REFLECTIONS ON THE PRACTICES OF BRAZILIAN URBAN PLANNING: ERRORS THAT REPEAT

Raquel Garcia Gonçalves[153]

Ricardo Viana Carvalho de Paiva[154]

Izabella Galera[155]

Abstract

The crisis of the planning estabilished on the 1970 decade, the historical changes occurred in Brazil on the 1980 years, the strong of neoliberal ideology, the globalization ideas and the performance of the consultants are important elements to the understanding of the legitimation process of the dominant paradigms on the urban research and on the accomplished planning practices, in general, of the great urban projects.

This article establishes connections between the historical context of Brazil and the diffusion of new ideas. The objective of this paper is to propose reflections about the interfaces between the actual planning practices and the urban utopians elaborated on the XIX century.

1. Introduction

The emerging of some recent ideas situated within the field of planning - including strategic plans and marketing strategies - is part of the historical changes undergone by the socio-economic structures and policies, within the context of restructuring the world`s economy.

The emerging of these ideas, however, brings us to the old and already much discussed issue of import of planning models in other countries. Elaborated in quite distinct economic-political-cultural universes, these models are not, evidently, neutral, as they structure relationships and represent, in a certain way, a socio-spatial reality, designing a way of confrontation that, in fact, constitutes an only income only for completely different realities.

Moreover, despite the planning proposals released in recent times appear as a substitute for the old-operative conceptual apparatuses, we observe that since the nineteenth century, with the emerging of the industrial city and the utopians, until today, the solutions offered always are presented based on the idea of the ideal pre-set scheme, to whose rules the urban design and / or government has sought to submit, necessarily, the reality.

This article estabilishes conections between the historical context of Brazil and the diffusion of new ideas. The objective of this paper is to propose reflections about the interfaces among the present planning practices and the urban utopians elaborated on the XIX century.

2. Utopias

From the late eighteenth century, and especially the first decades of the nineteenth century, the effects of the industrial revolution of technical progress and the demographic revolution became increasingly notable. A major transformation in the distribution of the population across the territory will emerge as one of the consequences of economic transformations, significantly altering the balance until now existing between town and country and generating numerous tensions and needs (hygiene, new attachment sites, among others) . It is in this context that

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[153] Teacher, Department of Urban Planning, School of Architecture of UFMG. Cláudio Manoel Street, 1018/1001 – Funcionários. CEP: 30140-100. Belo Horizonte – MG / Brazil. E-mail: raquelgargon@hotmail.com

[154] Director of Continuing Education and Research Anima Group. Cláudio Manoel Street, 1018/1001 – Funcionários. CEP: 30140-100. Belo Horizonte – MG / Brazil. E-mail: ricardovcp@gmail.com.

[155] Masters student at the School of Architecture at the UFMG. E-mail: izabella.galera@gmail.com.

begins to occur the first questions about the organization of urban space. Several proposals will emerge denying the big city, or in counterpoint, calling out the need for a city increasingly current, efficient and modern. Even then, in most cases, the concern with the "disorder" and belief in models and standards of urban space showed the search for a new order and rationality against the spontaneity of urban structures.

What is an expression of disorder calls its antithesis, order. So we will see opposes to the pseudodisorder from the industrial city, proposals for urban amenities freely built by a reflection that unfolds the imagination. For not giving a practical way to questioning society, the reflection lies in the dimension of utopia ... (Choay, 2000, p. 07).

Thus, there are several schools of thought anchored in the idea that industrialization led to social disorder and urban to which should be imposed a new spatial ordering. Standing out among these tids, progressive and culturalist models, with the works of Owen, Fourier, Cabet, Morris, etc.. The implementation of these proposed models, however, is reduced to a small number of cases.

Even with the passage of time, the search for rationality kept uninterrupted and continued with the emerging of modernist ideas that come to dominate urban planning, especially after the Second World War. At this point, the mode of operation and the conditions were not the same everywhere, but the tendency to reorganize the space, through planning mass, was large. The functionality and efficiency of spatial patterns and circulation systems were seen as essential to achieve well-being and economic growth. The universalist character and uniformity present in architectural forms and large-scale urban plans showed, among other things, the denial of diversity and the fear and concern about the perceived disorganized and irrational.

If urban interventions with scientific pretensions began in the XIX century in major European metropolises, the peripheral countries will later take ownership of the solutions proposed by the core countries.

In this sense, it is assumed, for example, that the development of the Brazilian industrial capitalism led to urban problems and hence the need to seek solutions in the ideas and practices of so-called developed countries.

Especially since the period of import substitution, it is emphasized that the industrial expansion and urbanization and population concentration will be responsible, in Brazil, for deep quantitative and qualitative changes in the spatial structure, demographic and social development, as well as by emerging or worsening of urban problems and instability. And it is in this context of transformation of large Brazilian cities that urban planning and urban proposals gain traction.

The search for ideas related to progress, rationality and modernity lead to greater influence of the progressive model. The first big plans made express attempt to promote beautification and cleaning of cities, eventually boosting on the other hand, spatial segregation.

It is interesting to note that since the proposals to Paris of Haussmann is possible to highlight, according Choay (2000, p. 04),

... the work done, if it harms the working class, shocks old-fashioned estheticians, disturbs the small expropriated bourgeois, contradicts habits, it is, instead, the solution immediately favorable to the captains of industry and financiers who then constitute one of the most important assets elements of society.

So it will also occur in the plans and works carried out in Brazil, at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century: major interventions that, in general, favor the real estate market with its capitalist bases and exclude most of the population affected by the promoted spatial restructuring.

3.   Strategies

At the end of the t$wentieth century in Brazil, the new policy framework installed in the 80's and specifically the changes brought by the 1988 Constitution, add to the significant changes in the spatial organization and social structure, expressing the new political realities, economic and ideological of the contemporary city.

These new realities are gaining ground in the global level, especially since the first major recession of the post-war (1973-1975), and since then, a major restructuring of the geographical distribution and the dynamics of political, economic and social are occurring.

One of the significant changes is about the new location standards adopted by industries and economic activities in general, along with the trends of urban population deconcentration, demonstrating, among other things, the saturation of large cities, with their limitations, shortcomings and inability to meet the numerous and differentiated social demands.

Dealing specifically with the Brazilian case, several factors can be mentioned as contributors to decentralization (both in terms of employment and in the value of industrial production) and industrial growth in other areas, such as the development policies of federal regions with tax benefits and other incentives (although the policy of the states with the best resources has thwarted federal policy), the search for natural resources in new regions; diseconomies of agglomeration in the Metropolitan Area of São Paulo, with the emerging of agglomeration economies other urban centers, the unification of the market, with growing improved infrastructure (creation of urbanization economies), particularly transport and communications, among other factors (Diniz, 1993).

Consider also the profound technological changes, external openness, the creation of MERCOSUR, the changing role of the state and the diminishing importance of natural resources. These factors comprise a wide range associated with the advent of flexible production (or regime "post-Fordist") in the 70s and demonstrate the range (in Brazil) of ideas of globalization that have settled since then.

Resulting from the reconfiguration of the economy but also the global geopolitical consequence of the collapse of the Soviet bloc and of socialism, there has been a redistribution of productive activities and the emerging of new urban and territorial hierarchies. This new context is taken as an argument to justify the assignment of a new role for the cities. Large urban issues that during a considerable period, concentrated on issues such as equipment for collective consumption, accelerated growth and disorganized metropolis, speculation, housing, urban social movements, have been reinterpreted based on new scenario that takes place. Now seen as productive platforms and economic vectors, cities are designed, above all, from the construction and reproduction of competitive advantages and development strategies capable of ensuring them a favorable position in the space of interurban competition. In this new development to urban areas, the global-local relations were leading localities to adopt policies and practices that promise to ensure their integration into the globalized world.

According Otilia Arantes, the effects of so-called globalization on urban policies should not be neglected. "Something that strategic planners, on the contrary, not only ignore, but they`re to become a key input in the calculations about how to become a competitive city" (Arantes, 2000, p. 20).

Interventions related to communications or other activities connected with the global economy (information, quality of public services, culture, accessibility) are gaining space in the contemporary context, and, in most cases, targeted interventions (which shows the slightest emphasis on general plans) and of monumental character or symbolic - large visible works that can turn into a spectacle. It is observed that urban policies should, in accordance with the current proposals, position the city in the best possible way to seize opportunities, identify and promote the main attractions, to use more effectively the resources, encourage consensus building. Also according Arantes:

Although it is known that modern cities have always been associated with the social division of labor and capitalist accumulation, the exploitation of land ownership is not a new fact, and that there is (...) a direct relationship between the urban and spatial configuration production or

reproduction of capital, (...) there is something new to record this stage of capitalism in which the cities themselves began to be managed and consumed as commodities (Arantes, 2000, p. 26).

It is noticed that the world view that is imposed, in contemporaneity, lines with a kind of economic rationalization and the logic of the market begins to dominate and permeate the consciousness the new discourses that arise. An arsenal of keywords and / or key ideas, starting with the so-called globalization, established that, often acts as justification for thoughts and attitudes, and others as maximum growth, productivity and competitiveness appear in recent times as background of a context where the kingdom business / commercial is practically imposed at various discursive fields, also gaining strength in performances practices that refer to space in general.

These questions relate to the current strength of the neoliberal ideology that, according to Bourdieu (1998, p. 58), is based on "a sort of social neo-Darwinism: they are 'the best and the brightest', as they say at Harvard, who triumph". To highlight the competitive advantages of a location, in this sense, would be one of the strategies used to achieve success. Large urban projects, urban renovations marked by calls for the promotion of sporting events, among others, are based on this speech that emphasizes competitiveness as something necessary and almost inevitable.

In the same way, one can see how the background to the ideas of interurban competitive, as disclosed in recent times, the dominant discourse according to which the so-called globalization and neoliberal appear coated the "appearance of inevitability" (Bourdieu, 1998).
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It is heard to say everywhere, all day - there lies the strength of this dominant discourse - that there is nothing to oppose the neoliberal view, it can present as evident as devoid of any alternative. If it bears this sort of banality, because there is a whole work of symbolic indoctrination which passively journalists participate or ordinary citizens, and especially actively, a certain number of intellectuals (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 42).

Thus, although some forces shall rise up against the hegemonic and dominant thought, the idea of fatalism and the myth of neoliberal globalization come to pervade most of the speeches of both their promoters, such as politicians, journalists and ordinary citizens, forming a kind of solidarity network, collaborate for massive dissemination and / or imposition of a certain economism, based on the primacy of the productive forces, the annulment of the political and social abandonment. The competitiveness and productivity come to be seen as the only way to achieve success.

Broaden the perspective offered by the ideas outlined above and, mainly, by the process of ongoing globalization, and consider the process of transformation / fragmentation of planning contexts and the consequent crisis of national unit planner, structured in the seventies, under the aegis of the rationalist model-technocratic-authoritarian: it has an favoured environment to the development and legitimization of paradigms that are reorienting research in urban as well as planning practices. In fact, in addition to achieving the social, economic, political and cultural work in redefining scales, reconfiguring the meaning of space as a whole, the so-called globalization goes to the heart of the elaboration processes and legitimation of paradigms that guide research on field of urban and regional studies and planning practices (Vainer, 2002).

In a time marked by the force of the neoliberal ideology where seduction prevails rather than domination, market laws, the maximum profit and economic efficiency are tailored concepts and techniques inspired in the business for them to be applied in the public sector and more specifically, in cities. Many times, the local development strategies are placed as the only possible way of survival and success within the so-called new economy, marked by "urban entrepreneurialism". And if, according to these paradigms, globalization and neoliberalism dress themselves with the "inevitability", as these strategies for the development of the localities are also placed as inevitable.

Planning tools most publicized, in actuality, just as well, because they act as true "symbolic systems",

(...) They fulfill their purpose policy instruments imposing or legitimation of domination, which help to ensure the domination of one class over another (symbolic violence) giving enhanced his own power to the power relations that underlie and thereby, in the words of Weber, for the 'domestication of the dominated' (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 11).

It is emphasized that from the late 80s that foreign agencies - multilateral or not - start acting in a more intense, as protagonists in establishing guidelines concerning Brazilian urban and regional issues, supporting and / or inducing adoption of institutional practices that express concepts   and   objectives   of   planning.
To these facts, one can still associate the weakening of the state that has, gradually withdrawn itself from various sectors of social life before its responsibility. The public discourse to stimulate private interest along with the power-ideas of those who preach the redefinition of the size and role of the state and strive to "the absolute reign of the market and the consumer, commercial substitute for the citizen (assaulted) the State: (did) of the public goods a private good, of the public life, the Republic, their thing "(Bourdieu, 1998, p. 38). The state regression process worldwide, sum up the crisis of the national unit planner, as previously mentioned.
It is within the framework of this problem that new planning models emerge, alternative to the traditional pattern considered, whose practices are consolidated, generally in large urban projects. Among the instruments disclosed involved in the same context of competitiveness and new intermunicipal practices performed, there is the Strategic Planning of Cities, mainly based on the model "Catalan".
It is noteworthy that the significant release of these models predominantly through the combined action of international agencies and consultants, and the consequent use by governments of numerous cities of the proposals most widespread nowadays, leading to pay attention to the fact

the force of a speech depend less on their intrinsic properties than the mobilizing force he exerts to say, at least in part, the degree to which it is recognized by a numerous and powerful that recognizes him and he expresses interests (in a more or less transfigured and unrecognizable) (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 183).

The strength of proposals and planning models that emerge in contemporary times, in large part, can be related forms of dissemination of these ideas gleaned from the valuation of a speech based on the binomial "use model - achieving success" and at the same time this force can be connected to the network formed by various consultants and agencies that through joint efforts, can establish and legitimize concepts and techniques that will reorient practices in the urban area. Also, according to Bourdieu:

The force of ideas (a spokesman) is measured, not as in the field of science, its truth value (even if they should part of his strength to its ability to convince that he holds the truth), but but by mobilizing force they contain, ie: the strength of the group recognizes that, even if the silence or the absence of denial, and they can manifest their voices gathering or assembling them in space (2001, p. 185).

Considering the above observations, we can not ignore that the promises of the speech of strategic planning exercise great power of persuasion. At this point, it is clear the importance of setting the historical context in which lies the emerging of the current proposals, that is, the emerging of some recent ideas situated within the field of planning is part of the historical changes undergone by the socio-economic structures and policies. Thus, it is part of a larger

process in which competing conceptions of what the city, which seeks a redefinition of inter-scalar, as well as the social and political subjects and their relations with the territory.

It is worth mentioning that a moment of crisis of the planning standards provides an increased ability to believe in the truth of these ideas that come up. Resorted to here the Choay (2000, p. 07) and reaffirms that "what is an expression of disorder calls its antithesis, the order ..." And this is the great promise of strategic plans: resume power planning to replace the clutter in order, by the crisis development. That is why some of the main creators of these new instruments claim that the crisis or the decay is not the planning itself. The problem would be the lack of ability to adjust the planning of new urban spaces, to conceive it in a different way from the traditional.

The fact is that these instruments, produced and widely disseminated by agencies and international centers have been incorporated as a great innovation for a growing number of cities.

On one side, there is the great engagement of consultants and multilateral institutions in the dissemination of concepts and methods, which have, in addition to analyzes and proposals, true formulas for the application of models.

On the other hand, it is clear the increasing number of municipalities that in Brazil and Latin America, have been hiring the consulting or using the teachings circulated about, especially the Strategic Planning of Cities. Importantly, there are several authors, planners and international consultants who have applied similar concepts and models involved in the context of increasingly competitive. It is noteworthy, finally, that the importation of proposals, planning tools and models from other countries, long ago, is a common occurrence in our history. Criticisms and questions abound, but the influence still marks this day.

It is a fact that these models emerging today, supported by the idea of the inevitability of competition between municipalities, present themselves convincingly and hegemonicly. It should however be considered that other possibilities are presented (even tentatively) in the same connection. In this sense, rethinking the city from the ideas of minimizing social exclusion, focusing on socio-economic-environmental sustainability and considering the importance of citizen participation in the processes of management and planning can be a more long and complex, but fairer. To reflect from the particularities and historical and cultural reality of each place expands the possibilities for an effective action and can contribute to the disruption of the historical process of reckless use of ready formulas and models.

4.   Final Thoughts

It should be noted, first, that the strategic plans (cities) are disclosed as a great innovation and often as the only possible way of survival and success (for cities) within the so-called "new economy", marked by "urban entrepreneurialism" and neoliberalism.

Generally, these ideas (widely publicized), especially for their indisputable and unquestionable appearance, are accepted and influence common sense. However, tests and analyzes already undertaken have demonstrated that the "look" of the strategic discourse differs from the "essence" of the same. At the same time, we must bear in mind that "the manifestation, the appearance is of the essence" (Lefebvre, 1995, p. 217). In this sense, the ideology that involves planning models in question can often be best apprehended through a process of deepening (the theoretical-conceptual content and analysis of concrete experiences), through the understanding of possible connections and capture contradictions and movements (appearance - essence) that would lead to the understanding of the appearance as denial (in our case, usually intended) of the essence.

It is noteworthy that, once again, regarding the practices and discourses that refer to planning and land management, we are sharing the common fate, offered to peripheral countries, mere operators of concepts and conceptions. The importing of proposals, models and planning tools from other countries has long been a common occurrence in our history.

It is a fact that the proposals and planning methods disclosed in recent times seek to replace the old conceptual apparatuses surgery. It is noted, however, that much at first, and here we

highlight the emerging of the industrial city and the utopians of the nineteenth century, as the end of the twentieth century to the present day, the solutions offered have always been based on the idea of model or an ideal pre-established schema, to whose rules the urban design and / or government has sought to submit perforce reality (Choay, 1985, 2000). Theoretical conceptual and methodological projects are altered. The rational analysis remains that allows the determination of an order-type, likely to apply to any human group, anywhere. Choay (2000, p. 10) points out that the progressive model, proposed in the nineteenth century, presents itself as a system limiting and repressive.

The limitation is exercised, a first level, by the regidity by a predetermined spatial framework. (...) On a second level, the spatial order proofs that it must be provided by a limited more strictly political. (...) The political authoritarianism in fact, that hides in all these proposals, democratic terminology, is connected to the common goal, more or less assumed, the maximum yield.

Choay (2000, p. 14) also highlights that all nineteenth-century thinkers imagine the city's future in modeling. "In all cases, the city, rather than being conceived as a process or a problem, it is always positioned as a thing, a reproducible object. It is extracted from the concrete temporality and becomes, in the etymological sense, utopian, as to say, out of nowhere."

There has, in the current context, the introduction of new models, especially the competitive strategic planning – as "city" or "situational" addressing, again, a "reproducible object" and not complex realities, and work within a managerial knowledge, imported the techniques of war or private enterprise to government institutions. Let it, then, remain, the use of rules and procedures based on models that impose a choice between hegemonic conceptions on the one hand, and / or corrective and disciplinary action, on the other hand. As in the nineteenth century, the current models are presented as instruments indefinitely reproducible. Conversion devices and "cure" devices that, through corrective and medicalizing procedures might promote a new order.

It is worth mentioning that the techniques for setting up models, presently, are similar to techniques used for over a century. Thus, to relate, in a dual way, an "image-portrait" and an "image model", ie, the use of the resource "modeling critique", from the moment that each defect listed in relation to the current standard opposes a quality reverse that highlights new concepts proposed, they create a sort of a deadlock which practically excludes the possibility of intermediate solutions. Thus, many times, these local development strategies are placed as the only possible way of survival and success within the so-called new economy.

It can not be ignored, however, that the current processes and the ideas and concepts more widespread in recent times are part of historical changes undergone by their own socio-economic structures and policies. Changes that lead to rethink the city and territory, on multiple scales and inter-scalar, on social and political subjects. One must also recognize the relevance of some global players - agencies that support research, multilateral agencies and cooperation - supporting policies, plans and projects working in governmental and dissemination of new models, for often carrying specific experiences of a side to side of the world, as "objects reproducible." In fact, more fundamental question is to recognize and expand the reflections and debate. After all, if more than a century ago utopias did not materialize, strategies, proposed today, look for to fit and have been used anywhere.

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