Extended Abstract


Referring to sustainable cities seems to be conceivable in a model or paradigm which recognizes the importance of including in our practices a continuous reflection of the different impacts in life conditions of all the inhabitants of our territory. If urban planner’s aim is projecting spaces that transform positively how people experience the question is how it could be possible to comprehend inhabitants perception and how this could affect their participation as active citizens. In the actual world “in which neoliberalism ethic of an intense individualism, which wants everything for it and can transform in a socialization model of human personality (Harvey, 2014, p.47) ideals of urban identity, citizenship and belonging turn into a more difficult way to feed into.

This work inscribes under the debate about social participation development and presents this topic as an inherent condition for sustainability cities. In Brazil, since the guidelines which express social function of urban propriety in the urban plan of 1988, the approval of the “Estatuto da cidade” in 2001 and the inscription in the law of several participation instrument mechanisms, the space has been open for the local population to participate in the urban development at different scales. The general objective of this work is to explore mental maps as an opportunity to inhabitants express themselves in order to understand the different perceptions in a city and the connection with the geographical environment as a way of comprehending it’s linking with urban participation. Connected with this general objective, in each chapter the following goals were established:

- Relate the history of Situationist International (SI), the European group of artists, idealists and activists, whom against urban rationalism promoted by the Athens Charter, had as their main objective the active participation of all citizens in different fields of social life. By experimenting new
methodological ways of study and understanding of the urban space—like psicogeography and derive—they sought for others possibilities of studding the city considering the affective perceptions of inhabitants.

- Discuss about participative planning practices and the politic function of the architect in the process. Enquire how space could be transformed in a gradual process without reprising the concept of an ideal space, but the specific practices of transforming it. To the same extent, look for references of mechanisms and techniques aimed to listen local populations and their perception of the city. Emphasize the comprehension of affective perception of space and urban landscape, through an approach on the inset of mental maps methodology, by adopting a Case of Study for an analysis based on a practical experience in Parque das Missões, in Duque de Caxias, metropolitan area of Rio the Janeiro.

- Validate the effectiveness of the methodology applied and it’s approach to conclusions such as the influence of the landscape perception variation around different areas of a same space in the Case of study.

Finally, these experiences with mental maps introduce new searching possibilities in relation with each geographical area and landscape perceptions by local inhabitants. Some of them are related with the abounding presence of which
results in positive influence and turns them into popular spaces. Also each map allows recognizing that particular localization where each person lives maximize or minimizing critic perception from residents. Nevertheless, landscape doesn’t reflect a large quantity of problems and other factors which influence also different experiences at favelas. This results in a contradiction in relation to physical visibility which wouldn’t stimulate an approach between parts. It was possible to recognize during the interviews that it’s not urban form which determinates how each person’s confer signification to and experiences urban space, but there are also a large amount of situations which have strongly influence. In each chapter there are exposed some considerations in relation with theories and practices presented.

The contemporary paradigm’s crises is introduced at first. In it, there is an extensive amount of human rights being suppressed, particularly around slums population. This context it’s requires different approaches regarding tools and methods in order to increase and raise the communication between different participants around urban planning. Particularly the relationship between town planners and local people, recognizing the relevance of population decisions and the promotion of collective efforts that are beneficial to significative transformations.

Then, situacionits’s criticism about the existence of an ‘ideal city’ is exposed, including proclamation by modern’s town planners followed by theories and critics about alienation and society passiveness. It has been exhibited as different practical experiences, which aim for new mechanisms and techniques of studying cities, where the process was more important than an ideal to be reached. Analyzing the different methodological experiences performed by the movement shows that neither experience was concluded. However, these particular methods of studying the city bring new searches in order to comprehend how a segregated city impact on the different subjectivities.

During chapter three, it is resumed the importance of local habitants active participation in the construction of the environment where they live. Participation concept is introduced, analyzing each participant’s role in the process. From Guatarri’s approach, variable manners of people relationship in an organization
between vertical and horizontal axis which manage different degrees of results in nature a group work are studied. Besides, Brazilian urban planning experience in Bras da Pina, Rio de Janeiro is introduced. This resulted in important achievements to overcome slum’s habitant social stigma and the reconsideration of urban planner role not in an authority position, but looking for alternatives and tools around participation. Introducing Jane Jacob’s and Kevin Lynch contributions, from a closed observation about how inhabitant lives and experiments cities, allows to identify theories which enable to promote collaborative construction planning. This way, it’s attempted to present methodological researches, which work from urbanism context for a closer approximation between professional practice and local inhabitants.

Chapter four tells the experience of participants search at Itaipava’s area, in Parque das Missões slum, Duque de Caxias region. Accompanying TETO’s organization work, interviews with local inhabitants were realized, experimenting mental maps as a way to introduce situacionist’s urban studies in slums. At the interviews different subjects as participation, neighborhood proximity and everyday lives were discussed. This way aimed to contribute with other tools and methodologies for a closer approximation between different parts involved at urban planning.

Then, chapter number five shows the analysis of Case of Study results in order to comprehend the relationship between mental maps realized and discursive interview executed. Therefore, it was possible to recognize that physical visibility of urban landscape is not just the result of the way in which each space is experimented. There are, instead, other factors in this construction that require the research of different tools or ‘new demarches’ in order to involve new alternatives of dialogue and communication between different participants at urban planning. Furthermore, it’s visible how vulnerability and everyday risks to which inhabitants of Itaipava are exposed are represented in the different drawings which allowed to think about emotional development and influence in subjectivity caused by daily situations that they as many others inhabitants on Brazilians slums live everyday life.
In summary, searching for a methodology in order to recognize citizens perceptions transforms into comprehending urban environment as a social and collective construction including the complexities and diversities that these structure involves. With the research in Parque das Missões, it was possible to experiment a method that allows local population to express themselves and also comprehend that urban construction considering only psychical shape, not involving the subjective aspects that are implicated in that structure, it is not sufficient to develop a significant participation of inhabitants. This way mental maps succeeded as a mechanism for population to express themselves and lead to consider different tools which through a gradual process of collective encourage stimulate to real transformation with participation of all inhabitant as urban space construction.

In participatory planning terms, urban reforms aiming participation were an important progress at politic articulation between social actors. However, it seems to be necessary to think about itself depth to effectively show that population having an active role. The experience at Itaipava’s area leads to review participatory processes in order to find mechanism which assumes population virtue. It is, in some way, an intention to stimulate collective work to construct new connections and ways of intervention in urban areas, starting with processes that result in the effective transformation of the urban areas as with the inhabitant’s participation in the activity.

Bibliography searched and study case’s experience had generated new questions and ideas to future investigations. Through a deep study in subjective impact of unequal distribution of territory, it would be possible to recognize new research manners and approaches for a better comprehension about the social, economic and environmental imbalance produced by unequal distribution of urban space. Studying city planning seems to be relevant as a form of integrating every inhabitant in the process, avoiding the idea of urban planner deciding on what could be done, but creating a communication space in which collective decisions would become more relevant.

Following the idea of research in of this project, it’s considered relevant an observation and comprehension of the different subjective traits that each mental
map realizes from narratives and descriptions experimented and their consequences in affective behaviors of inhabitants. In this work, as the main purpose is studying the community these specifications are not detailed, nevertheless at analyzing mental maps, some characteristics can be recognized in order to consider the impact of external conditions in the affective development of each interviewee. Moreover, connecting with other areas, studied about natural impact in individual’s affective development can be expanded.

Furthermore, it is suggested to continue studying different psycho-geographical experiences, via situacionists derive or other technics which facilitate a comprehension of affectivity at different neighborhoods or areas and the manner as unequal distribution of territory intensify social imbalance at cities. It is recommended, on the other hand, an approach of participatory processes from practical experiences which could facilitate a better comprehension of different actors’ positions and each communication, looking for diverse manners and mechanisms in which participation of the local population at decision making loop would be considered as essential.

Referring to the case of study a variety of suggestions are included to continue researching. There is really limited information about the area around psychical, economic, social, territorial and environmental dimensions. A deeper investigation in these questions would be extremely important and relevant to recognize the severity of precariousness and vulnerability in which Itaipava inhabitants lives every day as in lot of Brazilian slums. Therefore, by analyzing the theoretical and practical experience approached with mental maps were suggested new manners to continue reaching Brazilian slums, from different approaches, with aim to comprehend environmental, economic and social factor and also affective factors that are involved in inhabitants emotional development and increased inequality and opportunity access of each inhabitant depending on the city area life.

**Keywords**

Urban Landscape; Situacionist Internacional; Psicogeography; Mental Map.