

“What is governed and not governed in Mexico City”

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This presentation aims to identify the origins and development of the modalities of governance in some fields of public policy (transport, housing, waste management, public works...). The objective is to identify the arrangements between the public, private, and "social" actors in each of these fields. Studies by different scholars have highlighted the role of conflicts and agreements between mayors ("Regentes") and social groups (associations, unions, business groups). This presentation raises some hypotheses concerning the modes of governance that are produced from these conflicts and negotiations, modes of governance explaining the current functioning of the city.

This presentation is part of the research project "What is governed? Comparing Paris and Mexico Governance: Conflict solving, governance failures, and public policies", coordinated by Patrick Le Gales and Vicente Ugalde. First, some facts will be quickly presented to put Mexico City in context, particularly in relation to what, from our perspective, is supposed to be governed in Mexico City. Second, the presentation proposes a review of some aspects of urban life which the project investigates. With this, we hope to give an idea of the politics of Mexico City, not necessarily in terms of how it is achieved or exercised but rather on how understanding the relationship between those who govern and that which is governed. What we try to identify is how are built the relationships between who govern with that which is governed. In other words, through which practices local authorities work in the city. This involves clarifying what we mean by "govern" in a metropolis like Mexico City: what is governed? Who governs it? What instruments are used? What arrangements are practiced? In the last section, we raise a number of questions about something which can be called a genealogy of local governance: it seeks to trace the process through which practices that characterize relations between government and the governed are constructed and stabilized.

Urban Growth

The Metropolitan Area of Mexico City (MAMC) includes sixty municipalities in the states of Mexico and Hidalgo as well as sixteen “delegations” in the Federal District.

The 2010 Census estimates that MAMC has 20 116 842 people. The population density of the Metropolis was 8730 per square kilometer (considering only the urbanized area) the highest population density in the county. This Metropolis is the largest Spanish-speaking city in the world.

The Federal District, in the MAMC, is the seat of federal powers since 1824 when the population was estimated to be at 165000 people in a surface area of 1499 square km (Luna y Olvera, 1992). In 1900 the population was estimated to be 344 721 (INEGI, 1999). In 1921 there were 906 000 people in the city: 76% in the Municipality of Mexico and the other 24% in the Municipalities of Azcapotzalco, Coyoacán, Cuajimalpa, Guadalupe Hidalgo, Iztapalapa Milpa Alta, Mixcoac, San Ángel, Tacuba, Tacubaya, Tlalpan and Xochimilco. In 1930 the metropolitan area included what in that moment was named Mexico City and twelve quarters (cuarteles) that later became the central “Boroughs” (or “Delegations” in Spanish) (Venustiano Carranza, Cuauhtémoc, Benito Juárez y Miguel Hidalgo). In 1950 the population reached 3.3 million on 240 km². During the sixties the metropolis expanded beyond the border of the Federal District and included, firstly, four municipalities of the state of Mexico (Naucalpan, Tlalnepantla, Ecatepec y Chimalhuacán) and at the end of the decade, more than a half million people within the metropolis lived in ten municipalities of this state. Later, in 1970 the MAMC had 8.7 million people: 78% live in Federal District and 22% in Municipalities of the State of Mexico. In this time, Nezahualcóyotl, La Paz, Atizapan, Tultitlán, Coacalco, Cuautitlán, Huixquilucan y Cuautitlán Izcalli belong to Metropolitan area. In 1980 the population of the metropolis exceeded 13 million people, more than 4.9 million people live in the municipalities of the State of Mexico, which together with the sixteen delegations of the Federal District made up the metropolis.¹ In 1990 the population of the Federal District decreased to 8.2 million while in the neighboring municipalities it

¹ During those years the municipalities of Chalco, Chicoloapan, Chiconcuac, Ixtapaluca, Nicolas Romero and Tecámac joined the metropoli. Velez (1992) speaks of seventeen municipalities (Velez, 1992).

reached 6.3 million . At that time a high concentration of the population is observed in four neighboring municipalities (Nezahualcoyotl, Ecatepec, Naucalpan and Tlalnepantla) (Velez, 1992).

Some issues to illustrate the current modalities of governance in Mexico City

The decision taking model in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area

In the case of the metropolitan area, many scholars (Castillo et al, 1995; Ziccardi, 1998; Rosique, 2006; Iracheta, 2009) argue that one of the most important problems for the coordination of the metropolitan area (between District Federal Government, Federal Government, Mexico State Government 49 municipalities) is that the coordination instruments have been lacking or are useless. One of these scholars argues in favor of political structures for the metropolis: committees or even a Parliament (Iracheta, 2009). Díaz y Zavaleta* characterize the governance metropolitan system as institutionally fragmented, and show how in this context of institutional fragmentation and political pluralism, the Metropolitan Fund has failed. Created as a intergovernmental coordination tool, the Metropolitan Fund has reproduced the former way (fragmented) of taking decisions: even in the case of infrastructure projects with a metropolitan scope, each government decides individually how to use this Fund. To illustrate this limited metropolitan coordination, Iracheta discusses how in the case of important (even emblematic) infrastructure projects in the City, local governments decide without consulting with the neighboring governments.²

² For instance: The “segundo piso del Periférico” (a highway elevated of beltway) between 2004 and 2006, The “Viaducto Bicentenario” (a highway that joins the Federal District with the municipalities in the State of Mexico) in 2008, the “Ciudades Bicentenario” (thousands of housing units) in the periferical municipalities of the Mexico City Metropolitan Area since 2007 (Iracheta, 2006:83).

The insufficiency in metropolitan coordination can be identified in decision-making processes regarding infrastructure, nevertheless it is may be more visible in others fields such as transport (Negrete*; Connolly*; Molina, 2002; Lezama, 2006), public security (Alvarado*), or land use (Eibenschutz,). What we could find in our research project (What is governed? Comparing Paris and Mexico Governance) and especially in our fieldwork is that, more than a general metropolitan arrangement (that involves all sectors), each sector presents particular modalities of negotiation between different governments (Federal District, Municipality of State of Mexico, State of Mexico Government and Federal Government); and different arrangements between governments agencies and social groups involved.

Some causes of disordered urban growth

According to the Ministry of Social Development, during the 40's in Mexico City (Federal District, actually), 87% of urban development happened on private land (and just 13% on ejido lands) while in 70's, 65% of urban growth happened on community land and 35% on private land. They estimate that in 2001 urban development was generating pressure on land that was 88% ejido lands (Secretaria de Desarrollo Social, 2010).

Some findings of our project

The governance model in public security involves many actors, a complex system of rules (heterogeneous and contradictory rules), and an important inequality in the allocation of resources. Looking to answer the question about the existence of a territorial logic of criminality, this research (Alvarado*) found something that could be characterized as a “metropolitan criminal system”: criminal acts are, in some way, concentrated in the central city and they are expanded in an unequal way through the delegations and metropolitan municipalities. There is a criminal spatial pattern concerning crimes such as petty theft or vehicle theft: the type of crime is associated to land use and to infrastructure. Looking at the governmental response to this problem,

the research found that, in terms of effectiveness, the Federal District response is less effective than the State of Mexico response. The security model in Mexico City is designed to face the irregular behavior but not the criminal one.

Analyzing the Night-time economy in Mexico City (Nightclubs, discotheques, restaurants, bars, cabarets and music halls), our project (Mercado*) identifies some interesting aspects about the way in which the government deals with this activities. First, this work show us that in Mexico City, these activities are not taken into account in the economic planning instruments: the government does not consider any specific intervention to regulate or to contain those activities. Despite this absence, this work is interested in looking at this also as a potential governance system. The key question in this work is how the conflicts between the different actors involved in the Night-time economy (that means: restaurant managers, restaurants' associations, neighbors groups,... the police, inspectors, the organized crime and the customers) are produced, how they developed and how they are solved. The work finds that, in this Night-time economy, there is an element, not very visible, but key: the informal intermediary agents. Their intervention avoids the emergence of conflicts. In fact, they are the ones who in many cases provide solutions to conflicts (between authority and organized crime and even between authority and restaurant managers).

Examining the Santa Fe Mega project, our project (Puente*) proposes too a review about the recent changes in urban policy in Mexico City. It identifies an evolution in this policy, from one characterized by a non-governed production of space, toward another one characterized by a partially-governed process of social production of space. What is particularly interesting in the Santa Fe-urban project is the conjunction of public and private instruments as well as the formal and informal arrangements established to deal with the day-to-day management of public services. We talk about the land-use regulation and its programs (ZEDEC), the Public Trust (Fideicomiso de Colonos de Santa Fe) and especially the negotiated use of all of them. The study displays how the Trust replaced the government in the management of public affairs in which a kind of non-government prevailed.

The Private Trust as an instrument of public policy is explored in another case (Ronda*) which is interested in the functioning of this type of instrument in the rescue

policy of the Historical District (Fideicomiso del Centro Histórico). The use of a private instrument for a public policy, originally designed to enhance the contact and coordination between public and private actors, did not work as expected. The effectiveness of the Trust was neutralized by the institutional mutability in the local agencies during the analyzed period.

Focusing on the effects of political party change in the government of the Federal District on infrastructure policy, one of our studies shows how this change did not entail a more democratic process in infrastructure policy making (Dolúskaya*). On the other hand, this partisan change introduced the use of policy instruments which until now had not been used for this type of activity: for instance, creating legal mechanism to avoid processes of accountability, the creation of Private Trusts, and other private mechanisms used, in this case, to combine public and private funding but mainly to avoid budgeting accountability. Anyway, concerning the governance system in the infrastructure policy, this study exposes that before as well as after political change in Federal District, in the case of major infrastructure works, something did not disappear: a stable coalition between government leaders and construction firms.

The public-private arrangements, the combination of instruments and the generalized practices in the relationships between local authorities, transport concessionaires and customers is another subject in our research. What defines the governance in the transport system in Federal District (as Connolly points out) is a combination of practices and uses of physical elements and on the other hand, different arrangements between public and private actors, that have been changing over time. One of those changes is the emergence and generalization of public-private partnership arrangements (PPP) in the supply of transport public service. But what characterizes the governance of transport system in the City, according to Connolly is the collective transport service based on individual concessions (one vehicle- one concession) for public transport: this model is the expression of a pyramidal corporatism system very expanded in Mexico in the last century.

On the other hand, this research also finds that the concession is at the center of this transport system as it also serves as a mechanism by which a network of relationships between authority and concessionaires articulates; and as a mechanism

to structure relations within organizations of dealers (Negrete*). In addition, the concession organizes relations between concessionaires and transport operators, who are not always the concession holders. The research discusses how what is governed in this service are not only concessions, routes and fares, but also the conflicts within groups of transporters. The feeling of a chaotic and ungoverned country, appears to be entirely justified: in addition to a constantly transgressed legal framework, governance of transport system involves numerous agreements between entrepreneurs, transport operators and officials on road safety, system where the transport user is the only one who is ignored. This part of the research (Negrete*) suggests an explanation regarding the excessive use of the concession, which is not only used like a mechanism to ensure a service, but like a way of fight unemployment, and like a mode of production and reproduction of clientelist relationships between government and concessionaires.

An analysis of housing production (Schteingart*) points out how there are two prominent ways in which housing is produced in the city: the first could be called governmental and the second is irregular but tolerated and even encouraged by authorities, especially through public service delivery. The review of urban sprawl through irregular human settlements is useful to question the effects of institutional change in property regime on practices to regulate the illegal sale of land in metropolitan periphery areas. In this case, the prevailing modes of governance over decades were profoundly transformed especially regarding the role of peasants (ejidatarios): from being traditionally passive beneficiaries they became an active actor in the urban development process. Comparing modes of governance in the real estate sector in the Federal District and the State of Mexico's municipalities, another study (David*) identifies what it characterized as territorially fragmented governance. The "licenses", which are the traditional instruments of administrative urban law, are at the core of the relationships between local authorities and real estate firms, which provide governments with the mechanisms to maintain power over these large economics actors. This urban regimen where the affiliation to a political party doesn't matter is stronger in Federal District than in the State of Mexico where the ways of managing this issues differs. Indeed, they could be described as a fragmented regime of governance.

New or old practices, new or old arrangements...

The preliminary findings of the project raise some questions about modes of governance identified in various sectors.

The specialized literature points that the origin and rise of governance modes are explained by market and state failures. The numerous arrangements between public and private actors are mobilized in order to get public policies off the ground where state or where the market no longer works. However, this is not necessarily the case in particular contexts. Recent literature on Mexico City's history suggests that most of the relationships established between private actors and local authorities began with the state building process during the twentieth century

Interested in modes of governance in Mexico City within some sectors like transport, infrastructure, urban projects, Night-economy, housing, historical renewal projects... we could observe the emergence of groups structured around new issues: local democracy, quality of life (urban parks, air pollution), commercial real state markets, public participation, but we could also identified groups associated to old issues like housing, public security and the use of public space. So the question that immediately emerges is: does the government deal with those new demands and new groups using the same means or does it mobilize new instruments and new arrangements.³

Sure, it is evident that there are many legal regulations in place to organize these activities. It is a kind of traditional or state regulation with the intensive use of legal prescriptions. The overregulation in almost all the sectors illustrates this trend. It is also evident that the economic dynamic also helps organize some of these activities. What we found interesting is a set of practices that involve forms of exchange between the members of these groups or even the groups and the public authority. At this

³ Certainly, Davis (1994) had already pointed the importance of middle classes in formulating demands about urban services.

moment the question that arise is if these practices are as new as the demands or if they are present since the formation of the current political regime of Mexico City.

The literature on Mexico City during the twentieth century has emphasized clientelism as a privileged form of relationship between government and groups of urban society. This kind of extended relationship is explained not just as a form of favors exchange but as a form of exchange regarding how to avoid complying with the law. Political support and tolerance in the face of illegal practices have become a very common way to build and keep political relations with urban social groups.

Analyzing the conflicts in the transport industry, in Mexico City over the PRI regime, Davis stresses the national-local relationships in urban development. She identifies a overlapping of national and local actors, where a subordination of local actors regarding national actors is apparent. Indeed, government officials prefer to negotiate with national organizations, like CROM in the 30's or the CNOP in the 40's, so that the local demands of Mexico City are expressed primarily through national political organizations (Davis, 1994). This characteristic in the relations between national and local stakeholders has not disappeared; nevertheless, many practices by which local actors and authorities negotiate through specific public policies also exist nowadays. The lack of a local state as we know it nowadays leads to the error about the negotiation practices between local groups and local authorities before 1988 but these practices can be identified all over twentieth century city history. Discussions within the advisory council of Mexico City (Consejo Consultivo de la Ciudad de México) in the twenties and thirties (Davis, 1994), the Planning Commission of the Federal District (Comisión de Planificación del Distrito Federal) in the fifties (Ronda and Ugalde, 2008); and the decision-making process about infrastructure works or urban planning in the city (Sánchez, 2003; Sanchez Mejorada, 2003) clearly indicate that there was also negotiation mechanisms for public actors and urban social groups during this period.

What seems important to note here is that in the discussions that took place in those spaces were numerous agreements and conflicts between the actors involved in all

decisions concerning projects and topics covered in these commissions. Many decisions were taken without giving rise to large mobilizations or conflicts between urban groups: some kind of arrangement were made and while they were often associated with national politics, in many cases the arrangements were found just between local authorities and actors. Many of the modes of governance that can be identified today in many sectors were already presents in the past.

The long political history of Mexico City has been overshadowed by domestic political history. Convergence in the city of domestic political actors has caused confusion. However, studies have recently appeared, emphasizing the uniqueness of the political history of the Federal District. Some interesting points help to identify that peculiarity. For example, Rodríguez (2012) has found that while struggles at the scale of federal deputies in the PRI were among peasant workers and popular sectors of the party, in the Federal District, the struggles were primarily between unions and the increasingly important popular sector. Considering the strength of this popular sector, made up of organizations that in many cases were organized around demands for urban services, it is possible to understand how the consolidation of the popular sector is associated with a process of stability in the practices and arrangements that allow for a particular mode of governance to continue to exist today. We may also ask if the weakening of the popular sector was the cause of the appearance of many groups for whom the old ways of trading were no longer effective to maintain stable relations with local authorities.

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