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Ramifications of the social housing movements - a step towards an alternative society

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ABSTRACT:

In the context of the reestablishment of Brazilian democracy, in the 1980s, two nationally organized social housing movements sprung up. These movements have struggled for participation in the urban policies and demanded the inclusion of a housing policy directed towards the production by self-management, created at the federal level in 2004. Both movements have deployed their actions to other fields such as education and gastronomy, which shows an expansion of its political project, pointing to an alternative to capitalist society.

The object of this article will be the housing and work cooperatives of the housing movements in Argentina and Brazil, taking as a case study a squat in Rio de Janeiro, whose renovation will be funded by the government. The objective of this research is to understand the ramifications of the actions of the housing movements struggling for housing self-management to the field of production in interaction with the public policies.

First, a brief history of the social housing movements will be prepared and the results of housing policies aimed at self-management presented, as well as some experiences of self-managed housing in Argentina. Finally, the case of the Manoel Congo [squat] will be presented, with their work cooperative, establishing comparisons with other cases in Argentina and Brazil.

Introduction

This article will discuss the ramifications of the actions of housing movements struggling for housing self-management for the field of production, i.e., to the field of work in interaction with public policies. Its object are the housing and work cooperatives created by the housing movements in Brazil and Argentina, taking as a case study an experiment of the National Movement of the Struggle for Housing (Movimento Nacional de Luta pela Moradia - MNLM) in Rio de Janeiro - the Manoel Congo squat, whose renovation will be funded by the government. We will seek to examine the similarities and differences in the political projects of the analyzed movements.

In the context of the struggle for democracy in the face of military dictatorship¹, even in the 1970s, social movements for urban reform sprung up, with support from the progressive wing of the Catholic Church, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities. They struggled against famine, the lack of health facilities and childcare, unsatisfactory transportation and the regularization of illegal settlements (MARICATO, 2011).

With the economic crisis of the 1980s, rising unemployment and the lack of investment in public policies, the precariousness of urbanization of Brazilian cities was intensifying. In 1986 the National Housing Bank (Banco Nacional de Habitação)² was terminated and no agency dealing with housing policy was created to replace it, which caused problems especially with regards to housing for the popular sectors of society. Thus, the suburbs and slums of the big cities expanded, with the occupation and own-built houses and shacks, without any infrastructure (FERREIRA, 2012b).

Given the precariousness of their living conditions, residents began to organize themselves in associations and social movements to demand sanitation and land reform, forming a collective subject that also attracted homeless families.

In the 1980s, the collective squatting supported by the Church and progressive technicians were the main strategy of the movements in the struggle for housing in different regions of Brazil (MOREIRA, 2009, *apud* FERREIRA, 2012b). It was a way of pressuring the State to expropriate land and finance the production of housing in collaborative actions.

¹ The military dictatorship in Brazil lasted from 1964 to 1985.

² Government agency responsible for managing housing policy during the military dictatorship.

Partly due to the crisis, to rising unemployment and the lack of consumption, the search for types of self-managed organizations seems to spread in many intellectual, political and popular circles in Latin America, as Schteingart noted (1990). It would be an attempt to put aside bureaucratic, centralist, authoritarian schemes and give rise to the development of creative potentialities of the majority, encouraging the pursuit of the satisfaction of their needs.

Different groups and minorities, with varied origins, have developed self-management experiences as an alternative way of living. Although there are different meanings of "self-management"³, what they have in common is that they all seek a full democratization process, encompassing the economic, political, social and cultural dimensions of national life (RAZETO; CALCAGNI, 1989, *apud*, SCHTEINGART 1990). Normally, the collective actions of emancipatory social movements are spatial practices of resistance, giving materiality to the claims by processes in time. Usually, as is the case with housing movements, they are also territorial actions, that is, for control of the territories originally belonging to the dominant classes (SOUZA, 2009).

Self-management in this article is understood as a collective management process in which all members of the group participate in the decision-making processes, overcoming the difference between those who make decisions and those that carry them out, as well as seeking to overcome the external pressures on the collective in the definition of the decision-making process. "Those who participate in this process do so consciously, chooses it from a discussion in the deliberative bodies of the entity and, therefore, take on responsibility and engages with the work."⁴ (BONDUKI, 1992, p. 161) It is important to point out, as Bobbio and Mateucci (1981 *apud* SCHTEINGART, 1990), that self-management cannot happen in a complete manner without restructuring the political system of the State, especially in regards to the decentralization of power in various decision-making centers.

³In this case, because we are dealing with the experiences of groups and minorities who consider self-management as an alternative way of living, we will disregard the neoliberal meaning of the term self-management, hegemonic in the 1990s, which expresses the transfer of management and financing policies to the affected social groups, with the State taking a subsidiary role. In this definition, there is a strengthening of the socio-political fragmentation in the context of the focus on "group goals". (RODRIGUEZ, 2009)

⁴ Free translation by the author. In the original: "Quem participa deste processo o faz conscientemente, opta por ele a partir de uma discussão nas instâncias deliberativas da entidade e, portanto, assume uma responsabilidade e se envolve com o trabalho."

Because of the dissatisfaction with the Brazilian government practice, since the 1980s, urban social movements have organized to struggle for housing. Some of the main issues have been the lack of urbanization in areas where the poor live and the lack of participation in public decisions and actions related to the regions where they lived.

Since then, these movements have had many victories, especially institutional ones, like those consolidated in the 1988 Federal Constitution and the Statute of the City (2001). In the Constitution, with the inclusion of the social function of property in the title of fundamental rights and guarantees and the incorporation of the right to housing and urban policy chapter. In the Statute of the City (2001), with the establishment of different land use regulatory instruments, such as Zones of Special Social Interest (Zonas de Especial Interesse Social - ZEIS) in consolidated and empty areas, the expropriation of land for affordable housing and the capture of surplus value.

These instruments will meet the struggle of urban social movements, since they aim to "[reduce] the monopoly of power of landowners and [intends to function] as an ideological resource in the struggle against the commoditization of the property."⁵ Thus, this regulatory milestone creates a new urban contradiction regarding the liberal project of deregulation of the market, including real estate, which has been consolidating in Brazil since the 1990s. (LAGO, 2012, p. 8)

Urban social movements are struggling for participation in the preparation, implementation and oversight of public policies, as well as transparency in government action.

The nationally organized Brazilian social housing movements

In the late 1980s, two nationally organized social housing movements were created: the National Movement of Struggle for Housing (Movimento Nacional de Luta pela Moradia - MNLM) and the National Union for Popular Housing (União Nacional de Moradia Popular - UNMP). Since then, these, along with two other nationally organized urban social movements - the National Confederation of Neighborhood Associations (Confederação Nacional das Associações de Moradores

⁵ Free translation by the author. In the original: "[redução] do poder de monopólio dos proprietários fundiários e [pretendem atuar] como recurso ideológico na luta contra a mercantilização do bem imóvel."

- CONAM) and the Centre of Popular Movements (Central de Movimentos Populares - CMP) - promote congresses and propose agendas for the right to housing, the right to the city and a fund with public money for housing finance with the participation of movements in the management council.

The UNMP has defended, since its beginnings, self-management financed with publicly funding and the MNLM bases its actions mainly in squatting. According to Barros (2011) and Drago (2011), the main difference between the two movements, at their origins, is that UNMP valued cooperation with the State, while the MNLM rejected it. However, Lopes (2012), a national coordinator of the MNLM, believes that representatives from the movements in the various MNLM federal units, at that time, had their differences of perspectives, including on cooperation with the State. For her, what really characterized the difference between these movements, at their origins, was that the UNMP proposed a nationalization of the model practiced in São Paulo - joint efforts with State funding - while the MNLM proposed creating a new practice from existing experiments in the various states.

The articulations for the creation of the UNMP started in São Paulo in 1989, from the Union of Housing Movements of São Paulo (União dos Movimentos de Moradia de São Paulo - UMM-SP). The movement was consolidated in the process of collecting signatures for the first Popular Initiative Bill, which created the System, the Fund and the Managing Board of Social Housing in Brazil, with law 11.124/05, which would concentrate all resources focused on popular housing.

The UNMP works with a methodology based on the Basic Ecclesial Communities, which formed a large part of their leadership. Basic groups are formed in metropolitan areas with homeless and residents from slums and allotments, to organize joint efforts and occupations regionally articulated in the main centers of the states. There is also the national body, which includes representatives from 19 Brazilian states where the UNMP is active. The action of this movement takes place through institutional means, through negotiation and purposeful actions with the three branches of government, and through collective action, such as marches, caravans and occupations.

Today, the UNMP, as well as the other three nationally organized urban social movements, have produced several condominiums funded by the federal housing policy focused on self-management. Its methodology of housing production was imported from the Federación Uruguayana de Cooperativas de Ayuda Mutua

(FUCVAM) ⁶ and appropriated to Brazilian reality, in which there is no collective ownership. Each group organized by the UNMP intends to provide their homes through self-management and with mutual aid, i.e., the donation of volunteer time for the production of housing⁷. However, the way in which the UNMP expands its base and the manner in which it has been practicing "self-management" has been criticized by other housing movements, who accuse the UNMP of becoming a "constructor". Despite this current context, the UNMP pioneered the construction of a neighborhood designed by the residents.

The east zone housing movement, affiliated to the UNMP, built through collective effort, funded by the city government, in 1997, a housing development in São Paulo - União da Juta⁸ -, located on the outskirts of São Paulo in a "long and monotonous area of developments produced by the State Housing Company (Companhia Estadual de Habitação)". Being an area without access to most public services, the movement was expanding its operations to other areas beyond housing, having come to create and manage public services, based on agreements established with the city government, like a nursery for 110 children, extracurricular activities for youth and service station of the Caixa Econômica Federal (CEF)⁹. It is worth noting that workers of the joint effort of União da Juta understand these achievements as a breakthrough for the entire district. (LAGO, 2011)

The National Movement of Struggle for Housing (Movimento Nacional de Luta pela Moradia - MNLM)¹⁰ was established in July 1990, during the First National Meeting of Housing Movements, consolidating the organization of the major squattings of areas and housing in urban centers during the 1980s, due to the accelerated rural exodus the country was undergoing at the time.

⁶ The FUCVAM is the Latin American reference in the self-managed production of housing and has as its main hubs self-management, mutual aid and collective ownership. Its base is composed of workers organized in trade unions.

⁷ Another difference in the methodology of the UNMP and that of the FUCVAM is the percentage of labor of future residents in the production of the housing. In the case of the UNMP, this participation is more symbolic, seeking to build bonds of solidarity and collective identity than to actually build the housing units.

⁸ The housing development of União da Juta is composed of 160 apartments and is close to two more developments produced by the east zone movement, totaling, in all, 630 residential units.

⁹ The CEF is a public bank which, in addition to fulfilling its banking duties like all others, is also in charge of the management of the housing financing system.

¹⁰ This is the social movement that organizes the occupation that will be analyzed as a case study, so its presentation will be more detailed.

Apart from the land, the MNLM usually emphasizes that it also struggles for home, sanitation, health, education and work¹¹. This is what they call "solidarity for the urban space", an organic and unique fight with the Landless Workers Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Terra - MST). During the creation of the MNLM, it already defended the demercantilization of housing and the demand for a public housing policy that included the low-income families and sought the fulfillment of the social function of property.

After the promulgation of the Federal Constitution of 1988, along with other urban social movements and the National Forum of Urban Reform, the MNLM participated in collecting over one million signatures in support of the Popular Initiative Bill for the creation of the National Affordable Housing Fund. This proposal would become the first popular initiative law (Law No. 11.124/05), and was instrumental in the approval of the Statute of the City.

In the 2000s, the MNLM continued to actively participate in the implementation of legal instruments and legal-political-organizational struggle for urban reform in Brazil. Moreover, the MNLM mobilized to squat idle properties, denouncing the non-fulfillment of the social function of property, enshrined in the Constitution (NAPP, March 2010).

One can consider the idle properties squatting in central areas of the cities, i.e. areas where the State invested in infrastructure and services and private enterprise in offices and businesses, a geopolitical strategy of the MNLM. By squatting, besides institutional struggles, the MNLM struggles for political, economic and cultural power, in opposition to the system of capitalist domination, both spatially and through the collective self-management of everyday life.

In the organizational structure of the MNLM, there are three levels of coordination: local, state and national. The management of the coordination of these instances lasts three years and the national and state coordinators are necessarily members of the local coordinations. It is during the National Meetings that the Movement "sets its direction," but there are spaces for training at all levels. The work and decision-making methods are decentralized, but are subordinated to the organizational structure of the Movement. All levels should follow the general political

¹¹ This approach meets with what Lefebvre defended (2004), when he said that urban reality is not linked exclusively to the consumer, or the tertiary sector, or to the distribution, but intervenes directly in the production and the relations of production.

guidelines of the Movement, but each intramunicipal core is independent to make decisions that do not confront the national guidelines. Currently the Movement is organized in 16 states of Brazil.

The goal of the MNLM is to ensure decent housing in urban areas and encourage debate on urban reform. To this end, it questions the value of the housing and the city, signaling the absence of land policies and of a planning that favors housing of social interest and the improvement of the quality of life of low-income families. The Movement combats the territorial exclusion of the poor, who can only live, in the light of speculation, on the outskirts or in hazardous areas in the inner city. It should be pointed out that for the majority, residents of the periphery; there is also, apart from the lack of urbanization, the high price of public transportation.

Cooperativism is one of the five current national axes of the MNLM, which shows its concern with the field of production, directly related to the field of reproduction, which were, according to Harvey (1982), artificially separated during the process of capitalist domination. That is, the MNLM includes employment in its political project, in addition to access to housing. It does that because it is the same political actors who need to access their right to housing and are often unemployed or in poor working conditions. This movement advocates the creation of multifunctional cooperatives, i.e., that in addition to housing, also comprise projects for the generation of "jobs and income", to lend sustainability to the residents in squats after their regularization¹².

Housing policies aimed at self-management

The creation of public policies for housing production by self-management was an important banner of the social movements that struggle for urban reform since the first of the Housing Caravan to Brasília, in 1988. In support of this claim, the movements made public demonstrations such as caravans, marches, squats of empty public buildings and seats of public bodies, such as the Ministry of Cities and Caixa Econômica, as they sat at the negotiating table (MINERO; RODRIGUES, 2012).

¹² The effective land regularization creates a guarantee of possession of the property, but also brings with it the inclusion of occupied buildings in collections of taxes and utility rates.

The self-managed housing production claimed by the movements consists in the management of public resources by associations, cooperatives or other nonprofit entities of civil society¹³. In this model, the decision-making power in all stages of production is of the entity and its members, making possible the construction of a community life with better quality. Such management involves everything from the selection and purchase of the land, to the supervision and monitoring of the work, including the definition of the project, technical consultancy, purchase of construction materials, hiring of labor, manner of construction and community organization (FERREIRA, 2012c; MINERO; RODRIGUES, 2012). However, the State still plays a central role, which guarantees the rights and controls public policy. The State is understood as a tool for social transformation and development of urban policy proposals for the transformation of housing. (RODRIGUEZ, 2009)

This form of production is also understood by social movements as a process of emancipation, a resistance to patronage and the manipulation of public power over the population, such as the construction of history by the subjects themselves (MINERO; RODRIGUES, 2012), or as an alternative policy to build a society that has such basic values as equality, solidarity and social justice. This experience of self-management would have the potential for innovation and transformation of lives at the individual level and, above all, collective (FERREIRA, 2012a).

Moreover, according to the housing movements, self-managed production would provide better quality of housing, because the construction process is not determined by profit and the oversight of the process is carried out by the major stakeholders - the future residents. In many cases, it is the future residents themselves who build their homes through a joint effort (sometimes paid, sometimes not) with technical assistance, which generally results in a more careful construction. For all these factors, the movements consider that housing produced by self-management guarantees a more democratic access to the city to the poorer classes (0-3 minimum wages).

¹³ This model is inspired by the Uruguayan experience, as "since the late 1980s, the housing movements, initially in Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo and later in several states had several exchanges with the Federación Uruguaya de Cooperativas de Ayuda Mutua (FUCVAM), which implements self-managing model since the late 1960s [and also have inspired the creation of the Bill of Popular Initiative of the National Fund for Popular Housing (PAZ, *apud* FERREIRA, 2012b)]" (MINEIRO; RODRIGUES, 2012).

After years of demands, some self-managed experiments were performed in the production of social housing off by grassroots organizations with the support of area professionals, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), pastoral actions of the Catholic Church, cooperation mechanisms or local governments. These were also "pilot projects" (MINEIRO; RODRIGUES, 2012).

Since 1988, with the election of several municipal governments with a popular democratic profile in Brazil, there have been some experiments at the municipal level. The most iconic of these was the Fund for Assistance to the Population Resident in Sub-Normal Housing (Fundo de Atendimento à População Moradora em Habitação Sub-Normal- FUNAPS - Community or FUNACOM) of the City of São Paulo during the government of Mayor Luiza Erundina (Workers' Party-PT), which made possible the self-managed production in a joint effort of 12,000 housing units (FERREIRA, 2012b)¹⁴.

In response to the demands of the MSUs since the 1980s, again presented at the Council of Cities¹⁵ - where the four urban social movements have national seats-, the first housing program by self-management at the federal level was created in 2004, the Solidary Credit Program (Programa Crédito Solidário- PCS). The purpose of the PCS was "the fulfillment of the housing needs of low-income families, organized in cooperatives or associations with housing purposes" (Resolution No. 93, dated April 28, 2004). The PCS uses costly resources from the Social Development Fund and the beneficiaries have to pay the full value of the house in 20 years, but without interest rate.

In 2004, 2,759 preliminary proposals of housing projects were presented, of which 684 were selected. However, by 2007, only 158 were actually contracted, due mainly to bureaucratic obstacles¹⁶ in the Caixa Econômica Federal (CEF), the agency that manages the program. For the social movements, the PCS would have a temporary character, until the National Fund for Popular Housing (Fundo Nacional de

¹⁴ Besides São Paulo, the municipalities of Diadema and Santo André, in São Paulo, and Ipatinga, in Minas Gerais, among others, have had experiences of municipal policies for self-managed housing production (MINEIRO; RODRIGUES, 2012) ..

¹⁵ The Council of Cities, which involved members of civil society and the government, was created in 2003 as part of the structure of the Ministry of Cities.

¹⁶ As many scholars of the relationship between State and society have shown (Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Bourdieu), the bureaucracy was historically established as a way to protect the sectors of the State that ensured the general conditions of capital accumulation. There were several demonstrations in favor of streamlining the bureaucracy of the PCS.

Moradia Popular- FNMP), which had been sent to Congress twelve years before, was approved (MINER; RODRIGUES, 2012).

In 2005 the National System of Social Housing (Sistema Nacional de Habitação de Interesse Social - SNHIS) was created, which encompasses all existing resources focused on housing, which would become the National Fund for Social Housing (Fundo Nacional de Habitação de Interesse Social - FNHIS). The SNHIS was seen as a great victory by the movements to be governed by the principle of social control, since its composition is formed by councils composed of representatives of the State and civil society, like the FNHIS Management Council and the Council of Cities, in which the four national movements have seats.

In 2009, as a preventive action towards the global financial crisis, in response to the demand of the business owners of the civil construction sector, the federal government created My House My Life Program (Minha Casa Minha Vida - MCMV) for the expansion of the solvable demand in the housing market. (LAGO, 2011) The PMCMV had an initial investment of approximately R\$ 34 billion to build one million homes. As is made clear by its goal, the PMCMV is more focused on the number of houses produced than in their quality.

The social movements that struggle for housing pressured the government and managed the directing of a small part of the budget (R\$ 500 million) for the My House My Life- Entities (PMCMV-E). This program follows the model of the PCS, in the sense of self-managed production, i.e., controlled by civil society organizations. With regard to funding, the PMCMV-E brought advantages over the PCS because the value of the investment to the beneficiaries in the range of 0-3 minimum wages is subsidized up to 90%, while the family pays 10% of the family income for 10 years.

By 2011, 790,000 units had already been contracted, with an investment of 38 billion reais, by MCMV, for corporate production and 31,000 units by the three self-managed housing programs, since 2004. This enormous difference, evident in the volume of public resources invested in each of the programs, also reveals the ideological and bureaucratic barriers to the implementation of the PMCMV-E.

It is also worth noting that, due to the high value of land prices and the absence of land policies, the PMCMV is accentuating the process of socio-spatial segregation, following the BNH model, with the concentration on the periphery of public housing interventions for the poor in Brazilian cities (CARDOSO et AL, 2011)

Some experiences of self-managed housing movements in Argentina

The struggle for housing produced by self-management is not an exclusive banner of Brazilian social movements. Besides the FUCVAM - a Latin American reference in the self-managed production of housing -, there are also movements in other Latin American countries. Considering that the purpose of this article is to present the ramifications of housing movements to other fields of work, the case of Argentina is the most emblematic in this respect. There are some social movements in the country which, besides struggling for housing, also build their residences, as well as operate in other activities.

The Argentinean Squatters and Tenant Movement (Movimiento de Ocupantes e Inquilinos - MOI) also has its origins in the late 1980s in a context after the end of the dictatorship amid a successive process of degradation, urban revitalization and valuation in Buenos Aires. Its leadership is a former university professor who eventually devoted himself exclusively to the movement, and its base was initially composed of squatters and empty properties in the central areas of the city. Together they had as their first battle flag the regularization of property, to stabilize the idea of maintenance of the squatters in space and strengthen a proposal of access to housing rights against the State. The MOI was created after a meeting with FUCVAM, sharing its three main axes: self-management, mutual aid and collective ownership¹⁷. (JEIFETZ, 2012)

This meeting between the experience of the Uruguayan cooperative movement and the Argentine phenomenon of squatting generated proposals for policies of self-management cooperative housing as regards: "a) formality and informality in the labor market and its relationship with the possibilities of cooperative organization b) peripheral construction and appropriation of the center as a claim by popular organizations, c) execution of new works and rehabilitation of buildings as possible options for popular housing."¹⁸ (JEIFETZ & RODRIGUEZ, 2003, *apud* RODRIGUEZ, 2009: 109).

¹⁷ The MOI, the FUCVAM and the UNMP founded the Latin American Popular Housing Secretary (Secretaria Latinoamericana de Vivienda Popular - SELVIP), which is a network of grassroots organizations (as opposed to the articulations of NGOs) which have principles like anti-neoliberalism and self-management housing and as the main methodology the exchange of experiences between the movements.

¹⁸ Free translation by the author. In the original: "(...) a) formalidad e informalidad en el mundo del trabajo y su relación con las posibilidades de organización cooperativa; b) construcción periférica y apropiación del centro como reivindicación de las organizaciones populares; c) ejecución de obras

During a second phase - 1998-2005 - the MOI has been extended to all persons in need of housing, i.e., beyond the occupants also tenants, residents of boarding houses and others. During this period, the "guardia methodology" was created, which systematizes the process of building a base, in which the applicant initially enters into a process of theoretical and practical training in self-management, until he or she joins a housing cooperative. It was also at this stage that the victory of the struggle for the creation of a self-managed normative milestone occurred, resulting in law 341/2.000, from the province of Buenos Aires. (JEIFETZ, 2012; RODRIGUEZ, 2009)

This law transfers public resources for social organizations to produce housing, financing land, work, and later, with law 964/2002, technical assistance (architectural, legal, accounting and in the social area). The text of the law also proposes "self-managed processes" as a solution for situations of "emergency housing. However, it superimposes the coexistence of collective and individual credits, allowing a degree of strategic freedom for the implementation of the standard by the Executive Power. Moreover, the text of the law defines cooperatives as transitional figures because, after the completion of works, the ownership would be individualized. (RODRIGUEZ, 2009)

In discussions on the regulation of this law, over a hundred organizations were involved in a cooperative housing movement and the result was the creation of "Programa de Autogestión de la Vivienda" (PAV), which included 12,103 families by 2005, when the government virtually "extinguished" the program. (RODRIGUEZ, 2009)

In the case of the MOI, the social unit of self-managed production has the participation of three actors - housing cooperative, work cooperative¹⁹ and technical assistance. The housing cooperative, which is comprised by the future residents of the houses to be built, perform the resource management and hire a work cooperative and the technical consultancy. The work cooperative is comprised of people from the base of the MOI that have skilled labor and other workers affiliated to

nuevas y rehabilitación edilicia (recuperación patrimonial) como opciones posibles para la vivienda popular (Jeifetz y Rodriguez, 2003)."

¹⁹ It is also possible within the PAV, to hire companies and freelance professionals for the construction of housing units.

the Workers' Union of Argentina (Central de Trabajadores de la Argentina -CTA)²⁰ and technical assistance is integrated by militant liberal professionals from the Movement. In addition to the work cooperative, members of the housing cooperative also devote time to volunteer their labor for the production of housing, under a joint effort. (JEIFETZ, 2012)

Although this law has been a major breakthrough, the MOI is still fighting for its nationalization, as it is still confined to the province of Buenos Aires. Another issue that arose with the implementation of Law 341/2000 was the sustainability of the work cooperative. This is because for the cooperative members have a work cooperative as a tool for strengthening their conditions of life, i.e., a project to generate employment and income, you need a constant inflow of resources. However, as it was originally conceived, the cooperative was exclusively dependent on public resources transferred by law 341. Thus, the MOI decided to create a multi-functional cooperative that, besides working in civil construction, also started to work in other fields, such as gastronomy, the textile sector and their own technical consultants also joined the cooperative (JEIFETZ, 2012).

Under a conceptual framework that associates centrality to daily life as a crucial aspect of the contemporary city and analyzing the experience of squatting associated with the right to the city, therefore, the relationship between housing, social facilities and production spaces in different scales and areas of the city, the MOI built a conception of "local development."

"a process of building social alliances and the articulation of different sectors with a spectrum of different unmet needs, by offering the space of the district as a space to formulate the creation of programs that express these articulated demands." (RODRIGUEZ, 2009: 113-114)

Based on this concept, the MOI created: a) "Programa de Vivienda Transitoria", to solve the housing situation of cooperated families until their permanent home; b) "Pre-Construction Program" as an initial practice of the execution of works, considering all their dimensions, c) "Programa de Externados," which proposes self-management as a tool for social integration and community health, starting with alliances with organizations of the anti-asylum struggle; d) "Centro Educativo Autogestionario Integral," which consolidates a pedagogical line

²⁰ The CTA is the workers' organization to which the MOI is affiliated. It is worth noting that this phenomenon - a social movement affiliated to a workers' organization - is peculiar to Argentina when compared to Brazil.

from the MOI practices, going from the training of the cooperative members in the "guardia methodology," to the encouragement to always study more, achieving higher levels of education, to a community nursery, where the children of residents and fellows organizations frequent, and a "baccalaureate popular" - a "high school" organized by social movements, in this case by the MOI, in which pedagogy is paulofreirian, whose governing principles are horizontality and self-management²¹. (RODRIGUEZ, 2009)

Since 2005, although public resources have become scarcer, the MOI continues to implement the PAV and comes in a process of expanding to other cities in Argentina, through contacts arising from university militancy. Currently, the Movement is active in Buenos Aires, Santa Fé, San Martín, Ushuaia and Neuquén. In Buenos Aires, the MOI has some buildings in central Buenos Aires, each governed by a housing cooperative. Some of them have already been completed and others are still in progress. For the execution of these works, the work cooperative has workshops on ironworks, carpentry and architecture, where the cooperative members produce parts of the work.

The Housing and Consume Cooperative of Quilmes (Cooperativa de Vivienda y Consumo de Quilmes - CVCQ) has a character quite different from all the organizations presented so far, because it has no ties or State funding for housing. Its origin is also in the 1980s, when a group of youths who aspired to home ownership for many reasons - they lived in slums, lived with their parents or paid rent - joined together and bought land collectively, with the savings belonging to each of them.

On this property, which is located on the outskirts of the city of Quilmes, in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires, the group has been building homes and infrastructure, with their previous savings²², through a joint effort. Those who had qualified labor in construction trained the others. Although this group did not have relations with UNMP, MOI or with FUCVAM, it developed a scoring system to measure the participants' commitment to the collective effort and the self-management similar to that used by movements linked to SELVIP, based on criteria

²¹ Since 2006, some "bachilleratos populares" achieved official recognition from the government, which issues a certificate of course completion.

²² Besides the existing savings, the cooperative also promoted events and raffles as a way to raise funds for the building of houses.

relating to the participation in activities, solidarity and financial contribution. The CQCV also has as a principle the promotion of the cooperative network. To this end, it always seeks to consume materials produced by other cooperatives, even when they are not the cheapest on the market, such as the tiles of Zanon Work Cooperative.

In 1997, this group created a work cooperative that made possible their participation in public tenders for small works, which contributed to generate financial resources for the residents. However, conflicts of projects between the members were made visible and the following year the cooperative was extinguished. In the 2001 crisis in Argentina, the group had grown significantly and began to think beyond housing, on ways of feeding itself collectively, which resulted in the creation of a vegetable garden, an oven for baking bread, a community general store and cafeteria, all managed collectively. In 2002, it developed its first social project, which received a little public funding to start the bakery and ironworks and, in 2004, obtained public funding to finish the bakery, create a sewing shop and purchase some equipment to cultivate the garden.

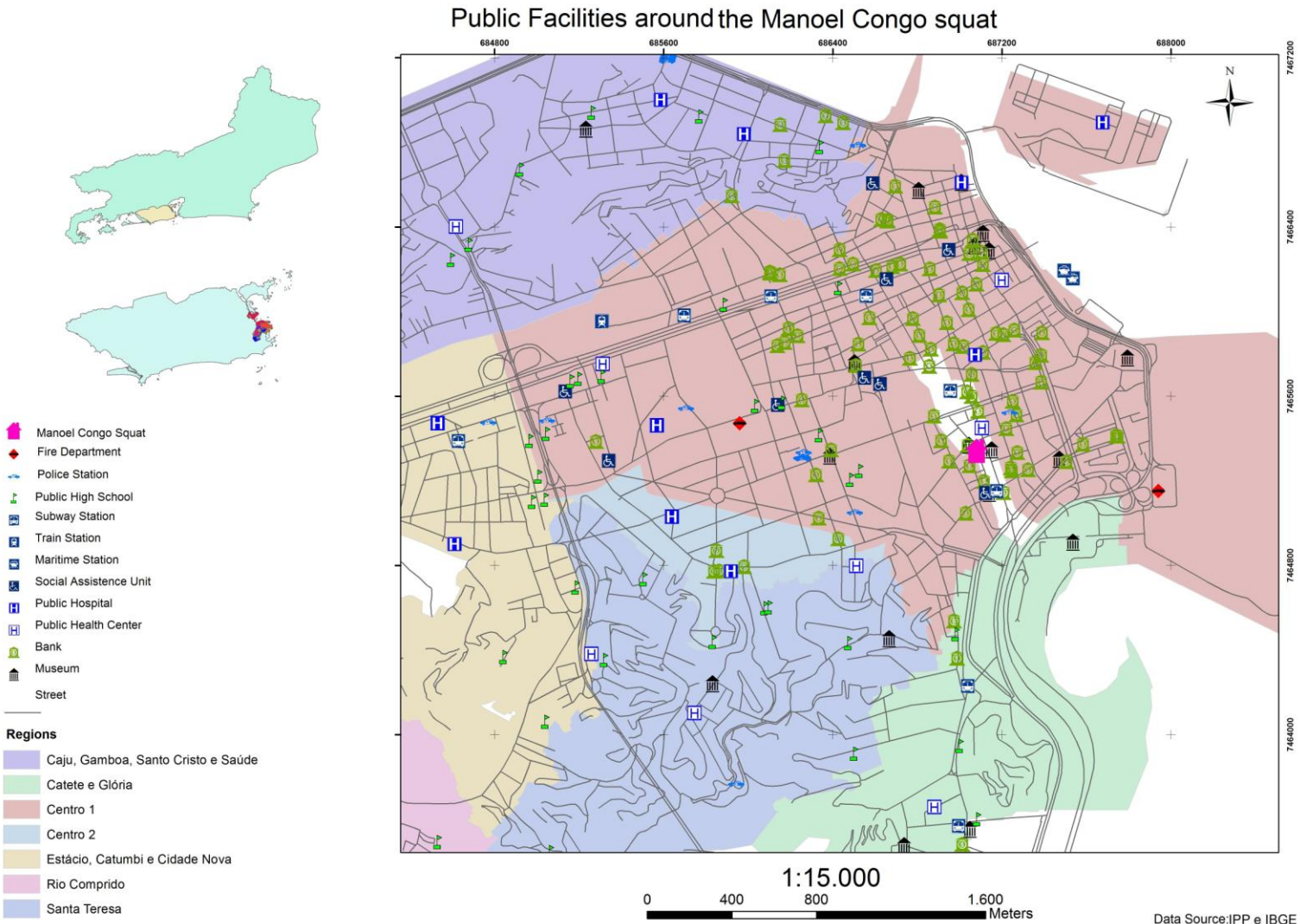
In 2005, they created CVCQ, and with the income generated by these projects, which also provides services to customers outside the cooperative, and continued to buy neighboring land, build houses and infrastructure and improve community services. Today, for example, in addition to the projects mentioned, they also have a library, a computer room and a day care center for the children of cooperative members.

The Manoel Congo squat

The Manoel Congo squat (MC), organized by the MNLN, exists in its current address since October 2007. The old building of the National Institute of Social Security (INSS), located on Guanabara Alcindo Street, No. 20, in a building in downtown Rio de Janeiro, adjacent to City Hall, had been abandoned for 11 years.

The accessibility of the squat is a point that stands out. It is in the cultural centrality of Cinelândia, close to theaters, movie theaters, museums, schools, and is served by several bus lines that travel in most of the neighborhoods of Rio and Greater Rio, as well as the subway (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Map of the surroundings of the occupation



Map made by Isadora Vida.

The building was constructed in the 1940s and is ten stories tall: on the first floor, there are two stores, each facing a different street (Alcindo Guanabara, where there is now a restaurant, and Evaristo da Veiga, where there will be a project space for generating employment and income for the squatters), the second floor has large rooms for common use, which are currently used for assemblies and meetings; the other eight floors have small offices and health units where families live today, sharing bathrooms, and that will be converted into a total of 42 housing units. (NAPP, March 2009)

The squat is comprised by 42 families - 108 people²³ -, 59 females and 49 males, among who 41 were children or adolescents, considering the limits of 0-17 years. In this range, thirteen were old enough to go to daycare, but only five attended, because the existing daycare centers in the surrounding area had no vacancies. The families tried to install a community daycare center in the building, which functioned for scattered periods for lack of a pedagogical and financial structure. Currently, it functions in the MC, the Espaço Criarte, in which university militants support the education of children and adolescents with tutoring and recreational activities.

The majority of household heads are female (36 of 42), and it is worth pointing out that some of them squatted only with their children or alone and their husbands moved only after the situation was stabilized. All families are low income (0-3 minimum wages), and there is a higher concentration in the range of R\$ 400.00 to R\$ 800.00²⁴.

Half of the heads of households (21) were unemployed at the moment of registration and five responded "another situation," which usually means a temporary and casual activity - resulting in a total of 26 heads of families who do not have an activity to generate income systematically, indicating a concentration of informal workers in the occupation. The vast majority of residents that work in the lower ranks of the urban economy are, for example, street vendors, seamstresses, machinists, construction workers and cleaning women.

A year before the families squatted the building, the MNLM leaders began a process of organizing people in the communities of Caju, Anchieta (which also included people from Costa Barros) and Cantagalo (including also people of Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira), whose goal was to solve their lack of decent housing. Meetings were held initially in each community and then in spaces in the central region, aimed at preparing people to squat an empty building and socialize with other families in solidarity, through a training policy based on the MNLM ideology. These meetings were attended by about 230 people who lived with

²³ The data presented to characterize the profile of the Manoel Congo residents are from the registry compiled by the Center for Advice, Research and Planning (Núcleo de Assessoria, Planejamento e Pesquisa - NAPP), the technical assistance of the Manoel of Congo in 2009. Part of the families characterized no longer live there, having been replaced by other families. However, we consider the data relevant, because it informs us the profile of the families seeking social housing movements and that accept to live downtown in squats.

²⁴ Value of the minimum wage at the time of the research, equal to R\$ 510.00

relatives and/or lived in rentals and/or in hazardous areas, and therefore were interested in the squatting project.

After some squatting and evictions, on October 28, 2007, 56 families (from the 120 initially organized) squatted the building where they live today. That same day, was initiated a formal institutional struggle for the formal achievement of the right to housing. Two days later, the building's owner, the INSS, filed a repossession suit. However, with the mediation of the Ministry of Cities, there was a negotiation for the building to become Social Housing, by complying with the social function of property and ensuring housing for these families. Bureaucratic obstacles, however, have not allowed the beginning of the renovation.

According to the profile of the families presented, the community consists of families from the suburbs and slums of Rio de Janeiro. Regarding the location and the situation of the surrounding area, the violence of the drug trafficking and the militias (paramilitary criminal organization) and the fact that they are in risk areas were the main reasons for squatters families to abandon their former residence, in addition to rent and cohabitation, as already mentioned. According to observations made in the register, these families are satisfied with the new housing and hopeful about a more peaceful coexistence and less subject to violence.

Manoel Congo is a self-managing squat in which the residents themselves donate their time volunteering for the maintenance and upkeep of the building. Families are organized for the watch schedule at the lobby²⁵ and for the joint cleaning efforts. On each floor, there are one or two bathrooms and a washing machine that are shared by the families using the floor. They are responsible for the cleaning.

In addition to these tasks, the residents are still regularly²⁶ meeting at lobby meetings, assemblies and local management committees to discuss and solve issues collectively related to Manoel Congo. Moreover, they are invited to participate in thematic hubs and training and decision meetings of the MNLM. All this

²⁵ Each resident above 18 donates X time each week to the lobby, with the exception of the MNLM's coordination, which is justified because they volunteer their time, according to residents, "giving information" through participation in meetings, production of emails and creation of a policy to support the continuing squatting. This does not appear to bother most residents, who understand and agree with the situation.

²⁶ The frequency of meetings and the time for volunteer work varies according to the moment of the squatting. Excluding extraordinary moments, the experienced trend was the decrease in time devoted to the collective, both for the maintenance of the building and for meetings as time passed (and the collective was becoming more organized).

organization in the collective corroborates the concern of the leadership with the delegation of responsibility to all residents for the maintenance of the achievement and turns it into an exemplary squatting for the National Housing Policy.

The squatters families obeyed the rules that were created collectively by themselves before the squatting, based on the MNLM principles, and compiled into a small handbook called Charter of Principles. This document establishes everything on rules of coexistence among the residents and between them and the property, including criteria to remain at the location, to guidelines for the socio-political and economic maintenance of the occupied space. (NAPP, May 2009)

These guidelines consider the political challenges imposed by the exclusion process based on private property, such as the ban on rental and sale, as well as the issues of minorities, such as the need to respect the differences of gender, ethnicity and age. Some failures, such as the recurrence of physical violence or drug trafficking, or the non-compliance with the defined parameters, like receiving more than three minimum wages, or have another property, can lead to the eviction from the unit.

The prospect of the renovation of the building and land reform indicated to the residents an increase in housing costs since they will have to start paying taxes, services, condominium fees, and the provision of funding. Thinking about the sustainability of the residents in the central area, the Work Plan of the squat delivered to Land Institute of the State of Rio de Janeiro (Instituto de Terras e Cartografia do Estado do Rio de Janeiro - ITERJ)²⁷, one of the assumptions of the squat is:

We believe that the Social Housing Policy - HIS can only succeed if combined with a policy of Labor and Income Generation for the benefited Community, so that this population can afford to stay in the city, ensuring the maintenance of the housing, contribute to the sustainability of families, the city and the organization so that it continues the struggle for a fair and democratic city²⁸. (NAPP, May 2010, p. 5)

The idea of working in the community with art and culture was awakened in the residents by the Cinelândia region's historical ties with culture - the cultural

²⁷ Agency that is conducting the land regularization process of the squat.

²⁸ Free translation by the author. In original: "Consideramos que a Política Habitacional de Interesse Social - HIS só terá êxito se for articulada com uma política de Geração de Trabalho e Renda para a Comunidade beneficiada, de forma que esta população possa arcar com a sua permanência na cidade, garantir a manutenção da habitação, contribuir para a sustentabilidade das famílias, da cidade e da organização, para que esta continue na luta por uma cidade justa e democrática"

corridor area, which facilitates the absorption of the offered services-, the availability and interest of the families in the gastronomy and cultural areas and the need for jobs (since most of the residents are unemployed). They intend to fulfill this desire at the Mariana Crioula Cultural Center (restaurant and Casa de Samba), offering food and music for the appreciation of black culture (NAPP, May 2009).

Seeking to create a bond of cooperation and complementarity between the residents and the activities to generate employment and income developed the building, they opted for the model of organization of the workers cooperative, i.e., an autonomous association resulting from the voluntary union between people with common economic objectives, collectively owned and democratically managed by the principles of self-management, mutual aid, equality, solidarity, honesty, transparency, autonomy and social responsibility. Being self-managed, the figure of the employer does not exist, all cooperative workers participate in administrative decisions equally and directly (NAPP Sept. 2010).

In 2010, the Manoel Congo squat received financing from the Petrobras Citizenship Program ²⁹ for a project to generate employment and income, called "We want... Work, Housing, Arts & Entertainment - Cinelândia Station." This project involves the creation of a multifunctional cooperative, comprised by residents of the squat, and the installation of the Mariana Crioula Cultural Center in the shop on the ground floor, which will be the first activity of the cooperative.

Part of their results will constitute a Property Maintenance Fund, which seeks to ensure the financial sustainability of the residents in the building after its legalization, bearing part of the taxes, services, and condominium fees of the cooperative members. Following its principles disseminated in discourse, the MNLM seeks, in its practice, to associate housing with work and culture.

With the cooperative, the families of the Congo Manoel hope to strengthen themselves politically and economically in the struggle to revert the process of exclusion that affects them. About a hundred residents have done vocational training courses, among the areas of gastronomy, computer science and construction and thirty-six have made the cooperative course.

²⁹ The MNLM-RJ heard about this invitation to bid through an email sent in the MNLM national network, from which the leadership came into contact with a Petrobras employee, which helped the Movement to shape the project according to the invitation. It is important to observe the appropriation of the internet as a means of communication and dissemination of information on the part of social movements, as well as the relevance of key peoples to trigger the processes.

So they seek to qualify to ensure the quality of the services and meet the demands of consumers of the surrounding area (of the Restaurant and Casa de Samba), work on the site of the building, and improve the functioning of the cooperative. After the implementation of the Restaurant and Casa de Samba, the plans for the cooperative will structure the aesthetics and crafts hubs, as well as expand the scope of the project, reaching out to other communities and squatting of the MNLM in the State of Rio de Janeiro (NAPP, April 2011).

Currently, the cooperative is in the process of formal regularization and, in practice, has been working in the kitchen of the squat, still improvised, for making snacks and meals for events, as happened in the People's Summit and for the soirees held in the street in front the squat.

Brief conclusions

The principles of self-management in the Manoel Congo squat resemble the principles of the UNMP, MOI and FUCVAM, because these organizations advocate public financing of housing produced by self-management, the participation of all those involved in the decisions and that practice the donation of time to volunteer for activities to benefit the collective. Now the CQCV distances itself from other organizations by using the resources of the cooperative members for the production of cooperative housing, not obtaining public funding. This is a central issue for a self-management project. To which extent does public funding, which supposes parameters and standards for its access, change the principles of action of the movements?

With regard to the development of housing self-management, the MNLM, in the case of Manoel Congo (MC), has expanded its practice beyond access to housing, depending on the sustainability of the residents in the building after its legalization, creating a multifunctional cooperative that will work on the state level and comprise different niches of activity, starting with gastronomy at the Mariana Crioula Cultural Center.

In this aspect, the MOI approaches the MC for having also created a multifunctional cooperative that works on all the experiences of the MOI in Buenos Aires. However, initially, the MOI created a work cooperative to build and renovate

the houses to be produced. The need to transform it into a multifunctional cooperative only became clear after realizing the economic dependence of the cooperative on exclusive public funding. If, on the one hand, in the MC, the MNLM understood this need to associate housing with work prior to regularizing the squat, on the other, the MOI has already established an association between consumption and production (of housing) since its origin, influenced by the FUCVAM methodology.

Although the UNMP also practices a similar methodology, just like the FUCVAM, it did not create a work cooperative. As in its practice, the percentage of participating labor decreased to a point where this practice is not conceived as a job, but as an aspect of the forming bonds of solidarity, most of the works are outsourced to companies or self-employed professionals.

In the case of CQCV, as in the Manoel in Congo, although housing (in MC, maintenance) production is carried out by the future residents themselves, it is completely voluntary. Identifying the difficulty of financial sustainability of the group members, the CQCV, as well as the MC, expanded its operations to other fields of production: sewing, bakery, ironworks and carpentry. These two fields serve the domestic audience, with the donation of volunteer time, and external customers, such as is the case of the meals produced by the MC cooperative.

In relation to the developments of the struggle for housing from the perspective of the establishment of a neighborhood, as concerns services inaccessible in the areas surrounding the experiences of movements, the MC developed, as well as all other experiences, activities in the field of childhood education, based on the university militancy of the MNLM. In this sense, the UNMP, at União da Juta, was a pioneer in Brazil, having also managed to open and manage a bank branch in the district. However, its current practice is not focused on developments beyond housing, differently from the MNLM of Rio de Janeiro and Rio Grande do Sul.

The Argentine movements presented were those most progressed in the relationship with the neighborhood and the neighborhood production. While the CQCV installed a sanitation and energy infrastructure, it created a children's cafeteria, a library and a computer room and the MOI formulated a concept of local development. According to this construction, the MOI developed a pedagogical line

comprising the different levels and types of education in partnership with other organizations, created a program for social integration and community health from self-management and a transitional housing program, to host the cooperative members in conditions better than those offered by the state until they achieved their permanent homes.

Given this scenario in progress, one identifies a dissatisfaction with current urban conditions of capitalist society in their spaces of activity. This feeling has contributed, in different measures, to the expansion of practices and political projects of housing movements towards urban reform in its full meaning, associating consumption to production.

The observation of these experiences leads us to question what will be the paths and barriers for the housing movements to establish a network of self-management experiments in the various fields of life reproduction?

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