of staff (Josué Valadão). I have tried to contact them, but with no success. In Brazil, there is often a blurry line between research and political activism, which makes high-profile politicians unwilling to give interviews about controversial cases.

4.2.2. Snowball sampling

In each of the case studies, the populations I was interested in were very particular. In these cases, snowball sampling is a convenient method. According to Berg (2001, p.33), this sampling strategy “is sometimes the best way to locate subjects with certain attributes or characteristics necessary in a study”. As discussed in the previous section, in each case I was able to get access to a gate keeper, who would then introduce me or give me the contacts of others belonging to the same group. Moreover, in each of the cases, it is possible to identify a “leader” – Prof Antônio for the Musas street case, Pedro and Julia for the Mineirão case and Ana for the case of Vila UFMG. Through the contact with them, I was able not only to get the contacts of others, but also to identify key agents who I should interview. This process, however, is never ending, as new interviewees always mention new actors and so on and so forth. In this research, I decided to stop the interviews once new narratives began to add minimal details that were not substantially changing my knowledge about the cases.

4.2.3. Data collection methods

The case study approach is the primary method of this research, whereas most of the information discussed was gathered from interviews. Nonetheless, to have a broader picture of the cases, I have also used different methods, such as participant observation and archival research. The use of multiple methods allows for triangulation and, therefore, a more robust analysis (Grillham, 2000).

Data were collected during approximately eight months of field work, divided into three parts, between 2014 and 2016. The first was a preliminary visit that happened between April 15 and June 1st, 2014. The second was the most extensive part of the field work and took place between July 19, 2015 and January 8, 2016. The third and last part was a quick trip in 2016, from August 12 to August 28.

(1) Semi-structured interviews

I have conducted semi-structured interviews with relevant actors involved in the three selected cases. In total, I have interviewed 56 people and conducted 54 interviews. The discrepancy between these two numbers is because on some occasions I have talked to more than one person at once and, in others, more than once with the same person. The complete list of interviewees for each case, as well as their institutional connections, is described in Appendix A-1. On average interviews lasted one hour and thirteen minutes – the shortest lasted thirty four minutes and the longest, three hours and thirteen minutes.

The purpose of the interviews was to understand the interviewee(s) perceptions over the reality of what happened in each dispute under analysis. I was also interested in their narratives regarding their participation, their role in the institution/movement they are a part of – when applicable, details about the institution/movement and their role in the cases – when appropriate, as well as in other similar disputes. I have also asked people about allies and the participation of other relevant actors/institutions/movements and their opinions about them.

I have tried to let people talk as freely as possible about subjects they thought to be relevant. Nonetheless, I had topics that I wanted to cover, which varied from case to case and from person to person. Appendix A-2 presents a few examples of topic guides used for

different interviews. The questions were informed by previous information gathered about the cases, as well as theoretical debates.

The interviews were mostly recorded after gaining explicit consent from participants. I resorted to notes on a few occasions, either because the interviewee requested or the setting was not appropriate for the use of a recorder. I also took notes while interviewing people, even while recording; those records were used to complement the analysis. Moreover, I also took pictures when relevant, and the interviewees agreed.

(2) Participant observation

One of the main challenges faced in conducting this research was the fact that the field work happened after the projects considered were completed (or cancelled). That prevented me from engaging in participant observation as far as the projects were concerned. Nonetheless, the object of this thesis is urban space production, and, as conceptualised by Massey (2005, p.9), space is “always under construction. (...) It is never finished; never closed”. Considering space production as an ongoing process in which multiple agents are in constant struggle has allowed me to perform some participant observation.

In the case of the Mineirão, as already mentioned, the conflict was still ongoing. I was thus able to follow several activities of the Mineirão stallholders and observe the activities of street vendors, supporters and state agents around the stadium during match days. Regarding the other cases, both conflicts were already “finished”, that is, resolved in some way, at the time of my field work. Nonetheless, some reverberations of what happened could be observed in the present and institutions/movements were still active in local politics. Therefore, I have tried to attend as many events and meetings as I could to observe the everyday functioning of relevant institutions/movements. Moreover, I have also taken notes during interviews at people’s houses and offices, noting details that could inform this research.

The field notes were taken manually in Portuguese and then digitalised. In a few occasions, I have recorded observations that were partially transcribed. In others, I have produced the notes already in English on my personal computer, summarising reflections

and events of the day. A list of entries and examples of field note extracts are available in Appendix A-3 and A-4, respectively.

(3) Archival research

A third source of data collection was archival research. For each case, I have collected as many relevant documents as I could from various sources. That included the personal archives of the principal actors in each case, institutions, movements and state agencies. I have also gathered online articles and other publicly available documents such as minutes and audios and visual recordings of public hearings, bills, laws, and judicial decisions, among others. I have also taken pictures and videos, while also collecting photos and videos online. These documents were organised in my personal computer by case, institution and type of material.

4.2.4. Research ethics

The data collected, interviews, documents, field notes, videos and pictures were digitalised (in case they were not digital already) and kept on my personal computer with a backup for safety reasons. Every participant has given me consent to use and analyse the data. I have maintained the anonymity of all interviewees and participants. The data was entirely transcribed by myself. I have also translated the extracts I have used in the thesis from Portuguese to English by myself.

In some cases, however, the anonymity of participants is not entirely secure because those readers that have a bit of knowledge about the situation and the politics in Belo Horizonte will be able to recognise some of the leading actors. Nonetheless, the anonymity was not a requirement of the participants, but my option. Those that are identifiable are known locally for their political participation. They agreed to be interviewed aware that the description of their role in the case would most probably make themselves recognisable.

4.3. Data analysis

4.3.1. Transcribing

The interviews were transcribed by myself in Portuguese. They were then uploaded to NVivo[®], the software used for performing the thematic analysis. In the process of listening to the interviews again, I have also started the first round of data analysis, taking notes and building a preliminary codebook, which has guided the subsequent phase of the research, which will be discussed in the following section.

4.3.2. Coding

The data collected was examined through thematic analysis⁸⁹ with the help of NVivo[®].⁹⁰ Thematic analysis is a way of systematising the process of analysing qualitative data. It consists of searching for themes (or categories) that can be useful to understand the phenomenon being researched. Such themes emerge from the “careful reading and re-reading of the data” (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p.82; Rice and Ezzy, 1999, p.258). Therefore, it is a process by which the data is investigated through themes identified in the data set itself. In this method, the researcher works inductively, deductively and utilises a combination of both (Berg, 2001; Strauss, 1987):

(...) [A]n inductive approach begins with the researchers "immersing" themselves in the documents (that is, the various messages) in order to identify the dimensions or themes that seem meaningful to the producers of each message. In a deductive approach, researchers use some categorical scheme suggested by a theoretical perspective, and the documents provide a means for assessing the hypothesis. In many circumstances, the relationship between a theoretical perspective and certain messages involves both inductive and deductive approaches. However, in order to present the perceptions of others (the producers of messages) in the most forthright manner, a greater reliance upon induction is necessary. (Berg, 2001, pp.245–246)

⁸⁹ Lacey and Luff (2001) propose a framework for codifying and analysing data through thematic analysis.

⁹⁰ For an updated guide of how to use NVivo to plan and implement qualitative research, see Bazeley and Jackson (2013).

In this thesis, I have built themes through an inductive-deductive process. As suggested by Berg (2001), the aim was to be faithful to the message of those interviewed, while structuring the topics in such a way that their narratives could open a dialogue with theory. The interviews were thus transcribed and coded with the help of a codebook that was built and informed by the interviews and the additional data sources. The themes in the codebook were created in relation to the research questions and the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 3. The codebook used for the analysis is available in Appendix A-5 of this thesis. My coding strategy is organised in two big branches. In one hand, I am interested in the case studies and particular aspects of each case study. In the first group of themes (A to C), each of them represents a case, with sub-themes describing critical moments, personal narratives of actors within the affected group and their relationship with other stakeholders and institutions. The second group of themes (D to G) is organised around the main relevant topics that will be discussed in the empirical chapters – respectively, informality, state, space and law. An additional theme was added for methodological remarks (H).

4.4. Reflections about the field

4.4.1. Belonging to the field: challenges and opportunities of doing field work at home

Belo Horizonte is the city I call my home. Before moving to London for my PhD, I lived there for 12 years, which includes most of my adult life. I left my hometown – a city 100 km away – when I was fifteen to attend high school, and in Belo Horizonte, I completed my undergraduate and my Master's degree. During this period, I have explored the city, creating a vast network of friends, colleagues and acquaintances. Although not directly related to the cases, my connections were helpful in a variety of ways. Sometimes as a reference to my character, sometimes as a direct contact I could use to get in touch with people. Moreover, the city is familiar to me, and I required no adaptation. Field work started as soon as I landed in the city.

One cannot overlook the considerable advantages of doing research at home. In the context of development studies, Unwin (2006) cites five reasons, of which three are also

valid for my project. First, my previous knowledge of the society I am studying makes my job as a researcher much easier. Second, the language is not a barrier. Third, an important step in the research process is building trust and passing from being an “outsider” to being considered as an “insider” by the group you are studying. This process should be smoother when you research at home because the cultural barriers are less intense.

Nonetheless, some challenges emerge when you are doing research at home, but the product of your research is intended for yet another audience. This issue is discussed by Caldeira (2000) in the first chapter of “City of Walls”. She talks about the constant feeling of displacement that emerges from doing research where she was born and lived for most of her life – São Paulo/Brazil – while writing in a foreign language for an international audience. Although her work was supposed to be underpinned by the “international style” of anthropology and social theory, she discusses how there is a strong bias in the discipline and how the research concerns are distinct in different academic cultures. For Caldeira, the acute perception of such local framing of questions led her to consider writing two books for two different types of audience. However, she dismisses this possibility after realising that her perception is affected by both experiences and, therefore, cannot be squeezed into any of the two ways of thinking.

My languages, my writing, my thinking, my critiques all had acquired a peculiar identity. I came to realize that as my English has an accent, so does my anthropology; it persists no matter from what perspective I look at it or in which language I write it. (Caldeira, 2000, p.6)

While conducting this research, I undertook a similar task of making sense of how my perception as a Brazilian and my pre-conceptions of Belo Horizonte affected my thinking and how my education at LSE was fundamental to shape this investigation. Two correlated challenges have hunted me. On the one hand, I was keen to avoid particularistic views of Brazil, framing the discussion in a wider international approach. On the other, I also felt the need to have a conversation with Brazilian academia. Departing from a post-colonial perspective, I considered that it was essential to give voice to those producing literature in Brazil, about Brazil and in Portuguese. However, as noted by Caldeira (2000), debates vary immensely across different academic traditions, making hard the task of keeping a two-sided dialogue. While trying to remain in conversation with both academic cultures, I might have fallen short in one of those tasks or even both. This thesis is (dis)located somewhere in-between.

4.4.2. *Otherness: facing my white middle-class privilege*

To conduct this research, I have spent a considerable amount of time with people that, unlike myself, struggle every day to survive in the city. I also went to many different places I have never been before. In this process, I have faced my preconceived mental maps of the city (Raanan and Shoval, 2014), crossing many of the boundaries I had internalised subjectively.⁹¹ The Belo Horizonte I knew was always confined by my routine and my perceptions of risk. Growing up in Brazil, one quickly learns which places to avoid and the persons one should fear. Moreover, my interactions with the city and its inhabitants were always mediated by my own white middle-class status. Doing field work at home was an opportunity for me to confront my positionality in the Brazilian society, my racial and economic privilege.

I remember one of the conversations I had with Manuel, a local street vendor, in one of the first ABAEM meetings I attended. We were chatting before it started and he was telling me a bit about his life story. In the attempt of bonding, I also spoke to him about my upbringing in a “working class” home. My father, now retired, was a train conductor who was an employee for many years of the *Rede Rodoviária Federal* (Federal Rail Company). He responded: “Oh, I had an uncle who worked for the Federal Rail Company. He was always mocking my father for not having money to buy us any gifts for Christmas. I truly disliked him.” In his perception, growing up on the streets, his “working class” uncle was well-off and so was I. The uncertainty of income in his household obligated him to work from an early age as a street vendor, which he still is. That day I started to understand that I could not pretend to know anything about their lives. I had to be humble and just listen. The discomfort of my privilege, however, chased me during the whole field work. The following is an extract from my diary, written during one of the occupations organised by the stallholders in front of the City Hall building.

Today I left the occupation around 12.15 pm, and I went to a mall in the city centre to make some purchases. I then had lunch in a restaurant that caters for the middle-

⁹¹ Urban space production is a dialectical process in which the city is produced by its residents, who attribute meanings to space and whose identities and perceptions are influenced by the city. Agents actively engage in the creation of cognitive maps, which represent spatial behavioural patterns. According to Raanan and Shoval (2014): “Mental maps provide the external borders of an individual’s potential activity space, which can be defined as the area which contains most of the individual’s destinations, or as the individual’s personal territory.”

classes. Although the price looks very reasonable – R\$18 (+/- 4 pounds) for food and R\$2.50 (+/- 0.75 pounds) for a coffee – I know it is inaccessible for most of the stallholders. I also live in a middle-class region, and I spend most of my days hanging out and interviewing people from a different social class. We don't go to the same places, and we experience the city in very different ways. My consumption pattern differentiates me, and so does my postcode. (...) This constant negotiation has bothered me. Doing field work at home also means to reinsert myself in my place in Brazilian society and to re-enact old routines. That perception was never so clear to me. The daily negotiations and improvisations, the constant (political) struggle for spaces and recognition that I decided to unpack are strange to me. The uncertainty of the informal activity is a reality very distant from mine. It seems impossible to insert myself in it, to live it. I am the other. (Field note, 18/08/15)

Doing research at my own home created a familiarity that disabled the place of "otherness" present in classic anthropology. Nonetheless, I have experienced many times this feeling of dislocation described in the note above. This perception was coming from the interaction with people very different from me. This discomfort was present during the entire research period, and I hope it will remain with me. As a researcher, I cannot forget the vulnerability of the voices I am trying to hear. Nonetheless, my perception is distorted by the place from which I am looking, and it is fundamental to recognise that.

4.4.3. The role of the researcher: what is research?

A recurrent challenge I faced was to understand and deal with my role as a researcher. In the case of the stallholders, the fact that they were very active, made me spend a lot of time hanging out with them. I attended the ABAEM meetings, went to the demonstrations, visited their occupations, accompanied them when they were meeting with local state agents, so on and so forth. That created some confusion about what was my role in their movement. I always made clear that I was a researcher and what was my interest. However, for most of them, that was a very vague notion, and I was sure they knew very little about the nature of my work. In the following quote from my field notes, my role as a researcher was the subject of discussion while we waited for one of the ABAEM meetings to start.

The ABAEM meeting was scheduled for 2 pm, now it is almost 4 pm, and it hasn't started. Sixteen people have arrived so far. While we are waiting, I am chatting with some of the stallholders. Carmo has asked me about Cecilia – a COPAC member

that belongs to the *Brigadas Populares* – as if we were close friends. It took me sometime to realise who was the person that she was referring. I then told Carmo I'd seen Cecilia at the City Hall during the occupation, but that she was in a different public hearing (the one about the Isidora occupation). Then Leticia interfered to say "Mara's work is completely different from Cecilia's, Mara is a researcher". She said that while looking at me, apparently searching for my approval. I remained silent, listening to see if she was going to develop the thought a bit further, but she didn't. I then explained to Carmo that, unlike Cecilia, I was not an activist of any social movement, but only a student and a researcher. She then complemented "I know, and you are following us, but you are not part of anything". (Field note, 30/09/15)

The quote explores a contradiction of the "participant observation" position. As a researcher, I tried not to influence the trajectory of their movement, avoiding to create a bias in my "data". However, my presence was obviously already a source of bias. Moreover, I also got increasingly involved in their situation. My constant presence and involvement created a strong bond of trust. In one hand, that was very positive, as it gave me a lot of access. On the other, I was always asked many times for opinions about many things regarding their movement. They also constantly asked for my help to perform many small tasks – write banners, make calls or do an internet search, for instance. As much as I could, I tried to keep my participation as low as possible, not being very vocal about my opinions and only doing tasks that would not create a lot of impact. Nonetheless, while trying to perform my research the best way that I could, I was also uncomfortable with the passivity of the researcher role. I asked myself more than once what would happen if I focused my energies on helping instead of observing them. I was questioning the relevance of doing research and the actual impact I could engender with my work. My discomfort was echoed by Diva, a former resident of the Vila UFMG I interviewed. The following extract from my field diary narrates my thoughts provoked by our encounter.

During the interview, Diva asked me what did doing research meant, because she had talked with many people already, but none of them helped them. I then was made to think about the meaning of "doing research". For me, it means to understand things, or as LSE's motto says, "to know the cause of things". I then told her that people were trying to find out what happened so next time it could be better. But do I believe that? Can my research be useful to society in any way? Not just society, but the very people I've identified as those suffering the worse. Those people that have been sharing their life histories with me. Histories of abuse, of marginalisation, of living against the odds. (Field note, 22/11/15)

I concluded the field work, and now as I write this thesis, I still have many questions about how useful the work as a researcher can be. While trying not to influence the reality

we are interested in, aren't we also keeping ourselves from being agents of change? Perhaps motivated by this uneasiness, I have tried to make my research helpful in some sense. As I write, Belo Horizonte's recently elected municipal government is planning the removal of street vendors from the city centre once again. The eviction is part of a broader project to "revitalise" the downtown area, a pungent place where many lives co-exist and circulate. On June 14, 2017, I had a meeting with a few of the leaders of the street vendors' movement, mediated by the office of a recently elected councilwoman – Áurea Carolina (PSOL) – whose mandate is compromised with the struggles of the marginalised. In this meeting (see Figure 4.13) I have presented my findings for them in the attempt of providing their movement with arguments that can become ammunition in their fight against displacement.



Figure 4.13. Meeting with street vendors

(Source: Author's own photograph)

4.5. Summary

In this chapter, I have described the methods utilised in this research to achieve the objectives outlined in the introduction of this thesis. I have explained the motivations behind the initial design, as well as the criteria for the selection of the city and the three case studies. I have also discussed the data collection methods and the methodology employed for the analysis. Finally, this chapter has also explored the particularities of doing research at one's home.

The data gathered, organised and analysed according to the methods described here will be discussed in the following three empirical chapters. The discussion will start with an investigation of the role of the state in each of the cases in Chapter 5, focusing on the different abilities of citizens to affect urban policy. Chapter 6 will look at the two cases involving the displacement of the urban poor – Mineirão and Vila UFMG, comparing the situation of informal workers and informal residents. The discussion focuses on the intersections between law and urban space production, while also analysing the connections between work and house informality. Finally, Chapter 7 is dedicated to the middle-classes, discussing the two cases – Mineirão and Musas street – in which their role in shaping urban space is observed prominently.

Chapter 5 : The politics of informality: engaging with the selectively porous state

In this chapter, I address the main question of this thesis, exploring how different citizens – informal residents, informal workers and middle-class residents – engage with the state to validate their claims over space. The analysis focuses on the relational and processual nature of the state, revealing how the channels of engagement between citizens and the state are shaped by previous social interactions and institutional arrangements. I thus show how the informal workers, the informal residents and the dwellers of a middle-class neighbourhood engage, negotiate and challenge the state in order to affect formal/informal boundaries. I argue for an approach that recognises the dispersive nature of power, the relational and processual character of the state, as well as its fractured and porous nature. Nonetheless, I emphasise that such porosity is “selective”, contributing with two main arguments. Firstly, different modes of engagement between citizens and the state have varying outcomes. The organised struggle of the urban poor for their rights is more effective than non-collective and atomised strategies to claim urban space. Secondly, social class does matter, and middle-class residents are more empowered to challenge the state.

The chapter is divided into four sections. In the first three parts, I discuss three cases of urban informality – work, housing and planning – which reveal distinct stances of the relationship between the state and the (re)production of formal/informal boundaries. I focus on everyday state actions, exploring how state power is enacted, negotiated and challenged.

The first section explores the quiet encroachment (Bayat, 2004) of the Mineirão stadium space by street vendors. The narratives of the workers show how, rather than a product of an absent state, the informal economy is an outcome of multiple negotiations between vendors and state agents. I then show how the informal economy has been modified, but not eradicated, by the modernisation of the stadium in question, spurred by the 2014 FIFA World Cup. I further explore how recent changes in the local state have created a more difficult environment for street vendors, who “re-encroach” space, challenging and negotiating with the everyday state and its agents.

In the second section, I discuss the social movements for housing in Belo Horizonte by telling the story of two “insurgent” women (Holston, 2008; Wittger, 2017). Those narratives expose the transformation of the local state and the slow construction of the rights of informal dwellers in Brazil. I then explore the displacement of the Vila UFMG

residents, caused by an urban mobility project connected with the preparation for the World Cup. I show how institutional developments arising from past struggles have shaped the way the Vila's eviction evolved. The displacement is reconstructed through the narrative of the Urbanisation Company of Belo Horizonte (URBEL) worker in charge of the process.

Section three explores the Musas street case, in which the state is found modifying its own rules and seeking to create informality from above (Roy, 2009a). In order to allow the construction of a hotel to accommodate the needs of the World Cup, the local state moves the boundaries of the law, creating an exception to planning guidelines (Vainer, 2015). The process, however, does not go uncontested, revealing the limits of sovereignty and the dispersive nature of power. I then show how the residents of Musas street were able to stop the hotel construction using the project's environmental impact as a means to legally challenge the state and conserve their middle-class space.

The fourth section critically engages with debates on the role of the state in the urban informality framework. I argue for a view of the state as a selective porous entity, which is affected differently by unevenly empowered citizens. I contribute to the debates on the politics of urban informality with two main arguments. Firstly, the state process can be affected by the organised struggle of the urban poor. Secondly, new channels of engagement arising from those struggles are also employed by the middle-class whose access to resources makes them well-equipped to affect urban space production.

5.1. The state and the informal economy

5.1.1. The Mineirão stadium and the "absent" state

The Governador Magalhães Pinto stadium, popularly known as Mineirão, was inaugurated in 1965 with the capacity for 130 thousand spectators. In Brazil, the period of its inauguration is characterised by intense urbanisation and state-led industrialisation, but also by the growing popularity of football.⁹² At that moment, football stadia were largely built by regional or federal states, with a clear political and populist objective. They were popular spaces, catering for the working classes and managed by the state (Gaffney, 2013b).

⁹² As pointed by Gaffney (2013b), football emerged in Brazil in the beginning of the 20th century as an elite sport, only achieving popularity later, especially after the popularisation of the radio.

The construction of the Mineirão was a mega-project, intended to stimulate the local football teams, but also to symbolise a new modernity, in which the strict lines of Belo Horizonte's initial project were replaced by the curves of Pampulha (Campos et al., 2014). Since its inauguration, the Mineirão was also characterised by the presence of street vendors in the area surrounding the stadium. This informal economy was as popular as the stadium itself, becoming a space for many disadvantaged workers looking for a place to make a living.

Rodrigo, Alfredo and Vilma started working as street vendors in the stadium soon after its inauguration. The area surrounding the stadium was – and remains to this day – mainly residential and the absence of restaurants or bars nearby rendered the Mineirão a potential market for these workers to explore. While Rodrigo was relying on that activity as his main source of income, for Alfredo it was a side-job to complement his “below-minimum-wage” salary as a policeman. Vilma, on the other hand, was only a child when she started working there with her mother and her siblings. Later on, in her adult life, she became a street vendor at Mineirão herself. Figure 5.1 shows a picture of Vilma as a young adult standing in front of her stall and proudly smiling for the camera.



Figure 5.1. Vilma in her stall at Mineirão stadium

(Source: ABAEM)

The informal market at Mineirão started spontaneously through the atomised and non-organised actions of workers looking for a place to make a living. At first, one could see these workers as a part of the oversized tertiary sector and the product of an absent state

(Kentor, 1981; Lewis, 1954; Morse, 1971). Nonetheless, the conversations with the former stallholders have revealed a very different picture. Their permanence on the stadium was possible through a combination of evasion and negotiation with the multiple agents of the state in charge of regulating that space throughout time (Crossa, 2009; Hackenbroch, 2011; Schindler, 2014a). The list included, for instance, the city's inspection agents, the military police, and the workers of the regional state's agency – Management of the Stadiums of Minas Gerais (hereafter ADEMG) – managing the stadium.

The strategies deployed by these workers to secure access to public space can be interpreted through the “quiet encroachment” (Bayat, 2004) perspective. The concept is described as the “non-collective, but prolonged, direct action by individuals and families to acquire the basic necessities of life (land for shelter, urban collective consumption, informal work, business opportunities, and public space) in a quiet and unassuming, yet illegal, fashion” (Bayat, 2004, p.81). According to this framework, the urban poor are driven by necessity and execute their activities not as a deliberate political act but rather as a way to survive and improve their livelihood. One can thus argue that the street vendors at Mineirão have quietly encroached the stadium, negotiating individually with multiple state agents to access workspace. Those actions were not part of a political struggle aimed at having the rights to space recognised, but rather strategies to guarantee circumstantial agreements to allow the workers to make a living.

Throughout time, those workers encroaching the stadium slowly became increasingly associated with that space, which was being transformed by their activity. Moreover, their constant presence has engendered a relationship between the vendors and the multiple state actors in charge of inspecting (city inspection agents), policing (military police) and managing the stadium (regional government agents). This process led to a differentiation of the informal market among types of vendors with diverse arrangements to access workspace. Some of the workers started setting stalls in the outside area to sell their products. This group became known as the *Barraqueiros do Mineirão* (Mineirão stallholders) who worked in fixed spaces and were a constant presence. The area, however, was open and easily accessible, which meant that new workers would arrive continuously. The stallholders then shared the space with other more mobile vendors whose presence was more sporadic. Those are popularly known as *caixeiros* and *toreiros*, which are expressions used to refer to mobile vendors who carry their products – in this case, mainly beverages – in thermo boxes (*caixas*) and work without permission.

During the 1980s and 1990s, due to the rising unemployment in Brazil, the informal sector⁹³ was growing fast in the country. Due to the escalating presence of street vendors in Belo Horizonte, the local government engaged in an effort to regulate their activity. Although the issue was more associated with central areas, the Mineirão stallholders remember that the time coincides with the increasing regulation of their workspace by the City Hall. Those workers were thus registered and started paying a fee for the use of the space. According to Rodrigo, “We paid a fee to the City Hall so we could work. (...) First, it was a monthly fee; then they started charging per match.” Figure 5.2 shows a typical license, issued by the Department of Health Surveillance, part of the Municipal Secretary of Health and Welfare. The license dates from May 5, 1990, with no visible expiry date, and it describes the place, the person and the products (hot dogs and soda) authorised for commercialisation. As described by Vilma, those paying the fees would sometimes pressure inspection agents to stop non-licensed vendors from competing with them. Nonetheless, the *toreiros* were also interacting with state agents, who would turn a blind eye to their irregular activity depending on their “mood”.⁹⁴

That shows how informal workers themselves participated in the process of governing the market. Those paying for the use of the space were often demanding greater control from the inspection agents to avoid competition. According to Crossa (2016, p.292):

(...) [The] legitimization of formal practices versus the desire to eradicate selective informal activities is not only a discourse (re)produced by the state, but also a narrative enacted by actors involved in so-called informal activities. Indeed, the sorts of politics of difference exercised by the state when defining informality are also enacted by vendors themselves through a particular geography of difference which reproduces the same sorts of legitimacy discourses as those produced by the state.

Moreover, the ability of unauthorised vendors to negotiate and access workspace also demonstrates how state power is performed by actors who may choose when and how to thoroughly apply rules (Haid, 2016). The boundaries between formal and informal are

⁹³ According to the Brazilian Institute for Applied Economic Research (hereafter IPEA), the informal sector is composed of employees with no contracts (*sem carteira assinada*) and self-employed workers. The IPEA has calculated the weight of the informal sector in relation to the total number of employees for Brazil since 1992. In that year, it was estimated that 40.6% of workers in Brazil were informal. This indicator reached its peak in 2002 (49.1%) and slowly decreased until 2013 when it started to grow again. The measurement of the informal sector is, however, contested. Corseuil, Reis, & Brito (2015) have calculated the weight of the informal economy to the Brazilian GDP for 2011. They found three different estimations for each criterion used: 32.2%, 27.6% and 36.4%.

⁹⁴ Although many studies on street vending emphasise the practice of bribery in the negotiations between vendors and state agents, this topic was not mentioned by interviewees.

hence negotiated among distinct actors: “although ‘the state’ theoretically enjoys a monopoly over distinguishing formal from informal, in reality, the state is a fractured entity composed of competing interest groups” (Schindler, 2014a, p.2597).

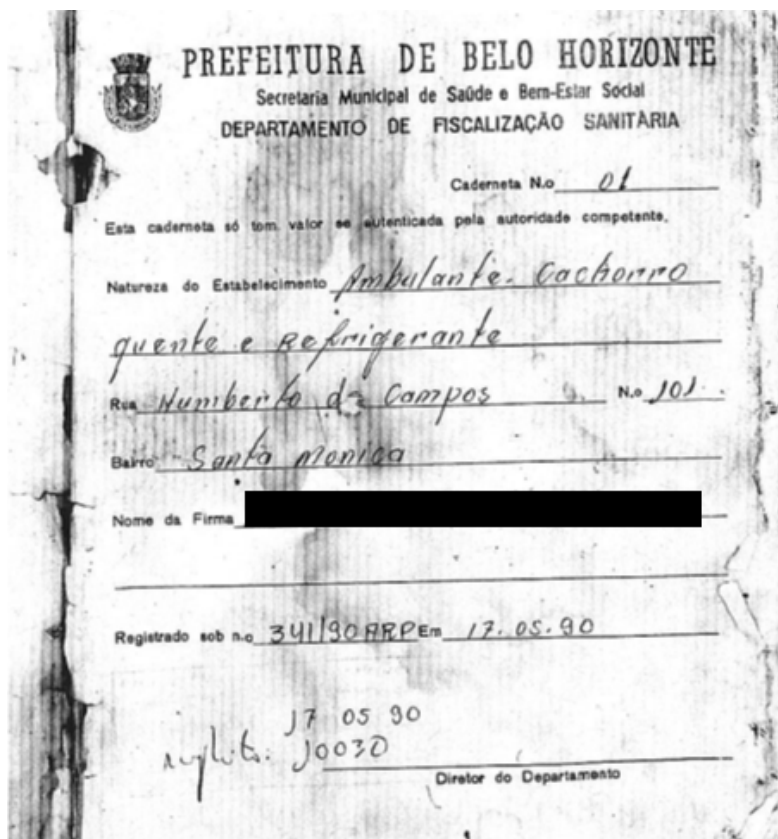


Figure 5.2. Street vendor license issued by Belo Horizonte’s City Hall for the use of public space

(Source: Public Defender’s Office)

In the beginning of the 2000s,⁹⁵ the City Hall abandoned the management of the informal market. Paradoxically, the absence of state regulation was perceived negatively by the stallholders, who responded by creating an association. One can argue that the absence of state validation created uncertainty and fear of displacement. Pedro is one of the founders and the most active member of the Association of the Mineirão Stallholders (hereafter ABAEM). He narrated that the association was created in 2000 due to their perception of the need to organise the space and fight against the increasing pressure for

⁹⁵ Despite asking many of the stallholders, I was unable to get the precise year in which the City Hall stopped charging the fee for the space.

their displacement. According to Bayat (2004, 92): “a key attribute of quiet encroachment is that while advances are made quietly, individually, and gradually, defence of these gains is often (although not always) collective and audible.” The creation of the ABAEM can thus be interpreted as an organised attempt to secure access to workspace against a perceived threat of eviction. Another cause for such fear was the increasing animosity from the city’s administration sponsored by the local media against street vendors in Belo Horizonte (see Carrieri and Murta, 2011 for a discussion on this topic).

In 2003, the unlicensed use of public spaces for street vending was prohibited by the municipal law 8,616/2003, known as the Code of Placements (*Código de Posturas*). Despite this turn of events, the stallholders were able to remain in place. The area was regulated by the City Hall in the 1990s and was, therefore, potentially covered by the municipal law. In spite of being open, the area they occupied was considered part of the stadium and, therefore, under the jurisdiction of the regional state. The company managing the Mineirão assumed the responsibility for the regulation of the market while municipal agents were instructed not to interfere with the stallholders’ activity. One can thus notice that the confusion between local and regional states regarding the management of their workspace was used by the stallholders to their advantage. That shows how multiple spheres of the state, with potentially conflicting agendas, are implied in the process through which the boundaries between formal and informal are negotiated. Moreover, it shows how the informal workers actively engaged with those multiple spheres as part of their strategies to access urban space.

Between 2000 and 2010, the ABAEM held regular meetings, collected fees from its associates and constantly negotiated with state actors to guarantee the permanence of the stallholders in the stadium, to maintain well-functioning working conditions, and to regulate the spaces allotted to the families. One could say that ABAEM became one of the key players in the regulation of that space which is shown by its inclusion in the *Comissão de Monitoramento da Violência em Eventos Esportivos e Culturais* (COMOVEEC - Commission for Monitoring Violence at Sporting and Cultural Events). The COMOVEEC was established in 2003, gathering the police, the football clubs, the ADEMG, and the *Ministério Público* (MP - Public Ministry), the *Defensoria Pública* (Public Defender’s Office), among other relevant actors; it was in charge of promoting safety in sportive events in the entire state of Minas Gerais. Despite their relative legitimacy, the stallholders narrate that the 2000s were a particularly difficult decade in which they continually dealt with the threat of displacement. The ADEMG launched several public bids that intended to establish objective criteria for the

selection of the market participants and its regulation. However, the members of ABAEM were able to stop such bids from being concluded. Their strategy for such was, according to Pedro, to “work politically”, that is, to pressure politicians with whom they had some connections into cancelling the process. Ironically, the workers’ main argument was the existing plans for the renovation of the stadium that would render the bid process redundant.

Since the mid-1990s, the stadium had gone through several small-scale refurbishment projects to modernise its facilities.⁹⁶ In 2004, the stadium hosted a match between Brazil and Argentina for the South-American 2006 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers. In preparation for the event, FIFA required the installation of new seats. Those were allocated in the superior ring, replacing the simple undifferentiated concrete stands, which made up the accessible area used by many working-class consumers. During that match, the stallholders were prohibited from working in their usual area, foreshadowing the process that was about to come. In that period, the vendors narrate that the government had already vented the desire to promote a large-scale refurbishment of the stadium. In 2006, those plans became more concrete when Brazil presented its bid for hosting the 2014 World Cup. Even more so in 2007, when the bid was successful; this gave start to a battle among the regional capitals for who would host the matches.

The ABAEM efforts to guarantee the stallholders’ permanence in the stadium were eventually undermined once Belo Horizonte was chosen as one of the host cities for the World Cup and the stadium’s modernisation became a reality. In 2010, the Mineirão finally closed for refurbishment and all informal workers were displaced with no plans for relocation. The stadium was renewed by Minas Arena, a private consortium⁹⁷ that signed a public–private partnership (hereafter PPP) contract with the regional state to manage the stadium until 2037. After the stadium reopened in 2013, the area where the informal market was located became enclosed and private. Facing eviction, the ABAEM workers who had been able to quietly encroach space shifted towards contentious politics through a collective organised action for the right to resume their activities (Bayat, 2004).

In June 2013, the ABAEM members actively engaged in the massive wave of protests taking place in the city, as well as all around Brazil. They were associated with Belo Horizonte’s Local Committee for a People’s World Cup (hereafter COPAC) – a key local player

⁹⁶ In 1996, the stadium closed for six months for a lawn replacement.

⁹⁷ Minas Arena is a private consortium formed by three contractors: HAP, Egesa e Construcap.

during the 2013 demonstrations.⁹⁸ As a result of the pressure rising from the streets, a meeting with the governor and the COPAC members was scheduled. Figure 5.3 shows a picture of this encounter in which Pedro appears along with other social activists, while the governor – Antônio Anastasia – seats at the head of the table. As a result of this meeting, the stallholders were promised relocation but the pressure engendered by the protests eventually vanished with the end of the demonstrations, and the governor did not keep his promise. A few days before the World Cup started, they were once more promised their immediate return after the mega-event was over. The commitment this time was made by the Regional Secretary of Pampulha Region during a public hearing on June 9, 2014. Once the mega-event was over, however, the municipal government did not follow through with the promise, arguing that the only possible way of articulating a market on public space would be through a public bid open to all the population.



Figure 5.3. Meeting with the governor of Minas Gerais, June 2013

(Source: Cidade e Alteridade)

What this debate further reveals is a responsibility dissension, that is, the strategy of the local state to shift the responsibility to the regional state and vice-versa. Before the stadium's renovation, the confusion between both spheres of government regarding the

⁹⁸ The COPAC was a movement created to raise awareness regarding the impacts of mega-events. Each host city has organised its own local committee. They were connected through the ANCOP, an umbrella organisation that brought together the twelve local committees.

management of their workspace was an advantage explored by the stallholders. Nonetheless, after the re-inauguration, the local state has used the regional state's responsibility and the Code of Placements as pretext to deny their relocation to public space.

For over 50 years, the stallholders were able to claim workspace in non-confrontational ways (Bayat, 2004), exploring the fractured nature of the state (Haid, 2016; Marston, 2004; Tuvikene et al., 2017) to negotiate the boundaries of (in)formality (Cossa, 2016; Schindler, 2014a). Although successful in guaranteeing their permanence, those arrangements were circumstantial and insufficient to overcome the criminalisation of street vending. After being displaced, they are thus unable to have the rights to urban space recognised.⁹⁹ The informal economy, however, remained a fundamental feature of the stadium, as it will be explored next.

5.1.2. *The “return” of the state and the “re-encroachment” of space*

After the Mineirão stadium was reopened in 2013, in the absence of the informal market organised by the stallholders and any other suitable alternative, the football fans got in the habit of remaining in the residential streets that circumvent the stadium, buying drinks from *caixeiros* and *toreiros* (see Figure 5.4). Therefore, the stadium renovation did not manage to put an end to this informal economy and, according to the residents of the neighbourhood, the situation became more chaotic with fans and vendors leaving trash on their doorsteps. Some of the vendors are actually former stallholders who, after losing their fixed workspaces, have resorted to this uncertain activity, which is prohibited by the municipal law and enforced by inspection agents in partnership with the police.

⁹⁹ The stallholder's displacement process will be further explored in Chapter 6.



Figure 5.4. Football fans and *caixeiros* at the surroundings of Mineirão stadium

(Source: Author's own photograph)

On July 29, 2015, I attended one of the games at Mineirão. The match was scheduled to start at 10 pm, but I arrived there around 6.30 pm to observe. The following is an extract of my fieldwork notes from that day.

The area was full of street vendors everywhere and some inspection agents were walking around, but no action was being taken. I spent half an hour just seating in the sidewalk while watching a group of inspectors and policemen who were talking to each other in one of the side streets (see Figure 5.5). They finally started moving and I followed them with my phone in hand, as I wanted to photograph any action against the street vendors. However, they simply walked through the avenue towards the stadium, where they stopped close to the ticket boxes and started chatting with each other again. I overheard one of the inspectors saying: "If I was in charge, I would send everyone home. We don't have enough numbers to take any action. And even if we try, the fans will take the vendors' side." (Field note – 29/07/2015)

The agents of the state, therefore, are often unable to effectively enforce the rules. One can thus argue that vendors have managed to "re-encroach" space, exploring at least three features. Firstly, the inspection agency does not have enough employees to deal with hundreds of vendors spread around a large area. Secondly, the vendors have strategies to explore those limitations. One of the former stallholders, Vera, narrated that she waits for the end of the inspection agents' work shifts to open her stall and sell food to the fans, leaving the stadium after the end of the games. Other vendors narrated that they exchange

messages to let each other know where agents are located in order to avoid them. Thirdly, the atmosphere around Mineirão creates a legitimising space for street vendors who are often defended by those consuming their products. Schindler (2016) argues that non-state actors, such as the middle-classes, are often consumers of informal markets to which they convey legitimacy. Consumers can thus be regarded as agents of the local 'governance regime', "comprised of state and non-state actors, whose combined priorities will sanction and institutionalise economic activity, land-use and service provision and its attendant status as formal or informal" (ibid, p.257). In this case, football fans attending the matches legitimise the presence of street vendors by consuming their goods.



Figure 5.5. Inspection agents and police in the surroundings of Mineirão: 29/07/15

(Source: Author's own photograph)

The middle-class residents of the surrounding area are also part of this "governance regime". They are organised in an association and have constantly pressured the local government to better organise the occupation of the space.¹⁰⁰ In the face of such challenges and pressure, the City Hall has decided to launch a public bid to create a new market in the streets around the stadium. The bid was announced on August 7, 2015, and it was set to select 96 stallholders that would be authorised to sell drinks and pre-defined types of food in four different locations. The criterion for the competition was the highest bid and there

¹⁰⁰ The politics of the middle-class, as well as their role in the regulation of urban space, will be analysed further in Chapter 7.

was no mention of former stallholders.¹⁰¹ Questioned about the use of the “highest bid” criterion to select participants, Luciano Castro – the chief-secretary of the Secretary of Urban Regulation – has argued that they were simply following legal recommendations from the Prosecutor’s Municipal office. The Secretary of Urban Regulation is responsible for elaborating and implementing the municipality’s policy for urban control – through laws, norms and monitoring, “envisioning the harmonious coexistence of all citizens”. Castro’s office is thus currently responsible (in tandem with the Pampulha Council) for regulating the Mineirão space. According to Marcos Silva – the chief-secretary of the Pampulha Council – and Castro, it is the understanding of the local government that the “highest bid” criterion avoids any type of favouritism and it is, therefore, the fairest way to select beneficiaries. They have both also argued that the inclusion of criteria to benefit the old stallholders in the bid would be considered a privilege, which would go against *isonomy*, the principle that all citizens are equal before the law.

The stallholders were, therefore, furious when the local media announced the bid with the headline “Belo Horizonte’s government launches a bid for the return of the Mineirão stallholders”. They responded by organising a series of activities to try and stop the bid. On the 18th of August, they decided to promote an occupation at the City Hall building. They brought tents and banners and set camp on the pavement in front of the building located in one of Belo Horizonte’s major avenues (see Figure 5.6). On the left-hand side of Figure 5.6, one sees Pedro in the background giving an interview to a TV channel about the public bid. In the foreground, the sign reads “96 stalls, bid? It is not fair... We want the reparation of our violated rights. Signed: ABAEM”. They are thus challenging the government’s attempt to make the general public believe that the process would reinstate the old stallholders by including exactly the same number of workers registered by ABAEM.¹⁰² On the right hand side of Figure 5.6, a group of stallholders and social activists appear in the picture holding a banner that says “We don’t want privileges, but the fulfilment of previously agreed upon commitments.” This is a direct counter-claim against

¹⁰¹ This same model has been used by the City Hall in other 33 public bids, designed to select participants for all the active informal markets functioning in the city. The issue is highly contentious and the process was paralysed for some time by an injunction posed by the Public Defender’s office who questioned the fairness of the process and the exclusion of current workers in the democratic process. Nonetheless, the court decision has been reversed and the bids have been resumed. The participants of the existing markets have organised to fight the process with varying degrees of success. Some of these markets are more structured and thus more empowered to negotiate.

¹⁰² During the stadium’s modernisation process, the stallholders were identified as an effected group by the environmental impact report, a legally necessary step for large impact projects. Through this process, 96 stallholders were registered by the regional state and the Minas Arena. The latter was required to provide the workers with training courses. This point will be further explored in Chapter 6.

the idea defended by state officials that the local government could not give any “privileges” to the old workers, running the risk of not being fair towards other potentially interested people. The stallholders argued that they were not asking for benefits, but rather the recognition of previously held rights and the fulfilment of promises made by the government in the past. Despite all their efforts, the public bid was eventually concluded, and the new market was implemented in 2016. To the best of my knowledge, although a few of the previous stallholders sent proposals, none of them were selected.



Figure 5.6. First City Hall occupation

(Source: Author’s own photograph)

One day during the occupation, I was walking towards the City Hall after a meeting at the City Council accompanied by Manuel, a former stallholder at Mineirão and an active member of the ABAEM. He has worked as a street vendor since he was a child, selling ice-pops and other low-value merchandise to complement his family’s income. After being displaced from Mineirão, Manuel lost the fixed workspace and the certainty of the regular sales at the stadium. Since then, he has resumed his activity as a *caixeiro*, dealing with the unreliable income and the increasing harassment of the city inspectors and the police. As we walked, he told me about his experience negotiating with the inspection agents in different moments of his life. He made a clear distinction between the old agents that had known him since he was a child (“they are getting old, just like I am getting old”) and the younger ones (“full of adrenaline”) with whom it was harder to negotiate. His perceptions regarding the inspection agency are aligned with recent changes in local policy.

Recently, revitalisation and renewal projects have sought to reshape urban spaces around the world in order to attract global capital. Those policies often result in the removal

of informal street vendors from targeted areas (Crossa, 2009; Itikawa, 2016; Swanson, 2007). In Belo Horizonte, the situation is no different and, since the beginning of the 2000s, the city has implemented policies aimed at revitalising the city centre (Carrieri and Murta, 2011). As part of this policy, street vendors were relocated to popular shopping malls (see Chapter 2). In this process, the local state has caused the disruption of informal workers activities, increasing the precariousness of their livelihoods. This policy was commented by Marcos Silva, Pampulha's secretary, who narrated the efforts of the successive administrations in Belo Horizonte to implement stricter rules to control the access and the use of urban space.

It is a priority. It is one of the big challenges that we have been working on. And that [goal] has been chased in Belo Horizonte for a longer time in other spaces. If you remember the change that Belo Horizonte went through regarding the issue of street vending, the *camelôs*¹⁰³ and the inauguration of the popular shopping malls, this intervention dates from 12 years ago. (...) Therefore, Belo Horizonte has looked since the beginning of the 2000s for an active way to better organise the urban space. In many aspects, it has been successful, but many other challenges remain. (Interview with Marcos, Pampulha Council's Secretary – 23/12/15)

Marcos also commented on the recent institutional changes implemented to improve this regulatory policy. He talked about the restructuring of the inspection agency, which became more relevant in recent years.

These mechanisms of urban control that the City Hall has... I do not know precisely, but the effort to have an integrated inspection agency has happened some five years ago. When we unified the inspection groups, the City Hall has managed to give a greater organicity to the inspection effort. So there was also a change from the institutional point of view in this period. (Interview with Marcos, Pampulha Council's Secretary – 23/12/15)

It becomes clear from the quotes that the success of policies is measured by their ability to effectively eradicate informality. The goal is to better organise public spaces by keeping away those populations that are perceived as "out of place" (Yatmo, 2008). Areas, such as the Mineirão, are thus regarded as "challenges" for the local government, where the large presence of street vendors remains an issue to be solved. According to Crossa (2016, p.300):

The formal/informal divide is a strategic narrative which is commonly utilised among urban authorities and policy circles and which perceives the informal as a

¹⁰³ As described in Chapter 2, *camelôs* are a common type of street vendor found in Brazilian urban centres. They normally sell products of small commercial value using stalls.

residual category. That is, informal people (or practices) are an urban problem which exists and needs to be controlled by the formal mechanisms of the state or a problem which can be silently tolerated.

One must thus understand the local state's efforts to regulate the Mineirão space in this wider context of institutional changes promoted since the 2000s to ensure a stricter control over urban space. Those measures have created an increasingly more difficult situation for street vendors. The issue has been escalating as the regulatory efforts get combined with the growing presence of vendors on the streets due to the current economic crisis. For Brown (2015, p.239), although an evident reality of cities for many years, recently "the scale and economic significance of the informal economy has expanded as long-term economic and policy trends such as economic liberalisation and structural adjustment have reshaped developing country economies."

The story of the Mineirão informal workers and the changing nature of their relationship with the state also reveal how the state itself was being transformed throughout the period in question (1965-2010). It is possible to observe the modification of the local state in regards to its attitude towards the informal economy – from acceptance and negotiation to criminalisation, and also the changes in the Brazilian state – from national-developmentalism to neoliberalism. The observation of the everyday attempts of the state to "better" regulate the use of urban space challenges narratives of a declining state power in the context of neoliberalism (Brenner, 2004; Painter, 2006). In comparison with the early days of the stadium during the periods of national-developmentalism, when theoretically the government was more influential, the current situation points towards an increasing presence of the state and its regulatory apparatus.

Nevertheless, the agents of the state are unwilling or rather incapable of effectively regulating the space in which a burgeoning informal economy thrives (Haid, 2016). Street vendors are able to "re-encroach" space through a multitude of strategies (Bayat, 2004). However, just like in the past, they are unable to have their rights to workspace recognised, partially because they lack the collective organisation found, for instance, in the movement for housing. The mobile character of their activity allows vendors to avoid or negotiate with state agents, exploring the fractured nature of the state to access space and make a living, instead of struggling for rights. It is interesting to notice how policies targeting housing and work informality have evolved in opposing directions. The former will be explored in the next section.

5.2. Housing informality and insurgency

5.2.1. *Transforming the state: the housing movement in Belo Horizonte*

Much like the informal economy, the existence of informal settlements has been a reality since Belo Horizonte's foundation. Unlike the street vendors who are able to quietly encroach urban spaces in atomised and non-conflictive ways (Bayat, 2004), the housing movement has been characterised by collective and organised actions of insurgent citizens (Holston, 2008). Through such organisation, the local movement for housing has been effective in partially re-configuring the state into incorporating the rights of informal dwellers to urban space. One can observe how those collectives were challenging the state, demanding new forms of engagement. The state is thus revealed to be somehow porous to popular demands that can be incorporated through organised struggle. This transformation can be explored through the narratives of two "insurgent" women – Ana and Clarice – whose lives have been entangled with the struggle for dignified housing (Holston, 2008; Wittger, 2017).

In Belo Horizonte, the *Política Municipal de Habitação* (PMH – Municipal Housing Policy) was created in 1993 to promote the production of houses for the poor (see Chapter 2). This policy was under discussion during a seminar organised by the URBEL employees on November 26, 2015.¹⁰⁴ The main issue under discussion was the precariousness of the PMH and its inadequacy to deal with the growing housing deficit. One of the speakers at the event – entitled "In defence of the Municipal Housing Policy" – was Clarice, who is the regional coordinator of the *Movimento Nacional de Luta Pela Moradia* (MNLN – National Movement of the Struggle for Housing). She is also a councillor of the Municipal Housing Council (hereafter CMH), a participatory council created in 1994 to debate and define the directions of the PMH, being in charge of deliberating about its plans and programs.¹⁰⁵ In her talk during the seminar, she declared her current disillusion as she and others felt "abandoned by the policy we have built with our blood."

¹⁰⁴ On November 2015, the employees of the URBEL were on strike for and the seminar was part of the activities of their campaign for better working conditions and salaries.

¹⁰⁵ Information about the CMH is available on the local government's website: <http://bit.ly/2hhLxhy>.

Clarice's trajectory is entangled with the housing struggle in such a way that it became "her life," as she told me during an interview at the MNLM office, a small room in the centre of Belo Horizonte. She added: "It is my school, my life story, the organisation of my family, the [source of all the] most valuable accomplishments we had. Everything comes from that struggle [for housing]. (...) So I seek to give back by organising people, by instructing others about the rights they have" (Interview with Clarice, MNLM – 03/12/15). Her story in the movement started in 1986, when she first attended a meeting of the residents' association at Alto Vera Cruz, one of Belo Horizonte's *favelas*. The meeting had been called to organise a protest against the mayor, who did not honour his campaign promise to build houses for poor people: "At that time," Clarice recounts, "we warmed up (*esquentamos*) the struggle for housing in Belo Horizonte." The politician's unfulfilled commitment worked thus as a trigger for a wave of organised occupations in the entire city.

As a result of the movement's pressure, the local government donated a terrain with 2,853 lots of 150 m² each to the families of Alto Vera Cruz. The donated land was partially urbanised, but had been declared improper for housing. Nonetheless, the families were keen to accept the offer as there was no other alternative. Each household received a lot in which they had to build a house within two months; otherwise, they would lose the right to the land. In 1986, Clarice moved to Taquaril, as the neighbourhood became known, and narrates that following the donation, the government completely abandoned the families to their own devices. Until 1990 they did not have access to water, which was achieved by an irregular connection to a pipe that served the nearby farm of a local politician. Also in 1990, during the municipal elections, they made an agreement with one of the candidates for mayor; the dwellers would vote for him in exchange for access to electricity. Clarice's narrative shows how the struggle for housing evolves incrementally and depends on a multiplicity of strategies that vary from conscious political engagement based on the right-to-rights discourse to political patronage.

Those features are identified by Holston (2008) who argues that the emergence of rights-based discourse in the housing movement in Brazil has not replaced clientelist patronage politics, but that both have rather become entangled. He further argues: "that does not mean that Brazilian citizenship has not changed or that this change has not transformed how clientelism operates" (ibid, p.247). In Belo Horizonte, those struggles have slowly produced new forms of engagement between the state and informal residents. In 1983, the local government had launched the Municipal Programme for the Regularisation of Favelas (PRO-FAVELA). The city was one of the pioneers in Brazil – together with Recife –

to implement a policy for favelas that officially recognised “favela dwellers’ rights to remain on the land they occupied.” (Fernandes, 1993, p.218)

In Clarice’s memories, things began to improve effectively when the newly elected mayor – Patrus Ananias (PT) – started promoting institutional changes in the local state apparatus to create housing for the poor. Although the municipality had a housing fund since 1955, it had no guaranteed source of resources. Therefore, in practice, there was no money and, according to Clarice, the City Hall never “built a brick for the poor.” His administration restructured the housing fund and associated it with the recently instated PMH. The policy became the responsibility of the URBEL, which was already managing the PRO-FAVELA at that time. The design of the PMH was much influenced by the mayor’s connection to the Catholic Church, an institution that was already an active participant in the struggle for housing. In 1987, the Church founded the Pastoral Care for Street Dwellers, an organisation that remains active, providing support for the homeless population in Belo Horizonte.

Claudia is currently employed as a social worker at the Pastoral. It is part of her job to assist homeless people in several ways, including helping them seek solutions for their housing situation, whether through the “formal channels” offered by the government or by supporting spontaneous occupations. She recalls that the late 1980s and early 1990s were characterised by the “boom of the occupation movement” in the city. As a response, the municipal government started structuring a policy to address the situation. The Pastoral has played an important role in this process, negotiating with the administration of Patrus, who had a historic connection to the Church. Claudia narrated how, in 1993, due to the forthcoming visit of an international personality to Belo Horizonte, there was an increasing pressure to “clean” the city. At that time, the Pastoral was developing a partnership with waste pickers, which had been organised in an association named ASMARE.¹⁰⁶ Many of the workers were living underneath a viaduct close to the cooperative’s deposit. Facing the pressure of their eviction, the Pastoral negotiated with the local government for an alternative. Until that point, Claudia recalls, the relationship between homeless people and the government was “regarded as a case for the police.” They were under the constant harassment of the inspection agents who would usually “apprehend their belongings and toss them at the Arrudas River or the dumping ground.” The Pastoral’s proposal for a

¹⁰⁶ About the ASMARE and Belo Horizonte’s policy on waste management see Dias (2011).

humanised approach was then accepted and they started working in tandem with the government to promote what Claudia described as the first “dignified eviction” in the city.

When the first social approach team was created, the first team was hired with this purpose, precisely to develop actions with this group [the homeless], under the idea of establishing a different relationship, creating bonds, listening, and not promoting an abrupt eviction. (...) So the families were transferred to a real shelter. (Interview with Claudia, Pastoral Care – 03/11/15)

Among those evicted was Ana, who had been homeless since she was 17 years old and got kicked out from home by her father. I first met her during a Seminar organised by the Pastoral to debate the challenges of institutional policies for the homeless population. Ana was invited to speak as a representative of the National Movement for the homeless. After being removed from the viaduct, she was relocated to one of the shelters where she started developing a relationship with the social approach workers. During a later interview, she told me that, “It was the first time that I was in contact with the local government. Until that point, the government didn’t even know I existed” (Interview with Ana, a former resident of the “Vila Recanto UFMG” – 15/10/2015).

The promise made by the city government was that they would remain at the shelter for one year and then be permanently resettled to social housing. She recalled that once people realised that time was passing and no final solution was presented, they decided to gather and protest at the City Hall. As a result of the political pressure, they were offered cash compensation from the URBEL. Ana used the money to buy a shack at São Lucas neighbourhood where she lived until 2000. However, her son got involved with drug trafficking at the neighbourhood and she had to go back to the streets to avoid him getting killed. She then remained in contact with the Pastoral, where she was a constant presence in the meetings, in which one of the topics was always the political struggle for housing and the search for suitable places to occupy. In 2001, the Pastoral got in touch with a group that had spontaneously started an occupation a few years before. The settlement was located in an abandoned lot in front of the Federal University campus, at Antônio Carlos Avenue, 7070. Ana narrates the process through which she was able to move to the area.

We participated in several meetings with a few residents that were already occupying that space. But the fight needed to be strengthened. And I received the opportunity to be part of this community, to which we decided to give a name after

a few meetings. Then we named it “Vila Recanto UFMG”. (Interview with Ana, former resident of the “Vila Recanto UFMG” – 15/10/2015)

The “Vila Recanto UFMG” was later removed, in 2011, by the local government. The settlement and all the 90 families living there were displaced to give room to a viaduct designed to facilitate the access to the Mineirão stadium. The construction was part of the set of projects planned to prepare the city for the upcoming 2014 FIFA World Cup. During her talk at the aforementioned seminar, Ana narrated how her home was taken away from her when “the World Cup rhythm came.” Nonetheless, in her speech, she was also proud to say that she was a former homeless person, but now she had a home. Figure 5.7 shows a picture of Ana in her new house located at Citrolândia, a neighbourhood of Betim, which is another city within Belo Horizonte’s metropolitan region. The house was bought with the compensation she received from the URBEL. Not only Ana’s but all the families living at the Vila were compensated by the local government: they either received cash or were relocated to social housing. The judicial framework that allowed the partial recognition of the residents’ rights was the PMH, designed during the administration of Patrus, and a result of the struggles narrated by Ana, Clarice and Claudia.



Figure 5.7. Ana in her new house
(Source: Author’s own photograph)

The insurgent struggles for housing were thus able to promote a partial transformation in the state to allow the recognition of the rights to informally occupy urban space. That shows how non-state actors also engage in the process through which

formal/informal boundaries are determined (Schindler, 2014a). The struggles for housing are collective, organised and contentious, aimed at the creation of new rights (Holston, 2008). Contrary to the case of the informal workers, whose individualised efforts only guarantee provisional access to workspace, in this case, the boundaries of the law are somehow shifted to partially recognise the rights of informal residents. That reveals the processual character of the state and the mutually constitutive nature of urban space production, the state and political subjectivities. The stories of Clarice and Ana reconstruct the changes in the local state that led to the slow creation of the right to housing, of the right to participation, and also its current demise. Their narratives are entangled with the story of the construction of the Brazilian democracy, the urbanisation process and the struggle for the “right to the city” (Lefebvre, 1968) that arose from the autoconstructed peripheries (Caldeira and Holston, 2015; Fernandes, 2007a). Through their insurgent engagement with the state, new “formal” channels of access were created. In the next section, I explore how the judicial framework emerging from insurgency is applied in the removal process of the Vila Recanto UFMG, in the context of the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

5.2.2. The Vila UFMG and the agents of the state

On May 24, 2010, the residents of the “Vila Recanto UFMG” were gathered in the City Council for a public hearing. The session was presided by Carlos Alves, a PT councilman with connections to the Catholic Church and the housing movement. He organised the meeting following a request from the Pastoral and the Vila residents, which were represented at the hearing by two of the most politically engaged dwellers – Ana and Luiz. The main topic of discussion was the imminent eviction of the settlement and the fact that the local government had yet to offer plans for relocation or compensation to the families. Apart from the politician and the residents, the discussion committee was also formed by Claudia (Pastoral) and Fábio Alves, the latter was the occupation’s attorney, working as a popular lawyer and the coordinator of the Legal Assistance Service of the Catholic University (hereafter SAJ).¹⁰⁷ The local government was represented by the Operations’ Director of the URBEL and the lawyer of the Superintendence of the Capital’s Development (hereafter SUDECAP).

¹⁰⁷ Fábio Alves dos Santos was a law professor at the Catholic University in Belo Horizonte. He was also a popular lawyer and an activist with deep connections to the Catholic Church and the social movement for housing. Unfortunately, he died in 2013.

Both government agencies were involved in the project of the viaduct; while the construction was the responsibility of the SUDECAP, the URBEL was in charge of the relocation plans. That was later explained to me by Fernanda, who was the URBEL employee in charge of managing the everyday process of the eviction in the capacity of “social technician”. She has described herself to me as a “left-wing” person with a background in social activism, who despite not agreeing with forced removals, believes in the job that she does. When asked about the experience of working with the SUDECAP, she explained that the partnership between the two state agencies did not come without tension, because of their different areas of expertise.

According to Fernanda, the relationship between the two agencies is very difficult because the SUDECAP employees are accustomed to working in the “formal” city. Therefore, they normally lack the sensibility to tackle issues and challenges that are commonly found in “informal” settings: they are not able to understand the dynamics of *vilas* and *favelas* (informal settlements) (Interview with Fernanda, URBEL – 06/03/16). During the afore mentioned public hearing, the Vila UFMG residents narrated that SUDECAP agents had visited the occupation to perform measurements, but were unwilling to provide further information about the nature of the project being implemented. That had caused fear and uncertainty about the future of the occupation among the dwellers.

This discussion shows how state power is exercised by different agents and institutions with potentially incompatible interests. It is possible to observe the conflicts across two agencies – SUDECAP and URBEL – that both represent the state, but have different methodologies and approaches. For the residents, nonetheless, all of the agents equally represent the state, which appears as a coherent entity through its effects (T. Mitchell, 2006) but it is, in reality, fractured (Marston, 2004) and operates through agents that might hold different ideas of how to implement policies (Painter, 2006; Tuvikene et al., 2017).

In April 2010, things became clearer upon the publication of a municipal decree which expropriated the settlement’s land for the public interest. The ordinance stated that the area would be used for the construction of a viaduct as part of the city’s preparation for the 2014 World Cup. During the hearing, both the residents and their representatives – Claudia (Pastoral) and Fábio (SAJ) – were keen to affirm that they were not against the project, which Luis, one of the most politically active resident of the settlement, has described as necessary “for the good of the city.” They were open to negotiating the terms

of their eviction and the plans for compensation/relocation, rather than fighting to remain in place. Many scholars have discussed the use of mega-events as tools to reshape urban spaces and engender capital accumulation while dispossessing the urban poor (Maharaj, 2015; Rekow, 2016; Shin and Li, 2013; Vannuchi and Crieckingen, 2015). What those narratives show is that the discourse of the “public interest” that legitimises such violent actions is also reproduced by those affected. This point resonates with Ghertner’s (2015) discussion about slum clearance in Delhi: “for such a system of rule to be effective it must not only work as an observational grid for ordering space, but also be internally appropriated by the population it would govern; its vision of social order must be imprinted on their sensibilities, inscribed in their senses” (ibid, p.125).

The Pastoral played a key role in the process of convincing residents to negotiate and accept their fate. According to Claudia, there was a moment in which the dwellers were unwilling to talk with the government. They were ready to resist the eviction and fight for the right to stay. At first, the Pastoral and the SAJ tried everything to guarantee their permanence, including the proposition of an alternative project for the viaduct that could save the occupation. Nonetheless, such plans were rejected by the government for “technical” reasons. It soon became clear that the displacement was unavoidable in face of the “public interest.” The Pastoral workers then started performing the “opposite role,” helping the local government improve the channels of communication with the residents. That was a moment of tension, in which, according to Claudia, the residents accused the Pastoral workers of switching sides.

(...) but what we understood after talking to Fábio and going to the MP, of talking to the URBEL, was that there was no other way. (...) On the other hand, whenever we followed and supported occupations, we always believed that that was a way to achieve [the right to] housing, not necessarily in that same place though. We believed that the fact that those families were going to get houses was already a victory. (Interview with Claudia, Pastoral Care – 03/11/15)

The Pastoral team, therefore, started performing a mediating role between the local government and the Vila dwellers. According to Fernanda, without that, the work of the URBEL would have been impossible. She narrated that in her first days on the “field,” most of the residents of the Vila were unwilling to speak with her without the presence of the Pastoral social workers. The purpose of this initial visit was to register each household, and without that preliminary information, nothing else could be done. Fernanda recalls that

after this disastrous attempt to approach the residents, she talked with her boss at URBEL and said, “if we do not involve the Pastoral, things will not move.” It was common practice in most of the URBEL projects to form a reference team for negotiation with the participation of community leaders and representatives. Nonetheless, the viaduct construction was not the usual project executed by the URBEL, which normally implements public constructions within informal settlements mainly as part of two policies: participatory budgeting or *favela* upgrading programs.¹⁰⁸ Fernanda thus narrated that the directors in charge were quite “intransigent” and unwilling to follow the regular methodology because it was not mandatory. Even so, she was keen to declare that because of her insistence, she was able to go ahead and work in cooperation with the Pastoral, more specifically with two social workers, Claudia and Neusa.

In a moment in which the discourse was hardening, both from the residents’ and the URBEL’s side, we [herself, Claudia and Neusa] were able to leave our differences aside and work in partnership. (...) I was able to understand their [the Pastoral workers] way of thinking and their struggle in tandem with those families. [I have managed to] respect them, but at the same time say: “There is a project that will happen, right? Unfortunately, history tells us that people are not able to stop it. Should we try to do it in the best way possible?” (Interview with Fernanda, URBEL – 06/03/16)

Fernanda was happy with the fact that she was able to work in tandem with the Pastoral and the Vila residents. After the conversation with Claudia and Neusa, she went back to the occupation in their company and “the doors that were closed in the previous day, were suddenly open.” The first stage was to register all the families and then the URBEL engineers stepped in to produce the reports that informed the final amount offered to each family as financial compensation.¹⁰⁹ With those figures in hand, the following step was called “negotiation” and it entailed presenting residents with the options.

Initially, despite the law describing three types of compensation – cash, assisted resettlement or resettlement to social housing – there were no housing unities available for the project. Once again, the role of the Pastoral and the SAJ was fundamental in creating

¹⁰⁸ As already discussed, in 1993 the URBEL became responsible for the PMH and all interventions in the *favelas* of Belo Horizonte. From 1994 to 2008, the URBEL was responsible for 326 projects within many of the city’s informal settlements. In order to implement such projects, the methodology followed by the URBEL demands the involvement of the community (Lara, 2013).

¹⁰⁹ The compensations were calculated considering only the value of the buildings and not the value of the land, as regulated by law. This point will be further explored in Chapter 6.

political pressure for the government to search for an alternative. In the end, the three options were offered to each family and all of them received the compensation to which they were legally entitled. The last step was then to actually remove the families from their houses and either pay the compensation or resettle them to their new homes.

State power, in this case, was exerted through the mediation of the Pastoral, which is fundamental for at least two reasons. Firstly, the organisation performed an indispensable role by convincing residents that negotiating was a better strategy than challenging the state. Secondly, the work of the state agents was only possible once the Pastoral workers were involved in the process. Those features point towards the evasive nature of state-society boundaries, as non-state actors effectively act as the state (Painter, 2006).

Accompanying each family's moving process was also a part of Fernanda's job. She described that one day she was unable to fulfil her duties because of her busy work schedule and Neusa agreed to step in for her. In Fernanda's interpretation, that was the final proof of their ability to overcome their differences and work together. In the case of the Vila UFMG, she believes that, despite the many challenges, the outcome was positive. She concluded: "The work there was very interesting. It was a job that you can look back and say, 'Mission accomplished'. I think that through my work I was able to promote an improvement in the quality of life of the families."

In the discourse of the URBEL and the Pastoral employees, the resettlement process is described as something that can potentially improve the lives of the Vila dwellers, who do not fight against eviction, but rather for the access to their legal entitlements. Informal residents are transitioned to a "formal" life, and their recognition as citizens by the state is predicated on displacement (Zeiderman, 2016a). The process is thus one of "counting" people and "evaluating" the buildings, resembling what Zeiderman (2016b, p.391) has labelled as "metrological citizenship": a process "whereby the inclusion of the urban poor within the political community of the city is predicated on (and enacted through) practices of measurement". All the procedure is described by the legislation which comes as a mixed blessing. On the one hand, it allows residents to receive partial compensation for the buildings, which are evaluated by trained engineers. On the other hand, the law also limits what is accessible to them and what they can actually get. Their engagement with the state is thus mediated by pre-inscribed rules, a set of legal-institutional instruments engendered through the insurgent struggles of the past. In the next section, I explore how the same

framework is deployed by the “exceptional” state to promote capital accumulation as well as the middle-class residents fighting against the state-capital alliance.

5.3. The Musas street and the informal state

5.3.1. The World Cup and the “exceptions” of the state

The “World Cup rhythm” became a reality in Belo Horizonte after the city was confirmed as one of the hosts for the mega-event in 2009. Apart from the interventions planned by the state (described in Chapter 2), there were also plans for investments coming from the private sector. In particular, the hotel industry was booming with the incentives created for the construction of new hotels to accommodate the expected incoming tourists. In May of 2011, the local newspapers were announcing the building of a five-star hotel at Santa Lúcia, an upper-middle-class neighbourhood in the southern portion of the city. The tone of the articles was celebratory as the hotel was going to make the city’s infrastructure more adequate for hosting the upcoming international event. To make the construction possible, the entrepreneur had negotiated with the City Hall to buy a piece of the street that separated two plots.

The residents of Musas street, where the hotel would be located, were taken by surprise by the news. This story was narrated to me by Professor Antonio, who is one of the oldest residents of the area. He is a well-known and respected professor at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), where we first met. We talked for more than two hours in his office as he narrated with incredible detail his recollections of the events. He recalled being told about the transaction by his mother on the phone.

I think it was in May [2011], my mother called me and said: “it is in the newspapers that they are selling your street”... (laughs)... It was then that I found out, so I said “what?”, “yes, it is on Estado de Minas [local newspaper] that the mayor will sell your street”. Then I searched on the internet and it was really there, the first article. (Interview with Professor Antonio, “Salve a Musas” movement – 04/09/2015)

Antonio was in shock regarding what he thought to be a completely absurd prospect. He soon got in touch with his neighbours to discuss the matter. One of them was

Mateus, a small businessman with a law degree who had just recently moved to Musas street. He recalled that the refurbishment plans for his house had been adapted after a request from the local government.

(...) I started refurbishing the house and all the legal plans had to be made and the City Hall was very strict. Even regarding the altimetry of the house. I had to change the floor plan due to 20 centimetres. But I didn't see it as a problem, because it was a requirement of the law. Thus, it was one of those situations in which, as a legalist, we must comply, right? The citizen must comply. (Interview with Mateus, "Salve a Musas" movement – 19/09/2015)

After doing some research, Mateus and Antonio found out that the city's master plan only allowed buildings up to 9 meters tall in the street. Therefore, they concluded that the 27-storey luxury hotel was illegal. Mateus was particularly upset about the fact that he had been required to adapt to the rules – to which, "as a good citizen", he was happy to abide – whereas the same rules did not seem to apply to a private developer with "deep pockets".

One might wonder how a project that was in violation of construction regulations for the area and included building over a part of a street was even possible in the first place. The company benefited from the municipal Law 9.952/2010 that was created to encourage the construction of hotels and other types of infrastructure envisioning the hosting of the 2014 World Cup. The law was entitled "Urban operation of Stimulus for the Development of Infrastructure for Health and for Cultural and Business Tourism aimed at meeting the demands of the 2014 Brazil FIFA World Cup." It made the use of the "urban operation" (*operação urbana*), an exceptional mechanism, valid for the entire city. The law thus made projects possible without following the criteria described in the City Statute, the Federal law of 2001 that regulates such operations.¹¹⁰ The construction of the hotel was, therefore, conceivable because the local state created two "exceptions." First, the approval of a law that allowed the street, a public patrimony, to be withdrawn from the public use (*desafetação*) and transferred to a private company, without a public bid. Second, another law was proposed by the executive and approved by the legislative, which made planning regulations inscribed in the city's master plan flexible to accommodate the requirements of an international mega-event.

¹¹⁰ A debate regarding the historical construction of the City Statute was analysed on Chapter 3 of this thesis.

The case could, thus, be interpreted through the “city of exception” approach developed by Vainer (2015) to discuss the case of Rio de Janeiro. According to him, the advent of entrepreneurial urbanism (Harvey, 1989) has engendered a change from state-led master plan-making to market-led strategic plan-making. In this new context, local states are prone to making rules flexible in order to accommodate investments and overcome other cities in the battle to attract global investments. In the case of Musas street, the local state has altered the local legislation, moving the boundaries of the law to legalise a project that would be considered illegal under normal circumstances.

Regarding the first law, which changed the street status from state property to a negotiable asset, the relevant legislation says that such procedures are legitimate as long as they serve the public interest. The law created by the city hall, authorising the alienation of the property – in this case, the piece of the street – law 10,188/2011, did not mention any justification. However, the bill sent by the mayor to the City Council came with a message from the mayor that made the purpose of the project clear. It proposed the alienation of a section of Musas Street “(...) aiming at the implementation of a real estate project to meet the demands of the 2014 World Cup” (DOM, 2011). The law also authorised the government to receive new land in exchange, in case there was a difference in the value of the permuted areas. At first, therefore, the law did not anticipate a public bid, but an exchange between the municipality and the entrepreneur. The “public interest,” although not clearly defined in the bill, was represented by the need to prepare the city for the mega-event.

For the residents, the negotiation was perceived as a business partnership between the government and the entrepreneur,¹¹¹ which ignored the rules and the laws that the state itself was supposed to enforce.

Márcio Lacerda [the city’s mayor] himself was saying ‘we are negotiating a Hyatt hotel for Belo Horizonte.’ So, it is like the president of the Institute of the Brazilian Architects (IAB), Claudia, said during the public hearing, right? It looked like the city hall was the business partner and not that it was there to control the use of public space, because this part was all messed up, right? It [the city hall] was acting like a business partner. (Interview with Professor Antonio, “Salve a Musas” movement – 04/09/2015)

¹¹¹ The entrepreneur was also hoping to benefit from a funding program launched by the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) to foment the construction of hotels for the World Cup. The “*Programa BNDES Pro-Copa Turismo*” was launched on January 2010 and it included special conditions for construction and modernisation of hotels. For details about the program, see Gama et al (2013).

In this case, the state itself is portrayed by the residents as an informal entity that is willing to alter its own rules to accommodate a real state project (Roy, 2009a; Vainer, 2015). The transaction is perceived by the residents as an alliance between the state and the private sector to promote local “growth machines” (Molotch, 1976; Rolnik, 2013b). The World Cup here emerges as justification – the “public interest” – for such state-capital alliances created to promote urban boosterism (Hiller, 2000).

Despite all the efforts of the local and regional state in tandem with the developer, this capital-state alliance was defeated by the small group of residents of Musas street, who were able to articulate the support of the MP, a few politicians and other institutional actors for their cause. They deployed multiple strategies to delay the project until it became unfeasible timewise. The boundaries of the law, which were altered by the state, were moved back to its place through the organised action of the residents, revealing the limits of sovereignty.

In the next section, I discuss how the residents were able to fight back, also engaging with formal channels of access to the state promoted through the struggles of insurgent citizens for the “right to the city”.

5.3.2. Challenging sovereignty: the environment and the scales of the state

The residents at Musa Street were deeply bothered by the irregularities surrounding the hotel construction in their street and did everything in their power to cancel the project. In this case, time was on their side, as the law that allowed the construction had a deadline. Therefore, everything they could do to delay the process would give them an advantage. The first step was to challenge the “sale” of the street. In the first attempt made by the City Hall to transfer the street to the private company, the government justified the absence of a public bid alleging the inexistence of other potentially interested buyers. Professor Antonio and his son, Pablo, questioned this decision by declaring their interest in buying the land. They never actually intended to buy it, but wished to force the process to be cancelled and thus gain more time. Eventually, a public bid was launched but also questioned by the residents through a lawsuit. Finally, in July of 2012, the deal was sealed in a second public bid, in which the company interested in the hotel was the winner, buying the land for R\$ 4.1

million (1.3 million pounds).¹¹² Although the residents' efforts did not prevent the transaction, they were able to delay the process by over a year simply by interfering with state bureaucracy.

Following this initial defeat, the residents moved on to try and stop the construction of the hotel. From the various strategies deployed, the most effective was the argument regarding the potential environmental impact of the project. According to municipal law, any project that causes considerable environmental impact has to go through the analysis and the approval of the Municipal Environmental Council (hereafter COMAN). The council is in charge of promoting the municipal environmental policy, while also regulating activities and issuing environmental licenses. It is one of the 24 public policy councils that exist in the municipality. In total, Belo Horizonte has 613 "participatory entities," which are the result of popular demand for increasing participation, as described in the brochure produced by the municipal administration.

The Brazilian experience in the construction of public policy through social participation has engendered the creation of several participatory channels (...). This experience was stimulated by the demands of several social movements during the 1980s, whose main request was increasing participation, with the goal of turning the cycle of public policy making more democratic, transparent and responsive to the needs of the population. Belo Horizonte has presented, for more than two decades, a growing number of such institutions, especially the public policy councils, which exist in several areas of the local government. (PBH, 2015, p.6)

The COMAN is thus a participatory policy council, which exists as a consequence of the insurgent movements for participatory democracy. The council can be regarded as what Cornwall (2004) has labelled as "invited spaces", which she defines as "institutions that provide opportunities for dialogue and deliberation between different kinds of stakeholders" (ibid, pp.75-76). Those "are designed as mechanisms for enabling public engagement in governance" (ibid, p.76). The members of COMAN come from the government and the civil society. The latter normally includes representatives of organised professional bodies, such as the Institute of the Brazilian Architects (IAB). As part of their strategy to delay the hotel construction, the Musa street residents approached Claudia, the president of Belo Horizonte's IAB, who was then able to schedule a public hearing, as part of the participatory process. For that meeting, the residents circulated a report produced

¹¹² Values in pounds calculated using the official exchange rate (£1.00/R\$3.18) for the day the sale was made official – 26/07/2012 (Brazil Central Bank).

by the MP denouncing all the illegalities found in the project. The meeting was held in August 2011 with the presence of many of the residents, the public prosecutors in charge of the report and other allies of the movement, apart from the developer and the members of COMAN. Despite all their claims regarding the alleged irregularities, the project was approved as the local government had issued a report in favour of the hotel.

Although Professor Antonio recognised that the existence of participatory councils were important achievements “engendered by the new Constitution [and] the City Statute,” his experience with the COMAN made him disappointed with the efficacy of those institutional spaces.

[Then] I started going to these council meetings that have popular representation, they [the government] have the majority of members that are appointed by the mayor or the governor, so it is like a theatre in which you legitimise the things that they want to do. (Interview with Prof Antonio, *Salve a Musas* – 04/09/15)

Although, in theory, the council was a space for the discussion of the project and the inclusion of the population in the process, the residents felt incapable of having their demands heard within that forum. His perception resonates with Cornwall’s (2004) point about the challenges of implementing participatory democracy through “invited spaces”, which are “always already permeated with the power effects of difference” (ibid, p.83).

This second defeat, however, did not discourage the residents either, whose next step was to claim that, given its location in the borders of the city, the project’s impact would potentially reach other municipalities within the metropolitan region. This argument was first introduced by the state parliamentary Eduardo Santos, himself a resident of Santa Lucia and an ally of the Musas’ residents. The following is an extract of his speech during the COMAN’s public hearing.

We cannot also forget, and I believe this is a fundamental point (...) [that] we are on the border [of the city], in the frontier between Belo Horizonte and Nova Lima. If it [the project] is going to impact both cities and their surroundings, I believe that the COMAM does not even have the authority to endorse this, the process should be discussed at the COPAM [Regional State Council for Environmental Policy] (...). (Extract from COMAN’s public hearing, speech by Eduardo Santos, state parliamentary – 24/08/11)

The Public Prosecutor’s office for environmental protection joined forces with the

residents and the state parliamentary to ensure the process would be discussed in the COPAM, which is the COMAN's analogous in the regional state.

It was being processed in the municipal government the procedure for the environmental licensing, right? But in that region there, as it is within the border of the municipality it had to be a state's license. Then we made a recommendation to the municipal government so they would forward the licensing process to the state. (...) (Interview with Roberta, Public Prosecutor – 28/10/2015)

The potential environmental impact was again the basis for their claim to allow the change in jurisdiction from the municipality to the regional state. Their argument was based on two points. Firstly, the hotel would be located within a 3-km radio from an environmental protected area – the Ecological Reserve of Cercadinho. Therefore, according to the legislation, the regional state would also be in charge of analysing the project and providing (or denying) the environmental license for construction. Secondly, Musas street is located within the *Área de Diretrizes Especiais* (Special Guidelines Area) of the Serra do Curral, with restrictive planning regulations. The sierra, which marks the limits of the city towards the east portion of its territory, is also protected as municipal and national heritage. The process then moved to the regional state and it took a whole year for it to be appreciated by the COPAM.

Despite all the efforts, the project was once again sanctioned by the state and approved at the COPAM. Nonetheless, they were able to appeal against the decision that returned to the same council once again. Their appeal was denied and moved to a higher chamber within the COPAM, where they had the support of one of its members. They were once again defeated and the entrepreneur was able to resume the process at the municipal level.

Douglas Faria, the president of the company, told me that he was able to receive the last necessary license for the construction only in October 2013. Nonetheless, the original legislation required the hotels to be in operation by the end of March 2014, or they would be subjected to a fine. As it was impossible to reach the deadline, he asked the city hall for an extension. At that point, however, many other hotels were already under construction and the extension was denied. Ironically, it is possible to see the empty land from his office window, located less than a mile from Musas street. Douglas narrated his frustration with the deal, which was “entirely legal”, according to him. He eventually sold the land to another entrepreneur.

In the end, despite the existence of the participatory councils, according to the residents, the internal organisation of both forums – COMAN and COPAM – makes them ineffective in terms of actually empowering citizens. They can propose an agenda for discussion, but the imbalanced composition of the councils make them much more prone to sanctioning the projects supported by the government. Therefore, although the residents in alliance with the MP prosecutors and others based most of their claims in the irregularities of the project, that was not what caused its cancellation. The “exceptional” law created for the World Cup which allowed the construction was a special circumstance with a deadline. Although the unfinished projects were later able to receive a partial amnesty from the penalties established by the law,¹¹³ at that time, the entrepreneur was not aware of that and made the calculated decision to not proceed with the plans.

An important point emerging from this discussion is the relational and processual character of the state; not only it affects the production of informality, but it is also modified by informal practices. In this case, legal-institutional frameworks emerging as a result from insurgency movements are deployed by both sides. On the one hand, the urban operation (an instrument of the City Statute) is enacted to make regulations flexible and stimulate capital accumulation instead of promoting greater social justice (Rolnik, 2013b; Vainer, 2015). The state transformed through organised struggles for housing utilises new instruments to create “informality” from above (Roy, 2009). On the other hand, the relational and processual character of the state is further exposed by the ability of the residents of Musas street to engage with the state through formal participatory channels. Despite their distrust in those councils, one can argue that without their existence the success of the residents would have been unlikely.

A fundamental feature of this case, however, is that it is not about the politics of the marginalised urban poor, but the middle-class. These are the “good” citizens who respect the laws and have access to resources – such as knowledge and social networks – that make them well-equipped to explore the new participatory arenas. The discussion thus points towards the need to incorporate the politics of the middle-class in the analysis of the urban space production (Lemanski, 2017; Mercer, 2016; Schindler, 2016) – a task that will be taken in Chapter 7 of this thesis. Although state-society boundaries are blurred, one can argue that citizens are not evenly empowered to affect urban space production. This case shows

¹¹³ Municipal law 10,911/2016 modifies the legislation that altered the planning guidelines to promote the hotel industry. The 2016 law extended the deadline and provided a 50% discount for the entrepreneurs that did not comply with the requirements of the original law.

how formal/informal boundaries are negotiated between state and non-state actors, revealing the limits of sovereignty and the dispersed – yet uneven – nature of power. This point will be further developed in the next and final section of this chapter.

5.4. Informality and the selective porousness of the state: a relational approach

Recently, studies about the Brazilian state and its relation to the production of urban space have been focusing on the reshaping of urban policy spurred by neoliberalism. The emergence of strategic planning (Vainer, 2009, 2015) and the usurpation of recently developed legal-institutional frameworks by local growth machines (Rolnik, 2013b) are common themes in such influential analyses. In this context, mega-events have been interpreted as opportunities “for massive infrastructure investment and real estate speculation that bypasses normal political processes” (Rekow, 2016, p.7). Borrowing from Agamben (2005), Vainer (2015) has described this process as the “city of exception”:

This is a new way in which relations between the state and private interests are completely reframed and instate new forms of hegemonic exercise. In this context, the invisibility of the decision processes becomes the rule, due to the disqualification of politics and the real decomposition of the “normal” forms of interest group representation. It is not possible to know who makes the decisions, and where, how and when the decisions are made – it is certain that is not in formal venues where such decisions should be made in a democratic rule of law. (Vainer 2015, p.107)

In this context, “event-led planning” is said to foster “an exclusive vision of urban regeneration that can open the way for the state-assisted privatisation and commodification of the urban realm, thus serving the needs of capital while exacerbating socio-spatial segregation, inequality, and social conflicts” (Sánchez and Broudehoux, 2013, p.133). Underpinning such interpretations is an account of the state, as a separate entity dominated by the elites “acting singularly with explicit intentions to facilitate the interests of a bourgeois capitalist class” (Landesman, 2016, p.71).

Although I do not seek to deny the powerful coalitions that underpin urban space production, either in ordinary times or “extraordinary” moments, I intend to point towards the elusiveness of both state-economy and state-society boundaries (Mitchell, 2006). I argue that interpreting such processes as “a direct democracy of capital” (Vainer, 2015) obscures other forms of agency and power. In this chapter, I have sought to explore how a

more nuanced view of the state can reveal how the effects of urban redevelopment are felt unevenly across different social groups and how the interactions between citizens and the state might actually affect outcomes.

The discussion contributes to a bottom-up relational approach to the politics of urban space production that accounts for the participation of state and non-state agents in this process. I thus intend to show how space, state and political subjects are produced in tandem. In this sense, I argue that the urban informality approach provides a good framework to understand the process through which the politics of space production evolve in Brazil. As developed by Roy (2005, 2009a) and others (AlSayyad, 2004; McFarlane, 2008; Yiftachel, 2009), this theorisation approaches the state as the sovereign that holds the power to set the boundaries between formal and informal:

The planning and legal apparatus of the state has the power to determine when to enact this suspension, to determine what is informal and what is not, and to determine which forms of informality will thrive and which will disappear. State power is reproduced through the capacity to construct and reconstruct categories of legitimacy and illegitimacy. (Roy, 2005, p.149)

The main question emerging from that perspective is “why some forms of informality are criminalised and thus rendered illegal while others enjoy state sanction or are even practices of the state” (Roy, 2009a, p.83). Informality thus emerges as a mode of urban governance: “the calculated informality that undergirds the territorial practices of the state” (ibid, p.82). A system of deregulation “that involves purposive action and planning, and one where the seeming withdrawal of regulatory power creates a logic of resource allocation, accumulation, and authority” (ibid, p.83). In this sense, Roy argues: “This is informality from above, rather than informality as a subaltern revolution from below” (ibid, p.84).

Although having the merit of re-politicising informality, this framework has been criticised for featuring the state as a coherent entity, separated from the society. This approach reifies what Painter (2006) has called the “separate spheres” assumption. This notion prevents an analysis that accounts for the ways in which non-state actors are also imbricated in the process through which formal/informal boundaries are formed (Crossa, 2016; Hackenbroch, 2011; Schindler, 2014a). In more nuanced accounts, the state has been described as a fragmented entity (Marston, 2004), whose power is enacted by multiple state agents and institutions across different scales. Urban space production is therefore affected by those multiple instances of the state. Additionally, non-state actors also engage,

negotiate and explore those features to influence the production of (in)formality (Haid, 2016; Tuvikene et al., 2017).

In this chapter, I have thus argued for a view of the state as a fragmented and porous entity, whose power is executed by multiple state agents with potentially conflicting agendas. This approach challenges the view of the state as the sole entity re-shaping cities and implementing the neoliberal agenda sponsored by the elites, showing how different citizens – informal workers, informal dwellers and middle-class citizens – also engage with the state affecting how space is shaped. The state is also portrayed as a process, constantly reconfigured in relation to space and political subjects. Those features render the state porous. However, such porosity is selective and shaped by the previous engagements of citizens with the state, which in turn, shape the available channels for future interactions. Although citizens may affect urban space production, the power to do so is unevenly spread.

I have focused on different disputes over the legitimisation of formal/informal uses of urban space among state and non-state actors. (In)formality emerges as the outcome of engagements between citizens and multiple instances of the state. Moreover, not only the state affects the production of informality, but it is also affected by informal processes. Nevertheless, the discussion also showed that citizens' success in influencing the formal/informal boundary making is uneven. I thus contribute to the debates about the politics of urban informality by arguing that the porousness of the state is selective. Two main arguments can be drawn from the findings to support this conclusion.

(1) Different modes of engagement with the state have varying outcomes

The Mineirão stallholders have no right to relocation and are forced to become “illegal” street vendors and resort to the uncertainty of this activity. Although they were able to negotiate access to workspace for over 50 years, the process has not translated into actual rights. The workers had managed to “quietly encroach” (Bayat, 2004) space in non-conflictive ways, exploring the fragmented nature of the state (Marston, 2004). However, the stadium's spatial restructuring dismantles such arrangements, rendering them unable to have their demands for relocation recognised. The strategies deployed are thus effective to claim workspace, but not enough to reconfigure the state in order to engender rights to space. The discussion shows rather the opposite, that is, one can notice the slow changes in the state towards the criminalisation of street vending. Nevertheless, informal workers are

able to “re-encroach” space, further exposing the “‘porosity’ of the lower bureaucracy and the multiple, fluid channels for accessing the local state” (Ghertner, 2011, p.512). Those practices, however, only guarantee situational arrangements which are constantly re-negotiated.

In the case of informal housing, the insurgent movements (Holston, 2008) for the rights to housing have managed to engender a reconfiguration of the state in order to partially incorporate the rights of informal dwellers to occupy urban space. Those achievements were the result of organised struggles, aimed not only at claiming space, but at the creation of new rights. In the case of the Vila UFMG, the existence of a legal-institutional framework guarantees partial compensation in the face of displacement. Moreover, this institutional apparatus also shapes the ways in which the residents’ political struggle evolves. State and non-state actors participate in the displacement process, regarded as a path towards the recognition of the residents’ rights to housing. The legislation is thus a mixed blessing that formalises the channels of engagement between citizens and the state while constraining the possibility of an insurgency.

(2) Middle-class politics matters: not all citizens are evenly empowered to have claims upon space validated.

This statement might sound obvious. Nonetheless, as pointed by Ghertner (2014), it is not enough to say that the middle-class views of the city are increasingly more relevant in shaping urban policy, one must “show through what political mechanisms these goals get translated into real outcomes” (ibid, p.188). In Brazil, new “invited spaces” (Cornwall, 2004) of democratic participation in urban governance have emerged since re-democratisation, mostly as a result of the insurgent struggles of marginalised citizens. In the case of Musas street, it is possible to observe how middle-class residents are able to access the state through such participatory arenas. Social class, as well as the access to knowledge and social networks, mediate the residents’ ability to explore the formal channels of engagement with the state to their advantage.

5.5. Summary

The discussion in this chapter has emphasised how state and informality are mutually constituted processes. Departing from a relational approach to urban informality, I have explored how conceptualising the state as multiscalar, fractured and porous reveals the complex stances of the role of the state and its relation with informality. I have argued that not only the state reproduces informality but it is also affected by informal processes. Moreover, I show that non-state actors are also able to influence the process through which formal/informal boundaries are formed. Nonetheless, the porosity of the state is selective as not all citizens are equally empowered to affect the production of urban space.

Two main conclusions emerged from the findings. Firstly, the marginalised urban poor are able to challenge their exclusion and claim access to urban space. The organised struggle of the insurgent citizens for housing alters the state process, modifying the channels of engagement between informal residents and the state. In comparison, the non-confrontational and atomised strategies of informal workers to access urban space are circumstantial and do not translate into rights. Secondly, middle-class residents make use of channels of engagement emerging from the organised struggles of insurgent citizens to affect urban space production. They have access to knowledge and social networks that make them more empowered to challenge the state in order to conserve their middle-class spaces.

These conclusions will be further explored in the next two empirical chapters. Chapter 6 will compare the displacement of the Vila UFMG and the Mineirão stallholders, exploring how the organised insurgent movements (Holston, 2008) in the past have affected the abilities of these two groups to claim their rights. I focus on their place-making strategies and their use of the law to justify their demands. Chapter 7 will look at the politics of middle-class residents to conserve middle-class spaces in the city. I discuss their role in the governance of urban spaces, which has been mostly ignored in the debates about the politics of urban space production in the Global South (Ghertner, 2012; Mercer, 2016; Schindler, 2016).

Chapter 6 : Displacing informality: the urban poor and their “right to the city”

Accessing urban space for labour can be vital to those struggling for a place in the city but, unlike the right to housing, discussions about the right to work have been largely disassociated from space (Brown, 2015; Schindler, 2014a). In Brazil, although the right to work and the right to housing are both included in the Constitution, claims upon space based on those constitutional rights turn out to hold differing levels of legitimacy as discussed in this chapter. Two empirical cases are explored involving urban poor populations under informal conditions of work and living facing displacement. The insurgent struggles of the past (Holston, 2008) have engendered legal-institutional arrangements that partially recognise the rights of informal residents (Fernandes, 2007a); but as argued in this chapter, such arrangements are absent in the case of informal workers.

The discussion contributes to the overall goal of this thesis by exploring how formal/informal boundaries are negotiated. The main objective is to analyse how the informal use of urban space for working and dwelling are treated differently by the unevenly porous state. I will thus analyse how displacement affects the ability of informal residents and informal workers to belong to the city. I focus on the use of legal discourses in the claim-making strategies of informal residents and informal workers, showing how the law, urban spaces and political subjectivities are mutually constituted. This discussion will join the recent debates about the limits of the Brazilian urban reform to promote the “right to the city” of the urban poor. I contribute by pointing towards the narrow understanding of urban space production that has informed recent legal-institutional developments in the country. I show how the urban poor produce space through their working and living strategies, which are both fundamental to guarantee their presence in the city.

The chapter is divided into four sections. In the first one, I present the case of Vila UFMG residents, an informal settlement in Belo Horizonte formed in the mid-1990s. I explore the process through which the space, abandoned by a bankrupt car shop, was turned into the home of disadvantaged citizens. The discussion will reveal how the accumulated struggles for housing are central to the process through which the occupation is formed. The residents receive institutional support that is fundamental to shape the space and their lives. Through their efforts to make a home, residents become citizens with partial

rights to relocation, achieved through rightful resistance. Nonetheless, displacement affects their lives in multiple ways, revealing the limits of this legal-institutional recognition.

In section 6.2, I explore the case of the Mineirão stallholders, who have historically occupied the stadium space since its inauguration. I show how the workers' rights to urban space are not recognised despite their contributions to building the city and despite their efforts to turn the space into a meaningful place for themselves and the thousands of football fans visiting the stadium. In the absence of a legal-institutional framework that can legitimise their rights, the stallholders articulate legal and political discourses rooted in their place identity.

Section 6.3 critically engages with the recent debates about the "right to the city" agenda in Brazil, which have mainly focused on the appropriation of the City Statute instruments by urban growth machines to promote capital accumulation. Building upon the findings of empirical sections 6.1 and 6.2, I critically discuss the restricted notion of urban space production that has underpinned debates around the "right to the city" and argue for a more encompassing focus on place-making practices involved in the livelihood strategies of the urban poor, highlighting how both home and workspace are produced in tandem through the struggles of marginalised citizens for a place in the city.

Finally, section 6.4 summarises the main contributions, while connecting this chapter to the overall structure of this thesis and introducing the next empirical chapter.

6.1. Displacing house informality: the case of the Vila UFMG

6.1.1. Making a home, creating rights, becoming citizens

The 1988 Brazilian Constitution was not clear in regards to which level of government was responsible for housing policies. From 1986 to 2009, there were no consistent federal policies for the sector.¹¹⁴ In Belo Horizonte, despite the implementation of the Municipal Housing Policy (hereafter PMH) in 1993, the local government housing

¹¹⁴ In 2009, during the first mandate of Dilma Rousseff, the federal government launched the "Minha Casa Minha Vida", a housing policy with ambitious targets. The program has been also interpreted as a counter-cyclical policy to generate employment in the context of the 2008 financial crisis (Nogueira, 2012).

provision was insufficient to provide adequate supply for the growing local demand.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the 1990s/2000s period was characterised by growing favelisation and peripheralisation in Belo Horizonte (see Chapter 2). The history of the Vila Recanto UFMG can be understood in this context, in which economic crisis and re-democratisation were unravelling in tandem. The occupation started with only three families and 90 families were residing in the area by the time of their displacement, in 2011. The Vila was a space where people unassisted by the government and incapable of affording a place to live in the city could solve their housing situation.

That was the case of Maria, who was living in one of Belo Horizonte's public shelters for homeless people, before she moved to the occupation. Maria explained that she does not agree with "invading someone else's property" but the lack of support from the government left poor people with no alternative.

The issue is that the people from the state, from the federal government, they do not care for poor people. I am not even talking about homeless people... even waged workers. Not all of them can afford such expensive rents. It is a big share of your salary. So, if you have a small child, you get desperate. (Interview with Maria, former resident of Vila UFMG - 14/09/2015)

Most of the initial settlers at the Vila were homeless people who made a living by performing low-paid informal jobs. Luis, one of the first people to move to the occupation, was in that situation. On 24 May 2010, during a public hearing at the city council to discuss the process of displacement, he spoke about the importance of the settlement for the residents' livelihood. Not only people were residing there, he said, but multiple economic activities were carried out by the residents in that space. He mentioned that in the Vila, there were, for instance, deposits for recycling materials, bars, small restaurants (*lanchonetes*), and car washes. One of the deposits belonged to him, who started working as a waste picker after losing his job. He narrated that before moving to the Vila UFMG he was living in São Paulo and working for a company but, due to the "unemployment crisis" at that time (the mid-1990s), he was made redundant and went back to Belo Horizonte. Through his work collecting recycling materials, Luis met the social workers from the

¹¹⁵ According to available data, the estimated housing deficit in Belo Horizonte was 53,201 in 2000. In 2010, this value increased to 78,340. There are no estimations prior to 2000. Moreover, this increase is partially overestimated due to changes in the estimations methodology (FJP and Ministério das Cidades, 2013, 2005).

Pastoral, which had founded an association (ASMARE) to help organise the waste pickers of the city (Interview with Luis, former resident of Vila UFMG - 11/11/2015).¹¹⁶

Claudia, one of the Pastoral's social workers, has narrated how the organisation got involved with the housing issue due to their work with the waste pickers; many of them did not have a place to live and slept on the streets in order to take care of the collected materials. The ASMARE's headquarter was located near a viaduct, where some of the workers had improvised precarious shacks to live. In the beginning of the 2000s, the Pastoral articulated the contact between some of those workers and the Vila UFMG residents. Through the mediation of the organisation, these new families moved to the space. The idea was to increase the number of dwellers to both strengthen the occupation and help others solve their housing situation. The narratives of Claudia and Luis point to the fact that the "everyday lived experience of informality systematically vitiates" the separation between working and living spaces (Kudva, 2009, p.1614). The Vila UFMG was mainly formed by waste pickers looking for a place to live, whereas that space itself became necessary for the livelihood strategies of the dwellers.

After the arrival of the new settlers, the Pastoral's team started developing a project in tandem with the occupation's residents. The social workers were first concerned with establishing the bonds and trust with the residents and used a participatory method called "Urban Participatory Diagnostic" (UPD) to develop the skills among those directly involved to exercise their leadership (see Figure 6.1). Through this exercise, the Vila residents were invited to reflect on the meaning of community, to trust each other and to organise their struggle for elementary rights. Claudia explained the methodology:

It [the UPD] is about experiences and group activities that engender the construction of knowledge about the settlements' environment, its potentialities, its fragilities, and also the path [to improvement]... Because [the UPD] is [about] activity and practice, as it was the case with the Vila UFMG. We combined activities and practical experiences. That is, it was a joined work, of social organisation and of searching for better conditions, for example, improving the space. (Interview with Claudia, social worker at Pastoral – 03/11/15)

The arrival of the new residents and the partnership with the Pastoral were thus fundamental to improve the management of the space. Ana, who came from the viaduct, has talked about their efforts to clean and improve the area, which was then "covered in

¹¹⁶ For the history of ASMARE's creation see Gonçalves, Oliveira, and Silva (2008). Writing for The Guardian, Leon Kaye has described the work developed by a global enterprise company (SAP) with ASMARE (Kaye, 2012).

bushes.” Only a few people were interested in taking care of the space; others were more interested in spending their time drinking. She added:

But then once we arrived, we got in touch with the SLU [the municipal cleaning service]. We started promoting a group effort (*mutirão*) to clean the space. We had several meetings with the Pastoral. The Pastoral team was there every week, right? We created a daily schedule in which we all talked about what we did since morning until dusk, so we could take better advantage of our time, of our space, of life. (Interview with Ana, former resident of Vila UFMG - 15/10/2015)



Figure 6.1. Urban Participatory Diagnostic of the residents of the Antonio Carlos area: “We fight for the right to live with dignity – Residents of the Antonio Carlos occupation”

(Source: Pastoral archive, photo taken by the author)

The activity discussed by Ana, during which the residents were invited to think about their routines and create a daily schedule, was one of the proposed UPD’s group practices. Through their joint work with the Pastoral, the dwellers started organising to fight for the access to public services, such as water, electricity and phone connections. For Ana, those were achieved through organised political struggle because “in this country everything works through pressure.” Eventually, the efforts of the residents in tandem with the Pastoral workers started paying off. She stated:

Until one day, bang! Things started happening. Then first we got phone connections, then it was the Copasa [State’s water company] that became a great

partner, they understood our side that despite the fact that we were an occupation, without water there is no life. So we achieved this right. Afterwards it was the CEMIG [State's electricity company]. It was a very nice space, it was a cool fight. So, you realize that everything is worth it, when you have a dream and you fight for it. (Interview with Ana, former resident of Vila UFMG - 15/10/2015)

This quote shows how rights were achieved incrementally through their organised actions. Moreover, while transforming the space, the residents were also transforming themselves. In Ana's words, the process of building the occupation was also one of building citizenship, of becoming aware of one's rights and making them real:

I always mention the Brazilian federal Constitution. It is there, beautiful and wonderful, full of ordinances, full of decrees, full of laws. But reading is not enough, if you do not make those letters come to life, otherwise they remain dead and erased. In life, when you channel something that is inside you, you make things move, right? It is about being sure, it is about knowing the steps. If you know you have a right, if I knew back then, when I became homeless, if I knew at least a small part of the rights I had, I wouldn't have had to go through so many things in life. However, unfortunately, not everyone has the access. For you to gain access to information, my dear, you need to fight, you need to battle. And then when you become empowered by it, you need to make it real. (Interview with Ana, former resident of Vila UFMG - 15/10/2015)

The Vila UFMG was thus a space of organised struggle through which the residents were able to learn about their rights and fight for them. Although the Brazilian Constitution extended political, civil and social rights to everyone, the access to such rights was never straightforward. In order to achieve "substantive" citizenship, the residents of the Vila had first to become insurgent citizens (Holston, 2008). Apart from improving the space, the work developed by the Pastoral was also about disciplining the residents, discouraging certain inappropriate behaviours. According to Claudia, in its early days, the area was disputed between those fighting for housing and others utilising the space for drug use and petty crimes. The arrival of the new families reinforced the housing struggle and settled the path for the improvement of the space.

Neusa, a former social worker from the Pastoral, who was in charge of executing the UPD at the Vila (interviewed on December 4, 2015), described some of the activities they developed and the difficulties in implementing the strategy. The main goal of the project, she explained, was to construct a group identity and to initiate a discussion about the space and its relationship to their day-to-day lives. In one of the activities, the residents were invited to reflect on their routines, which made them realise the centrality of the *cachaça*

(a Brazilian spirit made from sugar cane) in their daily lives. They were then encouraged to change their habits and restructure their routines. One of Neusa's most cherished memories was the time when the residents decided to destroy an abandoned security cabin, which had been mainly used for begging but also as a nightly refuge for residents in poor condition due to alcohol or drug abuse.

In the end of 2003, they had the idea of making a Christmas crib. The process of building that was beautiful. The crib was then used for our Christmas celebration. It was really nice. It was beautiful. But after that, they had already gone through the process of partaking in the activities, of developing the participatory diagnostic. That had affected them... the transformation was already happening. So, they started questioning, what is this security cabin for? Is it a positive feature of the space? Considering the situation, what is it useful for? And then they reached a unanimous decision to destroy the cabin. It was very beautiful. (...) It was a way of saying, we want a new life. We don't want to beg, we don't want to... do you know? (Interview with Neusa, former social worker at Pastoral - 04/12/2015)

The quote narrates the moment in which the residents chose to destroy a construction that symbolised attitudes they wished to overcome. In Neusa's interpretation, it was a paradigmatic act that revealed their intentions to abandon certain problematic behaviours – begging, alcohol and drug abuse – that were not compatible with the dignified lives they wished to live. The literature normally emphasises the efforts of the urban poor in the autoconstruction of houses as a process of building rights and citizenship (Holston, 1991, 2008), or the construction of collective infrastructure for fostering community and recognition (Amin, 2014). It is interesting to notice how Neusa's narrative underscores an act of destruction as a moment of home making, of a joint catharsis representing the collective will to build new lives worthy of citizens. One can thus observe the mutually constitutive processes of building the space and disciplining behaviours (Foucault, 1977).¹¹⁷ Through the organisation of the space, new subjectivities were emerging and the residents were also modifying themselves to become citizens.

Another initiative developed in the same period was the division of the land into 13 lots, one for each of the families residing at the Vila at that time. In the original project, there was also an extra lot designated as a shared space, a communal area where meetings were to be held. The lots were all the same size, 249 square meters, so residents would qualify for land titles through adverse possession (*usucapião*), according to the Constitution

¹¹⁷ For Foucault (1977), discipline is a fundamental part of *biopolitics*, a technique of government that seeks to regulate human life.

and the City Statute.¹¹⁸ Therefore, although the Vila UFMG was organised informally with no interference or help from the state, one can observe that state law influenced the organisation of the space. To have access to the potential right to property titles, the residents have configured the space in accordance with what is prescribed by the legislation.

The above shows how informal spaces are not unregulated voids and informal practices are also conditioned by the state law (Chiodelli and Moroni, 2014; Varley, 2013). According to Varley (2013), moving beyond the binary understanding of formal/informal requires not only recognising that informality is present in elite spaces, but also that the law is present in informal spaces. The practices of those inhabiting informal spaces, she argues, are shaped by their perceptions of the law. A similar argument is developed by Chiodelli and Moroni (2014), who contend that unauthorised settlements do not exist outside the law, but are rather influenced by it. Their approach rejects the compliance/non-compliance binary as the only possible reaction to the law.¹¹⁹ They argue, instead, for a broader understanding that also considers unintentional effects of legislations, that is, actions that do not adhere to the prescriptions of the rules but somehow take them into account.

The existence of an institutional and legal apparatus that recognises partially the right to informal housing is of particular relevance here, not only because it provides some compensation in the face of displacement, but because it also influences the way in which place-making practices evolve. For Luis, however, the decision to divide the land had unintended consequences. He said that afterwards, families started selling part of their land to others. He believes that this has weakened their sense of community, as the newcomers did not share the same value. According to him: "After the division happened, many people started re-dividing the lots, you know? I think that was, in part, what caused problems" (Interview with Luis, former resident of Vila UFMG - 11/11/2015). Maria narrated a similar situation. She said that before the division, whenever a new person wished to move to the occupation, they would meet and decide as a group if they would accept the new resident. After the land was divided, "people started to sell, and then it became full of people there" (Interview with Maria, former resident of Vila UFMG - 14/09/2015).

¹¹⁸ "Brazil's adverse possession policy, known as a special urban entitlement (*usucapião especial urbano*) requires five years of uncontested occupation and is applicable up to 250m²" (Fernandes, 2011b, p.40).

¹¹⁹ To explain their argument, Chiodelli and Moroni (2014, p.162) engage with the concept of nomotropismo (Conte 2000), which is defined in terms of what they call Y-effectiveness versus X-effectiveness: "In the case of Y-effectiveness, the rule causally affects an action inasmuch as the action corresponds to what is prescribed by the rule. In the case of X-effectiveness, the rule causally affects an action even when that action does not correspond to what is prescribed by the rule: in other words the action 'takes account' of the rule while not adhering to its prescriptions."

For Luis and Maria, the process of dividing the land in order to improve the space and fight for property rights weakened the community ties. That resulted in residents further dividing the land and selling the smaller plots to others. This process has damaged the political character of the occupation because the newcomers were not committed to the ideals shared by the original dwellers. After the division, each lot became the (informal) property of an individual family, which they then felt entitled to sell. That reveals how informal settlements are not disarticulated from the market and often reproduce similar dynamics (Bonduki and Rolnik, 1982; Maricato, 1979b; Singer, 1982). A possible way of understanding this process is the paradox of informal settlements, discussed by Gelder (2013). He argues that informal settlements are generally built in violation of property rights, while their main goal is the creation of new property rights. Looking at the Brazilian case, Arantes (2013) argues that despite the advancements achieved by the Brazilian urban reform, the private property model has not been challenged and home ownership remains at the core of urban policies recently implemented in Brazil (Arantes, 2013). In the next section, I will explore the juridical battle of the Vila UFMG residents to remain in place. Although the Brazilian Constitution and the City Statute have turned private property into a relative right (conditioned to the fulfilment of the property's social function), the discussion reveals how the institution of private property is safeguarded by the conservative character of the judiciary system.

6.1.2. The right to housing: "rightful resistance"

In the case of Vila UFMG, the partnership between Pastoral and PUC to give support to the residents in their struggle to organise the space was aimed at improving their life conditions, fighting for elementary rights and access to public services, and fostering community, but also creating the conditions for the future legalisation of the space. All these initiatives were aimed at creating and fighting for rights. In 2004, while the residents were building their homes, their right to urban space, and becoming citizens, the occupation was threatened by a preliminary injunction granted to the company claiming ownership of the land. The judicial conflict was initiated in 2000, when "BH Imóveis" filed a repossession lawsuit against two of the original residents. Table 6.1 presents a summary of the main actions taken by both parts and court rulings, indicating the dates.

Table 6.1. Judicial Timeline

Date	Action	Author
19/10/2000	Repossession lawsuit	BH Imóveis
16/07/2004	Repossession injunction granted to the plaintiff	Judge on call
22/07/2004	Bill of Review appeal granted to the appellants	SAJ
11/08/2004	New Repossession lawsuit	BH Imóveis
11/09/2006	External experts report	Marcelo Corrêa & Associados
02/02/2009	Ruling in favour of the plaintiff	Titular judge
29/04/2010	Expropriation	City Hall

Source: Elaborated by the author

Although “BH Imóveis” had filed the repossession lawsuit in 2000, the first procedure was only implemented in 2002, when an expert consultation took place. Nonetheless, in July 2004, the residents were taken by surprise by a preliminary injunction granted to the company, requiring the families to leave the space while the original repossession process was ongoing. In order to secure this decision, the company used a strategy that explores a particular feature of the Brazilian judiciary system. In Brazil, cases are distributed randomly to different courts (*varas*) and there is no way of knowing a priori which judge will be assigned to each case. Additionally, there is no doctrine of *stare decisis*¹²⁰ in the judicial system, therefore, different judges can rule differently on similar cases. It is impossible to know who will be in charge of a particular process and, therefore, which decision will most likely be made. That creates a lot of uncertainty as rulings can always go either way. Nonetheless, whenever there is a holiday, a judge is designated randomly as the “judge on call” that will answer for all the existing courts. It is common for an attorney to explore the knowledge about the judge on call past rulings to get a favourable decision. As explained to me by Christian, a people’s lawyer that currently coordinates the SAJ, this is a routine strategy also employed by the people’s lawyers.

The preliminary ruling was issued by a judge on call and the residents were notified of the eviction on 16 July 2004, on a Friday afternoon. In that occasion, a newspaper article described the conflict; in the highlighted extract one reads:

This community enjoyed tranquillity until last Friday when it was visited by a bailiff accompanied by representatives of BH Imóveis (who presented itself as the owner of the invaded area) and the Military Police who wanted the immediate withdrawal of the residents. “We asked them to wait until we contacted our lawyers, but this morning (yesterday) the officer and the PM returned. The only reason they did not

¹²⁰ The Latin term *stare decisis* refers to a juridical doctrine in which court decisions are based on past rulings on similar issues – precedent – in earlier cases.

do anything is because we had members of the press here," said the men and women in fear of losing their homes. (Estado de Minas, 19/07/2004 – Pastoral archive)

Upon their eviction notice, there was no promise that they would receive any sort of compensation or alternative housing. Although it is not unusual that some kind of compensation is offered after a negotiation process, there were no legal guarantees. Neusa narrates her recollections of those events.

When I arrived [at the Vila] I found this group very scared and frightened, you know? Outraged. And I thought to myself, "we spent three years saying they had the right, we insisted on this point, you have the right, you have to be persistent, you have to fight... for dignified housing, for this place you have been taking care of, right?" (Interview with Neusa, former social worker at Pastoral - 04/12/2015)

She then recalled how they gathered all the support they could get and remained in the Vila, awaiting a solution. They called residents from other occupations to help and invited journalists to put the conflict in the spotlight. That was important to attract attention, making the actions of the police more difficult, as showed by the newspaper quote. The political strategy was combined with the efforts of the SAJ's juridical team, coordinated by Professor Fábio. As noted by de Sousa Santos and Carlet (2009) in their discussion about the landless workers movement in Brazil, people's lawyers have learned how to employ strategies that explore the contradictory nature of the Brazilian law as far as land is concerned: "This involves not only making use of the legal tools available, but also the construction of alternative interpretations of the law in an attempt to generate jurisprudential solutions that are favourable to the struggle for land and social justice" (de Sousa Santos and Carlet, 2009, p.69).

In this case, therefore, the lawyers' strategy involved a combination of deploying recently developed legal instruments, juridical stratagems and political pressure. One could interpret such actions as an example of what O'Brien (1996, p.33) has labelled "rightful resistance," which "entails the innovative use of laws, policies, and other officially promoted values to defy 'disloyal' political and economic elites." Rightful resisters, he argues, "usually combine legal tactics with political pressure," and "typically behave in accord with prevailing statutes (...)" (ibid, p.33). Although the Brazilian judiciary is generally conservative and normally takes the side of the plaintiffs, reaffirming the private property institution, "the 1988 Constitution establishes that ownership of land is only constitutionally protected provided that it is productive and fulfils its social function" (de Sousa Santos and Carlet,

2009, pp.68–69). This constitutional provision was the exact argument employed by the people’s lawyers in this case. They were able to use a civil procedure appeal (bill of review appeal – *recurso de agravo de instrumento*), requesting the suspension of the injunction, which was granted on July 22.

Neusa has talked about those decisive moments in which they found out that a judge had overruled the eviction order. That decision allowed the residents to remain in the settlement until the process was over.

Oh my God, giving them the news that they could stay was wonderful for everyone in the Pastoral team. Because we kept saying that they had the right to stay. So the responsibility was ours, because we were the ones always saying “you have the right, you have the right”, and now what? So it was truly amazing! (Interview with Neusa, former social worker at Pastoral - 04/12/2015)

Neusa describes the relief she felt telling the residents about the favourable decision allowing them to remain in the occupation at least until the lawsuit was over. The outcome had validated the Pastoral's discourse regarding the rightfulness of the residents’ claims.

Soon after this court decision, the company filed yet another repossession lawsuit that included all the known residents as defendants, replacing the original one that targeted only two people. While the lawsuit was ongoing, the Vila dwellers kept their quotidian lives and the occupation grew with the continuous arrival of new residents. In 2006, as part of the legal process, a consultancy firm was hired to submit a report with information to substantiate the court ruling. According to the report, summarised in Table 2, at that moment there were 29 houses and a total of 86 residents living at the Vila. Each lot was generally smaller than 250 square meters, with four exceptions. The average value of the buildings was calculated in £1,900. Apart from the houses, the report also identified the existence of a common area used for meetings and for saving collected recycling materials. It is possible to observe both the growth in the number of houses and residents, but also the process discussed by Luis and Maria in which the lots were divided and resold for newcomers.

Both the Brazilian Constitution and the City Statute recognise the property rights of consolidated informal settlements on private land through the *usucapião* (adverse possession) provision.¹²¹ The criteria for claiming property through adverse possession is

¹²¹ In the case of public lands, the instrument used is the “real right to use concession” (*Concessão de Direito Real de Uso*—CDRU). Apart from the ordinary adverse possession, the City Statute also establishes the possibility of “multiple occupants to act as a group – or ‘condominium association’ and request

the uncontested occupation of privately owned urban parcels (maximum size of 250 square meters) for at least five years. The report has identified that 16 of the 29 families occupying the land have declared to be living in the land for at least five years. Nonetheless, in another extract of the report, the following is concluded:

Question number 8: Is it possible to identify the construction time of the existent houses? If yes, what is the time?

Answer: We have no elements to attest the exact age of each construction identified by the technical consultancy. However, analysing aerial photographs from URBEL and those found in the Google Earth “site” on the “internet”, we can affirm that the maximum age of each construction cannot be more than 4 years, considering that the said photos are from 2002 and they do not show any construction. (Consultancy Report, p.64 – Pastoral Archive)

Finally, three years after this report was submitted, a court decision was made in favour of the plaintiff. The decision established a 30-day period for the voluntary evacuation of the land by all the cited defendants and other potentially non-identified third-parties. The non-compliance with the court order would imply compulsory evacuation, with the use of police force if necessary.

possession of tracts that have been occupied for at least five years”. This new instrument is called *usucapião coletivo* (collective adverse possession) (Macedo, 2008, pp. 262–263).

Table 6.2. Summary of consultancy report: characteristics of the occupation

House number	Number or residents	Total area	Built area	Total residency time	Estimated construction values (R\$)	Estimated construction values (y£)*
1	3.00	247.11	30.76	2.00	5,683.00	1,472.66
2	4.00	247.11	41.37	2.00	6,737.00	1,745.79
3	7.00	256.77	41.66	2.00	6,996.00	1,812.90
4	8.00	130.67	73.13	11.00	4,213.00	1,091.73
5	4.00	142.58	22.02	2.00	7,309.00	1,894.01
6	4.00	259.66	76.13	6.00	5,612.00	1,454.26
7	1.00	268.13	78.84	11.00	4,002.00	1,037.06
8	2.00	307.30	101.16	11.00	8,379.00	2,171.29
9	5.00	227.00	72.07	7.00	7,917.00	2,051.57
10	Common area	263.49	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
11	1.00	214.34	26.32	6.00	5,204.00	1,348.54
12	2.00	99.65	57.26	6.00	7,190.00	1,863.18
13	1.00	55.16	26.34	-	6,822.00	1,767.82
14	5.00	209.61	67.85	6.00	6,647.00	1,722.47
15	1.00	54.59	36.45	6.00	5,846.00	1,514.90
16	3.00	78.36	58.46	2.00	6,560.00	1,699.92
17	3.00	169.23	78.98	7.00	5,631.00	1,459.19
18	1.00	251.78	41.24	7.00	7,030.00	1,821.72
19	3.00	197.51	43.54	10.00	4,209.00	1,090.70
20	2.00	154.45	82.90	2.00	19,175.00	4,968.90
21	2.00	149.63	67.15	3.00	10,007.00	2,593.16
22	1.00	88.01	36.36	8.00	7,177.00	1,859.81
23	7.00	79.39	48.34	3.00	10,177.00	2,637.21
24	2.00	133.61	45.46	10.00	4,642.00	1,202.90
25	2.00	56.58	40.92	3.00	4,134.00	1,071.26
26	1.00	68.90	29.29	4.00	4,288.00	1,111.17
27	4.00	111.20	56.84	4.00	5,349.00	1,386.11
28	1.00	53.75	88.19	-	21,273.00	5,512.57
29	3.00	96.00	55.85	6.00	8,395.00	2,175.43
30	3.00	32.95	24.18	6.00	5,632.00	1,459.45
<i>Average</i>	<i>3.00</i>	<i>156.82</i>	<i>53.42</i>	<i>5.67</i>	<i>7,318.48</i>	<i>1,896.47</i>
<i>Sum</i>	<i>86.00</i>	<i>4,704.52</i>	<i>1,549.06</i>	<i>153.00</i>	<i>212,236.00</i>	<i>54,997.67</i>
<i>Min</i>	<i>1.00</i>	<i>32.95</i>	<i>22.02</i>	<i>2.00</i>	<i>4,002.00</i>	<i>1,037.06</i>
<i>Max</i>	<i>8.00</i>	<i>307.30</i>	<i>101.16</i>	<i>11.00</i>	<i>21,273.00</i>	<i>5,512.57</i>

Source: Elaborated by the author with information from consultancy report

(*) Values in pounds calculated using the official exchange rate on 14/03/2017, £1.00/R\$3.86 (Brazil Central Bank)

The judge's decision was based on the Civil Code, a much more conservative legislation than the new legal-institutional orders which have been evolving since re-democratisation (the 1988 Constitution and the 2001 City Statute).¹²² This dilemma is investigated by Fernandes and Pereira (2010) focusing on the case of Belo Horizonte and the programs for informal land regularisation.

The current clash between the Belo Horizonte's City Hall, the Public Defender's Office and the social movements representing the residents of the informal settlements in that municipality indicates that the municipal juridical-urban order has not accompanied the progress of the national legal order and, as a result, municipal authorities continue to deal with land regularisation only as a discretionary policy and in a highly questionable legal and political way. (Fernandes and Pereira, 2010, p.187)

In the current case, a similar issue can be observed in the judge's decision. His final ruling pointed out the "complexity of the case" represented by two "conflicting interests": on the one hand, the right to property and, on the other, the right to housing, "protected by the Republic's Constitution". Nonetheless, the final verdict clearly showed the judge's bias, once he stated that the Judiciary should not "tolerate acts of invasion", but rather pursue the public interest. In his opinion, therefore, the common good should be achieved by privileging the rights of the plaintiff – the legal owner – versus those of the residents – the "invaders" (Extract from judicial decision – Pastoral archive).

Therefore, his decision clearly protects the institution of the private property from "ill-intended" invaders. In order to substantiate his decision, two pieces of evidence were fundamental. First, the decision cites the existence of a police report in 1999 in which the company files a complaint against the presence of invaders on its property. This is important to establish that the plaintiff has actively attempted to recover the possession of the land, which is a condition for proving the loss of ownership (according to the Civil Code).¹²³ Second, the decision quotes the technical report issued in 2006 in the already mentioned extract, which affirms that no construction was visible before 2002, according to the evidences from the "internet". This information is relevant for denying the possibility of adverse possession, which was a part of the defence's strategy. It is interesting to notice

¹²² A new Civil Code has been approved in 2015 and implemented in 2016. The analysis of this new legislation is not relevant for the case under analysis.

¹²³ "According to the art. 1,224 of the Civil Code, 'the possession is considered lost only for those who have not witnessed the misappropriation, or, when having knowledge about it, refrain from attempting to recover it, or, trying to recover it, are violently repelled.'" (Extract from judicial decision – Pastoral Archive)

how both evidences are clearly in contradiction with one another. If there was a police report in 1999 recognising the presence of “invaders”, how is it possible that the occupation was non-existent before 2002? This contradiction and the legal arguments based on the constitutional provisions were used to appeal to a higher court, which, however, was also denied. The SAJ has filed a new appeal to the federal Supreme Court. Nevertheless, a final decision was never reached.

In April of 2010, a new fact has engendered the end of the original ten-year-long law suit. Following the Belo Horizonte’s confirmation in 2009 as a host city for the upcoming 2014 FIFA World Cup, the City Hall expropriated the land under dispute envisioning the construction of a viaduct to improve the access to the Mineirão stadium. In this process, the company was compensated for the ownership of the land, and a new round of negotiations started regarding the displacement of the residents by the local state. Eventually, in May 2011, all residents were displaced and relocated. At that point, the Vila was occupied by 90 families. The increase in the number of dwellers shows how the occupation kept growing despite the legal battle. In the end, all families received either cash compensation or in-land compensation (see Table 6.3 for a summary). The latter included relocation to a house (PROAS)¹²⁴ within the metropolitan region or in a social housing estate located closer to the city centre and within 10 km from the original occupation site. Moreover, all those relocated to apartments live in the same place.

¹²⁴ PROAS is the municipal program for assisted resettlement that targets families evicted from informal houses due to public constructions or geological risk. Assisted families can choose a house located in non-risk areas within the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte of up to R\$40,000.

Table 6.3. Summary of the Project: Works on Antônio Carlos and Abraão Caran Avenues intersection

Modality	Concluded	New Address	Total Expenditure with Resettlement and Compensations	Average compensation
Social Housing	28	“Vila Viva Residential” at Pedreira Padre Lopes	-	-
Assisted Resettlement	9	Diverse	R\$ 1,874,849.45 (£713,440.21)*	R\$ 30,735.24 (£11,695.74)*
Cash compensation	53	-		

Source: URBEL

(*)Values in pounds calculated using the official exchange rate of May 1st, 2011 (£1.00/R\$2.63), the approximate date in which compensations were paid.

In my visits to the social housing estate, I have met Valeria, who lives in one of the flats with her husband and her teenage daughter. She complained about having a longer commute to work while declaring her discontentment about living in a flat: “I hate this place. (...) This flat? I do not like it. You stay like this all the time, locked inside your house. There is no open area or anything. (...) My dream is to exchange this place for a house” (Interview with Valeria, former resident of Vila UFMG - 02/12/2015). Her narrative resonates with Diva’s, who has also been resettled from the Vila to a flat. She became very upset during the interview and even cried remembering the life at the community, where she was surrounded by family and friends (Interview with Diva, former resident of Vila UFMG - 22/11/2015). For those women, displacement has caused the disruption of place-attachment, engendering a sense of alienation and defamiliarisation that results in grief and mourning (Davidson, 2009; Fried, 2000). While talking about other former residents from the Vila, Valeria narrated that some of them have sold their flats and moved to houses in the peripheries. That was the case of her friend Antonia, a single mother who exchanged the flat for a house closer to her mother's, so she could have help with childcare and keep her job.

Most of the residents that opted for cash compensation or assisted resettlement now live in the peripheries of the metropolitan region, as the lower values received made it impossible to purchase a house in a location similar to Pampulha. That is the case of Maria,

who opted to move to a house in the periphery instead of getting a flat, where she believes she would not have privacy. Moreover, she is also very keen on growing vegetables, which she then uses to cook both for her own consumption and for her small business selling snacks informally. Mauro and Ana have also opted for a house. The couple lives in the peripheries of Betim, another city of the metropolitan region. Mauro was content with having a house of his own, as he was coming from a situation of homelessness. During my visit, he spent most of the time working on the house, doing small repairs. Ana, on the other hand, demonstrated some contradictory feelings. She complained about the fact that living far away from Belo Horizonte made her life more difficult, considering the high cost and low-quality of the transport system. Nonetheless, she also believed that having a house of her own was a victory achieved through insurgency.

Many critiques can be made regarding the displacement/resettlement process. Firstly, one can observe the feelings of frustration and alienation caused by the disruption of community ties (Atkinson, 2015; Davidson, 2009; Fried, 2000). Secondly, the process contributes to further socio-spatial segregation and to the peripheralisation of poverty, that is, the phenomenon through which the most underprivileged populations are pushed towards the remote areas of the city (Aguilar and López, 2009; Olavarria-Berenguer, 2014). Thirdly, the removal from the Vila has dismantled social networks which are relevant for the survival strategies of the urban poor (Yntiso, 2008). Finally, the residents were denied their legal rights to receive compensation also for the property of the land (at least for the older residents), showing how, despite the existence of the City Statute, the use of this juridical framework to promote socio-spatial justice remains restricted (Arantes, 2013).

Nonetheless, the municipal (and federal) law partially recognises their rights and no one left without some sort of compensation. The PMH is the legal-institutional framework that has guaranteed the minimum rights for the Vila residents. The City Hall, therefore, in the act of buying the land has denied their rights to it, which was under legal dispute. The same action has also created a partial right to compensation. The spatial restructuring led by the mega-event preparation engendered a middle-ground solution: neither were the residents displaced with nothing – a potential result of the juridical process, nor were they compensated for their legitimate right to the land. This result was only possible because of the rightful resistance strategies of the residents in tandem with the Pastoral and the people's lawyers.

6.2. Displacing work informality: the case of the Mineirão stallholders

6.2.1. *Making a living, making a home, building the city*

In 2010, the Mineirão stadium closed for refurbishment envisioning the 2014 FIFA World Cup. The spatial restructuring led by the modernisation effort has dismantled the informal market which had been a feature of that space since its early days. In this process, the Mineirão stallholders were displaced from their historically occupied workspace. The story of these workers and their relationship with the stadium dates back to 1965, when the Mineirão was first inaugurated. The informal market was formed spontaneously by workers looking for a place to make a living. In the beginning, the situation was precarious, as narrated by Rodrigo and Alfredo, who have both started working in the stadium in that period.

Well, about the Mineirão, I started there during the construction. There, selling with a basket... a little box... selling [food] to the construction workers. (...) There was a lot of mud and then there was the inauguration. (Interview with Alfredo, Mineirão stallholder – 15/12/15)

So, I started working as an employee with the popcorn cart. (...) [In that period] there were only popcorn carts around the Mineirão, there was nothing more. By the way, there was not even asphalt there yet. The first games there... it was all gravel, later that they [asphalted the surrounding area]. (...) Then people started selling skewers, skewers made using coal [because] at that time people did not use grills. (Interview with Rodrigo, Mineirão stallholder – 04/08/15)

The quotes show how the occupation of the space was initially disorganised, and informal vendors would use improvised ways to prepare and sell their goods. Vilma also started working at Mineirão in this period. She and her siblings – all children – would accompany their mom and sell home-made ice-pops for the football fans. She narrated her recollections of those early days at the stadium:

When my mother started working at the Mineirão the stadium was already there, but the people there were selling what? Skewers made in cans (*churrasco na lata*), for instance, right? (...) We were very young still. We used to make a huge box [full of ice-pops], just like the one you saw outside [her house] and we took it there by bus. (Interview with Vilma, Mineirão stallholder – 04/08/15)

At that time, Vilma and her siblings were all living with her mom and their stepfather. She recalls that her mother was obligated to work in order to bring money to the household and raise her children with almost no help from her partner. The stadium became thus a source of income for the family.

Then we would arrive and sit on the stairs, while the fans were arriving. At that time, there was no beer, right? There was no *tropeiro* [traditional Brazilian dish]. Everything you would put there, you would sell. Holy mother. We sold all the ice-pops. Thank God. We would then go home with that money and spend the whole week making ice-pops, with all the different flavours. (...) The first car my mother had was a beige Volkswagen (*fusquinha*). She bought the car with ice-pop money. (Interview with Vilma, Mineirão stallholder – 04/08/15)

The livelihood of Vilma's family was dependent on their work at the stadium. The income they were able to get from the sales was used to pay the bills and the rent. Her mother was uneducated, but she was able to raise all her children through her work at the stadium. The Mineirão was, therefore, a popular space where disadvantaged workers were able to make a living. A similar situation to that of Vilma and her family was narrated during interviews with other workers who used to occupy the area. Throughout the time, they have used the income from their sales to build their lives, while also transforming the space where they worked, providing a useful service for the thousands of fans attending the football matches. In my conversations with these vendors, they told me histories about their own conviviality, the feeling of community and solidarity between them and their relationship with the supporters. Although their activities were informal from a strict legal point of view, their presence was associated with that space, while also constantly negotiated with multiple state agents (see Chapter 5). They have always felt like they belonged to the Mineirão and it was through their work in that space that they were able to find their place in the city.

The case of Lucia exemplifies how being a Mineirão stallholder has allowed her family to guarantee not only their subsistence but some degree of social mobility. Through her activity as a street vendor, she was able to build her house and give her kids access to education, something she was only able to accomplish late in life. She particularly recalled a certain period in the mid-2000s when the local clubs were attracting many supporters to the stadium, which had a positive impact on her family's income.

It was 2007, 2006, something like that. It was a very good period for everybody. (...) Then I started building this house that was only a shack before. I was living here with my three kids. (...) Then when they said, "The Mineirão will close", that whole

thing, I started making money. Then I called the mason, he made the budget for me and I said: “Now I knock down this thing”. Then we stayed here and, in a little while, he built this. In a blink of an eye, I did this, two floors. Then I moved the bedroom to the upstairs and made this big living room. (Interview with Lucia, Mineirão stallholder – 02/12/15)

In the quote, Lucia explained that once she heard rumours about the closing of Mineirão, she decided to invest the stall's income into building her house. Her home is an example of the autoconstructed houses discussed in the peripheral urbanisation literature (Caldeira, 2016). Her story reveals how the practices of living and working informally are connected through the livelihood strategies of the urban poor. Furthermore, one can argue that spaces of living and working are mutually constituted. The informal residents of the peripheries often depend on their access to a workspace to build their houses and, consequently, the city.

Hence, for the Mineirão workers, the access to a fixed workspace at the stadium was a source of steady income that allowed them to build their houses, to build their lives, and to make a living. Vilma, who became a stallholder herself as an adult after working in the stadium as a child, has narrated how she decided to start selling the *tropeiro*¹²⁵ dish once she found out that Mineirão was about to close. She recalled seeking help from another worker, who taught her how to prepare the dish. Although it was not possible to find out who started selling *tropeiro* at Mineirão and from when, the dish became intrinsically connected with the stallholders and the stadium. They were a part of the cultural experience of going to the stadium: to arrive early and spend some time at the stalls, drinking and eating the famous *tropeirão do Mineirão* (see Figure 6.2). The dish is simple and the ingredients are not expensive, which allows for a good profit. In their narratives, the stallholders were keen to discuss their particular ways of preparing the recipe and its origins. They also often associate the *tropeiro* with their material possessions. That is the case of Vilma, who told the story of how she managed to build her house, while showing pictures of the construction in different moments of time.

This was all a ravine, look, there was no sewerage, there was nothing. Look how my house used to be without the ceiling. All of this I solved while working at Mineirão. (...) But, then, Mara, I got this shack the way it was... because when I realised that the Mineirão was going to close, my dear, I said: “What? Where am I going to find the money? Where am I going to work to find the money and build the ceiling (*bater*

¹²⁵ *Feijão tropeiro* is a typical Brazilian dish, associated mainly with Minas Gerais (although also popular in São Paulo and Goiás). It is made with beans, bacon, sausage, collard greens, eggs and manioc flour. At the stadium, the dish was served with rice and an egg on top.

laje) for a house this size?” Then, thank God, Lourdinha taught me how to make *tropeiro*. I have learned how to make the *tropeiro* and before the Mineirão closed I still managed to save some money and buy a sofa set because I did not own even a sofa. (Interview with Vilma, Mineirão stallholder – 04/08/15)



Figure 6.2. Mineirão stallholder prepares a tropeiro during match day

(Source: Cidade e Alteridade)

Aparecida, who was also a Mineirão stallholder, currently lives in a small favela in the north region of Belo Horizonte. Her house is a small *barraco* (shack), a “gift from a colleague”, that became her residency after the stadium closed and she could no longer afford to pay the rent for her house. Figure 6.3 shows a picture of Aparecida’s current home, a modest shack located in a settlement that belongs legally to a private company. On December 2015, she was facing the possibility of eviction, due to the construction of Belo Horizonte’s new coach station in the region. She narrated that her place was already visited by several people – social activists, members of the local government and of the judiciary – and that eviction was scheduled to start two months from the interview date, but she was not sure where she was going to move to afterwards. Although the government wanted them out without anything, she was confident that she was getting either cash compensation or an apartment after the social activists and the public defenders intervened. She knows that that is her right and compares her dwelling situation with her working situation.

Aparecida: It is like when you invade... like here, it is the same thing. They wanted to take us away from here and throw us on the street. I compare here and there, in the Mineirão, it is like here, right? Those who spent a lot of time [working there]... we had that thing arranged, working with that for a long time... it became almost like our home. I compare it with the situation here, it is just the same. (Interview with Aparecida, Mineirão stallholder – 21/12/15)



Figure 6.3. Aparecida's home

(Source: Photo taken by the author)

Aparecida's story further reveals the connection between living and working informally. The displacement she suffered from her workspace has influenced negatively her capacity to afford rent, forcing her to move from her house to a shack, where she is again facing potential displacement. The possibility of being evicted from her current home made her reflect about the differences between her living and working situation. In her discourse, one can see that she believes the right for compensation is rooted in some sense of belonging. The same way she is entitled to compensation because her home is being taken from her, a similar principle should apply to her working condition, as the time spent working in the Mineirão stadium with the other stallholders created the sense that the space was like home to her. Nonetheless, the city (and federal) legislation only (partially) recognises her rights as an informal dweller, but not as an informal worker.

The institutional apparatus that underpins Aparecida's rights as an informal dweller are inscribed in the PMH, the same policy that has guaranteed partial compensation for the

Vila UFMG residents. This policy (discussed in Chapters 2 and 5) was the result of the struggles emerging from the autoconstructed peripheries, where the insurgent citizens have claimed the “rights to the city” they had built (Caldeira, 2016; Holston, 2008). Those rights have also been incorporated in the City Statute, a federal legislation which is internationally celebrated for recognising the “right to the city” as a collective right (Fernandes, 2007a). Despite its importance in meeting the demands of the urban reform agenda, the concept of “urban space production” that has been incorporated in the City Statute does not account for the contributions of other agents, such as informal workers, in the making of the city.

The story of the Mineirão stallholders challenges such narrow understanding of urban space production, showing how their activity in the stadium has shaped that space, while also engendering their capacity to belong to the city. Those workers attachment to that place can be perceived through their constant association with the stadium and their homes. During interviews, they told histories about how they had “raised their children” on that space, how their houses were all built through their work there, and how the displacement from the stadium affected their family lives in multiple ways. After the modernisation of the stadium, in the absence of previous legal-institutional developments that could legitimise their rights to relocation, the disarticulation of the space also meant the loss of the arrangements that guaranteed their access to workspace.

The spatial restructuring caused by the World Cup represented the loss of the stallholders’ legitimacy, which emanated from the social arrangements embedded in that particular place, no longer existent. Displacement emerges as the loss of place, not only as a meaningful space, but also as the product of “socially, politically and economically interconnected interactions among people, institutions and systems” (Pierce et al., 2011, p.59). That place, transformed by the stallholders through their activity, no longer exists and the workers are told that they don’t belong in the new stadium anymore.

The modernisation of Mineirão followed the same trend described by Gaffney (2010) for the case of Maracanã, in Rio. That is, it entailed the reduction of overall capacity, especially by eliminating the popular seats (the *geral*).¹²⁶ The new stadium caters for supporters with higher disposable income and symbolises the exclusionary character of the world-class aesthetics associated with mega-events (Ghertner, 2015; Shin, 2012; Shin and

¹²⁶ The *geral* was a section of the stands with popular ticket prices and undifferentiated seating. According to Gaffney (2010, p.13): “The *geral* was a low-lying area of concrete that encircled the field. This ‘populist heart’ of the stadium was a functional and symbolic space that allowed for the inclusion of all social sectors in public life because of the low ticket prices.”

Li, 2013). After its re-opening, in 2013, the stadium became managed by a private company, and the space where the informal market was located became privatised and enclosed.

Nonetheless, the modernisation has not altered the habit of the football fans to remain in the outside area before the start of the matches. In the absence of the informal market organised by the stallholders or a proper offer of bars and restaurants, the supporters buy drinks from informal street vendors, which are spread around the residential streets surrounding the stadium during match days. Although the activity is prohibited by local legislation, inspection agents are unable to regulate the space and informal workers are easily spotted moving around with their thermo boxes (see Chapter 5). A few of those vendors are former stallholders who, after losing their fixed spot at the stadium, resorted to the uncertainty of street vending to make a living. One can thus argue that the spatial restructuring of the stadium was unable to eliminate the informal economy, which was only “displaced” to the outside.

Since their eviction, the Mineirão stallholders have been fighting for the right to resume their activities. On July 2015, the stallholder’s association (ABAEM) was still very active even though five years had passed since their displacement from the stadium. The ABAEM members met regularly at the Mineirinho, a sports arena located across the street from the Mineirão, where the association has a small office (see Figure 6.4). The main purpose of those gatherings was to plan their next steps in the fight to return to the stadium. After multiple defeats, many of the stallholders slowly abandoned the association and the meetings’ attendance decreased. This situation is mentioned by Jonas, who was present in a few meetings mostly to bring his mother, Rosa, a former stallholder whose health condition and age impaired her ability to work elsewhere. According to Jonas: “Those [former stallholders] who have a better life condition do not care anymore. But the situation is getting worse for everyone because of the [economic] crisis” (Interview with Jonas, Mineirão stallholder - 11/09/15).



Figure 6.4. ABAEM meeting and office door at Mineirinho

(Source: Photo taken by the author)

Before and after the assemblies, the workers chatted casually, joked and caught-up on each other's life events. In general, the present members were those still working as street vendors, whose livelihoods had been more severely impacted by the loss of the Mineirão workspace. In the conversations, they would share their experiences and frustrations as informal workers. They talked about good places to work as *caixeiros*, where they could escape harassment from inspection agents. The vendors also exchanged information about other working opportunities, such as open calls to select stallholders for public and private events in the city and the metropolitan region.

The association was then presided by Regina but Pedro was the *de facto* leader and the force behind most of the political actions. After going to several of those gatherings, I realised that they always followed a very similar format. The extract from my field note below describes one of those encounters:

The meeting follows the same usual dynamic. It was scheduled for 3 pm and Pedro arrived a little after 5 pm. Everybody was waiting for him to start the meeting. Once there, Pedro complained that nobody had taken the initiative to organise anything. Nivea, one of the ABAEM members, was about to put the desk in a certain position but was stopped by Borges because "Pedro likes the desk to be placed in a different way" (ABAEM meeting – 24/08/2015).

Every meeting began with Pedro narrating a summary of the ABAEM's activities in the past week (e.g. meetings with politicians or allies, visits to the public defender's office, the city council or state assembly, etc.). Usually, those activities were carried out by him, either alone or with me or a couple of other members. In those accounts, Pedro normally exaggerated the relevance of those activities, clearly trying to keep the hope of the other members alive. He also complained constantly about the stallholders' lack of political engagement, which he believed to be the main reason why they were still unable to be relocated. Another topic regularly under discussion was the regularisation of the ABAEM with the notary's office, pending due to issues with taxation and the need to register a new board of directors. Additionally, they recurrently discussed the situation of the office at Mineirinho, in need of cleaning and better organisation. Those topics were examined in every single meeting, but no practical actions were ever taken to solve them.

The repetition of those routines can be understood as a way to give the association a purpose of being. After the stadium closed, the ABAEM lost the main reason for its existence, that is, the regulation of the informal market at Mineirão. Moreover, the incapacity of the stallholders to achieve the rights to relocation slowly eroded the political relevance of the association. The meetings became mostly a place where the stallholders could revisit their lost community. It also worked as a forum for the street vendors to share their frustrations with the increasing difficulty of accessing workspace and making a living. Therefore, the constant repetition of rituals in those gatherings worked as a way to keep the hope of relocation alive, while the unsolved issues kept the association itself alive. As long as there were problems to be solved, there was a reason to meet.

The ABAEM workers were also constantly talking about the past, narrating stories from the old Mineirão, where they belonged. In addition to impairing the workers' capacity to make a living, the displacement suffered has also engendered the same feelings of grieving and mourning described in the literature about home displacement. Atkinson (2015, p.382) for instance argues that displacement from ones' neighbourhoods often disrupts peoples' social networks, while generating "major practical problems, emotionally charged feelings of loss and a sense of trauma among those (...) affected." Investigating the consequences of gentrification, he further argues that the process often "brought feelings of isolation and alienation as well as a deeper sense of nostalgia for changing social relations and lost connections" (ibid, p.382). In the next section, I explore how the association between the stallholders and the old stadium – a place they also constructed through their activity – is mobilised as a claim to relocation.

6.2.2. *The right to workspace: judicial arguments*

The stallholders were able to claim workspace for more than 50 years. Through their activity, they have created a cultural tradition which became associated with the stadium, embedded in that space. They have also built their own lives, their houses, and their places in the city. After displacement, they were unable to get relocated or to receive a proper compensation. Although their activity was regulated and legitimised by different levels of government throughout time, in Brazil – as in many other countries – the right of street vendors to workspace is not recognised in the legislation. Brown (2015) has recently pointed out that, despite the relevance of the informal economy for the lives of the urban poor, land debates have not tackled issues regarding the role of public spaces “in accommodating street vending and other urban work” (ibid, p.239). She argues for “the potential of collective rights in the public domain to underpin a more equitable approach to the management of public space and challenge inappropriate regulation that criminalises the lives of the poor” (ibid, p.238). Commenting on the stallholders’ situation, Juliana – the public defender in charge of the case – talks about the relationship between informality and rights.

Then I think that, in this aspect, the fact that the regional state has treated this so informally, that was prejudicial. Because afterwards, you see how life works, right? Afterwards, you try to negotiate through a dialogue. But the right is on which side? Where does it go to? To the justice system. And what does the judiciary require? Documents, facts, data. And they are informal. You see what I mean? And that is why I believe that... in this point, they have lost. (Interview with Juliana, public defender – 21/09/15)

After the stadium closed for renovation, the ABAEM remained active, meeting regularly, planning actions and organising the struggle for their right to return to the stadium and resume their activity. In the absence of a clear “legal” basis for their demands, they have deployed many different strategies and discourses to legitimise their claims. One of their main arguments comes from the fact that they were identified as an affected group in the environmental impact report.¹²⁷ The “Environmental Control Report” is the document

¹²⁷ The renovation project was considered as a large impact project by the Municipal Secretary of Environment (DOP-MG et al., 2010). In these cases, Belo Horizonte’s municipal legislation requires a compulsory impact study, which is required for the issuing of the “environmental license” for

that lists those impacts and proposes initiatives for mitigation. The report discusses the “disorganisation of economic activities in the area surrounding the stadium” recommending that in regards to “the stalls of food and beverages, it becomes desirable to search for diverse measures that could incorporate those current economic activities in the new setting of the stadium’s area and its immediate surroundings” (DEOP-MG, Gustavo Pena and Práxis, 2010: 202-203). This report generated an environmental restriction in the private-public partnership (PPP) contract signed between Minas Arena and the regional state of Minas Gerais. Environmental Restriction no. 18 required the submission of periodic reports regarding the actions taken to provide the Mineirão stallholders with appropriate capacitation and training programs to promote their inclusion in “the formal trade and/or fair trade” sector.

In order to fulfil the contractual conditions, the Minas Arena hired a local NGO (Rede Cidadã) to provide the stallholders with training. The first step, however, was to identify the affected group. Pedro explained the process to a radio reporter during an interview on 4 August 2015. He narrated that 150 vendors worked in the area, but only 52 had been initially registered.

Later in a public hearing in the Federal Public Ministry, we asked the deadline to be extended. The registration took place here [at Mineirinho], in this place where I am talking to you now, right? (...) We set up a table over there, [and] an employee from Minas Arena came to register the stallholders. We asked the extension of the period, it was open for one week and only 96 came. What happened? The state government took the sheet and said: “We are working with 96.” (Interview to the radio by Pedro, Mineirão stallholder - 04/08/2015)

Thus, the 96 workers registered in this process became recognised as an affected group holding a rightful claim to compensation in the form of training, but not the right to relocation. Nevertheless, not all vendors were subjected to the recognition. Although the stadium used to be full of street vendors, the group associated with ABAEM was the only one recognised and, therefore, entitled to some form of compensation. In a way, that has separated the 96 workers from the entire population of street vendors, pointing to the existence of hierarchies of informality (Roy, 2005). Marina, the coordinator of Rede Cidadã, the NGO hired by Minas Arena to provide the training course, has spoken to me about her perceptions regarding this distinction between the stallholders in relation to the street

construction. See Araújo (2009) for a discussion about environmental studies on urban spaces in the context of Belo Horizonte.

vendors' movement, clearly separating the former from the whole category as a group with distinct rights.

Marina: Stallholders are not street vendors, right... They were becoming associated with the street vendors. I think that was a big [mistake] ... I said: "Do not mix, you are not street vendors". This was a tip I gave them, you know...

Me: But why?

Marina: Because the street vendors belong to another category, right? The street vendors are different. They are stallholders of Mineirão. I think they have mixed with the street vendors' movement which is a much bigger movement. (Interview with Marina, social worker at Rede Cidadã - 07/12/16)

The ABAEM workers have shown mixed feelings about the training courses provided by Rede Cidadã. Regina, one of the stallholders participating in the training program, shared her thoughts about the course and the materials used. One of the handouts explained the program's methodology. Firstly, the NGO collected information about all the 96 stallholders and their families, seeking to identify their characteristics in order to propose adequate training. Secondly, three main goals were established based on the features identified: to register those entitled to benefits with the government, to provide training in order to include the stallholders and their family members in the formal job market, and to capacitate those interested in becoming individual micro entrepreneurs. Table 6.4 presents a summary of the schedule with the themes of each module, the workload and the status of the training as of January 2013. In Regina's opinion, the course was very helpful: "I enjoyed taking the courses very much. (...) They were very good. The little I know about the internet I've learned there" (Interview with Regina, Mineirão stallholder - 20/11/15). The NGO also provided job opportunities for some of the stallholders' teenage children through a program of young apprentices.

Table 6.4. Schedule: course for the formation of entrepreneurs

Theme	Workload (in hours)	Status	Date
Individual micro entrepreneur	3	Concluded	10/11/2012
Access to microcredit	2	Concluded	10/11/2012
Sales	16	Ongoing	04/12/2012
Customer Service	4	Foreseen	Jan/Feb-2013
Computer course	16	Ongoing	15/01/2013
Finance: cash flow, basic accounting	8	Foreseen	Feb-13
Proper use and conservation of foodstuffs	20	Foreseen	Mar-13

Source: Rede Cidadã, January 2013

Nonetheless, in the opinion of most of the stallholders I have interviewed, the NGO training was a waste of their time and left them feeling frustrated, as it did not engender their relocation to the stadium, which was their primary goal. That was the opinion of Rosa, who also participated in the courses. She declared that: “Everyone took the courses. It was just a minority of people that didn’t. (...) Everyone did, but what then? Were we able to return? That is the issue” (Interview with Rosa, Mineirão stallholder - 11/09/15). Marina, the NGO coordinator, made sure to emphasise that this promise was never made. According to the PPP contract, the Minas Arena was not demanded to relocate the workers, but only to provide them with training.

One can argue that the proposed mitigation was inadequate, as it did not provide the workers with alternative arrangements sufficient to compensate for their losses caused by the displacement from the stadium. Nevertheless, by providing the courses, the Minas Arena has met its legal contractual commitments. That has weakened the strength of the environmental condition as a legal argument for a potential lawsuit, but the ABAEM workers have continued to explore the political appeal of the official recognition as a group affected by the stadium’s modernisation.

The feeling of frustration among the workers was enhanced by the constant back and forth negotiations with the local and regional state, with many promises made and no action taken (see Chapter 5). Those feelings were discussed by Jonas, Rosa’s son, who also worked in the stadium helping his mother. He said:

(...) It is with the mayor, it is with the regional state, it is with I don’t know who. Then you go, six more months. There is another meeting, you call everybody. Then you have a meeting with everybody, but someone doesn’t come. Then you have to

reschedule, and nothing gets resolved. It is because of that that everyone is angry, people are furious. (Interview with Jonas, Mineirão stallholder - 11/09/15)

The City Hall's justification for denying the stallholders' rights to relocation was based on the inexistence of an acceptable juridical arrangement to "privilege" the stallholders. Nonetheless, this argument has been challenged by a report launched by the Heritage division of the Public Ministry that presents a more progressive view of the law. In regards to the use of public space for private activities, it is argued that the "isonomic criteria" should be applied, "under penalty of violation of the republican and democratic principles, and its corollary, the equality principle." The case of the stallholders, however, is considered an exception:

Nonetheless, in this concrete case, the regional state has, a long time ago, recognised, although precariously, the right of the stallholders to be located in the surroundings of Mineirão, including through the payment of a fee.

This official recognition of a truly granted use permission (*permissão de uso outorgada*) to the stallholders legitimises the idea that these workers and only them have the right to, in the same public space or similar, remain exploring the economic activity to which they were previously dedicating themselves, that is, the sale of *feijão tropeiro* and other kinds of food, for a certain and determined period (...). (Public Ministry, CAOPP – 06/11/2014, multiple pages)

It is interesting to notice the clear connection established in the report between the stallholders and the *tropeiro* dish. The Public Ministry declaration was based on another report launched by a group of law researchers connected to the Federal University of Minas Gerais. In 2014, the group – *Cidade e Alteridade* (City and Alterity) – undertook a research project aimed at understanding the process of displacement of the Mineirão stallholders from the stadium, as well as its impacts on workers, seeking to identify violations of rights during the process.

Among the violations identified, "the right to recognition as immaterial cultural heritage" became the stallholders' movement strongest claim. In their report, the research group cites the "constitutional obligation of the Brazilian state to protect the cultural manifestations which refer to the identity, the action and the memory of different groups forming the Brazilian society" (Cidade e Alteridade, 2014, p.49). They argued that, after 50 years of activity, the stallholders had become part of the stadium's history and, consequently, part of the city's and the regional state's culture. Special attention is given to the role of culinary systems and traditional dishes as cultural immaterial heritage. Therefore,

the report associates the stallholders with the *tropeiro* and its intrinsic relation to the football culture in Minas Gerais.

The Attorney's Office of Belo Horizonte has responded to both reports – the Public Ministry's and the researchers' – in a document addressed to the Municipal Secretary of Urban Services. In this recommendation, the municipal attorney recognises the importance of immaterial cultural heritage protected in the 1988 constitution and the need to preserve certain communities, including their "culinary systems". However, it proceeds to cite the Municipal Code of Placements as the main legal basis for their counterclaim, concluding with three arguments.

- 1) The legislation of the Municipality of Belo Horizonte does not allow the use of municipal public space without the necessary license;
- 2) The right to equality and the principle of impersonality demand that the interests of those interested in using the public space must be made compatible, which engenders the need for a public bid procedure for the impartial selection of beneficiaries.
- 3) Therefore, street vending in public municipal spaces is only possible after the regular licensing, preceded by the public bid procedure for the impartial choice of the beneficiaries. (GEAPM/PGM – 22/02/15, 7)

In mid-July, 2015, a bill (PL 1.334/15) to reinstate the sale of alcoholic drinks inside Minas Gerais' football stadia – prohibited since 2008¹²⁸ – was approved by the Regional State's Parliament. Article 5th of this bill stated that in case the Mineirão's esplanade was ever used for commercial purposes, preference should be given to the old stallholders. Nonetheless, on 5 August 2015, the governor sanctioned the law, but vetoed the said article. The justification was that the area was managed by the Minas Arena and the amendment presented a breach of the PPP contract.

Both alternatives – the stallholders' relocation to the public space and the stadium's esplanade – were doomed "legally" impossible. Following those negative decisions, the City Hall decided to launch a public bid open to all.¹²⁹ The procedure was initiated in August,

¹²⁸ The prohibition was first established by a resolution issued by the *Confederação Brasileira de Futebol* (CBF – Brazilian Football Confederation) in 2008. In 2010, the federal law 10.671/03 – known as the *Estatuto do Torcedor* (Supporter's Statute) – was changed and the prohibition became an article of the federal law. During the World Cup, this law was ignored to allow the sale of the beverages produced by the event's sponsors.

¹²⁹ The political and judicial debates regarding the municipal public bid and the negotiations between local and regional states, Minas Arena, the stallholders, Pampulha's neighbourhood association, the Public Defender's Office and the Public Ministry will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 7.

2015 to select 96 new stallholders to operate in the stadium surroundings. During a public hearing to discuss this process, Juliana, the public defender in charge of their case, gave the following interview to a radio station in which she defends the old stallholders' right to relocation.

What we argue is that it is not only the stallholders that are being affected in their rights, but the entire population of Belo Horizonte is being affected in their right to culture, to immaterial cultural heritage. (...) The Mineirão *tropeiro* is part of the supporter's imaginary. The supporters went to Mineirão to watch the matches imagining that *tropeiro*, that pork sandwich. That is already a part of the history of Belo Horizonte and this is the history that we think it should not be erased. (Interview to the radio by Juliana, public defender - 26/08/2015)

The cultural expression embedded in their activity is used by the stallholders both as a juridical claim and a discourse in political demonstrations. Figure 6.5 shows a leaflet distributed by a group of activists (Resistência Azul Popular) to invite supporters to protest against the Minas Arena and the stadium's elitisation process. The material explicitly mentions the "eviction of the stallholders" (highlighted in the figure): "The Mineirão stallholders were evicted from the workspace they occupied for decades. To increase profits, Minas Arena is damaging the workers and preventing the football fans from enjoining their traditional *tropeirão* before the matches." Figure 6.6 is a picture of the scheduled demonstration on 8 August 2015. Activists and stallholders carry a banner that says: "Mineirão Stallholders: We are part of the history of the Pampulha's Giant [the Mineirão]. We will be back soon." In both materials one can notice how the place identity of the stallholders is mobilised as a political claim.

Dossiê Minas Arena



Fora Minas Arena, O Mineirão é do povo ! CPI do Mineirão já !

Fim da Festa Popular
Para selecionar o público do Mineirão, a Minas Arena impõe uma normatização da torcida, aos poucos vai impedindo os torcedores levarem seu material que sempre foi a garantia da festa popular no Mineirão

Expulsão dos Barraqueiros
Os barraqueiros do Mineirão foram expulsos do seu local de trabalho já estabelecido há décadas. Para lucrar mais a Minas Arena prejudica trabalhadores e impede do torcedor de ter o seu tradicional pré jogo com tropeirão.

Irregularidades no contrato
Há evidência de superfaturamento, jogo de planilhas, aditivos e contratação do escritório para a obra sem licitação

Ingressos caros/Setor corporativo da Minas Arena
Por contrato a Minas Arena obriga que o seu setor (o que fica vazio na maioria dos jogos) seja mais caro que todos os outros setores, e a arrecadação total vai para a Minas Arena. Mesmo não enchendo, a concessionária não se importa pois o contrato feito com o Estado lhe garante lucro, veja abaixo.

Contrato com o Estado garante lucro para a Minas Arena
Existe uma cláusula no contrato que garante o lucro de no mínimo 3,7 milhões de reais para a Minas Arena, caso não seja atingido esse valor o Estado pagará a diferença. Só em 2013 a Minas Arena trouxe prejuízo para o Estado de 44 milhões de reais. Ou seja a Minas Arena usa do nosso dinheiro para nos expulsarmos do Mineirão

**Fora Minas Arena !
O Mineirão é do povo!**

Veja os motivos da Minas Arena ser uma das responsáveis pela elitização do nosso Mineirão

Convocação para o ato dia 09/08
A Resistência Azul Popular acredita que apenas com a expulsão da Minas Arena, podemos impedir a elitização do Mineirão. Dia 09/08 a partir das 14:30 estaremos no Mineirão gritando Fora Minas Arena, CPI do Mineirão Já!

Figure 6.5. Leaflet distributed by supporters: protest against the elitisation of Mineirão stadium.

(Source: Resistência Azul Popular)



Figure 6.6. Demonstration at Mineirão Stadium: stallholders and local activists

(Source: Author's own photography, 2015)

In order to demand rights, the stallholders have sought to differentiate themselves from all the other informal vendors. A similar situation has been described by Crossa (2016) for the case of street vendors in Mexico, fighting against displacement spurred by urban regeneration projects. She argues “that thinking about difference matters to the way in which vendors carried out their resistance strategies” (ibid, p.288). Those differences are often constructed in relation to place identity, that is, the association between street

vendors and their workspaces. She further argues that “looking at the multiplicity of ways in which street vendors build their identities” is relevant to reveal how in this process, “a politics of difference is also reproduced” (ibid, p.288). In the case of the stallholders, their claims are rooted precisely in their contribution to the making of the Mineirão as a meaningful space. They are part of this history and thus deserving of preservation.

After the municipal government decided to go through with the public bid, Juliana – the public defender – tried to stop the process in the courtroom, but lost the litigation. However, she intends to pursue a lawsuit against both the regional and the municipal governments. Her main argument will be based on their cultural value and the need of the state to protect the stallholders as symbols of immaterial cultural heritage. Nonetheless, there is no juridical consensus regarding the validity of this claim. Although the public prosecutor that produced the cited report agrees with the public defender, Roberta, another public prosecutor, holds a different opinion. In our conversation, I asked her about the public ministry’s report that recognises the cultural importance of the stallholders. Despite agreeing with the cultural relevance of the informal market, she does not believe that this recognition is transferable to the workers.

No... the market can be [considered] heritage, still not recognised, but it can become recognised as cultural heritage. But not the people, [only] the market.... So, if you keep the market, you allow people to buy their meat skewers, so on and so forth. Then it [the market] can be [considered] heritage. But, that person [working] there, no. That service could be done by anyone, right? (Interview with Roberta, public prosecutor – 28/10/15)

Therefore, Roberta concurred with the City Hall’s decision to launch a public bid, stating that there was no legal way to give the stallholders a “privilege”, because they had always been informal, and “were never authorised to be there.” In her view, street vending is an illicit activity, comparable to drug trafficking. Roberta argued that, in the same way taxes are still due even for income from illicit activities, the stallholders were still required to pay for the use of public space even though their activity was also illicit.

Of course their situation is not the same, comparatively, in terms of gravity. But they occupied a public space, so they had to pay a fee for the occupation of the public space, independently if they had or not the license to occupy the public space, the fee was due. (...) So, I believe that my colleague [from the Public Ministry that wrote the report] did not follow this reasoning when he argued that only because they paid the fee, they had the license. No, they did not, [because] the license is something else. (Interview with Roberta, public prosecutor – 28/10/15)

Roberta presents a view that Juliana classified as “legalist”, in opposition to her own “constitutionalist” view. Whilst the latter is more preoccupied in fulfilling the constitutional rights (such as the right to work and to have a house), allowing for a broader view of the legal system, the former is more concerned with the legality/illegality of certain practices. We can see this conflict throughout the whole discussion in this section. The right to work, although recognised by the Constitution, does not guarantee any rights for the stallholders, because they are informal. Although their claims can be translated into juridical arguments, the counterclaims also have very clear juridical basis. In the occasions I met with Juliana, with or without the presence of the stallholders, she was always upfront about how sceptical she was in a favourable solution for their case, taking into account the conservative nature of the judiciary. Moreover, both the stallholders and the public defender believe they need to exhaust the political negotiations before appealing to the courts. They think that, once the dispute moves to the courtroom, any political resolution will become more difficult. If they lose the case, the local/regional state will have no reasons to meet their demands for compensation and/or relocation.

6.3. Informality and the right to the city: the limits of the Brazilian urban reform

Since re-democratisation, Brazil has experienced a slow but continuous process of urban reform, with legal and institutional developments that favour participatory democracy in urban policy. Legal innovations such as the City Statute have been celebrated for expanding the “right to the city” to marginalised populations. Fernandes (2007a, p.208), for instance, has argued that “this growing socio-political movement of legal reform in Latin America has been based on the two pillars Lefebvre proposed as the core of the ‘right to the city’, namely, the right to habitation and the right to participation”. Since the approval of the 2001 City Statute in Brazil, many have explored how the entanglement of democratisation and neoliberalism have limited the success of such developments in terms of actually engendering the urban poor’s “right to the city” (Caldeira and Holston, 2015; Fernandes, 2011a; Maricato, 2010; Rolnik, 2013b). Such criticisms have mainly focused on the appropriation of this new legal-institutional framework by local “growth machines” (Molotch, 1976; Rolnik, 2013b).

Recently, the Brazilian urban reform movement has been further criticised for not challenging a fundamental barrier to effectively promoting the “right to the city”: the private

property model (Arantes, 2013; Tonucci Filho, 2017). For Arantes (2013), the most advanced urban laws and instruments in the world, spurred by insurgent movements, have been insufficient to promote greater socio-spatial justice. On the contrary, the Brazilian cities have been characterised by increasing commodification in the era of financial globalised capital. In this context, the instruments of the City Statute have been used as strategic planning tools (Vainer, 2009) to accelerate capital accumulation in the secondary circuit (Harvey, 1978), turning cities into machines for maximising urban surpluses in order to increase local public budgets in times of austerity (Arantes, 2013; Rolnik, 2015).

According to Arantes (2013), that is partially explained by a certain conservative and pragmatic character of the popular-democratic urban reform. Not only did it not question or oppose the private property but, in fact, it stimulated it. As housing and home ownership became conflated, both the policy and the shape of the cities remained dictated by the private property model. The main goal was never to overcome property, but to make it accessible to all. This feature becomes clear in the federal housing policy launched in 2009 with the ambitious goal of producing three million housing units in 5 years. The “*Minha Casa, Minha Vida*” (My House, My Life - hereafter MCMV) was presented as a solution to two problems: fighting the growing housing deficit and promoting growth in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. The construction sector proposed the program to the federal government, working in practice as a counter-cyclical package to fight the short-term effects of the economic crisis rather than as a consistent policy to promote the right to housing (Nogueira, 2012). According to Arantes (2013, pp.6–7): “The promotion of popular houses is thus presented as a compensatory solution to the Urban Reform that did not occur, and the best way to reconcile capital and labour – since it would benefit both.”

In order to maximise profits, the construction sector targeted the production of houses for middle-income groups. In this context, the production of housing unities for the poor families¹³⁰ has been very restricted (Nogueira 2012). The lack of a solution to a permanent crisis has engendered increasing distrust in the government’s initiatives to reduce the housing deficit. In Belo Horizonte, the institutionalised policies failure to promote access to housing has culminated in the proliferation of new informal settlements. According to Lourenço (2014), more than ten thousand families in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte are living in thirteen occupations constituted between 2008 and 2014. Those occupations are formed by marginalised citizens, unassisted due to inadequate

¹³⁰ According to estimations based on the 2010 Census, families with incomes from zero to three minimum wages a month concentrate 71.6% of the Brazilian housing deficit (FJP and Ministério das Cidades, 2013).

policies and tired of “waiting in the queue” for a house. This phenomenon can be understood as a re-insurgent movement that reveals the fiasco of Brazil's urban reform, effectively failing to promote the “right to the city” to marginalised populations. In this chapter, I point to further limitations of this institutional framework to actually deliver the “*right to urban life*” (Lefebvre, 1968) to disadvantaged populations.

The advancements of the urban reform in Brazil have been sustained by a theoretical framework that conflated the “right to the city” with the right to housing and participatory urban planning. Underpinning this framework is the idea that urban space is produced either through the construction of houses or through planning. Despite the centrality of accessing workspace for the livelihood of marginalised urban populations, the right to the city of informal workers has been mostly ignored in Brazil as well as around the globe (Brown 2015; Schindler 2014). A central point being made here is that the housing and working strategies of the urban poor are connected. That has been shown by focusing on the place-making strategies (Lombard 2015) of informal residents and informal workers. My argument is based on a relational approach to urban informality (see Chapter 3) that reveals how workspaces and the home are built in relation to one-another (Kudva, 2009).

I argue that informal vendors, much like the insurgent citizens arising from the autoconstructed peripheries (Holston 2008), are also building the city which is also rightfully theirs. Firstly, they make place by attaching meaning to space and forming community ties to each other in that place through their work. Secondly, access to workspace is fundamental to urban livelihoods, allowing marginalised groups to belong to the city. Thirdly, income from informal labour is often employed in the autoconstruction process of the home. Considering the Mineirão stallholders, a fourth aspect can be added. In their case, place also embeds the socio-political arrangements that allow the workers to claim access to workspace in non-confrontational ways.

The findings have shown that displacement from the home and from the workspace have similar consequences. Firstly, displacement causes the sentiment of frustration associated with the loss of the home and the community (Atkinson, 2015; Davidson, 2009; Fried, 2000). Secondly, the disarrangement of social networks often impact negatively in the life strategies of marginalised citizens (Yntiso, 2008). Those features reveal the need to think about the articulations between the right to work and the right to the city. According to Crossa (2016, p.299):

In numerous cities across the Global South, governments have sent about altering the nature of the street in the context of trying to attract and generate investment. Whereas this vision of urban change seeks to make the street a space of leisure, in many places in the Global South these spaces are also work spaces, especially for marginalised populations who rely on these spaces for their material and symbolic reproduction.

Her argument resonates with what has been discussed in this chapter. The displacement from workspace constrains the capacity of informal workers to earn their livelihoods, including their ability to afford a place. Additionally, in regards to the stallholders situation, displacement has also dismantled place as the outcome of social, political and economic interactions (Pierce et al., 2011) that had guaranteed their ability to claim urban space for over 50 years. Therefore, the stadium's spatial restructuring also engendered the disruption of those arrangements that produced legitimacy.

In the Vila UFMG case, legitimacy is inscribed in the local legislation that partially recognises the rights of informal residents. The disarticulation of place does not, therefore, impair their ability to claim relocation. Nevertheless, the discussion also sought to demonstrate how this recognition is not straightforward and was dependent on the "rightful resistance" strategies (O'Brien, 1996) employed by residents aid by the Pastoral and the SAJ lawyers. In the legal documents analysis, it is clear that the people's lawyers have employed juridical strategies and arguments that explored the legal innovations introduced post-democratisation (de Sousa Santos and Carlet, 2009). Nonetheless, the judge ruling on the case shows how the judiciary remains a conservative institution, that utilises a restrictive interpretations of the law, which prioritises the defence of the individual private property in detriment of the notion of the social function of urban land (Fernandes and Pereira, 2010). One must recognise the importance of previous struggles in the social movements for housing in the creation of institutions and laws that partially recognised the rights of informal settlement's residents. However, in practice, recent legal innovations introduced as result of insurgency movements (Holston, 2008) have only produced a new space and new strategies for a dispute that remains intrinsically political. Moreover, the legislation also limits the residents' ability to fight for the right to remain in place. Displacement is also shown to disrupt social networks, while contributing to reproduce patterns of socio-spatial segregation.

Although the stallholders have also tried to engage in rightful resistance, negotiating with politicians and articulating claims in legal terms, they face an institutional void. Not only there is no legal-institutional framework that can validate their demands for relocation,

the rights of street vendors to access urban space have become increasingly restricted. Additionally, they do not receive enough support from social movements or other agents (such as the Church or the Public Ministry) that play an important role in the struggles of informal settlements. The Mineirão stallholders' claims are thus mostly rooted on their right to be protected as cultural heritage, that is, as the embodiment of a place no longer existent: the "old Mineirão" and its cultural-historical significance. The workers hence mobilise their place-identities, or the dimensions of themselves developed in relation to the stadium (Proshansky et al., 1983), to claim rights to urban space. This discourse, however, produces a politics of difference (Crossa, 2016) that restricts their ability to form alliances with other street vendors struggling with similar issues to access workspace. Contrary to the housing movement, struggles to access workspace are often atomised, which constrains the capacity of informal workers to push for institutional change.

6.4. Summary

In this chapter, I have explored the connections between the production of space, the law and the capacity of different informal groups to claim their "rights to the city". The discussion builds on the relational approach to urban informality discussed in Chapter 3. I have explored two cases where populations living and working informally suffer displacement spurred by World Cup projects. The discussion has shown how the boundaries between formal/informal are constantly negotiated, while the abilities of distinct "informal" populations to claim rights are influenced by the accumulated struggles of the past.

The discussion has contributed to recent debates regarding the limitations of recent legal-institutional developments implemented since re-democratisation, in Brazil, to tackle social-spatial segregation. I have argued that the urban reform agenda has departed from a restricted notion of urban space production that does not take into full account the place-making practices involved in the livelihood strategies of the urban poor. I have emphasised the connection between working and dwelling informally, exploring how workspaces and the home are constructed in tandem. Moreover, both practices are fundamental in terms of engendering the urban poor's sense of belonging. I thus show how the experiences of displacement from the home and workspace have similar consequences. The discussion has also revealed how place identity can be mobilised as a political claim. Place is thus

underscored as an active dimension in the process through which formal/informal boundaries are discursively constructed.

In the next chapter, I will explore the politics of the middle classes to claim and conserve their spaces in the city. I will show how they are fundamental agents in the regulation of urban space, analysing how their discourses and practices often appropriate arguments engendered by the struggles of the insurgent citizens. I thus show how socio-spatial segregation can also be reproduced by the uneven capacity different groups have to protect their ways of belonging to the city.

Chapter 7 : Conserving the (segregated) city: the role of the middle-class in shaping urban space

Within critical urban studies, cities are analysed as spaces in constant change to accommodate the needs of capital accumulation. Nonetheless, this process is not uncontested, as people react against the commodification of urban land, trying to protect their ways of living and belonging to the city against the creative-destructive forces of capitalism (Harvey, 2008). Not much, however, is said about how different social class groups are more or less empowered to protect their ways of belonging to the city. This chapter contributes to this gap by focusing on the role of middle-class citizens in urban space production. The topic has not received enough attention, especially in the Global South context, where studies have tended to focus either on the elites or the urban poor (Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2013; Mercer, 2016; Schindler, 2016). Although the importance of this social group in shaping urban policy in Brazil has been recognised (Oliveira, 1982), little effort has been made so far to show how middle-class views become influential. In this chapter, I explore the practices, strategies and discourses employed by middle-class citizens in their struggle to affect the making of the city.

The concept of middle-class has been enunciated in several multiple ways and there is no consensus regarding what classify a group as middle-class (Lentz, 2015). In this thesis, I understand class as a “sociocultural phenomenon growing out of industrial relations of production and the modern state”, that also incorporates “notions such as status and habitus” considering their relevance for class relations (Heiman et al., 2012, p.9). Moreover, class is approached not as a category, but rather as a social process (Thompson, 1978): class distinction is hence achieved through a set of practices in which social actors continually reaffirm their membership to a group by distinguishing themselves from others (Bourdieu, 1984). Therefore, considering that society and space are co-produced (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 2005), one must acknowledge the need to incorporate spatial practices into the analysis of such repertoire of boundary making (Mercer, 2016). As argued by Heiman et al (2012, p.26): “Spaces are critical for subject making not simply in terms of marking the physical spatialisation of class” but also because classed subjects are made in those same spaces. A similar argument is made by Zhang (2012, p.214) who states that “socioeconomic differences get spatialised and materialised through the remaking of urban communities.” I

thus understand class and urban spatial production as two processes that are mutually constitutive.

The study of the middle-class outside the Global North has been described as a tricky business (Centner, 2012a; Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2013; Mercer, 2014; O’Dougherty, 1999; Schindler, 2014b). Most of the theories dealing with this concept refer to Europe and the US. Therefore, one interested in the Brazilian middle-class must ask what does it mean to be middle-class in Brazil.

Following the economic “evidence” of a growing “global middle-class” in developing countries (Kharas, 2010), studies in Brazil have discussed the emergence of the so-called “new middle-class” (Neri and others, 2008).¹³¹ However, I argue that the people depicted in this chapter are not part of the “new middle-class”, but rather the traditional middle-class – formed by liberal professionals, civil servants, university professors, small business owners, company managers, etc – whose emergence is connected with the process of industrialisation (Bresser-Pereira, 1962). The political influence of this social group in decisive moments of the Brazilian history – such as the 1964 coup d’état – is well-known (O’Dougherty, 1999; Saes, 1985) but little effort has been made to analyse how they affect urban policy – see Vancellos (1997) for an exception. In order to classify those described in this chapter as “middle-class”, I have relied on my interactions with the interviewees and the information disclosed during interviews. In addition to those, I present socioeconomic information about the neighbourhoods where they live vis-à-vis data for the city and Brazil. Nonetheless, I do not intend to argue that the groups I am discussing represent some ideal middle-class type and that their actions can be extrapolated to represent this ambiguous and politically fragmented group. However, I sustain that the spatial practices of the groups discussed are important for the maintenance of their social class status.

I will explore two cases in detail. The first one concerns one of Pampulha’s neighbourhood associations and their struggles to conserve the city’s heritage, which involve three main topics: (1) the creation of Pró-Civitas and their campaign against the verticalisation of the area surrounding the Pampulha Lake; (2) the spatial restructuring led by the World Cup and the neighbourhood association’s response and; (3) attempts to regulate an informal economy that encroaches on their residential streets, as well as their

¹³¹ This population was said to encompass those that arose from poverty during the 2000s, when the Brazilian economy experienced a period of growth, with decreasing unemployment and inequality rates. The reasoning underpinning the “new middle-class” category has, however, been criticised for relying only on income data. A more multidimensional measure reveals their vulnerability and their close resemblance to the working-classes (Pochmann, 2012).

shifting alliances with the Mineirão stallholders. The second case focuses on the Musas Street residents' struggle to stop the construction of a luxury hotel in their street. Building upon the discussions in Chapter 5, here I look more closely into their political alliances and strategies, focusing on (1) the cooperation between the residents and a local social movement, which was important to escalate their struggle and (2) the resident's use of social and cultural capital to advance their cause.

The rest of this chapter is organised in four sections. Sections 7.2 and 7.3 discuss the two study cases. Section 7.4 introduces a debate about the politics of the middle-class, summarising the contributions of this chapter to the literature. The final section 7.5 presents the main findings of this chapter connecting the debates to the overall objectives of this thesis.

7.1. The case of Pampulha: the neighbourhood association *versus* the “urban predators”

7.1.1. Fighting the speculators and conserving heritage

When the planned city of Belo Horizonte was first inaugurated in 1897, the northern region known as Pampulha was located in the area ascribed for rural usage. The region was completely redeveloped in the 1940s, during Juscelino Kubitschek's term as mayor, who “dreamed of an exclusive neighbourhood around the artificial lake where luxurious homes would mingle with leisure facilities” (Castriota, 2008, p.208). The project was the first partnership between Juscelino and Oscar Niemeyer, then a young and visionary architect who would later become internationally famous for the design of Brasília. According to Segawa (1997, p.292), “Niemeyer first attracted attention as a collaborator in the design of the Ministry of Education and Health building in Rio de Janeiro (1936), produced by a team of Brazilian architects headed by Lucio Costa with Le Corbusier as an advisor.” The Pampulha ensemble,¹³² however, is considered his first significant autonomous work and the birth of the Brazilian modernist architecture style (Segawa, 1997; Segre, 2012). The complex built around the Pampulha Lake has become an iconic mark of Belo Horizonte and one of its most

¹³² The Pampulha Modern Ensemble is formed by a casino, a yacht club, a ballroom house and a church, all surrounding the Pampulha Lake, an artificial lake created in 1936 by the construction of a dam in the Pampulha stream.

important postcard images. In 2016, the Pampulha Modern Ensemble was recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as a site of world cultural heritage. In the long process that led to this recognition, one of Pampulha's neighbourhood association – Pró-Civitas – has played an important role, as it will be explored.

Currently, the Pampulha region is comprised of several neighbourhoods divided into four different sub-regions for administrative purposes (see Figure 7.1). The Pró-Civitas represents the residents of two of Pampulha's neighbourhoods, São José and São Luiz, which are both located in sub-region P-2. Figure 7.2 presents income data for the residents of this area,¹³³ vis-à-vis Belo Horizonte and Brazil. One can notice that, comparatively, those living in this region belong to a higher economic strata. Moreover, according to Census data for 2010, the average density for São Luiz and São José is 3.3 thousand inhabitants per square kilometre, which is much lower than the city's average 7.2. Therefore, one can argue that the two neighbourhoods are low-rise residential areas inhabited mostly by middle-income residents.

¹³³ There is no available data for each neighbourhood separately.

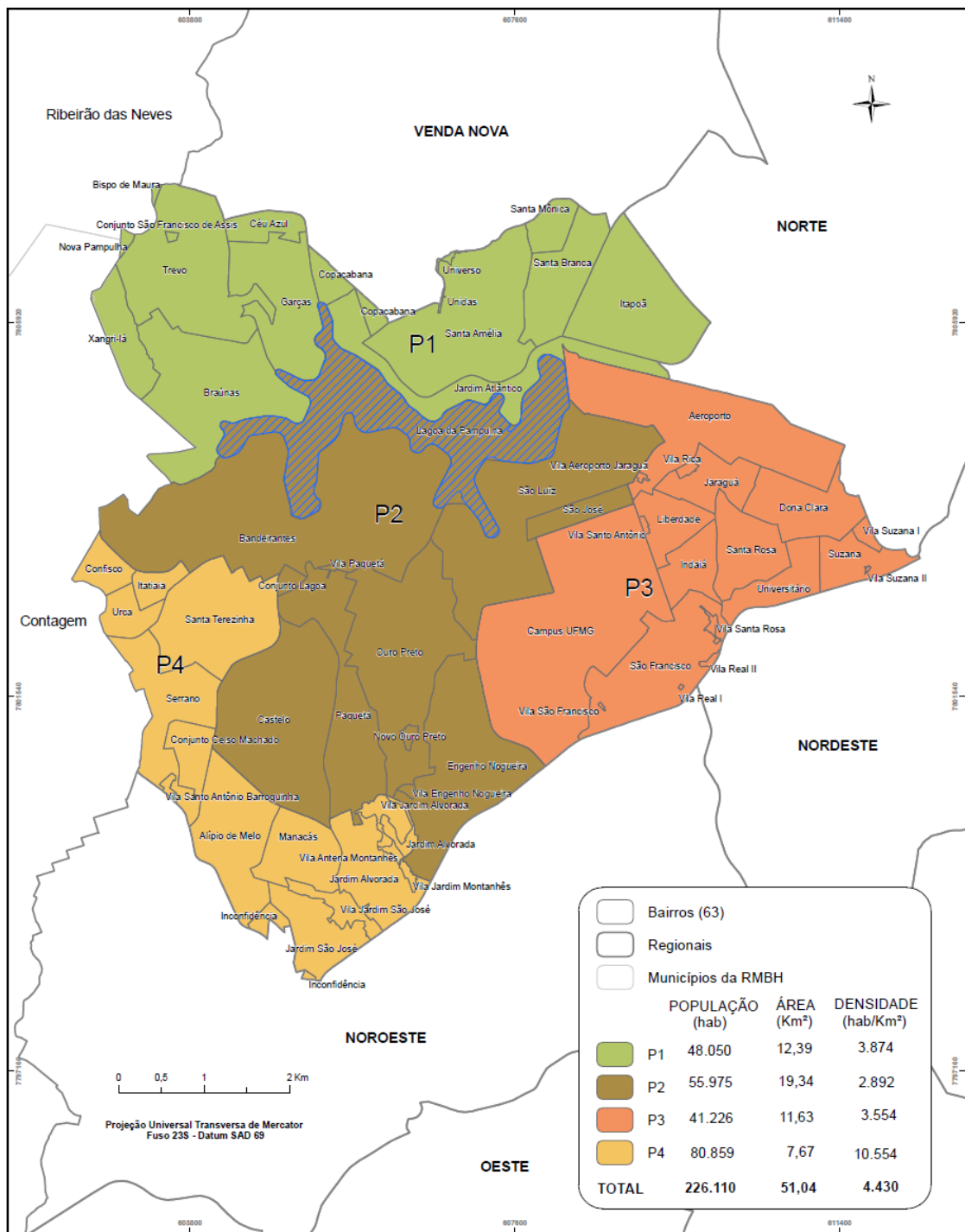


Figure 7.1. Pampulha region: neighbourhoods divided by administrative areas

(Source: Prefeitura de Belo Horizonte. Available at <<http://bit.ly/2wG3qMS>>)

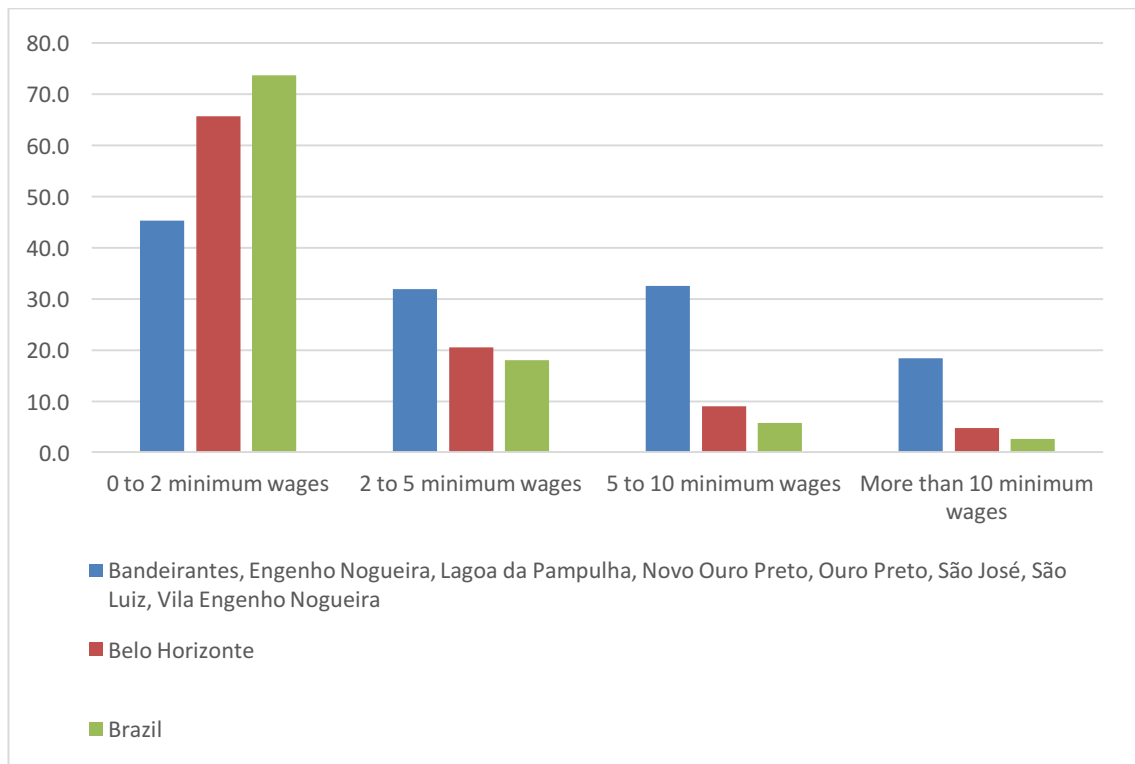


Figure 7.2. Share of the population per income group for 2010: selected Pampulha neighbourhoods *versus* Belo Horizonte and Brazil

(Source: Author's elaboration with data from IBGE and Prefeitura de Belo Horizonte.)

Note: The value of the minimum wage in July 2010, when the Census was conducted, was R\$510 (£187).

According to its president, Julia, Pró-Civitas was created in 2003, due to the increasing concern with the region's visible deterioration. In their website, the association describes current efforts to improve their work: "In order to achieve better results, we have been working together with neighbouring associations to try to enforce the City Statute (Federal Law of 2001), which guarantees citizens the right to participate in the elaboration of the rules of the environment in which they live."¹³⁴ The association's main objectives are described as follows: "to promote the reinforcement of the zoning law (*lei de uso e ocupação do solo*), the respect for silence, environmental preservation, public safety, the better ordering of traffic, urban cleaning, the compliance of public events with existing municipal laws and, the quality of residents' lives and assets." Pró-Civitas has been circulating a small newspaper since 2005,¹³⁵ in which they publicise their work and try to

¹³⁴ Retrieved from <http://www.pro-civitas.org.br/Apresentacao.html>. Accessed on 02/08/2015.

¹³⁵ The publication is available on their website (<http://www.pro-civitas.org.br/jornais/>). In total, 21 issues were published from March 2005 to August 2015, with varying periodicity.

raise citizens' awareness about neighbourhood and city issues. In an interview in the first edition, published on March 2005, the president talked about the greatest difficulty faced by the association.

I would like to have involved more people in our work. Surely our results would have been even more substantial. But the association is still very young and we will get there soon. Certainly, this is the natural course of events when you intend to promote the common good for people with few individual needs. (Pró-Civitas Journal – March 2005, p.7)

It is possible to infer from these that the association represents people that are not demanding minimum rights, but citizens with access to substantive citizenship, that is, that enjoy political, civil and social rights (Marshall, 2009). It is then a challenge to get the middle-class residents "with few individual needs" to get involved. The association seeks to affect public policy and to enforce the "rule of law" in order to promote the conservation of the neighbourhood, improving the well-being of citizens. Moreover, the straightforward mention to the "quality of residents' assets" points towards the entanglement of property-based interests with claims on the rights to affect urban space production.

Investigating the limitations of property-rights activism in China, Shin (2013, p.1183) has pointed towards the multi-faceted "relationship between homeownership and civic virtue." On the one hand, the progressiveness of property-based activism is constrained by homeowners' greater concerns with their own individual lifestyles that disregard more inclusive agendas. On the other, property owners' willingness to engage in political and societal issues that may affect their interests create the potential for more progressive politics. Shin (2013, p.1183) concludes that "homeowners' political interests are centred around preserving (and increasing) property values, leading to fragmented forms of collective action with broken links with wider societal movement." A similar conundrum is observable in the political actions of the Pró-Civitas association in their struggles to protect their neighbourhood.

I met Julia, the president of Pró-Civitas, for two interviews at the association's head office, located inside the building of an aviation company in the region. They have a secretary, a computer with internet connection, and a phone. This is all provided at no cost, as a courtesy of the company's CEO, who happens to be Julia's husband. Before having access to the building, I had my ID checked by a security guard, who let me in after confirming the appointment with the secretary on the phone. After a few minutes of

conversation, a butler dressed in a suit – despite the tropical weather – came to offer coffee and water. In our first interview, she told me about the association’s struggle against the verticalisation of the region, a successful campaign that stopped a change in the city’s zoning law that would have allowed the construction of high-rising buildings in the area surrounding the Pampulha Lake. Figure 7.3 shows a flyer produced by the campaign to invite the wider public for a public demonstration. The logo alludes to one of the region’s landmarks – the São Francisco church designed by Niemeyer – symbolising the connection between the campaign and the willingness to conserve the city’s cultural heritage, threatened by the bill.

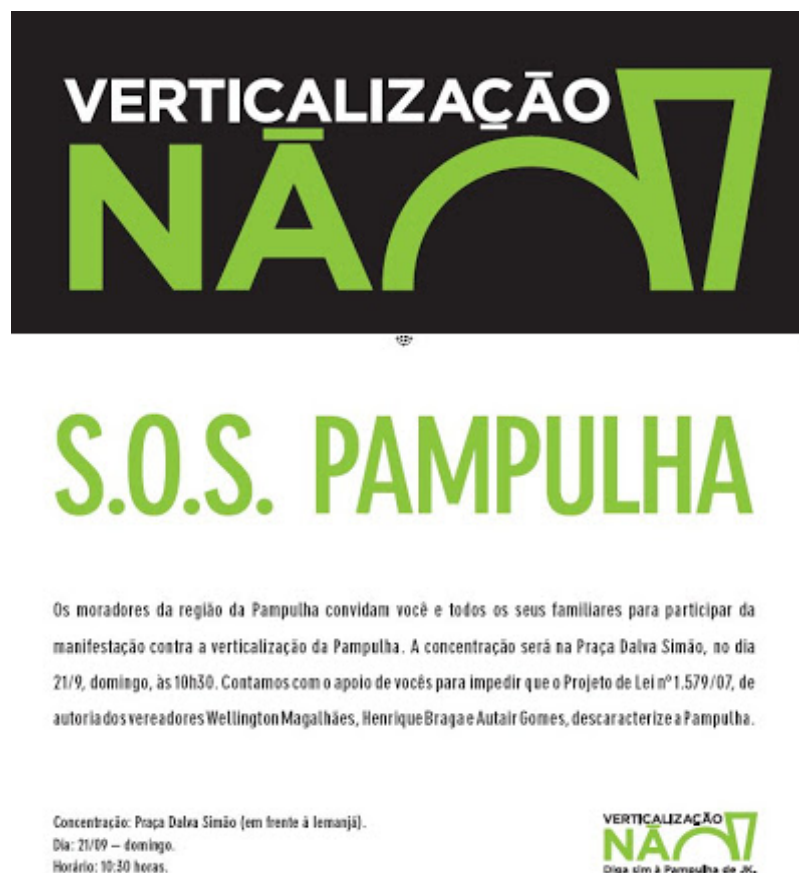


Figure 7.3. “Verticalisation no.” campaign

(Source: Pró-Civitas)

I have discussed the same subject with Alessandra, the association’s treasurer. In their website she is described as a civil servant who lives in São José since 1982, a time remembered with longing: her children were then still able to play on the streets of the neighbourhood. Since then she has observed the continuous deterioration of the region. She hence joined the association because of her belief in the importance of a community

united in the search for the common good. I interviewed Alessandra in her home, a comfortable two-floor house, with a large living room, just a few blocks from the Mineirão stadium. During this conversation, she described the ongoing concern within the association regarding the verticalisation issue.

(...) [W]e have to remain always attentive because the state only works under the pressure of entrepreneurial interests, right? So, now, the legislation is more rigid, but nothing guarantees that [it will remain like this]. In the future, in a short period of time, the pressure might arise from businessmen to make it [the zoning law] flexible again. The association is constantly watching the verticalisation issue. (Interview with Alessandra, Pró-Civitas – 25/08/2015)

From her quote, it is possible to see that she believes the association is protecting the well-being of the citizens against speculators, who act in tandem with the state to promote their interests. The campaign against the region's verticalisation is hence framed by the residents as a wider political struggle contrary to the remaking of the city by private interests. One could locate their efforts in the same ranks as the "urban social movements" described by Harvey (2008), who are "seeking to overcome isolation and reshape the city in a different image from that put forward by the developers, who are backed by finance, corporate capital and an increasingly entrepreneurially minded local state apparatus" (ibid, p.33).

In this regard, the recent recognition of the Pampulha Modern Ensemble as a world heritage site is considered a great victory that will help insulate their neighbourhood from speculative pressures for verticalisation, whilst forcing the government to promote a more effective maintenance of the area. During my second interview with Julia, on August 2016, I have asked her about the involvement of Pró-Civitas in this process. She then told me how she resented the fact that, despite all the effort the association invested in making this happen, their work has not been properly recognised.

The association put a lot of work into this and we should have had more visibility. Then I was thinking that we never took the time to talk about the important work we did. Because if the verticalisation had happened, I don't know how this [the heritage recognition] would have evolved. And the verticalisation did not happen because of our tireless work for the past thirteen years. (Interview with Julia, Pró-Civitas – 24/08/2016)

According to Julia, Pró-Civitas has been one of the key actors promoting the conservation of the neighbourhood and its heritage. They have been effective in protecting the area from speculation and disordered change, although the state avoids recognising

their relevant role. Without their efforts, the heritage recognition by the UNESCO would have been much harder as there would be little left to conserve.

She further argued that the economic pressures to densify the Pampulha region have always existed, despite the concerns of “urbanists” with the irreversible environmental impacts such densification could cause to the Pampulha Lake. Through her involvement with the association, she claimed to have become increasingly aware of the city’s issues, of the lack of planning, and of the dynamics that are behind the chaotic urban growth. She is particularly fond of the work of Candido Malta, an urbanist from São Paulo, that she had the opportunity to meet, whose work she recommended me after explaining briefly the main points of his theory.¹³⁶

So, what kind of planning is that? This urbanist has alerted us to this issue. Look how the city has grown? Who has led the growth? It is the economic interest. Always the speculation. Then he said, “look, notice how speculation is harmful” because you have a place that is still good, then everyone goes to that place, builds apartments and everything. Then you do not plan properly, you deteriorate the region, [then] it begins to devalue. But when devaluation begins, the speculators have already earned their money and gone to another place to speculate elsewhere. So, he calls these people the urban predators because he thinks there are two classes of urban predators, the unconscious ones, totally unprepared people, the *favelas* and such, and the others who are aware, who are doing that to make a profit, with no concern for the city. (Interview with Julia, Pró-Civitas – 24/08/2016)

It is interesting to notice how the elite and the poor are joined in the same category in her interpretation. The role of the middle-class is then to fight against the depredatory practices of those trying to make a profit or, alternatively, trying to make a living. Discussing the Brazilian middle-class in the early 1990s, O’Dougherty (1999, p.153) has identified how these citizens “construct a political identity founded on a moral code versus one depicted as opportunistic and corrupt in Brazilian government and society.” In this case, one can observe the same traces of “moral superiority” (O’Dougherty, 1999) that authorises the good citizens to safeguard the city and the public interest from the two groups of “urban predators”. In common, both groups have the disrespect for the laws, which the association struggles to enforce. In the campaign against the verticalisation, Pró-Civitas has fought against the first class of predators, the speculators who destroy the city for profit. In the

¹³⁶ Candido Malta is a professor at the University of São Paulo’s School of Architecture. It is important to emphasise that I do not believe this description is an accurate portrayal of his ideas, but rather a personal interpretation, which is the relevant part for the analysis.

next section, I explore how they have dealt with the second, the urban poor who struggle to make a living while disregarding the law. The discussion reveals a few of the contradictions in the political practices of this middle-class group.

7.1.2. Volunteer regulators of the urban space

Since its foundation, one of the most enduring battles of Pró-Civitas is against the chaos produced around the Mineirão stadium. Throughout its existence, Pró-Civitas has filled several lawsuits against the regional state agency that managed the stadium. They have complained incessantly about the excessive noise created by the open-air events hosted with no legal permits, which the residents claimed to disrespect the relevant municipal legislation. All the lawsuits were extinguished by a judge ruling in 2011, against the plaintiffs. One of the arguments was that the raised issues would be considerably altered after the stadium's modernisation for the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

For Pró-Civitas' president, that is very ironic, considering that the situation is much worse now. "It was a disaster. For Pampulha it was a disaster..." (Julia, 24/08/16). She and the other residents I interviewed were emphatic to say that the refurbishment of the stadium was a tragedy for the region. As already discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, the Mineirão before the renovation was surrounded by an open space where a dynamic informal market was established. When the stadium was closed in 2010, this informal local economy was dismantled but the presence of street vendors during matches and other non-sportive events is as strong as ever. After the stadium's re-inauguration, in the absence of the informal market organised by the Mineirão stallholders and any other suitable alternative, the football fans got in the habit of remaining in the outside area of the stadium, hanging out on the streets of the surrounding residential neighbourhoods. They arrive many hours before the event and remain outside, buying drinks from street vendors and even promoting private barbecues on the street. Figure 7.4 pictures football fans buying drinks from a street vendor, whereas a police car is parked very close by, showing how they carry on their activities despite the presence of the police.



Figure 7.4. Football fans on the streets of Pampulha and the “after-party”

(Source: Pró-Civitas)

Talking about this issue during an interview, Marco, the president of the Pampulha Council, emphasised the recent changes triggered by the refurbishment. Firstly, the stadium’s capacity has decreased from 130,000 people to 61,846. Secondly, the availability of parking space was reduced. This fact would not be an issue considering the smaller capacity, but other changes have increased the demand for parking slots. Thirdly, the new “Multipurpose Arena” is now run by a private company – Minas Arena – that manages the stadium as a for-profit business. Finally, the new management model has led to a considerable increase in the price of tickets, triggering a change in the profile of the typical visitor. In the new stadium there are no more popular seats (*geral*) and, on average, the supporters have greater purchasing power. This last point is a central piece of the puzzle, according to Marcos.

When you change the profile of the supporter, which is now a fan that wants to go by car, which is a supporter that consumes more, that demands more services, food, drinks... Then, you highlight a structural problem of the Mineirão: the surroundings of the Mineirão do not have the appropriate conditions, it does not have appropriate services to meet this large public that remains on the outside [area before the beginning of the matches]. (...)

Then you start having the conflicts, such as the issue of the irregular trade, of the clandestine trade of drinks and food, but especially drinks. (Interview with Marcos, Pampulha Council – 23/12/15)

The situation described by Marcos has caused the fury of the Pampulha middle-class residents, who complain non-stop about the messiness and trouble caused by the presence of dozens of street vendors and thousands of drunken football fans hanging out on their doorsteps. For Julia, the situation is comparable to her dystopian views of Indian cities.

Julia: There is a resident that says this is getting similar to India. Do you understand?

Me: In what way?

Julia: If you analyse coldly, do you have an idea of how are the streets in India?

Me: Only superficially, I have never been there.

Julia: Dirtiness, do you understand? Disorder... that is it.

Me: Several street vendors in the streets...

Julia: Disorder, messiness, dirtiness... it is very sad. It could be very different. (Interview with Julia, Pró-Civitas – 24/09/15)

Facing this situation, residents have constantly demanded actions from the local government to reduce the impacts of the stadium occupancy on their neighbourhood. They use their influence to pressure the Pampulha Council to control the “irregular trade” of drinks promoted by street vendors and the actions of football fans that organise private barbeques on the street. Their claims are justified by the 2003 municipal law (Code of Placements) that explicitly prohibits the activity of street vendors in public spaces and the use of utensils (such as barbeque grills) on public streets (see Figure 7.5). During the interview, I pointed out to Julia that, although illegal from a strictly juridical point of view, the presence of informal vendors was always a characteristic of the stadium. To which she responded:

Yeah, but when you have an inspection system that works, you can inhibit this a bit, right? (...) Because if it is illegal, right? I have heard from one resident the following idea, nowadays everything that generates income is allowed. In a little while drug trafficking will be allowed, because it generates income. No one thinks about the following, is it legal? Is it allowed? Are you obeying the rules and the norms? Then you pretend like you do not see it, do you understand? We must have order, people. We must have respect. Do you understand? In the old days, we used to learn: the rights of a person end where someone else's begins. It is impossible... now everything is allowed. (Interview with Julia, Pró-Civitas – 24/09/15)



Figure 7.5. Banner from City Hall: “Barbecue grills and any objects on public space are prohibited. Law 8,616/03, Art, 6th A and 17th (Code of Placements)”

(Source: Picture taken by the author)

She thus compares street vending with drug trafficking on the basis that they are both illegal and, therefore, those engaging in such activities should be punished by the state, whose role is to enforce the rule of law. Her statement reproduces the discourses identified by O’Dougherty (1999, p.158), who has discussed how middle-class Brazilians tended to “emphasise their morality in contradistinction to an unjust state and society: they devalued and mistrusted both.” This is not, however, a particularity of the Brazilian middle-class. For instance, a similar point was made by Liechty (2012, p.271) about the Nepali middle-classes who “continuously located themselves in a social-moral middle-ground while locating their class Others in a morally compromised social location ‘above’ and ‘below’ themselves.” The role of the middle-class becomes, hence, to regulate both: the untrustworthy others and the state.

In her discourse, Julia did not mention the socioeconomic status of street vendors or the importance of this “irregular” activity for their survival. Her grievances against informal workers can be located on recent debates regarding the potential of the middle-classes to “act in opposition to or in solidarity with those named as ‘poor’” (Lawson, 2012, p.1). Talking about Indian urbanism, Roy (2012, p.26) holds a pessimistic view:

(...) the making of the ‘world-class’ city has hinged on violent evictions of the urban poor – of squatters, vendors, pavement dwellers. Such forms of erasure and

exclusion have been supported by the urban middle classes as a reclaiming of the 'good city' and as a protection of the urban commons. This theme of spatial order, championed by the middle-classes, shows how the political activism of the middle classes often eschews class rhetoric and takes up civil society causes.

The comparison drawn by Julia between Belo Horizonte and Indian cities can be hence stretched to also cover the middle-classes of both countries. Pró-Civitas discourses and practices are articulated around the need for "spatial order", whereas their actions are justified by the importance of civic engagement in the making of urban policy. Although there is no open statement against poverty, one can perceive the association between street vendors and "dirtiness" in Julia's discourse. In a way, the situation resembles Ghertner's (2015, p.79) debate about the incorporation of "nuisance talk" in urban policy. His work looks particularly at how these "everyday depictions of slums as dirty, uncivil, and out of place (...) travel into and gain legitimacy in popular representations and state visions of urban space." Similarly, in this case, the discourses of the neighbourhood association are also assimilated by state policy.

As discussed previously, one of Pró-Civitas' main goals is to pressure the state to enforce its own rules. In their task to dismantle this burgeoning informal economy, the residents turn to the Pampulha Council with their complaints. The council's inspection office¹³⁷ is the responsible for the regulation of Pampulha's urban spaces. The residents are thus in constant contact with Marcia – the office director – who cultivates a very good relationship with Pró-Civitas. In my interview with Marcia, we have talked extensively about what she calls "the Mineirão operation", meaning the joint efforts of her team and other government agencies – such as the police and the city's traffic company (BHTRANS) – to regulate the occupation of urban space during the event days in the stadium. Although the regulation of street vendors' activity is the responsibility of the city inspectors, they are assisted by policemen during match days. The military police, which is controlled by the regional government, acts in partnership with the inspection agents to prevent irregularities, providing them with security to perform their role. This operation, Marcia says, has been the biggest challenge for her office since her appointment in February 2014. In her narrative, she has greatly emphasised the cooperation with Pró-Civitas. According to Marcia, one of her greatest achievements in 2015 was the praise she received from the

¹³⁷ The *Secretaria Municipal Adjunta de Fiscalização* (Inspection Office) is a sub-secretary of the Urban Regulation Secretary. The office was created in 2011 as part of the increasing efforts of the City Hall to regulate the urban space, a topic discussed in Chapter 5.

association in a letter for her efforts to meet their demands. After my request, she printed a copy of the letter, while also reading extracts from its content.

So, it goes like this: “Relevant improvements have been observed in the residential areas leading to a reduction in the number of residents’ complaints. Much more is yet to be achieved, but the work executed thus far makes us optimistic.” So, this is cool. I was very happy when I received it because it shows that we are on the right path, that we are not being negligent. (Interview with Marcia, Pampulha Council – 16/12/15)

This shows how the local government is attentive and influenced by the demands of the residents, even measuring the success of their actions in relation to the association’s opinions and judgements. Not only the residents’ remarks are proof of good government, but they also take part in the government’s actions themselves, contributing to the efficiency of their operations. For instance, as Pró-Civitas’ treasurer has told me, the association has a WhatsApp group that congregates the residents and representatives of the military police responsible for their area. Alessandra explained the dynamics of the group, which is used both during match days and for everyday security complaints.

It is a group that works like this. Any irregular situation that a resident sees, s/he writes in the group. Immediately the police send someone to investigate and they reply here in the group [explaining] what was the issue about. (...) [Regarding] the big problem that we have here during the event days at the Mineirão, there is also a constant exchange. On the day, there is a huge influx of messages from the residents denouncing irregular situations. The commander always answers with the actions that were taken to address the complaints, you know? (Interview with Alessandra, Pró-Civitas – 25/08/2015)

On one hand, her quote shows how the residents act as assistants to the police, spotting irregularities and passing on the information. On the other, it also reveals how the police act as their private security force, directing their resources to address demands pre-selected by middle-class citizens. This situation exposes how middle-class views of the “good city” and their demands for spatial order (Ghertner, 2014; Roy, 2012) affect everyday state action. Middle-class citizens have privileged access to state agents and through those interactions, their “sensibilities enter the day-to-day culture of governance” (Ghertner, 2014, p.198).

Marcia has also discussed the residents’ role as regulators of urban space, helping her office perform more efficiently by directing the efforts of her team to places where wrongdoings have been spotted.

Marcia: I talk with them almost every day. So my relationship with them is a good one. I represent the state, and this is my view: I am really here to serve. So, they have to demand, and I have no problem with that. (...) Moreover, they also help me. During match days, they tell me: “in this and that street, [there is] a vehicle suspected of acting as a deposit for products.” (...)

Me: Do they work as volunteer inspectors?

Marcia: I call the team in the same minute: “on this or that corner there is a group making a barbeque or this and that.” Then I can manage the team and optimise the resources. They help me. (Interview with Marcia, Pampulha Council – 16/12/15)

The residents are thus deeply involved in the regulation of the neighbourhood’s spaces. Through their association, they have developed partnerships with several government agencies, which see their claims as legitimate, although not always being able or willing to meet their demands (see Chapter 5). They also act as the state, denouncing irregularities and mobilising its apparatus to influence and control the occupation of urban space. This discussion exposes the blurriness of state-society and public-private boundaries. As argued by Mitchell (2006, pp.175–176): “The power to regulate and control is not simply a capacity stored within the state, from where it extends out into society. The apparent boundary of the state does not mark the limit of the processes of regulation. It is itself a product of those processes.” In a similar note, Sending and Newmann (2006, p.658) have engaged with Foucault’s (1991) concept of governmentality to argue that “the self-association and political will-formation characteristic of civil society and non-state actors do not stand in opposition to the political power of the state, but is a most central feature of how power operates in late modern society.” Middle-class citizens, in this case, are thus found embodying state power to regulate urban space according to their own standards.

Partially as a way to further combat the irregular occupation of the neighbourhood streets hence meeting the residents’ demands, the local government has launched a public bid to create a new market in the outside area of the Mineirão. This non-ideal solution was met with distrust by the residents who argue that such market should be placed in the stadium’s esplanade, which is the area – now enclosed and privately managed – where the stallholders used to operate. For that reason, Pró-Civitas has declared its support for the Association of the Mineirão Stallholders’ (hereafter ABAEM) demands for relocation.

On the 3rd of August, 2015, I had a meeting with two members of Pró-Civitas regarding the issues of the Mineirão stadium. During our conversation, I never mentioned the movement of the stallholders, but the subject was brought to the table by the residents themselves once I asked them about the use of the stadium’s esplanade.

Me: In this case, do you believe opening the esplanade would solve part of the issues?

Claudio: Yes, it [the crowd] would become concentrated [in the esplanade]. And there is another detail. In the past, when we had the old Mineirão, there were the so-called stallholders. These stallholders were registered by the City Hall, regulated by the health surveillance [local agency] and everything.

Innes: Just adding a parenthesis, they are immaterial heritage... cultural [heritage], right?

Claudio: Immaterial [heritage]...

Innes: Cultural and immaterial [heritage].

Claudio: Appointed by the Federal University. That is, these guys are recognised as services' providers. And [this is about the] preservation of a tradition that was really always there, of the *tropeiro* there and everything. These people cannot work anywhere anymore.

Innes: They have no space.

Claudio: And we are supporting them, we already had two or three meetings with them. We think that it would be ideal to place them [in the esplanade], in a legalised, structured [way], with toilets and everything. (...) And the people would have their right to resume their work and make their money. Nowadays those who make money are the restaurants that, in the past, did not sell much - there were not many [restaurants] also, now there are more, the flanelinhas [car watchers], and the people with the thermo boxes [street vendors] that are illegal. (Meeting at Pró-Civitas – 03/08/15)

They thus differentiate the stallholders – properly licensed and controlled by the local health surveillance agency – from the “illegal” street vendors. Nonetheless, as I have discussed before, the stallholders were also “informal”, from a strictly legal perspective. Moreover, after losing their historically occupied space, many stallholders became street vendors and are, therefore, part of both “categories”. The residents also reproduce the discourse of cultural heritage associated with the *tropeiro*, which is deployed by the stallholders and their allies to legitimise their claims to relocation. Therefore, the discourse of the residents reveals an ambiguity. They are against the street vendors, because they are illegal, but support the stallholders, although their situation is not different – as far as legality is concerned.

This debate points toward the role of the middle-classes in the regulation of informal spaces. As argued by Schindler (2016, p.250), “the state is simply one of a number of actors struggling to regulate activity, land-use and service provision.” He emphasises that middle-class neighbourhood associations are part of the local governance regime that also engage in the process through which formal/informal boundaries are drawn. In his account, residents act as consumers that legitimise informality. In this case, however, middle-class

citizens employ (in)formality as a discursive tool to (de)legitimise uses of urban space according to their own ideas of how the neighbourhood space should be ordered. The same discourse is employed both to support and to antagonise the urban poor. This discussion also shows how “the designations ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ are not ontologically given categories” (Schindler, 2014a, p.2597), but rather “strategic discourses” employed to categorise “the informal as a residual category” in need to be either controlled or silently tolerated (Crossa, 2016, p.300).

Despite the opposition of the residents to the public market, the City Hall has launched a bid to select new stallholders. Although unhappy about it, the residents have not engaged in any public demonstration, leaving to the stallholders the task of protesting while loosely declaring support for the workers’ demands. The environment director of Pró-Civitas has talked about this issue. Fred, who is an engineer, has lived in the region for more than twenty years and joined Pró-Civitas in 2012. In his statement, he has commented on their relationship with the stallholders’ movement.

I think it is not up to our neighbourhood association, to get involved in this. If it will be the old stallholders or the new ones, I believe they should solve that among themselves. Because otherwise we create animosity if we say we support the old [stallholders], the new ones coming can get into a fight with the residents. And if we say that we support the newcomers, the old ones can also say “why did we work here for all our lives?” So I told him [Pedro, the ABAEM’s leader] that as far as the bid is concerned, I did not want to get involved. I defend their return, but how they will organise themselves, that is a problem for their association [to decide]. Nevertheless, what we are totally in favour of and we are fighting for is their return to the esplanade. (Interview with Fred, Pró-Civitas – 25/08/2015)

According to Fred, although the association is “fighting” for the return of the stallholders to the esplanade, the situation is quite different when the street market is under discussion. The discourse regarding their cultural heritage or their rights based on their previous arrangements – manifested before by other members – is replaced by an understanding that equates the old and “new” (selected through the bid) stallholders. It also seems to imply that ABAEM – the “old” stallholders’ association – has any say on who gets the slots, which is not the case. The residents are willing to lobby for the solution they believe will improve their own situation, but not as keen to “get involved” when it does not. Their alliance with the stallholders is hence a way to strengthen their own demand for the installation of a market inside the stadium’s space, a solution that would enhance the neighbourhood’s spatial order by attracting football fans to the stadium earlier. To justify this demand, they convey legitimacy to the stallholders’ movement, which becomes

“cultural and immaterial heritage” and “licensed workers” with a right to relocation. The support fades or gets weaker when it is about their relocation to the streets, a solution that is seen as non-ideal. In this case, it does not matter as much if the “old” or the “new” stallholders will occupy the slots, they are all the same.

The relationship of Pró-Civitas with the movement of the stallholders is thus twofold. The residents use (in)formality as a discursive tool to legitimise the ABAEM workers, separating those from the “illegal” street vendors (Schindler, 2016). Rather than an act of solidarity between the middle class and the urban poor (Lawson, 2012), this differentiation is better understood as a boundary shaped by the residents’ own aspirations for spatial order (Roy, 2012). They support the stallholders’ relocation to the esplanade, a public space, but not to the streets, which are perceived as an extension of their private homes. The regulation of the neighbourhood space could thus be interpreted as a process through which middle-class residents use (in)formality as a discursive practice to (de)legitimise different uses of urban space in order to produce the “right kind of city” (Centner, 2012a).

7.2. The case of Musas street: the weapons of the “good citizens”

7.2.1. Fora Lacerda: fighting against urban entrepreneurialism

Since the city’s inauguration, the South-Centre region has been occupied mainly by the upper and upper middle-classes. After the 1940s, when state-led spatial restructuring and industrialisation were unfolding in Belo Horizonte, the area became an axis of expansion, maintaining the original class composition. Located in this area, the Santa Lúcia neighbourhood was mainly formed in the 1960s and 1970s, when new roads connected the region to the city centre. Recently, a “new metropolitan periphery” is being formed in the region, following worldwide tendencies of urban dispersion (Limonad and Costa, 2014). Such expansion is “associated with residential dispersion in luxury developments” (ibid, p.127) catering for the wealthy.

Figure 7.6 shows the location of Santa Lúcia within the South-Centre region, which is divided into five administrative areas. Figure 7.7 presents socioeconomic data regarding the C4 sub-region where the neighbourhood is located. One can notice the small proportion

of low-income residents in the area vis-à-vis the city and the country. Moreover, over 60% of the population is concentrated in the middle-income groups, showing the strong presence of the middle and upper-middle classes. The region presents low density (3.08) in comparison with Belo Horizonte (7.4). Therefore, the area is similar to the Pampulha region: characterised by low density and the predominance of middle-income residents.

In the context of the preparations for the 2014 World Cup, the area was selected by a private developer for the construction of a five-star hotel. The characteristics of the region were perfect for the real estate investment, which benefited from alterations in the local legislation. The hotel would be located at Musas street, but the residents have opposed the building, which was never built. In Chapter 5, I have explored how they have engaged with the state through formal channels to delay the construction until it became unfeasible. In this section, I will focus on their strategies in more detail to show how they were able to transform their cause into a citywide problem, building an alliance with local social movements.

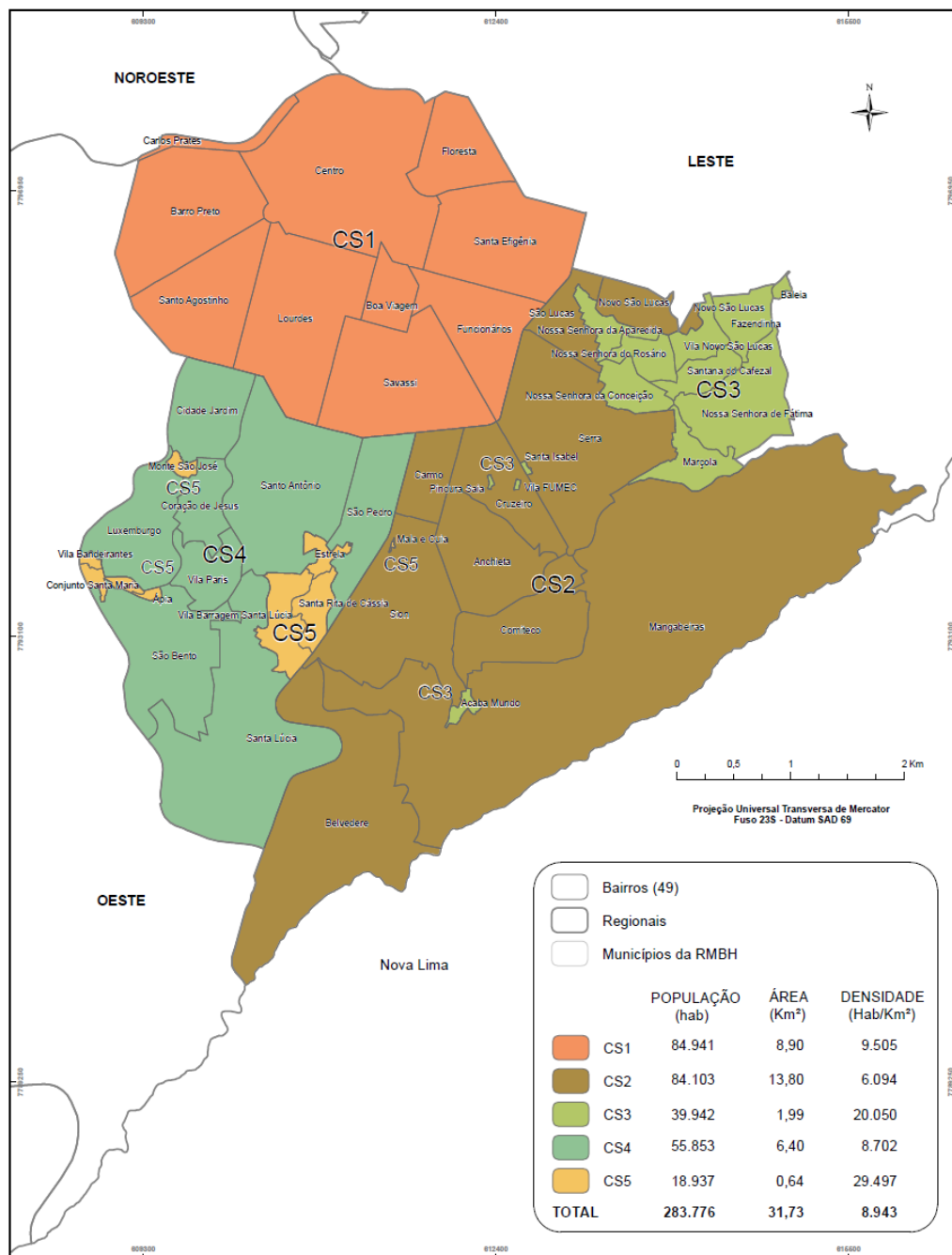


Figure 7.6. South-Centre region: neighbourhoods divided by administrative areas
 (Source: Prefeitura de Belo Horizonte. Available at < <http://bit.ly/2wG3qMS> >)

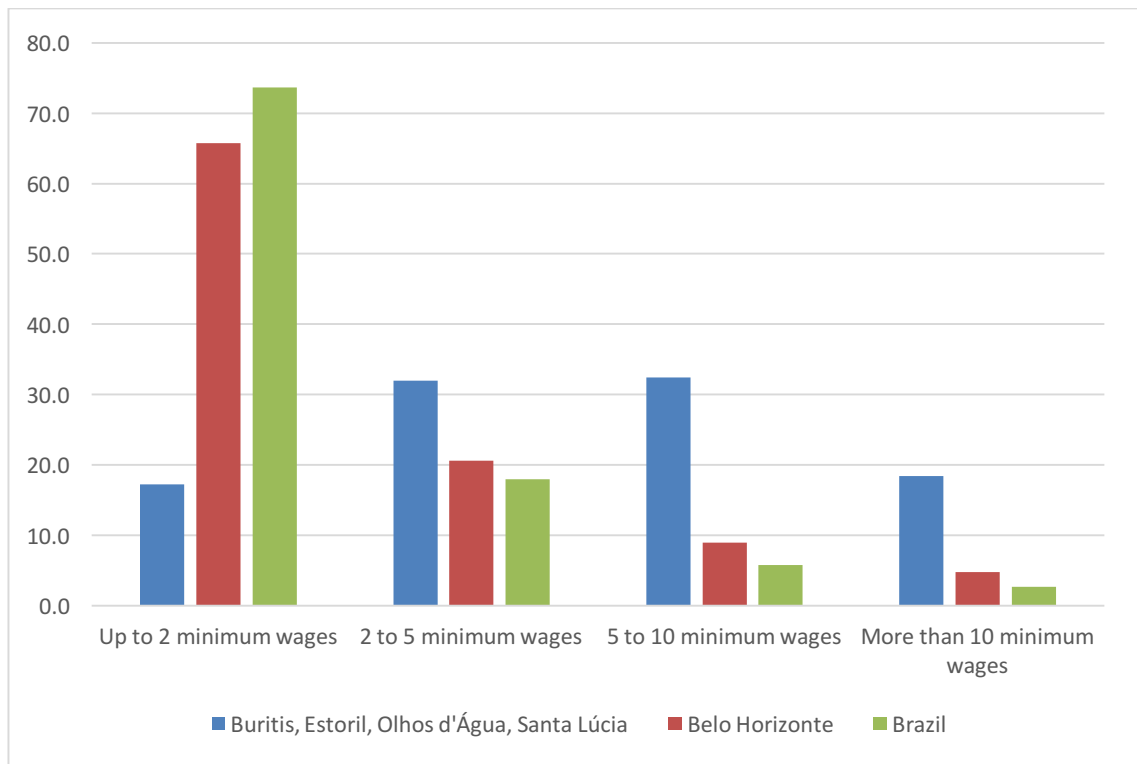


Figure 7.7. Share of the population per income group for 2010: selected neighbourhoods in the South-Centre region *versus* Belo Horizonte and Brazil

(Source: Author's elaboration with data from IBGE and Prefeitura de Belo Horizonte.)

Note: The value of the minimum wage in July 2010, when the Census was conducted, was R\$510 (£187).

The first attempt of the residents to gather support for their cause was not successful. They were unable to get help from Santa Lucia's neighbourhood association because some of its members were in favour of the hotel construction. This was particularly the case of Mariana, a local councilwoman, who was also the vice-president of the association and favourable to the project. The construction was thus not an issue for all the residents, revealing how the middle-class is not a politically cohesive group.¹³⁸ Without the support of their local association, the residents resorted to other forms of organisation. In the following quote, Professor Antonio, who was the leader of the *Salve a Musas*, talks about his initial efforts to raise the awareness of his neighbours and the initiative of creating a website (see Figure 7.8) to mobilise others.

Then, I wrote a letter for my neighbours using an argument that I knew was going to affect people. [I argued] that the construction of the hotel in the street would

¹³⁸ This point has been made Davis (2010) who rejects essentialist arguments about this group while seeking to understand differences within this heterogeneous social class.

devalue our houses. I don't think this is the most important, (...), but I needed [to use this argument] to convince them, right?

(...)

But then, in reality, around five... half a dozen people agreed on doing something. My son, who knows how to do things on the internet said: "No, let's do something on the internet, create a web page, and create a movement". He then gave the name to the movement "*Salve a Musas*" (Save the Musas) and created the page in which people could access, write, etc.

(...)

Then we started the movement, and when it appeared on the internet, a bunch of people started accessing and this and that. It is impressive this internet thing. (Interview with Prof Antonio, *Salve a Musas* – 04/09/15)



Figure 7.8. *Salve a Musas* website

(Source: Salve a Rua Musas <<http://bit.ly/2ydtik6>>)

He thus describes how the residents first created the movement independently. Although not being personally interested in the impact of the project in his assets, he believed that this was an important argument to convince his neighbours. Professor Antonio is thus aware of the "intense possessive individualism" (Harvey, 2008, p.32) that turns property values into the main concern of middle-class citizens, using it as a strategy to draw their attention to a wider cause. The movement, in the absence of any sort of organisation to mediate their concerns to the local state, has used the Internet as their primary space for mobilisation.

As explored in Chapter 5, the success of the *Salve a Musas* movement was much connected with their ability to show how the hotel construction would cause negative impacts for the city and even the metropolitan region. The Internet was a very important channel for the residents to escalate their struggle, turning a matter that was at first glance a problem for five or six residents into a much wider issue. Figure 7.8 shows a snapshot of their website, in which the impact of the hotel in the intense traffic of the region is emphasised. On the top part of the picture, one reads: “The population needs to intervene. We want development, but we need planning. Our traffic problem is much more serious than the lack of beds for the World Cup.” The residents, hence, argue that the hotel construction is not only their problem, using the impact on traffic as a strategy to gain support.

In their website, as well as in other actions, the residents of Musas Street were very critical of the mayor, Márcio Lacerda, who was said to be responsible for privatising their street (see Figure 7.9). This argument, in addition to the connections between the project and the World Cup preparation, resonated with the grievances of a local grassroots movement that was just taking shape at that point. As discussed in Chapter 2, Lacerda was elected thanks to an extraordinary informal alliance between the Worker’s Party (PT) and the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), two political parties that had been – and remain – historical rivals. Soon since the beginning of his mandate, the politician became *persona non grata* among many of the social activists in Belo Horizonte. His government was often described as authoritarian, whilst promoting real estate speculation through urban planning (Mayer, 2015).



Figure 7.9. Banner at Musas Street: “Márcio Lacerda sells Musas street and approves construction, if the traffic is bad, it will become worse”

(Source: <<http://bit.ly/2xvRS2O>>)

In the end of 2009, the mayor signed a decree¹³⁹ that prohibited public events in one of the most iconic squares of the city, the *Praça da Estação* (Station Square) (Migliano, 2013). This square had just been recently renovated and it was constantly used for open concerts and other public events. This prohibition triggered a wave of spontaneous protests in the beginning of 2010, gathering a group of people in the square with the objective of challenging the decree and re-appropriating public spaces (Franco, 2016). According to Dias (2015, p.89), the movement “offered a new form of civil-political expression, by proposing an urban intervention with performances and festivities.” The protests were humorous and involved turning the square into an improvised beach (Mayer, 2015; Migliano, 2013). People arrived in colourful bathing clothes and parasols, using the square’s fountains to refresh themselves in the middle of Belo Horizonte’s hot summer. The movement became known as *Praia da Estação* (Station’s Beach) and still happens during the summer (see Figure 7.10). It is useful to emphasise a few points about the *Praia da Estação*. Firstly, it became an important space for those opposing Lacerda’s government. Secondly, these protests were aimed specifically at the right to occupy urban space, explicitly connecting such claim with

¹³⁹ Municipal decree No 13,798, September 9, 2009.

discussions about the “right to the city” (Lefebvre, 1968). Finally, these movements were not organised around demands for minimum rights, neither were they connected with typical class-based agendas. Nonetheless, it is not farfetched to affirm that this space was mainly visited by the educated middle-class youth (Dias, 2015; Franco, 2016; Migliano, 2013).



Figure 7.10. *Praia da Estação*

(Source: Priscila Musa)

In June 2011, this grassroots opposition to the local government culminated in the creation of the *Fora Lacerda*¹⁴⁰ movement (see Figure 7.11). This group was an independent and nonpartisan collective that emerged within the *Praia da Estação*, bringing together those dissatisfied with Lacerda's administration (Rena et al., 2013). For those critical of his government, the case of Musas street was a straightforward example of the mayor's wrongdoings. Moreover, the creation of the group coincided with the news regarding the sale of the street. As narrated by Professor Antonio in the following extract, the residents became involved with the *Fora Lacerda* through his contact with a student of the federal university where Antonio is a well-known and well-liked professor.

Then, one day a student wrote to me. I don't know if he was in my class or if he just knew me. I think he was a law student. [He wrote] inviting me to come to a meeting that they were organising at the Law School. It was the *Fora Lacerda*. So, I went to

¹⁴⁰ In Portuguese, *fora* means “out” in the imperative. The name of the movement is thus a demand: the protesters wanted Lacerda out of the government.

one of the meetings (...). I thought it was really funny because there was a large crowd with 500 thousand subjects, including the people from this Sunday market.¹⁴¹ When it was time to leave, the guy [representing] the market... It was actually a man and a woman ... They came to talk to me and said: “Before, they used to say that we were Márcio Lacerda’s worst enemies. Now it is you.” Then we went to all the *Fora Lacerda* events. We went to everything. We made some banners [saying] “Musas street”, and we carried them in the middle of the demonstrations. (Interview with Professor Antonio, *Salve a Musas* – 04/09/15)



Figure 7.11. *Fora Lacerda* flyer: “BH is not your company.”

(Source: *Fora Lacerda*)

The case of Musas Street became thus an argument for those dissatisfied with Lacerda’s elitist and managerial style of government (Rena et al., 2013). Many of the issues which were central to the platform of the *Fora Lacerda* were identifiable in the hotel project: the privatisation of public spaces, the under-the-table agreements with private developers, and the use of urban planning for promoting urban speculation. On the other hand, the *Fora Lacerda* became a relevant space for the *Salve a Musas*, which was originally formed by half a dozen discontented residents. This mutually beneficial alliance is discussed in the following quote by Jose, an active member of many local social movements, who I interviewed because of his connection with the Local Committee for a People’s World Cup (COPAC).

¹⁴¹ He is referring to the *Feira Hippie*, a traditional market that takes place every Sunday at Afonso Pena Avenue in the centre of Belo Horizonte.

The *Salve a Musas* movement took advantage of the context of the *Fora Lacerda*. It was fundamental. When there was the attempt to donate... to sell the street for the hotel construction... right in the beginning: it was the boom of the *Fora Lacerda* movement. (...) So, then, both movements took advantage of that to say: "We are against a mayor who sells streets to build hotels for the World Cup". It summarises what was wrong with his administration. For the [Musas Street] movement it was very important to have access to a space as multiple as it was the *Fora Lacerda* and so significant. When it was booming, the *Fora Lacerda* promoted demonstrations with 3 thousand people. (Interview with Jose, COPAC/*Brigadas Populares* – 20/10/15)

Therefore, it is possible to see how a movement that initially concerned a few residents of a street, became a citywide issue. The particularities of the case, especially the negotiation involving the sale of the street, turned it into a symbolic example of entrepreneurial urbanism (Harvey, 1989). As discussed by Jose, the situation "summarised" the issues with the local government. It is hard to infer how relevant for the success of the residents this alliance was, but it is fair to assume that the publicity did not harm their cause and probably gave them bargaining power.

The *Fora Lacerda* movement emerges as a "zone of encounter" (Lawson, 2012) between multiple actors that were being affected by local government policies. It created a potential space for cross-class alliances around struggles for the "right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1968), against practices of urban entrepreneurialism. This urban movement can be regarded as an "invented space" described as "grassroots-led forms of (often combative) participation and political mobilisation that are largely demonstrated by collective action functioning in confrontation (rather than concertation) with authorities" (Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2013, p.95). Those stand in contrast with institutionalised state-centred arenas for "citizen participation and urban management" (ibid, p.95) which are known as "invited spaces". If in Chapter 5 I have explored how the residents of Musas street engaged with the state through invited spaces, this section has explored their connections with invented spaces. Moreover, their actions also disrupt Chatterjee's (2004) civil/political society binary, which as noted by Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal (2013), are roughly organised around class: while the poor engage in the 'old politics', the elites politicisation is exerted through the new forms of civic engagement. What this case shows, therefore, is that residents are willing to "employ whatever strategies will achieve their goals" (ibid, p.102). In the next section, I explore how middle-class citizens also deploy the same weapons of the enemy.

7.2.2. Lobbying for the common good

The defence of legality was one of the main arguments used by the street residents to challenge the hotel construction. In this process, they were not alone, as the Public Ministry (MP) became an important partner, giving legitimacy to their legal claims. Roberta, one of their partners in the MP, has explained to me the sources of their support for the residents. She also questioned the law that altered the construction parameters of the area, allowing the hotel construction.

It [the law] has a serious problem, first because it has authorised urban operations anywhere in the city, right? This is not viable because the City Statute says that when you create an urban operation you must delimit the affected area. And they [the government] were saying that you could apply the urban operation criteria anywhere in the city, with no consideration to whether the infrastructure would be able to accommodate. (Interview with Roberta, Public Prosecutor – 28/10/15)

An urban operation is an instrument regulated by the City Statute.¹⁴² Among other things, it allows changes in the zoning law to meet structural urban transformations, social improvements and environmental protection. Nonetheless, the law refers to the city's *plano diretor* (Master Plan) as a guide that describes the areas that can be targeted by urban operations.¹⁴³ Roberta, thus, raises the issue that the municipal law which allowed the hotel construction is in direct contradiction with federal law (the City Statute) and municipal law (the Master Plan).

Another argument connected to that was explained to me by Mateus, who was one of the most active members of the *Salve a Musas* movement. Currently, he is also the president of the Movement of the Neighbourhood Associations of Belo Horizonte (MAM-BH).¹⁴⁴ I first met him in September 2015 at his house, located on Musas Street. He has a law degree but does not practice law and has mainly worked as a small businessman. We talked for more than two hours, sitting outside in his barbecue area facing the pool, which was glistening in the strong sunshine. According to the city's planning regulations, he

¹⁴² Although being regulated by the City Statute, the federal law did not create the instrument that has been used by many cities before 2001 (Maricato and Ferreira, 2002).

¹⁴³ Among other features, another relevant point is that the urban operation should involve the affected population in the discussion process and also define measures to mitigate the impacts. (Maricato and Ferreira, 2002)

¹⁴⁴ The MAM-BH is an umbrella institution that serves to connect different associations from all regions of the city. In their website they are described as “a political movement with no connection to any political parties, which intends to integrate the various neighbourhood associations (...) in the search for and strengthening of participatory democracy in Belo Horizonte.”

explained, the street is part of an environmentally protected area with restrictions on densification. Moreover, the region has been expanding quickly in the last few decades and would not accommodate any further pressures to the already chaotic traffic. Later in the interview, Mateus talked about the possibility of another construction in the area.

(...) [I]f it is within the legality, there is nothing to be stopped. What we want is for the question to be treated with transparency, respecting the parameters that are allowed by the legislation and not only... and [also considering] the well-being of the population, the public interest. Because sometimes you might be respecting the legality, but it [the project] will affect so much the people that circulate here that the approval of any construction could not be justified. (Interview with Mateus, *Salve a Musas/MAM-BH* – 19/09/15)

Therefore, apart from the strict “legal” perspective, he also claims that the well-being of the population and the public interest should be respected. Legality is not the only condition that should be fulfilled. The affected population must have a say and even a project that respects the laws should not necessarily be sanctioned by the state, which is the institution in charge of safeguarding the public interest. Mateus is thus claiming the right to affect the boundaries through which (il)legality is produced. Discussing the struggles of the middle-class to shape urban space, Centner (2012a, p.248) has noted that “different groups that invoke middle-class labels attempt to distinguish and mobilise around visions what they see as the right kind of city, often with very specific discourses of liveability, morality and citizenship.” The “right kind of city” must thus be produced in relation to the public interest, which is best represented by the good citizens who have the moral stance to defend the common good.

In their struggle to preserve the public interest, the residents of Musas street were helped by Eduardo Santos, a regional deputy that is also their neighbour. His role was important for their strategy of moving the environmental process from the local level to the regional level, which delayed the process and it was thus important for their success (see Chapter 5). During an interview, he talked about his role in the case.

Justice be made, my participation was minimum compared to what the family you have mentioned [Professor Antonio’s family] did. Why? Because they were able to build a support triangle. First, the son, (who is a genius, if I may say so, in the art of digital media) he was able to use an instrument that was not very common in the city of Belo Horizonte at that time. He created [a website that had] a very important effect to form an opinion, [to disseminate] the rejection of the city hall’s proposal [to sell the street]. I am talking about Pablo. His father and his mother [on the other hand], [were responsible for] allying technique to mobilisation. Both come from the federal university, enjoying respectability for their formation and for not having any sort of political involvement.

(...)

In that case, the direct consequence and effects [of the hotel] would be felt by a small parcel of the population, practically one street. But they managed to turn something micro into macro (...) because they showed that the project impact would be architectural, environmental, visual, sonorous and in the traffic. And they've managed to make the movement take shape, but also to slow down the environmental process (...). (Interview with Eduardo, regional deputy – 13/10/15)

In his narrative, the regional deputy has emphasised the reputation of Professor Antonio and his wife as academics, which has vouched for the respectability of their characters and the cause they were defending. Such features are assets that were made more effective by the use of the internet, a resource that was still not very commonly utilised for this type of political activism before. Additionally, through their strategies, they were capable of turning a “micro” impact into something that surpassed their immediate interest. That was mainly due to the alliances they have built (with local politicians, the MP, the Institute of Brazilian Architects (IAB) and the *Fora Lacerda*, to name the most relevant), drawing from their personal social networks. Moreover, as educated people, they had the access to the knowledge necessary to substantiate their claims.

The discussion shows how at least two elements associated with the “middle-class” have played a fundamental role. Firstly, “morality” (Liechty, 2012; O’Dougherty, 1999) emerges as an important feature to validate the residents’ demands. Their respectability is fundamental to convey legitimacy to their cause, which is not about their own interests, but the common good. Secondly, the access to social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984) – social networks and education – allows residents to escalate their struggle. For Bourdieu (1984), those forms of capital are just as relevant as economic capital in the reproduction of social class. Moreover, as argued by Centner (2008, p.197), urban space is shaped by “groups with differentiated access to forms of capital” that make use of those to make claims thus fashioning “particular kinds of places.” Therefore, one can say that, in this case, access to different forms of capital are relevant to claim space, which is in itself an element of class distinction (Zhang, 2012).

Moreover, the internet became an important space where they could publicise their arguments, which also helped escalate their struggle. I have interviewed Pablo, who created the website, in his apartment located at Santo Antonio, a middle-class neighbourhood in the South of Belo Horizonte. We talked for more than an hour, as he showed me the videos he produced for the *Salve a Musas* movement while discussing the consequences of the case in his personal life.

Then there was a voting at the City Council. The second round of voting was happening soon afterwards and at that time (...) there was still no [record of] internet activism (*ação web*) to pressure the councilmen [in Belo Horizonte]. (...) Then I had the idea of creating a website to protest the sale of the street. (...) To tell you the truth, after this whole business with the street, at least from my point of view... I had a software development company before. Then this issue of the street sale happened and this was more or less how I've learned to do political marketing: defending the cause of the Musas street. After this, I ended up changing my company completely to work with political marketing, then I worked with political campaigns and everything. (Interview with Pablo, *Salve a Musas* – 11/09/15)

The website created by Pablo was very important to disseminate the information about the case and to turn their struggle into a citywide issue. As already discussed, it was an important vehicle to mobilise the support of a much larger movement, giving bargain power to the residents and “scaring” the politicians, as commented by the developer during an interview. As described by Pablo, through his involvement in the *Salve a Musas* movement, he learned how to work with political marketing, an area of work on the rise in Belo Horizonte. He then changed the direction of his business, perceiving an opportunity to explore this market niche. Eventually, his company was hired by the very same politicians that were criticised for their involvement in the hotel project.

At that time, because of these political things, I was already working for the governor, Alberto Pinto Coelho (PSDB). Then I talked about this with him and he said “Look, I am not going to interfere, but I will call the Secretary of the Environment and I guarantee you that if there was any pressure from one side, there won't be any longer,” do you understand? Then, for instance, the governor went there and called him [the secretary]. In the end, the regional state authorised [the project], but adding a million demands that would take a long time, a bunch of things. Also at the city hall, we started making a few contacts, this and that. So, I think that we were able to do this very well... We've beat him [the developer] in his own game a little bit. (Interview with Pablo, *Salve a Musas* – 11/09/15)

Apart from disseminating information and helping to escalate their struggle, the website has also opened an unexpected channel for political lobbying for the residents' cause. The traffic of influence that they claim was used to seal the hotel deal is also employed to further the interests of their movement. Although it is not easy to say how much this has actually influenced the process, Pablo has chosen to talk about his contact with the government during the interview, implying he was able to “play” the developer's “game” as well. This further reveals the importance of social and cultural capital for the politics of the middle-class. Moreover, it puts the “morality” of the “good citizens” in check, showing how they might also have privileged access to higher levels of the state (Ghertner, 2014) through

informal channels. As argued by Lentz (Lentz, 2015, p.15): “Members of the middle class generally see their success as dependent on their own efforts rather than on social networks or ‘corruption’ (for which they blame the upper class).” This discussion has shown how the politics of the middle-classes might also bear some resemblance to the practices of the “immoral” elites.

7.3. The politics of the Brazilian middle-class: claiming the “right kind of city”

The scholarship on the middle-classes “once heralded as the main forces behind industrialisation, urbanisation and bureaucratisation but then somewhat neglected by social scientists (albeit not by historians), has experienced a renaissance, this time on a global scale” (Lentz, 2015, p.14). Such renewed interest has been spurred by claims on the “explosion of the world middle class” (Das, 2009, p.89). Historically, this social class “has been thought of as the source of entrepreneurship and innovation—the small businesses that make a modern economy thrive” (Kharas, 2010, p.7). However, there is little consensus regarding what being middle-class means, especially outside the Global North context. As argued by Centner (2012a, p.250), “there is a wide variety of definitions given to this group across different national and local contexts.” Before moving to any further debates, I will thus provide some context regarding the middle-classes in Brazil in a historical perspective, focusing on their political engagements.

In the Brazilian case, Bresser-Pereira (1962) has argued that the middle-class makes its first appearance in history after the independency. Following the Declaration of Independence (1822), the necessity to organise the state produced new functions that gave rise to “a silent but growing middle class” (Bresser-Pereira, 1962, p.315). After the 1930s, the industrialisation process and the implementation of reforms (such as the labour law) engendered the development of a services sector and an internal market, which represented new employment opportunities for the middle-class. Moreover, the complexification of the state apparatus, as well as the foundation of important state-managed companies created new suitable positions for this emerging social group (Bresser-Pereira, 1962).

This “urban middle class” has grown considerably during the so-called Brazilian Miracle, a period of accelerated economic growth observed during the dictatorship (1964-1985). This period was also characterised by brutal repression and violation of human rights,

increasing inequality through the control of wages, especially in the base of the income pyramid, and exclusion of the popular masses. Nonetheless, as discussed by O'Dougherty, (1999, p.155): "It is well known that many middle-class Brazilians supported the 1964 coup d'état and the authoritarian government, and that the middle and upper middle-classes were the beneficiaries of the blossoming consumer society that emerged from the 'Brazilian [economic] miracle' of 1968-1973." The collapse of the developmental regime and the economic crisis that followed have, however, quickly turned the middle-classes against the authoritarian state.

In this context, the rising discontent with the dictatorship and the emerging protests for democracy walked hand-in-hand with middle-class' grievances (O'Dougherty, 2002). In the early 1980s, massive demonstrations for re-democratisation (*Diretas Já*) emerged in several cities around the country. The urban middle-classes joined the popular masses in those protests, which were partially responsible for the end of the dictatorship in 1985 (Martins, 2000). Despite the change in regime, the 1980s and 1990s were characterised by inflation and growing unemployment. As noted by Caldeira (2000, p.55):

[M]ost people experienced the late 1980s and early 1990s with pessimism, uncertainty, and disillusion. Most could not recall another time when things had been so bad, not even the military years, which people remembered as a time of political repression tempered with economic prosperity.

Economic instability was deteriorating the living standards of the middle-class, who began to see the government with increasing distrust while anxious about keeping their social status (Caldeira, 2000; O'Dougherty, 1999). For O'Dougherty (1999) the many failed attempts of government policies to control inflation and resume economic growth have eroded the support for state intervention in the economy. The success of the Real Plan in July 1994 to end inflation increased the popularity of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the plan's architect, who won the presidency in that year. His government promoted a shift in the Brazilian development model, abandoning the "import-substituting model of the past 60 years in favour of a model based on market reforms and a drastic reduction in the role of the state" (Power, 1998, p.51). His neoliberal agenda was widely supported by the middle-class who also rejected his main opposition, Lula, as a representative of the working-classes whose government would be more likely to promote "special interests rather than the good of the nation" (O'Dougherty 1999, p.167).

This discussion shows how the political relevance of the Brazilian middle-classes in key moments of the recent past has been historically recognised. Despite that, little account

of the role of this social group in shaping urban policy has been observed. Critical urban studies in the country, inspired by the urban Marxist sociology – especially the work of Castells on “marginality” (Arantes 2009) – have tended to explore the conflict between the elites in coalition with the state and the marginalised working-classes who were said to be excluded from the city, but essential for the development of dependent capitalism (Oliveira 2003). Nevertheless, in the context of the dictatorship, Oliveira (1982) has claimed that Brazilian cities were increasingly being shaped by the demands of the middle-classes. Departing from a Marxist perspective, he identified a new class structure arising from the industrialisation process evolving under economic dependency. He argued that the growing presence of international companies in the country has produced many opportunities of employment for the emerging middle-classes. This group has created new demands within cities, which the authoritarian state was happy to meet in exchange for their political support. Most of the investments were thus directed to build cities for the middle-classes, while the voices of the poor were repressed by the regime.

Although recognising the importance of the middle-class in shaping urban space, Oliveira (1982) does not explore the channels through which their demands produce material outcomes. His discussion thus resembles recent studies about the new Indian middle-classes who Ghertner (2014, p.177) has criticised for creating “the assumption that the emergence of this new elite in and of itself explains the consolidation of the ‘world class’ city-building project at hand.” In order to identify which forces are shaping cities, he argues, one must reveal the political mechanisms that allow the demands of the middle-class to gain fruition.

This task has been partially taken by Vasconcellos (1997), who investigated the transformation of São Paulo into a middle-class city during the dictatorship. His work focused on the reshaping of the city space to accommodate the lifestyle of the emerging urban middle-class who privileged the use of cars in opposition to the public transportation system. In the context of authoritarianism, “the middle classes were the partners selected to support modernisation” (ibid, p.294) and their needs gained prominence in the decision-making process. Middle-class interests “were represented, inside the state, by transportation planners and engineers who promoted the ideology of modernisation and transformed the entire urban space to ensure better circulation conditions for automobiles” (ibid, p.294). He thus concludes: “Despite the powerful influence of economically and politically dominant sectors, middle-class sectors also have efficient ways of interfering with public policy decisions” (Vasconcellos, 1997, p.301).

Following re-democratisation, many windows for popular participation have emerged, culminating with an intense social mobilisation and debate around the elaboration of the 1988 Constitution (Caldeira and Holston, 2015; Maricato, 1988). Since then, Brazil has experienced a continuous process of urban reform, with the introduction of legal and institutional changes at different levels of government. This process has engendered the creation of new “invited spaces” (Cornwall, 2004) for participatory democracy. Exploring the case of São Paulo, Caldeira and Holston (2015) have shown how citizen participation in those arenas are organised around class-based groups, unevenly empowered to affect final policy outcomes. Their work sheds some light on the entanglements between social class and citizen participation in urban space production. The topic, however, has not received enough attention either in Brazil or in other Global South contexts. As noted by Lemanski (2017, p.101):

(...) [R]esearch on urban socio-economic trends, processes and policies in Africa, and the Global South more broadly, has focused on urban spaces and citizens that represent the extremes of wealth. This is demonstrated by bodies of literature addressing informal housing/slums for the poor on the one hand, juxtaposed against research on high-income elite forms of often privatised and secure forms of housing on the other.

This chapter has sought to contribute to this debate by switching the focus from the elite and the poor to those in-between (Lemanski, 2017). However, unlike Lemanski (2017) I do not reject the term middle-class but, on the contrary, I am interested in how social class and urban space are co-produced (Mercer, 2014; Zhang, 2012). I have examined the politics of organised citizens “with few individual needs” who also claim their right to “participate in the elaboration of the rules of the environment in which they live”. In both cases discussed, middle-class citizens struggle to conserve their neighbourhoods against change. They argue for the “right to the city”, that is, the right to participate in the process through which urban space is produced. Moreover, they also engage in struggles against the elites in coalition with the state, accused of destroying cities for profit. Those features seem to point towards a progressive type of property-rights activism (Shin, 2013) in which middle-class movements act in solidarity with the urban poor (Lawson, 2012) to produce more inclusive and socially just cities.

In the case of the groups analysed, however, it is not easy to determine if the politics and the effects of their actions are progressive or conservative as far as spatial segregation is concerned. As explored by Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal (2013), among others, it seems that “ambiguity” is what characterises the political action of those in the “middle”.

The panorama resonates with what Saes (1985) has discussed regarding the Brazilian middle-classes and their political role in crucial moments of the Brazilian history. He has argued that the interventions of the middle-classes do not happen in a unitary, but rather in a fragmented way. They are placed between the elites and the popular classes and both can mobilise their political force. In the cases analysed, I show that middle-class demands are organised around their own motifs, which can fall in different places on the political spectrum.

Whilst claiming their “right to the city” and protecting their neighbourhood against change led by real estate capital, middle-class citizens in both cases were able to mobilise the alliance of progressive social movements. In their campaigns against the densification of their neighbourhoods, residents have managed to escalate their struggle and turn them into a citywide issue. Their discontentment with state-capital alliances to alter zoning laws to accommodate investments (Vainer, 2015) resonates with the critiques of local activists against urban entrepreneurialism practices. Such social movements provide legitimacy to their causes, while also engendering political bargaining power.

In order to validate their demands, the middle-classes also engage with both street politics and institutional channels, challenging the civil society/political society binary (Chatterjee 2004). This feature has been discussed by Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal (2013, p.101) in their analysis of the Indian middle classes who, they conclude, “simultaneously employ both political and civil society strategies, with no gradation according to class, willing to use any method necessary to achieve their goals.” In addition, the discussion has also shown how the residents are also able to employ political lobbying to advance their causes, a strategy that is often associated with the promiscuous relationships between state and capital in the context of urban entrepreneurialism. Much like the elite, middle-class citizens are also able to negotiate outside the channels of participatory democracy. They draw from social networks in order to have access to state agents, who are receptive to their demands. Such practices are not understood as political patronage, but rather as signs of civic engagement and good governance. This point resonates with Ghertner’s (2014) discussion on middle-class participation in urban governance for the case of India. He found that recent changes in the local government structure have created opportunities for middle-class residents to have privileged contact with local state officials who strive to solve their complaints.

The political practices of citizens described in this chapter can be aligned both with the elites or the poor, drawing from different strategies and discourses to legitimise claims to urban space. In this process, they are often positioning themselves against speculation and urban development, but also against the urban poor. Legality emerges as a discursive practice that can mediate their claims joining speculators and the urban poor in the same group of “urban predators”. Middle-class residents act as the “good citizens” whose high moral standards authorise them to enforce the law, disrespected by the state, the elites and the urban poor alike. In this regard, the discussions in this chapter also point to the importance of non-state actors in the production of (in)formality as a discursive practice (Crossa, 2016; Schindler, 2016). Middle-class citizens use informality to (de)legitimise uses of urban space according to their own ideas of how the city should be organised.

In both cases analysed, the wish to conserve middle-class ways of belonging to the city seems to be a driving force of residents’ political actions. Nonetheless, as noted by Centner (2012b), the articulation of citizenship discourses to legitimise claims over urban space can sometimes lead to the reproduction of inequalities. Conserving middle-class spaces, in this regard, also contributes to the reproduction of social class itself (Zhang, 2012). That resonates with what Mercer (2016) has discussed regarding the relationship between the making of middle-class spaces and its association with class boundary-work. I thus argue that the conservation of middle-class spaces is part of such a repertoire of practices that seeks to (re)produce middle-class distinction. Although in these cases residents are not effectively “building” urban space, they struggle to shape it in accordance with their own notions of spatial order (Roy, 2012). In their discourse, these citizens are protecting the city and the well-being of the population, but those concepts are articulated in relation to the needs of their own class. This point was discussed by Centner (2012a, p.247) whose work focuses on “conflicts over the use and signification of space” in Brazil, Argentina and Turkey. He has argued that although middle-class citizens in these countries articulate claims around the “right to the city”, those are translated into “an exclusive right to the city, crafted essentially as the circumscribed property of a certain group” (ibid, p.248). Therefore, the conservation of middle-class spaces is also about the conservation of a certain middle-class lifestyle, which is constructed in relation to space and urban belonging.

Looking at the case of São Paulo in the 1980s and 1990s, Caldeira (2000) has described how the economic crisis and rising criminality rates have engendered new patterns of socio-spatial segregation that could not be captured by the classical centre-periphery dichotomy. São Paulo, she argued, was becoming “a city of walls, with a

population obsessed by security and social discrimination” (ibid, p.232). In her analysis, those walls were both material and discursive. In order to safeguard their social position, the middle and upper-classes were struggling to differentiate themselves from the lower classes. The proliferation of fortified enclaves is thus understood in this context. For Caldeira (1996, p.303) those citizens confined in privatised space were “abandoning the traditional public sphere of the streets to the poor, the ‘marginal,’ and the homeless.”

In this chapter, I have dealt with middle-class citizens who want to be part of the city. They claim the right to shape the urban space, to affect the environment where they live. Nevertheless, they also want to fashion places in accordance with their own views of “the right kind of city” (Centner, 2012a, p.248), building in the process a much more subtle type of wall. These middle-class citizens do not want to leave the *polis* but rather to engage in the political arena to conserve middle-class spaces. To some extent, such middle-class politics are symptomatic of the class struggles in Brazil, as demonstrated by current political events. Recently, the political relevance of the middle-classes has become once again evident in the process that led to the controversial impeachment of the elected president, Dilma Rousseff. Under the unifying moral claim against corruption, the middle and upper classes went to the streets to demonstrate their support to what has been regarded by many as a political coup d’état. The new government has, since then, implemented a neoliberal agenda with austerity measures that will most probably deepen the Brazilian historical pattern of inequality.

7.4. Summary

In this chapter, I have explored how middle-class citizens articulate to affect the way urban space is shaped and regulated. I sought to contribute to the task of considering how the politics of those in the “middle”, neither poor nor elite, can also have an impact in the way urban space is produced. This discussion is directly connected with what was first concluded in Chapter 5 regarding the different abilities of citizens to access the state and have their demands validated. It also connects with discussions in Chapter 6, showing how the relationships between the middle-classes and the urban poor, living and working informally, are often ambiguous. Moreover, this discussion has shown how middle-class citizens mobilise many resources, alliances, tactics and discourses to validate their claims. Although they position themselves as the bastions of morality, their politics are not limited

to the institutional channels and can resemble those deployed by the urban poor (street politics) and the elite (political lobbying). Middle-class politics are neither necessarily progressive nor conservative, but they seem to aim at conserving their place in the city and, thus, their own middle-classness.

If cities are in constant change to accommodate the needs of capital accumulation, it is paramount to analyse the ways in which different social groups are able to protect their ways of living and belonging to the city against the forces of capital. Although not always successful, middle-class citizens in this study had more access to resources and were thus more empowered to participate in the politics of urban space production. In this way, the historically formed socio-spatial inequality persists. More attention by critical scholars is needed to understand this complexity of democratisation and progressive urban social movements, and how extant segregated socio-spatial patterns are reproduced.

Chapter 8 : Conclusion

This thesis has analysed the politics of urban space production in the city of Belo Horizonte/Brazil. The main goal was to discuss how different citizens – informal workers, informal residents and middle-class dwellers – struggle to belong to the city. I understand space as a relational concept, produced as the outcome of a complex network of interwoven social relations in multiple scales (Massey, 1993). Following this approach, I have used the spatial restructuring generated by three World Cup-related projects in Belo Horizonte to reveal the contested nature of the city's production. The rearrangement of spatial forms dislocated "power-geometries" (Massey, 1993), causing 'affected' citizens to interact with the state to renegotiate claims to space. I thus interrogate who has the right to remain in place. That is, who has the right to shape the city according to their necessities, views, and desires?

In order to investigate such conflicts, I have engaged critically with postcolonial debates that propose the understanding of urban informality as the prevalent mode of space production in the Global South (Roy, 2005, 2009a). In this perspective, different "illegal" uses of space are legitimised by the state, portrayed as the sovereign who holds the power to create exceptions to its own juridical order. In this thesis, I proposed a modified relational approach that recognises the blurriness of state-society boundaries and the dispersive nature of power (T. Mitchell, 2006; Painter, 2006). Informality arises as the outcome of multiple interactions between state and non-state actors (Hackenbroch, 2011; Schindler, 2014c). Moreover, drawing from the Brazilian experience of "insurgent citizenship" (Holston, 2008), I have argued that space, state and citizenship are (re)produced in tandem. Past struggles from urban social movements in the country have shaped legal-institutional channels of participatory democracy, expanding the rights of marginalised populations, albeit imperfectly. In this sense, informal spaces and citizens are the product of state practice just as much as they both modify the process of the state. This relational approach was employed in the analysis of three case studies involving conflicts over formal/informal uses of space, regarding work, housing and planning practices.

To conclude this thesis, in the first section, I will summarise the main findings of each empirical chapter. In the second section, I present the main contributions of this research organised in two topics: (1) postcolonial urban studies and (2) the (re)production of socio-spatial segregation. This thesis ends with a coda, in which I present an agenda for future

investigations and discuss the current political scenario in Brazil, reflecting on the potential challenges and opportunities ahead.

8.1. Citizens, state, and space

8.1.1. The limits of sovereignty and the uneven power of citizens

This thesis has explored interactions between different citizens – informal workers, informal residents, middle-class dwellers – and the state in their attempts to claim rights to urban space production. Chapter 5 has approached this topic building on empirical findings from three case studies concerning different types of “informality” – work, housing and planning – and social groups – the urban poor and the middle-class. I explored these groups engagement with the state, demonstrating the uneven distribution of power to shape formal/informal boundaries. (In)formality thus emerges as the product of the engagement between unevenly empowered citizens and multiple instances of the state. I emphasised that it matters how and by whom claims on space are made.

The urban poor are political subjects who participate in the making of formal/informal boundaries. Nevertheless, their strategies to access workspace and secure housing have diverged historically. Moreover, different forms of engagement with the state – encroachment *versus* insurgency – produced distinct outcomes. Informal workers have claimed space through circumstantial arrangements with multiple state agents; street vendors explore the fractured nature of the state, which operates through overlapping institutions and agents. Although informal workers’ “quiet encroachment” (Bayat, 2004) of space guarantees provisory access to workspace, such strategies are not aimed at the creation of rights. Spatial restructuring dismantles such arrangements and, in the absence of legal-institutional frameworks to recognise rights, workers seek to “re-encroach” space. The non-collective strategies of street vendors differ from the organised struggles of the “insurgent citizens” (Holston, 2008) for the right to housing. This thesis has shown how the state process has been affected by the insurgent citizens, who seized the opportunity created by re-democratisation to push the boundaries of the law towards the recognition of informal housing practices. Therefore, in Belo Horizonte, local state policy has evolved in opposing directions in relation to informal housing and informal workers’ access to urban

space. That influences how struggles develop once informal workers and informal residents face displacement. The criminalisation of street vendors stands in contrast with the (partial) recognition of the rights of informal dwellers. Nevertheless, the institutionalisation of informal residents' rights comes as a mixed blessing: it guarantees minimum compensation in the face of displacement while constraining the possibility of insurgency. Becoming a citizen also entails adhering to rules and accepting what is prescribed by the law.

While the first two cases, as summarised above, have concerned the urban poor and their strategies to validate informal claims to space, the third case has focused on the struggles of middle-class residents to challenge the local state's attempt to create "informality from above" (Roy, 2009a). The discussion revealed how the state does not have unlimited power to create exceptions to its own juridical order for the promotion of capital accumulation. Despite the efforts of a state-capital alliance to promote an "exceptional" (Vainer, 2015) real estate project, middle-class citizens were able to push back the boundaries of the law. The processual nature of the state is exposed by the use of instruments and spaces created from insurgent struggles to advance the contrasting needs of capital and those of the middle-class. Power is thus dispersed and citizens can affect the making of formal/informal boundaries. In this study, middle-class residents draw from resources such as knowledge and social networks to challenge the state. They are empowered to use arenas of participatory democracy to protect their ways of living in the name of legality and the public interest.

8.1.2. The urban poor and the making of the city

In Brazil, the struggles of the "insurgent citizens" (Holston, 2008) emerging from the autoconstructed peripheries (Maricato, 1979a) fostered one of the most advanced urban legislations in the world (Fernandes, 2007a). This regulatory framework has been widely celebrated for being one the finest attempts to incorporate Lefebvre's ideas into public policy (Fernandes, 2011a). In this thesis, I have explored the limitations of this juridical-legal framework to promote the urban poor's right to the city, comparing the two cases of displacement involving informal workers and informal residents. The discussion emphasised how the informal practices of those groups enjoy different degrees of legitimacy. I explored how the existence of such legal frameworks affected differently both the place-making

strategies and the displacement of these two groups living and working informally in Belo Horizonte.

The existence of progressive legislation does not guarantee rights, but neither has it left the conditions of the struggle unchanged. The existence of juridical-institutional frameworks regarding the rights of informal dwellers influences the production of settlements' spaces. Moreover, apart from being the language of state power (Marston, 2004), the law can also be deployed by those resisting and challenging the state. People's lawyers and activists defending the legal entitlements of the urban poor have learned how to use the law and the quirks of the judiciary system to protect the rights of marginalised citizens. In this process, they face entrenched and conservative understandings of property rights reproduced by the judiciary while also potentially affecting this same system. Once displaced, informal residents were compensated or relocated, but the low value received in tandem with the disruption of community ties impacted their survival strategies negatively. This process also engenders the peripheralisation of poverty and deepens socio-spatial segregation.

Despite such limitations, the eviction of informal settlements does not completely dismantle the rights of residents, which are partially recognised by the local legislation. The situation of informal workers is different. For street vendors' access to workspace is legitimised by social, political and economic interactions which are place-specific (Pierce et al., 2011). Displacement hence disrupts arrangements that guarantee the ability to claim urban space. The narratives of the workers analysed showed the centrality of accessing workspace for their permanence in the city. Through their work in the stadium, the stallholders built their houses and their lives. Displacement impairs their ability to make a living while also disrupting the community created through years of sharing a place that was akin to home. Displacement from workspace thus produced similar feelings to those experienced by people who suffered eviction from their homes.

The urban reform movement in Brazil was mainly led by social movements for the right to housing, one of the reasons why the rights of informal dwellers were a central point of their proposal. The right to work, however, has been historically associated with the unionised movement of formal workers (Arantes, 2013). In this context, not much discussion has been developed in the country about work informality in relation to space. As a result, informal workers' rights to space are not recognised and it is increasingly harder for these populations to access workspace, make a living and belong to the city. A central argument

that emerged from this thesis is the need to pay closer attention to how multiple places are connected through the survival strategies of the urban poor. Both cases show how workspaces and home are related and produced in tandem. To promote the “right to the city” of the urban poor one must thus recognise their contributions to the making of the city through diverse practices of place-making.

8.1.3. Middle-class politics and socio-spatial segregation

The critical urban studies literature in Brazil has followed the worldwide trend of this scholarship: it focuses either on the elites, usually colluded with the state, or the struggles of the urban poor (Lemanski, 2017; Mercer, 2016). In this thesis, I explored the politics of middle-class citizens in their attempts to make the “right kind of city” (Centner, 2012b). Middle-class citizens’ political practices were analysed as part of their strategies to reproduce their social class status. These citizens are not struggling against displacement or for basic needs; they want to be part of local urban governance regimes, affecting the rules of the environment in which they live. Chapter 7, in particular, has discussed this topic in relation to two case studies in which citizens of the middle-class stratum make an effort to conserve their neighbourhoods from change.

Middle-class politics were often described by participants as struggles against state-capital alliances interested in promoting real estate speculation at the expense of citizens’ wellbeing. One could potentially locate such efforts in the “right to the city” agenda. Nevertheless, in their argument, the urban speculators are joined in the same category as the urban poor: both ignore the rule of law that the ‘good citizens’ aim to safeguard. The “moral superiority” (O’Dougherty, 2002) of the middle-class allows these citizens to stand in contrast with those groups; they represent the public interest, which legitimise their efforts to affect legal/illegal boundaries. Nevertheless, the ‘good citizens’ are also playing the game of the elites to advance their own views, which they despise in principle for not following the rules. They also have privileged access to state officials who are responsive to their needs recognised as legitimate. Such practices are regarded as ‘good governance’ that encourages ‘civic society’ engagement. Moreover, progressive social movements can be mobilised to defend middle-class demands, which amplify their struggles, providing them with legitimacy and bargaining power. In a similar way, access to influential networks (social capital) and knowledge (cultural capital) make the middle-class more empowered than the

urban poor to have their concerns heard and validated. Their views of spatial order thus infiltrate state policy through a multiplicity of channels. Such views can be (and often are) excluding of the urban poor and the 'dirtiness' and 'messiness' of poverty, which devalues property value and impacts their lifestyle negatively. In this study, residents of middle-class areas have constrained the abilities of informal vendors to access workspace in their attempt to regulate neighbourhood spaces. These citizens are part of the local governance regime, taking part in the process through which different uses of space are (de)legitimised. Considering the centrality of public spaces for street vendors' life strategies, this enclosure may impact negatively in the workers' ability to belong to the city, which can have direct consequences for the (re)production of socio-spatial segregation.

The studied political practices of middle-class citizens disrupt binary categories usually deployed to describe citizens' participation in urban governance (Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2013). They can be found promoting progressive and conservative agendas, forming alliances with urban social movements and playing the elites game, engaging with the state through formal and informal channels. Such behaviour mirrors the same patterns recognised by Saes (1985) regarding the role of the Brazilian middle-class in important historical moments of the country's past. As argued by Lopes de Souza (2016, pp.1240–1241), "[p]olitically, the ambiguous role of the middle classes is so decisive that much more attention should be paid to it than has been the case so far, especially in the Latin American context." What connects seemingly disparate politics is the effort of the middle-classes to differentiate themselves from both the elites and the working classes. Such efforts are also represented in their struggle to shape cities according to their own aspirations of what the urban ought to look like. It is commonly argued that cities are shaped by middle-class views; nevertheless, more attention to their practices is necessary to understand the channels through which this process happens. The persistence of extent socio-spatial segregation should not be regarded solely as the result of state-capital alliances promoting the dispossession of the urban poor. Taking the blurriness of state-society boundaries seriously implies interrogating how state power is performed through multiple channels and how privileged citizens are also involved in the reproduction of inequality.

8.2.Main contributions

8.2.1. Postcolonial urban studies: lessons learned from Brazil

Informality is not a novelty in the Brazilian context. This topic has been analysed by an extensive literature that contributed in a great deal to the understanding of several aspects of this phenomenon (Bonduki and Rolnik, 1982; Costa, 1994; Maricato, 1979a; Oliveira, 2003; Valladares, 1981). This thesis is indebted to those contributions but it follows Telles's (2010) call for the need of a deeper reflection regarding the new mediations and connections through which informality is currently reproduced in the Brazilian urban context. To add to this task, I have critically engaged with recent postcolonial debates on urban informality. As proposed by Roy (2005, 2009a), this framework was used to analyse the case of Indian urbanism. Since then, many studies have employed this theoretical approach to understand the realities of other contexts (Crossa, 2009; Hackenbroch, 2011; Lombard, 2015; Telles, 2010; Yiftachel, 2009) where informal uses of urban space prevail. Others have engaged with this discussion to disrupt the Global South and Global North divides, calling attention to the existence of such practices in cities everywhere (Haid, 2016; Tuvikene et al., 2017). In this thesis, I have argued that this approach can improve the understanding of how Brazilian urban politics evolve. The exploration of Belo Horizonte as an "ordinary city" (Robinson, 2006) from the Global South has expanded the scope of this approach. I showed that the context in which struggles evolve matters because the "sedimented crystallisation of earlier patterns of social interaction" (Brenner, 2004, p.75) shape the possibilities and constrains of political practice. I analysed different types of informality – work, housing and planning – which also exposed different instances of the relationship between state, citizens and the production of space.

As formulated by Roy (2005) and others (AlSayyad, 2004; McFarlane, 2012; Watson, 2009; Yiftachel, 2009), the urban informality framework draws from Agamben (1998) to portray the state as the sovereign capable of making exceptions to its own norms. Informality is thus a mode of governance deployed by the state to legitimise distinct claims over space (Roy, 2009a). Different "informal" practices enjoy varying degrees of legitimacy emanating from the state apparatus "that actively utilise informality as an instrument of both accumulation and authority" (ibid, p.81). Others, however, have departed from ethnographic accounts of the state to further interrogate its role in the (re)production of informality (Devlin, 2011; Lindell, 2011). Such scholars have shown "the various ways in which multiple, heterogeneous state actors and institutions affect urban processes in not

quite so concerted manners that go well beyond laws and regulations” (Tuvikene et al., 2017, p.282).

In this thesis, I have argued for a view of the state as a multiscalar, porous and fractured entity (Brenner, 2004; Marston, 2004; Painter, 2006). The state is a process that evolves in relation to political subjectivities and space (Brenner, 2004; Massey, 2005). I follow conceptualisations that reject state-society boundaries (Abrams, 2006), advocating for a view that apprehends the state through its effects (T. Mitchell, 2006) on everyday encounters between its agents and citizens (Marston, 2004; Painter, 2006). The boundary between state and society is in flux and constantly negotiated. Such view has implications for the analysis of the politics of informality. I have thus engaged with recent theorisations that interrogate how such a nuanced view of the state reveals multiple stances of its relationship with the (re)production of informality (Haid, 2016; Tuvikene et al., 2017).

Furthermore, I have sought to interrogate the role of the law in informal processes. Drawing from the scholarship of legal pluralism (Fernandes, 2012; Merry, 1988; Nkurunziza, 2008), notably from de Sousa Santos (1987) work on interlegality; I have argued for the need to discuss the existence of multiple legal orders coexisting in society. That entails recognising not only the presence of “illegality” in elite spaces, but also the fact that state law is present in informal spaces (Chiodelli and Moroni, 2014; Varley, 2013), as informal practices are affected by participants’ perceptions of the legal system. Moreover, the law, not restricted to the language of state power (Marston, 2004), can also be deployed by those resisting and challenging the state (Holston, 2008; O’Brien, 1996).

In Brazil, the National Constitution recognises both the right to work and the right to housing. Nevertheless, the rights of informal workers and informal dwellers to space are not treated equally. Despite the importance of workspace for urban livelihoods, discussions about the urban poor’s access to workspace have been mostly absent from critical urban debates worldwide (Brown, 2015; Schindler, 2014b). The rights of informal dwellers are included in the Brazilian federal legislation (City Statute) and also partially protected by local frameworks, such as Belo Horizonte’s Municipal Housing Policy (PMH). In opposition, several Brazilian cities have legislations that criminalise the activity of informal street vendors, such as the Code of Placements in Belo Horizonte. The struggles of insurgent citizens shaped legal-institutional frameworks that affected the state process; I have showed how those arrangements are absent in the case of informal workers, revealing how past accumulated struggles change the prevailing conditions for political practice.

Moreover, focusing on the place-making strategies (Lombard, 2015) of the urban poor, I showed how the workspace and the home are produced in tandem (Kudva, 2009). While many studies have highlighted the connections between formal and informal sectors (Chen, 2005; Guha-Khasnobis et al., 2006; Telles, 2010), this research has showed that informal practices are also connected through the living strategies of the urban poor. Moreover, I argued that assuming that space is a relational concept (Massey, 2005) also entails perceiving deprived and privileged spaces as produced in tandem.

This thesis also investigated how non-state actors engage in the (re)production of informality. The analysis exposed the limits of sovereignty, revealing the dispersed nature of power. (In)formality thus emerges as the outcome of never ending negotiations and struggles among distinct state and non-state actors (Hackenbroch, 2011; Schindler, 2014). The discussions showed that those engaging in informal practices also participate in the process through which formal/informal boundaries are drawn (Crossa, 2016). Moreover, local governance regimes include non-state actors, such as the middle-classes, who participate in the process of regulating urban spaces (Schindler, 2016). Assuming that society and space are mutually constitutive implies understanding social class and space as imbricated processes (Mercer, 2016; Zhang, 2012). In this thesis, I showed that middle-class views of city-making become influential in multiple ways (Ghertner, 2014). I thus revealed that, although citizens can affect formal/informal boundaries, especially in unequal societies like Brazil, such power is unevenly spread. The production of the “right kind of city” (Centner, 2012a), where middle-class citizens feel like they belong, can be (and often is) excluding towards the urban poor.

In this thesis, I have contributed to the debate on the politics of urban informality proposing a relational approach that focuses on how space, state and political subjects (citizens) are produced in tandem. The construction of urban space is a contested process in which citizens interact with the multiscalar, fractured and porous state to validate demands on space. The outcome of such negotiations establishes criteria of inclusion/exclusion, (de)legitimising different uses of urban space. Recognising the elusiveness of state-society boundaries entails an understanding of power as dispersed; that does not mean that citizens are equally empowered to affect the state process and shape space. Categories such as class, gender and race can mediate the interactions between the state and its subjects. However, this relationship is mutually constituted: the state can also be modified by the organised struggle of citizens. Those transformations then shape how further interactions between state and citizens will evolve. Such features have

consequences for how formal/informal boundaries are drawn. It does not suffice to say that the state (re)produces (in)formality because formal and informal spaces also (re)produce the state and political subjects.

8.2.2. *The (re)production of socio-spatial segregation*

Uneven development and middle-class politics

In the critical urban studies tradition, uneven development is understood as the result of capital constantly searching for “spatial fixes” (Harvey, 2001). Cities are thus in constant change to accommodate the needs of capital accumulation. Therefore, it is paramount to analyse the ways in which different social groups are able to protect their ways of living and belonging to the city against such forces. Although not always successful, the middle-class citizens studied had more access to resources and were thus more empowered to participate in the politics of urban space production. As argued by Lemanski and Lama-Rewa (2013):

Much of the existing literature on urban governance in the global South polarises urban citizens and their mobilisation strategies into the elite, typically understood as guilty of ‘capturing’ participatory structures; and the poor, largely conceptualised as excluded from formal governance mechanisms but active in more politicised forms of mobilisation.

In this thesis I follow recent efforts to incorporate the analysis of the politics of the middle class in the making of Global South cities (Centner, 2012a; Lemanski and Tawa Lama-Rewa, 2013; Mercer, 2016; Schindler, 2016). Understanding space relationally entails recognising that middle-class and deprived spaces are produced in tandem. Therefore, the (re)production of persistent patterns of socio-spatial inequality is also the product of the uneven power of the middle-classes in relation to the urban poor when challenging state-capital coalitions that seek opportunities for capital accumulation. If investments in middle-class areas get blocked, capital must go somewhere else, perhaps places inhabited by citizens with fewer resources to fight back. The findings of this thesis suggest that socio-spatial segregation and inequality cannot be regarded solely as the products of state-capital alliances for engendering capital accumulation through spatial restructuring. The blurriness

of state-society boundaries must be taken seriously, allowing the recognition of other forms of agency and power, which are also part of the conflictive nature of urban space production. If the “right to the city” is the “right to change ourselves by changing the city more after our heart’s desire” (Harvey 2008, p.23), one must interrogate whose desires and aspirations are actually shaping cities. I thus argue that critical scholars need to pay more attention to understand how extant segregated socio-spatial patterns are also the result of the uneven capacity of citizens to protect their ways of living in the city.

Work informality and access to workspace

Several studies have argued favourably for the important role performed by the informal economy and its participants, showing how they contribute to the production of wealth (Chen, 2005). Nevertheless, those debates have tended to overlook the spatial dimension of work informality. The relationship between work and space is not as obvious as it is in the case of housing; this thesis has explored how they are interrelated. Both are connected to space and associated with the survival strategies of the urban poor. Studies about socio-spatial segregation in Brazil have focused mostly on the housing strategies of the urban poor (Arantes, 2009; Bonduki, 2008; Maricato, 1979a, 2010; Valladares, 1981). They have also talked about the connection between the work and home, especially in the context of mobility and the need for better and more accessible transport systems (Maricato, 2011).

In thesis, I make the case for place-making as a dimension that can expose the connection between informal practices of living and working. Accessing workspace is relevant for the urban poor to make a living. Therefore, policies of revitalisation that aim to produce spatial order according to middle-class views can also contribute to the exacerbation of socio-spatial segregation. In Latin American, recent studies on gentrification have highlighted how the development of real estate projects aimed at middle-income consumers has contributed to the displacement of the urban poor from desirable city areas (Lees et al., 2016; Lopes de Souza, 2016; López-Morales et al., 2016). Those discussions highlight the need to further explore how the shaping of cities according to the demands of privileged social groups can impair the ability of the urban poor to belong. Nevertheless, those investigations are mostly concerned with the housing strategies of marginalised citizens. This research has exposed how similar issues are found in relation to informal

workers' access to space. I showed that criminalising the activity of street vendors, enclosing spaces and displacing these populations do not solve the problem, which is rather shifted elsewhere. Similarly to what Engels (1935, p.71) pointed out in relation to the housing question, "[t]he same economic necessity that produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place."

The limits of the institutionalised rights of informal dwellers

This thesis has showed how having partial rights to compensation partially protect residents of informal settlements, but it does not prevent displacement, which deepens socio-spatial segregation. The 'formalisation' of 'informal' houses, therefore, is not necessarily a solution. The existence of rights do not guarantee the fulfilment of those rights. There is a need for constant organised pressure, which can be constrained by the incorporation of social movements in the state process. The creation of participatory channels and the extension of partial rights to informal dwellers has demobilised the movements for social housing. In this research, informal residents are turned into "citizens" who are told to accept their fate in the face of displacement. The existence of legal entitlements partially protects their rights but it also constrains the possibility of a radical struggle.

In Belo Horizonte, the Municipal Housing Policy has never been able to produce enough social houses to supply the ever increasing demand. In the past, a number of families had the right to social housing recognised, but they did not receive the actual property due to the low number of unities effectively produced by the local policy, always short of resources. Those families form what is known as the "organised movement" for housing ordered in a "queue" that observes the criteria set by the institutionalised policy and prioritise families whose rights have been recognised in the past (Bedê, 2005). Nevertheless, the persistent inability of the government to produce enough houses for the poor has led to the proliferation of new informal settlements. Those new settlements are denominated as urban *ocupações* (occupations), which is "the term used by social movements to refer to an area of private or public land that does not fulfil its social function as property and is occupied by poor residents (mostly organised by militant housing movements)" (Nascimento 2016, p.1). According to Tonucci Filho (2017), although recent occupations are connected to the traditional movement for housing, they present some

peculiarities that are worth discussing. They normally involve a complex array of agents which include the residents, organised social movements (old and new), agents connected to organised institutions (such as the Catholic Church, government agencies, the Public Defender's office and the Public Ministry), and academics (both students and professors from universities). The support of people's lawyers, the Public Ministry and the public defenders make those occupations very resistant, as they are able to repel repossession orders by using the legislation to fight the eviction attempts from the state apparatus pressured by legal owners (Mayer, 2015; Tonucci Filho, 2017). The "urban occupation" movement can be thus understood as a new round of "insurgency" that differs from the 1950s-1980s social movements for housing partially because they build on the achievements of those previous struggles. They also reveal the limitations of the legal-institutional framework that resulted from the previous struggles.

A central point made by Arantes (2013) is that the Brazilian urban reform movement did not challenge the private property, but rather sought to regulate it and provide it for all. That creates an ambiguity in informal settlements, which violate property rights envisioning the creation of new ones (Gelder, 2013). This contradiction was elaborated in this research, showing how even the "informal" housing property can lead to the individualisation of collective struggles. In this regard, the new occupations seek to defy the institution of property in hopes that it will lead to a more radical urban reform movement in the future.

8.3.Coda

In this research, I have focused on social class as a category that mediates the encounters of citizens with the state and their ability to claim space. However, many authors have recently called attention to the need to incorporate other dimensions such as race and gender in urban studies debates. In her discussion about the squatting movement in Brazil, Wittger (2017) has emphasised the need to integrate gender as a category of analysis in order to identify the real needs of actors and effectively tackle inequalities. In a similar note, Beebeejaun (2017) has argued for a focus on everyday spatial practices, which can reveal how access to rights is mediated by gender. Moreover, Harvey (1998, p.420) has discussed how the body can be mobilised both as an accumulation strategy and a "nexus through which the possibilities for emancipatory politics can be approached." In this context, an extension of this research would consider how issues of social class are entangled with race

and gender to further expose how different citizens are more or less empowered to shape cities.

The importance of the local scale and its mutual relationship with others was emphasised in the main debates of this thesis. I have focused on Belo Horizonte and its particular trajectory in relation to the development of local policies and institutions that have shaped the ways citizens analysed engage with the state to make claims. Other contexts might have policies, laws and institutions that evolved differently. Therefore, a possible extension of this project is to propose a comparative study with other cities in Brazil and Latin America that present different legislation regarding the access of informal workers and informal dwellers to urban spaces. Another possibility is the incorporation of the global scale. Talking about the Brazilian case, Telles (2010) showed how the products sold in the informal markets of São Paulo come from all around the world. This globalised informal economy is permeated by constant formal/informal and legal/illegal crossings. They also involve not only products but also people. Migrants from different countries are involved in the business, often having comparative advantages arising from facilitated channels to articulate import and export deals. Such discussions further reveal the importance of space as a dimension of analysis in regards to the informal economy, a task that I have begun to address in this thesis.

I introduced this research discussing what was happening in Brazil when I started this project. Therefore, it makes sense to conclude talking about the current political situation and how that relates with the topics I have discussed in this thesis. In 2014, a federal police investigation – known as “Lava Jato” (Car Wash) – that had started in 2008, uncovered a massive scheme of corruption involving Brazil’s state-owned oil company, Petrobras. According to Watts (2016, p.1), “[d]epending on your politics, it [the Lava Jato] is either a clean broom sweeping out decades of rotten politicians or part of a conspiracy to end 13 years of Workers party rule without an election.” Following the indictment of many politicians connected to the Worker’s Party (PT), anti-corruption protests calling for the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff became a common event in several major Brazilian cities. Participants of those demonstrations were normally dressed in the Brazilian national colours, in a striking resemblance with the anti-corruption protesters of June 2013. Despite not having been indicted herself in this investigation, Dilma Rousseff’s government was under attack. On December 2015, an impeachment proposal petitioned by the oppositional party was accepted by the Congress’s president, Eduardo Cunha. Her government was “accused of using state-run banks and funds to pay for its regular expenses, such as benefits

payments, upfront. The TCU [the country's budget watchdog] has argued that these upfront payments amounted to loans to the federal government from the state-owned banks. Under Brazilian law, this is illegal" (Leahy, 2016, p.2).

On 17 April 2016, the Congress voted in favour of accepting the charges against Rousseff's government. Five months later, the Senate voted to remove her from office. After the impeachment, her vice-president Michel Temer, from the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB), assumed the presidency. His party, which was part of the government coalition, turned its back against Rousseff's government and colluded with the opposition to have her impeached. Since then, Temer's government has implemented several reforms that deepen austerity measures in the attempt to revive Brazil's economy, in crisis at least since 2013, when the country's GDP fell by 3.9%. In December 2016, the senate approved a controversial law proposed by the federal government that freezes government spending for the next 20 years. This policy has been criticised for burdening the poor disproportionately: "the spending cap has been described by a senior UN [United Nations] official as the most socially regressive austerity package in the world, while Brazilian leftists argued that it will damage the country's already fragile health and education systems" (Philips, 2016b, p.2).

Moreover, on 13 July 2017, Temer signed a law that reforms Brazilian labour law. This has been celebrated as a victory for his unpopular government¹⁴⁵ and for business owners who have long complained about Brazil's outdated and excessively rigid labour law. The main points of the reform can be summarised as follows:

[It] introduces more flexible working hours, eases restrictions on part-time work, relaxes how workers can divvy up their holidays and cuts the statutory lunch hour to 30 minutes. It also scraps dues that all employees must pay to their company's designated union, regardless of whether or not they are members. Just as important, collective agreements between employers and workers will overrule many of the labour code's provisions. (Bye-bye, 2017, p. 1)

In summary, it makes labour laws much more flexible, which caused huge disagreements among trade unions and Brazilians in general, who have voiced their dissatisfaction with the changes in the statute.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ The most updated poll, published on 19 September 2017, showed that 75.6% of Brazilians evaluated Temer's government as negative (Verdélío, 2017).

¹⁴⁶ According to a survey, 58% of Brazilians rejected the labour reform (Cersosimo, 2017).

How do such changes impact the topics covered in this research? As it has been argued, both reforms have regressive consequences and affect the poor and marginalised disproportionately. It is possible to imagine that, with fewer resources, public housing policies will become even less effective than they have been so far. Moreover, with persistently high unemployment rates,¹⁴⁷ it is fair to assume that the housing options for the urban poor will become even more limited. This might create a further need for the search of alternative forms of housing and the consequent proliferation of new informal settlements or the densification of those already existent. In relation to working conditions, the recent reform modifies employer-employee relations in favour of the first group. It makes rules more flexible, causing boundaries between formal and informal work to become further blurred. That, combined with unemployment and insignificant economic growth, may cause the increase of the contingent of informal workers. Both trends have direct consequences for the topics this research has covered: one can assume that conflicts over the use and access of urban space will increase.

During the 13 years of the PT federal government, traditional social movements in Brazil, such as the Landless Workers' Movement (MST), trade unions and the urban reform movement, were incorporated into the government. According to Saad-Filho (2013, p.661):

Since Lula's first administration, starting in 2003, many hundreds of left-wing political, trade union and NGO cadres have been appointed to the federal administration. While this has, effectively, 'nationalised' most social movements through the close alignment of the material interests of their leaders with the government's policy agenda, it has also changed the social composition of the Brazilian state.

Although this process has had a positive effect in terms of the implementation of progressive social policies, it has also caused the demobilisation of such organisations. The incorporation of social movements' interests into the state has institutionalised their political action. Therefore, the disruption of such channels has caused social movements to resume practices of insurgency. Before the approval of the labour reform, for instance, trade unions have organised general strikes in the country. Moreover, the renaissance of urban occupation movements in major urban centres is an example of new social forces emerging to challenge exclusion. One can thus only hope that the latent and persistent

¹⁴⁷ In the first quarter of 2017, Brazil reached a record; 14.2 million people were unemployed then, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

contradictions of Brazilian society can once more explode in insurgency, creating new alternative paths for the expansion of rights.

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Appendix A-1

Case	Actor	Institution/Movement	Interviewee (anonymised)	Number of interviews	Number of interviewees
<i>Rua Musas</i>	Residents	Salve a Musas	Antonio, Mateus, Pablo	3	3
	Judiciary	Public Ministry	Roberta	1	1
	Local politician	Regional State Assembly	Eduardo Santos	1	1
		City Council	Mariana	1	1
	Entrepreneur	Batur/Tenco	Douglas	1	1
	Local activists	COPAC/Fora Lacerda	Lucas, José, Flávio, Marcelo	4	4
	Total			11	11

Case	Actor	Institution/Movement	Interviewee (anonymised)	Number of interviews	Number of interviewees
<i>Mineirão</i>	Stallholders	ABAEM	Pedro (3), Rosa, Jonas, Margarida, Vilma, Manoel, Leandro, Fernanda, Alfredo, Rodrigo, Regina, Luisa, Lucia, Aparecida	14	14
	Residents	Pró-Civitas	Sandra (2), Alessandra (2), Fred, Claudio, Ines	4	5
	Local activists	COPAC	Lucas, José, Flávio, Marcelo	4	4
	Judiciary	Public Ministry	Roberta	1	1
		Public Defenders' Office	Julia (2), Marcia	2	2

Case	Actor	Institution/Movement	Interviewee (anonymised)	Number of interviews	Number of interviewees
<i>Mineirão</i>	Local politician	City Council	Carlos Alves	1	1
	Local state agent	Pampulha Council	Marco, Marcia	2	2
		Urban Regulation Secretary	Luciano	1	1
	University	Cidade & Alteridade	Stela	1	1
	NGO	Rede Cidadã	Marina	1	1
	Consultancy firm	Práxis	Jorge, Joana	1	1
	Total				32

Case	Actor	Institution/Movement	Interviewee (anonymised)	Number of interviews	Number of interviewees
<i>Vila Recanto UFMG</i>	Residents	Vila Recanto UFMG	Ana (2), Diva, Rafael, Maria, Luis, Barbara, Carla, Mauro	8	9
	Local activists	COPAC	Lucas, José, Flávio, Marcelo	4	4
		Pro-Housing Movement	Clarice	1	1
	Judiciary	Public Defenders' Office	Marcia	1	1
	Popular lawyer	SAJ-PUC	Christian	1	1
	Local state agent	URBEL	Mario, Fernando, Clara	3	3
	Local politician	City Council	Carlos Alves	1	1
	NGO	Pastoral	Claudia, Neusa	2	2
	Total			21	22

Total (minus duplicates)	54	56
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Appendix A-2

Examples of topic guides used for interviews

1. Interviewee: Lucas

Affiliation: Local Committee for a People's World Cup (COPAC)/ Socialist Party (PSOL)

Case: All three

Topics for discussion:

- COPAC
 - How and when was the COPAC created?
 - Ask about his own participation in the committee
 - Which social movements were part of the COPAC?
 - Tensions/alliances
 - Ask about the relationship between COPAC and the Mineirão stallholders.
 - When was the first contact? How approached who?
 - Did the relationship change in different moments? (Before, during and, after the World Cup)
 - Same questions regarding Musas Street and Vila UFMG.
 - Do you think the existence of the COPAC has changed the relationship between different social movements in Belo Horizonte? What are the main repercussions?

2. Interviewee: Ana

Case: Vila UFMG

Affiliation: Former resident of Vila UFMG

Topics for discussion:

- The formation of Vila UFMG
 - How did the occupation start? Whose idea was it?
 - Who was the first resident?
 - When did she move to the Vila? Why? How was the process?
 - Relationship with the neighbourhood
 - Why was it called Vila UFMG?
- Who were the leaders of the occupation?
 - Incremental rights (water, electricity)
- Ask about displacement threats.
 - The repossession law suit
- Ask about the alliances of the occupation
 - Pastoral

- Urban Participatory Diagnostic
 - Division of the plots
- Professor Fábio (Legal Assistance Service of the Catholic University)
- Dr Cristóvão (Public Ministry)
- Pólos (Federal University of Minas Gerais)
- ASMARE
- Ask about the World Cup.
 - When did they find out about the viaduct project and the expropriation?
 - Opinions, feelings, perceptions
 - Did they fight against the displacement?
- Ask about the displacement process
 - Relationship with the Urbanization Company of Belo Horizonte
 - Public hearing at the City Hall
 - How was the relocation process?
 - Where did she move afterwards?
 - How has the relocation affected her life?
 - Does she still have contact with other former residents? What happened with them?

3. Interviewee: Julia

Case: Mineirão

Affiliation: Pró-Civitas

Topics for discussion:

- About Pró-Civitas
 - When and why was it created?
 - Pampulha verticalisation
 - What is the main goal of the association?
 - What are the biggest challenges?
- Current situation of Mineirão
 - What changed after the modernisation?
 - What has the association done to change the situation?
 - Relationship with street vendors?
 - Ideal solution?
- Relationship of Pró-Civitas with the state
 - Pampulha Regional Council
 - Change of secretary: how does it affect the relationship?
 - Regional state
 - City Hall
 - City Council

- Regional State's Assembly
- Public Ministry
- Opinion about the public bid for the new stallholders market
 - Political strategies?
- Relationship between Pró-Civitas and the Association of the Mineirão Stallholders?
 - Alliance? Meetings?
- Secretaria Regional
 - Humberto vs Zé Geraldo
- Ask about the Public Hearing (03/12/14) at Clube Ipê
 - Who called the hearing? What was decided?
- Ask about the meeting with the Regional State Sports' Secretary
 - How did they manage to schedule this meeting?
 - Which topics were discussed?
 - What was decided? Any promises made?
- Ask about Pró-Civitas relationship with the Movement of the Neighbourhood Associations of Belo Horizonte.
 - Importance of citizenship participation in the making of the city

Appendix A-3

Examples of field note entries

Date	Type of entry	Case	Activity	Who was there?	Local
21/07/2015	General Comment				
24/07/2015	Meeting	Mineirão	Meeting with allies to discuss stallholders' situation	Pedro (ABAEM), Lucas (COPAC), Stela (Cidade e Alteridade)	Federal University's School of Law
21/08/2015	Meeting	Mineirão	Meeting at Luciano's (Urban Regulation Secretary) office	Pedro, Regina (ABAEM), Luciano (Urban Regulation Secretary)	Urban Regulation Secretary's office
25/08/2015	Participant Observation	Mineirão	Occupation in front of the City Council	Several ABAEM members	City Council
25/08/2015	Participant Observation	Vila UFMG	Public hearing about urban occupation (Isidora)	Brigadas Populares, Police, Regional and Local state agents, Councilmen	City Council
01/09/2015	Participant Observation	Mineirão	Second Occupation in front of the City Hall building	Several ABAEM members	Afonso Pena Avenue
14/09/2015	Participant Observation	Vila UFMG	Visit to Pastoral	Claudia	Pastoral's office
18/09/2015	Participant Observation	Mineirão	Second Occupation in front of the City Hall building	Aparecida, Manuel, Leticia and Carmo	Afonso Pena Avenue
30/09/2015	Participant Observation	Mineirão	ABAEM meeting/Second Occupation in front of the City Hall building	Several ABAEM members	Afonso Pena Avenue
03/10/2015	Participant Observation	Mineirão	<i>Praia da Estação</i> (Station's Beach) at Savassi Square	Aparecida, Manuel and Luisa (ABAEM)	Savassi Square
06/10/2015	Participant Observation	Vila UFMG	Fórum da População em Situação de Rua (Homeless People Forum) - organised by Pastoral	Ana and Claudia	Centro Mineiro de Reciclagem
12/10/2015	Participant Observation	Mineirão	Second Occupation in front of the City Hall building	Apacida, Manuel (ABAEM) and Fabio (street vendor)	Afonso Pena Avenue
14/10/2015	Participant Observation	Mineirão	Second Occupation in front of the City Hall building	Augusta (ABAEM) and Flavia (cinema student)	
15/10/2015	Meeting	Rua Musas	Collecting documents with Prof Antonio		Federal University's (UFMG) campus

Appendix A-4

Example of field note extract

Conversation with Lucas (COPAC/PSOL) before meeting

Date: 24/07/2015

Place: Federal University's Law School

I have arrived early to the meeting that was scheduled for 9 am, but the building was closed. I followed this old guy and went through the gate that was not locked after all. Knowing my way from being there several times, I went straight to the stairs that led to where the meeting was scheduled but was stopped from doing so by the doorman, who asked me where I was going. I told him I was going to a meeting at the "Território Livre" (student union's name), but he said the school was closed and that I couldn't go there. He told me to wait until someone from the student union arrived.

I waited for 15 minutes, and then Lucas (COPAC) arrived, and we started talking after the doormen denied him access as well.

We sat on the stairs and started chatting. He was updating me on what was going on now.

Some actors he mentioned: Cidade e Alteridade, Streetnet.

Cidade e alteridade is a research group associated with the Federal University's Law School that is giving ABAEM juridical support. Later, Stela, who is one of the researchers, joined the meeting.

Streetnet is an NGO that gave ABAEM some training. He mentioned that while trying to remember the name of another NGO (Rede Cidadã) that also provided training for the ABAEM after the Mineirão was closed. The Rede Cidadã's course was part of an attempt to provide training for the stallholders in order to get them to work for Minas Arena (private company managing Mineirão) or to get them reinserted in the market (he was not sure). According to Lucas, the training was provided because it was foreseen in the private-public partnership contract between the regional state and Minas Arena.

He also mentioned other "actors" that I should contact:

- The secretary of the Pampulha Council

- The secretary of the Secretary of Urban Regulation of Belo Horizonte
- Pró-Civitas

We were talking about the complaints of the neighbourhood residents regarding the messiness on the streets surrounding Mineirão during match days. He was telling me that football fans were drinking and listening to music close to people's houses. He also said that most of the informal workers were acting as "toreiros" (informal street vendors) – that is, caring thermo boxes with drinks and avoiding the city inspection agents – and that this kind of work was unsuitable for women and old men. Therefore, most of the ABAEM workers were still fighting for relocation because they were jobless since 2010.

Appendix A-5

Coding strategy

Code	Theme
A	Case 1 - Mineirão
A.1	Alliances
A.2	Beginning
A.3	Internal dynamic
A.4	Personal narrative
A.5	June 2013
A.6	Tropeiro
A.7	Minas Arena - MP
A.8	Pró-Civitas and MP
A.9	Relationship with Minas Arena
A.10	Relationship with Pró-Civitas
A.11	Relationship with Rede Cidadã
A.12	Relationship with <i>toreros</i>
B	Case 2 - Rua Musas
B.1	Articulation
B.2	Personal narratives
B.3	MAM
B.4	Neighbourhood association
B.5	Relationship with Developer
B.6	Relationship with MP
B.7	Relationship with politicians
C	Case 3 - Vila UFMG
C.1	Beginning
C.2	Personal narratives

Code	Theme
C	Case 3 - Vila UFMG (continuation)
C.3	Repossession order
C.4	Division - change
C.5	Pastoral - Brigadas
C.6	Pastoral - MP
C.7	Pastoral - Public Defenders
C.8	Pastoral - SAJ
C.9	Pastoral - State
C.10	Pastoral - University
C.11	Relationship with Brigadas
C.12	Relationship with MP
C.13	Relationship with Pastoral
C.14	Relationship with URBEL

Code	Theme
D	Informality
D.1	House informality
D.2	Work informality
D.3	Work-House informality
D.4	Planning (top-down) informality
E	State
E.1	Informal state
E.1.2	State and informality
E.1.3	State of exception
E.1.4	Urban operations
E.2	Fragmented state
E.3	Scale politics
E.3.1	ADEMG
E.3.2	Environment
E.3.3	June 2013
E.3.4	Local government
E.3.5	Regional State
E.3.6	Responsibility quarrel
E.3.7	Social movements
E.4	Engaging with the state
E.4.1	Formal access
E.4.1.2	Fees for the use of space
E.4.1.3	Public bid
E.4.1.4	Public hearing
E.4.1.5	Participatory concils
E.4.1.6	Social policy
E.4.1.7	URBEL (Urbanisation Company of Belo Horizonte)

Code	Theme
E	State (continuation)
E.4.2	Informal access
E.4.3	Access to services
E.4.4	Capital-state alliances
E.4.5	Challenging the state
E.4.5.1	Deceiving
E.4.5.2	From insurgency to formal participation
E.4.5.3	Insurgency
E.4.5.4	Social movements
E.4.5.5	Street demonstrations
E.4.6	Coercive state
E.4.7	Mediations
E.4.7.1	ABAEM
E.4.7.2	Brigadas
E.4.7.3	COPAC
E.4.7.4	Pastoral
E.4.7.5	University
E.4.8	Negotiating with the state

Code	Theme
F	Law
F.1	Rights
F.1.2	Right to house
F.1.3	Right to work
F.1.4	Violation of rights
F.1.5	Heritage
F.2	Citizenship
F.3	Interpretations of the law
F.3.1	Others
F.3.2	Public defenders
F.3.3	Public Prosecutor
F.4	Politics of the judiciary
F.4.1	Juridical strategies
F.4.2	Juridical arguments
F.5	Agents of the law
F.5.1	City council
F.5.2	MP
F.5.3	Public defenders
F.5.4	SAJ
F.5.5	People's lawyers
F.6	Legal pluralism/Interlegality
F.6.1	Global law
F.6.2	Informal governance
F.6.2.1	Middle-class
F.6.2.2	Community (Vila UFMG)
F.6.2.3	Degrees of informality
F.6.2.4	Informal market

Code	Theme
F	Law (continuation)
F.6.3	Intersections
F.7	Exception
F.8	Law suits
F.8.1	Markets BH
F.8.2	Musas - State
F.8.3	Repossession order - Vila UFMG
F.8.4	Usucaption
F.9	Law talk
F.9.1	Claims to (i)llegality
F.9.2	Inequalities
F.9.3	Justice
F.10	Legislation
F.10.1	Alcoholic drinks - stadium
F.10.2	Code of Placements
F.10.3	Environmental License
F.10.4	Zoning law
F.10.5	Master Plan
F.10.6	City Statute
F.10.7	Municipal Housing Policy (PMH)
F.10.8	Civil Code
F.10.9	Constitution

Code	Theme
G	Space
G.1	Belonging
G.2	Place-making
G.3	Displacement
G.3.1	Community disarticulation
G.3.2	Compensation
G.3.3	Eviction
G.3.4	Narrating Displacement
G.3.4.1	The middle-classes
G.3.4.2	The stallholders
G.3.4.3	The state ("official" narrative)
G.3.4.4	Vila UFMG
G.3.5	Peripheralisation
G.3.6	Spatial restructuring
G.3.7	Technical procedures
G.4	Informal regulation
G.4.1	The middle-classes
G.4.2	The stallholders
G.4.3	Street vendors
G.4.4	Vila UFMG
G.5	Spatial restructuring (World Cup)
G.6	Neighbourhood associations
G.6.1	Alliances
G.6.2	MAM (Movement of the Neighbourhood Associations of Belo Horizonte)
G.6.3	Pró-Civitas
G.7	Intersections: law-state-space

Code	Theme
H	Methodology
H.1	Doing field work at home
H.2	Reflexivity
H.3	Positionality
H.4	Sampling process
H.5	Observations