

The dispute for the use of public spaces in manifestations against and in favor of the impeachment process in 2016, in Brazil.

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Abstract

This article intends to address the use of public spaces by the movements organized through social networks that conducted thousands of people to the streets during 2016 and which peaked at the impeachment of the former president Dilma Rousseff. It stems from the premise that although the organization of these events had occurred through social media, it was in the appropriation of the public space by the respective groups that they became materialized. The manifestations occurred practically in every capital of the country and a curious point on one hand was the choice of locations, of public spaces, by the groups that supported the permanence of the President and, on the other hand, of those who called for her departure. The first group had their manifestation space associated to the city center, while the groups who demanded the President's withdrawal had occupied the spaces identified with the reproduction of financial capital and/or elites' residence which, in the case of the Brazilian coast, would be associated to the seashore. To reach its objective, the research is organized in three parts: *i) The structuring of Brazilian urban space; ii) The public spaces as a place for political expression; iii) The manifestations of 2016 and the use of public spaces in the cities of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Recife, Salvador, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre.*

Keywords: Intra-urban space. Sociospacial segregation. Public participation

I. INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this article is to conduct an analysis about the occupation of public spaces by social movements in political manifestations during the year of 2016, that culminated in the deposition of the Brazilian President, Dilma Rousseff. The relevance of this theme is to identify why one place, and not another, was chosen for the manifestations under the light of urban space ideology in order to answer the following question: how can space become an instrument of domination?

Based on these initial considerations, the present work intends to investigate to what extent were the processes of intraurban space structuring in six major Brazilian cities: São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Recife, Salvador, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre fundamental for the association of the use of the main center by manifestations against the impeachment in detriment of the use of sub-centers destined to the elite for the manifestations in favor of the impeachment.

The squares, parks and gardens, streets and avenues that shape the public space in traditional cities, make up the first element of space perception and is the space historically occupied by political collective action of groups and movements. For Gohn (2014), since the days of the Portuguese colonization, the manifestations of social movements in public spaces are common in Brazil, but these have gained greater visibility since the 1950s. In the 1970s, these struggles built new meanings in the construction of Brazilians' citizenship and contributed to the consolidation process of the democracy. Only three historical moments in the country are remembered by the great amounts of outraged people: in 1992, the impeachment of the former President Collor de Melo; in 1984, the "Diretas Já" (direct elections now) movement, in the period of the military regime, in the fight for the return to democracy; and in the 1960s, at the pre-strikes and sit-ins before the military takeover and the "Passeata dos Cem Mil" (The March of the Hundred Thousand).

And since 2013, one more time, thousands of Brazilians went to the streets and made of them a political instrument. In 2013, the manifestations also denominated "June Journeys" set a wave of protests in the principal streets of the country. It is undeniable to affirm that the manifestations that culminated in the president's deterrence, in 2016, were born from the rebellions and revolts that shook Brazil in July 2013.

The Journeys of June 2013 began on June 6 with a march in São Paulo, with at least 2 thousand people protesting against the increase of public transport fares, convened by the youth of the Free Pass Movement (MPL)¹. Those protests were amplified until they reached more than 2 million demonstrators throughout the country. The protests also turned themselves against the 2013 FIFA Confederation Cup. Since then, the word "street" has gained another meaning. This public urban space has been in the headlines of the mass media because of its use as a public manifestation tool.

Three motivating questions took us to the investigation here presented: how does the structuring of the Brazilian urban space take place, in the light of the analysis of its six major cities? How were the public spaces, as a space for political manifestation, occupied by the participating groups? How did these movements act in the public spaces of manifestations in 2016 in the cities of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Recife, Salvador, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre?

Based on the concrete analysis of the reality anchored in the dialectic of social contradiction, as well as the use of hypothetical deductive methods, we shall analyze the data that enables the grouping of fact and event sequences in a chronological way, of spaces and actors involved so that it is possible to interpret them in the context of the ongoing political process, having a primarily spacial objective, we are going to identify the differences or similarities of the locations and their symbolic dimension, taking the six capitals above as a case study.

¹ Movimento do Passe Livre - MPL (Free Pass Movement) - founded in a plenary session in the World Social Forum in 2005, in Porto Alegre, the MPL gained prominence when participating in the organization, in 2013, of the first protests in São Paulo against the increase of the bus fare.

II. THE STRUCTURING OF THE BRAZILIAN URBAN SPACE

The comprehension in which space as the main product of capitalism is not given by nature, but produced by human work, is still little assimilated by society. We can conclude that the residential provision in capitalism has gone from a situation where the search for use values was predominant to one where trade values prevail (HARVEY, 2014). In marginal countries like Brazil, the imposition of the "neoliberal agenda", notably in the 1990s, ended up boosting the speculation and the accumulation of capital, enhancing the division of classes. For Harvey (1993), "the space domain has always been a vital aspect of the class struggle". And, according to Villaça, no aspect of Brazilian society can be explained and comprehended if the huge economical and political power inequity of our society is not taken into consideration. The biggest problem of Brazil is not poverty, but inequity and the injustice associated with it. (VILLAÇA, 2011)

In the Brazilian metropolises case, the urban segregation has another characteristic: the giant unbalance that exists between the quality of urban space of the rich and the poor population. Thus, the urban spaces are constituted from the relations of power and domination between classes with distinct and irreconcilable interests. Milton Santos affirms that the city in itself, as social relation and as materiality, becomes a creator of poverty, both because of the socioeconomic model of which it is support and because of its physical structure, which makes the inhabitants of peripheries (and of tenements) even poorer people (SANTOS, 1996).

The modified space - public and private - function also as a symbol of *status* or social belonging. Henri Lefebvre, in his book "State and Politics" defines that the space is political and ideological. It is a representation that is literally populated by ideology since there is an ideology of space.

In this game of interests, there is a strategic role for the capitalist State. For Harvey (HARVEY, 2005), the State is not a power unrelated to society, but a product of its development, originated from the recognition of the antagonisms of society, therefore it is necessary for moderating conflict and keeping it in the limits of order; and this power, born from society, but putting itself above it and, progressively, alienating itself from it, is the State.

Milton Santos (SANTOS, 1998) outlines, still, that what happens in one place influences all the others. It is best to act on what acts, on the totality of places, that is, society itself as a whole, because the location of people in the territory is, in most of the times, independent from the individual, product of a combination of market powers and government decisions. The space domain has always been a vital aspect of the class struggle.

According to Lojkin (1998 apud Villaça, 1998) it is possible to identify three types of sociospatial segregation: 1) opposition between center and periphery: the richer social classes establish themselves in the most central areas, endowed with infrastructure and higher prices; the poorer classes are relegated to the peripheries, distant and lacking equipment and services; 2) separation between the areas occupied by the popular classes' residences and by the more privileged classes' residences; 3) separation between urban roles such as commercial, industrial, residential etc.

The structuring of the city has defining traces that stem from the class struggle dominated by the economical and political bases, which manifests itself through segregation. For Villaça (1998), the elements of territorial structure that make up the cities come from the recognition of a main center as the biggest diverse agglomeration of jobs or the biggest agglomeration of commerce and services. From this, the urban expansion will be dictated by the high income social classes, always associated with the real estate development, who chooses the best locations (and smallest distance from the center) to settle in. When they move "away" from the center, they bring their services and equipment with them, creating elite sub-centers. The residual space, "the other side of the city" is occupied by the popular layers, which nevertheless also have their sub-centers, of popular commerce, relying on the territorial extension of the city in question. Curiously, when the main center ceases to be occupied by its elite, because the dynamics of accumulation of capital have allowed the urban expansion, it becomes the "old center" and it is in that moment that the popular layers of society occupy them, whether in housing or because the commerce becomes "popular". It is within this logic that one understands the process of urban segregation, a process of which the different classes or social layers tend to concentrate even more in different general regions or the neighborhood clusters of the metropolis. The phenomenon of segregation, therefore, is fundamental for the comprehension of the intraurban spacial structure.

II.2. THE PUBLIC SPACES AS A SPACE OF POLITICAL MANIFESTATION

In order to analyze the political manifestations in the public Brazilian space, at first, it is necessary to approach the literature from a field of Social Sciences called "Sociology of Manifestations". One of the definitions would be:

To manifest yourself essentially means 'going to the streets', occupying a public space which is visible to as many people as possible and parading through it. The concrete places where the manifestations develop also has great importance. They must benefit from high visibility and, besides that, be filled with strong symbolic content. (MORÁN, 2005)

Another definition about the attributes of the manifestations is given by (FAVRE, 1990) that refer to the place of manifestations in the democratic system:

The manifestation would be, therefore, of democratic essence or, more precisely, participate in a power of primordial expression from the governed. In these situations, the simple participation of protesters is proof of the strength of their convictions.

Chauí suggests that the participation in collective events, in public spaces, has active citizen learning role, as a practice of citizenship (CHAUÍ, 1988). The city must also be a product of the relation of the desires of its inhabitants, when such individuals perceive that the city in which they live does not correspond to these desires, and their ideologies, the possibility of promoting change in urban life comes through the social and political mobilization (HARVEY, 2013).

It is under this perspective of participation in the construction and transformation of the city that (LEFEBVRE, 2001) proposes the concept of the right to the city. This right thus involves the access and equal use of that pre-existing city, but also the possibility of acting upon it and according to collective necessities. In the configuration of the city, the author points out that there must be space for the creative activity, of works, of information, of symbolism, of imagination, of ludic activities. For him, those necessities can not be completely satisfied by commercial and cultural equipment which offer the subject a place of mere passivity. When we deal here with the occupation of the public space we are also referring to this type of active, creative and transforming participation.

According to Pierre Bourdieu, this connection between social space and physical space ends up resulting in the reified social space or physically fulfilled that presents itself as the relation between the distribution of agents and the distribution of assets in the space. It is from this relation that the value of each different region of the reified space is defined. (BOURDIEU, 1993).

Within this context, the resistances and disputes for appropriation of the space develop themselves with reflections on the symbolic domain. (BOURDIEU, 2011). The places of the reified social space and the benefits that they promote are results of struggles inside the different fields (BOURDIEU, 1993, p.163). These benefits can represent location gains associated with the proximity to really rare and coveted agents and assets or the position gains associated with the symbolic gains of distinction. In this battle waged between different social groupings for the appropriation of space, the success depends on the accumulated capital in its different species.

The expressive pro-impeachment manifestations occurred between 2014 and 2015, which brought thousands of demonstrators to the streets in hundreds of cities, counted with the presence of a profusion of organizations with varied profiles: religious groups, professional associations, employers' associations, trade union centrals, political parties and social movements. New groups such as the Vem Pra Rua (Come To The Street)² and the Movimento Brasil Livre (Free Brazil Movement) with the antipetistic banners³ were the ones that presented a greater capacity of social mobilization and higher visibility in the virtual information mediums.

When it is talked about social and identity movements in Brazil, these are structured by Maria da Glória Gohin by Classic, New and Brand New movements. Classic not only because they are older, but also because they are part of the path of construction of the working class, heirs to the fight for better living and working conditions. Most of them have the same form of action from the XX century, the social

² Vem Pra Rua (Come To The Street). A new political group that emerged in 2015 and stood out with an anti-corruption agenda, in favor of the Lava Jato operation and of privatizations.

³ Antipetism. Groups against the Workers' Party.

relations are more homogeneous, verticalized; the articulations and communications are more directed, closed, between pairs. The New, created since the late 1970s, nowadays maintain the profile of a fight movement for cultural identity. But these movements alter the daily practices, the direct relations / face to face / reunions, assemblies etc., articulate themselves into networks, along with non-governmental organizations - NGOs, and they began to act focusing more on the inclusive institutionalized processes, created after the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, and in programs and partnership projects created by the Public Administration. Yet the newest movements and groups are diversified in terms of references, crossing different age groups, tastes, belonging to groups in social media, adherence to the fight for some "cause", values, motivating ideologies etc. The form of the movement is no longer hegemonic or agglutinative of identities. Many young people organize themselves into collectives, but do not want to organize themselves into social movements. What is the big difference? The collectives are seen as fluid, fragmented, horizontal groupings, many of which have autonomy and horizontality as basic values and principles, they are activists and not militants of causes (Gohin, 2014).

III. THE MANIFESTATIONS OF 2016 AND THE USE OF PUBLIC SPACES IN THE CITIES OF SÃO PAULO, RIO DE JANEIRO, RECIFE, SALVADOR, BELO HORIZONTE AND PORTO ALEGRE

During the first months of president Dilma Rousseff's second mandate, groups that were against and in favor of the government came back to the streets. The outraged, contrary to the government, reunited in March 15, April 12, August 16 and December 13, 2015. And, on the 16th of May, 2016, considered the biggest in the country's history, 3.6 million protesters, in 239 cities, went to the streets on Sunday to express themselves against the Dilma Rousseff's government⁴, The protesters, contrary to the impeachment, went to the streets on May 13, April 15, August 20, December 16, 2015 and March 18, 2016. A symbolic date of this period was on the Sunday, April 17, 2016, when millions of demonstrators - both in favor and against the government - watched the Federal Chamber, on screens installed in public and private places, approve the withdrawal process of the elected president.

The intriguing and not less important factor refers to the days and schedules chosen by the protesters, with the favorable movements supporting the continuity of the government choosing business days and nightly schedules, while the groups that were against the permanence of the president, opted for weekends and daily schedules.

Each action of occupying the urban space was planned by identifying the protester profile, how the transit of people would happen, what is the best location, the best day, the best schedule for the manifestations' reunion? Always being next to the spaces that represent the centrality of the capital, the manifestations convoked via social networks once more caused a urban *apartheid*. That Sunday was chosen not only because of the coverage of the media, but also to give possibility for the middle and upper

⁴ <http://especiais.g1.globo.com/politica/mapa-manifestacoes-no-brasil/18-03-2016/pro/>. Visited on 23/07/2017.

classes to participate in the manifestations. It was a family outing, a sunny Sunday, right next to the new centers or in coastal roads.

In São Paulo, in the Paulista Avenue, the largest registered act, on a sunny Sunday, on March 13, 2016, in front of the FIESP building - Industries Federation of the State of São Paulo, a place that represents the economical power of the country - about 500 thousand people, according to Datafolha⁵, participated in the manifestations in Paulista. The Military Police calculates a crowd of 1.4 million. The banners concentrated under the theme of corruption combat, in defense of the Lava Jato operation⁶ and against the Workers' Party - PT, other causes such as groups in favor of the military intervention were protagonists of the scenes transmitted live by the major national television channels. Images of groups toasting champagne shining glasses, others hugging and kissing military policemen, others with Dilma and Lula puppets being hanged. The federal judge Sérgio Moro, responsible for the Lava Jato operation, in the first instance of court, who authorized the testimony under coercive conditions from the former president Lula, asked that the authorities and parties "listen to the voice of the streets".

The manifestation in Rio de Janeiro occupied eight blocks of the Atlântica Avenue - a little more than 1.5km. According to the act's organizers, around 1 million people participated in the protest that concentrated at Copacabana's seashore, region of the classes with greater buying power and with strong mobilization power without the effort of traveling to the leisure destination. This manifestation featured the symbolic picture of the moment when a couple with the Brazilian team's shirt and a dog walked ahead while their black housekeeper brought their child, creating a summarizing picture of the social exploitation and historical racism in the country.

In Porto Alegre, around 100 thousand people protested for Dilma Rousseff's impeachment, according to the numbers given by the Military Police - PM, in the Moinhos de Vento square. In Belo Horizonte, the crowd started arriving at 10:00 in the Liberdade Square, in front of the Liberdade Palace. In Recife, the military police did not disclose official estimates, but the protests' organizers said there were about 150 thousand people in Pernambuco's capital. One year ago, 8 thousand people mobilized themselves, according to the military police. The concentration happened in Boa Viagem avenue, a focus area for part of Recife's elite. In Salvador, the crowd was of 20 thousand, in the Farol da Barra, also in the city's seashore.

However, the manifestations of March 31, 2016, a Thursday, marked the 52 years since the 1964 overthrow, which installed a military regime in Brazil. It was summoned as the National Day of Mobilization Against the Coup and had 3 axes which unified the groups, being: defense of the democracy, against the tax adjustment and against the welfare reform. As a rule, the manifestations against the impeachment were coordinated by entities such as the Unified Workers' Central - CUT, Brazil's Landless Workers Movement - MST and The National Union of Students - UNE who sustain the importance of

⁵ <http://datafolha.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaopublica/2015/03/1604284-47-foram-a-avenida-paulista-em-15-de-marco-protestar-contr-a-corrupcao.shtml>. Visited on 27/09/2017.

⁶ The Lava Jato operation is a set of ongoing investigations of the Brazilian Federal Court which aims at ascertaining schemes of money washing. The operation began on the 17th of March of 2014 and is conducted, in first instance, by the federal judge Sérgio Moro.

having the acts in weekly days after the shift so that the students or workers can take advantage of the work or school/college exit. The option of the "old" centers is the necessary communication with the public transportation and the identity with spaces which represent work.

In São Paulo, the movement began around 16:00, in Sé's square. About 30 social movements gathered 40 thousand people, according to Datafolha⁷. Besides the Sé's square, the protesters also took over the Benjamin Constant street. Around 19:00, the subway station closed the entry next to the Poupatempo of Sé's station, of the Line 1 - Blue.

In Rio de Janeiro (RJ), the Largo da Carioca was taken over by the protesters. The act's organization speaks of 50 thousand people present. The PM did not make an estimation, but informed that no occurrence was registered. Artists participated in the manifestation, and among them was Chico Buarque, who gave a speech on the stage, defending the integrity of president Dilma.

In Belo Horizonte (MG), the protesters gathered in the Estação square. The act had concerts from MG's artists and speeches against the president's impeachment. In its apex, there was a crowd of 40 thousand people, according to the organizers. The PM estimated an amount of 10 thousand activists.

In Porto Alegre (RS), the protesters gathered in the Esquina Democrática square, with the participation of members from PT, the Communist Party of Brazil - PCdoB, CUT, MST, CTB and the Socialist Youth Union - UJS. According to the organizers, the numbers reached 80 thousand people. The PM disclosed an estimate of 18 thousand.

In Recife (PE), protesters gathered in the Derby square, a central area of the city, to march through the Conde da Boa Vista avenue towards the Independência square, in the neighborhood of Boa Vista. Different members of social movements participated, along with student entities and syndicates, in addition to parties, such as PT and PCdoB. The protesters proceeded through the Duarte Coelho bridge, taking the Guararapes avenue, towards the Independence square, where movement leaders gave speeches before the ending of the manifestation. According to the organization, 90 thousand people participated in the act. In the Military Police's estimate, they were 6 thousand.

In Salvador (BA), around 17:00, the protesters marched from the Piedade square, capital center, up to the Campo da Pólvora, at the end of this Thursday. On the spot, there is a monument in memory to the dead and disappeared people from the Military Regime period. In the middle of the trajectory, the group stopped at the Campo Grande square, where a vigil was made. The Military Police says that 12 thousand people participated in the manifestation. According to the organization, it was 20 thousand.⁸

IV. THE PROTESTERS' PROFILE

⁷ Datafolha survey. <http://datafolha.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaopublica/2015/03/1604284-47-foram-a-avenida-paulista-em-15-de-marco-protestar-contra-a-corrupcao.shtml>. Visited on 27/09/2017.

⁸ <https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2016/03/31/atos-pela-democracia-acontecem-no-aniversario-do-golpe-de-64.htm>

A research made by Datafolha⁹ on March 15, 2016 during the manifestations in favor of the impeachment depicted the elitist profile of the protesters who went to the Paulista avenue on that Sunday. 2,262 people were interviewed during the act. When asked about their occupation, 12% stated that they were businessmen - in São Paulo the activity is mentioned by only 2% of the population. The number of unemployed people in the avenue was lower than in the general population. With regard to family income, half of the interviewees said it is between 5 and 20 minimum wages. In the city of São Paulo, the percentage in this range is of 23%. The research also showed that 77% of the protesters had declared to be white and that 94% do not participate in any group that promoted the act.

The researches from Datafolha and from Perseu Abramo Foundation showed that the mobilizations against the impeachment have had a different profile from the anti-Dilma manifestations. The same pattern was recognized in the previous manifestations. In relation to schooling, 77% of the protesters had higher education (complete or incomplete). However, in the income aspect, the pattern was a little inferior to the ones in anti-Dilma manifestations, with 54.5% of the protesters with a family income between 3 and 10 minimum wages and, in relation to color, 34.9% had declared to be black or brown.

The big mass of Brazilian workers, the naturalization of the constituted misery, once more did not participate in the national political life, were not on the streets, did not protest against the low wages, against public services of bad quality such as health, education and housing. They continue to live on the margins of political decision-making, living on the urban fringes and undergoing the radical exploitation of capital. In this regard, Lefebvre teaches us that urban alienation involves and perpetuates all alienations. By itself, the segregation is generalized: by class, neighborhood, profession, age, ethnicity, sex (LEFEBVRE, 1999).

V. CONCLUSION

In 2014, the country was divided in a president election campaign that reflected a denial to politics, presented on a daily basis in a media narrative where the news gained great repercussion with the reiterated associations of politics and politicians with corruption and unlawfulness. With 51.64% of valid votes, Dilma Rousseff (PT) won against Aécio Neves (PSDB) who had 48.36%¹⁰. This was the smallest vote margin difference in a second round in the history of presidential elections in the redemocratization of Brazil, marking a social and political division. Thus, the impeachment process, in 2016, of the first female president of Brazil, was endorsed by the protesters filled streets that were inflated by the mainstream media and mobilized by networks and movements. But which space to occupy? By analyzing these spaces from the identities of the main participating groups and the repertoire of their demands, meaning will be given to the political culture of these protests that were decisive in the destitution of the Workers' Party

⁹ Datafolha. <http://datafolha.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaopublica/2015/03/1604284-47-foram-a-avenida-paulista-em-15-de-marco-protestar-contra-a-corrupcao.shtml>. Visited on 27/09/2017.

¹⁰ <https://www.eleicoes2014.com.br/candidatos-presidente/>. Visited on 18/08/2017

from presidency and in the inauguration of the ones who were defeated in the election, giving celerity to a neoliberal agenda of disassembly of the National State.

The proprietary groups of the financial capital or the intellectual capital, went to the public space of hundreds of cities in Brazil to fight for their ideology. This sociospatial division, which originated from the division of classes, characteristic of the Brazilian society and great part of underdeveloped countries, used to be more clearly visible in private spaces, now it is also happening in public spaces, through street demonstrations against or in favor of a certain government.

The data demonstrates that although the big mass of Brazilian workers are on the margins of manifestations analyzed, it is possible to identify the clear division of classes and ideological interests in these acts, even of choices and conditions of the urban spaces utilized in the manifestations.

In this sense, it is possible to state that the choices of the public spaces in the demonstrations that happened during the *impeachment* process of Rousseff are related to the social, economical and ideological profile of its protesters under the perspective of the domination of the spacial division of labor.

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