URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND INCREASED SOCIO-SPATIAL INEQUALITIES IN FORTALEZA, BRAZIL: THE ROLE OF PLANNING

BY

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THESIS

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To my husband, Adriano

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Chapter 01 Overview

The Project of the Thesis

The current work exposes the social effects of planning - defined as a space production activity – in the city of Fortaleza, one of the most socially unequal Brazilian metropolises. There is a certain belief among the residents that the spatial reorganization of the city has served the interests of privileged groups. I will explore *how* this spatial praxis has served the needs of powerful sectors reinforcing existing social inequalities. Or, in Harvey's words, "Why and by what means, and in what sense do social beings individually and, more importantly, collectively invest places (localities, regions, states, communities or whatever) with sufficient permanence to become a locus of institutionalized social power and how and for what purpose is the power then used?" (1996:320).

There are innumerous ways in which social actors are able to invest in places, producing space and making them an instrument of social power. By defining routes of public transportation, regulating private property, drawing administrative boundaries and even by representing places in particular ways (i.e. promoting or stereotyping a neighborhood), private or public actors shape the urban geography and actively affect previously existing social relations. This thesis will focus on public decisions regarding the location infrastructure investments within the urban territory of Fortaleza.

This work suggests that the placement of infrastructure strongly influences the access of the urban poor to the opportunities offered by the city. In regards to infrastructure investments, Fortaleza's geography has been shaped according to the needs of productive capital and, for the most part, with very limited social equity considerations. I'll demonstrate how a renewed market

logic of urban development, associated with the influence of neoliberalism, has actually contributed to the worsening of social inequalities, instead of addressing the urban needs of the least advantaged urban populations. The fact that many social actors, including planners, have been producing and modifying the city without regards to the social effects of changes in the urban space severely restricts the possibility of a more just city.

Research Problem

Population in general - and public managers in particular - hardly acknowledges the problem of reproducing urban inequalities through policies of urban development. While people often explain persisting poverty as the outcome of power imbalances, historical conditions of exploitation, insufficient economic development and lack of education or professional training, few people recognize that the rationale behind city planning policies can indeed affect the relative wealth of the residents.

In urbanized Third World countries, where this problem would be more visible due to scarcity of urban investments, cities are said to be unplanned. In these places, planners are powerless professionals hopelessly trying to organize the urban chaos. Following this line of reasoning, it does not make any sense to point to urban planning as one of the factors for persisting poverty.

Nevertheless this work contends that urban planning *is* an important cause of persisting conditions of poverty in some urbanized societies irrespective of their location in developed or underdeveloped countries. Planning is clearly not the only one, but it is certainly one of the many factors contributing to such a complex social problem. By urban planning I refer to any collective (often public) initiative able to shape the urban environment. Thus, even in the "unplanned" Third World cities there is a rationale for modifying the urban geography that often

attends to the needs of the powerful sectors at the expense of the rest. In fact, cities in Third World countries are particularly susceptible to the perverse social effects of urban development precisely because of the belief that the cities are unplanned, which implies that nobody controls the production of their spaces.

The perceived irrelevance of urban development practices comes from a widespread notion that the urban space is merely the effect of complex social processes. Those who see space as mere reflex of society equate questions of *urban-justice* to that of *justice*. This mode of thinking = not unpopular among planners = implies that the best (and only) solution for the so-called *urban* problems would be simply by solving the *social* problems. In an ideal situation where the society itself is egalitarian, there would be no inequalities to be reflected in space.

Contradicting this familiar chain of causality, this work stresses the circumstances in which socially created geographies actively influence social relations. I assert that, if planners shaped the city with more awareness to the social effects of these changes, they could more effectively contribute to more just cities, eventually contributing to more just societies. The analysis of the empirical case of Fortaleza suggests that providing marginalized groups access to the city is an indispensable component of the struggle for social justice in any unequal society. The production of the urban space can eventually determine one's life-chances.

Research Question

Changes in the urban geography are able to affect social relations in a myriad of ways. A given segregation pattern can contribute to marginalizing ethical minority populations, or foster integration and assimilation, for example. Cities designed with excessive emphasis on automobile transportation can isolate those without access to cars, and even affect the health of the residents. I'll focus on the *socio-economic* effects of urban development specifically because

they have been the main urban contradiction in the empirical case of Fortaleza. Urban spatial development has denied economically vulnerable families access to job opportunities brought by local economic growth.

Based on this discussion, the central question of this research is the following:

How can urban spatial development influence the socio-economic life-chances of the residents?

The case of Fortaleza will demonstrate that a new pattern of infrastructure investments in specific strategic sites within the city has profoundly changed the local spatial structure, making access to the city more difficult for the urban poor. The close connection of changes in the local economy with politico-economic developments happening at the global scale often leads popular wisdom to refer to "globalization" as the main factor of heightened socio-spatial inequalities that Fortaleza has been experiencing. The current analysis will demonstrate how increased inequality is not the result of abstract and unavoidable globalization forces, and how they are, instead, contingent upon the attitudes of local actors in placing investments in the intra-urban space.

Significance

Since the beginning of the profession, planners have attempted to address the problem of urban poverty with limited results. Certainly political unwillingness to implement social policies is in great part responsible for this failure. It is, however, not unusual to find progressive governments committed to the cause of the urban poor unable to efficiently address the urban needs of underprivileged groups. That is, even when planners have the political opportunity to implement more equitable urban policies, they may fail to do so. Moreover, planners' knowledge of "how cities work" might actually be able to shape political opportunities.

Thus planning's failure in regards to social equity issues is certainly not limited to political matters. I adopt Massey's (1996) argument in order to support that planners can indeed push for more socially just cities. For her, all academic progress in the understanding of socio-spatial practices has not yet been able to influence the political process of city-making *partly* due to the inability of academics to convey the message clearly enough to political actors.

This project is an attempt to bridge this gap between theory and actual practices, through analyzing the ethnographical reality of Fortaleza. This empirical case is very useful because it is closer to the rule than to the exception. Specifically, it is definitely not only in Fortaleza that a-spatial social planning policies are struggling to minimize the effects - and not the causes - of poverty, while urban spatial development further marginalizes powerless groups. This work suggests that it is specifically by managing the urban space that planners can more efficiently address the conditions of extreme urban poverty. Empirically demonstrating this argument is significant because it directly challenges a prevalent model of urban development that has not adequately addressed questions of social justice.

It is relevant to mention that the work has not intentions of offering apolitical absolute truths. People, including urban residents and voters, have different notions of whether some urban policies and their effects are just or not. The version exposed here is not immune of the author's particular values, and personal impressions. But the social effects of these policies have to be exposed, in order to allow the reader to take a position. And this is a particular contribution of this work: to problematize the urban question, leaving it open for debate. In other words, this work intends to break the widespread consensus around projects of urban development that are only consensual because their actual potential effects are not at the table for discussion.

Methodology

This project makes use of both qualitative and qualitative methods. The socio-spatial changes of Fortaleza come from the longitudinal analysis of the intra-urban census data in the years 1991 and 2000 mapped at the most disaggregated level of "setor censitário" (parallel of U.S. census tracts). The sources on major public and private investments in the city are the files and plans of both local Municipal and State governments, as well as newspaper articles and local tourism promotional materials. The data on planning practices and discourses come primarily from informal conversations with planners inside and outside the state apparatus, as well as several media of public discourse such as magazines, local newspapers, official plans and published interviews with community leaders. Some secondary data will come from published books or unpublished dissertations and NGO's reports. The municipality of Fortaleza generated the spatial data (base map, street network, infrastructure, land use) utilized. The bulk of the data collection was conducted during my fieldwork research in Fortaleza in January 2003.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis has the following structure. Chapter two reviews the literature and traces the development of the socio-spatial theory that informed urban development practices since the outset of urban planning as a profession. It argues that current practices of producing the city still rely on planning theories that describe urban geography as a mere reflex of social processes. This is so, despite the convergence on the literature around the notion that changes in the urban space affect social process in a myriad of ways.

That city-building professionals still see the city as the outcome of social relations is confirmed in the third chapter, which introduces the empirical case of Fortaleza. The chapter describes how public managers and local residents accept the recent rise in urban poverty in

Fortaleza as the result of non-spatialized factors such as rural-urban migration and the worsening of local jobs conditions. In view of this, chapter four demonstrates that the increased indicators of social inequality and increased squatters population (relative to the total population) are also contingent upon the placement of urban investments within the urban territory. It offers two case examples in Fortaleza that reveal how the influence of neoliberal ideologies in urban practices has induced the increase in socio-spatial inequalities. The first case has a citywide perspective arguing that the concentration of investments has shrunk the urban space, diminishing the supply of available land and leading to new forms of urban poverty. The second case further advances this argument focusing on the social effects of road opening projects. It offers the example of a popular neighborhood in transition due to one of such projects.

Finally, the fifth chapter reveals how official planning policies actually contribute to further differentiate the city of the rich and that of the poor residents. It confirms empirically what I had earlier suggested in the literature review that social planning policies have not addressed the important spatial dimension of urban inequalities. Insurgent planning initiatives that have been able to warrant access to the city for disadvantaged groups are by and large found out of the state planning apparatus. These initiatives have forced official planning to incorporate their claims, and have been able to teach planners that they need to be aware of the effects of the urban geographies resulting from their plans. I conclude with a call for planners concerned with social justice to turn their attentions to the socio-spatial aspects of urban poverty.

Chapter 02 Review of the Literature

Introduction

The search for the structural roots of spatial inequalities has been a major issue in the field of urban studies from its outset. Because of that, there has been significant development of our understanding of the relations between social and spatial processes. Even though old theories have not completely disappeared, they have often taken new forms.

This review will trace the progress of geographical theory and its influence on urban planning practices at key points in time. Urban space has been described as (1) an active agent of social processes although isolated from political content, (2) as a passive outcome of socio-political relations, (3) as socially constructed and able to influence social processes. It seems that this theoretical development has not sufficiently informed Planning's understanding of the urban space. While contemporary planning is not devoid of politics anymore, it has been missing a spatial perspective adequate to efficiently address equity considerations. My work specifically claims that without considering the role of the urban environment in shaping social relations, planning has intervened in the city in a way that reinforces - rather than diminishes - social inequities. Based on that, I call attention to the fact that space has been a powerful instrument of the appropriation of wealth and power by privileged groups. That the urban geography has been produced with little equity considerations is the main limitation of equity planning initiatives.

Early Theories of Urban Form

Early urban researchers viewed the city with a considerable degree of dissociation from the social processes that created it. The influential work of the Chicago School of Urban Ecology

(see Burgess' Model[1]) consisted basically in identifying the "natural" urbanization pattern that would apply to any city in the world, even though the empirical work was based on the city of Chicago. Its description as "natural" implied that humans had an inherited tendency to organize their settlements according to a fixed model - namely, the center-periphery pattern.

Similarly, urban neoclassic economy also suggested a detachment between society and space. In economic models however, it was the laws of the market - rather than natural processes – that ruled the pattern of spatial organization of cities (See William Alonso's Bid-rent Theory[2]).

Because both these theoretical traditions (urban economy and ecology) did not recognize urban geography as the product of social relations they tended to undermine both social and spatial inequalities existent in a given city. Urban Ecology and Economic theories overtly described the city as an equilibrated entity implicitly denying the existence (and relevance) of intra-urban differentials. According to these theories, it was only a matter of time for the market to even out any existing urban imbalances. For instance, the Burgess Model defined the decaying zone near downtown as a zone in transition, which would develop and increase its value as soon as the urban core needed room to grow. By using the term "zone in transition" they implied that poverty and decay of some neighborhoods was a temporary problem.

Reinforcing this notion of an equilibrated city, urban neoclassical economic studies, claimed that external interference in the balance between supply and demand for land would decrease efficiency and lead to non-optimal. Indeed, urban economics remains dominant in the

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[1] This model described neighborhoods as different organisms that compete with each other for their survival, in an apology to Darwin's Evolutionary Theory, envisioning urban development as a natural process. Centralization and decentralization were the two main *natural* forces affecting geographical space.

[2] William Alonso's Bid-rent Theory in 1960, using neoclassical economic principle, argues that every type of land use competes for the urban core because of different reasons, increasing competition for some key-located places within the city. According to this theory, it is the supply and demand for land that ultimately shapes the city. The market is taken as given, and the role of public urban investments was not taken into account. (in 1960 in Knox 1994)

field of urban studies although contemporary research admits the possibility of State intervention in the land market in cases of "market failures" or "externalities" (see, for instance, Brueckner, 1999[3]). The fact that redistributive goals are put out of scope of these economic studies allows them to rely on a notion of the city as a balanced entity.

Influence in Planning: Modernist Planning Project

For both theories it was either "nature" or "the market[4]" – two entities beyond reach of human agency - that dictated how space is produced. They viewed the city as an object that has its own inherent laws, which humans were supposed to identify, understand and fit in. This, of course, is very in line with the modernist project of early planning practice. These theories were products of positivist-modernist thought which suggested a comprehensive understanding of society. They also strongly influenced urban policies of the time. Urban renewal programs of the post war period in the United States (or early 19th century Europe), for example, intended to correct the illness of urban society simply by eradicating the *sources* of the problems - that is, the slums (Rosow, 1961). Slum removal programs aimed at eliminating the "culture of poverty" supposedly reproduced in the overcrowded environment of slums, both in cities of developed and developing world. We can thus logically conclude that, according to this point of view, the space - the slums - *produced* social processes of violence, diseases and unemployment.

A second representative example of the belief that urban (territorial) planning would ultimately determine social processes is the Modernist Planning utopia. The ideology behind the

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[3] Jan Brueckner's (1999) work applies the microeconomics general equilibrium theory to urban development. He identifies the under pricing of infrastructure network expansion as one of many "market failures", and suggests that, once these "market failures" are addressed, the economic general equilibrium would prevail.

[4] Although the market is clearly not out of scope of human agency, the theories did not considered the possibility of intervention in the market forces taking "the market" an given.

construction of Brasilia intended to impose an egalitarian order in an unequal society by providing ordered standardized residential neighborhoods for all its residents.

Still, the excessive reliance on the "power of space" has not disappeared from both contemporary urban practices and theories. In the U.S specifically, the design-related planning sub-fields tend to blindly trust the potential of the built environment to shape social processes. The New Urbanism movement, for example, has clear intentions of fostering community life and relationship among neighbors by providing public spaces in well-designed neighborhoods (Talen, 1999). The political processes of creating these spaces, and particularly the often-exclusionary qualities resulting from such design principles, are often overlooked.

Radical Geography and Critical Urban Studies

Despite the relative popularity of these recent design theories, the emergence of critical urban studies in the late 1960s had the important impact of politicizing urban practices. Radical geography, for example, fiercely refers to this reification of space as *spatial fetishism,* and concentrates efforts in identifying the dominant interests being served by this ideology. The early works of Marxist geographers such as Manuel Castells and David Harvey in the early 1970s are often cited as responsible for the rapid decline in popularity of the "power of space" (Soja, 1980, Gottdiener, 1985). They shifted attention away from the outcome – the city – to the process – the urbanization (Harvey, 1996). For them, these inherent laws that were said to produce the city were simply social constructs serving the interests of dominant classes. No city is balanced precisely because no society is balanced. As Lefebvre noted,

> "Space is not a scientific object removed from ideology and politics; it has always been political and strategic. If space has an air of neutrality and indifference with regards to its contents and this seem to be "purely" formal, the epitome of rational abstraction it

is precisely because it has been occupied and used and has already been the focus of past processes whose traces are not always evident on the landscape. Space has been shaped and molded from historical and natural elements, but this has been a political process. Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideology." (Lefebvre 1976, quoted in Soja, 1980)

The urban space comes to be understood as the outcome of conflicting social interests. Organized groups compete for public services and infrastructure, because they have different spatial requirements. Homeowners, for example, may seek investments in their neighborhoods while renters experience losses with valorization of their neighborhoods. Productive sectors also have important role in shaping the urban environment.

A distinction between the production and social reproduction functions of the urban space helps in explaining the question of spatial inequalities. On one hand, productive sectors such as industries, commerce and real estate see the city mainly as an instrument of profit. Productive activities may prefer one area to the other due to the availability of infrastructure proximity to input goods and labor market. Residents, on the other hand, tend to think of spatial differentials in terms of proximity to different services such as housing, leisure facilities and schools. For the residents, although their houses have a monetary value, the prime function of the city is to reproduce their social relations. This different function of the city leads to different definitions of spatial inequalities: "First there are inequalities in terms of the dominant form of economic activity; second there are inequalities in terms of the various indicators of social well–being" (Massey, 1994).

David Harvey's work tends to focus on the former aspect, the creation of spatial inequalities between productive activities and non-productive ones. His work suggests that

productive sectors' spatial agenda eventually ruled the placement of investments within the urban space. Thus, for him, the city form is shaped by the spatial requirements of the prevalent economic activities. He sees the logic of capitalist modes of production as the most powerful force driving urbanization, and therefore as the main cause for geographical differentials. He understands Marx's "annihilation of space through time" as the successive efforts in reducing the costs of transportation of goods and services, in an "endless search to maximize profits". This is met by the production of a series of "spatial fixes", relatively fixed infrastructure networks that are essential to serve the productive sectors of the economy. These productive activities need to be inserted somewhere in the metropolitan territory, and the infrastructure logistic to support them easily becomes a more important factor than the location itself. Therefore these complex demands for investments determine the decision on where to place such networks (Harvey, 2000). The logic of capital accumulation is what ultimately rules the socio-spatial changes within the city, albeit with the intervention of State (and urban planning) to facilitate economic growth. This market-driven process does not work to fade inequalities but rather to use space to perpetuate conditions of social inequalities.

Castells also suggest that the State uses urban planning to favor capitalist classes. However for him, State does that by facilitating social *reproduction* of labor power, which reproduces class relations. By providing instrument of collective consumption such as schools and parks, or piped water and housing State takes up services not profitable to private sector.

While for Harvey productive sectors invariably have the power over non-productive ones, Castells (1978) looks at distinct social reproduction interests. Castells tends to focus on the pattern of segregation among different socio-economic groups and how power imbalances among them cause collective services to concentrate in rich neighborhoods. He explained intra-

urban differentials as the outcome of a political struggle between urban residents, and he shifted productive activities to the regional scale.

For Castells, urban social movements are formed according to the way in which different groups consume space, which is not necessarily identical to class structure because residents of similar class might differ in their utilization of urban services, or homeownership conditions for instance. In this regard Gottdiener (1985) has a similar point. He is critical of "productionist" perspectives (such as that of early Harvey's work) because he identifies different fractions of capital competing with each other for urban investments.

Castells' focus on the power of a given group to determine the reorganization of the city according to its interests is also in line with the literature on urban politics. Such literature concentrates on unraveling the strategies that urban elites, for example, use to control the developmental agenda of the entire city (Fainstein, 1999). The existence of the so-called pro-growth coalitions – alliances between State and productive sectors, such as real estate, and businesses – is suggested by studies on urban politics. Thus, it is not enough to identify the ruling class, or the productive sectors' interests in the city. It is also necessary to understand the political strategies that they use to set the urban development scheme (Purcell, 1996), and the means used by the grassroots to challenge them (Castells, 1983). These analyses of urban politics suggest that for the most part the political struggle over urban space is based on matters of collective consumption and neighborhoods concerns, although economic interests are never out-of-sight.

Despite their different approaches, critical urban studies converge in identifying conflicting interests in the evolution of the urban form. Such studies also established that the wider social forces affect urban geography as well as internal political interests. They place

urban processes into the broader socio-economic context: "Any understanding of explanation of the city needs to be set in a wider canvass, what goes in them needs to be interpreted in the context of the wider context of things" (Massey, 1996:102).

For example, the reasons for urban problems such as poverty and unemployment, for instance, are found on macro economic (national or increasingly international) context. Without denying that urban policies are capable of diminishing the effects of their social problems, these authors proved that interventions at the local scale would not reach the ultimate causes of their local scale problems.

A second and very up-to-date example of wider forces affecting the city is that of communications / transportation progress which is said to affect the city in a variety of ways. While some contend that facilitated communication diminish the costs of displacement and thus diminish the importance of space, the contrary is often the case. These technological innovations create new infrastructure requirements that are placed in strategic locations within the urban context thus increasing the discrepancies between different parts of the city and increasing the value of space (Smith, 1984). Despite divergences, nobody questions the fact that technological progress – a process of global reaching – does affect the city.

Social and Political Planning

Radical geography and its subsequent research brought to planners the perception that they have acted as state representative facilitating a market-driven urbanization process, which had perverse social consequences. In response to this perception, American urban planning incorporated social goals in its policies during the early 1970s. The boundaries between urban planning - a field derived from design-related disciplines such as architecture - and public policies were blurred. The rising interest in the social aspects of the city triggered new political

planning strategies, such as equity planning and advocacy planning. These new policies introduced equity concerns to planning. They aimed at the fair distribution of urban services and infrastructures among different neighborhoods. They recognized the devastating effects of modernist-comprehensive planning practices such as forced dislocation of the poor by urban renewal programs, and absence of social services on neglected areas of the city (Davidoff 1965, Krumholz, 1982).

However, as another consequence of theoretical development, the recognition that wider forces were able to affect the cities entailed a dramatic reduction of planning's scope. Slowly planners understood that the city is not a self-contained entity and that their range of action within the urban scale was limited. As a result, instead of changing society through the construction of the ideal spatial form, the new strategy intended to correct the imbalances of the economy, through attending marginalized groups. Therefore, social planning has had much more success in attending fragmented local-scale demands than in acting upon the origins of the problems of inequities because they were often located at regional or national scale.

Similarly in Third World cities, there was an increased recognition of the rights of the urban poor for an adequate living environment. In Brazil, for example, National Social Welfare policies expanded the urban infrastructure network of the major metropolitan areas and devised affordable housing projects to meet the social demands of rapidly growing cities. Although these policies have the same modernist intents of rationalizing the city, they (implicitly) acknowledged that the urban poor were being marginalized and victimized by the economic system. It was necessary to devise socially inclusive polices. Nevertheless, the political regime of dictatorship existing up to the 1980s delayed the political and advocacy aspects of planning (Bonduki, 1998).

In Brazil, as in great part of Latin America, urban social policies resulted from top-down approaches rather than direct demand of grassroots movements.

The Limits of Social Planning

Despite the positive effects of the increased concerns for equity in urban planning in the 1970s, planning practices tend to address social inequalities through non-spatialized policies. For the most part, social planning is limited in challenging the real estate market logic that makes the urban land an instrument of capital accumulation. The most spatially-bound planning instruments, like zoning, development control and urban redevelopment programs continue to be used with the prevalent objective of creating conditions for economic growth with very limited social equity purposes. While social planning focused on solving the problems at the level of neighborhoods or individual housing demands, physical planning shapes the pattern of spatial inequalities. And all too often the criteria used to shape the city rely on a kind of trickle down ideology where the urban economy has priority over social equity demands.

Hayden (1994) suggests that advocacy planners increased focus on the social causes of the urban problems occurred at the same time as their attentions to the physical reorganization of the city decreased. Because the urban physical space has intricate connections with society, spatial rearrangements led to important social equity consequences that planners should not overlook.

> "By turning his back on Physical Planning, Davidoff weakened the concept of advocacy in some significant ways. Today, after 40 years of sustained spatial, social and economic reshaping of the U.S. urban landscape, planners and citizens alike can see that economic inequality and racial segregation as well as profitable investment can flow from physical reorganization of the urban realm" (Hayden, 1994: 160).

By affirming this, she is calling equity planners to identify whose interests are being served by the physical reorganization of the city.

The discrepancy between the potential for equity in planning and its real accomplishments is indeed more obvious in Third World planning. The literature on poverty alleviation is well developed, and a literature about relative poverty (intra-urban socio-economic differentials) does exist (Devas and Rakodi, 1993; Werna, 2000). Poverty alleviation strategies often focus on the effects rather than the structural causes of the problems. As in equity planning, they also have a strong focus on participatory practices whose decisions at stake do not reach the structural roots of socio-spatial inequalities.

More recent studies center attention on urban management and urban services redistributive effects. Their argument is that infrastructure investments are collective social riches and should be used to diminish socio-economic distance between rich and poor (Werna 2000, Bond 2000, Silva 2000). But while the provision of urban services inevitably modifies the patterns of spatial inequalities in a given city, the way that space reacts back upon society – as in the case of infrastructure provision leading to gentrification – is not considered. In this sense, the third world planning literature also overlooks the dialectical relation between space and social processes. This was the shortcoming that critics of radical geography picked-up (Soja 1980; Gottdiener, 1985).

Social Production of Space

With the development of critical urban studies the path-breaking works of radical geography of the 1970s were viewed as too timid (Soja 1980; Gottdiener, 1985). Specifically Soja saw orthodox Marxist concentrated efforts in shifting attentions from urban space to urban

processes resulted in an almost non-spatialized mode of thought. This literature on social production of space emerged in order to avoid *social determinism* – space as the passive outcome of social processes (Soja, 1980; Harvey, 1996; Castells, 1982; Gottdiener, 1994; Massey, 1994). The literature focused on explaining how urban space could influence the very same social processes that shaped it. That is, although ruled by social processes, interventions in the urban territory also transform social structure – by defining routes of public transportation, placing public investments, regulating private property or the myriad of ways that private or public actors modify spatial relations. This is the foundational claim of the socio-spatial dialectics (Soja 1980). "In seeking an alternative to both, spatial fetishism and social determinism, the production of space perspective argues that spatial patterns and social processes are dialectically related rather than being linked through cycles of cause and effect" (Purcell, 1996:687).

It is important to mention that the progress in understanding spatial and social processes resulted from the academic discussion among the same radical geography authors rather than two clearly opposing bodies of literature.

Two points of this new approach are particularly relevant for their practical implications in planning. The first is the way in which representations are able to create "place identities" which in turn, are ultimately crucial to the concentration of wealth and power. In Massey's words, "imaginations of space and place play an important role in the constitution and legitimation of unequal material power" (1996:120). The second point is the recognition of a dialectical relation between globalization social processes the re-shaping of the urban geography.

Place Identities

Cases where representations of space end up shaping and modifying the urban landscape abound. Harvey (1996) provides the example of the power of writers, journalists and moviemakers to construct place identities and local traditions. They elect specific cultural traits to be marketed – which is the so-called process of commodification of culture. This strongly influences the choice of which areas of the city will receive public and private investments and be "revitalized". This process is widespread in Third World cities, particularly in order to develop the tourism industry. A second example of the power of place identities is how the depiction of a neighborhood as blighted and violent eventually contributes to its decay. The image of a violent place induces disinvestments reducing economic opportunities for the residents fulfilling the prophecy of a blighted area. Other authors have written extensively about that (see Smith 1996, Villaça 1998, Caldeira, 1996).

As with the social construction of ethnic identities, place identities are not only constituted (as we have seen) but also dynamic. This has been called the time/space dialectic (Smith 1984; Harvey 1996; Massey 1994). Contradicting public wisdom, these authors have shown that space is *not* the dimension of stasis while time is the one of movement and change. Space has multiple and ever changing socially constituted identities. Space identities consist of attempts to immobilize in a given point in time what is, by its very nature, dynamic. Harvey's description of construction of "permanences" is useful in explaining this:

> "A "permanence" arises as a system of "extensive connection" out of processes. Entities achieve relative stability in their bounding and their internal ordering of processes creating space, for a time. Such permanences come to occupy a piece of space

in an exclusive way (for a time) and therefore define a place – their place – (for a time). The process of place formation is a process of carving out "permanences"- no matter how solid they may seem – are not eternal: they are always subject to time as "perpetual perishing." They are contingent on the processes that create, sustain and dissolve them." (1996:261)

Globalization, Neoliberalism and Cities

The fact that these place permanences are dynamic and contingent upon processes that created them leads us to the discussion of globalization and the restructuring of the intra-urban space. Some authors (for instance Castells 1998, Sassen 1999, Marcuse 2000) are particularly interested in how changes in the urban landscape are associated with the increase in social inequalities of metropolises under the influence of new globalization processes. For them, the urban space tends to both accommodate, and simultaneously foster the new politico-economic, cultural and technological processes.

Generally, these authors describe a new spatial structure more complex than the well-studied center-periphery pattern as the result of social processes of global reaching. This complex and fragmented segregation pattern is the result of a global trend of greater symbiosis between the formal and informal economic sectors.

However cities are not passive outcomes of global processes, but rather the urban space has been a central element for the project of globalization. Following a neoliberal line of reason urban administrations have engaged in the process of local economic growth using public investments to produce spaces able to boost capital accumulation. This is a significant shift from a previous position when local governments (through urban planning) was to provide the minimum conditions of social reproduction, adopting more welfare-oriented policies aimed at

correcting the imbalances of the market system. A rather common strategy has been one of investing in strategic site within the city, promoting its image to potential investors, holders of footloose capital. (Sassen, 1999; Sandercock and Dovey, 2002) The trends to de-regulate and diminish restriction to market forces push municipal governments to policies excessively oriented toward economic development at expenses of the more vulnerable families, ultimately leading to increase in social polarization. (Ribeiro and Lago, 19996; Smith 2002)

Although entrepreneurial urban administrations are found in both developed and underdeveloped countries, the impact of globalization in Third World metropolises is not as clear as it is in "global cities". While some authors underline globalization's perverse social effects in Third world cities (Ribeiro and Lago, 1996), others challenge this assumption arguing that their integration into the global economy might decrease their level of urban poverty. Thornley (2001, 31), for example, contends that places able to successfully capture external investments to further develop their internal economy might not be experiencing increased social polarization. This controversy will be revisited later, in the empirical case of Fortaleza. For now it is enough to notice how the production of the urban space through placement of investments can be an active instrument of modifying existing patterns of social inequalities.

Socio- Spatial Theory

The majority of the authors that recognize a dialectical relation between space and society build upon the work of Henri Lefebvre. It was Lefebvre who first introduced the expression "production of space", referring to the perception that instead of producing things in space, society produces the space itself, molding the environment in order to facilitate its modes of production and reproduction (Lefebvre, 1979). And this very socially created environment also molds society. Lefebvre's seashell metaphor brings up this dialectical relation:

"A seashell is the result of a living creature that has slowly secreted its structure. Separate the creature from the form it's given itself … and you're left with something soft, slimy and shapeless. *The relationship between the animal and the shell is, therefore, crucial for understanding both the shell and the animal*" (Merrifield, 2002:81-82 my emphasis).

Humans are the animals and cities are their habitats. One cannot understand one or the other without understanding the relations among them.

"Lefebvre argued that the exercise of social hegemony is fundamentally a spatial project, that the potential for power is realized through the transformation of space" (Purcell, 1997:687). Thus, for him, the urban social struggle has *space* as a central element. It is important to notice that the space Lefebvre refers to is not an object but the essential component of social relation.

The Gap in the Planning Literature

This discussion leads me to conclude that in order to address the equity question in an efficient manner, *the practice of urban planning needs to be understood as the social production of urban space*. The advantage in defining planning this way is that it places planning's effect on society at the center. Thus planning, as long as it affects the urban territory, affects the relative wealth of the residents, for better or for worse. It is never neutral, serving an abstract public interest.

If we are to devise planning policies that help to diminish conditions of extreme urban poverty, the urban space has to be understood as a collective resource, whose production has to include social equity considerations as well as economic growth criteria. I contend that the difficulties of social planning in achieving more persistent effects lies precisely in its limited concern with the effects of changes in the urban geography. Urban investments, for example are

able to shape the urban space, and thus define who will have access to the opportunities offered by the city.

This definition opens up two very distinct possibilities for planning. It can be either an instrument of social control or an instrument of social reform (Yiftachel, 1998). Lefebvre had already opened these paths when he put space as the central element of any social process. If space is a critical resource for political domination it is similarly crucial for any process of social transformation.

Unfortunately this understanding has reached planning only in a tangential and very limited way. Yiftachel (1998) exposes how planners have taken for granted the essential reformist character of their activities. By assuming "planning as agent of positive change" (1998:396), they underestimate the circumstances in which planning serves the "exercise of social hegemony" (1998:396). For him, planning theory is heavily oriented toward producing normative and prescriptive models rather than analytical explanations. Likewise, Holston (1998) claims that planning has to focus on the ethnographic (as opposed to utopian) future, in order to be effective. Sandercock (1998) has a similar point, particularly in relation to planning education that tends to keep distance from analytical social sciences prioritizing instrumental rationality and normative tools. The current stage of planning theory contributes little to the understanding of how planning shapes our cities. Rather it produces a paralysis between academics' "untenable expectation to produce applicable theory" and practitioners misguided by "partial and misleading theories about planning potential impacts on the built environment" (Yiftachel, 1998:404).

Communicative planning (Forester, 1999; Healey, 1996 Innes, 1998) is one example of such of normative and prescriptive models. It concentrates efforts in amplifying the access to the urban decision-making processes, and aims at fostering the ability of different groups to

communicate their needs on the city. According to this mode of planning, open inclusive conversations would eventually lead to a fairer city.

Despite the usefulness of such inclusive practices, they tend to ignore the effects of the actual resulting geographies of such political processes. Morris and Fondahl (2002) suggest that we have to move from the "spaces of negotiation" to the "negotiated spaces".

Planners need to understand the politics of place construction and the effects of the resulting geographies in order to make urban planning an effective instrument of social equity. Planners, as the managers of urban space, occupy a strategic position to use space as an instrument of justice.

In this regard, a new body of knowledge is starting to emerge and tangentially influencing the planning field. It is mainly concerned with the rights-to-the-city of the marginalized groups (Sassen 1999, Holston and Appadurai 1999, Friedmann 2002, Sandercock1998, Purcell 2002, Souza 2001). What these authors have in common is the understanding of social conflicts as inherently spatial claims. Yet, there is still a long path for them to go, from a mere call for inclusion of spatial claims by the powerless groups, to devising policies that take into account the potential of the space in diminishing socio-economic inequalities. We must not underestimate the political nature of such a project.

The case of Fortaleza in the next chapters demonstrates how state-led urban planning has reinforced conditions of social inequalities. The conclusions also feed this insurgent planning literature that attempt to address questions of social justice in planning through socio-spatial processes.

Chapter 03 Fortaleza and the Rise of Socio-Spatial Inequalities

The Local Context

Fortaleza Metropolitan Region is the fifth biggest urban agglomeration of Brazil, with 2.5 million inhabitants in the year 2000. Yet, among the big cities it presents the worst socio-economic indicators. Its Human Development Index (PNUD/IPEA) in 1991 was 0.71 compared to 0.78 for the average of the 9 biggest Brazilian Metro Areas. The percentage of population under the poverty line in 1991 was 47.4% (Rocha, 1996) significantly higher than the 28.9% of the average. This negative scenario is a product of the historical conditions of national developmental strategies in which big disparities between the (still) more industrialized southeastern Brazil and the underdeveloped Northeast persist. As a result, Brazilian Northeast experienced a urbanization process much later compared to the more developed cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro – and to some extent Belo Horizonte - that received migratory influx from the entire country (particularly from the Northeast) in the 1960s and 1970s. In the following decades, while the national urban centers diminished their pace of population growth, regional centers such as Fortaleza became big metropolises. Within the Northeast, Recife and Salvador have always been the more dynamic centers, but the excessive migration toward Fortaleza allowed it to outpace Recife in terms of population size.

Population of the biggest Brazilian municipalities by decade

	1970	1980	1991	1996	2000
Brasil	93,134,846	119,011,052	146,825,475	157,070,163	169,799,170
Manaus - AM	311,622	633,383	1,011,501	1,157,357	1,405,835
Belém - PA	633,374	933,280	1,244,689	1,144,312	1,280,614
Fortaleza - CE	857,980	1,307,608	1,768,637	1,965,513	2,141,402
Recife - PE	1,060,701	1,203,887	1,298,229	1,346,045	1,422,905
Salvador - BA	1,007,195	1,502,013	2,075,273	2,211,539	2,443,107
Belo Horizonte - MG	1,235,030	1,780,839	2,020,161	2,091,371	2,238,526
Rio de Janeiro - RJ	4,251,918	5,090,723	5,480,768	5,551,538	5,857,904
São Paulo - SP	5,924,612	8,493,217	9,646,185	9,839,066	10,434,252
Curitiba - PR	609,026	1,024,980	1,315,035	1,476,253	1,587,315
Porto Alegre - RS	885,545	1,125,478	1,263,403	1,288,879	1,360,590
Brasília - DF	537,492	1,176,908	1,601,094	1,821,946	2,051,146

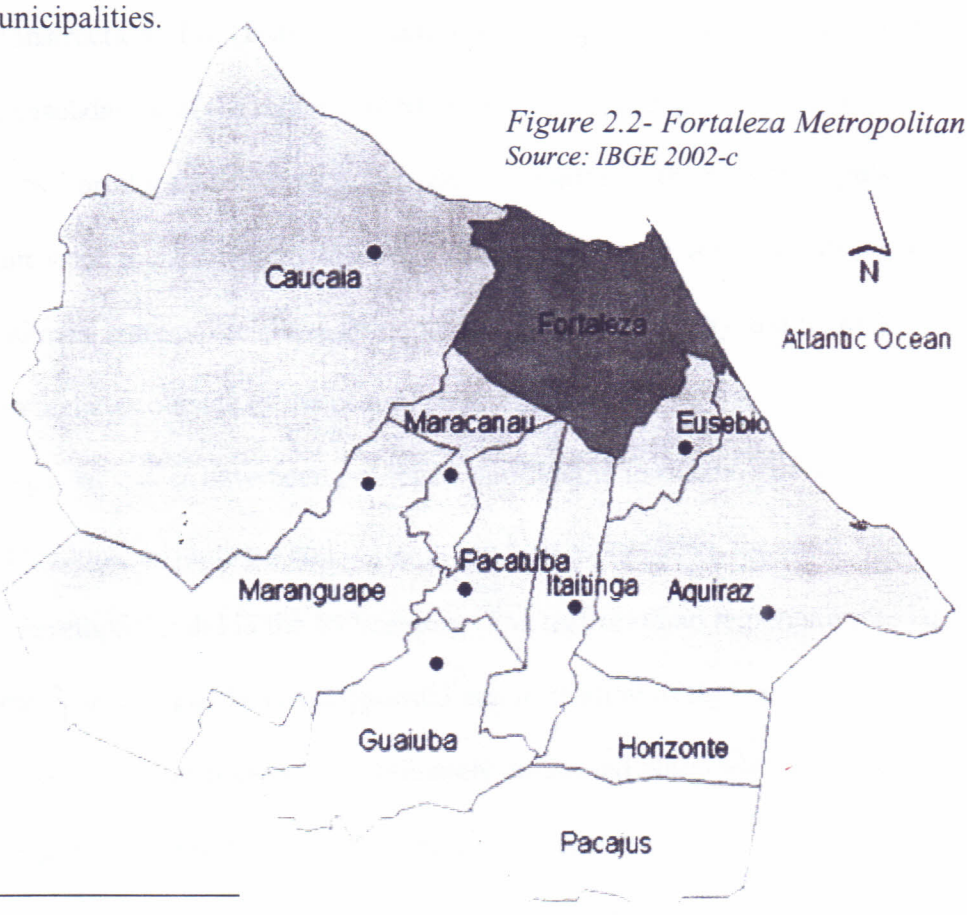
Source: IBGE - Censo Demográfico. www.ibge.gov.br

Figure 2.1- Brazilian Metropolises with more than one million inhabitants in 2000 Source: IBGE 2002-c

Twelve municipalities comprise the Metropolitan Region of Fortaleza. However 75% of its total population lives in the central municipality of Fortaleza. Today, more than a quarter century after the Metropolitan Region's creation as a political territory, its outer boundaries remain far larger than the main urban agglomeration, which I will hereafter refer to as the urban

continuum of Fortaleza[5], and roughly matches the borders of the city if Fortaleza. The conurbation between Fortaleza's urban tissue and that of other municipalities is just recently starting to occur. With the exception of Maracanaú and Caucaia, the peripheral cities are relatively isolated from the main urban continuum. The fact that 86% of the industries, and 84% of the commercial establishments of the entire region are located within the Fortaleza city limits and that 84% of the region's GDP is produced at the central city shows that this urban continuum mainly coincides with the administrative boundaries of the municipality of Fortaleza. Although the outlying municipalities are growing faster then Fortaleza, the central city still has 72% of the total metropolitan population (2,984,689 inhabitants in 2000), as compared to 28% of the sum of all other municipalities.

Figure 2.2- Fortaleza Metropolitan Region
Source: IBGE 2002-c



[5] This is the definition adopted by Pequeno, 2001 following Villaça 2000 criteria to identify the boundaries of the intra-urban space. Among other criteria, these authors consider the movement of daily commute. Smith, 2002 also makes reference to this difference among the urban and the regional space making specific reference to the Third World urban context.

The Historical Process of Differentiating Space in Fortaleza

The historical process of urban development in Fortaleza's cannot be adequately explained without accounting for the role of the natural barriers in shaping the city. Thus, in the 18th century, proximity to natural transportation routes and a landscape suitable for urban development still conditioned urban prosperity in Northeast Brazil. Fortaleza's natural site was particularly appropriate for the city because of numerous sources of water, abundance of flat land, and the existence of a natural harbor adequate for shipment of the agricultural goods produced in the hinterland. In the early 19th century, early settlers occupied the plains not subject to floods located relatively near to sources of drinkable water. From this point on, urban development was a process of further differentiating an already differentiated surface.

The construction of the Port of Mucuripe in 1950, the installation of a railroad line and the gradual consolidation of the regional road network converging on the city both explain and are explained by Fortaleza's economic supremacy in relation to the region. Population migration from the countryside toward the city followed. In the last decade, after the city surpassed 2 millions inhabitants, state polices have attempted to dislocate industry and regional transportation facilities outside of the central city, with limited success.

The regional spaces have been produced through the installation of these "spatial fixes" that created locational advantages and led to urban prosperity today, the same way that natural suitability to development did in the 19th century. The metropolitan region attracted more and more investments increasing the developmental gap in relation to the rest of the State. This regional process is relevant because it is intimately connected with the main object of analysis of this work: the process of production of the intra-urban space.

Early Settlements and Dunes

The city was born as this regional transportation hub. Industries were located near to the two main regional transportation facilities: the port at Mucuripe, and the Railroad Station on the west, closer to the city. The formal city – houses and commerce - occupied the area close to the Pajeú Stream where downtown is located today. The richest neighborhoods tended to expand eastward due to the barrier of the railroad, and also because of the availability of relatively flat areas. They kept distance from industries, but preserved the transportation link with them. The distance between neighborhoods and industries can be explained because the land close to the industrial districts consisted mainly of sand dunes, expensive to provide with infrastructure. Infrastructures for productive activities on these relatively distant areas were made available, but there was no immediate interest in developing these lands for residential use because of the high cost. The dunes also limited the rush for waterfront development experienced in recent decades by all Brazilian cities: the formal city appropriated a relatively small portion located in the interval between the east and west coastal dunes. (See figure 03 and 04 below)

By "formal city" I refer to those settlements that resulted from State initiative in transforming the natural environment to suit urban needs. Those who cannot afford these expensive produced lands occupy the left over spaces, building the "informal city". They create extra-official settlements in hard-to-occupy lands, which have no immediate value for the formal real estate market. People who lived in these places had a strikingly rural way of life until the 1980s. Before that, they had to carry water in buckets, wash clothes in the rivers, and live with no bathrooms. They frequently had to abandon their houses because of the constant movement of

sand. Paved roads and collective urban services were not available. It is not difficult to find old residents who can describe how life was there 25 years ago[6].

Despite the "rural" way of life of their settlers, these settlements have always been an intrinsic part of the city. Even without infrastructure, these settlements only existed because of relative proximity to work, both in the industries, and in the service economy of the formal city. In their struggle for a good location within the urban space, disadvantaged groups tended to target all kinds of ecologically sensitive areas, before they had been "developed" [7].

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[6] Today a small portion of "Castelo Encantado" (the dunes settlement on the east) dwellers still make their living from fishing.

[7] Portuguese has a term similar to urbanization (urbanização) that means land development for all kinds of urban uses. Dunes and rivers have been developed for dense residential uses (as in the case of favelas) or they have been simply provided with (mostly drainage) infrastructure and facilities to recreational uses.

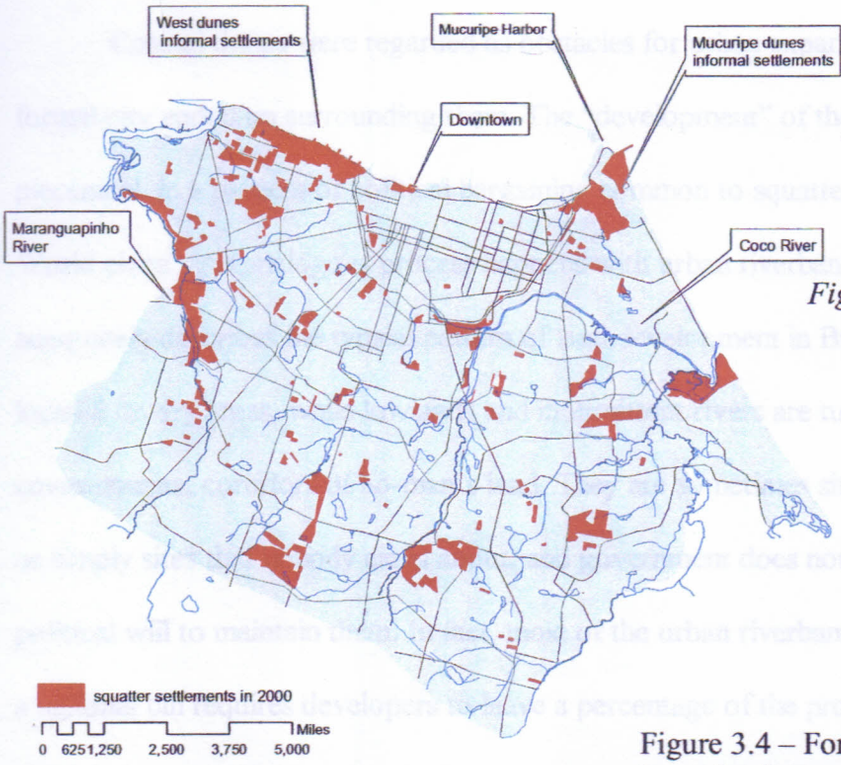

Figure 3.3 Intra-Urban Space of Fortaleza. (IBGE census 2002-b and Prefeitura Municipal de Fortaleza, 1991)

Figure 3.4 – Fortaleza Natural Environment
(www.cdbrasil.cnpm.embrapa.br and Prefeitura municipal de Fortaleza)

Rivers and Lowlands

Coastal dunes were regarded as obstacles for urban expansion. For the most part, the formal city ended up surrounding them. The "development" of the dunes has happened piecemeal, in a process of political bargaining common to squatter settlements in a lot of Third World cities[8]. An analogous process happens with urban riverbanks and low lands. Figure 2.5 adequately describes the typical pattern of land development in Brazilian cities. Streets are often located on dry areas, while lowlands and intermittent rivers are turned into leftover environments, corridors of no-man's land. They are sometimes sites of trash disposal, drug trade, or simply sites that nobody cares about, and government does not have enough resources or political will to maintain them. In fact, most of the urban riverbanks are publicly owned because a national bill requires developers to leave a percentage of the property as green space to municipal ownership.

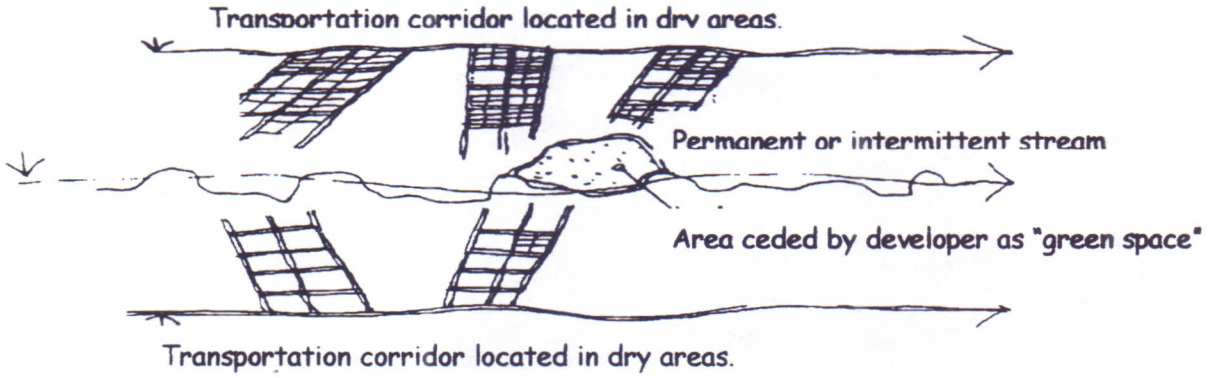

Figure 2.5 – a typical pattern of production of space (Campos Filho, 1999).

In this pattern of space production where non-valuable fragile ecosystems are "donated" to an absent public power, the concentration of squatter settlements at the coastal dunes and the urban rivers is no coincidence. Figure 2.5 depicts how the street networks of new subdivisions

[8] For a description of a similar case in the mountains on the outskirts of Mexico-city see Pezzoli, 1998

cling exclusively to the road and leave the river as a spatial barrier. Squatters rapidly occupy these empty in-between spaces. In all instances the squatters are aware of the environmental risks of catastrophic floods and landslides. Poor people continue to occupy these risky areas because they are the only available spaces with reasonable accessibility to the formal city and opportunities on the informal economy. Figure 2.6 reveals this process along the Maranguapinho River in the west side of Fortaleza.

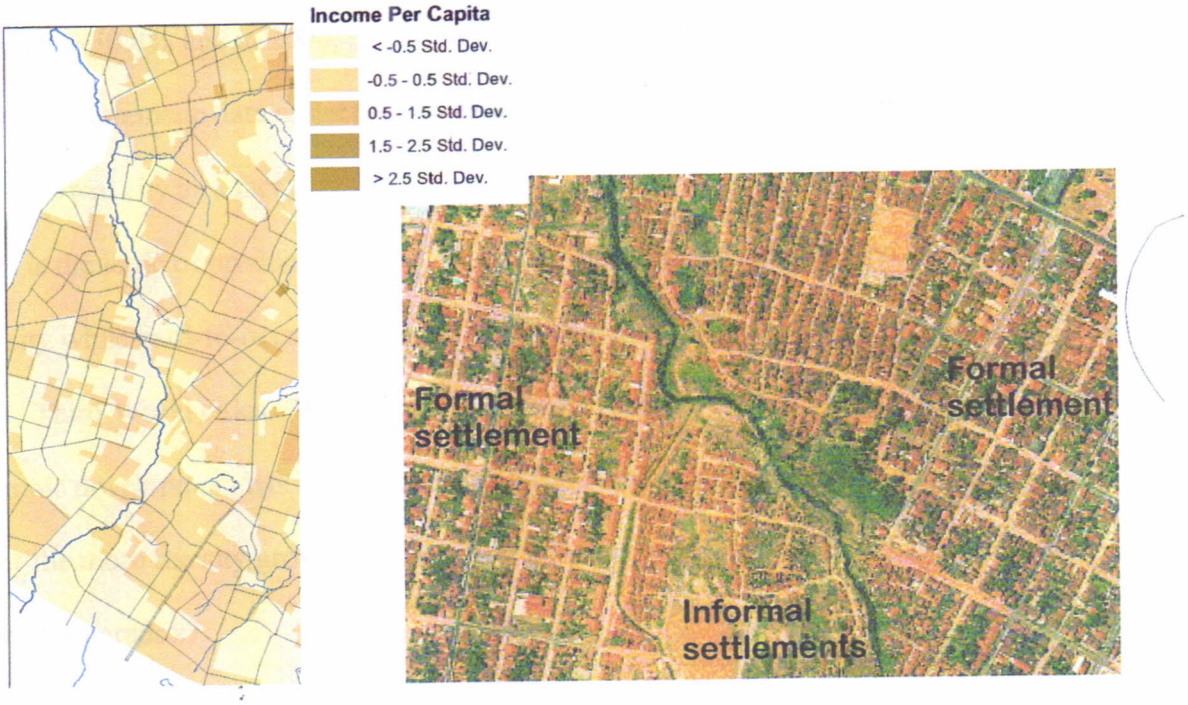

Figure 2.6 Occupation of Maranguapinho riverbanks. Source IBGE 2002-b (A- Concentration of poverty around the river) (B-Detail of street network)

Rise of Spatial Inequalities

Recently there has been an acute intensification of occupation of these leftover environments far greater than the growth of the formal sector. In fact in Fortaleza, the term favelas (the classical Portuguese word for urban informal settlements) has been substituted for "areas-at risk" referring to environmental risks of landslides or floods for example. There is such

a high incidence of occupation of environmental fragile areas that people are starting to think of every favela as "areas-at-risk". As misleading as this substitution might be, it depicts the significance of the occupation of environmentally fragile to the dominant perception of the problem. In this last annual rainy period (march-2003) local newspapers reported that the number of "areas at risk" have grown 82% in the last five years[9].

Because the new concept of areas-at-risk has become contentious and politically manipulated, it might be more accurate to expose the rise of favelas in general. According to different sources, in 1985, 27% of total residents lived in squatter settlements. In 1991 this number increased to 30.8% and in 2000, 34.3% of urban inhabitants lived in illegal settlements[10]. Despite the lack of systematic data collection, all sectors of society accept the recent astonishing growth of the informal city as a fact.

So, this is the logic of producing intra urban space in Fortaleza: suitable land is occupied by the formal city while hard-to-occupy lands are left for squatters. Certainly, this process is very typical of many Third World cities. What seems to be most relevant to the Fortaleza case is the fact that economic development has not been able to weaken this process. There is a common perception that the more the city grows the fast urban informality grows. The big challenge is how to explain this paradox?

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[9] O Povo April 1st, 2003

[10] Bezerra, 2001 based on three distinct censuses of favelas, PROAFA in 1985, COHAB in 1991, CDPDH in 2000.

Globalization in Fortaleza: Growth with Inequity

Despite its location in a very poor region of the country, Fortaleza has been experiencing a period of great economic growth if compared with the rest of the country. The rise to State[11] power in 1987 of a political group that describes itself as "the government of changes" is the cornerstone of this development process. Public administrators and media often refer to this development period as the insertion of the region into the era of globalization[12]. In fact, from a mere administrative capital of the chronically poor State of Ceará, and a regional commercial center of insignificant proportions for the national economy, the city became a profitable site for external (but mainly national) investments raising its position in relation to other national urban economies.

Fortaleza is clearly one of those places expected to benefit from the spatial rearrangement of the production process resulting from economic globalization. It is regarded as a successful city, and has received considerable international recognition[13]. Its developmental strategy has been regarded as a model, and has been emulated by the neighboring metropolitan regions. The development strategy consisted mainly of a pioneer State program of fiscal incentives, and important infrastructure investments for both tourism and industrial sectors.

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[11] Although each city of the State has its own relatively independent municipal government, all of them took a position of relative passivity accepting the regional policies devised at the State's tier of government.

[12] A representative approach is that of this document entitled consolidation of the new state of Ceará, which is part of the plan for sustainable development of State Administration for the 1999-2002 period. In the section "International insertion: trends and risks of the global context" the document asserts that the administration has been doing great efforts to profit from the opportunities opened by the globalization process.

[13] See Tendler (1997:9) for an account of the three-page description of the "remarkable accomplishments of the one of [Brazil's] state's government in that country's poor Northeast region, Ceará". See also her note 29, (Pp173) where she lists other "laudatory articles that appeared elsewhere in the international and Brazilian Press". Those include, Newsweek (1992), The Washington Post (1992) New York Times (1993, 1994) among others.

Industrialization

The city's industrialization has intensified due to the search for low-paid labor by industries from more developed regions. In addition to reduced labor costs, the State program of fiscal incentives was also a significant factor attracting industries. These fiscal incentives consisted in the reduction of State taxes requirement for incoming investments. They enabled the inward movement of industries originally from the more developed South and Southeast regions. Although the spatial dislocation of productive activities was not sufficient to alter the national structure of regional inequalities, it certainly has had a significant positive impact to Ceará's Economy. The incoming industries are, for the most part, traditional sectors such as textiles, shoes, and food, with very traditional production processes.

Fortaleza's industrial development might not be the elites' notion of inserting the city into the global economy. There has certainly not been a breaking down of Fordist mode of production and its related division of labor. However other indisputable aspects of globalization mark Fortaleza's industrial development – namely competitiveness and flexibilization of labor. Under the label of flexibility, many of the industries make use of subcontracting of labor cooperatives[14] that allows for escaping from the heavy labor benefits (Bernal, 2002). Not to mention the strategy of "fiscal war", that consists in competing for external investments with other regions through diminishing fiscal taxes as much as possible.

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[14] The system of labor cooperative was initially set up to incentive community-based productive groups as a method of employment generation. Unfortunately industries have made used of this legal instrument to run away from the heavy labor benefits required by the national legislation. For a more detailed account on garment industries on Northeast Brazil see Lima, 1999

Tourism

The rise of Fortaleza's tourism sector also increase the inflow of external investments. Since 1994, the influx of tourists to the city has more than doubled[15], with a similar increase in the influx of external revenue. Because the isolated Northeast region has little attractiveness to other economic activities that require heavy fiscal incentives, tourism has been described as a "magic solution". In fact, tourism development does not require a fierce competition with other powerful Brazilian regions. The local weather of virtually permanent sunshine, along with the natural beauties such as beaches and mountains are often cited as the region's "natural" economic vocation. Not to mention the reduced price of local tourist-related services if compared to the more developed southern regions of Brazil.

It is exactly through tourism development that urban administrations see the city's insertion into the global economy. The rise in tourism economies worldwide is clearly tied to increased mobility of people due to progress of transportation technology.

However, as in the case of industrial labor cooperatives and subcontracting, tourism has also brought new social contradictions for Fortaleza. While some residents profit from tourist-related activities, the social costs of some tourism developments – such as child prostitution and displacement of native communities – are barely taken into account by cost-benefit analyses of tourist projects. In addition, if the rise in industrial jobs was not able to decrease the level of economic informality, the influx of tourists has directly contributed to its increase. Not only because the tourists are considerable clientel of street vendors, but also because of the seasonality of the activity (January and July being the most demanding periods) requiring periodic hiring. The relative increase of the local informal economy is evident. Informal sector

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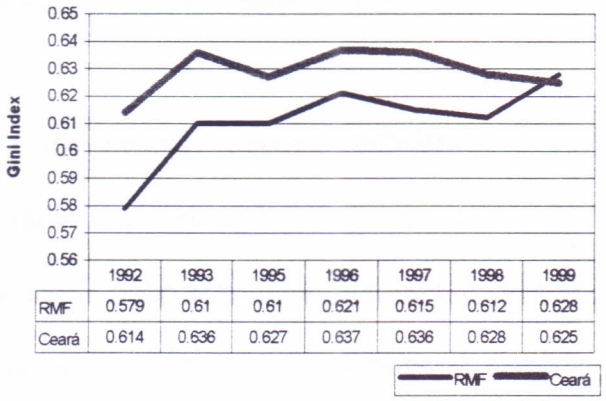
[15] www.turismo.ce.gov/

percentage of the total employment has gone from 42.5% in 1984 to 52.99% in 1998 (SINE/CE, 1998).

Social Indicators

From 1985 to 1997, Ceará's GDP grew 55.9% compared to 36.8% of the Brazilian Northeast and 36.5% of the entire country, demonstrating the incontestable success of the local economic polices. Unfortunately, Fortaleza's development was followed by an increase in regional imbalances. As a result, 1999's medium income of the Metro Area (the 12 municipalities) is more than twice that of the rest of the State. The new mode of development adopted was not able to diminish the internal social disparities. On the contrary, some claim that it has directly contributed to reinforce economic gap among the inhabitants. In fact, the most dynamic region (the metro area) has reached the level of income inequality of the State, known for contrasts among rich landowners and poor peasants (Bernal, 2002; see graph).

Gini Index (household income per capita)
(Source Bernal, 2002)



	1992	1993	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
RMF	0.579	0.61	0.61	0.621	0.615	0.612	0.628
Ceará	0.614	0.636	0.627	0.637	0.636	0.628	0.625

Searching for the Causes...

The rise in social inequalities in a developmental period is a politically delicate issue. It has received significant attention by the media, the academics and the political community, particularly if compared to the less discussed – although more acute – rise of spatial inequalities described earlier. Some of the more locally established explanations for the paradox of social

inequalities and economic growth consist of non-spatial arguments, which tend to see the changes in the urban geography as the mere reflex of social transformations.

Media and government sectors often explain the perpetuation of negative social indicators by sharp regional imbalances between the prosperous city and the stagnated rural economy. The fact that Fortaleza is the only dynamic economy in a stagnated and poor State contributes to the increase in social inequalities. The excessive concentration of investments in the metropolitan area has certainly not diminished the historically significant rural-urban population movement. The possibility of jobs attracts poor populations from stagnated cities. Massive influx of migrants continues to target the city, despite the national population trend of movement toward medium-sized cities. Census data (2000) shows that the city is not diminishing the pace of growth at the same rate as the other national urban centers.

According to this most widespread view, the situation of extreme imbalances between the prosperous city and the poor rural areas is the ultimate culprit of the persisting social inequalities in Fortaleza because it causes migration for the city. Concerns with this question of intra-State developmental gap are demonstrated by governmental polices that offer greater tax abatements for the industries that establish in isolated municipalities of the State. Reducing intra-state imbalances is also the main goal of policies aimed at strengthening others urban centers in Ceará. So far these policies have showed limited success.

Critics of governmental policies invariably point to the poor conditions of the new jobs. For them increased urban poverty is not simply caused by the situation of intra-State imbalances, but also by a misleading economic development strategy. In fact, Bernal's analysis of the composition of the local workforce reveals that the category defined as under-proletariat, which comprises the poorest part of low-paid informal workers, rose significantly from 12.8% in 1988

to 17.1% in 1999. Her analysis argues that the processes of economic globalization in Fortaleza led to impoverishment of the working class without middle-class shrinkage characteristic of global cities in more developed countries. For her, the rise of the informal economy and impoverishment of low middle-classes are ultimately responsible for the rise of the informal city.

The trend of pauperization of the working class results, in great part, from a national economic situation of stagnation and recession. Local development was not immune to the context of Brazilian economic stagnation, decreased security of jobs, and smaller wages[16], neither resistant to trend of flexibilization and pauperization of labor conditions of global proportions. It is thus not possible to evaluate the local economic policies without considering the national and global context into which Fortaleza is inserted, and this is not my intention. The important point is that, whatever the cause (macroeconomic condition or failed state development policies), the impoverishment of the working class has provided a second explanation for the rise of both social and spatial inequalities. Recently, this explanation has gained popularity as the migratory flow toward Fortaleza has been diminishing. Headlines such as "poverty is also a determinant factor for urban problems"[17] are not difficult to find in the local newspapers.

This thesis will, hereafter, provide a third and more geographically based explanation for the paradoxical recent intensification of socio-spatial inequities in Fortaleza. It calls attention to the role that space plays in defining social inequalities. I argue that intra-state imbalances and poor conditions of jobs are not enough for explaining the astonishing growth of the informal city and increased occupation of environmentally fragile areas, precisely because the above

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[16] For an accurate description of the national economic impact on urban informality and employment conditions see Baltar, 1998. Baltar, Paulo. 1998. Emprego e Informalidade das ocupações urbanas do Brasil nos anos 90. In XI Encontro Nacional de Estudos populacionais.

[17] Jornal O POVO. April 01, 2003.

mentioned explanations see space as a passive outcome of the social relations. I propose to shift the familiar chain of causality reflected in these popular accounts of the causes of urban poverty, which contend that the urban geography is passively determined by socio-economic factors such as migration and job informality.

The next chapter will provide a closer look at the forces shaping the urban space and expose how the appropriation of the city according to the interests of a few privileged sectors has strongly influenced the worsening of socio-spatial differentials.

Chapter 04 Can Urban Development Produce Inequalities?

This chapter offers two cases in Fortaleza that reveal how increasing social inequalities also depended on the spatial placement of investments within the urban space. Although both cases have this same argument, they approach the question in significantly different ways.

The first case provides a spatial explanation for the rise in socio-spatial inequalities under conditions of economic globalization described in the last chapter. It exposes the tendency for increased complexity of the local segregation pattern, and contends that the new geography is both a result and a necessary condition for the arrival of politico-economic globalization in Fortaleza.

The second case shows the persistence of deeply rooted practices of using urban development to privilege the already well-off sectors. It focuses on inequalities created by the provision of accessibility through the opening of transportation corridors. Despite major roads have always been placed to favor rich neighborhoods and open real estate frontiers, at the expense of isolated popular settlements, there has been a shift in attitude recently. Neoliberal urban investments have been using road projects to enable market led gentrification of poor settlements located at strategic sites, that is, sites potentially profitable for private investments.

Case 01 – Abandoning the Center-Periphery Pattern

This case builds upon the literature on the impact of globalization on cities, focusing particularly on the socio-spatial impact of neoliberal policies in Fortaleza. Earlier, I have exposed Thorney's (2001) premises that cities that have been able to successfully capture

external investments might not be experiencing increased social polarization. The fact that Fortaleza benefited from increased competitiveness makes the city one of these successful cases. Yet, we have seen that socio-inequalities did not diminish in Fortaleza confirming other more negative assessments of Globalization in Third World cities (Ribeiro, 2000 for instance).

This case does not stop on the analysis of the impact of globalization on Fortaleza. It takes a step further, and suggests that modifications on Fortaleza's spatial structure have significantly contributed to the worsening of inequality indicators. The analysis of changes in Fortaleza residential segregation patterns suggests that the increased socio-economic inequalities cannot be satisfactorily explained without accounting for the significant change in the logic of production of the urban space.

Spatial Requirements of Productive Sectors

The last chapter exposed how economic development associated with globalization arrived in Fortaleza in these last 15 years. The new economic development strategies required significant changes in the local urban geography, confirming Massey's assertion that geographical inequalities respond to "changes in the geographical distribution of the requirements of production". (Massey, 1994:51) Thus, the new productive activities of Tourism and Industries imposed new spatial demands on the city and significantly contributed to changing the previously existing center-periphery segregation pattern.

Industries and Investments in the Outskirts

In order to attract industries it was necessary to replace the old industrial sites, now increasingly encroached by urban expansion, with modern industrial sites located at the periphery of the Metropolitan Region and relatively far from the main urban continuum.

The metropolitan municipalities adjacent to the central city of Fortaleza received extensive investments in urban infrastructure targeting new industries. As a consequence, they experienced a great jump in population growth. Maracanaú is the best example of this process. From a mere peripheral district of the municipality of Maranguape in the 1970s, it became the second most populous municipality in the State in 1990. A second example is the municipality of Caucaia, west of Fortaleza. In the last decade, the administration of the state of Ceará has been implementing expensive industrial infrastructure improvement, including a new port, an energy generator facility, and a petroleum refinery. These investments have created great expectations for new jobs, although industrial development has not taken place yet. The main goal of these kinds of investments is to create "agglomerations of scale" giving conditions for the firms to relocate to these sites profitably. As a result, not only industrial infrastructure, but also a series of transportation corridors were opened to connect these peripheral industrial poles with the urban continuum of Fortaleza.

This increased regional connectivity has led to the end of the urban expansion frontier characteristic of the older urban development logic. That is, "the periphery ceased to be an open space [...] whose growth logic led to the spread of home ownership for the least well-off" (Ribeiro and Lago, 1996:379). Because of the transportation corridors, the new industrial poles increased the relative proximity of land peripheral to the urban continuum, increasing the value of peripheral land.

Tourism and Investments in Strategic Sites

While the industrial sector implied a trend of decentralization of the urban space, the tourist sector required increased centralization of investments on the already produced city. For the most part, tourism-led economic growth is often used as an excuse for excessive

centralization of investments in the relatively better off neighborhoods, particularly the east portion of the urban continuum whose contrasts to the rest of the city have historically been very sharp.

Another significant influence of tourism development on the urban space is the increased importance of Fortaleza's image. State-sponsored propaganda campaigns of the local natural features in national and international media aim to attract visitors by building an image of a coastal oasis. The waterfront became the site of numerous urban design contests and investments in cultural facilities such as museums and cultural centers. In fact, in 1998 the State Secretary of Tourism promoted a contest to create an icon for Fortaleza with overt references to Paris' Eiffel tower and New York City's Statue of Liberty[18].

The Political Component of Globalization: Neoliberalism

Perhaps, the local government's shift in attitude from the role of regulator to the role of facilitator of the market has more significant spatial consequences than the actual infrastructure requirements of productive activities. The greater concern with the image of the city, and the excessive search to capture external investments, are essential components of a dominant neoliberal ideology. Neil Smith's definition of "neoliberal urbanism" is one of disinvestments in the needs of urban residents in lieu of an increased emphasis on productive sectors requirements. For him "the shift from an urban scale defined according to the conditions of social reproduction to one in which the investment of productive capital holds definitive precedence" (Smith, 2002:427) defines the new urban political era.

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[18] The contest was realized, but its construction required an amount of investments far beyond the economic reality of the city.

The national context of fiscal crisis has significantly diminished national transfers of funds toward municipalities inducing local administrations to use pro-growth strategies in order to generate their own resources. Local governments of all political backgrounds have adopted pro-growth neoliberal urban policies using a commonplace argument of "there is no alternative"[19]. This dominant political ideology shifts the burden of economic development from the national to a more decentralized administrative level. Thus, the transfer of decision-making toward a more local level also comes with the burden for greater responsibility for the economic growth, which have justified reduced attention to the social reproduction needs of the urban residents. According to this now dominant mode of thinking, social reproduction needs will ultimately be addressed in the form of the new jobs brought by economic growth in a kind of "trickle-down" ideology.

Both Industry and Tourism's developmental policies have drawn on the rhetoric of urban competitiveness to justify the incentives provided and the consequential reduction of social service provision. The argument is that, because of the increased mobility of investments, if Fortaleza does not offer the best deal for external investments other cities will. Tourist investments and facilities are to be provided if the city is not to lose the opportunity for other cities. Policies of industrial development use the same argument of competitiveness with other cities. Fortaleza Metro Area competes for industrial investments not only by offering the best infrastructure conditions, but also by abating taxes as much as possible. According to the

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[19] Harvey summarizes this way of thinking very clearly in his chapter of "possible urban worlds". In his words: "The sixth myth is that social problems are curable only to the degree that decentralized forces of the market are given freer play to produce space, place, and nature in an urbanizing word" (1996:436)

Secretary of Industrial Development of the last State administration, tax abatement (and not cheap labor) is the only reason for an outside investor to invest in the State[20].

New Housing Policies

The clear mobilization on the part of local public managers to insert the city into the "era of competitiveness" has important consequences to the urban structure. The socio-spatial effects of this new entrepreneurial discourse are most evident in the new strategy of addressing the housing problem. While the old public housing projects aimed at providing homeownership to less favored groups, today fragmented interventions in existing favelas explicitly respond to requirements of productive capital, such as the opening of a road, or beautification of the urban space for tourists.

In the old logic of production of space, considerable national funds were channeled into big peripheral public housing projects. They were constructed to house populations evicted from centrally located favelas despite their inability to pay the monthly payments. It is relevant to mention that the old policies started in times of political dictatorship whose administrators did not tolerate illegal land invasion and whose policies aimed at imposing order to the urban space. But notwithstanding the perversity of some of these large-scale evictions, these housing projects had the positive effect of pushing the urban frontier outward. This diminished the pressure over land through increasing the supply of cheap peripheral vacant land (Pequeno, 2001). The *Conjunto Palmeiras*, *Conjunto Ceará*, and *Conjunto Presidente José Walter* are the main examples of these expansionist projects.

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[20] Interview to O POVO newspaper, April 14, 2002. Entitled: Income concentration: it is Federal Government's Fault.

The new housing strategy is one of provision of infrastructure to the already existing favelas rather than constructing big housing project on the outskirts (see table below). It has contributed to the closing down of the urban frontier also by concentrating investments on the already built-up space (Pequeno, 2001). The criteria of picking few areas to intervene often respond to the interests of the real estate industry and help to build an image of a city without poverty for the visitors. This approach tends to be more fragmented attending only the most visible parts of the favelas, contrasting to mega-scale housing projects of the past.

Housing construction 1964-2000

Period	Housing units built	Families beneficiaries from upgrading projects[21]	total
1964-1986	56.170	0	56.170
1987-1995	42.494	14.876	57.370
1996-2000	17.042	31.333	48.375
Total	115.706	46.209	161.915

Fonte: SEINFRA, 2001 in Pequeno, 2002

Reduced welfare-oriented policies, in a context where the welfare state was never significantly implemented, can be indeed more perverse than in developed countries. Fortaleza was particularly vulnerable to the current wave of reducing the welfare policies because its population boom happened very recently. The local recent population influx contrasts with the migratory movement toward São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in the 60s and 70s, when the rise of fordist industrial jobs coupled with welfare housing policies were able to diminish the percentage of squatter population, which has only started to grow since the 80s (Ribeiro and Lago 1996).

Nonetheless some qualifications apply. Maricato reminds that one of the major causes of housing informality in Brazil is the fact that during Brazilian welfare era, not unlike today, housing prices at the formal real estate market were not compatible with minimal wages (2000:

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[21] Upgrading policies consist of more recent housing policies that remove the minimum number of houses as possible and mainly provide basic infrastructure to the existing houses. Thus, the number under this category are not, for the most part, new houses, but houses that are within settlements that received any kind of infrastructure improvements.

155). She points out the disastrous social consequences of neoliberal urban policies without romanticizing old urban development logic that did not address question of spatial justice. Cities before neoliberalism excluded a considerable part of urban residents from the formal market as well.

Clearly this new strategy of addressing the housing issue is due to a series of external factors that go beyond neoliberal ideology. They include greater recognition of the favela-dwellers' rights to location and the perception of perverse effects of forced evictions. Today, a considerable part of public opinion has more sympathy for the cause of squatter settlers than 40 years ago. For example, the 1960 Municipal Master Plan referred to squatters as "pariah" who came to the capital city searching for charity and not jobs. This point of view, contrasts with the public reaction to forced eviction of a group of families that occupied a publicly owned land in 2001. However competitiveness and entrepreuneuralism serve as ideological constructs to shift both public attentions and public investments away from the social demands and toward the spatial needs of privileged sectors.

New Urban Planning Ideologies

Since the mid 1980s, the emergent political logic has seen planning as an important instrument of capture of external investments. If old urban policies were not capable of effectively meeting the needs of the poor, today there has been less emphasis on this goal and attentions are focused on marketing the city for potential investments. In some Brazilian cities, the Modernist-Comprehensive planning model is being replaced by a more fragmented approach - Strategic Planning, which aims to publicize the strengths of the city rather than to solve its social contradictions. This new logic relies on a kind of trickle-down effect where the increased

wealth brought by economic growth will ultimately benefit the poor in the form of jobs. However it includes no mechanism to make sure the benefits will really reach the bottom. This trust on market mechanisms as effective regulators of urban goods of collective consumption has indeed been imposed by multilateral donors' agencies[22].

In Fortaleza's urban plans the economic development project of elites contrasts sharply with situations of extreme poverty. A very illustrative case, the PLANEFOR - the strategic plan of Fortaleza Metropolitan Region - reinforces the excessive attention of economic development strategies calling local residents for a cooperative effort toward a few well-designed goals. The five main urban development strategies are as follows: (1) Consolidation of administrative structure of the metropolitan region, (2) Promotion and consolidation of regional competitiveness, (3) Human Development, (4) Participatory urban management and institutional empowerment and (5) Culture Identity and Self-esteem.

It is possible to identify a great deal of contradictions between the goals of this new plan and the actual residents' needs. While the second strategy emphasizes the role of tourism and refers to all locational advantages of the City for that activity, none of the strategies gives attention to the mitigation of the well-known social consequences of tourism (at least in some versions of tourism existent in the city) like child prostitution and drugs. According to the document, tourism development will require a great deal of effort on the part of the population, but the Strategy of Human Development will be achieved simply through the "maintenance and expansion of well-experimented educational programs" as if the reduction of school evasion, or juvenile delinquency, and the 50% illiteracy rate of some outlying metropolitan municipalities

[22] The PROURB, a program that included the realization of master plans for the 44 biggest cities of the State of Ceará (including all municipalities of the metro area except Fortaleza) funded by the World Bank, had as one of the main objective the capture of external investments as a way to solve the social contradictions of these impoverished municipalities.

were not big challenges for the Plan. As it is a characteristic of such plans, the tactic is to publicize local strengths and hide as much as possible the weaknesses. Thus, the plan does not explore the fact that illegal settlements constitute almost half of the city. Nor does it explore the deficiencies of public transportation system. For the plan, the solution to the problems of rising urban violence and the poor conditions of public health systems require the participation of community-based organizations. This can be interpreted as a transfer of responsibility from public sector to the civil society, namely, community organizations and NGOs.

Infrastructure Investments and Visibility

Yet, contradicting neoliberal developments in other Third World cities[23], investments in basic social and infrastructure services did not cease. With the exception of the telephone and the power company, no public utility company was privatized during this developmental period, despite privatization of basic services in some other Brazilian states. Nevertheless the universalization[24] of public services is "presented not as a goal in itself but as tool for improvement of the condition of the city's insertion in the world of competitiveness" (Oliveira[25], 2000). That is, providing access to infrastructure has been used as a market tool to capture external capital. This makes an enormous difference, because the decision on where to place such services depends on the criteria of visibility. Poor isolated neighborhoods, located in places tourists will never see, and that are not on the way to any "industrial pole", are likely to receive less services unless there is a powerful political movement able to make their needs visible.

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[23] see for example the case of South African Cities in Bond, 2000

[24] Universalization is the local term (universalização) used to refer to expansion of these services for all urban residents.

[25] In this passage the author makes reference to the Agenda 21 program being developed by the United Nations Development Program.

The Resulting Segregation Pattern

The mapping of census data[26] by census tracts in 1991 and 2000 reveals an increased complexity of the urban spatial structure that contrasts to the older more well-defined center-periphery segregation pattern. This new pattern is the result of the shift in attitude on the part of official strategies of producing the city, that have concentrated on capture external capital instead of more welfare oriented old policies. The urban geography changed not only as a response to new requirements of productive capital, but also (and more significantly) as a response to neoliberal ideologies of entrepreuneuralism and pro-growth policies.

The changes in Fortaleza's residential segregation patterns seem to confirm the two main intra urban migratory movements also found in other Brazilian Metropolises (Ribeiro and Lago 1996): the out-migration of middle-classes and spread of poverty throughout the urban landscape.

The middle class search for outlying land results from the access to the new regional street network, and escape from high real-estate prices of the core. In addition, communication technology such as fax and Internet might have influenced middle-class out-migration. It is easily depicted in the map of average nominal income where the peripheral sectors in 2000 ceased to be almost homogeneously poor as in 1991. Old public housing projects, built far from the urban core in inexpensive and disconnected cheap land, are now well placed in the urban context. Indeed some empirical studies have shown that a kind of gentrification took place at these neighborhoods and a great part of the original owners have already sold the houses to families of higher income class, or lost the house due to inability to pay (Braga, 1996).

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[26] Except for the case of density, the variables were classified into 3 quantiles in order to provide differentials between the census tracts relative to the condition of the overall city in each two points in time. That explains why the categories of the 1991 maps differ from those on the 2000 maps: each category corresponds to one third of the tracts, the best, the medium and the worst third respectively.

context. Indeed some empirical studies have shown that a kind of gentrification took place at these neighborhoods and a great part of the original owners have already sold the houses to families of higher income class, or lost the house due to inability to pay (Braga, 1996).

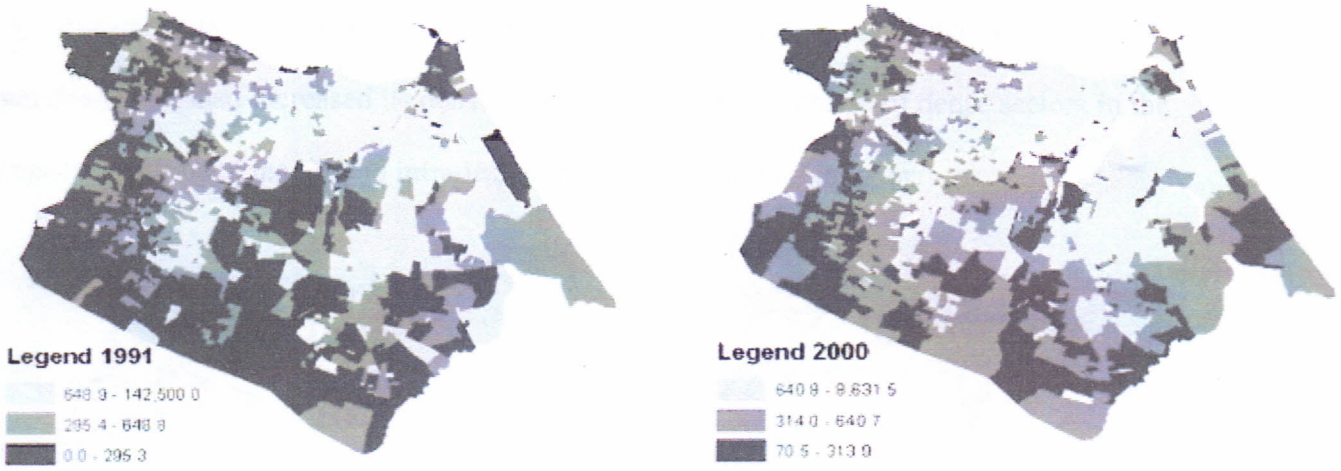

Figure 4.1 Average Nominal Income of Head of Household (in Brazilian currency: Reais)
Source: IBGE 2002 – a and IBGE 2002 -b

The mobility of the poor is more difficult to see in the income map because it is composed by two opposing tendencies. A first tendency is one of inward mobility where poor residents, in order to take advantage of job opportunities, move to popular central neighborhoods or squatter settlements. Cases of families selling the "permission" to build a second (or third) floor above their house to other recently arrived families demonstrate this inward movement. In addition the density of central squatter settlements is raised dramatically by increased index of co-habitation (families living together with the families of their sons and even grandsons). This results in the so-called process of "verticalization" of Latin American favelas[27]. Since the horizontal expansion of illegal settlements is constrained, the construction of a second and third

[27]Estadão 03/16/1998; Tachner and Bogus 2000; Agência de Notícias das Favelas http://www.anf.org.br/link.php?assunto=urbanismo&artigo=6

floor is the only strategy left. By doing this, favela dwellers are simply mirroring the logic of formal real estate market that demolish single family homes to built high rise apartments in order to take the maximum profit from increased land values. The density map demonstrates that the overcrowded areas of the west coast favelas expanded. Similarly some richer neighborhood east from downtown also increased its density (see remarks). The increase of dense sectors in the periphery leads us to the second intra-urban movement of the urban poor.

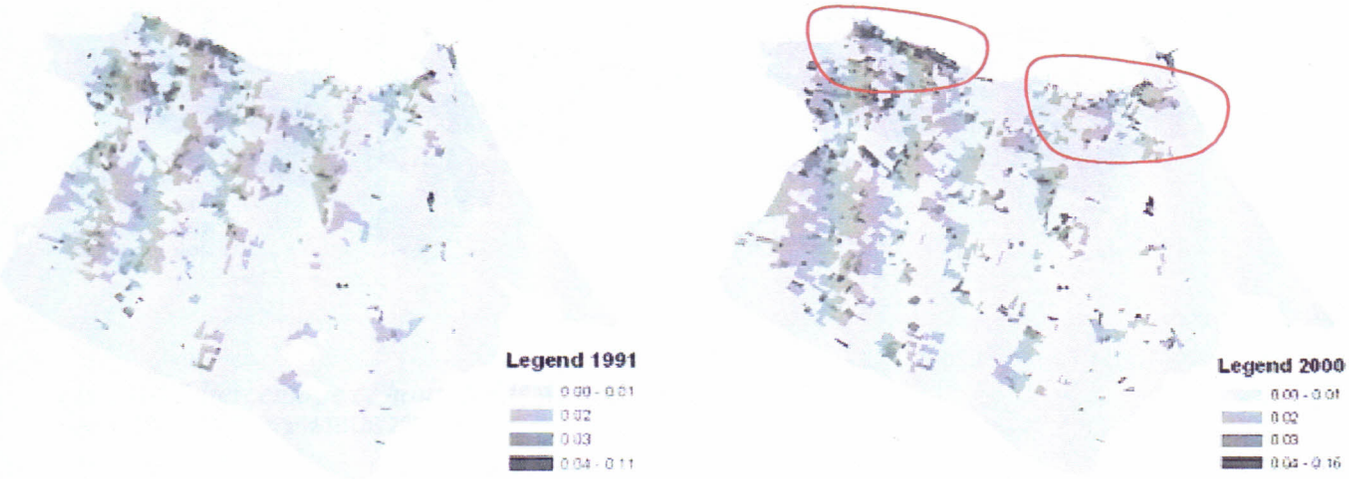

Figure 4.2 Density (inhabitants per area)
Source: IBGE 2002 – a and IBGE 2002 -b

A second tendency is one of outward movement of those who cannot afford to live in the center. A great part of those at the very bottom of the socio-economic strata, if residing in centrally located neighborhoods, find themselves forced to sell the entire house and move to more distant areas in order to meet their immediate living needs. Third World planning literature refers to this process as forced residential displacement, which is very similar to the gentrification phenomena. Bezerra (1999) and Braga (1996) accurately describe this movement in the city of Fortaleza. Thus housing upgrading polices often have very limited effect on the original beneficiaries because public intervention raises the value of the property and the original owner often sells it to a family with greater purchase power. The displaced residents are likely to move to the empty

spaces surrounding the old public housing projects, that were reserved for parks or social facilities never implemented. The map of unemployment shows that there is a relative decrease in unemployment in the central part of the city, except for the big favela on the west coast.

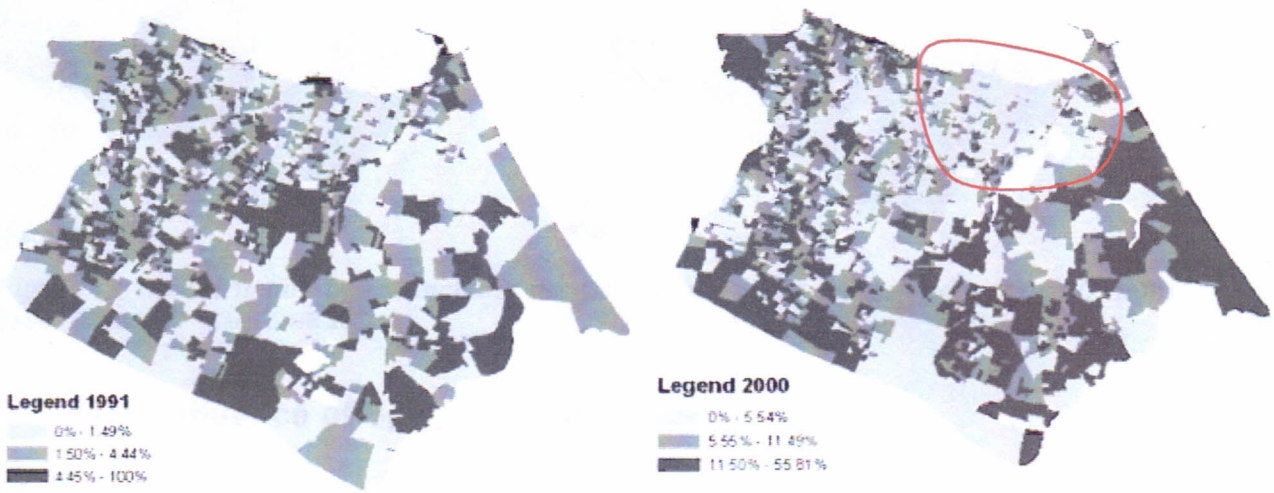

Figure 4.3 Percentage of households without income
Source: IBGE 2002 – a and IBGE 2002 -b

The infrastructure map is perhaps the one that depicts the abandonment of the center-periphery pattern most clearly. The clear shade at the center diminishes significantly in 2000. While there has been an overall improvement in accessibility to urban infrastructure, the relatively better connected places are not anymore located at the urban core, but are spread all over the city. The old downtown presents in 2000 a relatively bad infrastructure access. This is the combined effect of investments in infrastructure network at the outskirts, the vertical growth of popular central neighborhoods with deficient services, and aging of infrastructure network in the older downtown.

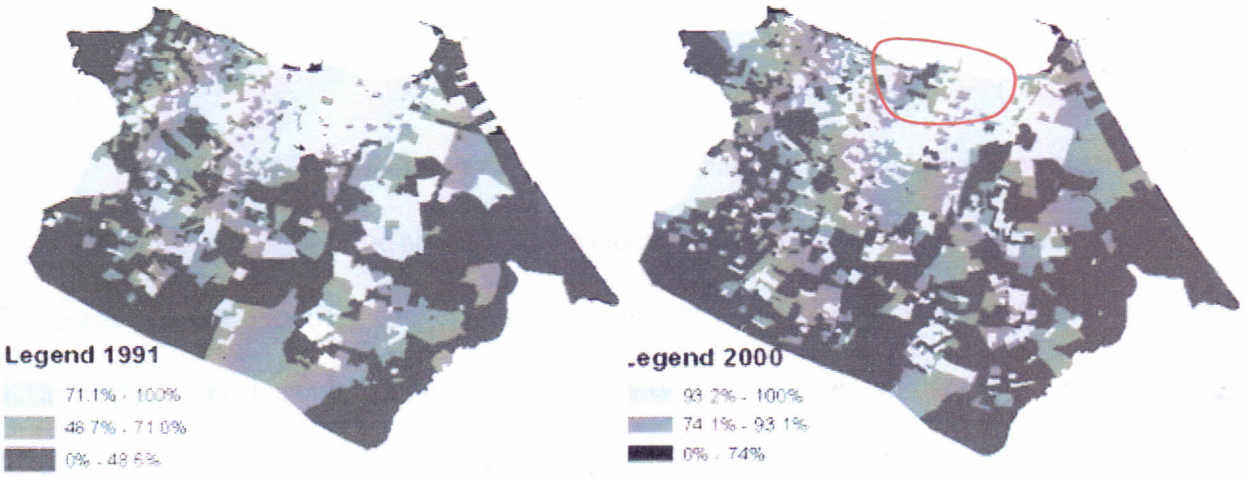

Figure 4.4 Infrastructure index (includes access to piped water, sewer and trash collection)
Source: IBGE 2002 – a and IBGE 2002 -b

The Influence of Space on Society

As geographers remind us, "all battles over space and place are battles over spatialized social power, and it is the nature, source and structured inequities of that power which must be central to analysis and position-taking" (Massey, 1996:123). Thus, while proximity between rich and poor might seem a fairer pattern than the clear class segregation that characterized the old urban geography, we should not analyze the two snapshots of urban geography as distinct points in time removed from the processes that produced them.

The new geography is the clear outcome of a myriad of different interests in the urban space. It is important to mention that social process of increased recognition of the squatters' cause[28] reduced evictions and led to the infrastructure provision to illegal settlements, improving their living conditions. On the other hand, new ideologies are shifting the power over urban investments from public sector to requirements of the productive sectors. This new logic is not the fairest mechanism of space production, particularly in a situation where over half of the

[28]These will be discussed in more details in chapter 05.

context. The shortage of vacant spaces in the city helps in explaining the occupation of "areas at risk" rather then a more suitable land, which is scarcer than before and thus less available.

Therefore in this case, the management of space contributed to increased socio-spatial inequalities exposed in chapter 03. Neoliberal ideologies have justified the placement of public investments in a way that widens the gap between poor and rich residents. The new geography is not only the result of neoliberal urban policies but it has also actively contributed to the neoliberal project of development, ultimately leading to the intensification of extreme conditions socio-economic inequality.

Case 02 – Transportation Corridors

Paradoxically, this neoliberal spatial praxis has only confirmed an old logic of using urban development to perpetuate the dominance of powerful sectors. According to the old urban practices, the state was responsible for providing the instruments of collective consumption necessary for the reproduction of class relations, strictly confirming Castells' early work. At that time, the urban state was visibly more concerned with the reproduction needs of the residents than it is today. However it is also true that the spatial requirements of productive capital and elites have never ceased to be priorities. If urban social movements were able to challenge old policies that segregated the poor from the rich part of the city, neoliberalism brought new political strategies to achieve the same goal of producing the city for a few privileged sectors.

The following case claims that Fortaleza's elites have always effectively controlled the production of the city through the placement of transportation corridors. Influenced by neoliberal ideologies, opening new roads has become a convenient mechanism for opening new real estate

frontiers while, at the same time, addressing the housing needs of some of the poorest residents. What this strategy conceals is that these projects have introduced an instrument of gentrification and market-led evictions into "strategic" sites for investments that are currently occupied by the urban poor. These new road-opening projects parallel, in some sense, the old segregationist policies that evicted the poor from well located settlements.

Urban Structure and Roads

Villaça (1998) defines the urban structure as a totality contained by parts that have intricate connections among one another. The alteration of one part (or of one connection) leads to the alteration of all other parts (the entire urban structure). This implies that investments in a given part of the city don't simply improve that parcel, but they also alter the entire structure of the city.

Therefore investments in space not only produce urban amenities, they also produce new spatial relations. In other words, urban investments produce distinct "locations" within the totality of the city (Villaça, 1998). Smith (1984, 1996) also stresses these spatial relations among the different places. He defines production of space as the construction of relativeness. For him, people produce space by altering the natural relations of proximity among distinct points creating *relative space*, as opposed to absolute (inherited natural) space (Smith, 1984:87). The concept of relative space refers to the human-led differentiation of territory within a given scale through the construction of a series of spatial fixes (urban investments) that are able to modify a given pattern of proximity.

Villaça groups these relatively fixed investments in the urban space in two categories. The first comprises those urban investments that don't require displacement on the part of the consumer (the urban resident). The majority of infrastructure networks, like water, sewer and

trash disposal would fit in this category. Spatial inequalities are more commonly described in terms of existence of these kinds of services and infrastructure. The second category of urban investments includes the more complex concept of location, defined by the spatial relationship among the distinct points within the city (1998).

Drawing on the work of Villaça and Smith, this case understands the struggle over access to the city as a process of continuous competition for intra-urban *locations,* rather than as a mere competition for urban *investments*. While the investments that do not require displacement are important aspects of spatial inequalities, they are not crucial. For example, the garbage collection does not alter the spatial structure of the city because it does not change the spatial relations between the different parts of the city. On the other hand investments that require displacement shape space creating locations and changing the degree of attractiveness of certain areas at expenses of others. Following this line of reason, the opening of new roads is the public investment most efficient in altering the intra-urban spatial structure because it modifies the patterns of proximity among attractive locations.

At this point, it is necessary to mention that a critical distinction between First-World and Third-World cities is that the latter have severe conditions of congestion, inaccessibility, and lack of public transportation. Cities in underdeveloped countries have not arrived at a stage of reasonable accessibility to all their parts. As a result, high commuting time is among the biggest problems of these cities. Although transportation problems affect both rich and poor residents, the poor bear a higher burden for long commutes. Three hours each way by bus is not an uncommon estimate for big cities such as Fortaleza. A visible example of accessibility inequalities in Brazilian cities is the fact that some squatter residents, in their commute to work, keep their shoes in their bag and only wear them when they reach a paved road. For middle class,

on the other hand, the choice of living in the outskirts is closely associated with the availability of road connection. In this reality it is not difficult to understand the difference a road makes. The richer the neighborhood is, the better its connection to the rest of the city (see figure 4.5).

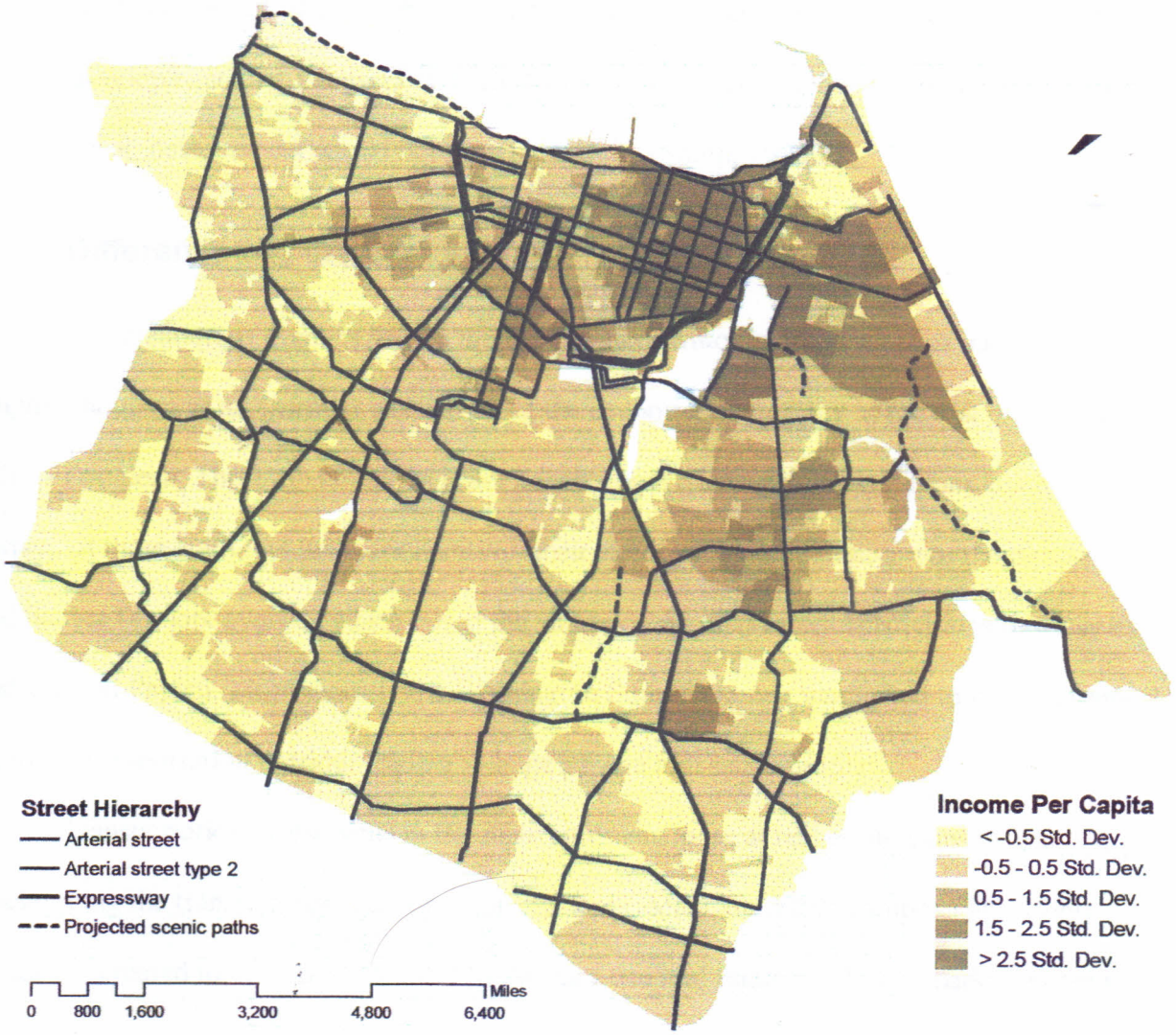

Figure 4.5 –Per capita income versus accessibility.
Source: IBGE 2002 -b an Prefeitura Municipal de Fortaleza, 1996

The fact that the mere existence of a paved road remains a significant differential exacerbates the impact of modifying the urban structure through opening new roads. What Smith

termed "ribbon development" remains the prime mechanism of producing space and modifying the urban structure of Third World cities:

> "Ribbon development [...] is precisely the case where new transportation routes alter the pattern of accessibility and hence the local ground rent structure leading to new development that clings exclusively to the new route. Without the new road, railway or canal, development would not have occurred". (Smith, 1996:81)

Differentiating the East Side

The creation of avenues linking the traditional downtown with the upper middle class neighborhoods was an essential mechanism of the economic supremacy of the east over the west side of Fortaleza. There are countless historical accounts of pro-growth coalitions among the owners of these lands and the investments on their street network[29]. First, it was the Beira-mar and Santos Dumont avenues which raised the values of the then-recent subdivisions of Meireles, Aldeota and Papicú. More recently the Washington Soares Avenue was linked to the easternmost regional transportation corridor leading to huge private real estate profits.

Transportation investments in Brazilian cities aim more at real estate gains than at ameliorating the transport services for urban residents (Maricato 2000, Campos Filho 1999). Roads are created to open new frontiers to the high-end real estate residential market, instead of serving the transport needs of the majority. The fact that part of middle-classes, and not only elite landowners, invest in urban land as a savings mechanism makes this "real-estate logic of producing the city" extremely appealing.

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[29] For a short version of this process see the section "El este de Fortaleza como tablero de juego de atores locales" in Rosner and Vilsmaier 2001.

More than half a century of public and private disinvestments in the traditional downtown transformed it into a popular commercial center, with a high index of vacant property because the offices were transferred eastward. With the concentration of higher income residents and easy accessibility, the eastern neighborhoods attracted a lot of economic activities, eventually leading to the eastward migration of the traditional downtown commercial center. At first, high-end commercial areas migrated contiguously along the Santos Dumont Avenue. But the installation of many new urban facilities[30] along the Washington Soares Avenue has been pushing local economic development still farther from the traditional downtown. Today, a new southeast centrality is now fairly well established. Thus, roads and public investments (such as the forum, administrative center, and infrastructure) not only have brought the wealthy neighborhoods closer to downtown but they have physically dislocated the commercial center as well. As a result, the bigger dark shade on figure 4.6 has the high land price, high-density and excessive concentration of private investments of all sorts.

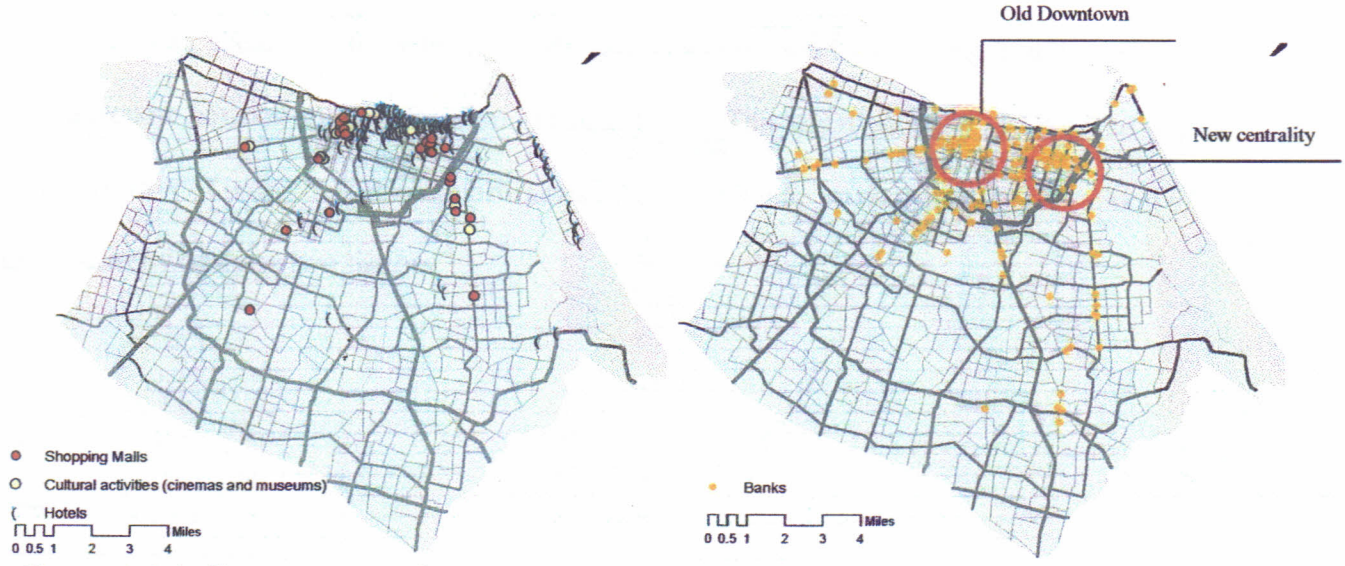

Figure 4.6 A- Concentration of tourist activities B- Migration of centralities
Source: Prefeitura Municipal de Fortaleza,1996 and www.zapt.com.br

[30] The biggest shopping center of the city, the conventions center, the university, the judicial court and the state government administrative center

Not only the quantity but also the quality of public investments indicates the degree of privilege of this area compared to the rest of the city. To cite but one example, this is the only part of the city where dunes and rivers cannot be described as leftover, inaccessible and filthy spaces. The powerful movements to preserve the dunes and rivers that are located either within this rich area, or in its immediate developmental path, have achieved considerable success. These are cases where the high demand for these rich produced spaces justifies the preservation of their remaining nature. These fortunate ecosystems are the object of immeasurable preservation efforts involving, for the most part, a great deal of public investments. Yet they are clearly not reminiscent of "pristine ecosystems" as popular wisdom believes. A considerable amount of resources in inspecting, cleaning, and controlling invasion are spent, making them much more "produced" spaces than the filthy leftover ecosystems. This contrasts with the environs of most urban ecosystems needs for basic infrastructure such as sewage and trash collection and drainage.

We can, then, start to understand why good location and bad housing is still more valued than adequate housing and bad location (Villaça, 1998). This situation is the result of the *spatial concentration* of both economic opportunities *and* urban public investments, in a condition of great scarcity of these two factors[31].

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[31] As demonstrated in the last case, the opposing force of spatial deconcentration (industries located at, and roads leading to the outlying municipalities) has had negative socio-economic effects of increasing the value of well-located land. So far, these outlying investments have not been able to create new centralities able to compete with the southeast region (Pequeno, 2002). The lack of other centralities in the periphery comprises the so-called "macrocephaly" of the urban structure.

Expanding the Privileged City

Outside this differentiated and more accessible small part of Fortaleza, the social transformation that even a small street effects is remarkable. Based on a statistical analysis of a sample of Fortaleza's poorest settlements, Bezerra (1999) concluded that street pavement is the type of infrastructure more likely to cause forced displacement of squatters' dwellers – the so-called market evictions. In other words, the study attests that the pavement of a residential street in popular settlements increases the value of a property more than the existence of piped water or sewer collection services.

The mapping of information collected through interviews with residents of a squatter settlement depicted in the following illustration further attests the economic value of road connection. It suggests that the best socio-economic indicators are found at the houses located at the roads on the edge of the settlements, as opposed to those located at narrow irregular streets typical of the inner areas of such settlements. That is because the road helps to make their small businesses more visible to middle class clients that pass by the road. Thus, the road helps providing a source of income to the families located along it, an advantage that the other squatter residents don't have.

Figure 4.7 Typical socio-economic distribution of a squatter settlement
Source: Bezerra, Ricardo Figueiredo et al. 2001. Habitation Précaire à Fortaleza – Brèsil. Analisys et Perspectifs

Extrapolating these findings to the larger metropolitan scale, Pequeno (2001) identified a series of development and degradation corridors constituting the intra-urban structure of Fortaleza. Not accidentally, all development corridors coincided with the major roads of the metropolitan region. Although not all the major regional routes were able to attract the amount of public and private investments that the southeast corridor did, the vicinity of such avenues generally present better infrastructure and socio-economic indicators than their immediate neighborhoods. On the other hand, Pequeno's degradation corridors consist of the combination of poverty and environmental decay along the majority of rivers and dunes, which I have been calling leftover environments.

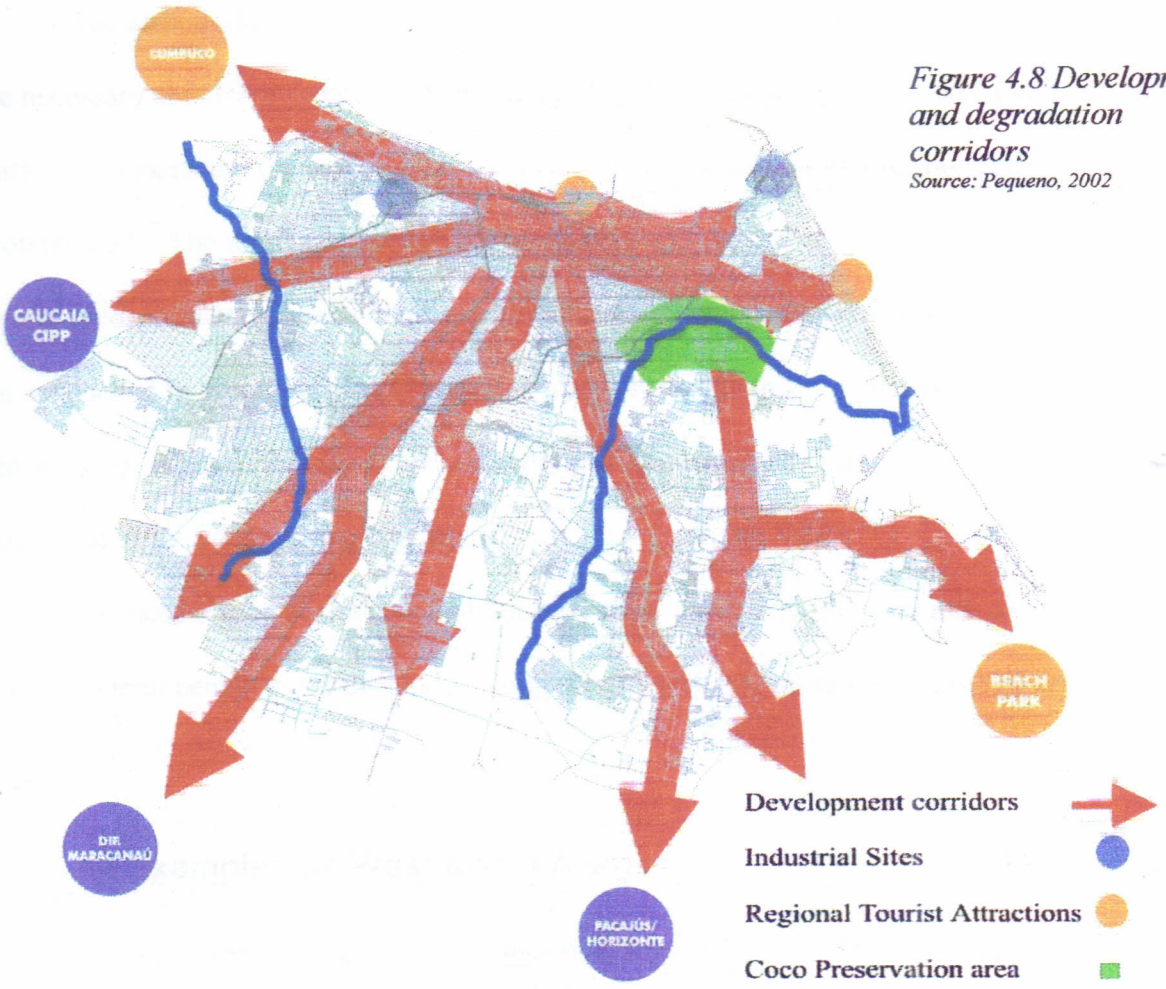

Figure 4.8 Development and degradation corridors
Source: Pequeno, 2002

I have suggested earlier in the last chapter that when urban development goes in the direction of some of these leftover environments they become strategic sites for investments. In fact, my account of the occupation of Fortaleza's natural environment showed that the poor populations currently established in expensive land had settled prior to valorization of the land. As the urban expansion (and thus accessibility) surrounded these areas, they were already so densely populated that their forced eviction would be extremely costly, in both economic and political terms. This situation created pockets of (relative) poverty located at the very core of the privileged part of the city.

The arrival of the "formal city" in those areas starts by the opening of a road, clearing up the necessary area from squatters. A delicate political negotiation process takes place between state government and the settlements' leadership. Only the houses on the way of the road are "condemned". The road cuts through the settlement and the houses left adjacent to the new road rapidly incorporate commerce in their ground floor. The subhuman environments of inner houses are untouched by State policies. The hidden places have, however, a tendency to increase their density as an effect of the recent arrived economic opportunities nearby. More density means worsening of their risky living conditions.

The access road of the new international airport precisely followed this process[32], albeit in parts hidden behind the walls hidden along the freeway that takes tourists to the new urban centrality.

An Example: the West Coast Avenue

Currently, there are some social tensions resulting from the State's declared intentions to developing the east and west coastal corridors. The tensions come precisely from the fact that a great part of Fortaleza's seacoast consists of sand dunes occupied by squatters. Both the recently built bridge over the mouth of the Ceará River and over the mouth of Cocó River intend to expand the seacoast development. Because the east dunes have historically been adjacent to the expensive neighborhoods, their occupation was limited, and not intense enough to prevent the opening of a coastal avenue. On the west, however, the situation is the opposite. There, the coastal connection between the rich part of the city and the recently built bridge requires the

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[32] This information is based on interviews with municipal officials and some displaced residents during my fieldwork for the report "*Habitacion prècaire a Fortaleza*", 2001.

construction of a street more than 5 kilometers long as well as the displacement of at least ten thousands persons[33].

The project for the opening of the West Coast Avenue follows the same process of the airport road. Here the situation is yet more complex because the avenue is projected as a scenery path for the visitors to appreciate the nice view to the sea. However, the street path crosses the favela of Pirambú, which is the oldest and biggest squatter settlement of the city, one of the biggest of the entire country, with a history of resistance to forced evictions dating back to mid 60s. The "great Pirambú" comprises a combination of favelas, self-help housing, popular neighborhood and public housing over the west sand dunes. According to the 2000 census data the area has 116,684 inhabitants[34], 62% of which are officially considered squatters[35]. Of all Pirambú, the poorest settlements are located precisely at the coast, which confirms a settlement pattern described earlier where lack of accessibility in hard to occupy lands concentrates the worst living conditions (See Figure 4.9).

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[33] The project includes the construction of 2.5 thousands houses which is on average 10 thousand persons. However at this initial stage of construction, the state staff has already declared that the area has more families than they had initially estimated. Diário do Nordeste, August 26,2002, and January 8, 2003.

[34] This data refer to the three officially designated neighborhoods that include the "great Pirambú": Barra do Ceará, Cristo Redentor, e Pirambú.

[35] Considering that the census definition of squatter settlement does not count isolated squatting houses, the squatter population is likely to be even higher in that area.

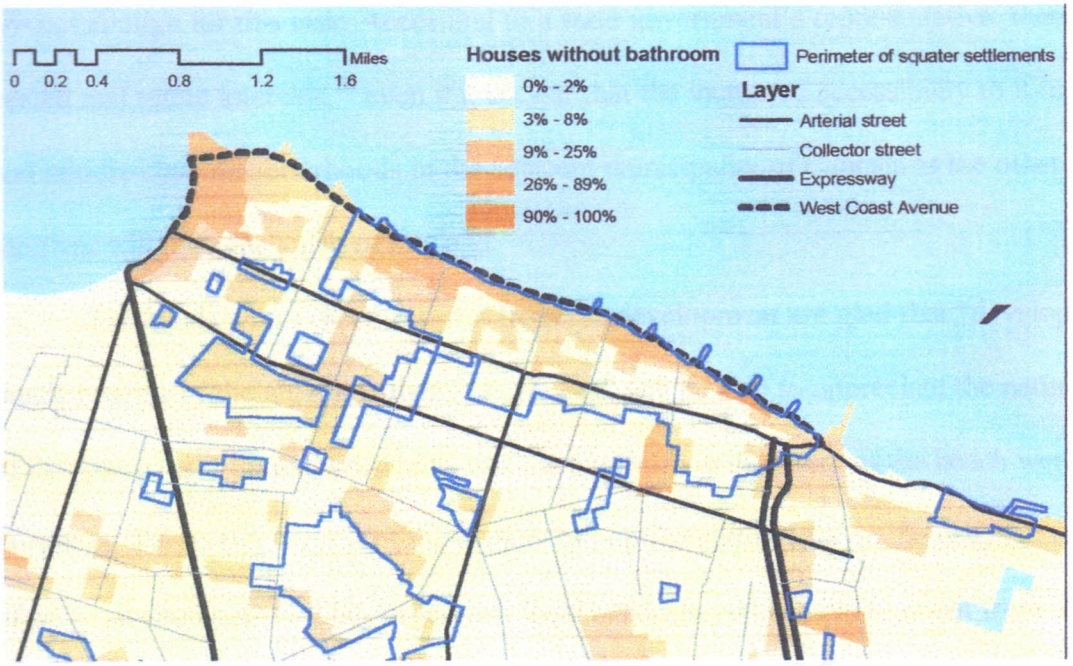

Figure 4.9 – Socio-economic indicators of Pirambú.
Source: IBGE census 2002-b and Prefeitura Municipal de Fortaleza, 1996

Despite the absence of visible concern on the part of public managers, the passing of the road will obviously lead to profound socio-spatial changes in the neighborhood. Of all these changes, the market-led displacement of the more vulnerable residents is the one that might have the deepest social inequity effects. Because the road will pass at the coast precisely where the poorest families are, they will be the most directly affected. It is reasonable to expect that the demand for coastal lands will rise rapidly and those not prepared to deal with the changes will be driven out. Limiting the removal to the houses located in the way of the road leave the land market to evict the remaining residents.

State government officials promote the West Coast Avenue as another road opening project vital to Fortaleza's progress. The project aims at raising the city's competitiveness in order to attract tourists. A reformed Coastal Promenade, a Cultural Center, several Downtown Revitalization projects, and a new Convention Center located at an artificial landfill over the sea

are not enough for this task. According to a state government's representative, there are no vested real estate interests,[36] even if it is clear that the increased accessibility to tourist attractions and middle-class neighborhoods in the adjacent municipality of Caucaia at the other margins of the river will raise the value of the land.

The locals who expect to profit from the development are glad that "development" is finally coming to the area. For them, "Fortaleza" will be able to appreciate the natural wonders of that place, as if Pirambú residents and the current popular users of the beach were not part of Fortaleza. This is the version of the owners of popular restaurants on the beach is similar to that of governmental agents. They argue that local residents will be able to profit from the movement of wealthier visitors.

But the fact that a significant part of the community has some reservations about the way that the project is being implemented raises some important questions. Does the provision of adequate shelter to the displaced residents sufficiently respond to questions of equity? Do the displaced residents and the restaurant's owners represent the interest of the community? Will the prospect of economic opportunity attract more residents and worsen the housing conditions of the inner parts of Pirambú, repeating the case of intervention at the dunes of Mucuripe?

These concerns are not echoed in the local media. Public opinion in general is remarkably more aware of the environmental impacts that the road might cause than the social impacts of the road on the neighborhood. The National Department of Environmental Affairs has already stopped the construction twice based on the ecological impacts that the opening of a road between the dunes and the sea. The Department is also concerned with the safety of the new

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[36] Diario do nordeste, August, 26 2002 "Seinfra diz que projeto foi discutido com população"

street because the sea is advancing on the land of that area. These environmental impacts tend to dominate the oppositional debates about the project.

Discussions of the social effects of the project in the community have been limited to the displacement of the families under risky conditions. Understandably these families have agreed to be removed. They are moving from a situation of landslides risk to houses built in "safe areas nearby" [37]. For the dominant public opinion, the transfer of the residents, which might take a considerable percentage of the budget for the entire project, seems to be more than enough to address questions of social justice. After all, not long ago, similar projects simply evicted without compensating those perceived as illegal settlers perceived to be hindering urban progress. However, even with so many new houses, the project is deficient from the perspective of the residents of areas-at-risk in Pirambú. That is because not all the houses being displaced are under risky conditions and only part of the huge amount of houses at-risk will be transferred.

Based on my newspaper research, few people have seriously considered the effects of the investment on the lives of the great majority of the 116 thousand residents of Pirambú not living immediately at the coast. Some of them, organized around neighborhood associations, have set up public protests asking, "Development for whom?" They are concerned that the development will not benefit the actual Pirambú residents. For the most part, current Pirambú inhabitants are domestic servants, illiterate fishermen, and unskilled workers not prepared for the new economy that the new road is expected to foster. Although they do not question the influx of investments, they say that the road was not *their* priority. If development is to benefit them, they need schools and technical skills first. Otherwise the opportunities will go to well-skilled newcomers who will

[37] This expression of "safe areas nearby" can be found in several public declarations about the project. This seems to be in response to the fact that some technicians have been questioning that the new houses being built are really safe. They argue that the houses are not being built with inadequate construction material (Diário do Nordeste, August 26, 2002)

offer a good price for their houses displacing the most vulnerable residents. Not accidentally the objectors to the project reside in inner areas, invisible from the coast, likely to receive no benefits, but a lot of social costs of development.

It is meaningful to highlight at least three definitions of the area and the interests behind its development. For the average newspaper's readers, government is *planning* a disordered unplanned settlement, and they may even suggest that government should have done this before. The fact that middle class residents have no access to that beautiful part of Fortaleza's seacoast is unacceptable for a city aspiring to become a tourist attraction of global proportions. According to this perspective, government is correctly eradicating 2.500 houses at risk. However, beyond this most widespread version of the area as an uncontrolled settlement of wasted natural beauty, there are at least two other definitions of the area. For the environmental groups this is a fragile ecosystem that needs preservation. For the residents of Pirambú in general, it is a place that might be able to bring *them* economic opportunities. If planning is about multiple constituencies with multiple interests, planning's projects have to accommodate all this points of view.

The example of the West Coast Avenue project does not intend to assess this planning project completely. Rather it intends to reveal how urban investments are devised primarily with economic objectives and how they tend to minimize the social impact of spatial changes. The example illustrates the official approach of intervening in strategic in order to expand the wealthy neighborhoods. There are some tourist destinations like hotels and restaurant as well as middle class neighborhoods developed at the neighboring municipality of Caucaia across the river, that need connection to the rich part of Fortaleza. And this connection seems to be all that matters about the project.

Concluding Remarks

Before proceeding to analyze the equity effects of planning in the next chapter, it is important to establish a causal connection between development of one part of the city and underdevelopment of the others. At the neighborhood scale, the Pirambú case demonstrates that development of its coastal area will increase the locational value of the few steep slides that remain vacant, inducing uncontrolled increase in density of existing settlements. At the citywide scale, the allocation of investments - even historically social investments such as housing - according to economic criteria immediately implies that more needy areas will not be attended to. This causal connection increases even further the difference between the city of the poor and that of the rich residents. In all this, space is ***the*** fundamental aspect of urban inequalities that planners seem to be missing. Their attitude of not accounting for the role of space has had however, perverse inequity effects.

Chapter 05 The Possibility of Socio-Spatial Equity Planning

The analysis of Fortaleza's official practices of producing space in the last chapter suggest that, for the most part, state intervention in urban space has been restricted to facilitate conditions for the market to take over. With the rise of neoliberalism, today more than ever, official urban (spatial) development process has produced a city for economically productive activities at the expenses of the social reproduction needs the residents. Not only roads but any major urban investments prioritize the economic development of the city without account for the effects of the changes in the geography on the lives the residents.

This chapter assesses the position of planning in regards to the urban development process described. It demonstrates how official planning has worked to marginalize the majority by hindering their access to the city. It contends that while the urban space has been produced without considering the social effects of changes in the urban geography, non-spatial social policies have had limited effect in providing the urban poor access to the city.

I conclude, with a brief analysis of some insurgent (non-state) planning practices that have been able to challenge some of the negative social outcomes of official planning. The relative success of these popular movements reveals some potentially transformative planning initiatives that have exposed the political nature of urban developments, opening the city for debate.

Official Planning

Planning Legal Instruments

Planning instruments have been reasonably effective in both controlling and producing a privileged city. By protecting the rich neighborhoods while ignoring the rest, legal instruments of developmental control have contributed to produce an exclusive and unaffordable city. The high minimum building legal standards put the majority of the city (some speak of more than 90%) at different degrees of illegality. The irregularities go from total illegal occupation (almost 50% of the entire city) of land, to the mere lack of building permits. In fact building permits are, by and large, irrelevant to the great part of the city. The situation of illegality implicitly removes responsibility from the public sectors, which in turn concentrate planning efforts in protecting the rich city from the "urban chaos".

In the rich neighborhoods permits are costly, highly restrictive, and believed to contribute to its unaffordability. Similarly, the zoning law is enforced in the rich part or in its expansion path (i.e. the coast). The innovative instruments of "Zones of Social Interest"[38] for example, which have been used by other Brazilian municipalities to protect well-located favelas from gentrifying, are here delimited in the cheap peripheral land. The current zoning law prohibits popular residential subdivisions at high-priced locations and further decreases access to the city by the poor.

Similarly, enforcement of private property rights is very effective in expensive areas, more so if compared to its ineffectiveness in the rest of the city. Land invasion is overtly allowed

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[38] These zones propose more flexible building standards in order to include the part of the informal city into the official city. In some cases (as in the city of Recife) they propose a maximum instead of a minimum, building standard in pockets of poverty concentrated in gentrifying areas.

in poor areas while strictly forbidden in costly land. In the words of Maricato (2000), access to land is permitted but not access to the city.

Two sets of standards in different parts of the city are evident in the case of legal instruments aiming at preserving fragile ecosystems. While the city proudly publicizes that the easternmost part of Cocó River is the first urban wetland ecosystem preserved in Latin America, the Maranguapinho River, which crosses the neglected southwest neighborhoods, is not object of a single environmental protection initiative. Instead, some claim that the municipality has been promoting the occupation of the lowlands in the poor periphery (see the case of Conjunto Barroso in Rosner and Vilsmaier, 2001).

Ironically, state planning does not hesitate to neglect environmental protection laws in cases where fragile ecosystems are in the way of economic development. The West Coast Avenue is case in point. Environmental specialists have fiercely questioned its environmental impact assessment. But so far, this has not been enough to hinder the project development.

The inequity effects of selective regulation of the city is so widespread among Brazilian researchers that they[39] frequently use the term "urban despoiling", coined by Kovarick in 1979, to refer to this process. Indeed, the political obstacles to implement regulatory instruments able to expand access to the city for the poor have been remarkable.

Planning as Space Production

My proposed definition of planning as production of space puts emphasis on how planning practices transform space and modify the patterns of spatial inequalities. Legal instruments of urban control do not, by themselves, have the power to modify the urban

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[39] See for example Ribeiro and Lago, 1996 and Ribeiro and Santos Jr., 2001.

structure. They can either work to maintain, or counteract a given tendency of differentiation. Unfortunately in Fortaleza legal instruments have reinforced an exclusionary pattern of spatial inequality by limiting their agenda to protection of the spatial interests of a few.

It is through placement of relatively fixed and scarce urban investments that state planning has most effectively further differentiated the rich from the poor areas. The last chapter demonstrated how the underlying principle of decisions about locating urban investments is strengthening the urban economy. Official planning has not produced the city to solve socio-spatial inequalities. While economic growth is a legitimate planning concern it has all too often been abused.

The overconcentration of investments in the southeast region has brought diseconomies - rather than growth – that can be attested by the current conditions of congestion and extrapolation of infrastructure capacity. These investments could have made a difference in disadvantaged parts of the city. For example, instead of a new convention adjacent to the overcrowded Praia de Iracema, which requires a costly and "environment unfriendly" landfill, it could be located in a peripheral site, helping to create new centralities on the monocentric urban structure. Given the high demand for convention events in Fortaleza, it is hard to believe that a less attractive site would lead to the decline of local tourist economy.

The diseconomies caused by excessive centralization of investments led to expansion of transportation corridors. Roads have been a convenient strategy of public institutions to attend impoverished settlements while facilitating demands of productive sectors. The West Coast Avenue is not the first, and will certainly not be the last. There is already another avenue projected at the margins of Maranguapinho River, expected to remove 2326 families (Pequeno, 2001). In this case though, the project is overtly designed to remove the families and prevent

further occupation of the river margins. As I have suggested earlier, these projects have insufficiently focused on how these avenues alter the spatial relations of the affected neighborhoods. The placement of these "spatial fixes" expulses those most in need of development, either through formally removing the families, or through market mechanisms.

The narrow economic growth interest hinders a more viable development strategy. A more careful attention to the social effects of the West Coast Avenue on Pirambú residents would not obstruct the publicized economic development project of the city. It might however, challenge entrenched habits of benefiting powerful sectors. While the avenue is indeed very important to the urban economy as a whole, a lot more needs to be done in order to make this economic development beneficial to the more vulnerable residents. Unfortunately, in these projects, the urban poor usually represent an obstacle that has to be (physically) removed - although with the least harm possible. This approach leaves no room for distribution considerations.

Planning Discourse: De-Politization of City-Building

State planning has, visibly, concentrated efforts on the urban conflicts perceived by the minority who have politico-economic power. For this privileged group, the city needs to solve the problems of reduced infrastructure for tourists, urban violence, and traffic congestion. These are undoubtedly very legitimate conflicts. It is important to perceive how media, urban plans and politicians represent these questions as the primary problems of the city - that is Fortaleza as a whole. Such argument is, at best, controversial. The majority of urban residents would cite lack of public transportation - instead of traffic congestion; inefficient drainage network – instead of a "decaying" downtown; and lack of schools and day care centers in their neighborhoods - instead

of insufficient numbers of museums and convention centers for tourists. Urban violence is a common problem in both "worlds", although the poor tend to ask for more police on the streets while the rich tend to use planning to build the exclusive city.

This divergence is clear if one compares the urban agenda of the local Slums Federation, and the official urban plans. Yet, there might be a significant common ground if it was possible to share both perspectives without prejudice. The understanding of the causal relations between development of one region and underdevelopment of others is only possible with openness on both sides. In order to foster such openness, it is necessary to de-construct negative representations of urban conflicts and projects.

Taking the part as the whole – in this case the formal city as the entire city – has become a commonplace strategy to justify investments on profitable sites of Brazilian cities. Villaça (1998) has shown how newspaper articles in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo refer to the best neighborhoods as "the city" while they address other neighborhoods by their names or geographical location (i.e. east side, west side). Fortaleza is no exception to this. What the official plans often refer as the problems of "the city", are in fact the problems of "the formal, exclusive city". This discourse deliberately ignores spatial differentiation as a political tool.

What seems to be particular to Fortaleza is the debate around representations of squatter settlements. I've discussed earlier the popularity of the term area-at-risk, indicating the high incidence of occupation of environmentally fragile areas. Yet, despite a certain appeal for prioritizing those more in need, it is necessary to be aware that the widespread adoption of the term has served to de-politicize the housing question. The word "risk" implies a greater technical connotation for the problem. The concept of "areas-at-risk" entails that areas technically unsuitable for development are being unduly occupied, and it begs for removal of the houses. It

both puts the environmentally conscious middle classes against the settlers and also brings back the notion of modernist planning aimed at ordering the urban space. Since the settlers occupy risky areas precisely because of the lack of suitable empty spaces nearby, programs of removal of these settlements often have no alternative other than transfer the families to far-away sites. At extreme cases, one state removal program offers money and bus tickets for the families to return to their hometowns. All this is ostensibly justified because they were under risky conditions. If, after removal of the residents, a developer safely prevents the steep from falling and constructs a new high-rise apartment in the very same spot of the dune previously occupied by squatters, the problem of risk is solved. After all, adequate infrastructure was provided. This has happened in the dunes of Mucuripe in Fortaleza.

Another example of urban development as an apolitical technical matter comes from the project of the West Coast Avenue. The state's officers made clear that they were simply constructing a road, and the project was not a project of construction of popular houses, which has undeniable social (and thus political) connotations. Needless to say, 2.5 thousand new houses are more than half of State Government annual affordable housing production[40]. However, by choosing to represent the project as "the opening of a road" it becomes a technical matter. It is thus technical issues, not the social consequences of the project, that dominate newspaper pages.

It is interesting to notice that political discussions about housing projects have finally become a "social" issue, in spite of persistent attempts to de-politicize it (see the case of "areas-at risk"). However provision of houses does not guarantee decent living conditions when the residents do not have any sources of income, which is very common among squatters' families.

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[40] This estimate is based on the housing production by state government of the period of 1996-2000 presented in the chapter 02.

This is demonstrated by the incredible re-incidence of land invasion by families that had received a "safe" house and could not afford to pay the bills. They sell it and go to occupy another area.

The notion of housing as "social" project contrasts with one of roads and infrastructure as technical matters. The production of the urban space through placement of these "spatial fixes" (such as roads) still responds to the interests of an abstract notion of public interest found in the expression "the city". Indeed, in order to efficiently address social justice, infrastructure projects too need to be understood as social projects. I take one step further and suggest that *urban spatial development* is by its very nature a social project, confirming the socio-spatial dialectics literature, which suggests that by modifying space we are indeed modifying society.

The De-Territorialization of Social Planning

The de-politization of urban development parallels a tendency to de-territorialize social planning. By de-territorialization I refer to a dominant representation of the problem of urban poverty that deliberately denies its spatial dimension. According to this view, it doesn't make sense to deal with poverty through urban development policies. Public planning agencies refer to urban poverty as the product of wider macroeconomic forces that urban planning has little responsibility for, if any. For them, the best planning can do is to produce a city that attends the interests of those devoted to strengthening the urban economy, hoping for job creation. The case of the construction of the West Coast Avenue demonstrates that this neoliberal logic of urban development have marginalized the most vulnerable families.

Still, there is a strong presence of the "social discourse" in Brazil these days. The recent election of the first left-wing president showed local politicians the importance of awareness for the causes of the underprivileged. Unfortunately, urban social policies in Fortaleza are

completely disconnected with the logic of space production. This only confirms what I had established earlier in the literature review. Social problems are addressed through non-spatial instruments while the urban space is differentiated to boost economic development.

What the current planning discourse understands by "social policies" are programs of income generation, construction of day care centers and community centers at needy areas. The rationale behind deciding which area is the most disadvantaged has little to do with the changes in the urban metropolitan structure. Social services are allocated primarily according to political clientelist relations among aldermen and community leaders.[41] This leaves little room for coordination among "social policies" and urban spatial development[42].

In addition, "social policies" do not have the metropolitan dimension of the urban problems. Rather they tend to deal with urban poverty at a very limited scale. That is the case of the innovative "Integrated Housing Interventions". These projects provide not only housing and infrastructure but also social services for the elderly and teaching of technical skills the young. Unfortunately, such laudable initiatives have limited power to increase the access to the city of their targeted population, because they do not change the reality that the poor lives in an extremely unfavorable "locations" within the intra-urban context, a fact that severely limits their job opportunities.

Similarly to the integrated housing policies, innumerable social project exists, most of which are truly committed to the question of poverty and go beyond mere political marketing.

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[41] This assertion is based in an informal conversation with a planner responsible for the GIS department of Fortaleza's municipal administration. He mentioned a case where an alderman asked for the socio economic data of a specific neighborhood to justify the construction of a school. Unsuccessfully, the planner tried to convince to build the school in the area adjacent to the one suggested by the aldermen, which had visibly worse socio-economic condition. The Aldermen's refusal was based in the fact that the needy area did not have political relations with him.

[42] The success of programs such as participatory budget in Porto Alegre is precisely because they provide public forums to decide the spatial distribution of urban investments. The forum has been successfully able to break this clientelist tradition, and connect social and spatial development (see Abers, 2000).

However any of such projects have a socio-spatial dimension relevant enough to address the causes – and not only the effects – of urban poverty. As I have been arguing, an important and often neglected cause of urban poverty, which planners have significant control over, is precisely its spatial dimension. In other words, the relative isolation of these disadvantaged settlements is a significant cause for the persisting poverty of their residents.

Therefore, accessibility can determine who will have access to the city. Poor residents do not have economic opportunities because they live in far away neighborhoods. This specific aspect of the spatial dimension of poverty has not been addressed by the strategies of combating poverty that I have been calling "social policies". Not to underestimate the importance of social services like education and even housing, I contend that the production of the official city has not been object of social equity considerations.

Official "technical" planning in Fortaleza has clearly denied the poor access to the city, by facilitating market-led evictions. At the same time, official "social" planning has had only a limited success specifically because it minimizes the role of spatial isolation in excluding the poor from the city. These processes of de-spatialization and de-politization of urban policies are not accidental. Rather they are ideological constructs to reduce obligations of justice to underprivileged urban residents.

Insurgent Planning

In spite - or maybe because of – the socially perverse consequences of official planning, non-state planning initiatives have achieved relevant success. Grassroots movements, mobilized around their social reproduction needs, have been able to shape the city and confront official planning practices. By making their needs visible they have challenged the political alliance between state, capital and elites, leading to the incorporation of their need into official polices.

Over the course of few decades, there has been a significant expansion of the nature of rights of the urban poor that have affected official urban planning practices in a variety of ways. In Fortaleza, as briefly mentioned in my discussions on neoliberal housing policies, urban social movements have been able to virtually stop forced evictions typical of the dictatorship period. These movements have made the city accessible for those who live in the few pockets of poverty with locational advantages such as Pirambú, which state planning policies are contributing to remove. But these insurgent movements have also managed to transform the image of squatters from a criminal, illegal population to needy people deserving some concessions.

In the 1960's and 1970's, the urban poor claimed access to decent housing conditions. Later, there has been a perception that housing policies are useless if they do not offer adequate urban infrastructure. The growing number of sites and services projects (upgrading projects) and diminishing construction of public housing projects intends to address this demand. Still, houses and infrastructure without a job to pay the bills have led to the displacement of those most in need. Recently, as the project of the West Coast Avenue demonstrates, the residents' main claims are to have their share in the economic development project of the city. The political obstacles for the realization of such claims are tremendous. However, in the 1960s, granting a house in a good location with infrastructure to an illegal settler might have sounded just as unlikely.

This recognition of the high degree of interdependence between housing, infrastructure, and economic opportunities, is the outcome of a political struggle in which the urban poor was able to make their spatial needs more visible. They were able to make their claims acceptable to the public opinion and incorporated into official planning practices in a significant way. Thus, by

and large planning initiatives that led to increased access to the city have their sources outside the state apparatus.

Here, the very definition of planning is at stake considering that social actors other than the state are important agents of producing the city as well. It is debatable if such resistance movements are planning initiatives, or are more adequately described as resistance to the official planning practices. I adopt Sandercock's (1998) notion of Insurgent Planning that refers to planning initiatives of groups marginalized by official planning. However for her these insurgent initiatives are not only opposition to a state-planning project seen as necessarily committed with elites and productive capital. She suggests that:

> "...we move beyond the simplistic dichotomies and begin to think about the complementary as well as antagonistic relationship between state and civil society and the possibility of a transformation as a result of the impact on State of mobilized groups within civil society" (1998:102).

Although we have seen that, in Fortaleza, the state has used urban planning to build a city that attends the spatial needs of a privileged minority confirming the Marxist conception of urban planning, insurgent planning challenges the widespread connection between planning and the state. It opens up a possibility of a politicised urban planning project not necessarily committed to the state, although sometimes in alliance with it.

Therefore, in several occasions in Fortaleza, these insurgent planning initiatives have been able to break this political coalition in which state monolithically represents the interest of powerful sectors. They have legitimized their claims on the city by making visible their needs, appealing to shared values of a more just city. Eventually they have incorporated their needs into official practices of urban development.

In fact Sandercock's Insurgent Planning follows Holston's (1996) notion of Insurgent Citizenships. Citizenship implies a sense of membership in the project of urban development, which official planning in Fortaleza has systematically denied the urban poor. By categorizing them as illegal residents, by not recognizing their social reproduction needs, and by planning exclusively for the formal rich part of the city, planners have eroded the citizenship rights of the urban poor. The insurgent strategy adopted by the urban poor, on the other hand, has been one of contrasting the abstract notions of urban progress of the official discourse, with their concrete situations of urban poverty. Their modest achievements have been able to expand, to a certain degree, membership in the political planning process.

For Holston (1998) these grassroots initiatives are insurgent because they suggest an ethnographically possible future, a new urban project based on the existing reality and its socio-economic and political constraints. They have reminded us that we need to focus on the existing conditions of the present – the geographies resulting from planning projects rather then their publicized goals – in order to implement more equitable planning policies.

Conclusion

Through the case of Fortaleza, I intended to demonstrate how urban planning can indeed affect the living conditions of the residents. State-led planning in Fortaleza has severely contributed to widen the socio-economic gap between rich and poor residents because it has paid scant attention to the social effects of interventions in the urban space. It is my contention that not only roads, but also any major urban investment capable of inducing economic opportunities has to have social equity considerations. It is clearly not enough to abstractly assume that planning brings efficiency and equity. It is necessary to assess the geographies resulting from

planning practices, verify who has gained and who has lost, and learn the lessons that these cases teach us.

The analysis of the local planning practices confirmed what I had earlier suggested in theory, that, for the most part, planning policies still see the urban space as the mere outcome of social processes. Specifically, for planners working within the state apparatus, squatter settlements are the product of factors out of their control, such as economic hardship. There is however one case when state-led planning sees the urban space as determinant of social processes. This is when producing spaces is believed to actively foster economic development. It is paradoxical that, following this dominant line of reasoning, space is able to boost the economy - by attracting tourists for example - but has little power to directly tackle the issue of urban poverty. What urban social movements have challenged, and the analysis of this thesis endorses, is that poverty can also be addressed through socio-spatial planning.

However, clearly, the barriers to establish a socio-spatial equity planning go much beyond the deficiencies in planning theory. They also include political barriers resulting from conflicting interests in the city. In this regard it is important to pay close attention to the ideological representations of the urban question. These ideological constructs have been able to expand or limit the access to the city for the urban poor. It is precisely in the political realm that underprivileged groups have been able to make their spatial needs visible.

While globalization and neoliberalism have brought new rationales for diminishing concerns with questions of socio-spatial justice, they have also opened up opportunities for grassroots movements to challenge this project. Largely outside the realm of "official planning", insurgent initiatives have been able to address social equity concerns much more effectively than a planning project still confined to notions of technical rationality and non-spatial policies of

social equity. These initiatives teach us that planning can indeed effectively contribute to diminish the socio-economic distance between rich and poor residents by engaging in a project of socio-spatial development attentive to questions of social justice.

An important factor for the success of these grassroots initiatives is their capacity in empirically demonstrating that neoliberal urban developments are actually worsening their conditions of poverty. This will not be possible without scrutinizing the changes in the urban geography and their social effects. Planners concerned with social justice have to be able to establish these causal connections, which would allow them to have a clearer picture of who their constituencies are. Without engaging in this inherently political project, planners and their plans will invariably serve the interests of the powerful sectors.

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