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Cultural Studies and the Question of Agency in  
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## *New Year and Christmas Terror in European Cities: Berlin and Istanbul Attacks*

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### **Abstract**

Europe is facing a range of terrorist threats and attacks of a violent jihadist nature, from both networked groups and lone actors. Most of the recent terror incidents are the work of Islamic extremists, either natives or immigrants motivated by radical groups, such as the Islamic State, which have declared war on Western values. In December 2016, 12 people were killed and 56 others were injured when a terrorist rammed a truck into a Christmas market in Berlin. These two attacks were horrifying examples of New Year and Christmas terror in Europe. The attack took place during a time of heightened Islamist terrorist activity in Europe. Several terrorist attacks in 2016, in Germany and in neighboring countries, have been linked to ISIS. 39 people were killed and 69 people were injured in another attack at a world-wide famous nightclub by the Bosphorus in Istanbul on New Year's Eve. The Isis-linked Aamaq news agency said the attack was carried out by a "heroic soldier of the caliphate" who attacked the nightclub "where Christians were celebrating their pagan feast". This paper looks at the reasons for the increasing of large scale terrorist attacks in Europe and explores the Berlin and Istanbul attacks deeply. It also aims to bring a insight into the consequences of the Berlin and Istanbul attacks concerning tourism and the changes in the daily lives of these two cities' citizens. The data is obtained from Global Terrorism Database and the European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Reports.

Keywords: Terrorism, Berlin Christmas Market Attack, Istanbul Reina Attack

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## **Introduction**

The number of terrorist attacks resulting in fatalities in Europe increased in 2016, despite an overall drop in the number of incidents taking place. Europe is facing a range of terrorist threats and attacks of a violent jihadist nature, from both networked groups and lone actors. Most of the recent terror incidents are the work of Islamic extremists, either natives or immigrants motivated by radical groups, such as the Islamic State, which have declared war on Western values. The attacks in Brussels, Nice and Berlin in particular, with explosives (Brussels) and vehicles (Nice and Berlin) used to randomly kill and wound as many people as possible, again demonstrated the harm jihadist militants are able and willing to inflict upon EU citizens, legitimised by the interpretation they adopted of selectively sampled religious texts.

In December 2016, 12 people were killed and 56 others were injured when a terrorist rammed a truck into a Christmas market in Berlin. One of the victims was the truck's original driver, who was found shot dead in the passenger seat. The truck was eventually stopped by its automatic brakes. The perpetrator was a Tunisian failed asylum seeker, urged by Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. Four days after the attack, he was killed in a shootout with police near Milan in Italy.

The attack took place during a time of heightened Islamist terrorist activity in Europe. Several terrorist attacks in 2016, in Germany and in neighboring countries, have been linked to ISIS; some of them were similar to the truck attack on the Christmas market in Berlin such as the 2014 Nantes attack and the 2016 Nice attack.

39 people were killed and 69 people were injured in another attack at a world-wide famous nightclub by the Bosphorus in Istanbul on New Year's Eve. Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the attack in the first hours of 2017 when a lone gunman fired 180 bullets in a seven-minute shooting spree. Nearly two-thirds of those killed in the club, which is frequented by celebrities, were foreigners. Many of them were from the Middle East. The Isis-linked Aamaq news agency said the attack was carried out by a "heroic soldier of the caliphate" who attacked the nightclub "where Christians were celebrating their pagan feast".

In November 2017, the United States warned that there is a 'heightened risk' of terrorist attacks throughout Europe, particularly during the upcoming Christmas and New Year holiday season.

## **Definition and Character of Terrorism**

Terrorism is the use of violence against civilians in order to achieve political aims. The three key words in this definition are "violence," "civilians," and "political." Terrorism is always violent, which is what distinguishes terrorist groups from other kinds of organizations, such as political parties. A terrorist attack, unlike most military operations, deliberately targets civilians. Finally, terrorism is always political. Unlike criminal gangs, whose violence is motivated by greed, terrorists attack in order to achieve some political goal, such as overthrowing a government (Glenn, 2017).

In fact, although the United Nations has been attempting to define the term terrorism since 2005, today there remains no international consensus over the meaning of this term. In recent years, several U.S. government agencies have developed their own specific definitions of terrorism. The U.S. Department of Defense defines terrorism as “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.”

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” The U.S. Department of State defines terrorism to be “premeditated politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.”

Within terrorism lies the word terror. Terror comes from the Latin *terrere*, which means “frighten” or “tremble.” When coupled with the French suffix *isme* (referencing “to practice”), it becomes akin to “practicing the trembling” or “causing the frightening.” Trembling and frightening here are synonyms for fear, panic, and anxiety—what we would naturally call terror. The word terror is over 2,100 years old. In ancient Rome, the *terror cimbricus* was a state of panic and emergency in response to the coming of the Cimbri tribe killers in 105 BCE. (Matusitz, 2013)

The UN General Assembly Resolution 49/60 (adopted on December 9, 1994), titled “Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism,” contains a provision describing terrorism: Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them. The UN Member States still have no agreed-upon definition of terrorism, and this fact has been a major obstacle to meaningful international countermeasures.

The European Union defines terrorism for legal/official purposes in Art.1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism ([eur-lex.europa.eu](http://eur-lex.europa.eu), 2002). This provides that terrorist offences are certain criminal offences set out in a list comprised largely of serious offences against persons and property which: given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organization where committed with the aim of: seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization.

The United States has defined terrorism under the Federal Criminal Code. Title 18 of the United States Code defines terrorism and lists the crimes associated with terrorism. In Section 2331 of Chapter 113(B), defines terrorism as: “...activities that involve violent... or life-threatening acts... that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State and... appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass

destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and...(C) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States...”

There has been a radical transformation, if not a revolution, in the character of terrorism. Laqueur (2000) compares old terrorism with new terrorism. Old terrorism is terrorism that strikes only selected targets. New terrorism is terrorism that is indiscriminate; it causes as many casualties as possible. Another major feature of new terrorism is the increasing readiness to use extreme indiscriminate violence. Laqueur argues that “the new terrorism is different in character, aiming not at clearly defined political demands but at the destruction of society and the elimination of large sections of the population” Terrorism has changed because of a paradigm shift. A paradigm is a pattern, worldview, or model that is logically established to represent a concept. A paradigm is a way of interpreting the world that has been accepted by a group of people and that can be useful for politicians and thinkers to design policy agendas. When a paradigm changes, the whole group experiences a paradigm shift (Matusitz, 2013).

Many scholars argue that the paradigm shift from old to new terrorism occurred at some point in the 1990s, with the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York and the 1995 sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway system by Aum Shinrikyo (a deadly Japanese cult).<sup>49</sup> Supporters of the concept of new terrorism identify the strict compliance with religion, predominantly radical Islam, as one of its main characteristics. While old terrorism was mainly secular in its focus and drive, new terrorism works hand-in-glove with religious fanaticism. New terrorism rejects all other ways of life and advocates a categorical and inflexible worldview consistent with the belief of the religion. New terrorism is also increasing. Gurr and Cole (2000) examined the sixty-four international terrorist organizations that existed in 1980; they found that only two of them were religious organizations (only 3% in total). By 1995, the number of religious terrorist organizations rose sharply to twenty-five out of fifty-eight (43% in total). It was an increase of 40% in just fifteen years. (Matusitz, 2013)

### **Rising of Terrorism in Europe**

Over the last three years, Europe has experienced a surge in terrorist attacks. This coincides with an unprecedented rise in refugee migration from Syria, Iraq and other war torn areas of the Middle East to Europe.

Also troubling is the recent report of 11,000 stolen blank Syrian passports in the hands of ISIS at a time when ISIS, due to defeats on the battlefield, is sending its fighters back to Europe. ISIS and other Jihadists will now be able to enter Europe and other countries with false Syrian identities. This facilitates the ISIS strategy of infiltrating the refugee stream with terrorists to carry out more attacks in Europe (Gurr & Cole, 2017).

In December 2016, 12 people were killed and 56 others were injured when a Tunisian asylum seeker rammed a truck into one of the main Christmas markets in Berlin. The attack took place during a time of heightened Islamist terrorist activity in Europe. It was the first major Islamist terror attack in Germany.

39 people were killed and 69 people were injured in another attack at a world-wide famous nightclub by the Bosphorus in Istanbul on New Year's Eve. The Isis-linked Aamaq news agency said the attack was carried out by a "heroic soldier of the caliphate" who attacked the nightclub "where Christians were celebrating their pagan feast".

Jean Claude Juncker, Head of the European Commission, gave a speech to member nations about EU progress and outlined the priorities for the EU. He took a passive stance on migration and rising terrorism when throughout Europe over the last several years, millions of refugees – 1.3 million in 2015 alone- have been resettled in various European countries. This past year, there was a terrorist attack in Europe on average every seven days, however Juncker barely mentioned terrorism. Furthermore, when outlining five priorities for the EU, the subject of refugee migration was last, two places behind climate change. Polls indicate that the majority of Europeans overwhelmingly oppose further migration, but there appears to be no official effort to slow it down.

In contrast to Juncker's speech, an article in the Gatestone Institute states: "The last three years saw an enormous surge in large-scale terrorist attacks in European cities: The ISIS attacks in Paris in November 2015, the Brussels attacks in March 2016, the Nice attack in July 2016, the Berlin Christmas Market attack in December 2016, and the Manchester attack in May 2017 — and those are just the most spectacular ones.

## **Conclusion**

Historic terror attacks were mostly motivated by ideologies such as anarchism and extreme versions of socialism or nationalism, and the numbers killed or wounded were minimal in comparison to today. Today terrorists are prepared to contemplate mass casualties on a larger scale, and religious faith plays a far more central role.

Terrorism is a global phenomenon that affects the everyday lives of many people. The Christmas Market Attack in Berlin and The New Year's Eve Attack in Reina have many effects on everyday lives of the citizens and the tourist attractiveness of these two cities.

Christmas markets across Europe have been identified as terror targets, partly because of their Christian symbolism, but more significantly because they are crowded and vulnerable. People are afraid to visit Christmas markets.

Last Christmas on 2017 in Germany increased security has been put in place as a precaution at public buildings, major events, transport hubs and large public gatherings.

Key buildings in many countries, from government ministries to railway stations, have permanent anti-truck barriers, but those are specifically designed to defend against trucks packed with explosives and driven by suicide bombers. They protect buildings regarded as vulnerable, but not the people who are outside the protective cordon.

Last year, the number of visitors to Turkey slumped because of a series of terrorist attacks. The night club-Reina that the attack took place was closed. It was one of the most popular night clubs for foreign tourists.

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## Resources

‘Europe Mass Migration and Increasing Terrorism’ by Doug Wilson:  
<https://www.counterthreatgrp.com>.  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3A133168>

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***Reinventing Identities in The Changing Metropolis: Shenzhen in Writer Wu Jun's Fiction***

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**Abstract**

This paper aims at examining the representation of Shenzhen, a fast urbanizing metropolis situated in southern Guangdong province, in Chinese writer Wu Jun's literary production, by focusing on characters' issues of identity and unfulfilled desire, their relationship with the urban space, and interaction dynamics among different social categories. Wu Jun, herself a witness of Shenzhen's development, sets most of her fiction in this city, showing a deep sensibility in portraying the contradictions caused by industrialization and economic growth and how these aspects affect its dwellers' lives, with an emphasis on the psychological dimension. Nowadays one of China's most bustling metropolises, Shenzhen has developed very fast since it has become the first Special Economic Zone in 1980, therefore revealing more intensely than elsewhere the outcomes of China's modernization. In her fiction, often included by critics in 'subaltern literature', Wu Jun frequently describes Shenzhen from the peculiar perspective of migrants, who move from rural areas in pursuit of a wealthier future, but she occasionally also depicts middle class characters. After introducing Shenzhen's social context at the turn of the century and the influence it exerts on urban writing, with reference to Wu Jun's literature, I will analyse six of her short stories, mainly belonging to the collection *From the second to the six district*, relevant to understand her ability in seizing the inner feelings of city dwellers and the psychological consequences they cope with, in the atmosphere of radical urban transformations.

Keywords: Chinese urban literature, Wu Jun, Shenzhen writers, subaltern literature, Chinese metropolis, new urban novel, Shenzhen fiction

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## Introduction

The personal experience of woman writer Wu Jun, born in 1969 in Hebei province, but moved to Shenzhen when she was very young, is deeply rooted in the unique atmosphere of this 21<sup>st</sup> century metropolis, situated in Southern China, Guangdong province, that constitutes her main source of inspiration.<sup>1</sup> Wu Jun's depicts, in a realist and at times brutal style, the way Shenzhen dwellers deal with the city, in a restless process of modernization.<sup>2</sup> Through the description of the urban environment and the relationships characters establish with it, crucial in defining their identities, Wu Jun unveils a psychological dimension of undisclosed anxieties and desires and provides an overview of the urban fabric's transformations in time of globalization. By embracing the subjective perspective of individuals whose daily experience takes place within the city of Shenzhen, her stories encompass contemporary urbanites' collective condition, thus acquiring a universal value. Regardless of whether characters are migrants from the countryside, factory workers or dissatisfied middle class women, Wu Jun is engaged in portraying their psychological reactions to Shenzhen's amazingly swift urbanization process in the context of China's dramatic shift towards capitalism. Interviewed about her interest for lower social strata, Wu Jun has claimed: "I'm not just interested in workers at the assembly line. Teachers, hotel managers, office employees, karaoke singers are all among my protagonists" (Li, 2011). During the same conversation, she added: "I don't think that only those who have not enough to eat belong to subaltern classes. In my opinion, whoever is not respected, is neglected, is oppressed is even more subaltern" (Li, 2011).<sup>3</sup>

Her plots unravel through a succession of inner feelings' narrations and images of the cityscape. In addressing subaltern characters, Wu Jun's peculiar ability is taking an objective stance, by criticizing their attitude and revealing their weaknesses and not simply standing by their side (Meng, 2013, 115). Characters often live in Shenzhen's outskirts and are torn between the effort to conquer an urban identity, in the case of migrants, or a more meaningful life, if they belong to the middle class, and the harsh reality, which at some point of the story abruptly awakens them, by disenchanting any idealistic hope. Concerns of identity and belonging, connected to the development of the global metropolis, do not spare any of the protagonists of the six stories examined in this paper.

## Literary representations of the metropolis: the case of Shenzhen

Before observing Wu Jun's literary texts, it's worthwhile to shortly introduce the singular history of Shenzhen, called the "city of dreams" (Bach, 2010, 421; Kho, 2017, 164) for the countless economic and cultural opportunities it offers and the appeal it exerts on migrants. Because of their peculiar features, contemporary Chinese cities are not properly studied by the perspective of Western urban theories (Wu

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<sup>1</sup> Wu Jun writes: "Shenzhen's uniqueness can hardly be compared to any other city. Shenzhen is the ideal land for many people, in a certain sense similar to what once were Yan'an, Peking, Paris or New York" (Wu Jun, 2012e).

<sup>2</sup> Besides the six short stories described here, most of Wu Jun's literary production is set in Shenzhen. See: Tan, 2014; Wu Jun, 2012e; Lu, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Wu Jun's works share many features of 'subaltern literature'; due to lack of space this trend will not be discussed here. For further readings: Shao, 2016, 103-146; Li, 2014.

Fulong, 2016);<sup>4</sup> this is particularly true for Shenzhen, where many urban novels are set,<sup>5</sup> and whose fast progress has fostered local writers' ponderings over China's urbanization.<sup>6</sup>

In 1980 Shenzhen has been promoted from a fishers' village and market town, founded around the end of Ming dynasty, to the status of city and chosen as China's first Special Economic Zone,<sup>7</sup> following the Reform and Opening Up policy launched in 1978 by Deng Xiaoping.<sup>8</sup> As a SEZ, Shenzhen attracted foreign investments and benefited from a rapid development, thus becoming in a few decades one of the most modern, industrialized and wealthiest metropolises of China, with a massive population increase, that has now reached more than ten million. Attracted by higher living standards, the large amount of floating population based in Shenzhen, makes it a hub of cultural diversity, since each resident brings a peculiar regional heritage (Clark, 1998: 109), the presence of foreign residents is high, young people move from elsewhere in pursuit of fulfilment in work and adventure (Clark, 1998, 112-113).

A feature of the city useful to understand Wu Jun's characters' mindset, is its centre-margins dichotomy:<sup>9</sup> until 2010, when the whole of Shenzhen has acquired the status of SEZ, its territory was divided in an 'inner city' (Guannei), corresponding to the area where the SEZ was originally established and its actual city centre, and an 'outer city' (Guanwai), situated outside the borders of the SEZ, mainly destined to factories and home to most migrants. In spite of the demolition of the border structures, Shenzhen citizens still distinguish the two areas.

Often residing in Guanwai, Wu Jun's characters' impressions of the surroundings convey a feeling of estrangement. In *Er qu dao liu qu* (From the second to the six district) the protagonist says: "People from every corner of the province live in Guanwai, and there are also people coming from the rest of China, like me and other pretentious students [...]. Because of the frontier, this place is called Guanwai. Seven centimetres, the width of a barbed wire. Because of it many people, including myself, don't have any chance to see Shennan Lane [...]" (Wu Jun, 2012c, 58).<sup>10</sup> And a little later: "In this place that is not really Shenzhen, but yet it's not outside Shenzhen, I've often thought that people are like ants in a frying pan. Until today I haven't found any good aspect" (Wu Jun, 2012c, 59). In *Qin'ai de Shenzhen* (Dear Shenzhen), the narrator states: "The place where he lives is Shenzhen's Guanwai, a place separated from the actual SEZ by a barbed wire, but close to the airport. Unfortunately, Li Shuiku has never been inside the SEZ" (Wu Jun, 2008, 222).

It's not easy to outline what an urban identity is, considering that experiences of the space can be very varied and there can be aspects of the city with which a person is

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<sup>4</sup> Concerning the inadequacy of Western urban theories to describe "multiple forms of metropolitan modernities", see Roy, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> For example, *Northern Girls* (Sheng, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> About Shenzhen literature: Li, 2014, 187-190; Nan, 2007; Zhou, 2007; Yang, 2007; Huang, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> In Special Economic Zones foreign investments are facilitated through market oriented policies and business incentives. Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou and Xiamen were the first four. Following them, SEZ have been established all over China.

<sup>8</sup> About Shenzhen's history: Clark, 1998, 106-108.

<sup>9</sup> On the outcomes of this dichotomy: Kho, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Except *Metro Line 5*, available in English translation (Wu Jun, 2017), I've translated the passages quoted in this paper from the Chinese edition.

not familiar (Haapala, 2003, 15-16). Nevertheless the metropolis defines its inhabitants' identities and, at the same time, is shaped by them, in a process of steady and dynamic interaction. Residents' perception of it is fragmentary and partial, since the city is enjoyed by millions of people who differ for class, personality and many other aspects (Lynch, 1960). Constituted by myriad of cultures, that in time of globalization also originate from its interconnectedness with foreign societies, contemporary conurbations affect identity formation in a multifaceted way, determining the coexistence of various lifestyles and individualities. All over the world, the emphasis upon individualism and neo-liberalism in the last decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century has determined the genesis of multiple identities within the metropolis (Thorn, 2002, 98); in China, the acceleration of market reforms in the 90s caused widespread phenomena of consumerism and individualism, especially in the metropolises.

The configuration of the urban landscape is a crucial element in shaping people's identity and desires (Thorn, 2002, 99): with urbanization and the increase of inner migration, Chinese cities' spatial distribution has been radically modified. Since a city is naturally divided into neighbourhoods with different functions and architectural styles, which may also differ in the kind of activities that can be enjoyed and in the categories of people that live them, "the concept of undivided city is a myth and a utopia at the same time" (Van Kempen, 2007, 15).

Rural-to-urban borders and inner city/outer city borders, considered as a virtual divide between two worlds, acquire a high symbolic value for Wu Jun's characters at a multidimensional level, meaning that they affect their lives from a psychological, existential and practical perspective. In his study on the borders within the city, choosing Canton as a case study, Breitung (2011) argues that in most Chinese cities neighbourhoods are separated from each other and people live in bounded spaces which represent their mental map. He looks at the meaning of virtual boundaries through an array of categories, among which the psychological one, quite meaningful for the purpose of this paper, is based on the idea that an invisible aspect of borders has to do with the 'spacialization' of identity (Breitung, 2011: 57-58): physical and psychological boundaries prevent migrants from actually experiencing the benefits of urban life. Wu Jun is concerned with the psychological impact of migration: upon their setting in Shenzhen, characters show a dual identity, trying to get rid of their background, but yet experiencing alienation in the urban context. Even craving for a urban status, they look at the glamorous aspects of the metropolis from behind a curtain, yet unwilling to return to their birthplaces.

Sociological studies show that migrant workers, especially women, once moved to the city, refuse their rural origins and consciously adopt a modernized lifestyle, visible in their outer appearance, that help them take the distance from their fellow villagers, with whom they do not want to identify anymore (Zhang, 2014, 5-6).

For Wu Jun's characters, the rural-urban gap is at the same time a tangible and a psychological reality: it implies a redefinition of identity, but also a geographical relocation.

## Between rural and urban identity

Identity issues related to migration are the core theme of the three stories proposed in this paragraph, that can be read as tales of disillusionment and awakening to reality. In their attempt to resettle in Shenzhen, these characters seem to be more interested in finding an answer to the question ‘who am I?’ than simply pursue an economic improvement. The three characters delineated in *Er qu dao liu qu* (From the second to the sixth district; 2012c) embody the condition of frustrated but stubborn desire to become city dwellers that characterizes migrants: the I-narrator, after studying to become an actress, moves to Shenzhen to fulfil her dream of performing on a stage, but inevitably fails; Guo Xiaogai, her childhood friend, and her boyfriend Xu Senlin go to Shenzhen to visit her, with the unspoken goal to stay longer, but the unfeasibility of urban life transforms their wish in a defeat. Despite difficulties and discriminations<sup>11</sup> from residents, who despise northern migrants, the protagonist devotes every effort to make things work, never losing hope, endowed as she is with dignity and prepared to endure loneliness:

[...] I still do unskilled work: I receive or send documents, help actors to put on make-up, I even watch people’s bags while they are singing on the stage, but they should know I studied to become an actress. And then there are those lonely and misunderstood nights. For example, I have never been to Shekou [...]; nonetheless, not much time ago, somebody said they had seen me in Shekou while doing ‘that’ business, they described plenty of details, said I was bargaining the price beneath a tree and suggested that I should have been fired (Wu Jun, 2012c, 60).

At stakes for the protagonist is not only the acquisition of an urban status: her aspirations entail complicated matters of identity. When her friends arrive in Guanwai, she’s proud to show them local habits and food tastes, as if she actually were a Shenzheners. Notwithstanding her nostalgia for the hometown, regret of countryside’s lost harmony, lets her cheerfully accommodate them, her behaviour must be interpreted as an aspect of her urban self. The identity issues of the three are also due to concrete problems, such as the lack of a residence permit:<sup>12</sup>

I ran to the dormitory in building six, where Guo Xiaogai and Xu Senlin, who were there to fulfil their dreams, lived. I wanted to tell them they had to change programs, look for a new job as soon as possible, since if they didn’t find any, there would have been big problems. After all, they didn’t even have a temporary residence permit [ ... ] (Wu Jun, 2012c, 67).

There’s a discrepancy between who the characters think they are and urban dwellers’ image of them. The protagonist is aware that her boss, as much as everybody else in Shenzhen, has an awful opinion of migrants: “He had already told me the only profession suitable for northern girls is that of prostitute” (Wu Jun, 2012c, 68). Walking alone in the night, it occurs that men ask her the price for her services: “I clearly heard a voice coming from beneath the tree, saying in Cantonese: Miss, do you want to make business? I knew it was the fish seller because he emanated a smell of sea water” (Wu Jun, 2012c, 70).

<sup>11</sup> About the discriminations endured by migrant girls, see: Pun, 1999, 11-13.

<sup>12</sup> The *hukou* (household registration system), mitigated in 2014, affects migrants’ perception of identity (Zhang, 2014, 18; Clark, 1998, 108-9).

Her friend's arrival awakens further identity conflicts, worsening her situation. Xu Senlin's initial enthusiasm towards Shenzhen wavers when the protagonist's employer, Lao He, doesn't accept to hire Xiaogai and they go out of money. The situation rapidly collapses: Xiaogai loses the baby she was waiting for, after being beaten by local residents; Xu Senlin turns into an alcoholic and drags all of them into the final tragedy, when he tries to sell Lao He's motorcycle and is captured by the police. The three gradually realize there's no place for them in Shenzhen: their story represents the disillusionment of China's working class in front of the promises of capitalism. The protagonist, after being fired, cannot but do the job everyone in Shenzhen thinks she's suitable for: "[...] she hoped I could help her to get out of prison; she didn't know that after losing my job I was already doing that old profession [...]" (Wu Jun, 2012c, 75).

Loneliness, estrangement and stubbornness are also the features of *Chen Housheng dadao* (Chen Housheng Lane; 2012a), whose male protagonist, a factory worker, fantasizes to give one day his name to a small street situated not far from his workplace. While this alley embodies freedom and imagination, the factory represent his real life. The dormitory where he lives is described as a narrow and stifling space, where eight men share one room, each just having their bunk-bed behind the mosquito net to store personal belongings. Smothered by the utter lack of privacy, he finds in the virtual world a safe haven where he can be himself and relieve his anguish. The beloved street, though, is described as a very ordinary place, whose most advantageous aspect is anonymity. He spends there most of his free time, chatting with virtual friends in an internet bar. He has even written a poem for it, attracting praises and critics from netizens:

[...] differently from the feelings he had towards his native place, he loved this city. Any place in Shenzhen was a good place for him and he particularly hated those who praised the countryside on the web or expressed nostalgia towards rural life. He was completely different from those pedantic people, he liked the city, he liked that small street. The title of the poem he wrote for his beloved street was 'Chen Housheng Lane' (Wu Jun, 2012a, 10).

In spite of the difficulties, Chen Housheng loves Shenzhen; even if he hasn't married much before moving there, he's not planning to go back anytime soon. The metropolis allows him to emancipate from an ordinary and meaningless life. Chen Housheng is afflicted by a complicated identity issue: he feels different from his coworkers, who seem to have no other interest than playing with their mobile phones:

Nobody in this dormitory can understand him, from the morning until the night they only talk about things concerning the factory or home. There's not even one person similar to him, who loves reading books, who likes to think, he is lonely. As soon as he started working in this factory he understood he was not an ordinary person (Wu Jun, 2012a, 12).

Chen Housheng frequently thought that the computer was like his wife or even much better. If he hadn't got that place, the internet, how could he have expressed his feelings towards this metropolis? This was a way to communicate with the world around him, it was the only way he had to let his heart fly [...] (Wu Jun, 2012a, 12)

His coworkers sometimes bring women to the dormitory, bothering him even more. When his wife goes to visit him, he's embarrassed to let her sleep in his bed, doesn't want to ask them to leave the room for one hour, plans to go to a hotel or to the lawn where he goes to think. Due to the discomforting situation, he understands he shares the same destiny of the other factory workers. Unexpectedly he'll overcome his feeling of oppression by acknowledging the redeeming power of human relationships. His wife Liu Caiying, a genuine girl who symbolizes the simplicity and moral values of the countryside, not in conflict with herself, helps him in this process, showing him the importance of people. Anyway, he secretly considers her unsuitable for urban life, he'd like her to share his interests: she doesn't read a Shen Congwen's novel he borrowed her, doesn't like the web. He'll gradually accept he's not so special, but this awareness is not without melancholy.

*Qin'ai de Shenzhen* (Dear Shenzhen; 2008) is paradigmatic of migrants' identity issues: it retraces the inner evolutions of three migrant workers from northern China, employed in the same skyscraper, who establish utterly different relationships with Shenzhen. Zhang Mangli is a successful manager who strives to hide her rural origins, pretending to have forgotten her previous habits, even when Li Shuiku will find out the truth by opening a letter destined to her. Li Shuiku hopes to bring back home his wife Chen Xiaogui, who works as a cleaners' team leader, in order to make a family with her. While, even after starting to work as a security guard, he never feels comfortable with the coldness of urban atmospheres, he soon finds out that Chen Xiaogui is only interested in becoming a true urban dweller: trying to behave as a local, she envies elegant and fashionable Shenzhen women, that instead look down on her. For her Li Shuiku is a burden which could prevent her from obtaining an urban status: "In front of Shuiku, she always spoke as if she was a white collar. He knew she was just pretending" (Wu Jun, 2008, 230).

Chen Xiaogui's background haunts her through her man, urging her even more to look like a citizen. The white collar Zhang Manli consciously rejects her past, displaying contempt towards any attitude that could be misinterpreted as 'northern'. Li Shuiku is, instead, clearly inclined towards the countryside, considering the city an unnatural environment. His sexual desire is frustrated by Chen Xiaogui's refusals, that seem to be an aspect of her urban self, while to him she looks more beautiful than ever, as much as those unattainable women walking in the fancy streets. Shenzhen bewilders him. His impression upon his arrival in Bao'an district, Guanwai, clashes with his idea of the metropolis: "This place has recently been transformed in a city district, it still has something of the old town. There are tall and short buildings, beneath the skyscrapers there are old houses, the market is chaotic, clothes and food shops are one next to the other [...]" (Wu Jun, 2008, 220). But in the next page, he glimpses the metropolis he imagined: "There were gleaming tall buildings everywhere, he could see a lot of men he envied and women that left a man out of breath. Li Shuiku went mad each time he saw one of them" (Wu Jun, 2008, 221). The impersonal office building has different meaning for the three of them. For Chen Xiaogui it's the place where she can try to conquer her urban identity. Her husband feels dazzled by it. For Zhang Manli it's the place where she can express her new self.

## Urban identities and social stratification

In *Lianshang ni de chuang* (In love with your bed; 2012d), *Shiqi yingli* (Seventeen miles; 2012b) and *Metro Line 5* (2017) Wu Jun portrays social stratification within the metropolis, as a cause of cultural misunderstandings and identity clashes, telling three stories in which dwellers belonging to different social classes are confronted. Middle class members are represented as greedy for money, lacking of human values and overflowing with material accumulation, while the working class is energetic, resilient and optimist, despite objective obstacles. These three stories illustrate the metamorphosis of people as a consequence of wealth. For example, the Zhuang family in *Shiqi yingli*, once humble migrants from Chaozhou, who eked out a living selling chickens on a stall, after getting rich act as if they'd forgotten their previous condition, just yearning for more privileges and adopting a haughty attitude:

Twenty years passed. Mister Zhuang's business had enormously developed, of course he didn't sell meet anymore, but was the owner of a listed company, his name often was in the newspapers and he appeared on television, he had transformed the small market where he used to work in a business plaza, where foreign brand products were sold [...] (Wu Jun, 2012b, 26).

When they were still poor Wang Jiaping, a school teacher, and his wife Jiang Lanying offered help to Zhuang's sons, who didn't have a place to study: although at that time their father was very grateful, in his new entrepreneur's identity he feels superior to his benefactors, doesn't even try to help Wang Jiaping, who's about to lose his job. The Zhuangs have moved to Seventeen miles, "a place situated on Shenzhen's east coast, rich people's villas are there" (Wu Jun, 2012b, 20), they own a private beach, where Jiang Lanying imagines they can have sex whenever they want. During Wang family's visit to the villa by the sea, Zhuang's wife shows off extreme luxury, making them feel awkward, and treats them with arrogance and snobbery. The story involves the topic of the marginalization of culture in the consumerist society: the two teachers are overwhelmed by a world where money, not culture or humanity, define people's value. The subway also represents a distressing symbol of modernity: "[...] strangers of any kind are swallowed or spitted out of the metro station; they make her think that the world has changed [...]" (Wu Jun, 2012b, 26).

In *Lianshang ni de chuang*, an account of prejudices towards northern migrants, three women with different backgrounds cross paths. Su Weihong, a bored middle class housewife, regrets having abandoned her career as an actress. A Di, her husband's cousin from Guangdong province, is a common girl who lives with them to help cleaning and raising children. Su Weihong hates their neighbourhood, not far from an industrial area built in the 80s, and is disturbed by the presence of factory workers in the surroundings: she hates to confront herself with their youth, even if she's just thirtytwo.

Looking at the environment around her, Su Weihong felt angry, it was like living in a big garbage basket, she regretted that when she was young she hadn't rather gone to Hong Kong to look for a local man to marry. Who could she blame now? (Wu Jun, 2012d, 79).

Migrant workers and Shenzhen's outskirts are blamed as a scapegoat for personal frustration:

Her husband never answered her complaining. Migrant workers from the countryside were too many, the apartments' prices were too high inside the city and so they had to live in a peripheral area. When they had moved there, you could hear frogs croaking and meet hens wandering around, there was a somehow romantic atmosphere. Nowadays she could only listen migrant worker girls screaming during the rush hours, she just saw trash bags or dirty food boxes flying in the air, especially after 11 pm, when the factory closed (Wu Jun, 2012d, 80).

A Di's goal, instead, is to become one of those *dagongmei*.<sup>13</sup> That's why she's bewitched by A Huan, her roommate when she finds employment in the factory, a maverick northern girl, with a free personality and a rebel attitude, who spends money for fun and wears showy clothes. Su Weihong looks down on her because of her uninhibited behaviour and because she's a northern girl. When A Di brings her friend to Su Weihong's apartment, she behaves impolitely, reinforcing the woman's racism: taking drinks and food from the fridge without asking, using everything she finds around, included Su Weihong's bed (the title comes from there).

At the end, A Huan is raped by two criminals in the dormitory room she shared with A Di who, in spite of their alleged friendship, doesn't help her and doesn't hesitate to indicate her to them. In this grim story fear, racism and preconceptions overcome friendship. When she's informed of the facts Su Weihong just suggests to A Di to leave the factory, which is not a safe place for a girl from Guangdong.

Also in *Metro Line Five* (Wu Jun, 2017) two metropolitan women are compared: a middle class woman, Shi Yu, who has a boring marriage, chosen just for money, and who regrets having left her job to take care of her busy husband, and a migrant girl, Zhu Xiyan, who in spite of many difficulties, appears as a more dynamic and happier person, supported by the certitude that she can improve her life through her own efforts. While the well-to-do lady is always complaining because she's dissatisfied with her life as a housewife in the suburbs of Shenzhen, the hunanese masseuse finds there occasions to work, earn money and make new experiences:

Her husband had bought a flat in the area so as to avoid friends, acquaintances and his ex-wife. There wasn't a single place around there to have fun. To make matters worse, the area around the flat had turned into a building site just a few days after they had moved, and the noise stopped them sleeping. Later on they were supposedly carrying out repairs on the metro and prices immediately skyrocketed (Wu Jun, 2017, 8)

Also in this story, migrants are a scapegoat for personal frustration: Shi Yu doesn't appreciate their presence in the nearby markets. Her discontent for not being a career woman anymore is also associated with her uneasiness towards traffic and construction sites. The new metro, a symbol of modernization and future for Zhu Xiyan, is a further annoyance for Shi Yu. In the area where they both live, residents' daily lives revolve around the construction site of the new metro line:

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<sup>13</sup> The term refers to rural migrant girls. For further reading about *dagongmei*'s issues of identity, see: Pun, 1999; Zhang, 2014, 23. For literary representations of *dagongmei*, see: Jaguscik, 2011; Dooling, 2017.

Things weren't bad before the metro. Now it was a nuisance, it was damaging the environment and the original landscape. Shenzhen is a landmark in the progress of Chinese civilization as well as an essential stopping point for people of distinction. Why mess that up? (Wu Jun, 2017, 3)

[...] there were building works for the metro everywhere. Towering cranes were dotted over the roads like pins in a map that just made people lose their way. The roads there and back were jammed, so she lost time taking a detour. They hadn't put up road signs, she went down several dead ends (Wu Jun, 2017, 3).

The two meet each other in the beauty centre where Zhu Xiyan is employed. At the beginning Shi Yu despises the young girl because of her origins and expresses disapproval towards her beauty treatments, but then she's attracted by her optimism and starts to trust her and feel pity for the hardships she's endured. Zhu Xiyan helps her when she has a miscarriage, but throws away or refuses Shi Yu's gifts, usually second hand things. Their friendship ends when Shi Yu finds out the migrant girl is having an affair with her husband. Zhu Xiyan is not interested in her husband, but is trying to exploit the situation to earn more money, in order to marry her boyfriend: she's good in turning adversities at her advantage. Avidity also causes Shi Yu's failures: choosing money over ambitions, materiality over happiness, she condemns herself to perpetual disgruntlement.

## Conclusion

Through the analyses of these six short stories, set in Shenzhen in time of globalization, I have attempted to demonstrate the relevance of issues of identity and belonging in the fictional production of writer Wu Jun and to show how, by contextualizing individuals' daily experience within precise areas or spaces of the city, she highlights the influence of the urban environment on the psychological dimension. As they're focused on everyday reality, memory seems not to be a meaningful aspect of characters' inner world; their contradictory identities and restlessness appear not just as an outcome of urbanization and rapid economic growth, but as result of the difficulty to define their own place in the city and of their need to find a meaning for their efforts in the context of social transformations. As an aspect of the wider phenomenon of 'urban literature'<sup>14</sup> and thanks to their realist style, Wu Jun's stories also constitute a contribution to the understanding of China's urban configuration in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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<sup>14</sup> For further readings about the broad phenomenon of contemporary Chinese urban literature, see: Visser, 2010.

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## *Teaching and Learning Urbanism in Architecture Schools*

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### **Abstract**

How are approaches and tools changing to deal with critical territorial challenges, particularly risks associated with climate change, the spatial dimension of the economy and the networked metropolitan region? Are urbanists equipped to lead solutions to our society's challenges to sustainability? Learning is a puzzling act, and the learning of a discipline like Urbanism is a particular one. This is because of the interdisciplinarity that this field requires in actual society. In many Schools of Architecture, it is find the nostalgia of the urbanist locked in a knowledge and skills that hardly seems to be practical versus the panorama of uncertainties and new possibilities in which we live. Therefore, it is appropriate to face how the urbanist education is responding to the constant changes and challenges. Studying the current educational processes involves the theoretical contextualization of the educational act, the educational discourses and a revision of the evolution of its structure. This research focus first, on a historical journey to discern its evolution, to know what was the main necessity and the competences needed for the practice. Second, a comparative study is made of different study plans to overview of how Urbanism is taught in different regions, the approaches and structure. Third, it is concluded which are the gaps, difficulties and opportunities. The relevance of this study is the redefinition of the studies of Urbanism in relation to the demands of society, the environment and the progress of pertinent situations.

Keywords: Urbanism, Sustainable Cities, Higher Education, Interdisciplinary, Society's Challenges, Architecture Schools

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## Introduction to the Origins

The field of Urbanism is an important part of the sustainable development and has an immediate effect on the challenges society is facing. Cities are at the forefront of global socio-economical change. Half of the world's population now lives in urban areas and the other half increasingly depend upon cities for economic, social, cultural and political progress (Cohen, 2006). How can we create sustainable, inclusive and creative cities in today's urban age? This is not about good urban amenities. Urbanists also need to take fully into account migration, integration, cultural diversity, environmental management, easy access to services, protection of natural resources, sustainable urban water supply, more efficient energy and a full spectrum of cultural activities that acknowledges and embraces diversity. For this, it is envisioned to catalyze a cultural shift in the Schools of Architecture, breaking the partial vision of sustainability and moving to a new paradigm with the goal that future graduates act as agents of change to solve the challenges of our society.

One of the reasons this study focuses on the Urbanism courses is because is less studied than Architecture Design courses and it's scale of impact. Most of the studies published about the Education in Urbanism in Europe are not updated and must be reviewed. Therefore, the following bibliography and reflections are taken into consideration for their contribution in this subject.

The chosen theme for the number 2 of *Ciudades* (Muzio, 1995) is the teaching of Urbanism in the Architecture schools, from a European perspective. Is composed of three articles with the opinion of Spanish professors and four foreign teachers, each referring to their own country. Ten years after almost the same title was given to the number 10 of *Urban* (De Terán & Sánchez de Madariga, 2005). *Un Urbanismo Docente* (Font Arellano & Lopez De Aberasturi, 2009) not too far from this, grouped teachers and professionals of Urbanism with the purpose of explaining the ways of intervening and imparting the teaching of the Urbanism for the last thirty years. Among the reflections of these books and articles, the main ones are:

### Integration and interdisciplinarity

- The possibility of a reorientation of the teaching towards a culture that considers the urbanistic, architectural and landscape; and in which both the urban plan and the architecture project coexist.

### Actual problem-solving

- Abandoning the spatial model to the result of market forces, with the consequent renunciation of the comprehension of globality, limiting the intervention to the urban fragment where only morphological approaches can have room, implies to hinder the theoretical elaboration and in the long term the own advance of the urbanistic discipline.
- The planning approach manifests itself in raising awareness about the cost of decision-making processes and on the need to provide an articulated response to citizen demands, as well as the social and environmental impact of the execution of plans.

### Culture and History Influence

- The influence of normative development on the delimitation of a professional field so narrow for architects has led to its distance from the practice of urbanism. The limited cultural and urban formation of the architects is a cause added to this distance.
- The problem of employment or unemployment in relation to architects and/or town planners is not considered in all articles, despite the controversy over their structural condition, in view of the future reorganization of the profession. Absent in the articles of Spain and Italy, is central in those that analyze the case of Germany and Great Britain, in which it is related to the search for a greater professional qualification.

### Lack of actualization

- The "classic" experiences have been losing their validity without being renewed or replaced by recent experiences that can be considered new models.
- The "adjectivation" of the urban environment is a symptom of the current contradictions, in which an implicit renunciation to the global understanding of the urban phenomena is manifested.

This leads to consider practical learning as a necessary complement to the studies and their sustainability and chains to consider professional structuring and the study of the sustainability in the education of Urbanism. For this, *Urban Design* (Krieger & Saunders, 2009) is taken for reference to study from the origins of the discipline. Is important to understand the history to know what the main necessity of this discipline was, the competences that are needed for the practice, the actual gaps in the discipline and opportunities to make it sustainable.

To understand the gaps and opportunities to make the discipline of Urbanism sustainable and to rethink urban engagement, a reference that is studied is *Urban Sustainability in Theory and Practice* (James, 2014). By identifying the key aspects of transformation towards sustainability at University, some cases from seven universities world-wide are studied (Ferrer-Balas et al., 2008). Some of the main findings are:

- 1) The main barrier to overcome is the lack of incentive structure for promoting changes at the individual level. The main drivers for change are the presence of "connectors" with society, the existence of coordination bodies and projects, and the availability of funding, all of which are important for progress.
- 2) Enhancing interdisciplinarity is a strategic objective at almost all of these universities, while transformative learning is less present.
- 3) A common characteristic for most of the institutions is establishing and supporting networks of expertise within the universities.
- 4) The University, as an institution dedicated to the creation and diffusion of knowledge through research and teaching, plays a leading role in the dissemination and application of possible solutions and alternatives to the social, economic and environmental problems facing current society.

In the Spanish context, in September 2002, the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (CRUE) approved the proposal for the creation of the Working Group on

Environmental Quality, Sustainable Development and Risk Prevention in Universities (CADEP), currently Commission Sectorial CRUE-Sustainability (CSCS). The purpose was to promote initiatives related to risk prevention, management, participation and environmental awareness in universities, as well as inter-university cooperation in these matters.

The CSCS approved in 2005 the document "Guidelines for the Introduction of Sustainability in the Curriculum" in Universities. This text, prepared by the Working Group on "Curricular Sustainability" (GTSC) of the CSCS, proposes general criteria and recommended actions for the curricular sustainability in the Spanish University System (SUE). This process (CADEP-CRUE, 2012) involves a change in curricula to provide students with the transversal skills necessary to:

- 1) understand how their professional activity interacts with society and the environment, locally and globally, to identify possible challenges, risks and impacts;
- 2) understand the contribution of their work in different cultural, social and political contexts and how they affect the same and the socio-environmental quality of their environment;
- 3) work in multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary teams to solve the demands imposed by socio-environmental problems derived from unsustainable lifestyles, including proposals for professional alternatives that contribute to sustainable development;
- 4) to apply a holistic and systemic approach to the resolution of socio-environmental problems and the ability to go beyond the tradition of decomposing reality into disjointed parts;
- 5) participate actively in the discussion, definition, design, implementation and evaluation of policies and actions in both the public and private spheres, to help redirect society towards a more sustainable development;
- 6) apply professional knowledge in accordance with ethical principles and universal ethical values that protect human rights; and
- 7) to collect the perception, demands and proposals of citizens and allow them to have a voice in the development of their community.

The GTSC has detected the difficulty of professors to integrate these concepts in the different subjects, regardless of their area of knowledge, since it requires an interdisciplinary and innovative practice (Barrón, Navarrete, & Ferrer-Balas, 2010). Recent studies show the efforts to implement sustainability in Higher Education, but it is an area of research and emergent action, in which the lack of common criteria on the competences to integrate, their promotion and evaluation in University degrees still constitutes a limitation (Ferrer-Balas et al., 2008; Lozano, 2011, 2014; Segalàs, Ferrer-Balas, Svanström, Lundqvist, & Mulder, 2009).

Therefore, relevance of this study is the redefinition of the studies of Urbanism in relation to the demands of society, the environment and the progress of pertinent situations. This allows defining a frame of reference for common reflection. The discipline of Urbanism needs a commitment to reality and confrontation with the society to which it belongs, without renouncing its ability to propose independently of the apparent demands of the market.

## Competences for the Practice

Urbanism is an old practice, which had brought together a multiplicity of professionals: architects, economists, geographers, engineers, sociologists and urban planners. However, Urbanism as a profession is relatively new. Its theoretical maturity was reached in the twentieth century, like a combination of different disciplines that were merged to rethink the city and build the discipline of Urbanism. We can take some interesting extracts from The First Urban Design Conference (1956) where people engaged in thinking about the future cities, where different authors participated, like Jane Jacobs, Edmund Bacon, Lewis Mumford and several leaders of the soon-to-be formed Team 10, narrated about the origins and intentions of the discipline (Krieger & Saunders, 2009):

- Jose Luis Sert (Figure 1L) said, "...Meanwhile, city planning has developed as a new science; city planners today are concerned with the structure of the city, its process of growth and decay, and the study of all the factors— geographic, social, political, and economic— which have shaped the city." It was a time when specialists in the field started to study more about the problems of our cities adopting new methods of research and analysis, emphasizing more in the scientific phase more than the artistic one. "This may be due to a natural reaction against past practice, when city planning was based on the superficial "city beautiful" approach, which ignored the roots of the problems and attempted only window- dressing effects."

- In the same line, Edmund N. Bacon (Figure 1M) said, "...We have the three principals: planning, architecture, and administration. What we lack is the capacity to function as a whole. Architects have fashioned almost the entire extent of their resources on the designing of individual buildings. The planners have tended to confine their efforts to the creation of broad and unmaterial concepts such as zoning, land-use control, density standards, and criteria. The administrators and policy makers, who really set the basic form of the urban environment, commonly regard the architectural aspect as something you purchase at the end."

- Eric Mumford relate the emergence of Urban Design in the Breakup of CIAM (Figure 1R) refer to the conception of the "architect- planner: "someone who could organize the "mutual relation of parts" involved in urbanism instead of focusing on the design of any individual part."



Figure 1: L: The 2006 issue No. 24 of *Harvard Design Magazine* celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Sert conference. M: Edmund N. Bacon in the cover of *Time Magazine*, Nov. 6, 1964. R: *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism 1928-1960* (Eric Mumford, MIT Press, 2002)

Something that is common with these asseverations is the linkage with other disciplines like geography, anthropology, ecology, architecture, psychology and sociology that are all under the umbrella of the 'relation human-environment'. The tension between objective and subjective explanations is one of the fundamental keys that operate in the different disciplinary approximations. The objectivism emphasizes the role of the environment like the configurative object of the human being, and el subjectivism the role of the human being like a sensible subject, active or modifier of the environment (Romañá Blay, 2004). Is about finding rules or patterns adequate to each society or group of humans.

In the book *Urban Spaces, Public Spaces* (Carmona, Heath, Tiesdell, & Oc, 2010) asserts that in Urbanism are four significant themes: is for and about people; the value and significance of 'place'; operates in the 'real' world, with its field of opportunity constrained and bounded by economic (market) and political (regulatory) forces; and the importance of design as a process. Other specialists in this discipline as Manuel de Sola-Morales describe three main aspects: permeability, sensuality and respect. Among others theorist that attempts to identify the desirable qualities of a successful framework, is also Kevin Lynch that identified five dimensions: vitality, sense, fit,

access and control. It can be said that is about constructing a scenario for urban evolution, imagining the conditions of transformation and proposing a process capable of incorporating new experiences.

How has it evolved? In the book *Public Places-Urban Spaces* (Carmona et al., 2010), describe three historical eras where the cities and settlements have evolved through marketplaces, centers of industrial production and centers of service provision and consumption. At present, it is a merge of the three, but with a greater degree in service production and consumption. It presents the diversity of contemporary urban development processes and urban design ideas:

1) Traditional urbanism (Figure 2L): grids, public squares, moderately dense housing and pedestrian corridors. Based on a critique of the 'placelessness' of the modern vehicular city and of urban sprawl, it attempts to recover what it regards as a more 'authentic' urban framework.

2) Conceptual urbanism (Figure 1M): adopts a more radical attitude, mix the assumptions of 'what the city was, is or should be', and welcome 'fluid instabilities' of cities as well as their 'inertia of material residue'. Instead of denouncing the 'chaos and congestion' of contemporary urban life, it 'experiment out from disruption and disorder'.

3) Marketplace urbanism (Figure 2M): 'immense financial, technological and political energies' emerging at 'those nodes of dynamic intensity merging around the intersections of major freeways, on thousands of acres of farmland or wasteland, on the borders of existing cities'.

4) Social urbanism (Figure 2R): a critique of most aspects of contemporary US cities, like the 'uneven consequences' of commodity capitalism. Highlighting areas of the city that 'capital ignores'.

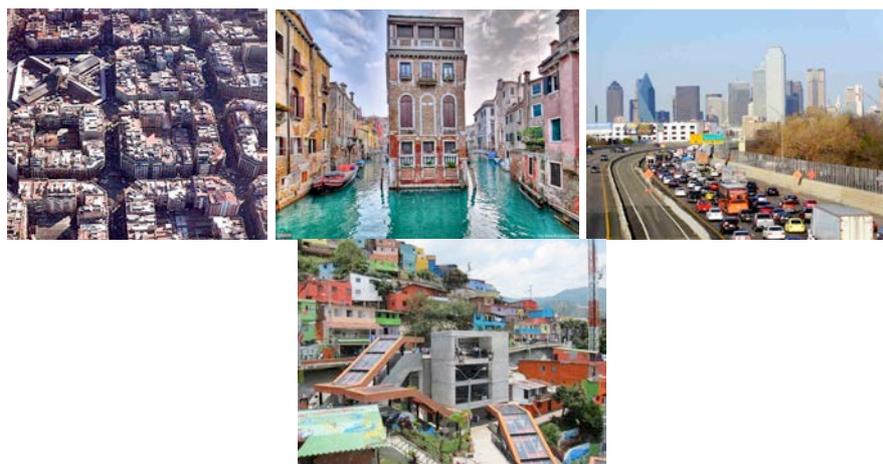


Figure 2: L: Traditional urbanism. M1: Conceptual urbanism. M2: Marketplace urbanism. R: Social urbanism.

It can be said that traditional urbanism and conceptual urbanism suggest contrasting ideas. Marketplace urbanism is about the forces shaping contemporary urban form, while social urbanism is a critique of the contemporary urban condition. How will the future urbanism be different from now? We do not know yet. William Mitchell

argued, “The impact of the digital revolution will redefine the intellectual and professional agenda of architects, urban designers, and others who care about the spaces and places in which we spend our daily lives” (Mitchell, 2000). Not far from what we are living now, as he said this on 2000. This, together with global warming, contamination, urban sprawl, among other new variants, may also provoke radical change. Urbanism is not a passive reaction to change, but a relationship between the physical characteristics of a city, and its functional, socio-economic and environmental qualities (Carmona et al., 2010).

How is the discipline of Urbanism nowadays? The deep physical, social and cultural changes that we are experimenting forces the contemporary Urbanist to a process that opens recreate the discipline. Even processes that are now a common instrument, like the computer, have opened a new world to the Urbanism, through new forms, new perspectives and new ways of analyzing data. However, this has provoked questions about the nature of the urban project, about the way is manage the synthesis of the analysis and the compatibility between the physical, mental and social order. The practice of Urbanism is opened to the processes of socially responsible participation and the conscious interaction of the culture that lives in each place. Psychosocial and post-occupational studies, new communication media, ways of collecting data and technology that can detect social, economic and environmental patterns of the urban spaces are supporting the discipline and bringing another dimension to the practice.

Urbanism as a discipline has secured its place among the other established built environment professions, addressing interdisciplinary concerns. It is a policy and practice base discipline which, like architecture and urban planning, benefits from an extensive and legitimizing theoretical support. While Urbanism continues to evolve, it can be seen the different approaches that have been a catalyst for its transformation. Evolving from aesthetic, that concern with the distribution of building masses and the space between buildings, it has become primarily concerned with the quality of the public realm, both physical and sociocultural (Carmona et al., 2010). Urbanism is concerned with the structure, process of growth and decay, and the factors — geographic, social, political, and economic—, which have shaped the city (Krieger & Saunders, 2009).

Urbanism as a process was a fruit of a culture to transforms a reality, a place, to make it more habitable which embrace different disciplines at the same time to understand the logic of the territory. What was missing was a synthesis. The professionals able to cover different aspects of the cities already existed, but who could interpret and organized all of them? It is then when the term Urbanism was born. Not to see the city as individual parts but a body. Therefore, it is interpreted that the training of the Urbanist does not separate the parts in specific courses, but relates their parts in developing inter and transdisciplinary projects on social, environmental and economic problems.

### **The School - Study Plans of Urbanism in different regions**

We can define Urbanism as a group of empiric technics which objective is to order the cities, and for extension the territory -this last thing because of the existing distinction between the city and suburbs. This group of technics has a theory support that synthesized the knowledge of a group of disciplines of scientific character

(geography, sociology, economy) or technic-artistic (architecture, civil engineering). More recently, Urbanism has established interrelation with others, like political sciences (as Urbanism is a key instrument in the government of the territory) and ecology (because of taking care of the sustain of environmental quality in the processes and types of urbanization). As a discipline, with a spatial basic component, the practice of Urbanism in some countries, particularly in southern Europe, is related to the practice of Architecture (Ruiz Sánchez, 2002).

The practice of Urbanism has incorporated in its tools aspects of management, every time more complex, that come from the urban planning, where the components of spatial design is just a part. However, the tradition in one hand, with the necessity of maintaining the spatial component in the first plane, and the contrasting capacity of synthesis of knowledge and the proven ability to synthesize knowledge for its inherent implementation of architecture on the other, keep Urbanism as a field of dedication manly to the profession of the architect (Ruiz Sánchez, 2002). Still, Urbanism has an additional level of complication that forces the training of its discipline an approximation in its complexity.

From a sample of sixty schools in Europe study, it became apparent that, of the average total of teaching hours required for the diploma in architecture, Urban Education accounted for 7.6% (Spiridonidis, 2004). This reference ranks Urbanism in the curriculum as fourth in order of importance, after Architectural Design (33%), Building Construction (12%) and Theory- History (8.7%). Is this an appropriate percentage when architecture is the basic material for the construction of the city and the city is the social space in which all architecture is framed? If the construction of urban space is the goal of architecture within the city, therefore, architecture and city are linked. Probably, courses of Urbanism should have a higher percentage or linkage inside the curriculum and have a better complementation in the Architectural education.

The beginning of teaching Urbanism as a degree at the universities started to emerge because of courses offered in Europe and North America. In North America, the discipline of Urbanism began with the first formal North American programs in City and Regional Planning (1923) and Urban Design (1960) at the Harvard University. This last one was born along with the texts on the subject published in that period, including (Figure 3): Lynch's *The Image of the City* (1960), Mumford's *The City in History* (1961), Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), Cullen's *Townscape* (1961), and Bacon's *Design of Cities* (1967).

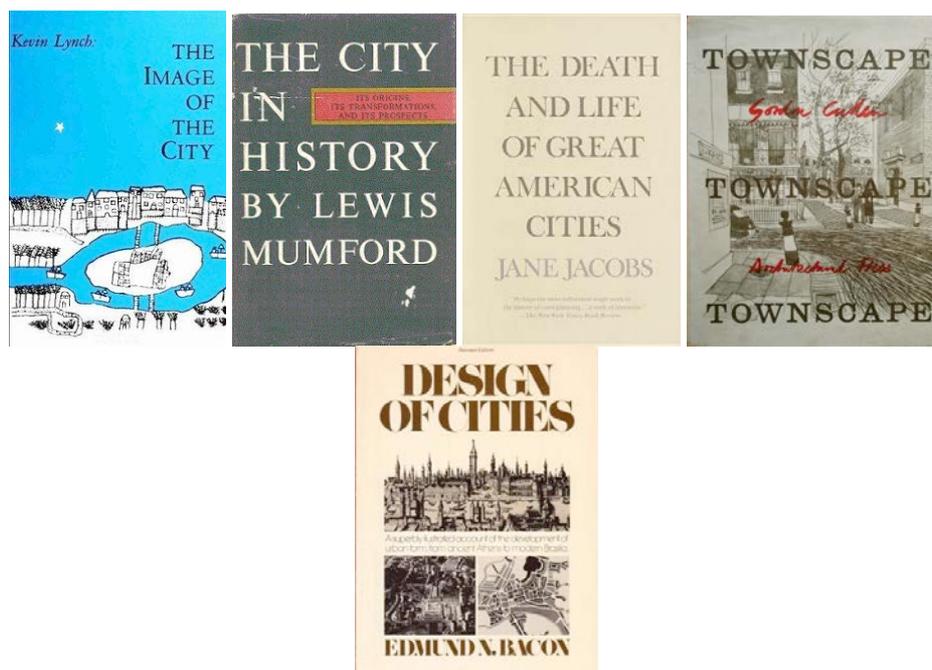


Figure 3: (left to right) Lynch's *The Image of the City* (1960), Mumford's *The City in History* (1961), Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), Cullen's *Townscape* (1961), and Bacon's *Design of Cities* (1967).

In South America, the studies of Urbanism are related with several events, like in 1944 when the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism in Chile was created; and with the initiative of the Higher Institute of Urbanism of the University of Buenos Aires in the United Nations (1949) declared on November 8 World Day of Urbanism. In Europe, the crucial dates are when the first academic course on urban planning was offered by the University of Liverpool in 1909; when the Town Planning Institute was established in 1914 with a mandate to advance the study of town-planning and civic design; or when the first International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM) produced the Athens Charter started teaching about the urban planning based on the function in 1928; or also when the Department of Urbanism in the Faculty of Architecture at Delft University of Technology was established in 1948.

In the United Kingdom during the first decades of the twentieth century, Urbanism was configured as a profession linked to the physical and technical aspects of design. During World War II, the work of Abercrombie in London and several reports commissioned by the central government created the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, which enlarged the demand of urbanists and created a new labor market. The government commissioned the Schuster report, which transforms Urbanism from a drawing-based activity into an activity based on the social sciences, primarily geography, economics and sociology. This is part of the origin of the separation between Architecture and Urbanism in British education and training (De Terán & Sánchez de Madariga, 2005).

In France and Germany, with a lesser tradition of the Anglo-Saxon countries, where there have been degrees in Urbanism since the first decades of the last century, specific formations in Urbanism started to develop since the 1960s. Also, with full-time formats during training periods of one to two and a half years. Comparable formations have also developed in Italy, although much smaller and much less

diversified. Exceptionally in the United States and the United Kingdom, there are specific undergraduate degrees in Urbanism, for students without previous university degrees.

Both, in France and in the Anglo-Saxon countries, there is a multiplicity of approaches in all these studies, and a clear differentiation between professional qualifications aimed at the training of researchers. In the Anglo-Saxon countries, the latter masters focused more on research than on vocational training are generally called Urban Studies, different from master's in Planning or in Urban Design; in France, they are the "Diplomes d'Etudes Approfondies", DEA. In both cases, these qualifications can be obtained as an end itself or as an intermediate stage towards the attainment of the doctorate. In the latter case, the usual thing is that the credits obtained during the master or the DEA are considered as doctoral credits.

In Italy, the professions of architecture and engineering are protected by two associations, whose admission is obtained by passing state examinations. Architects and engineers have always demanded exclusive jurisdiction over Urbanism and have refused to accept new graduates in town planning. As a consequence, the paradox arose because urban plans could be "signed" by chemical engineers or by architects specialized in interior design, but not by urban planners who had received 4 or 5 years of specific training on the subject (De Terán & Sánchez de Madariga, 2005). This take away the validity of the profession and the training needed to practice it.

One of the consequences taken for granted is the disappearance of the traditional architect, and bets on a more specialized formation, which shares the idea of architectural project as the starting point of all of them. "The European architecture directive establishes a minimum of four years, assuming that all the professional competences in force are acquired. If its acquisition is modulated - according to the sequence proposed by the EEES - the degree could give rise to a basic architect, with competences in the field of housing; the masters, to specialists with competences in the traditional fields of work of the architect: building, urbanism and design, and the third cycle, to graduates with training in subjects of high specialization" (De Terán & Sánchez de Madariga, 2005).

By studying more in detail different models of Urbanism as a Subject in in Europe, it was studied some characteristics about each country to make a comparison. The information used for this part is taken from bibliography date from 1973 (Solà-Morales Rubió, Gómez Ordóñez, Busquets Grau, & Font Arellano, 1974), 1995 (De las Rivas Sanz, 1995), 2003 (Monedero Isorna, 2002) and 2005 (Hernandez, 2005). From the comparison made it is concluded that United Kingdom for their long tradition worrying about the study of the Town Planning has manage to incorporate new ideas and tendencies in such field making the discipline more validated than in Central or Latin Europe. This has helped also in the integration of the government in recognition, association and subsidies. However, this has led to made Urbanism as a discipline of its own and a separation from the training of architects. In the study plans for English Architecture Schools, Urbanism is integrated in other courses but not as specific courses. This, in contrary to other countries like Holland, Belgium and Italy that have near 10% of their courses dedicated to exclusively to Urbanism. It is also noted that specially in Central-Europe has manage to integrate the discipline to

two main backgrounds, civil engineers and architects, to cover the technical and more scientific area, something that for example in Latin-Europe is not common.

Comparing how Urbanism as a subject has developed and how it is approached in each country, it can be deducted that Urbanism is in constant questioning and the disjunctive between the artistic and creative attitude and the social attitude. Urbanism cannot use the plasticity of architecture nor to develop the paradigmatic causticity of economics, for example. All this, along with the role of universities, that if we consider the training architect gets in Urbanism, the quantity in percentage is low and frequently called into question. Is not to the debate on the future of teaching in the strict sense, but it should be mentioned in this reflection the debate around the requirement of a specialization for the practice, as it affects the conception of the higher technical school as an institution that must scientifically form the professionals with the adequate tools.

### **Conclusions: Difficulties and Opportunities**

After many years of individual, isolated work of architecture, -landscape architecture, road engineering, and city planning, that developed independently-, we are logically coming to an era of synthesis to solve urban design problems, previewing the discipline of an architect- planner- administrator, as one profession to solve the urban situations from small details to its whole. The urbanist as a profession was born with a clear social responsibility that implies harmonizing all the components that affect and are affected by the built environment. There was a need to have a professional that could understand different aspects which affect the urban form, social life, environment and economics. It is then necessary for the urbanist to be trained in these general aspects in accordance with the history, actuality and tendency of the place.

Often, the modification of the political and economic situation is insufficiently reflected in this type of technical conception of applied Urbanism. An option to be contemplated is for Universities to become the place where urban plans are approved or rejected, models such as the ban on city expansion, an idea that is initially considered counterproductive and unrealistic to limit the consumption of surfaces for residential use, for example. Urbanism in Higher Education is an opportunity to invite students to meet, comprehend, integrate and compose knowledge, theories and corroborations related to the city as a cultural, social and economic fact. It is a platform to produce outcomes related to social life in the built environment, to the cultural dimensions of the form and organization of urban space.

The point of studying the teaching of Urbanism in Architecture Schools is because it is considered that the dialogue between buildings makes possible the construction of the territory and the city as a whole, and that necessary dialogue from aesthetics, scales and strategy. This forces the architect to have an urban formation. As it was seen, Schools put more or less weight on this matter, as not all of the students will practice as urbanists in the future and what is needed is a general conception, to later on, if desired, make a specialization. Then, knowing that Schools of Architecture, where Urbanism does not constitute a profession with its own entity, and the architects are the urban planners, mean that the urbanism should not be taught as "urbanism for architects" but, with all its implications. Therefore, the role that corresponds to urbanism in the teaching of architecture cannot be a mere secondary

role, subsidiary of architectural projects. What does seem clear is that all architects must acquire this global vision, since all, whether or not they do postgraduate studies, as in fact they are urban planners.

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***Walking along Dr Ka Seme Pixley Street in Inner City Durban, South Africa***

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**Abstract**

The inner city of Durban, the third largest city in South Africa, is currently considered an unsafe and difficult place to live in and traverse – and also for short/temporary visits. Nevertheless, should a person find themselves walking along Dr Ka Seme Pixley Street, they will find themselves in the most significant and vibrant atmosphere of the city, filled with people undertaking a variety of activities. From the 1960s to the 1980s this urban path, which crosses the whole inner city from the railway station and the main markets to the beachfront, was an important business and commercial area. The presence of the city hall, churches, bars, shops and banks formed the most important outdoor shopping mall at the time – but it was defined by the apartheid government as the core of the city only for white, privileged people. The city is still dynamic and is lived in by mixed-culture inhabitants, but the high level of crime, growing poverty and social problems have greatly changed its circumstances. The aim of the research is to explore the area around Dr Ka Seme Pixley Street from an architectural and urban point of view – from the apartheid era through to the contemporary era. Making use of several analytical procedures of architecture (such as mapping, drawing, analyses of historical and contemporary documents, plans and projects), the idea is to propose a critical analysis of the aspects that could potentially improve the unique character of this area, and build a habitable and vibrant city for the 21st century.

Keywords: urban history, urban planning, city mapping

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## Introduction

One of the oldest streets in Durban, the third most populous city of South Africa, Dr Pixley Ka Seme Street, was formerly called West Street when it was founded in the mid nineteenth century. The street crosses all of the inner city for approximately 2.5 km, from the area of the markets and the cemetery to the ocean, and from the west to the east side of the city. It is one of the most important and vibrant parts of the city and is mainly commercial, with shopping malls, small- and large-scale shops, and informal commerce. Here two and three storey buildings cohabit with large towers, which are significant landmarks of the urban landscape. The street includes the central business district, the Warwick Markets, public institutions like the old City Hall (that now hosts a museum, a space for temporary exhibitions and the concert hall), the post office, the Africana library, government offices, and spans an area of approximately 17 km<sup>2</sup>.

Currently, Dr Pixley Ka Seme Street is considered an unsafe and difficult place to live in and also traverse, even for short and temporary visits. Nevertheless, should a person find themselves walking along the street, they will discover a highly significant and vibrant atmosphere, filled with people undertaking a variety of activities. From the 1960s to the 1980s this urban path was the most important outdoor shopping mall at that time, but it was defined by the apartheid government as the core of the city, and meant only for privileged white people. The city is still dynamic and is lived in by mixed-culture inhabitants – but the high level of crime, growing poverty and social problems have greatly changed its circumstances.

The research is based on a study developed in the School of Built Environment and Development Studies (Architecture, Planning and Housing), at the University of Kwazulu-Natal in Durban. The project is in its first phase, and involves architecture undergraduate students. Currently the investigation is in working progress, and consists of exploring the street, from the past to the present – in order to understand its potential from the point of view of the form of the city, the city's architecture, and its inhabitants.

The methodology in this first phase is mainly based on mapping the area using different methods (e.g. drawings, pictures, videos, site visits, data collection), and in the next phase there will be a dialogue with the community (questionnaires, samples, data collection and analysis). The project will conclude with a concrete pilot project, still in preparation, related to reactivation of part of the street. Starting from the history of the street and the development of the inner city, and analysing different visions of the street developed by the municipality, the purpose of the work is to discover aspects and elements that can help and build new scenarios for the area.

## Context and History of the Street

Durban, as mentioned previously, is the third most populous city in South Africa after Johannesburg and Cape Town – with an area of 2 297 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 3 442 361 inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Its inner city is home to approximately 70 000 people in a diverse society, which faces various social, economic, environmental and governance

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<sup>1</sup> eThekweni Municipality (2011).

challenges. The area has a population density of 4, 768 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The current land uses mapped by eThekweni Municipality (Durban Municipality) in the *Inner City Local Area Plan* (LAP) in 2016, are Residential (60%), Retail (5%), Commercial/Industrial (20%), and “Other Amenities” (15%) (see eThekweni Inner City LAP, 2016).

The form of the street is marked by an important reticular structure that is laid out on three main streets: Anton Lembede (formerly Smith Street), Dr Pixley Ka Seme Street (formerly West Street) and Monty Naicker Road (formerly Pine Terrace) – between which lie a market square and a series of short cross streets (Dick, 1998). Durban’s colonial heritage is visible in the urban grid that illustrates the form of the first settlement of the city in the mid nineteenth century (Bennett, Adams & Brusse, 1987). The *Inner City LAP* describes the area as follows: “in the early 1800’s the natural environment of the Inner City was relatively untouched and the topography and natural environment restricted the growth of the community that settled along the Durban Bay” (eThekweni Inner City LAP, 2016). The town layout was formalised in 1850 by a grid pattern, designed by the English businessman Cato<sup>2</sup>, who was also the town’s first mayor. The Street is 100 feet wide (30.48 m) – to enable a wagon and a span of 16 oxen to turn in comfort, and most of the land was divided into module areas of 100 x 500 feet (30.48 x 152.40 m). In 1910, there was a building boom after the Anglo-Boer War, especially during the years immediately before the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, and the building density of the street changed in a process that continued through to the twentieth century and the 1970s (Morrison, 1987).

The urban landscape of Durban is marked also by the history of apartheid (1948-1994) and apartheid spatial planning still characterises this city and, in general, the South African city space (Bickford-Smith, 2016). Thus, “Through spatial legislation (esp. Group Areas Act, 1950) the people’s movements were administrated and the white people [European] controlled both town and country space. [...] ‘White space’ included city centres, farms, beaches, and mountains, and black people used these spaces temporarily as labourers and had to certify their rights to enter” (Shepherd, Murray, & Hall, 2007). Indeed under apartheid, the policies that Durban developed were along segregated racial lines and the poorest of the population (mainly the black “native” population) were located on the outskirts of the city – resulting in long travel times and expensive, subsidised travel to the workplace, mostly via the Warwick markets, which are located in the eastern part of Dr Pixley Kaseme Street.

The book *Dear old Durban*, published in 1985, describes the atmosphere of the street in the 1950s and 1960s thus: “the business and commercial centre of Durban is much bigger than it was, but it is still essentially the same three streets that it used to be. These are Smith Street the ‘business centre’, West Street the ‘shopping centre’ and Pine Street which had all sorts of functions, but seemed to be mostly hardware or fruit and vegetable shops. [...] West Street was the most important. Let’s make a tour of it!”. This comment follows a long and detailed description of the activities and places along the main street that suggests a rich and populated place that was part of a white area, and black people were only allowed to stay there for work purposes (Miller & Stone, 1985).

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<sup>2</sup> George Christopher Cato (1814-93).

## The Contemporary Street

Despite concerted efforts since 1994, when apartheid policies were abolished, the structure of the city remains segregated. The city is still vibrant, but very problematic in terms of security and only a part of the population live and transit there. These aspects demonstrate that the inner city area is a crucial area for the growth and development of Durban, and needs the requisite attention to retain and attract investment in the future.

South African national government has therefore identified, through the planning tool of the “Local Area Plan” (LAP), development of the regeneration of inner cities as a policy priority – providing potential for access to employment, reduced transport costs, and a range of housing opportunities. In addition, within the Durban metropolitan area, the value of business property assets is the highest in the inner city area and generates a significant portion of the rates base of the city (eThekweni Inner City LAP, 2016). The appropriate redevelopment of this part of the city offers an opportunity to start to restructure the segregated city with large tracts of undeveloped and underdeveloped land (eThekweni Inner City LAP, 2016). The idea of the Municipality – developed in *Inner City LAP* and in the subsequent *eThekweni Inner City Regeneration Strategy* (2017) – is that there are opportunities to densify and restructure the city to accommodate many more people and jobs.

The expectation of the Durban *Inner City LAP* is that the population will have grown from 61 985 in 2016 to 370 000 by 2040 - with an ultimate total of 450 000 people. The Municipality’s vision is to regenerate the area to become a “vibrant, liveable, walkable City Centre” (eThekweni Inner City LAP, 2016).

Furthermore the *Ethekweni Inner City Regeneration Strategy* (2017) explains in detail its vision, based on “Four Spatial Principles” that define the city. According to the document, the urban city centre environment will be developed to be “Connected” (e.g. appropriate roads, pedestrian and cycle paths, public transport); “Walkable” (e.g. relating to neighbourhood structures, public realm upgrades, mixed use, higher densities, the public realm, small blocks, crime, cleanliness); and “Integrated and Inclusive” with land-use intensity. The fourth aspect consists of “realising the potential”, based on the idea of inserting in the urban environment “small or large projects that contribute to the overall vision, promote a sustainable, resilient city and unlock other development opportunities” (Ethekweni Inner City Regeneration Strategy, 2017).

The municipality divided the inner city into 8 precincts and currently is developing the regeneration plan of each part (eThekweni Inner City LAP Precinct Plan, 2017).<sup>3</sup> The precincts that involve Dr Pixley Kaseme Street are Warwick, City Port, and Beach. The LAP for Warwick is completed, but there are no significant changes to the street. To the contrary, in 2014 a study commissioned by the eThekweni Municipality, the Durban Architectural Office Designworkshop, presented a proposal for the street that transformed it into a long, walkable linear park with a strong reduction in car mobility and the implementation of public transport. The proposal takes as a reference

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<sup>3</sup> The precincts are Umgeni, Sports, Greyville, Centrum, Beach, Warwick, City Port, Point, and the Ethekweni Municipality has developed the Sports, Centrum, and Warwick.

three other cases of walkable streets that have similar wide dimensions to Dr Pixley Ka Seme Street: Las Ramblas in Barcelona (30 m wide), 15 November Street in Curitiba (Mexico) (25-30 m wide), and Bahnhofstrasse in Zurich, Switzerland. This proposal was the first step in a concrete and significant transformation of the inner city, but the project – presented at the XXV International Union of Architects World Congress in Durban<sup>4</sup> – has not yet had any applications.

At this stage, the purpose of the research is to try to realise the potential of the street, and identify the characteristics of the street that can reactive the city's social and economic development of the area, – starting from the Municipality vision and past proposals. Mapping the area is the first phase of the research and will give new ideas for new urban scenarios – especially for its major street – Dr Pixley Ka Seme Street. Mapping considers two main aspects: the city form and architecture, and then people's activities (emergent social forms, informal versus formal). Cullen (1961) described the “urban vista” of a street “like a complete sentence containing subject and predicate, the use of word punctuation may clarify those demarcations of the enclosed phrase which this picture illustrates. In the continuing narrative of the street, function and pattern change from place to place; this should be acknowledged by some physical signals” (Cullen, 1961). Starting from this idea, we decided to consider the street as “a system of elements” that we composed, with the students, into a big Atlas that includes the buildings and their ground floor elements, like arcades, corners, passages, and entrances (Kearney, 1984). At the same time, we studied the plans and significant sections of the street. The exercise was a collective project, combining first and second year students, to document Pixley Ka Seme Street from the cemetery to the ocean.<sup>5</sup> As a combined work, we studied graphically the characteristics of each of the 19 blocks (divided and assigned to 10 groups of students) that make up this street. Each group of students realised a collective large land uses map model, onto which they placed stickers to note major land uses, and drawings with plans, sections and sketches that form a large storyboard of the street.

During the work of mapping, we discovered that the physical elements that we were analysing were overlapping in the formal and informal people's activities that also shaped the street layout in different ways. Indeed, the street changes its narrative along the path and forms five main, different parts. Starting from the west area and walking to the east, the first part of the street is characterised by buildings of 2-3 storeys and are full of informal activities constituting an extension of the markets. After this area, is a second part where there is the most important concentration of towers that cohabit with low buildings and a significant presence of small and large commerce, both formal and informal. There is also a third area where the main green space and the public and representative buildings (e.g. concert hall, post office, two museums) are located. However, the fourth part is mainly made up of 2-3 storey buildings and the ground floor hosts big commerce – mainly car dealers and show rooms. The last part, which ends in the beachfront, is mostly housing and hosts poor

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<sup>4</sup> The proposal was presented by Designworkshop at the XXV International Union of Architects World Congress in Durban in February 2014 – with the title “Transforming our city: Doctor Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Linear Park, Durban”.

<sup>5</sup> The two courses involved in the research were Architectural Design and Technology 1B and 2B (School of Built Environment and Development studies, Architecture, Planning and Housing, University of Kwazulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa). Studio staff were: Silvia Bodei, Bridget Horner, Mr Bonga Ntuli, Viloshin Govender, Lindsay Bush, Mark Oswell, and Clair Clifton.

immigrants from other African countries. Here informal commerce is present again. As a result of this work of mapping, we presented a combined exhibition with a map model and drawings, which showed graphically the characteristics of the street and its population, who we also consider to be important infrastructure of the area.

## **Conclusions**

The observations collected from the experience realised with the students formed the basis for the next phase of a pilot project that we are discussing with eThekweni Municipality, where we will consider the urban public realm as a strong part of the urban space for the social reactivation of the inner city. The research strategy is to start from the drivers of the Ethekeeni Municipality plans that imagine a city “connected”, walkable” and “integrated and inclusive” – trying to realise the potential of the consolidated form of the city and the population who live there, including informal merchants, squatters, but also social entities such as NGOs.

Apartheid history has strongly determined the spatial and formal characteristics of Dr Pixley Ka Seme Street, and in this sense this important urban path expresses “an intersection that reveals notions of space of power and privilege, identity and difference; palimpsests of historical experience; lived spaces in the everyday performance of urban life” (Shepherd & Murray, 2007). In general, contemporary South Africa is particularly influenced by a combination of nostalgia, desire and consumerism. Retail activities, drinking, movies, and consumerism combined with perimeter controls and insecurity, are the new borders – and the relation with order and disorder, formal and informal, is significant. The aim of this research is to exceed the psychological and physical borders and barriers, to produce new scenarios, and transform the street and context of the street into a safe and socially open space.

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*Autoconstruction as a Housing Tactic in the Contemporary City*

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**Abstract**

Based on the recognition of the difficulty of access to urban housing by the lower classes as one of the greatest political and socioeconomic challenges faced by Brazilian cities in the contemporary world, this article seeks to elucidate how this issue has been operated over the years and what are the consequences of such actions for Brazilian cities. At first, we identified the agents responsible for the construction of low-cost housing, analysing the history of their actions. From this, we observed that autoconstruction (construction of housing by self-work, in both consolidated areas and informal settlements) and the production of social housing projects promoted through public-private partnerships (State and civil construction companies) constitute the two main means of access to cheap housing by the poorest parts of society. We conducted two case studies, each evaluating the quality of the neighborhoods produced through such practices in Brasilia, the federal capital of Brazil. In these studies, we analyzed the history of the occupations as well as the formal and functional aspects of these places. We observed that, in the Brazilian case, both the self-construction and the private-public partnerships consist in practices of city production consolidated several decades ago. We concluded that, although autoconstruction is the practice that has a negative connotation in the collective imaginary, the neighborhoods resulting from both practices have similar deficiencies, resulting in inefficient cities.

Keywords: autoconstruction, social housing, strategies x tactics

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## 1. Introduction

The urban issue and the need for urban development planning has been the focus of several debates and research in Brazil since the 1960s, given the intense process of industrialization and, consequently, urbanization that was taking place in the country (MONTE-MÓR, 1981). This process led to an accelerated growth of urban centers, as well as the overwhelming increase in the demand for housing, especially by the popular classes, who migrated towards cities in search of better living conditions.

Since then, many governmental initiatives have been responding to this demand, from the creation of the Retirement and Pension Institutes (IAP) in the 1930s to the present day with federal programs, such as the My House, My Life Program (PMCMV) launched in 2009 and still in force.

These initiatives have in common the fact that they operate according to a market logic, in which the urbanized land layout and the production of built spaces work through a linear process, the management of which is the responsibility of government agents and construction entrepreneurs. This way, the urbanized land is understood as a commodity and ends up out of reach of a large part of the population, which cannot fit into the financing mechanisms for acquiring / renting houses.

In this context, the mechanism of autoconstruction appears as a unique possibility of housing and permanence in the cities for part of the population. The term refers to the production of spaces, especially for housing, by the poor, through their own labor force, apart from the formal construction market and often without being part of the linear purchasing process and sale of urbanized land.<sup>1</sup>

The modality of self-construction is applied to several spaces that shelter the daily activities of the most deprived portions of the population, in legalized and individual-owned areas or in informal settlements. As a means of producing constructed spaces that do not belong to the regular construction process of spaces in cities, it is understood that self-construction functions as a tactic.

The concept of tactics x strategy (DE CERTEAU, 1994) suggests that there is a difference between the way groups holding the power and those that do not have it function. De Certeau considers that strategy is linked to those who hold power and control of space, while the tactic is used by the "weak," those who must move in the space that does not belong to them. In this sense, we understand that the production of housing through autoconstruction functions as a tactic of the popular strata for economic reproduction and its fixation in the urban context, understood here as a field (BORDIEU, 1994) and dominated by those who hold power - *a priori*, government entities, civil construction investors, financing institutions.

This paper focuses on the city of Brasília, based on a comparison between two case studies. The first, at Vila Estrutural, seeks to understand the urban spaces formed through autoconstruction. The second one focuses on Riacho Fundo II, a district that has been the target of the implementation of a large number of housing complexes produced through partnerships between PMCMV and construction companies.

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<sup>1</sup> References about the concept of autoconstruction are discussed in the item 3 of this paper.

## 2. Overview of Government Actions on Popular Housing

Understanding the existence of autoconstruction as an alternative to meet the demand for housing demands a lookback on how Brazilian housing policies have been working overtime. In a synthetic analysis, we started with the first initiatives of the IAPs, then went through the National Housing Bank (BNH) financing program and finally came to the PMCMV, which is still going on, observing that the low-income population has never really been successfully contemplated by housing policies.

The performance of the Brazilian government in the field of popular housing has been perceived since the 1930's, with the creation of IAP<sup>2</sup>. With the authorization of the federal government, the IAP began to allocate part of their funds to the construction of popular houses. The IAP, however, developed an incomplete social policy, since access to housing was restricted to salaried workers in each professional category. Therefore rural, informal urban workers and the population without formal employment was not contemplated by this system (ALMEIDA, 2009), which ended its activities in 1966.

It is important to mention that in the 1930's Brazil was still essentially rural<sup>3</sup>. From the 1940's onwards, a large increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of around 7% per year was observed. This fact is responsible for the increase of migratory movements of the poor population towards more industrialized regions and Brasília, which was inaugurated in 1960. As a consequence, numerous informal popular settlements started to appear around major city centers, which triggered various urban problems (RUFINO, 2016). So popular housing as a socioeconomic issue started to appear then, consequently needing more attention from governmental entities.

The BNH was created in this context, inaugurating the first attempt of a housing policy to operate at a national level, in opposition to the palliative and punctual treatment that the issue had been having until then. A national policy of housing and territorial planning was formulated, with the intention of promoting social housing or financing to the low-income population, being based on the application of resources from the Fund of Guarantee by Time of Service (FGTS).

It is important to mention that BNH investments were guided only by economic profitability criteria, without following any type of macro-policy. As a result, there was an overvaluation of land and real estate speculation, which did not solve the problem of social housing (MONTE MÓR, 1981). An example of the ineffectiveness of BNH's performance is the fact that only 18% of the funds were invested in households earning less than five minimum wages. This way, after the massive construction of 4 million housing units, the middle class and the contractors were the real beneficiaries. Most of the workers, who represented three quarters of the

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2 Autarchies centralized by the federal government, created in 1933 to replace Retirement and Pension Funds. Membership was linked to professional categories, such as merchants, bankers or industrialists. The Institutes had as main objective to organize the social security sector, but were also important in the design of housing in Brazil, representing the direct production and the beginning of the large-scale financing of popular houses.

3 For the first time, in the 1960's, urban population outgrew rural in Brazil (CENSO/IBGE, 1970 apud RUFINO, 2016). In 1973, the first metropolitan regions were institutionalized, concentrating more than half of the entire Brazilian population.

Brazilian population, continued to irregularly provide their own housing (ARANTES, 2011).

The measures created by the federal government were directed to solve a "false fundamental problem", to which were applied "false solutions" that were nothing but devices to face an economic crisis caused by more than one factor (BOLAFFI, 1979). Such solutions did not represent the institutionalization of urban planning from a perspective of a complete approach (MONTE-MOR, 1981), but rather a focus on housing only as private property, not considering the planning of public spaces and aspects related to urban infrastructure.

With the stagnation of economy and consequent monetary inflation, which occurred since the 1980's, metropolitan hubs started to grow at higher rates. Population growth generated an intensive process of urbanization, especially at outskirts of big cities, increasing the character of the metropolis of the peripheries (RUFINO, 2016). Monte-Mór (1981) also argues that government investments in social policies have contributed to the accelerated marginal urban growth of large Brazilian cities, as well as the imbalance between Brazilian regions due to the different distribution ratios of BNH applications. Finally, in the early 1980's the BNH crisis depleted the public alternatives for producing social housing (ARANTES, 2011).

Between 1991 and 2000, the number of favelas in Brazil grew by 22.5% (RUFINO, 2016). As the hope that would counter the neglect of the country's low-income population, President Lula's election in 2002 came with promises that would lead to major policy reforms. As a first attempt, the Ministry of Cities was created with the objective of implementing public policies that the Labor Party (PT) had been seeking for years. The goal was to unify measures related to urban development and rely on popular participation (ARANTES, 2011). From 2003, greater governmental efforts began to take place in the upbringing of a housing policy, through a reformulation in the composition and the form of action of the FGTS curatorial council.

In this context, and with the global crisis of 2008, civil construction in Brazil relied on new public funds as an attempt to overcome the so-called subprime crisis that affected the world economy (AMORE, 2015). This triggered the privatization of housing policies, aiming to get the real estate sector out of the financial crisis (ARANTES, 2011). This is how PMCMV emerged in 2009, in the agenda of both the Civil House and Ministry of Finance (Table 01). The housing complexes built through the program are public-private partnerships between the federal government and construction companies, initially divided into three categories, each directed at a population income bracket<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> In 2017, the PMCMV went through some changes, counting with a new bracket of income after that. The table above shows the income brackets as they were after the reformulation.

**TABLE 01 – Income brackets for the PMCMV  
(CAIXA ECONÔMICA FEDERAL, 2018).**

<b>INCOME BRACKET</b>	<b>HOUSEHOLD EARNINGS</b>	<b>EQUIVALENT IN MINIMUM WAGES*</b>	<b>PARAMETERS</b>
1	Up to R\$ 1.800,00	1,88	Extended deadlines and instalments from R\$ 80 to 270. Almost integral subsidy
1,5	Up to 2.600,00	2,72	Low interest rates. Subsidies up to R\$ 47.500,00
2	Up to R\$ 4.000,00	4,19	Subsidies up to R\$ 29.000,00
3	Up to R\$ 7.000,00	7,33	Differentiated interest rates

\*As in 2018.

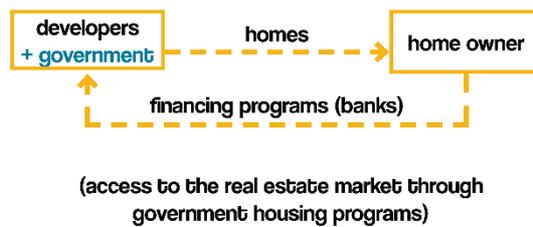
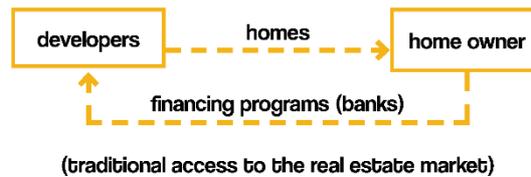
We should notice that, when the program was first launched, official data indicated that 90% of the housing deficit was concentrated in families with incomes up to three minimum wages (bracket 1). Still, at that time only 40% of investments were directed to this income bracket (AMORE, 2015). The remaining 60% were directed to families with incomes of up to 8 minimum wages, which indicate the prevalence of interests of real estate sectors and civil construction in the formulation process of the Program. So we can say that PMCMV works mainly as an economic and, not necessarily, a housing strategy, which leaves part of the population unassisted by the Program<sup>5</sup>.

Therefore, we can see that government's initiatives on popular housing had economic development as a historical purpose, aiming to bypass crises through investments in civil construction. We also concluded that public policies do not reach the entire population that depends on them to legally stay the city. Consequently, there is a part of the population that is forced to build, in a clandestine way, their dwellings in the cities, without considering legal parameters, with autoconstruction as the ultimate resilience resource.

### **3. Autoconstruction: What Are We Talking About?**

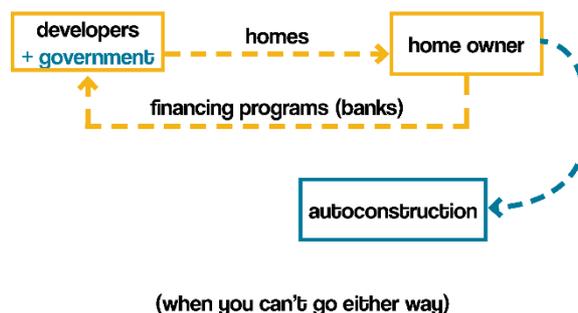
After understanding how the government has managed the production of popular housing over the years, it is important to understand how the population put aside by this system meets the need for housing. As shown in the previous section, traditional access to the real estate market does not serve a large portion of the population (Figure 01). Therefore, the federal government has been encouraging housing programs, so the poorest sections of the population can have access to housing.

<sup>5</sup> This can be proven by the definition of the brackets of income. The inconsistency of this division gets very clear when we look at the average monthly income per household. For example, of R\$ 1.723,00 in São Paulo to R\$ 575,00 in Maranhão (IBGE, 2016). Even though they have very different incomes, the Program puts these two families in the same bracket, what makes it even more difficult for the families in need to access the housing program.



**FIGURE 01 – Traditional access to the real estate market (1) and access to the real estate market through housing programs (2) (Image by the authors).**

As we have seen, despite the incentives for the production of social housing, the poorer sections of the population are not served by these initiatives. Among the alternatives, autoconstruction is the most comprehensive and the one that most has consequences to Brazilian cities (Figure 02). A simple definition of the term is "a housing construction system for the low-income population, where the future owner builds the dwelling with his own work" (DICIONÁRIO ONLINE MICHAELIS, 2017). Another definition adds to this concept the formal or informal obtaining of an urban lot, where the family builds the house itself using its own resources and the help of family, friends or payed labor (PRAXIS, 2016). Autoconstruction can be also defined by synonyms such as community task force, self-help and mutual help (MARICATO, 1978). The author defines the term as a process based on cooperation between people, in an exchange of favors and family commitments that are distinct from the capitalist relations of buying and selling workforce.



**FIGURE 02 – Poor population, which does not have access either to the traditional real estate market or housing programs, autoconstruct their own houses (Image by the authors).**

Another issue about autoconstruction is the fact that it is an activity that takes a lot of time to be completed, being a time-consuming process, since it occurs from the use of free time in the family: weekends and vacation periods (GOMES, BARBOSA DA

SILVA & SILVA, 2003). Thus, the pace of autoconstruction follows the rhythm of the worker's free time, as well as the availability of money from family members. We can infer from this that the activity of autoconstruction happens from the application of time that would otherwise be directed to paid activities or leisure. The authors also mention the total cost of the project, stating that just as the time spent with the activity is being withdrawn from the rest and leisure time of the worker, the money invested comes from reserves or benefits beyond the basic salary. We can conclude then that overwork is an element of great significance in the process of autoconstruction, contributing to the fact that housing is not part of the wage bill. What makes it feasible is precisely the cutting of costs related to labor.

It is important to emphasize the provisional nature often attributed to self-construction. Jacques (2007) analyzes the shelters of slums under the concept of Fragments. The meaning of "shelter" is explained by the author in analogy to the act of "cover", being a way to protect, cover, hide. When deprived of the formal possibility of being sheltered, the individual seeks various materials that can perform the function of dwelling. Thus, these fragments are used and replaced as new materials are acquired, or when inclement weather damages the shelter. The self-built house remains in the process of evolution even when it receives solid walls of masonry, because improvements and extensions always appear with no deadline to finish. The author also explains that the logic of autoconstructing a shelter produces a temporary element, manufactured as a patchwork of quilts sewn together and can become an actual house. That is, to change its ephemeral temporality to a durable and permanent good that will be inhabited.

As a result, autoconstruction is understood in the present research as the only possible alternative for the production of the housing of a significant portion of the Brazilian population, given the insufficient coverage provided by public policies managed by the government. The use of this maneuver should be approached as the way to generate a family shelter with the primary intention of protection and permanence in the urban environment.

#### **4. Case Studies and Results**

##### **4.1 Overview of Brasilia's construction and history**

Brasília is an important urban planning reference of the 1950's and 1960's, designed from the precepts of modern architecture<sup>6</sup>. The underdevelopment of the country, however, leaves marks on the production of the new capital and raises, mainly, the reality of social exclusion (SOBREIRA, 2013), as we can observe in Figure 03.

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<sup>6</sup> The city was built as designed by Lucio Costa, winner of the *National contest for the pilot plan of the new capital of Brazil*, which occurred in 1956. Recognized as world heritage by the UNESCO in 1987, Brasília also is home to several buildings designed by world-renowned architect Oscar Niemeyer.



**FIGURE 03 – At the top, the Vila Estrutural; at the bottom left, Riacho Fundo II. The original core of the city (Plano Piloto) is marked in yellow (Google Earth Pro, modified by the authors).**

Before the inauguration and consolidation of the core designed by Lucio Costa, the Federal District already had nine satellite cities, urban parcels with no political autonomy and dependent on a center (Brasília). Although the city's original plan had foreseen their existence, the expectation was that the satellite cities were not to exist before the consolidation of the *Plano Piloto*. Its early occurrence is due to the incentives of migration to the new capital during construction, with promises of housing and benefits for life improvement (Figure 04). A consequence of the lack of perception of what was going on in the country was the early peripheralization of Brasília, resulting in the inversion of the logic of creation of satellite cities (PAVIANI, 1994). The environment, which should have been equally and orderly planned when the capital reached its limit, formed in a disorderly fashion, like any metropolitan region that developed without proper planning.



**FIGURE 04 – “Brasília: the new capital of Brazil. Some against, lots in favor. All benefited!” (Federal District Public Archive - ArPDF).**

Several maneuvers tried to dismantle the informal settlements, as was the case of Vila Estrutural. It first appeared in the 60's, with the presence of garbage collectors who settled around the open dump that was formed there from the rubble deposit of the construction of the capital (ALVES et al., 2002). There were several attempts to remove the shacks, without success (Image 05). The Estrutural was legalized in 2004 as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> Administrative Region. Even so, 13.33% of the residents of Estrutural still live in improvised shacks (CODEPLAN, 2014), and are also surrounded by other irregular occupations such as the Santa Luzia settlement. In addition to sheltering residents in extreme social vulnerability, the region lacks urban infrastructure and Public Equipments (EPC)<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Lots or public spaces meant for institutional or community activities ( schools, hospitals and health centers, public safety, sports courts, public squares, playgrounds, etc.).

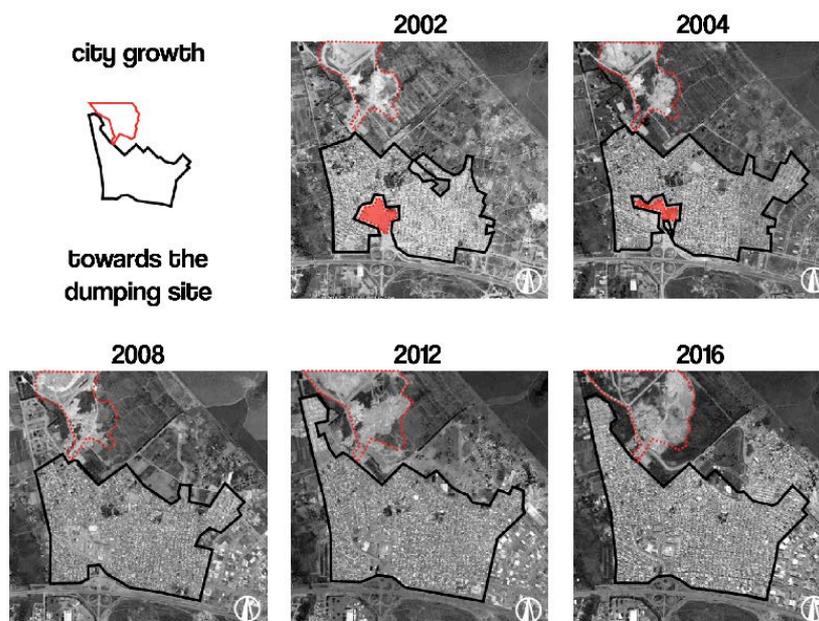


**FIGURE 05 – Removal of shacks at Estrutural in May 1995  
(Federal District Public Archive - ArPDF).**

At the same time there were attempts to eradicate the informal settlements, there were housing policies based on the mere distribution of public land to the poor, mainly during governor Joaquim Roriz's terms (PAVIANI, 1994). Riacho Fundo was part of this context, being consolidated by means of donation of lots in 1993 along with the localities of São Sebastião, Santa Maria and Recanto das Emas. Riacho Fundo II, as the 21<sup>st</sup> Administrative Region of the Federal District, was laid out of a governmental attempt to eradicate informal settlements, which resulted in an exponential urban expansion that attracted migratory currents from neighboring states to receive lots.

#### **4.2 Vila Estrutural vs. Riacho Fundo II: a brief analysis**

Vila Estrutural is approximately 15km from the Plano Piloto. The access to the district happens only through the DF-095 highway, which connects it to the rest of the Federal District. The oldest part of the district grew around the dumping site which, during the period of regularization of the city, was moved northwest, freeing the area to receive some EPC. New residents continued to build shacks on the outskirts, again pushing the city's expansion toward the dumping site (Figures 06 and 07).

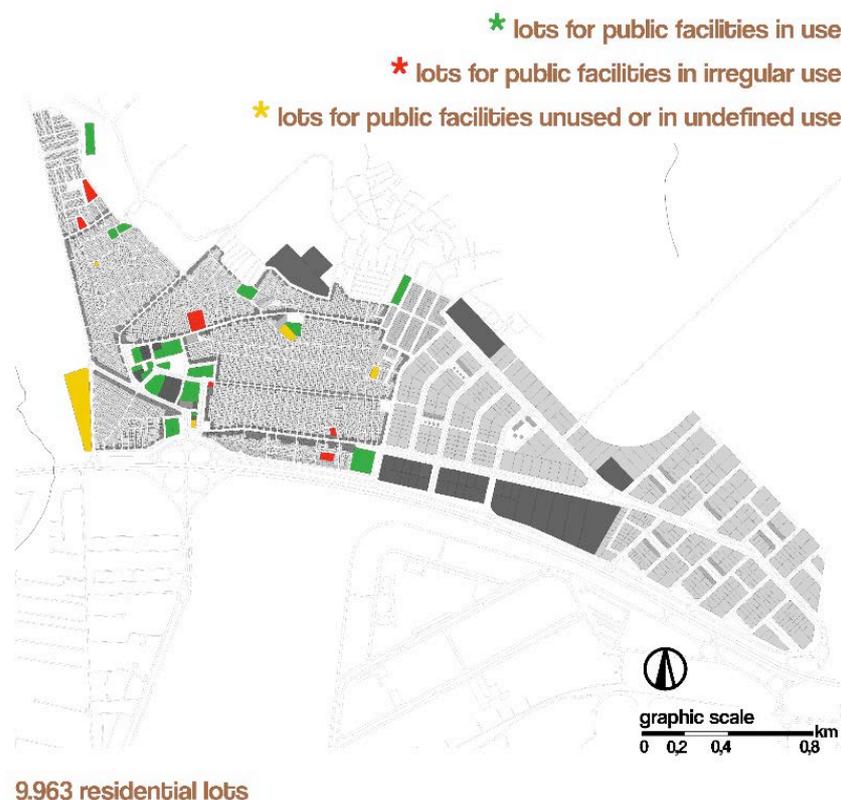


**FIGURE 06 – Evolution of the occupation at Vila Estrutural between 2002 and 2016 (Google Earth Pro, modified by the authors).**



**FIGURE 07 – Estrutural circa 2016: in yellow, the densified urban area; in red, the new location of the dumping site; in blue, a new informal settlement, Santa Luzia (Google Earth Pro, modified by the authors).**

Despite its legalization, the absence of public services in the district is remarkable. There is an agglomeration of EPC such as schools, community center, public square and institutions in general in the area where the dumping site once was, which hinders the population's access to essential services. In addition to the poor distribution of these services, several of the EPC lots are now occupied with irregular residences, not corresponding to the regularization plan approved for the place (Figure 08).

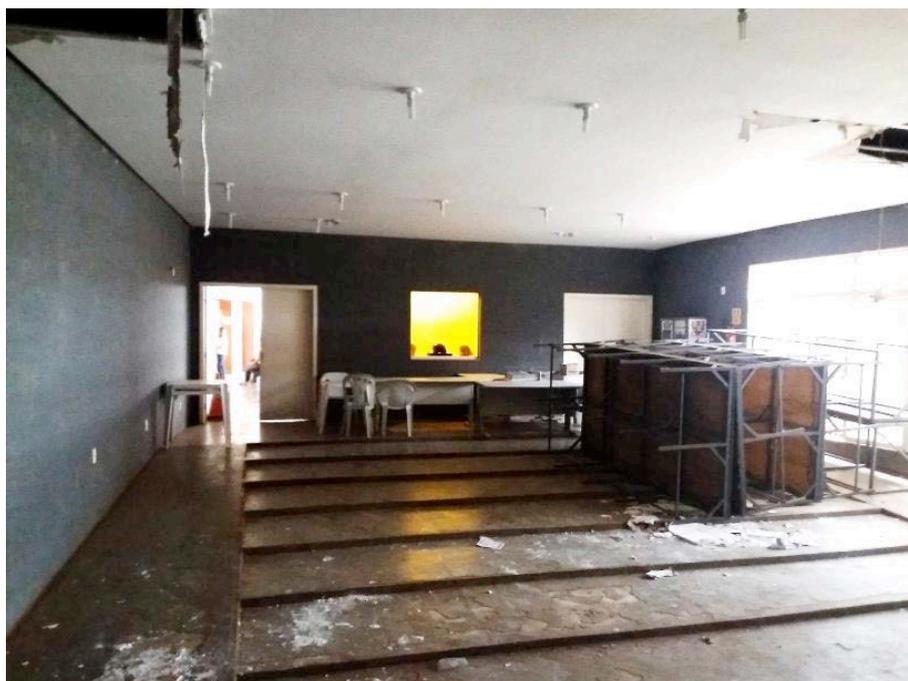


**FIGURE 08 – EPC lots in the Estrutural district. (Secretary of State for territory management and housing - SEGETH, modified by the authors).**

It is important to mention that 80.89% of the residents mention that there are no tree-lined streets in the vicinity and 91.33% say there were no parks/gardens nearby (Figure 09). Regarding cultural aspects, 99.77% of the residents do not attend museums, 88.41% do not attend cinemas, 99.37% do not attend theaters and 97.30% do not attend libraries (CODEPLAN, 2016). The data reveal that, in addition to the lack of public spaces, the community does not have easy access to cultural facilities, or that the places destined to these activities are not attractive to the majority of the population. As an example, the Cultural Center of Estrutural, inaugurated in 2015, was already in a poor state of conservation the following year and lost its potential of use for leisure when the building turned into the Center of Specialized Reference in Social Assistance (CREAS) (Figure 10).



**FIGURE 09 – Some views of the district’s streets, showing the poor quality of public spaces (Image by the authors).**



**FIGURE 10 – Auditorium of the Cultural Center of Estrutural (current CREAS) in a poor state of conservation (Image by the authors).**

Despite the urban problems cited, the demand for housing in the district is still big. But the urban network indicates the lack of planning for this growth. The regularized area refers to the traditional logic of parceling, with blocks in an orthogonal layout, while the district expands informally in an organic mesh (Figure 11). The newer side of the Estrutural is improvised by the locals themselves, who settled there and built their own homes and new streets. The shacks are precarious and it is common to see building materials in front of the houses, waiting until the resident can carry out a

renovation (Figure 12). It is important to mention that 13.77% of the city's households are still improvised shacks or houses under construction (CODEPLAN, 2016).



**FIGURE 11 – Above the dashed line, the organic settlement of Santa Luzia. Bellow the same line, the orthogonal layout of the legalized Estrutural (Google Earth Pro, modified by the authors).**



**FIGURE 12 – Autoconstructed house. It is possible to see a pile of accumulated material for a renovation on the right (Image by the authors).**

Riacho Fundo II is located near the DF-001 highway, which is its only way of access (Figure 13). The district develops in a linear fashion, connecting itself to the highway by perpendicular streets that separate the denser parts of the administrative region (Figure 14). Nowadays, with the district getting denser, linearity becomes more

evident (Figure 15). Its expansion, unlike what has been happening at Estrutural, is based in a development plan, which forecasts lots destined to EPC.



**FIGURE 13 – In white, the DF-001 highway, in red Riacho Fundo II and in yellow the Plano Piloto. (Google Earth Pro, modified by the authors).**



**FIGURE 14 - Riacho Fundo II circa 2012: in yellow, the densified urban area. (Google Earth Pro, modified by the authors)**



**FIGURE 15 - Riacho Fundo II circa 2017: in yellow, the densified urban area.  
(Google Earth Pro, modified by the authors)**

Our study is focused on two parts of the district, created from government programs focused on social housing. The first area is the Residencial Parque do Riacho, which was built along the DF-001 highway, in order to eliminate the void that was left when plans of expansion of the metro system changed, leaving behind a huge space subject to invasions. According to the project description (DISTRITO FEDERAL, 2013), the area was already depleted of its native vegetation cover, being completely decharacterized.

The project is part of both, the PMCMV and the Morar Bem program (local government), having cost almost half a billion reais. The condominiums were designed to house 5,904 families, who could acquire an apartment if they were registered in Bracket 2 of the housing programs. During a visit to the Riacho Fundo II Regional Administration, information was obtained on the planning and execution of the Residencial Parque do Riacho. Forty-two condominiums were built, each with nine four-story buildings. After the completion of the residential complexes, the population of Riacho Fundo II increased from 45,000 to 100,000 inhabitants.

The apartments have two or three bedrooms, with respectively 50m<sup>2</sup> and 60.25m<sup>2</sup>. There is also a parking space for each unit. It is important to note that the condominiums were built after the consolidation of the single-family houses of Riacho Fundo II, the first one being delivered in the first half of 2014 and the last one in the first half of 2016. It was possible to observe during the visit the absence of a relationship between the urban network and the condominiums built afterwards. The new buildings are surrounded by exclusive parking lots, which in turn are also gridded with electric fences with only visual permeability. There is no integration between the housing complexes and the exterior, generating physical barriers that cause various problems for the district (Figure 16).



**FIGURE 16 – Residencial Parque do Riacho (Image by the authors).**

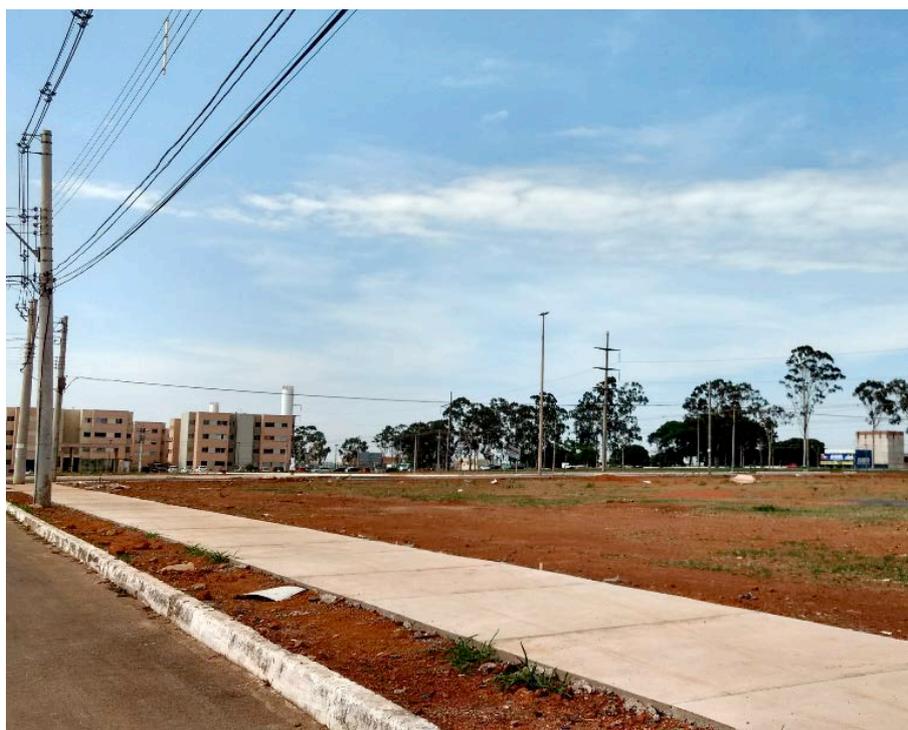
It is possible to notice the presence of some empty lots between the residential complexes (Figure 17). According to the Regional Administration of Riacho Fundo II, the construction company responsible for the development designed the condominiums and also public squares among them that were to be built by Novacap<sup>8</sup>. However, no square was built, resulting in large urban gaps between the condominiums and a large shortage of quality public spaces for the residents (Figure 18).

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<sup>8</sup> Public corporation created in 1956 by then President of the Republic Juscelino Kubitschek, with the objective of building the new federal capital, Brasília. It has as shareholders the Federal District and the Federal Union.



**FIGURE 17 – Residencial Parque do Riacho along the DF-001 highway, evidencing the empty spaces among the condominiums, which are marked in yellow (Google Earth Pro, modified by the authors).**



**FIGURE 18 – One of the empty spaces in the area, where there was supposed to be a square (Image by the authors).**

Still according to the Regional Administration, there are no commercial areas in Riacho Fundo II. Therefore, there is a lack of this activity in the district, as well as structure for other services, such as schools and hospitals. This, plus the fact that

Riacho Fundo II is one of the many dormitory towns<sup>9</sup> in the Federal District, is responsible for a large amount of daily commuting movements of the resident population<sup>10</sup>.

The images of Residencial Parque do Riacho publicized by the construction company before the construction of the complexes (Figures 19 and 20) highlight the design of the leisure areas, suggesting to the future owners a great quality of life in the place. This shows that the sale of the condominiums was based on the importance of quality public spaces in a community. The images also show a decontextualized design, where the condominiums would be inserted in a free and wooded area. However, the reality of the Residential Park do Riacho happens in the margins of a highway, with an urban context already consolidated previously by single-family houses, which resulted in large grid areas without continuity and integration to the existing morphology (Figure 21).



**FIGURE 19 – Image from the website of the construction company responsible for the design of Residencial Parque do Riacho, Retrieved from: <<https://www.facebook.com/parquedorriacho/photos/a.1437811966452153.1073741828.1437810529785630/1441080666125283/?type=3&theater>>. Accessed: 30 July, 2018.**

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<sup>9</sup> The term indicates urban parcels that are not self-sufficient, from which the population makes daily commutes to work.

<sup>10</sup> Although 100% of the district's households are permanent, which would indicate a well-functioning and consolidated place, only 20.33% of the population works there (CODEPLAN, 2015).



**FIGURE 20 – Image from the website of the construction company responsible for the design of Residencial Parque do Riacho. Retrieved from: <<http://forum.skyscraperpage.com/showthread.php?t=206206>>. Accessed: 30 july, 2018.**



**FIGURE 21 – Street that separates the early residences from the Residencial Parque do Riacho (Image by the authors).**

The second area we are dealing with is a housing sector that is still under construction. According to the official description of the project (DISTRITO FEDERAL, 2007), it includes residential (both single-family and collective) and institutional lots, as well as mixed use, commercial and community use (Figures 22 and 23). The project proposal describes the public spaces with emphatic discourse. The single-family houses are planned in an urban articulation around small squares meant for socialization, a solution also adopted to create pleasant microclimates. The collective dwellings are foreseen in a maximum of four floors, with half the first floor on *pilotis*<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Set of pillars that support the building liberating the ground floor, of public use, destined for free passage of pedestrians.



**FIGURE 22 – Single-family house under construction (Image by the authors).**



**FIGURE 23 – Residential building under construction (Image by the authors).**

According to the project description (DISTRITO FEDERAL, 2007), its "mixed-use lots are confronted with large green areas that define squares between them and the highways." On the collective or institutional lots it says, "The demands raised by both the original population as well as the newcomers were observed." We can infer from this that there is a vague discourse about community proposals, when no uses or demands actually reflect the needs of the residents.

As the Residencial Parque do Riacho, the execution of this urban expansion of Riacho Fundo II prioritizes only the delivery of the residences. Although the project was approved years before the actual construction of the sector, in 2016, it was still under construction and there was no work in the lots destined to public use. Therefore, we can say that the production of these places does not consider the development of the district as a whole.

## 5. Conclusions

We can verify, based on the analysis of Estrutural and Riacho Fundo II, that the focus in the development of these cities is the provision of housing, either by means of autoconstruction, or the construction of housing complexes based in partnerships between the government and construction companies. In both cases the lack of areas for trade, health, education and collective uses in general is clear. In addition, it was possible to perceive that the creation of these new urbanized spaces does not take into account the relation between them and the already consolidated urban fabric, or the importance of public spaces for the urban environment as a whole.

This issue is linked to the very way in which social housing is treated in Brazil. We have seen that, over time, government initiatives to deal with the housing deficit have always been linked to a market logic, where profit is a goal as (or more) important as the solution of the housing problem itself. As an alternative, autoconstruction is historically consolidated as a means of producing living spaces. It is observed that both scenarios lack urban and social planning, which compromises quality of life for those who live in these places. This proves that planning and execution by formal means does not always result in a quality urban space.

Both alternatives of access to housing of social interest, formal and informal, do not solve the problem of the city. The spaces resulting from autoconstruction continue to appear without connection to the formal city as the urban population grows. No matter how informal the creating of spaces that are not pre-conceived in the urban network is, the housing complexes end up being configured in the same way, also producing cities without good conditions to live in.

The common element between the two cases analyzed is the very creation of an urban space that primarily seeks the shelter of poor people. As a possible alternative to this problem that creates spaces of heterotropy (FOUCAULT, 1984), the use of abandoned areas in large centers fits this purpose. In this way, the uninhabited urban spaces, physically consolidated in the formal city, could accommodate the needy population under favorable social conditions. Alternatively, housing mechanisms such as social leasing could still be explored. Examples like these don't have many occurrences in Brazil, so these are methods yet to be explored. It is appropriate for future research, therefore, to investigate other inclusive ways of producing cities that promote good results for all who inhabit it.

## 6. Acknowledgements

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***Reclaiming Gendered Urban Spaces by Facilitating Fearless Movement of Women  
in the Fearful Cities: Enabling Inclusiveness by Advocating Spatial Mediation***

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**Abstract**

While women in most developing countries contribute significantly to the development of cities by being an integral part of the urban systems, often they are the last to benefit from it. Women have far more dynamic relationships with cities than men, “Poor spatial planning can often leave women “time poor”, Violence and fear of violence prevent women from utilizing the intended equal opportunities the city offers.” (UN-HABITAT). Alexander Cuthbert explains “patriarchal capitalism”, a male-dominated approach for designing cities, that conveniently puts women in the back seat of the planning process making them vulnerable in the urban environment. The research advocates ‘Right to city’ and investigates its effectiveness for ‘right to everyday life in a city’, asserting right of women to public spaces, instead of treating it as transit. Through mapping and on-site observations, the study conducted in a commercial center of Bhopal, India, one can state that by loitering in public spaces with as much authority as men, women can reclaim gendered urban spaces. ‘Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces’ is one of UN Women’s Flagship Programme initiative for ‘freedom of movement’ for women in cities. This paper validates that better designed Urban Spaces can enable mobility, promote the sense of security and facilitate equal opportunity, the feminist agenda, by facilitating an urban character that is inclusive in nature. The research promotes the idea of diversity bringing together a variety of people extending opportunities to be a participant rather than merely being a passerby, making women an active user of the urban setting.

Keywords: gender, safety, planning, public spaces, gendered, loitering, mobility, inclusive, urban.

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## Urban Feminism: Planning and Design

The role of a woman against that of a man has been challenged time and again, the breadwinner versus the homemaker have had a constant struggle for identity and place in the social hierarchy. Where the question of who 'owns' and who 'controls' is still contested between genders and gender roles in everyday life. The 21<sup>st</sup>-century questions these gender roles, contests equality and fights for 'Right to City' for all, the world is aiming for empowering women, the UN (United Nations) SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) 5, has an emphasis on the same. However, development of women in South Asian Countries remains conflicted with every day increasing crime against women. While women in most developing countries contribute significantly to the development of cities by being an integral part of the urban systems and functions, often they are the last to benefit from this development.

As Dolores Hayden with her perspective towards gender, race, and ethnicity writes to reorient the urban history to spatial struggles, in her book *'The Grand Domestic Revolution'*, she says, "Women's isolation in the home and confinement to domestic life is the basic cause of their unequal position in society" (Hayden, 1982). Theory and practice of what Hayden calls "*material feminism*" in pursuit of economic independence and social equality. She elaborates how this raised a fundamental question of the relationship of men, women, and children in industrial society. It was then, when, the realization of bringing women out in urban space and making them a participant in making a city was realized. The necessity of a physical space, to begin with, kitchen less houses, day-care centers, public kitchens, and community dining halls was incorporated in the planning process. Ebenezer Howard, Rudolph Schindler, and Lewis Mumford were among the many progressive architects and planners who promoted the reorganization of housing and neighborhoods around the needs of employed women (Hayden, 1982).

Today, cities have a lot to offer to an individual, one fetches for income, career, lifestyle and experiences in the city. This plethora of opportunities a city puts forward are limitless yet limited to gender mainstreaming. Women and men see cities differently, their experiences and expectations are different from cities, both may use public spaces differently, maneuver and function in cities differently, however, the approach to designing has been conditioned more for men as against women moving in cities.

"Violence and Fear of violence prevents women from utilizing the intended equal opportunities the city has to offer" (Schwarz, 2015), not only developing countries but also in a few developed countries women battle for safety in public places (Fig. 01). They see violence or fear of violence in public spaces as a big concern in their everyday functioning. The condition of women in South Asian Countries is even more sympathetic as they face social, economic and gender discrimination in every front of their life. If we see the case of India, the statistics contributes to the fact and the crime rate have been significantly high against women, in fact, have doubled up in a decade's time, as per reports by National Crime Bureau, India (Fig. 02). The idea of having family members alone after dark, in cities, can be discomfoting for many people. In Delhi, 87% Households Begin Worrying if Women Are Out Alone Beyond 9 PM, for other cities, for the same time of the night, are 54% in Bengaluru, 48% in Chennai and 30% in Mumbai. (Sinha, 2017).

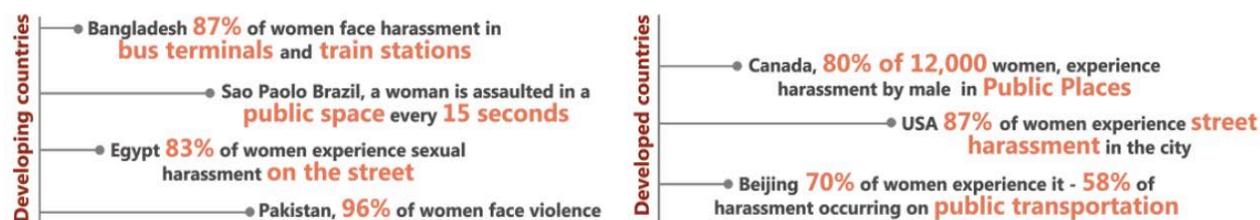


Figure 1: Crime against women in Developing Countries and Developed Countries. (Schwarz, 2015)

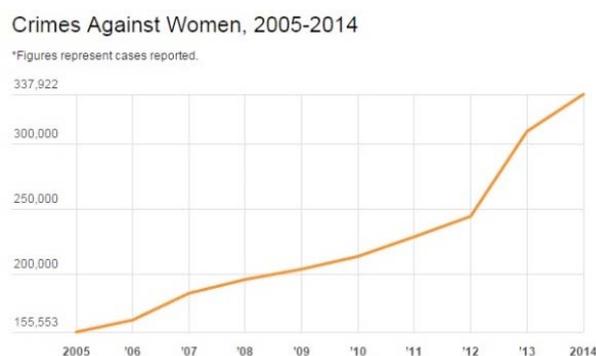


Figure 2: Crime Rate against women, 2005-2014. (Bureau, 2016)

## Fear landscapes

In the disputed world, where, power and politics reinforce and declare ownership to cities, gender mainstreaming remains marginalized. However, being an integral part of the urban system, women are limited in terms of ownership to space, freedom of being an active user of the urban setting and liberty of choice while navigating in urban India. Our cities are landscapes of fear with everyday crime and threat to life, the fear of being a victim is for every citizen and may not only be limited to gender, class or creed. However, the boundaries of perceived fear are different for women than men, it greatly affects how they access cities, it also restricts them from utilizing equal opportunities as a rightful citizen. “Fear can be portrayed as having damaged the fabric of cities, to have adversely affected the quality of urban life.” (Ferrero and La-Grange, 1992). Perceived Fear restrict how they access and mobilize in cities while Anticipated Fear can affect the overall health of the city. “Fear functions as form of social control over women’s use of urban environments since women are persuaded to significantly curtail their travel and behavior in public spaces out of fear” (Day, 2011). Women’s experience of fear in urban spaces is different from that of men, they experience greater fear in urban environments than men, whereas Men’s fear is tied to masculinity and potential confrontation with other men.

Feminist approach to urban design corrects this oversight, by exploring how women’s identities shape their use of urban environments and how designs and communities can better identify women’s needs. Gendered access to resources and construction of gendered identities. How Cuthbert describes patriarchal approaches; “Entire city structures have been generated on the basis of patriarchal capitalism: Land use zoning pattern, including the form, location and type of residential areas, transportation networks, public open spaces and the relationship between work and home result from male-dominated expectation and values”, links the patriarchal city design to gender

identity (Cuthbert, 2003). Post industrialization, cities were essentially designed for men, by men and masculinity dominated the city form. What Cuthbert tries to highlight is that the spatial arrangement of a city has been dominated by men to enable an urbanism that suites their everyday relation to the city. Women and their complex relation to the city are compromised in the fixation for work home relationship. Extremely defined land use planning dividing production and reproduction in cities leads to isolated zones limiting fluid accessibility across the urban system.

“Women have far more dynamic relationships with the city than men, utilizing public services more frequently. Poor spatial planning can often leave women “time poor.” (Schwarz, 2015). To be able to explore opportunities a city has to offer, one must not be limited by time, especially women while accessing cities are greatly limited by the changing landscapes of cities after dark. They may resist from moving out after dark as against men who seem relatively less affected by the same. Women tend to use these spaces in transit rather than being a part of it, leaving them as the transience population with no ownership of space. This leaves women ‘time poor’ and limits them from accessing equal opportunities a city has to offer.

### **Parameters Contributing to fear in urban spaces**

It is important to identify what generates this sense of fear in the physical environment. The reasons can be found in tangible and non-tangible factors that constitute an urban space. If one can assess these places on a set of parameters that can be directly or indirectly addresses in the urban system, the issue can be further narrowed down. Therefore, parameters were identified on the basis of which urban spaces could be assessed on its potential for how women, in a general perception, would perceive spaces in terms of safety and accessibility. The parameters identified were divided into four major categories with subcategories to follow.

- **Physical Parameters:** are parameters with physical form and alterations can be made in the structure to combat these.
  - **Scale of place:** Inhumane scale of place dominates the user and inculcates Sense of fear.
  - **Density:** Higher Densities encourage Natural Surveillance and Community existence.
  - **Planning and Land use:** Incompatible mix in land use leads to limiting accessibility. Encourage Compatible Mix.
  - **Morphology:** Losing connection to the ground due to insensitive built arrangement.
  - **Accessibility:** No Physical Accessibility and permeability or limited escape route.
- **Visual Parameters:** are parameters that are tangible yet can be assessed visually to be acted upon.
  - **Quality of space:** Visual chaos and no sense of space affect Quality of space, increasing or decreasing a sense of fear

- **Legibility/ sense of orientation:** Compromised legibility leads to loss of sense of direction creating panic and fear
  - **Quality of enclosure:** Humanizing Enclosures and enhancing quality through maintenance. A higher degree of comfort in moving.
  - **Illumination:** Poorly lit neighborhood limits Access and creates discomfort to the passer-by.
- **Perceptual Parameters:** which are perceived by an individual and can change from person to person or group to group, in the chosen case, a general perception of a female is taken for the kind of Territoriality she finds herself comfortable or uncomfortable in or the Uncertainties and Image of a place along with unfriendly activities.
    - **Territoriality/ ownership:** identifying gender-based ownership in public areas can create a sense of belonging. Increased Territoriality can reduce fear.
    - **Uncertainty in place:** A place with no intended function that it narrates.
    - **Image of Place:** Image Directing the purpose and intention of place and people around.
    - **Presence of unfriendly Activities:** Illegal or anti-social activities
  - **Social Parameters:** these are in-tangible parameters that cannot be assessed directly but has collateral impact on how people use and move in urban spaces.
    - **Masculinity in space:** Masculinity through the presence of male's or activities supporting male loitering
    - **Public Gaze:** Physical environment making women object to the gaze, discomfort.
    - **Association with past event:** Knowledge or being witness to a past event can create a sense of fear of the place.

### **Case of Exploration: Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.**

Bhopal the capital of Madhya Pradesh, also known as the “Bhopal of the Begum’s”, was once ruled by Begum’s. A city led by great women leaders like Sikandar Jahan and Shahjahan Begum who glorified the city of lakes for its own identity. The very city of the begums is now for the fifth year in a row, one of the most unsafe places in the country for women and children. Data by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) revealed that 35 cases of sexual abuse and crimes against children were reported every day in the state of Madhya Pradesh last year. According to the NCRB report, Madhya Pradesh reported the highest number of rape cases (4,391). The state’s overall crime rate stood at 348.3, much higher than the national average of 234. In comparison with the National Average the chart (Fig. 3 and 4) shows a comparison of the heinous crimes against women recorded in Bhopal to the national average over the past five years.

Bhopal as a city was placed significantly on the map of India when it was declared the capital of Madhya Pradesh in 1956 after the splitting of the state of Chhattisgarh. To accommodate the new infrastructure for administration, residential facilities, commercial centers and industrial zone, the southern portion of the city was planned.

A well laid out master plan was put in force that neatly divided and designated different functions to different parts of the city. It aimed at a land use plan that zoned out activities in different part of the city.

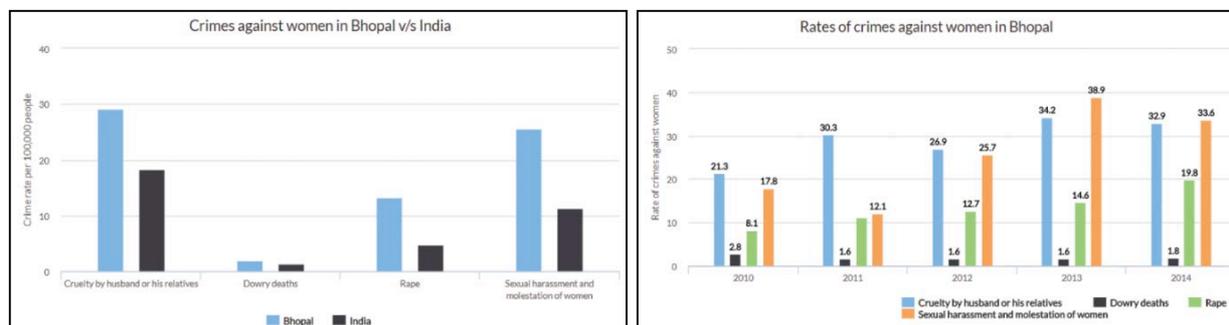


Figure 3: Crime against Women Bhopal v/s India. Figure 4: Crime Rate against Women in Bhopal.

**Site of Exploration: M.P. Nagar, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.**

The selected area for study was Developed by BDA in 1991 an initiative to decongest the Old City Market, M.P Nagar was conceived as a wholesale market, predominantly commercial in nature. Now roughly in 30 years, the precinct, which was then in the outskirts of Bhopal has now become a part of the cities fabric. It has evolved to accommodate newer activities like the restaurants, cafes, bars, low budget hotels, girl’s hostels and a number of coaching classes. These activities now house with the pre-existing activities like the car repair garages and accessories, wholesale building construction material, retail, healthcare and private and public offices. The selected precinct is in transience to become the city center, it citizens expect it to be, although the mix of activities and other factors makes it difficult for women to maneuver in space with full authority.

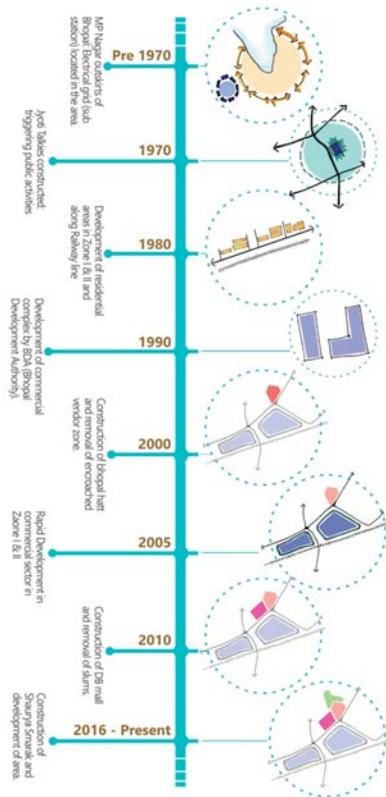


Figure 5: M.P Nagar Timeline



Figure 6: Site Context Map

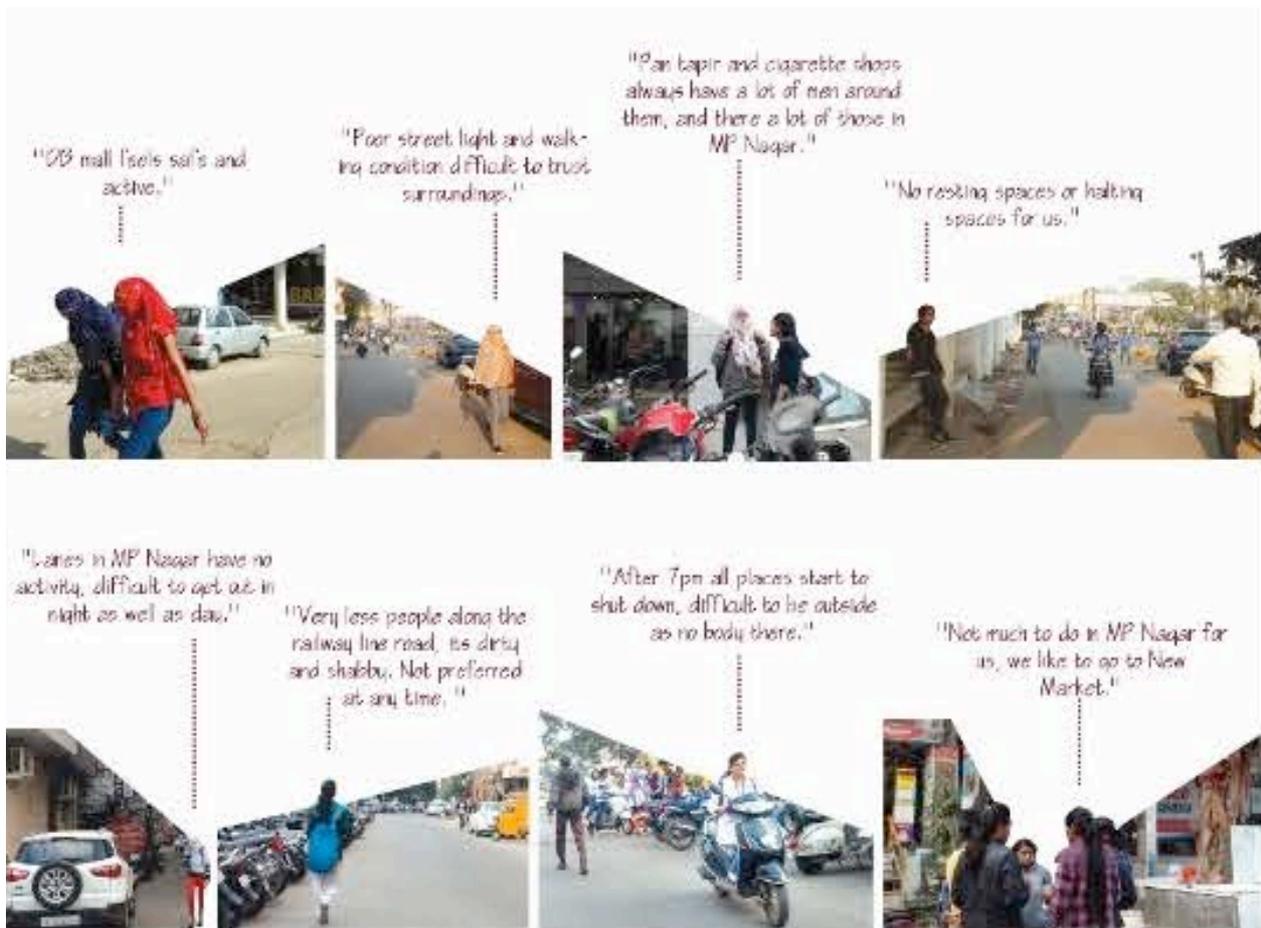


Figure 7: User Perception of Place



connected network of urban open spaces can trigger vitality and urbanity. It facilitates a platform to accommodate diversity and makes people an integral part of the urban.



Figure 9: Condition of Open Spaces

Insufficient and ill-maintained public infrastructure, (Fig 10), like the bus stop, public toilets and on street furniture can deter people, more specifically women, from using these services. Urban furniture can not only be considered a facility but also a point where strangers can interact to create urbanity. Sensitively designed public infrastructure can encourage women to become an active user of the urban setting eliminating the fear of uncertainty.



Figure 10: Condition of Public Infrastruct      Figure 11: After Dark on-site Condition

Different cities treat their citizens differently after dark, they can be welcoming or repellent, in this case, after dark hours have high chances of becoming notorious as the shops and offices close down but the commercial residential like the hostel and hotels continues to have people in the vicinity, who become vulnerable in the dark inactive urban environment (Fig 11). Illumination and visibility have been discussed as essential in making a space perceived to be safe. It provides deterministic value and limits insecurity, one could be aware of the approaching danger.

Natural surveillance and eyes on the street, as recommended by Jane Jacobs, have been said to be crucial for coherent urban spaces. The quality of enclosures, that is the built edge and its interaction with the street may directly impact the users, it enhances the sense of security and safety. The ability of an urban environment to facilitate a sense of belonging and ownership to its user may encourage more and more women to access the city with less perceived fear.



Figure 12: Edge conditions along the street and open spaces

These pictures have been taken during the day, in bright light, but one can hardly notice any women sitting by the stalls (Fig 13). One may say, that the Activities present onsite support male interaction more than that for females. This results in street pockets mostly occupied and used by men, be it tea/ pan/ cigarette stalls, they are loitered by men, omitting women from space. Women tend to avoid or only transit hurriedly through such spots. Masculinity in space and the male gaze marginalize women's use of the urban, making urban spaces more gendered. A simple mapping exercise to plot the male and female bodies on the map was conducted, (Fig 14 and 15), based on on-site observations and interviews. The blue map indicating the male bodies present in groups, pairs or single were mapped and similarly pink map for female bodies was mapped. This briefly explains the share of space and ownership for both the genders in the selected case. Both genders are moving in the precinct, but, one can observe some limitation in movement across the site for women as against men. This limited accessibility and mobility can be further discussed in relation to the immediate physical environment.



Figure 13: Male Presence on Site



Figure 14: Male Presence on site.

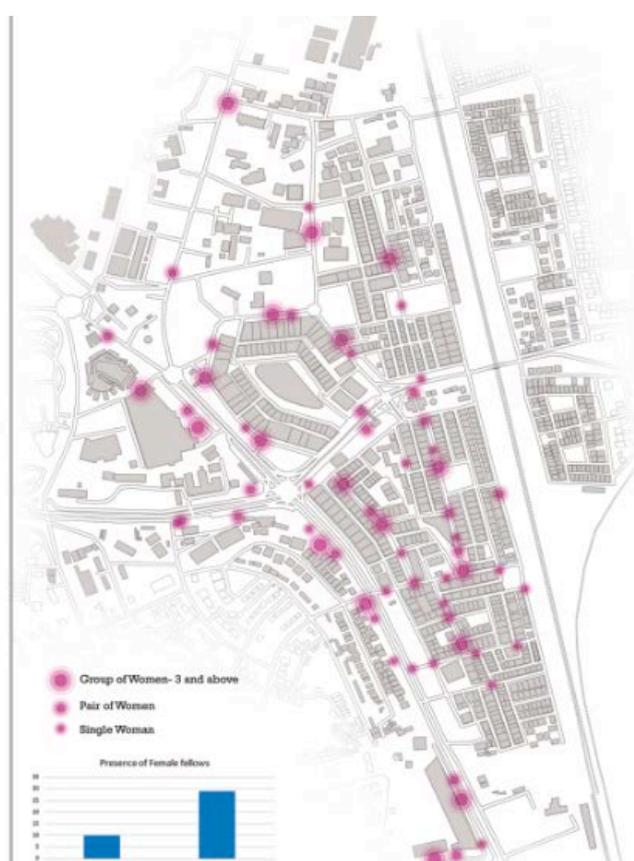


Figure 15: Female presence on site.

### Negotiating Urban Public Space

India, with its own share of socio-cultural diversity, where, class, caste, creed and ethnicity, where, these factors govern how women are expected to move into public spaces. “Interestingly, the findings confirm the sexist stereotype Indians are well aware of; men are confident and rest almost anywhere in a public space while women prefer moving in groups or walking past by-lanes hurriedly. The way Indian women

sit or lean to rest in public is also more careful in comparison to men, reflecting the patriarchal nature of society.” – ‘Gender, Urban spaces and Resting places’ (CEPT University).

Negotiating through these highly gendered public spaces, while navigating in urban India, has become an everyday challenge for women and girls. A crucial literature on women’s safety in the cities of the twenty-first century India, *Why Loiter?* maps the exclusions and negotiations that women from different classes and communities encounter in the nation’s urban public spaces. It establishes the importance of being in a space to own it, seeing loitering by women as a way of reclaiming gendered spaces. (Shilpa Phadke, Sameera Khan and Shilpa Ranade, 2011).

The authors explore urban spaces from women’s point of view. The thrust of the literature lies in realizing that, more the number of women visible as a user in the urban public spaces, it encourages other women to be a part and enhance a sense of belonging to the place. This presence of the female body as against the male body in urban space is explored with behavioral patterns, movement patterns and the nature of accessibility our cities facilitate for women. It explores the Right to everyday life in a global city, asserts right of women to public spaces, instead of treating it as transit.

The way she moves: mapping the everyday production of gendered space. A Study done for Gender and space project, Pukar, focused on how male and female bodies locate themselves in and move through public spaces in their everyday negotiation of space. (Ranade, Shilpa, 2007)

### **Approach to Reclaiming Gendered Urban Spaces**

‘Reclamation of Gendered Urban spaces’ through inclusive design and urban strategies can be processed by activating the urban environment to accommodate women. An inclusive design may have the potential to offer something for every citizen. The strength of an urban space to facilitate a platform where urbanity can be created to encourage inclusivity, in this case in terms of gender-biased urban environments, could prove to be the backbone of a healthy and livable city. The approach to the given case can be addressed at three different stages that act upon urban design and urban policy making (Fig 16). One can be by ‘Making Women and girls an active user in the Urban Setting’ by promoting diversity of people and nature of activities, generating ownership to space, thrusting upon values of design that women can associate to. Two, by ‘Reducing Perception of Fear from Urban environment’, design can guide way to reduce the perception of fear. An urban setting embarking upon the parameters identified for designing safer cities can facilitate an environment where women move fearlessly. Three, ‘Mobilizing Women in Urban Space’, by empowering them through infrastructural support, backing up law and order and technological advancements. This particular stage can stitch the city together to mobilize people across the city, enhancing accessibility and mobility. These stages can guide the way to ‘Reclaim Gendered Urban space by facilitating fearless movement in fearful cities.

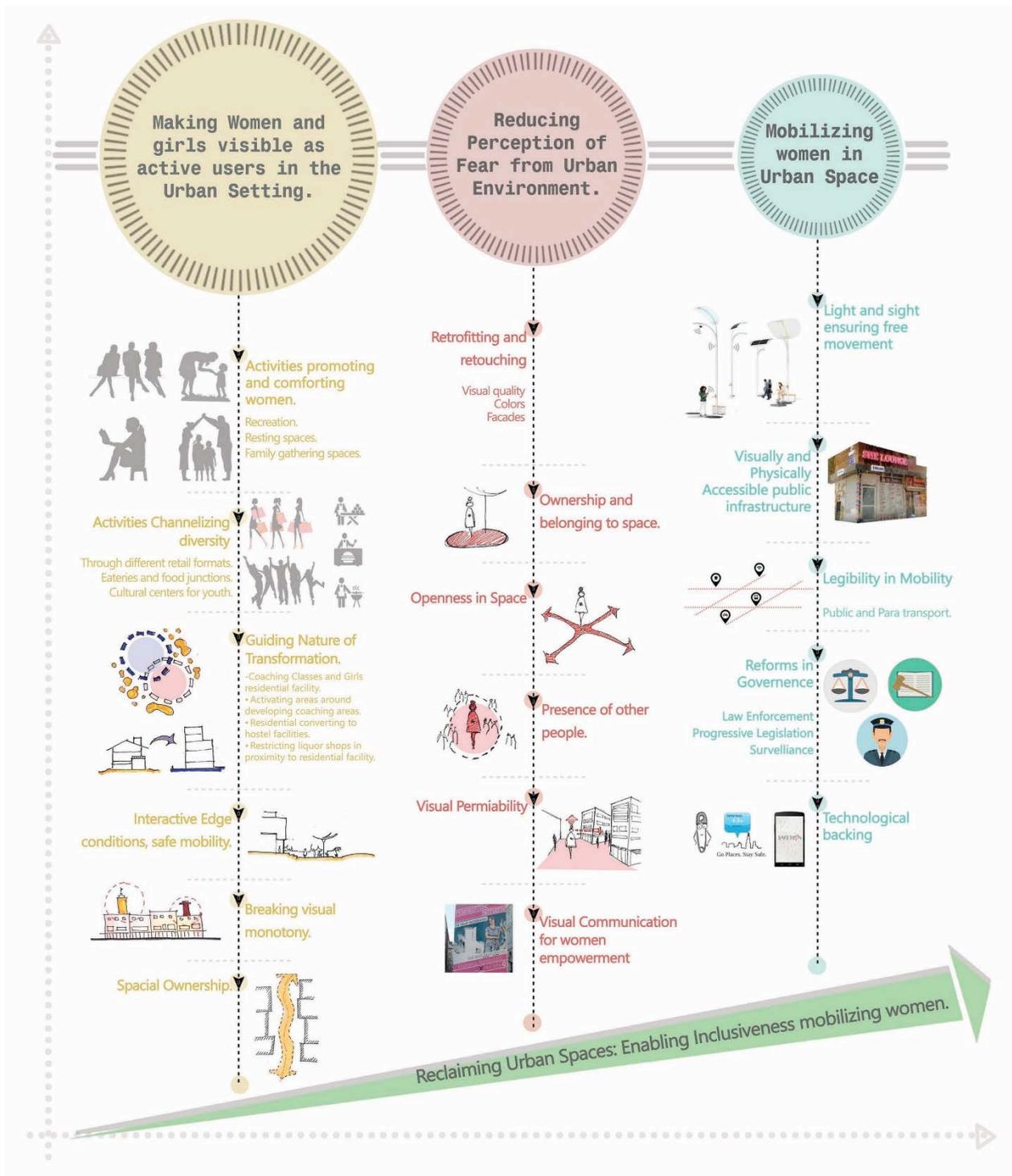


Figure 16: Approach to Reclaiming Gendered Urban Spaces

**Facilitating Fearless mobility by Spatially Mediating:**

Identifying how Urban Design can contribute to understanding the spatial relevance of the case is important. Improving the quality of space through physical interventions can directly impact the issues identified and facilitate an environment where people, specifically women in the context of the study, may find an engaging urban

environment. The relevance of the issues identified can be mapped to understand the relationship of the user to the immediate physical environment.

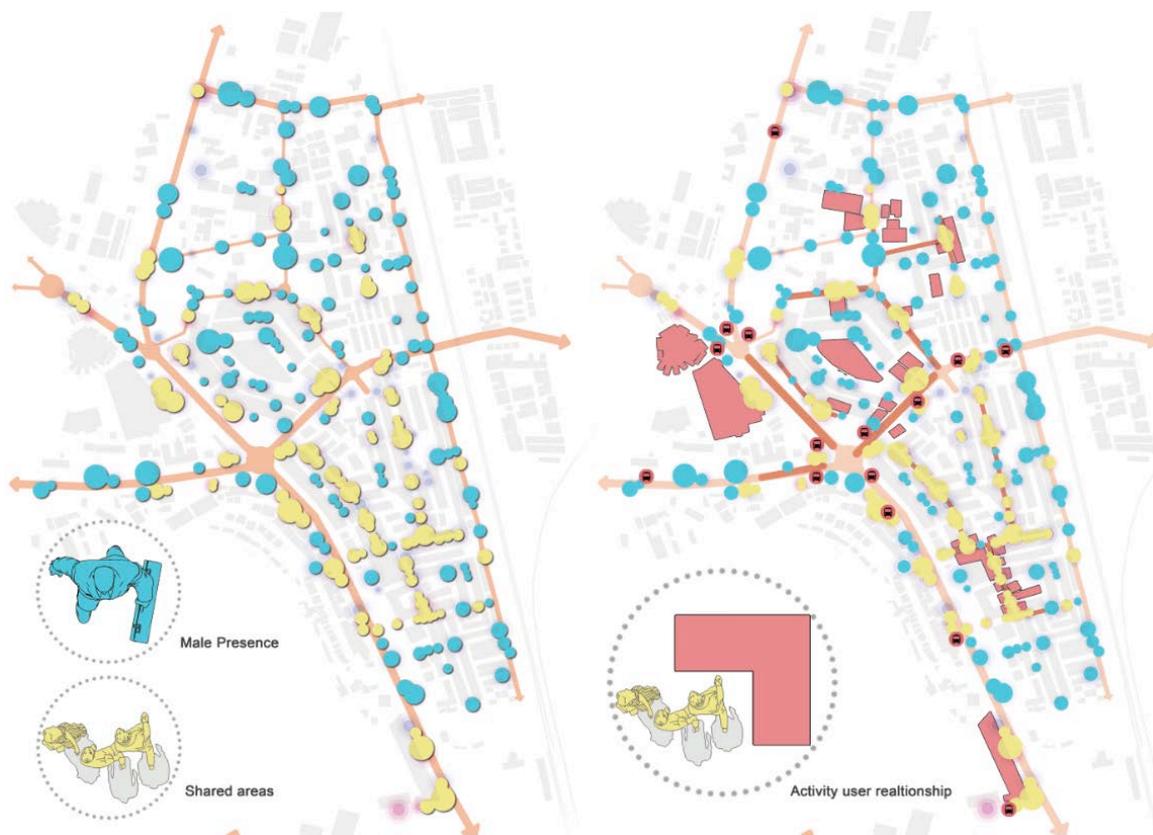


Figure 17: Map showing shared pockets

Figure 18: Relation to Immediate activity

Fig 17 shows a map with blue pockets as highly male dominant areas and yellow as the shared pockets for both men and women. One can note that the association of these yellow pockets are related to the nature of activity present along with it as shown in Fig 18.

Therefore, activities that women may relate to and find purpose it could be introduced, as in Fig 19. These activities and place of intervention can be strategically identified as the context demands, here, activity could be of the nature that is more engaging and encourage outdoor interaction. The pockets where these activities are introduced can bring vitality to place and an intensive network of existing and proposed activities may encourage through movement across the site, as suggested by Fig 20. This Fluid Mobility can be encouraged by reconnecting the already active streets across the site and stretching it to create a well-connected network that helps people move in light and sight. (Fig 21 and 22).

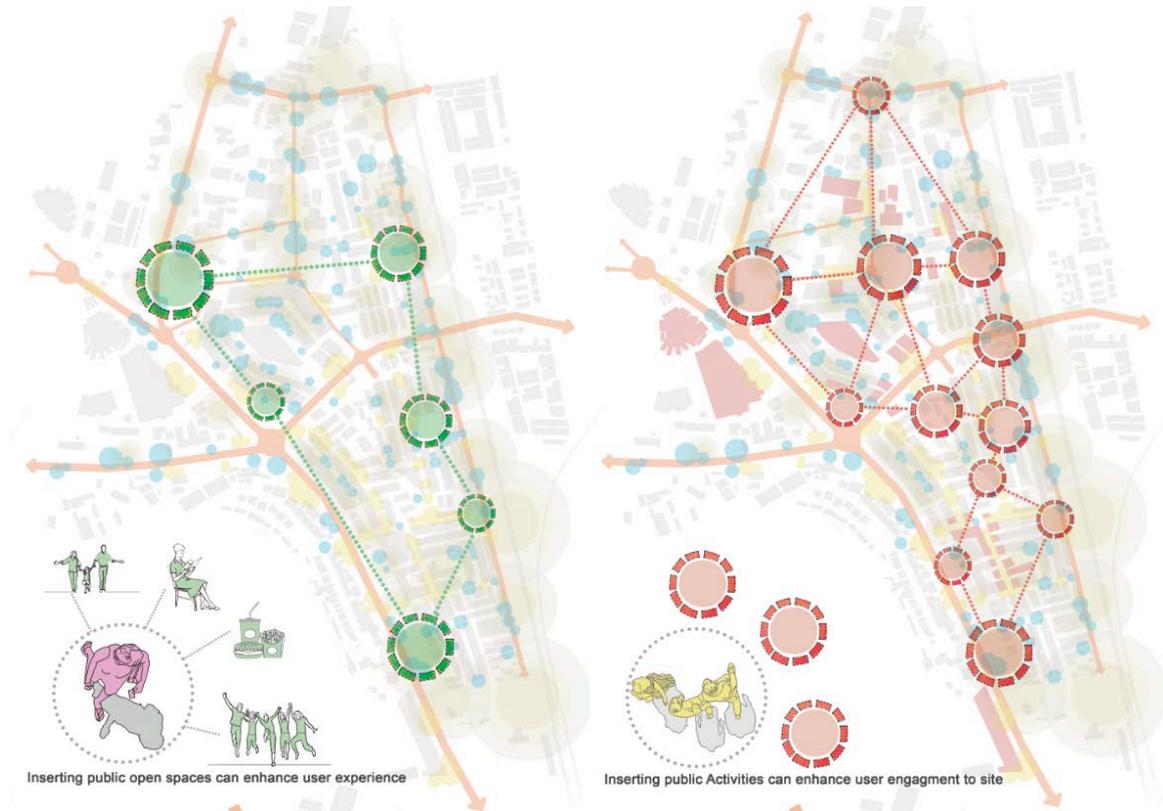


Figure 19: Introduction of Activities Figure 20: Network of Existing and Proposed Activities



Figure 21: Exiting Active streets

Figure 22: Thorough network of streets



Figure 23: Channelizing Mobility



Figure 24: Activated Central Spine

An urban system that is well connected, activated and vibrant can encourage more women to participate in the urban than treating it as transit. This spatial mediations for the identified issue results is an activated central spine and core connecting variety of activities and making a free movement plan for all, dwelling upon an inclusive urban environment (Fig 23 and 24). Accessibility enhances opportunities and opportunity may dilute gender biased identities while increasing a sense of belonging.

### **Conclusion: Approach to gender mainstreaming in urban design**

Therefore, to Facilitate Fearless mobility by Spatially Mediating, the focus can be on developing safety links, designing and developing edges and open spaces. The built form can be responsive to the context that helps channelize diversity. A visual landscape where every citizen is involved can guideway to safer and more accessible urban public spaces. Taking the fact that urban systems are complex and dynamic in nature, design opportunity could focus on encouraging adaptability and strengthening this system through sensitive design.

This can create an urban experience, where women and girls can access cities with equal liberty of choices, ownership to place and have full access to opportunity. Facilitating fearless movement in the fearful cities by enhancing publicness of public spaces through fluid movement patterns, promoting diversity and sense of security, moreover, creating an inclusive urban environment that instigates reclamation of gendered urban spaces through spatial mediation. Better designed urban spaces have the strength to empower women and create a platform where they have access to

opportunities. The strength of a good city lies in the chances it can provide its citizen, being a rightful citizen can expand the horizons of Gender Equality.

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## ***Wellbeing, Inequality and the Role of Urban Form***

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### **Abstract**

The study of wellbeing is fast becoming a key consideration for urban planning, architecture, design and policy makers as it can provide a system to measure social progress. However, it is the topic of wellbeing inequality which requires urgent attention if the wellbeing agenda is to achieve its potential to improve social justice (NEF, 2015). Although average national wellbeing scores are rising in the UK, so is inequality of wellbeing. Those living in deprived neighbourhoods are more likely to experience adversity in health, education, mobility and social inclusion. This pattern of disparity in wellbeing reveals an unequal geography, a space of inequality and injustice. To better understand how the nature and quality of space can influence the relationship between social progress and wellbeing, this paper proposes a new conceptual model that focuses on how spatial structures – via urban design – can promote wellbeing by reducing spatial expressions of economic disparity and facilitating positive encounters between social groups.

Keywords: Wellbeing, Inequality, Spatial Inequality, Spatial Injustice, Urban Form

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## **1 – Introduction**

### **1.1 – Inequality and Injustice: The Spatial Challenges of Wellbeing**

On a regular basis, policymakers are faced with making judgements about what resources to promote and whose wellbeing to prioritise. Although average wellbeing scores have improved in the UK, inequality of wellbeing has also increased (NEF, 2015). One of the key issues that policymakers face is disrupting the self-reinforcing cycle of unequal economic geographies and low wellbeing outcomes.

This paper examines the pattern of disparities in wellbeing, where prominent spaces of injustice have formed. It proposes a new conceptual model that aims to depict the correlation between wellbeing, life outcomes and processes that derive from spatial inequality. From macro to micro levels, this paper argues that inequality and injustice are spatially structured. Individual wellbeing and life outcomes can be limited by exposure to this spatiality. Thus, urban form performs a critical role in the efforts to promote wellbeing.

The neighbourhood as geographical entity<sup>1</sup> stages the focus of this study. A global perspective of spatial inequality is used to understand how the uneven pockets of wellbeing are established within a larger urban context. The role of urban form and the influence of space will be discussed throughout the paper.

The uneven territorial distribution of wellbeing leads us to two key concepts: spatial inequality and spatial injustice. Section 2 focuses on spatial inequality at global scale; Section 3 on spatial injustice at neighbourhood level, followed by the conclusion and proposed framework on Section 4.

## **2 - Spatial Inequality**

### **2.1 – Defining Spatial Inequality**

Amongst the fields of geography and economy, spatial inequality is often defined as income inequality across geographical or administrative units within country or region (see Milanovic 2011 & 2012 Rodríguez-Pose & Ezcurra, 2013, Justino & Moore, 2015). Social disparities are often regarded as consequences of income and wealth inequality. Justino and Moore (2015) for example, highlight the harms of income and wealth inequality, which can result in production inefficiencies as well as degrade the collective and political competence of societies, obstructing a fair distribution of public goods and justice.

Conversely, Kanbur and Venebles (2005) propose a description of spatial inequality in which wellbeing is not a consequence, but an indicator: “inequality in economic and social indicators of wellbeing across geographical units within a country” (Kanbur & Venebles, 2005:11). Wellbeing is not always directly related to income or wealth, and it follows that to obtain a more accurate picture of spatial inequality, they should be measured separately.

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<sup>1</sup> As opposed to a neighbourhood defined by social communities, which can be much more fragmented and dispersed (See Wellman 2001, 2002; Piselly, 2007).

## 2.2 – Trends in Spatial Inequality

There are two types of spatial inequalities based on geographical definitions:

- 1- Geographically disadvantaged areas vs. geographically advantaged areas. Based on ‘first nature geography’, i.e., areas with natural physical advantages or resources, such as coastal regions, and proximity to rivers.
- 2- Regional vs. urban. Based on ‘second nature geography’, i.e., advantage and efficiency gains created from dense agglomeration and economic concentration. Thus, productivity in urban clusters tends to be higher than in regional settings. The accumulation forces in cities act as virtuous circles of self-reinforcing development (Kanbur & Venebles, 2005:7).

These geographical classifications exercise a delicate play between spatial concentration and dispersion. On the one hand, concentration can be intensified by the centripetal forces of natural advantages and economic specialisation. On the other hand, centrifugal forces of dispersion are influenced by mobility and communication factors. From an urban perspective, extreme concentration can introduce a variety of premiums and social ills that can seriously undermine efficiencies that foster mass clustering; for instance, congestion, commuting costs, greater crime and pollution. (Kim, 2008).

Despite the fundamental role of geographical advantages, the complex oscillation of inequality cannot be fully explained by spatial advantage. Historical, political and economic permutations also play a key role. For example, in traditionally rich countries such as the US and Europe, spatial inequality decreased between the wars and started rising again in the 1980s (Atkinson 2014a; Milanovic 2005; Piketty 2013; Stiglitz 2013). Justino and Moore (2015) identify three key, equality-inducing factors during the first half of the 20th Century: low levels of unemployment, increased political power of organised labour and solidarity promoting wars. Beyond the 1980s, global inequality increased sharply. Divergence of inequality during this period is often attributed to factors derived from globalisation.

Future trends of spatial inequality remain unclear as the full effect of labour-displacing technology remains unknown. According to Neo-Marxist economist Piketty (2013), it is more likely that inequality will tend to persist or intensify for the foreseeable future. His concerns are based on the recent rise of concentration of wealth reaching levels not seen since World War I, threatening political stability. Piketty believes that excessive accretion of wealth can only be undermined by rapid growth (due to technological progress or rising population) or government intervention such as adopting a global tax on wealth.

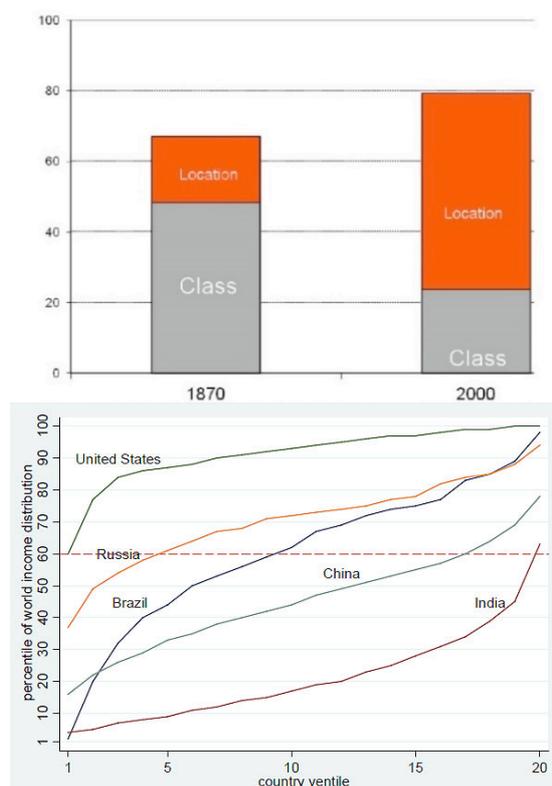
## 2.5 – Consequences of Spatial Inequalities

Political dynamics and quality of governance play a key role as the State can influence the distribution of wealth (Kanbur & Venebles, 2005; Kim 2008). For example, unequal distribution of infrastructure, rapid economic growth, the openness of economies and globalization are often linked to uneven regional and urban development (Kim, 2008; Kanbur & Venebles, 2005; Milanovic 2012). Extensive

spatial dissonance may provoke conflicts over the geographical distribution of resources (Østby et al. 2009, quoted from Rodríguez-Pose & Ezcurra, 2013).

From an economic perspective, spatial inequality may be beneficial or harmful (Kim, 2008). Inequality can reduce wellbeing, limit life chances of a specific sectors of society, cause social instability and poverty traps, leading to a fragmented urban and social fabric. On the other hand, concentration of trades and specialization can increase economic returns on the basis of proximity, scale and productivity. Optimal levels of inequalities<sup>2</sup> have a fragile balance and if the economies are not internalised, beneficial effects can be disrupted.

One of the key concerns of global inequality is migration. Milanovic (2012, 2016) talks about “citizenship premiums” and argues that “a proper analysis of global inequality today requires an empirical and mental shift from concerns with class to concerns with location.” (Milanovic 2012:12). His research indicates that a place of residence has a higher impact on determining income, opportunities, and outcomes than social background. If people are unable to improve their deprived spatiality, migration becomes the only solution to escape poverty.



*Figure 3 (LEFT): Level and composition of global inequality in the 19th century and around year 2000 (measured by the Theil Index). Figure 4 (RIGHT): Different countries and income classes in global income distribution, 2005. (SOURCE: Milanovic, 2012)*

<sup>2</sup> One the most influential theories on benefits and harms of Inequality is the highly criticised Rawls’ Difference Principle (Rawls, 1971). It proposes that the only morally valid sources of inequality are those that lead to life for the worst off being made better (E.g., inequality of income in order to encourage people to work hard, thus making the society as a whole, and those poorest, better off). See also Kuznets, 1955.

### **3 - Spatial Injustice**

#### **3.1- Defining Spatial Injustice**

“The welfare of a nation can scarcely be inferred from a measurement of national income”.

(Simon Kuznets in report to the Congress, 1934)

Whereas spatial inequality is heavily accentuated by economic factors such as wealth or income, spatial injustice focuses on political aspects or devices of power and control.

The spatial organization of inequality is, in part, simply a manifestation of unequal distribution of resources, opportunities or outcomes occurring at the level of individuals, families, and groups that is mapped on geographical units. However, we define spatial injustice as the intentional efforts to organize physical space in ways that maintain or reinforce that inequality. (Galster & Sharkey, 2017:2; See also Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2001). In Soja’s (2009) words:

Thinking spatially about justice not only enriches our theoretical understanding, it can uncover significant new insights that extend our practical knowledge into more effective actions to achieve greater justice and democracy. Aversely, by not making the spatial explicit and assertive, these opportunities will not be so evident”. (Soja, 2009:2)

Health, education, social inclusion and mobility –both social and occupational- are some quality of life outcomes that can be distressed by spatial injustice and the prolonged occupation of a disadvantaged spatiality (Galster,2014; van Ham, 2012). This phenomenon is often referred to as area or neighbourhood effects.

#### **3.2- Injustice, Disadvantage and Wellbeing at the Neighbourhood**

The spatial effects of injustice on individual wellbeing reveal a conspicuous relationship at the neighbourhood level. According to an Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) 2005 report, long-term exposure to spatial inequality can have a detrimental effect on individual wellbeing. That is, “Living in a deprived area adversely affects individuals’ life chances over and above what would be predicted by their personal circumstances and characteristics” (ODPM, 2005:6).

In health, for example, a substantial body of epidemiological research associates area effects (both physical and social) with a range of behaviours and outcomes, including depression, anxiety, violence, substance use, smoking, unhealthy foods intake, cardiovascular disease, obesity, lack of physical activity and low birth weight (See Ross & Mirowski, 2001; O’Campo et al 2015; Pickett & Pearl, 2001; Diez Roux, 2001). These behaviours, in turn, can have a negative effect on morbidity and life chances (Johnston & Pattie 2011; McCulloch, 2003). Long-term exposure to deprived or disadvantaged socioeconomic settings is often associated with low wellbeing outcomes, with neighbourhood effects frequently highlighted as a key obstacle to improving such outcomes (Kawachi & Berkman, 2003; O’Campo et al 2015).

In social sciences, the concept of the neighbourhood effect suggests that the social and economic status of a neighbourhood can directly or indirectly influence individual outcomes. Neighbourhood effects have preoccupied researchers as far back as 1925 (See Park et al., 1925). However, it was Wilson's 1987 book, 'the Truly Disadvantaged', which sparked a renewed interest in this field, resulting in an explosion of studies and hypotheses (van Ham, 2011). Following Wilson's publication (1987), researchers have examined the consequences of neighbourhood poverty alongside the effects of other neighbourhood conditions, such as spatial mismatch (Galster, 2012) and racial homogeneity (eg. Small & Feldman 2012).

Wilson's (1987) theory has profound spatial associations. He argues that, during the 1970s and 1980s, American cities suffered a major socio-spatial-economic shift that saw the growth and prosperity of suburbia against the decline of urban centres. The exodus of manufacturing jobs and the middle class from the centres caused the vitality of cities to shrink. Critical revenue was removed, the spatial landscape became fragmented and pockets of poverty were enhanced. This concentration of poverty exacerbated the life chances of the poor by affecting individual outcomes, such as economic self-sufficiency, violence, drug use, low birthweight, and cognitive ability (Wilson, 1987). Reflecting on Wilson's key proposal, Mayer and Jencks (1989:1441) hypothesised that "poor children living in overwhelmingly poor neighbourhoods find it harder to escape poverty than poor children living in more affluent neighbourhoods." (Mayer and Jencks 1989:1441).

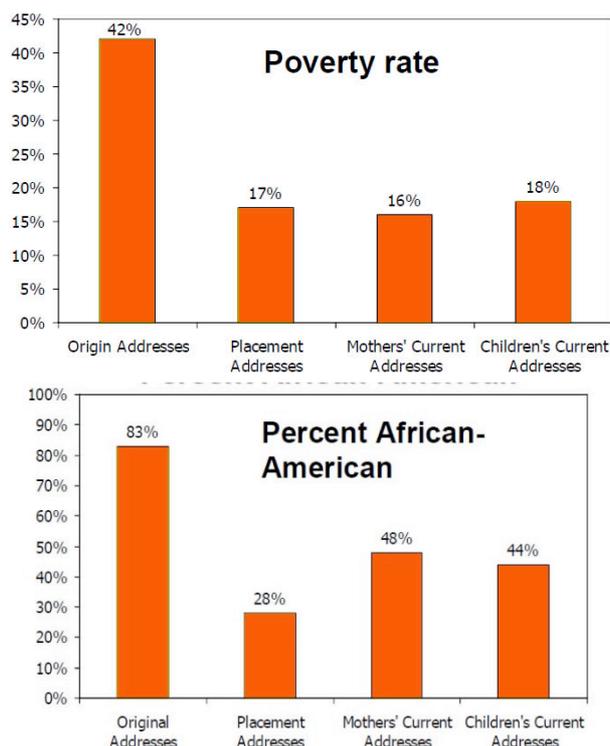
Location, once again, appears to be a driving factor for the reproduction of inequality and the spatial manifestation of injustice.

### **3.3 – Testing Neighbourhood Effects.**

"Homogeneous neighbourhoods become self-perpetuating societal divisions" (Johnston & Pattie 2011:2)

Wilson's theories were tested on two, key, American-based social programmes that attempted to reverse the injustice of locality. These interventions removed thousands of families from poverty trap neighbourhoods, transferring them to less-deprived spatialities. The first was the Gautreaux Assisted Housing Programme in Chicago, which ran from 1976-1990, and focussed on tackling racial segregation (see Rosenbaum & Kaufman, 1992; Popkin et al., 1993; Duncan & Zuberi, 2006).

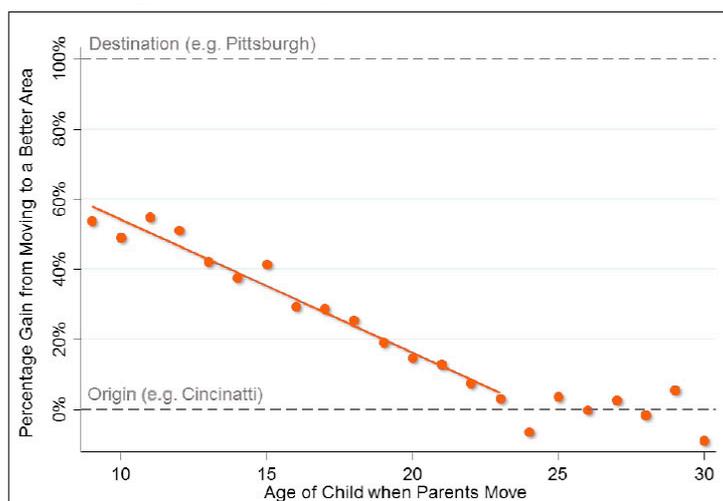
The Gautreaux programme successfully relocated most families to low-poverty, racially-balanced neighbourhoods. It also had positive intergenerational outcomes: grown-up children have continued living in areas with lower poverty rates, higher educational outcomes, and more integrated than children growing up their original neighbourhood (Duncan & Zuberi, 2006).



*Figure 5 (LEFT): Gautreaux Census Tract - Poverty Rate*  
*Figure 6 (RIGHT): Gautreaux Census Tract Percent African American*  
 (SOURCE: Duncan & Zuberi, 2006:123-124)

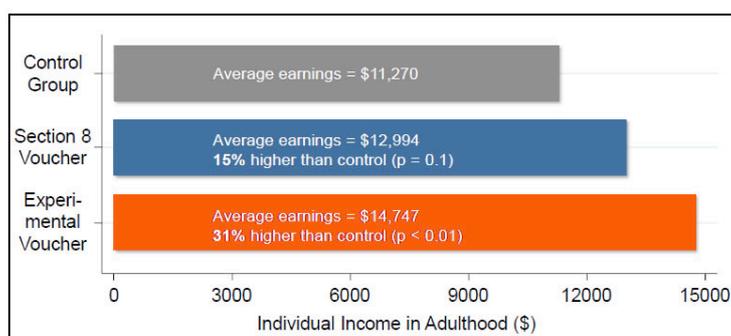
In contrast to Gautreaux, the and the 1994-1998 Moving to Opportunity Experiment (MTO) lasted from 1994-1998 and tried tackling class marginalisation (see Clampet-Lundquist & Massey, 2008; Ludwig et al., 2008; Sampson, 2008). Surprisingly, MTO revealed mixed results. Some outcomes demonstrated significant improvement, such as mental and physical health, and young female education and behaviour (e.g., Sampson, 2008; Ludwig et al 2013). However, other outcomes, such as economic self-sufficiency, appeared to have no impact. The complexity of interpretation led to considerable debate, especially around the extent and influence of neighbourhood effects on economic success (Clampet-Lundquist & Massey, 2008; Ludwig et al., 2008; Sampson, 2008).

In 2015, Chetty, Hendren, and Katz, presented a re-analysis of the effect of the MTO experiment. In their research, they examined how children's long-term economic outcomes were affected by the duration of environmental exposure, finding that, "every year spent in a better area during childhood increases a child's earnings in adulthood" (Chetty, Hendren, & Katz, 2015:19). Children who relocated between the ages of 9 and 13 showed a 31-50% income increase, compared with the control group or those who remained in a deprived locality. According to the authors, the social impact of moving to a better area has a spatial as well as a chronologic dimension.



Notes: This figure plots the percentage gain from moving to a better area by the age at which the child moves. For example, children who move at age 9 have outcomes that are about 50% between the outcomes of children who grow up permanently in the origin and destination areas.

Figure 7: *Effects of Moving to a Different Neighbourhood on a Child's Income in Adulthood (SOURCE: Chetty & Hendren, 2015)*



*Cost-Effective Policy: The MTO experiment increased the earnings of children who moved to low-poverty areas before age 13 by 31%*

Figure 8: *Long-Term Economic Impact of MTO On Children Moving to A Low Poverty Neighbourhood at Age 13 (SOURCE: Chetty, Hendren, & Katz, 2015).*

### 3.4 – Neighbourhood Effects Processes

According to the literature, four mechanisms may explain how the spatial characteristics of a neighbourhood can impair wellbeing and life chances (Bauder, 2002; Galster, 2012, 2014; Johnston & Pattie, 2011). These include:

- Spatial mismatch;
- Environmental factors;
- Social processes; and
- Institutional mechanisms.

#### 3.4.1 – Spatial Mismatch

The disconnection or mismatch between the location of labour force and suitable employment is often referred to as spatial mismatch (Houston, 2004). High

unemployment and low economic self-sufficiency are the foreseeable manifestations (Galster, 2014).

The Spatial Mismatch Hypothesis (SMH) was first discussed by John Kain in 1968 as an alternative assessment to the high, black unemployment rate in American city cores (Ihlanfeldt, 1994). “The spatial mismatch hypothesis was a challenge to the prevailing notion in the US during the 1960s that employers’ racial discrimination accounted for high unemployment among African Americans” (Houston, 2005:226). According to John Kain (1968) the concentration of low-skill, city centre unemployment in North America was partly due to the suburbanisation of employment and the involuntary segregation of ethnic minorities (mainly black) communities.

SMH does not necessarily imply that suitable jobs are negligent; rather, that through de-concentration towards the outskirts, suitable jobs became remote from the location of labour force, establishing an urban geography of injustice (Kain, 1968; Holzer, 1991; Houston, 2005; Hughes, 1989; Ihlanfeldt, 1994; Kasarda, 1990). City centre residents faced three key spatial impediments to gaining employment (Ihlanfeldt, 1994; Ihlanfeldt & Sjoquist, 1998; Houston, 2005):

- **Commuting:** Not always a viable option due to financial and time costs, as well as lack of public and/or private transport (Holzer et al., 1994; Shen, 1998);
- **Migration:** Barriers in relation to social or low-cost housing can reduce the residential mobility of the low skill sector (Minford et al., 1987; Doogan, 1996). In addition, members of these groups often have a low inclination for change (Coser, 1975; Granovetter, 1983); and
- **Information:** The further a job vacancy is from home, the less likely an individual is to find out about it (Ihlanfeldt, 2004).

### 3.4.2 – Environmental Factors and Hazards

Environmental factors are defined as the natural and human-made characteristics of the neighbourhood that may “affect directly the mental and/or physical health of residents without affecting their behaviours” (Galster, 2012:25). Factors can include:

- Visual disorder;
- Exposure to Violence; and
- Toxic Exposure.

Evidence of visual disorder or ‘incivilities’<sup>3</sup> include verbal harassment, public intoxication, decayed urban landscapes, abandoned cars, and broken windows. This environmental disorder reveals a physical narrative of the apparent value placed by residents on their surroundings. Research has shown that minor offences can have a direct effect on fear of crime and be a direct trigger for serious crime (Wilson and Kelling, 1982; Skogan 1990; Sampson, 1999). Wilson and Kelling (1982) introduced the theory of the ‘broken windows’, proposing that trivial environmental visual cues, such as broken windows, can entice graver felonies as residents appear more tolerant

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<sup>3</sup> As referred to by Albert Hunter (1985).

of neighbourhood disorder and less likely to confront or report crime. Public ‘incivilities’ are a strategic visual environmental cue for the commission of crime (Sampson, 1999).

Research has shown that exposure to violence and physical disorder can be disproportionately assigned to a certain sector of society, limiting their wellbeing and life chances whilst intensifying the uneven distribution of territorial injustice. In Chicago, Papachristos (2013) and Sampson (2012) found that violence was concentrated in neighbourhoods marked by poverty, ethnic isolation, and institutional decay. In Glasgow, Livingstone et al. (2014) revealed a positive association between the number of ‘newly active’ offenders in a neighbourhood and the density of prior offenders for both violent and property crime. This research, suggests that the institutional segregation of known transgressors can be a factor for the reproduction of spatially-defined crime and criminals. Damm and Dustmann (2012) encountered similar findings in Denmark. Their study followed children<sup>4</sup> within a refugee relocation programme, reporting a positive relationship between the existing stock of felons at the assigned neighbourhood and those who committed offences as young adults<sup>5</sup>. Further evidence indicated that youth crime conviction rates in the neighbourhood at the time of relocation, decreases the chances to be active in the labour market or in education by age 25. Damm and Dustmann (2012) and Livingstone et al. (2014) findings support the existence of a social multiplier that is spatially structured and institutionally dispensed (see Glaeser et al., 2003).

A third factor of spatially structured injustice is the distribution of environmental hazards. Bryant and Mohai’s (1992) research focussed on the siting of environmental toxins across neighbourhoods and found that these were disproportionately located in or around low-income, racial or ethnic communities (see also Dawney & Dawkin, 2008). Kerry Ard (2015) investigated the decline of pollutant levels between 1995 and 2005 in the US, highlighting that, despite the sharp reduction nationwide, the difference of exposure between races and neighbourhoods has remained unchanged, displaying an enduring geography of injustice. Ard’s (2015) research is corroborated by Sampson and Winter (2016), who investigated lead levels in children between 1995 and 2013. Again, despite a substantial decline since the 1990s, the increased difference of exposure for children living in black neighbourhoods has been consistent “the patterns reveal both the enormous spatial disparities in exposure to environmental toxins as well as the power of public health intervention to reduce or eliminate the consequences of environmental inequality” (Galster & Sharkey, 2017:6).

### 3.4.3 - Social Processes

Social processes are a fundamental aspect of neighbourhood effects:

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<sup>4</sup> The 1986 to 1999 study followed children who were under 14 years old at the time of residential assignment and noted their offenses between the ages of 14 and 26 years old. (Damm & Dustmann, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> Damm & Dustmann, (2012), looked at crime rates higher than the average for the overall population, and found a positive relationship with male subgroup only, particularly for violent crime. There was no effect with the female subgroups.

Where you are influences who you interact with; who you interact with influences what you learn and how you interpret the information and knowledge gained; and such local sources of ‘valued’ information influence how you behave – all of which takes place in spatially-defined contexts. (Johnston & Pattie, 2011:17).

In education, for example, substantial research indicates that parental and student attitudes to involvement and achievement are in part related to dominant preconceptions of their community (e.g., Kohen et al., 2008; McCulloch, 2006; Sampson et al., 2002). Furthermore, Huckfeldt (1983) presented evidence that social networks are spatially disposed. Despite individual preferences, opportunities for social ties were constrained by neighbourhood context. Associations that are structurally biased can, in turn, affect the flow of information across that social context<sup>6</sup>.

Jencks and Mayer (1990) and Galster (2012) described a series of social processes in relation to neighbourhood effects, including:

- **Collective socialisation:** Subject to a critical mass, collective socialisation implies a process of assimilation of local norms imposed by key role models. According to the gravity of social networks, practices are substantiated by social pressure. In other words, social control is policed by the neighbourhood (Wilson, 1987; Jencks & Meyers, 1990). “It is through personal networks that society is structured and the individuals integrated into society” (Tilly, 1982:3);
- **Social networks:** Peer influence and social cohesion are subject to the strength and number of weak and strong ties within and across neighbourhoods (Granovetter 1973, 1983). Intrapersonal communication and intergroup information flow across those ties, affecting the balance between social disorder and collective efficacy (Sampson & Raudenbush 1999). “Behaviours, aspirations, and attitudes may be changed by contact with peers who are neighbours. Under certain conditions these changes can take on contagion dynamics that are akin to “epidemics” (Galster, 2012:25).

All the above social processes have an inherent spatial dimension. In addition, it seems that the distance between social networks can be fundamental to the structure of these processes and information flow between them. In 1950, Festinger et al. found a strong connection between proximity and social networks, revealing a common geography to social patterns where material interaction appeared to have the most influence.

However, Wellman’s research proposes that social networks are far more complex than the geographical boundaries of a neighbourhood: “Communities – in the flesh as well as in the ether – are far-flung, loosely-bounded, sparsely-knit and fragmentary” (Wellman, 2002:11). According to Wellman, spatially or neighbourhood-based interactions have become residual, largely replaced by advances in communication

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<sup>6</sup> Huckfeldt also notes “contextual influence is not simply a matter of assimilation and absorption. These friendship patterns also point to processes of exclusion, rejection, and hostility” (Huckfeldt, 1983:668. See also Bauder, 2002).

technology and social media. Wellman (2001, 2002) has termed the emergence of these loosely-bound communities ‘glocalisation’<sup>7</sup>.

Piselly (2007), on the other hand, has attempted to bridge both spatially-structured and glocalised network theories by proposing that glocalisation has not replaced physical information flows, but instead offers additional communication channels (Piselly, 2007:875).

#### **3.4.4 - Institutional Mechanisms**

In a report published by Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Harkness et al. (2012) evaluated how the role of institutions, culture and social norms influence the geography of poverty in the UK. They discovered that uneven geographies were established under two, distinct circumstances. Areas assigned to poverty from inception with persistent deprivation (e.g., areas ‘built poor’, such as of low-income, factory worker housing) and those that have evolved into an inadequate spatiality (e.g., low-rent residential areas generated by the exodus of higher-income residents from to cities to the suburbs (see Lupton, 2003). Both areas are characterised by a lack of poor institutional intervention.

Institutional processes of neighbourhood effects stress the importance of local resources, including schools, parks, libraries, medical facilities or children's programs that provide opportunities in comparatively wealthier neighbourhoods (Shonkoff and Phillips 2000:330). According to Galster (2012), local authorities may offer lesser public services and facilities due to a limited tax base, incompetence, corruption, or other operational challenges, amplifying the effects of uneven spatiality by reducing personal development and educational opportunities of residents.

Beatty and Fothergill (2011) have looked at the spatial distribution of employment and the perception of ill health. Their data suggests that, where labour demands are high, those with health issues and disabilities are more likely to work. Conversely, in regions with low employment opportunities, ill health seemed to have a stronger influence on those unable to work:

Claims for incapacity benefits have as a result become increasingly concentrated by area, with reforms to incapacity benefits expected to lead to significant loss of income while having little effect on employment (Beatty and Fothergill, 2011).

#### **4 – Conclusion: Towards a Spatial Injustice Framework**

Although awareness in wellbeing has increased amongst policy makers, many initiatives to improve life outcomes fail to reach their potential across all sectors of society (NEF, 2015; Smyth & Vanclay, 2017). The literature reviewed above advocates a strong link between reduced life chances, low wellbeing and inequality. Furthermore, some of the literature also implies that inequality can be spatially structured (Huckfeldt, 1983; Johnston & Pattie, 2011), facilitating the creation of

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<sup>7</sup> ‘Glocalisation’, however, according to Wellman (2002), does not apply to segregated ethnic or racial communities.

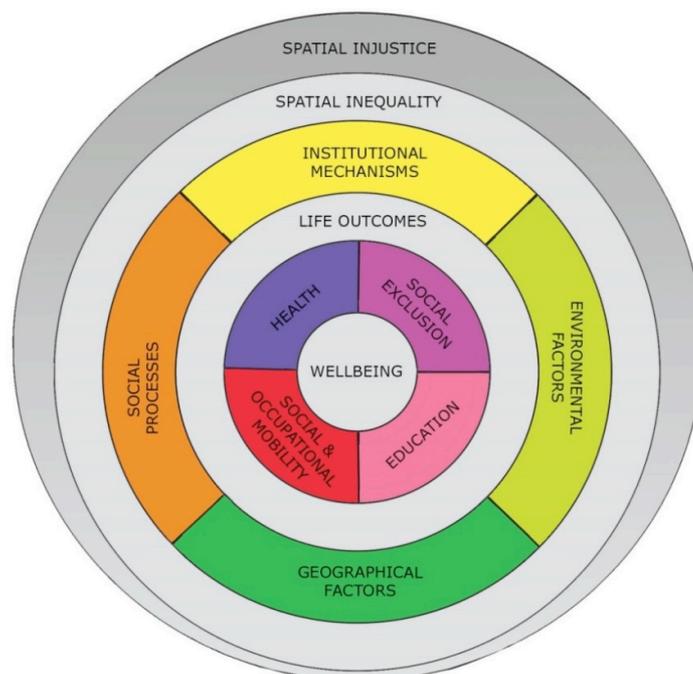
poverty traps where the reproduction of disparity and deprivation is said to be ‘contagious’ (Jencks & Meyer, 1990; Galster, 2012). The incapacity to avoid or escape such communicable hardships defines spatial injustice (Galster & Sharkey, 2017).

As part as a PhD thesis, this paper proposes a new conceptual model to better understand how processes that are spatially structured influence the relationship between social progress and wellbeing. The aim of the model is to highlight neighbourhood factors that, via urban form can promote wellbeing and increase life outcomes by reducing spatial expressions of economic disparity. This framework can be used by policy makers and designers as an overarching conceptual model to ensure key issues are considered by focussing on the analysis of social progress in relation to the design of neighbourhoods. It can support different phases of local initiatives such as strategic definition, briefing, data collection, development, monitoring, design and social review. It can also be used an infographic or template to stimulate a discussion that aims to mitigate effects of spatial injustice.

The proposed framework places wellbeing at its core, as it is intended for projects or initiatives that target social progress through wellbeing. The framework measures wellbeing through key life outcomes -health, education, social exclusion and social/occupational mobility and it aims to ascertain how these outcomes are influenced by four critical neighbourhood processes:

- **Geographical Factors:** Spatial mismatch (access to suitable jobs);
- **Environmental factors:** Exposure to neglected surroundings, violence, hazards and toxins;
- **Social processes:** Cohesion, control, networks and collective socialisation; and
- **Institutional mechanism:** Access to quality public services.

Using only key or significant measures increases the framework’s simplicity and broadens its practicality and accessibility to a larger audience of stakeholders.



*Figure 9: Spatial Injustice Framework*

All four factors – geographical, environmental, social and institutional – can produce and reproduce spatial inequality. This propagation of uneven geographies can be due to personal preferences or economic concentration initiated by natural, physical advantages. However, as revealed by Ard's (2015) and Sampson and Winter's (2016) research, institutional mechanisms can have additional powers over geographical, environmental and social processes to control the dissemination of spatial injustice. For equity of wellbeing to be a driving consideration for the making and implementation of policy, further research is required about the impact of the spatial composition of neighbourhoods (i.e., its urban form) on the distribution of wellbeing, in order to ascertain how urban design can reduce spatial injustice and improve wellbeing.

The model will be applied in two case studies of deprived neighbourhoods in Manchester (UK); lessons from the case studies will be used to develop design guidelines/policy for decision-makers interested in improving the equality of wellbeing in their neighbourhoods.

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## *An Analogy of Metropolis “Istanbul” As a Big Machine*

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### **Abstract**

What does one do in a metropolis with dozens of business towers, huge and luxurious shopping malls, hotels, conference centers, sports complexes, airports, endless construction sites, highways, bridges, sub-sea tunnels, cars, busses, and metros? What does one think to do in a city with a population of more than tens of millions, receiving constantly immigrants from all over the country and from the neighboring countries, constantly increasing housing and nourishment expenses, inaccessible parks and streets in dangerous hours, traffic congestion nightmare, and overcrowded schools and hospitals? Romantic responses are ready to give. Cosmopolite structure, vibrant cultural activities, “amusement” facilities, rich employment opportunities, freedom! Central and local administrations, urban planners, architects all work and spend too much effort, time and money in order to make those metropolises more attractive, livable and investable. Speculative costs, magnitudes and sizes of projects sweep one of her/ his feet. There are numerous stakeholders generating illusion to make us feel more independent, freer, and more powerful. But, what does one produce except earning for mortgage and installments? What happened if one cannot serve more for the functioning of this giant artifactual machine? Do the lives of individuals designed and devoted to the continuity of this machine to work value also on their own without taking a part in? Honestly, what does this machine produce? Just to had asked all these questions, over the analogy of big cities as big machines, the metropolis Istanbul, where emancipation and possession, and potential and border have intertwined, will be investigated.

Keywords: mega-machine, metropolis, Istanbul

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## Introduction

The idea of making the analogy of Istanbul as a machine comes from the famous book of the great thinker and scholar Lewis Mumford “The Myth of the Machine”. He introduced the machine concept to the civilizations and argued that the first machine was social – the early kingships. The king, with the promise of protecting his people from the enemy, constructed the fortress and the community inside this fortress created the first social mega machine. From that time on, the community – the group of people- showed obedience to the rules of the kingship (Mumford, 1967). In this way, each single person in the kingship become nothing different than each single part acting according to the working principles of a machine. In a machine, the small parts doesn’t mean a thing on their own, but only function and do value if they serve to the whole and produce all together something useful. At this point, those questions arise: what is the whole? and what does this whole produce?

The ideas of Lewis Mumford, later on, have been accepted by many other thinkers. It was the political economists Prof. Jonathan Nitzan and Prof. Shimshon Bichler, who have introduced the machine concept to the capital itself. According to these political economists, today’s mega-machine was not anymore technical but financial. Capital itself has become the main organizing factor/ aspect of the daily life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Nitzan & Bichler, 2009). This perspective has also constructed the main idea of resembling the biggest metropolis with a population of more than 15 million people of a developing country, Turkey, to a mega-machine.

## Istanbul as a Big Machine

For what purpose do all the mega-infrastructures and crowd in the metropolises serve? I’d like to share the research results of an Istanbul based international technology company surveyed in Istanbul in 2017. According to the results of this study, white-collar’s favorite social activities in Istanbul were determined as follows: %47 shopping, %40 cinema and other cultural activities, %14 traveling, %19 sport, %10 finance-focused activities. And, the most socializing spaces of the white-collar’s were declared as follows: %41 shopping malls, %35 café’s, %31 restaurants, %18 events and activity spaces, and %8 gyms. (Blesh, 2017). The dominance of shopping activity, and the consumption of culture at cinemas and at other cultural facilities, again the consumption of prepared food and sports greet the eye. And this shows that the giant metropolis “Istanbul” functions as a consumption machine. Its inhabitants consume apartments in gated communities, cell phones, TV’s, cars, cloths, and even cinema and other realms of culture as in all the other metropolises of the World. Here I’d like to quote Mumford saying “by fashion and built-in obsolescence the economies of machine production, instead of producing leisure and durable wealth, are dully cancelled out by the mandatory consumption on an even larger scale.” (Mumford, 1961). So, what about leisure and durable wealth? We work for six days a week just to make one day off. Or, we work for the whole year just to make one week holiday. The smallest – useless part- of the giant mega machine - a human being- devotes the majority of his/ her lifetime to his/her work or to banks to pay mortgages and loans.

All the machines are designed and produced for some specific purposes. One purpose is, for sure, to make the single parts useless. So, the aim becomes to weaken their

power, making their connection be left apart. But there is another purpose bigger than that. This giant urban consumption machine is owned by a proprietor and there are his/her continuous interests and benefits. The owners of all these urban infrastructures – the capitalists – owns the machine and the machine produces capital.

So, it is considered necessary to ask four basic questions by making comparison with the early kingship times as introduced by Mumford and today in order to enlarge and understand the machine concept for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century's metropolises. The first question is about the ownership. Who owned the machine in the past – in the early kingships and who owns the machine today? Of course, it was the king in the past. So, the responsibility has been taken by the king. The group of people, who obey the rules of the kingship and work for its benefits and interests, were totally aware of hierarchy and authority. However, today, the owners of the machine – the capitalists-, the owners of shopping malls, business towers, finance companies, banks, giant groups, hotel chains, biggest film studios, biggest food and drug companies, creates an illusion and demonstrates an abstract ownership of power. So, we are not aware anymore the ruling class or the power possessors. It seems like there is a liberal free market economy, and everyone is free to choose how to live, what to buy, to whom to vote, by whom to be governed. The unclear image of authority, however, doesn't make the authority absent.

The second question is about the smallest part of the machine. In the past, it was the community/ group of people inside the fortress constructed for the king. But today, it has become the individuals, each of whom has different earning, spending and consuming habits. So, it needs to be more complex control mechanisms now compared to the past. The individuals, who surmise that they are independent and free, should be and are controlled not by any violence anymore.

The third and maybe the most important question then becomes the main ruling mechanisms of the machine. In the past, it was the threat of death, and the enemy. With the promise of protecting the community from the enemy and death, the king has convinced them to stay inside the fortress and obey his rules. And today, the fear of failure, and the fear of being nothing/ a loser has become the ruling mechanism of the machine. Obedience extraction mechanisms work on a volunteer basis. The fear of pain and the promise of pleasure creates this voluntariness. Today, nobody forces any individual to spend and consume more. The individuals devote all of their lives willingly to their patronage, to banks and inevitably to capitalists.

The last question is about the production of the machine. In the past, in the early kingship times, the mega-machine has produced the power/control to rule. But today, the machine produce the common sense, the voluntariness to consume. All the advertisements, icons, social media figures, vloggers, bloggers serves for the creation of an imagery.

## **Conclusion**

Change is continuous and inevitable. The fears, the pleasures, the controlling mechanisms and the controlling actors change all the time. Nowadays, the artificial urban environments; which gives an impression that without our diplomas we are nothing, or that we worship steel, cement, concrete and internet; make us think that maybe there is a need for rural revolution. However, another revolution can make only another mega-machine come into being. There is no point to search for breaking the machine? Is it something breakable anyway? Instead of looking for something big, we should work on the very small details. Raising individual awareness, consuming carefully; and planting own food, building own house, and sewing own cloths shouldn't sound nonsense. We must learn to be ok on our own and to feel enough. Even though we don't share Instagram photos, we don't attend opening ceremonies, displays, galas, and even though we don't buy new things every single day, we could feel that we're whole and we're ok. Sometimes, just noticing a mistake makes us correct that mistake. Or sometimes, when just a reliable doctor says we're going to be ok, we start to feel much better. We don't have to be approved by this mega-machine all the time. We can approve ourselves. We should learn to trust our own intelligence, body and mind. This could be the only way to stop to be a small useless part of the urban mega-machines in the giant metropolises.

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## **Resources**

“Beyaz Yakalılar AVM’de Sosyalleşiyor” by Blesh Company:  
<http://digitalage.com.tr/beyaz-yakalilar-avmde-sosyallesiyor-arastirma/>

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*The Image of the City in the Portuguese Literary Journalism in the End of the 19th Century*

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**Abstract**

The end of the nineteenth century witnessed several changes: the Industrial Revolution created new jobs, new ways of working, new ways of producing the newspapers. The social misery that was a consequence of these transformations soon became the object of interest of men who wandered in the cities, reporting the bad conditions of life of the poor who arrived to the modern urban centres. Lisbon, the capital of a once great empire, was no exception. Although it cannot be compared to London, the Portuguese city was also the stage for some technological development: new avenues were opened, piped water and sewages were built, electric lighting appeared for the first time in the country. The Portuguese literary journalists were privileged spectators of all these changes. Eça de Queirós or Jaime Batalha Reis lived in London for several years as diplomats and their collaboration with Portuguese and Brazilian newspapers was intense, providing the image of the great metropolis. But Paris was another case of reports about its way of life through the hands of Ramalho Ortigão or Guilherme de Azevedo. If these two European capitals were highly considered by the Portuguese writers / journalists, Lisbon was seen through the lenses of Fialho de Almeida, for example. Through the Portuguese literary journalists of the 19th we are able to understand the cities of the present.

Keywords: literary journalism, image, city, 19th century

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## Introduction

The city has changed along the time, from the first gatherings made possible by the Neolithic revolution to the current urban districts with millions of inhabitants. More recently, the nineteenth century saw deep changes in many aspects of society throughout the world. The development of innovative mechanisms and industries brought to light by the Industrial Revolution led to a change in the demographical picture of the countries, namely of England. The need of working hands in the cities made millions leave the small villages of the countryside towards industrial towns and cities that were not ready to receive them. Lack of sanitation in the crowded houses or outside them, open-air sewers, deficient public lighting, the exploitation of workers by the factory owners, children who did not go to school (school was only compulsory between 1876 and 1880 to children up to the age of ten) and who, consequently, contributed to the high percentage of crime and illiteracy – all these issues contributed to the emergence of places where misery and other social problems were the norm.

This century also witnessed the expansion of the press, due to technological progress and better economic conditions. The press quickly turned from political propaganda to true, factual information. Advertisement allowed this to happen, as the money paid by it contributed to the survival of newspapers and magazines without having any connection to political parties. The appearance of the telegraph in 1844 and of the cable telegraph in 1866 created a more and more global and updated journalism.

Compulsory education created more readers for this press that employed the newly created “reporter”, who was looking for facts in the manner of the scientist, the explorer or the historian; the reporter is a social investigator, and the consequence is a close association between Naturalism and journalism due to the examination of the world performed by these people. The need for a wide audience created a variety of information and information that could interest the readers. New Journalism emerges, with new techniques, such as the interview, multiple sources of information, eyewitnesses, description, dialogue. According to Marzolf,

by the end of the century, Europeans had examples of the ‘new journalism’ in their capitals, and the Americanizing style, with its stress on the news, in the extensive use of the interview, in the human interest story and the investigation reportage, had also influenced and modified the elitist and political press in those places (quoted in Traquina, 2007, p.48).

This type of texts “reads like a novel or short story except that it is true or makes a truth claim to phenomenal experience. [It has a] relationship to fiction but reflects a world of ‘fact’” (Hartsock, 2000, p.1). According to Tom Wolfe, “new journalists [...] combined in-depth reporting with literary ambition: they wanted to make the nonfiction story shimmer ‘like a novel’ with the pleasures of detailed realism” (Kerrane and Yagoda, 1998, p.17).

Authors such as Dickens, Henry Mayhew, W. T. Stead or Jack London described the reality of the Victorian society in texts that Kevin Kerrane and Ben Yagoda call ‘Tales of the City’, whose aim was to “dramatize the reality of poverty, prostitution

and prejudice” (Kerrane and Yagoda, 1998, p.17). Henry Mayhew, for example, cofounded *Punch* in 1841 and in 1849 he became ‘Metropolitan Correspondent’ for the London *Morning Chronicle*. In his tales of the city of London, he focused on people whose lives were extremely difficult due to poverty, by giving vivid details and using the interviewee’s own words. As a result of his work, he published *London Labour and the London Poor* (1861-62). Jack London lived for seven weeks in the East End of London in 1902 and *The People of the Abyss* (1903) is the result of his immersion in the life of a huge slum. In his work he uses the techniques associated with realistic fiction (dialogue, scene construction, concrete detail) and the reporter’s subjectivity is present.

But W. T. Stead was the one who changed British journalism as editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in the 1880s. In terms of style, he introduced the bold type and the eye-catching headlines, popularised the interview but at the same time gave “details of atmosphere and descriptions of the interviewee’s appearance and mannerisms” (Kerrane and Yagoda, 1998, p.49). Sensationalist articles like “The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon” turned him into the creator of the ‘new journalism’, in the words of Mathew Arnold in 1887.

In the 1960s, Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese, Joan Didion and others established the name to this type of writing: literary journalism, also known as new journalism, literary nonfiction or reportage literature, among other terms<sup>1</sup>. However, there is a great difference between literary journalism and sensationalist journalism: the first tries to “provide insight into other subjectivities, while sensationalism attempts to reinforce the notion of the marginalized as Other in order to elicit a response of terror or horror” (Hartsock, 2000, p.100).

As Harrington says,

literary journalism abandoned the objective news-voice in favour of multiple voices or a subjective voice. It used many novelistic techniques and concepts: detailed characterization, scene construction, dialogue, playful syntax, emotional intimacy, metaphoric language, irony and imagery. It shared the elements of timeliness and newsworthiness with mainstream journalism, but added permission to interpret facts, and focused on the ordinary person instead of the famous or the infamous (quoted in Swasey, 2009, p.11).

In Portugal, the end of the nineteenth century also witnessed changes in the geography of the capital city, Lisbon: new avenues were built and existing spaces were renewed, like the Public Boulevard (Passeio Público) or the current Liberty Avenue (Avenida da Liberdade). Living with the desire to change the political, social

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<sup>1</sup> The expression “literary journalism” was mentioned for the first time in 1907 in an anonymous article, “Confessions of a Literary Journalist”, published by the literary magazine *Bookman*. More recently, the work of scholars such as Norman Sims, Kevin Kerrane, Ben Yagoda or John Hartsock have made the expression “literary journalism” more predominant over all other denominations. In 2006, the creation of the Association for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS) has helped the dissemination of scholarly research on the genre, most notably after the release in May 2009 of the first issue of *Literary Journalist Studies*, the association’s peer-reviewed bi-annual journal. In Portugal, the 2007 PhD dissertation of Isabel Soares, “O Império do Outro” (“The Empire of the Other”), marks the first attempt at cataloguing and recognising Portuguese literary journalism.

and cultural situation of the country, many Portuguese writers turned their attention to the city, namely Lisbon, Paris and London.

Having these factors in mind, this research is a result of a PhD dissertation that is about to be presented on the image of the city that a Portuguese writer transmitted in his literary journalism texts, Fialho de Almeida. The purpose of the work is to reveal the image of the Portuguese capital, comparing it to what other authors mentioned about London and Paris, cities that were models to these people.

### **The image of the city in the Portuguese literary journalism in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

Fialho de Almeida (1857-1911), a doctor who loved books and writing, wrote abundantly in many styles (chronicles, short-stories and novels). This author with a new way of writing (spontaneous, direct, with rhythm and impressionist descriptions, as well as with new words) was a Portuguese literary journalist whose theme that is present in most of his writings is the city of Lisbon at the turning of the twentieth century, a city that he criticizes for its social and moral misery. The image of the places he depicts is influenced by theories he had studied: eugenics, the pathological criminology by Lombroso, evolutionism, Taine's deterministic theory.

There are many aspects of Lisbon that Fialho de Almeida gives attention to but, unlike other literary journalists who write on the Portuguese capital (Gervásio Lobato or Carlos Malheiro Dias), most of his texts describe the poor areas of the city. Fialho says that Lisbon "is still today the sloppiest, the dirtiest and the most artificial of all the capitals of the universe" (Almeida, 1992-3, p. 44). The chronicle "Lisboa Velha e Lisboa Nova" (Old Lisbon and New Lisbon)<sup>2</sup> depicts these two Lisbons that Fialho de Almeida knew. The old Lisbon was not the beautiful city for the rich, it was for the ones who could not afford a palace or a new big house. He describes the squares with trees that hide thieves, the tall, narrow and irregular buildings in steep streets, the sick women who did the house work, the shops with thousand goods and a nice smell, the ruined palaces, wandering dogs (Almeida, 1996, 11-13). The present is different. Now, the construction is made with the French style, not the Portuguese one. And these buildings and neighbourhoods are for the rich – judges, bankers, doctors. There is luxury in every detail, such as materials, objects or gardens. The way of dressing and the ideal of physical beauty also changed; in the author's opinion, for the worse: men and women became shallow<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Almeida, 1994, pp. 11-23.

<sup>3</sup> See Fialho de Almeida, 1957. *Vida Irónica: Jornal d'um Vagabundo* ( pp.300-301), for the ironic description of the men and women who stroll in this avenue.



Figure 1- Avenida da Liberdade (source: Lisbon Municipal Archive - <http://arquivomunicipal.cm-lisboa.pt/pt/contactos/arquivo-fotografico/>)

In “Lisboa Monumental” (Monumental Lisbon)<sup>4</sup>, another chronicle, we have a vision of the whole city of Lisbon: the reality of the metropolis and how Fialho thinks it should be. Once again he dislikes the choices, made in the interests of politicians and rich people, not contributing to the progress of the country:

What barbarities, what donkey’s kick in good taste, what crimes of beauty, that grow without bit [...]. And how the mediocre intellectuals, the non-progress of the rich, the ignorance and inaction of the rulers, even in the architecture of this poor Lisbon, summary of the kingdom, leave without trace, and will contribute hundreds of years [...] to the setback of the land [...] (Almeida 1960, 83).

In this text he mentions the new avenues, the harbour, Praça do Comércio, the Customs, the industrial city (a city with as much smoke as London). It is not by accident that he mentions London to refer to industry, because afterwards he describes the neighbourhoods of the workers, and they are very similar to Whitechapel, described by another Portuguese literary journalist, Jaime Batalha Reis.

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<sup>4</sup> Almeida, 1960, p.77-126.



Figure 2 - Lisbon docks (source: Lisbon Municipal Archive - <http://arquivomunicipal.cm-lisboa.pt/pt/contactos/arquivo-fotografico/>)

Therefore, the Lisbon that abounds in Fialho de Almeida writings is a city of misery and decadence with the night as the mother of the unprotected, just like London. In the chronicle “De Noite” (At night)<sup>5</sup>, the author wanders in Lisbon at night and the vocabulary is related to death, suitable to the time of the day: “funereal lines”, “perspectives of burials”, “dying glows” (Almeida, 1994, p.121-122). Fialho describes the city after six o’clock, when the gas lights are lit and all kinds of people are in the streets: “women in a hurry, [...] coal women and dandies, caps and top hats” (Almeida, 1994, p.122). For him, “the city has completely lost the bourgeois configuration that existed in the sun light, to become an indefinite necropolis of scary perspectives” (Almeida, 1994, p.122). The same idea is developed in another text when referring to Lisbon at night: “the city is at the mercy of tragic dreams, streets are bigger, houses are gloomier, trees are colossal with despair, and the bells forget to give the time, a deadly anguish drools from things, there are rounds of madness in the gas, vague sobs” (Almeida, 1957, p.4). Therefore, we can perceive a dual city, apparently without problems during the day and at night showing its other dark side. This notion of dichotomy is present also when the authors refer to London: the City, the heart of the British economy and of the wealthy, is side by side with Whitechapel, the dreadful neighbourhood of London.

At night, Fialho sees beggars, sick people, prostitutes, criminals. One of the unprotected is Sérgio, the main cello player at S. Carlos Theatre, who drank very much and now played his instrument at a café of bad reputation. To show the decadence of this place, Fialho uses negative vocabulary to refer to the people, to the drinks and to the objects: “admirers in shirts and clogs”, “the customers sit on wooden benches”, “squeak of enormous rats. On the walls, little paintings of women

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<sup>5</sup> Almeida, 1994, p.121-129.

offering the breasts for suction to those who watch them” (Almeida, 1992-1, p.84-85). The author also alludes to animals to describe these decadent people: the men who smoke and drink are “bovine”, the sound of chords is like “quacks of ducks, in a puddle” (Almeida, 1992-1, p.87).



Figure 3 - Tavern at Mouraria (source: Lisbon Municipal Archive - <http://arquivomunicipal.cm-lisboa.pt/pt/contactos/arquivo-fotografico/>)

Another example of decadence in this text is the case of a strong man who entered the “tavern of *fado* singers at Carreirinha” (Almeida, 1992-1, p.92) where Sérgio plays, with a very frail girl from the countryside who, with some wine, slowly stopped resisting the attacks of the man. It is a case of prostitution at Mouraria, a medieval neighbourhood of Lisbon where the moors were confined after the conquest of Lisbon by the first Portuguese king, D. Afonso Henriques, in 1147. This couple leaves the tavern and the “chase” continues: he tries to grab her, she continuously escapes and returns to his arms. This episode was seen by the author the way a reporter does, a *flâneur* who needs to wander in the city and expresses his emotions in the way of a short story – Fialho intertwines the two plans of action: the concert that Sérgio performs inside the tavern and the game of the couple that ends when the concert finishes. Because of these features (the presence to see the facts, the events in a decadent place with miserable characters, the two plans of action, the literary language), this is probably one of the best examples of Fialho de Almeida as a literary journalist.

The case of Manuel is also told in a way that is similar to a short story. Again we have Mouraria as background, the “filthy neighbourhood of the people” (Almeida, 1992-2, p.41), again we have the night, drink, poverty, diseases, crimes. This Manuel is a poor man, miserable as his friends: “poor night travelers of the streets, sleeping on the stairs, [...] and eating on good days the food of some cat” (Almeida, 1992-2, p.35). In this story, Mouraria is better described:

There the buildings were slim, the stairs were sooty, light was gloomy. Dark muds silenced the noise of the steps, and hoarse voices came out of the houses, rumors of guitars of taverns, and discussions of the corners [...]. At the doors, crushed with vice, the girls slept under gas lamps, crossed on the ground as dogs (Almeida, 1992-2, p.41).



Figure 4 – Calçada da Mouraria (source: Lisbon Municipal Archive - <http://arquivomunicipal.cm-lisboa.pt/pt/contactos/arquivo-fotografico/>)

Drinking became a habit to Manuel, wandering in the night also, and with time, diseases appeared. The state of misery became worse and the author uses Taine’s deterministic theory<sup>6</sup> to explain Manuel’s current situation - race, education and environment led to this moral decadence: “in this seclusion of the school, the boredom of life [...], the *surmenage*, the closure, the passive obedience, the bad food, etc., only increased in that illegitimate body, [...] the factors that heredity had put in his teenage type” (Almeida, 1992-2, p.61). Gradually, he became weaker and died at the age of twenty-three.

When studying other Portuguese literary journalists, we can see that these images of night and misery are similar in other European capitals. Jaime Batalha Reis (1847-1935), an agronomical engineer with several political activities who travelled during most of his life, left us with the impressions of his longest journey: as a consul in Newcastle (from 1883 to 1898) and in London (until 1911), he wrote a series of chronicles for a Portuguese newspaper, *O Repórter* (1888) and for the Brazilian *Gazeta de Notícias* (1893-1896). These chronicles were named “Revista Inglesa”. There he describes a culture that was considered superior in many ways, but had negative aspects as well. The author says: “the whole Europe admires England. Even I, following the universal example, do it for over thirty years. What a great country! I

<sup>6</sup> Taine 1866, iii-xix.

think all the time [...]. However, when you live in England for some years and you try to analyze the elements of the whole, you find, surprisingly, contradictory facts” (Reis, 1988, p.55).

Positive aspects are the education in public schools that creates true gentlemen and the fierce politicians, leaders of the greatest empire in the world. This strength and will to succeed wasn't only learned in the public schools, but it came from the religious doctrine: the evangelicalism taught that work would make a better country and provide a better life after death. Therefore, work is a positive aspect of the British society, but its dark side is hypocrisy. Hypocrisy on Sundays, when families gather but do not show any sign of affection or emotion; when they cannot work but drink and gamble. Hypocrisy when they had the Angel in the House and the Magdalenes in the streets. Hypocrisy when they had the City and Whitechapel next to it. The duality is present in many aspects of London.

Whitechapel, a neighbourhood full of dark narrow alleys crowded with poor houses and miserable people, “the terrible neighbourhood of London” (Reis, 1988, p.99). It is the place where the travellers strolled, a labyrinth that was an initiation journey: by trying to reach its centre, discovering the different sides of the Other, they get to know themselves better. The place where Jack, the Ripper killed the prostitutes is thoroughly described by Batalha Reis in his chronicles, precisely because he went there and talked to the people. The readers of *O Repórter* had the acquaintance to this murderer, due to the fact that the author was in England during the crimes, which made him tell all the procedures of the police and of the criminal. No one can deny that England is an advanced society in industry and economy at this time, but there are theories such as Lombroso's that defend that crime is the sign of primitivism and, therefore, degeneration. Even the figure of criminals was a primitive one, like Jack's: “a short and frizzled moustache, [...] a cannibal-like mouth and small, live, scary eyes” (Reis, 1988, p.101).



Figure 5 – Drawing by Ana Luísa Rosa, based on Gustave Doré, *Wentworth Street, Whitechapel*

The poor prostitutes were Jack's victims and they were also a source of pollution to the respectable society and of degeneration of the race through sexually transmitted diseases, like the syphilis, since there are physical and mental elements that pass on to the following generations. A number of Contagious Disease Acts intended to control the dissemination of contagious diseases, but in fact they only punished the women, and not the masculine vice, a vice that was accepted by the society. Also because of evangelicalism, the role of the Angel in the House was well defined: the middle-class woman should look after the house and the family and sexually she should only give pleasure to the husband and have children. And so prostitution was needed. And prostitution is a common theme between Fialho de Almeida and Jaime Batalha Reis, as an example of the decadence of these capitals.

But the duality of the English society existed also in the City, the centre of the world's economy, the place where the respectable society was:

the figure of a huge fish or cetacean, with its muzzle heading to the Bank of England and to the Stock Exchange, as if preparing to devour these two centres of human wealth [...] This is the commercial centre of the world; it is through the offices of this street, it is through this shark that flows, as blood or excrements, all the gold of Earth (Reis, 1988, p.104).

The City is compared to a fish which dives into deep waters, and is therefore impure. The City is impure because of the gold that is the result of commercial activities. The idea of the monster is the chaotic and fearful figure that protects a treasure, and in fact, there are City descriptions that show us that everything is in a complete disorder. The monster also devours man and makes him worse, because in this case he loses the spiritual values and cares only for the material ones. That is why the centre of the world's wealth is next to the centre of criminality. But Lisbon is also a "monster with scales" (Almeida, 1994, p. 124), where the hospital buildings are the brain and Rossio is its flaming heart from where the arteries go to the outskirts, "little islands of shadow, where vices sleep, and the poverty glimpses between misery and tavern" (Almeida, 1994, p. 125). Even today, Rossio is one of the central squares in Lisbon where people, means of transport and commerce merge and give the idea of disorder. The negativity of these two capitals is shared through the images of monsters, by giving the image of chaos.

But why are the English different from what they show to the world and are not the perfect people that everyone believes them to be? The answer is in the fog. According to Taine, the climate is a factor that influences the character of a people: it hides, transforms and as a consequence the true character is revealed: "it is in the middle of the fog of London that you can understand the British character, their ways of living, all their sentimental manifestations" (Reis, 1988, p.46). He also says that in that fog we can see "all the coal, all the sulphur of combustions and putrefactions, all the hydrosulphurics, all the hydrocarbons, all the carbylamines, all the naphthalines, all the microbes, all the miasmas, all the plagues" (Reis, 1988, p.47). This quotation reveals the negative aspects of progress, all the chemicals and diseases caused by the Industrial Revolution. And although Portugal did not have the Industrial Revolution with the dimension of Britain, the pollution in the river Tagus is also noticed: "the

sulphurous water (...) is a disagreeable extract of a dead body, purging when you drink it, tiresome when you see it, and fever-causing when you breathe it” (Almeida, 1992-4, p. 185). Once more, the capitals of great empires share the same images of decadence.

## Conclusion

All the mentioned elements characterise a decadent society, the Babylon heading to the Apocalypse, with crime, corruption, prostitution. The image of Babylon appears when Portuguese authors refer to the capitals of Lisbon, London and Paris. Although the texts about the French capital city are mainly descriptive of buildings, of events and of the Bois de Boulogne, Guilherme de Azevedo (1839-1882), a Portuguese literary journalist, also witnessed the misery of the French capital, mentioning the case of sixty-three families, living in workers’ houses, that lost their homes (Azevedo, 2000, p.84). All the authors refer to the crimes committed in these places, examples of the decadence.

Fialho de Almeida, a Portuguese writer who has lived in Lisbon most of his life, gives account of the life in the capital of Portugal, a labyrinth, a «gloomy Babylon» (Almeida, 1992-4, p.140). Jaime Batalha Reis, who was also a science man, shows us the maze that is London.

In “Revista Inglesa”, Batalha Reis gives more importance to the dark aspects of the metropolis than to the image of the shining London. The decadence in England is the result of the capitalism and the fast way of life created by the Industrial Revolution. After the peak of the Great Exhibition, the transformation brought by the coming apocalypse is for the better, a renewal is waited. But before this renewal there is a transition moment, symbolised by the fog. Fialho de Almeida also prefers writing about the dark and miserable Lisbon, the metropolis of an empire that had its peak during the Discoveries period (15th-16<sup>th</sup> centuries). According to Antero de Quental (1842-1891) in his article “Causes of decadence of the peninsular peoples in the last three centuries” (1871), the Portuguese decadence was caused by the Trento Concilium, the establishment of Absolutism (cohesive and against freedom) and the distant conquests that provoked economic problems to the country. Having this in mind, only a socialist revolution would change the situation. Therefore, the Portuguese authors of the late nineteenth century highlighted the decadent aspects of the society, namely the situation of the education system, the bad housing conditions and criminality. When in different countries, they describe what they consider positive and an example to follow, but the reality proves different and it is not only Lisbon that is decadent: Lisbon, London and Paris are Babylon, the city of the Apocalypse. So, the Portuguese literary journalists write tales of cities, all with elements in common: the misery in the old buildings, in the people who survive in these districts, in the criminality that exists in all the capitals, which are monsters, mazes and Babylon, the ultimate symbol of decadence.

A city is a living organism that evolves, and an example of it is the neighbourhood of Mouraria, in Lisbon. Once a place of insecurity and crime, it is now one of the typical districts of the Portuguese capital where a multicultural population lives alongside with the local inhabitants who continue to preserve the traditions, namely the *fado*. Also Whitechapel, in London, is now a multicultural district where the past

buildings are side by side with the modern ones and where we can find contemporary art galleries and street art, as well as traditional shops and street fairs. Therefore, to understand the cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century one must know how they were in the past, how they have evolved, and in the cases of these two cities (London and Lisbon), neighbourhoods that were once miserable and dangerous are now multicultural and managed to associate past traditions with modernity.

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