

From Creative Genius to Entrepreneurial Spirit: Architectural Mediations in the Formation of the Brazilian State

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Abstract

The architectural field has performed a central mediating function in the process of formation of the Brazilian State through the formulation of mechanisms for control, ordering, and management of territories and populations. In the present article, we address three different scenarios in which architectural professional networks played a significant role: national-developmental projects implemented from the 1930s onwards; housing policies developed during the military dictatorship (1964 to 1985); strategic plans for the production of “global cities” following the redemocratization process (1985-today). From among the kaleidoscope of professional practices and meanings mobilized during these periods, we highlight situations and events that triggered the ideal types of the “creative genius”, the “engaged anti-designer” and the “entrepreneurial manager”. By analyzing the interactions between architects and public administration, we hope to contribute to the understanding of the population management technologies and business mechanisms that supported the neoliberal turn in the forms of government in Brazilian cities.

Keywords: State; Architectural projects; Land use planning; Population management; Brazil.

Del genio creativo al espíritu emprendedor: Mediaciones arquitectónicas en la formación del Estado brasileño

Resumen

El campo arquitectónico desempeña funciones mediadoras centrales en el proceso de formación del Estado brasileño, a través de la formulación de mecanismos de control, planificación y gestión de territorios y poblaciones. En este artículo, discutimos tres escenarios distintos en los que sus redes profesionales tuvieron un desempeño significativo: en los proyectos de desarrollo nacional implementados desde la década de 1930; en las políticas de vivienda elaboradas durante la dictadura militar (1964 a 1985); y en los planes estratégicos para la producción de “ciudades globales” que se extendieron después del proceso de redemocratización. En el caleidoscopio de prácticas y sentidos profesionales operados en estos períodos, destacamos en particular las situaciones y eventos que movilizaron a los tipos ideales del “genio creativo”, el “diseñador comprometido” y el “gerente de negocios”. Al analizar las interacciones entre los arquitectos y la administración pública, esperamos contribuir a la comprensión de las tecnologías de gestión de la población y los mecanismos empresariales que apoyaron el guiño neoliberal de las formas de gobierno de las ciudades brasileñas.

Palabras clave: Estado; Proyectos arquitectónicos; Ordenación del territorio; Gestión de la población; Brasil.

Da genialidade criativa ao espírito empresarial: As mediações arquitetônicas na formação do Estado brasileiro

Resumo

O campo arquitetônico desempenha funções mediadoras centrais no processo de formação do Estado brasileiro, por meio da formulação de mecanismos de controle, ordenamento e gestão dos territórios e populações. Neste artigo, abordamos três distintos cenários em que suas redes profissionais tiveram atuação significativa: nos projetos nacional-desenvolvimentistas implementados a partir dos anos 1930; nas políticas habitacionais elaboradas durante a ditadura militar (1964 a 1985); e nos planos estratégicos para a produção de “cidades globais” que se difundiram após o processo de redemocratização. No caleidoscópio de práticas e sentidos profissionais mobilizados nesses períodos, destacamos em especial as situações e eventos que acionaram os tipos ideais do “gênio criativo”, do “anti-projetista engajado” e do “gestor empresarial”. Ao analisarmos as interações entre arquitetos e administração pública, esperamos contribuir na compreensão das tecnologias de gestão populacional e dos mecanismos empresariais que sustentaram a guinada neoliberal das formas de governo das cidades brasileiras.

Palavras-chave: Estado; Projetos arquitetônicos; Ordenamento territorial; Gestão populacional; Brasil.

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Urban interventions are usually undertaken in the name of ideals of modernity and development, the rational use and interconnectedness of the territory, the ordering of flows, services, and people, and the creation of markets. In urban contexts, each question regarding the causes and responsibilities of a situation perceived as socially problematic leads to calls for new conceptions about society and the elaboration of solutions based on specialized knowledge. Only after the production of a common sense around a certain “public problem” can the creation of new management mechanisms and the carrying out of a set of State works become legitimized. It is in the search to understand the dynamics of how urban interventions are implemented that we take as our inspiration Cefaï’s (2017) analysis of the process of a public problem is constituted.¹

Our analysis in the present article focuses in particular on the mediating role in Brazilian public administration that architects and urban planners have played in the problematization, publicization, and construction of the “problem of mass housing”. We begin with the idea that housing scarcity gradually became perceived as problematic within a state agenda ever more focused on development projects, which saw private construction initiatives as insufficient to meet demands linked to population growth and the acceleration of urbanization. Seen as a collective issue, the housing problem then became a political process, becoming disputed as a field of action for agents of – or accredited by -- the State.

In the present article, then, we seek to highlight how the experience of homelessness was transformed into a broader, collective experience, “with common sense ways of seeing, saying, and doing linked through a network of numbers, available categories, types, accounts, and arguments” (Cefaï 2017: 192). In this process, housing became an identifiable and recognizable problem, enabling the weaving of knowledge and techniques around existing organizations and professional associations, as well as the construction of a moral order based on aesthetic meanings, practical experiments, and interactional exchanges with different people and things. In this dynamic, the structuring of the architectural field came to the fore in promoting new State functions through the creation of laws, equipment, and specialists qualified to take on the problem of public housing.

The increase in public housing works by the Brazilian State thus involved the movement of administrative and legislative arrangements, the creation of regulatory frameworks for construction and planning, and the legal and economic establishment of various forms of partnerships between public and private entities. Through the expansion of the meanings and objectives of the works (which in the name of urbanization and popular access to housing began to cover issues relating to infrastructure, supply, and circulation), professional

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networks anchored in different fields of knowledge were set up within public administration, linking engineers, sanitation workers, economists, sociologists, lawyers, and etc.

Something beyond technical expertise was also expected in the conception of these public interest projects, however. Often, those involved in them referred to notions of harmony, order, and balance -- that is, to a moralizing and integrating vision of society (Guimarães, Barbosa & Moreira 2021). It is at this intersection between art, technique, and politics that architects began to assert their expertise as professionals recognized by (inter)national public culture. In this way, depending on the context of their actions, the “creative genius”, the “engaged anti-designer” or the “business manager” became increasingly evoked and recognized in the field of public housing.

Based on an analysis of the dynamics of the architectural field, we seek to illuminate the discourses and practices mobilized in the process of implementing state-based urban interventions, with an emphasis on interactions surrounding the construction of public housing as a political problem. The results presented in this article are based on bibliographical and documentary research, with special attention being paid to the controversies that permeated the constitution of the field of architecture as a form of knowledge that’s of the public interest. We also employ interviews with agents involved in the Favela-Bairro urban and housing program, implemented between 1994 and 2007 in Rio de Janeiro.² This program was paradigmatic in embracing communicative strategies for producing cooperation and consensus between different social actors, expanding the perception of popular housing as a problem while boosting professional careers and generating norms, rules, financial investments, and management technologies.

In presenting our analysis, we give pride of place to three distinct scenarios of State-driven urban intervention. Initially, we address policies with a national developmental bias that were implemented from the 1930s onwards and the controversies surrounding public competitions for architectural projects. These competitions led both to the projection of specialized knowledge in the public sphere and to the destabilization of the ideals of “creative genius” and the structuring of professional architectural bodies. Next, we deal with housing policies designed during the years of the military dictatorship (1964 to 1985), seeking to illuminate the contradictions and tensions faced by “engaged anti-designers” in the face of State apparatuses focused on territorial and population management. Here, we pay special attention to the pioneering case of the urbanization of the Brás de Pina favela, located in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Finally, we expose the discourses mobilized by architects and managers in the production of so-called “global cities” after the Brazil’s redemocratization process. These had the effect of increasing the influence within public administration of those architects who demonstrated “entrepreneurial spirit”. Within this concluding scenario, we discuss the assessments, experiences, and strategies of the agents involved in the Favela-Bairro program, which were included in the Strategic Plan of the City of Rio de Janeiro.

It is not our intention here to provide a comprehensive transversal account of the nuances of territorial and population management in Brazil. We are aware that our country’s many different regions have particularities related to both urban and rural contexts and that the analysis that we present here cannot possibly take all of these into account. We do hope, however, that the questions we raise below serve to inspire further research into the study of professional networks and their intersection with the State. We propose to shed light on those “at the top” (Nader 1972); that is, on those who, through the operation of different resources (economic, political, cultural, and etc.), hold the power to shape and control institutional structures that affect the quality of life of thousands of people. Ultimately, we seek to create knowledge about the dynamics that legitimize, organize, and sustain government policies and business initiatives such as those that permeate housing and urban planning policies, making these dynamics more accessible to the populations they supposedly serve.

By looking at the interactions between the fields of public administration and architecture, we seek to contribute – even if only more broadly -- to the understanding of the processes of the generalization of

² We chose to use the real names of the people interviewed because their actions took place through institutions and organizations with a broad public impact. We hope that further research into the Favela-Bairro program will be able to use the present study as a reference and context for analysis.

mechanisms of territorial and population management that occur via contemporary business strategies. This is an area of study that, by penetrating into the dynamics of formation of “new elites” in the Brazilian neoliberal turn, faces a deep methodological challenge. It seeks to investigate extremely flexible networks composed of mobile, dynamic, and globalized groups which are not easily identifiable (Gomes, Motta & Souza Lima 2021: 16).

The political place of the “creative genius” in the formation of a State architecture

The scientific conception of modern urban planning dates to the first decades of the 20th Century and is deeply related to the social and aesthetic experiments carried out by the French government in colonial cities. Such experiments had as their main objectives the demonstration of political superiority, the support of certain forms of military control, the regulation of economic activities, and the segregation of populations, all while making public order increasingly legible. (Rabinow 2003). This does not mean that we are making the simplistic claim that every architectural form carries within its materializations a political symbolism. Rather, we want to that emphasize architecture’s programmatic contents can be strategically manipulated in a given socio-historical context, creating broader processes of transformation in fields of power and knowledge (Foucault 1975).

It is in order to highlight the strategic contours of architectural and urban planning programs that we affirm that modernism was mobilized during the change in the political context of Brazil in the 1930s. This was when the country’s elite began to adopt a progressive, charitable nationalist model and a state agenda focused on development projects. Public resources became directed towards the materialization of new values of power and the establishment of spatial structures that supported water, road, and air transport systems that would enable the unification of economic, social, and cultural production regimes and the creation of markets. Urban planning was chosen as the form and ideology of social intervention. Within it, architectural modernism proposed guidelines relating to representation, monumentality, and identity as devices symbolizing national traditions in line with the demands for order and productivity emerging in the post-colonial capitalist world (Gorelik 2005).

The Brazilian federal government began promoting architectural competitions for the selection of projects aimed at public works as a way of both confirming the ideal of free expression and competition and of meeting the demands of the liberal heritage of the architectural professional field itself. This legacy was related to the intense cultural and political transformations that occurred during the French Revolution, when initiatives emerged to organize methodologies aimed at architectural practices. Among them was the defense of competition as a means of stimulating the debate of ideas and protecting government works from the “intrigues of public men” and the “cult of the king’s architect” (Quincy 1801; Sobreira 2018).

This liberal understanding of the competition inspired the professional imagination as a model for reality. It was based on the desire to promote impersonal selection processes that valued technical and artistic attributes and better distributed resources among architects, stimulating the improvement and consolidation of the field. In the 19th century, the practice spread in Brazil, which had its first public project competition held in the federal capital in 1857. This was the competition for the project for the construction of the Teatro Lírico do Rio de Janeiro.³

Competitions in Brazil only increased in number decades later. This was partially related to the modernization and structuring of new administrative frameworks during the 1920s and ‘30s and the creation of a federal law that made competitions mandatory for public works.⁴ During these decades, a management pattern emerged based on specially trained public employees and a bureaucratic elite that aimed to manage and solve national

³ The competition was won by architect Carl Gustav Waehnelde, but the project was not carried out due to financial difficulties. The construction of the theater only took place in the 1910s, following pressure by City Hall of the Federal District, which disregarded the results of the competition and contracted for another project to be built (Santos 2002: 89-90).

⁴ In the 1920s, around 30 competitions were organized per year, the majority in the federal capital of Rio de Janeiro. After the promulgation of Federal Law No. 125 of 1935, which made it mandatory to hold project competitions for public works, this number increased to 50 per year over the course of the next two decades. The practice of calling for competitions also expanded to constructions carried out in the city of São Paulo (Santos 2002: 51).

problems through professional development (Gomes 1994).⁵ Entities such as the Institute of Architects of Brazil (IAB) emerged. This was organized to bring professionals in the field together in order to demand the standardization of architecture and its recognition by the State as a form of specialized knowledge, particularly with regards to the process of selecting projects for public works.⁶

It was in this context that the rhetoric of “creative genius” in the selection of State intervention projects began to be consolidated and also destabilized. Several discontented sectors of the architectural field complained that the valorization of technical expertise appeared more in terms of government discourse than in terms of its operations. In this transition of meanings and practices, competitions continued to be permeated by personalist selection criteria, with personal or elective affinities regarding what would be understood as beautiful and functional, and personal ties and friendship influencing the choice of projects.

From the Estado Novo of Getúlio Vargas (1937-1945) to the government of Juscelino Kubitschek (1955-1961), competitions were carried out through interdependent modes of action involving a specific network of modernist architects and government officials, who operated through a model like patronage. The place of the “king’s architect” was occupied by architects who were symbolically invested with value through the rhetoric of “genius”⁷. These were professionals who, in practice, promoted certain visions and ideals of the world in their projects, brokering a union between politics and representation and the construction and the symbolization of power. This is clearly shown in the government preferences, widely recorded by historiography, in relation to the architectural and urban planning concepts of Le Corbusier, Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer.

Partnerships between modernist architects and government officials might be regulated through public competitions, but their results were not always subject to (or free from) disagreements.⁸ Despite the visibility that the modernists brought to the architectural profession, advances in the organization of professional associations and the complexity of the agents involved in State interventions produced serious questions about the concentration of public works in the hands of a few “geniuses”. A landmark of these tensions and clashes of interests was the public controversy surrounding the competition for the pilot plan for the new federal capital of Brasília in 1956. During the competition, the president of the IAB and member of the jury, Paulo Antunes Ribeiro, was accused of presiding over a lack of fairness in the selection process. To the final

5 This discourse of technical competence allowed subjects with new knowledge to access key positions in public administration and encouraged the creation of associations and corporate bodies. As Gomes (1994: 3-10) points out, the new approach emphasized knowledge such as engineering, sociology, and economics, to the detriment of the previous dominance of an “baccalaureate elite” originating, for the most part, in law schools and possessing both a humanistic culture and a family political tradition linked to land ownership.

6 As systematized by Moura (2021), Brazilian Institute of Architects (IAB) was formed with the objective of broadly representing and mobilizing professionals in the field. In the words of its members, the creation of the IAB and the Central Society of Architects (SCA) in 1921 are seen as milestones of the architectural profession’s myth of origin. Both were based in Rio de Janeiro and proposed the regulation of the profession. The entities merged in 1924, forming the Central Institute of Architects (ICA). This Institute’s capacity for action was expanded when it achieved recognition as a “public utility” through a municipal law of 1929, which allowed the Institute to become a privileged organizer of public architectural competitions and a provider of services to the State. Its first nationwide professional regulation was sanctioned in 1933 and, two years later, it began using the name Instituto dos Arquitetos do Brasil (IAB) to signal its desire for nation-wide representation.

7 The idea of *genius* is widespread in many texts in the architectural field. As an example, we remember that in his “Testimony of a Rio architect”, Lúcio Costa applied this term to Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer, comparing the latter to Aleijadinho (Costa 1952: 37). For those not familiar with the field of architecture, the French-Swiss Le Corbusier (1887-1965) was important for the formation of the modernist generation of Brazilian architects. In 1929, he visited South America and gave lectures in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro. These events were fundamental for the spread of modernism in Brazil and, in the early 1930s, boosted the movement during the reform of the Escola Nacional de Belas Artes in Rio de Janeiro (then under the direction of Lúcio Costa (Leonídio 2007)). In addition to the determining role they played in the modernist conception of Brasília, both Lúcio Costa (1902-1998) and Oscar Niemeyer (1907-2012) had outstanding architectural works in their CVs. The first was responsible for projects such as the Gustavo Capanema Palace, the Plano Piloto da Barra da Tijuca, and the Pacaembu Stadium. The second designed the Niterói Contemporary Art Museum, the Copan Building, the Memorial da América Latina and participated in the project for the United Nations Headquarters in Manhattan, among other acts of architectural monumentalism.

8 To choose the architectural project for the Ministry of Education and Public Health, for example, the federal government called for a competition in 1936, but the project chosen by the jury was the Marajoara style designed by Archimedes Memória. This displeased Minister Gustavo Capanema, who paid the prize to the winner, but directly invited Lúcio Costa to develop something different and modern. The project was then prepared by Costa and his team, made up of Carlos Leão, Ernani Vasconcellos, Affonso Eduardo Reidy, Oscar Niemeyer, and Roberto Burle Marx (Cavalcanti 1995; Lissovsky 1996). It is worth noting that not every competition held at the time by the public administration resulted in modernist projects winning and being put into operation, as confirmed by the construction in 1938 of the Ministry of Finance, a classic-style project designed by architect Luiz Eduardo Frias de Moura on the demand of minister Arthur de Souza Costa (Sobreira 2018: 118).

minutes of the judging committee, the architect attached a critique of the evaluation procedure for the 26 projects registered by the committee (which, by the way, were almost all modernist in design, confirming the establishment of a hegemonic bloc in the professional field), explaining that a pact existed between foreign jurors about the result of the competition (Braga 2011).

However, even after the arrangement was publicized, requests to review the competition were refused, and Lúcio Costa's winning plan enthusiastically received in the specialist press. Among those who supported the project was Oscar Niemeyer, who was also a juror and the person responsible for the Architecture Department of the recently appointed Companhia Urbanizadora da Nova Capital (Novacap). Niemeyer had already been selected to be the creator of the future Brazilian capital's most representative buildings: the headquarters of the Executive Branches, Legislative, and Judiciary. In a statement to *Módulo* magazine, Niemeyer not only praised the winning project but also emphasized that choosing a "young team" for 2nd place would act as an incentive for other professionals (Braga 2011: 35). Niemeyer thus actively employed the hierarchies of the architectural field. These had legitimized architects like him and Lúcio Costa, who had established themselves as "geniuses" in the process of institutionalizing architectural knowledge. This knowledge, linked to centers of power, constrained new professionals into copying architects like Niemeyer and Costa (Santos 2002: 85-86).

Despite the IAB's apparent political defeat, the competition for Brasília became a significant event for professional architecture networks, as these publicized indignant testimonials regarding the system of favors and prestige practiced by the government. The debate showed that the architectural field itself was polyvalent, composed of different action programs and, therefore, should not be centered on a single authorizing reference which, in this case, was composed of the networks of social relations linking rulers, their tastes and projects, and "geniuses". Those professionals not included in these networks argued that State interventions should be structured in a complex manner through interactions between different fields (administrative, political, economic, and professional) and their various associated bodies.

In this way, in addition to publicizing the importance of adopting competition as a method of selecting projects for public works, architects also began to demand control over the definition of the composition of the juries in these competitions, as well as the criteria for evaluating projects. This control was constructed via an IAB monopoly over the organization of competitions themselves. To use Bourdieu's terms (2012), these actors occupied a position as pertinent agents in the production of specific effects in a given field. In other words, in the context of a modernizing Brazil, the organization of the architectural professional field inaugurated a public agenda related to architectural projects produced for State interventions, the pertinent agents and powers in this field, and the structure of its balance of power. As we shall see, this maneuvering was essential for networks of architects to have the political strength necessary to guide public policy regarding Brazil's housing deficit as this became increasingly understood as a public problem to be solved by the State.

The "engaged anti-designer" and other solutions for mass housing

The public works carried out between the Vargas and Kubitschek governments were, therefore, characterized by projects aimed at rationalizing and integrating the uses and functions of national territory. During this period, modern architecture was the preferred program of the center of power and this raised the professional field to unprecedented heights of prestige and social recognition. After the 1950s, architectural activities were no longer indexed as a subset of engineering or as a specialist field of the fine arts, but became increasingly seen as oriented towards the production and teaching of knowledge. This institutional autonomy of disciplinary knowledge was both a reflection of the political space conquered by architectural professionals and a driver of diversity in architecture's areas of activity.

After the civil-military coup of 1964, the increase in State intervention in the economy and the organization of strong conglomerates in strategic areas of industry accentuated differentiation within the civil construction sector. This led to many architects being hired to implement large development projects across Brazil. These professionals participated in the construction of industrial and hydroelectric facilities, freight and passenger bus terminals, airport and subway facilities, supply centers, university spaces, etc. (Segawa 2018).

Another important professional space was linked to the housing policy created by the National Housing Bank (BNH) and the Housing Financial System (SFH), whose express purpose was to “stimulate the construction of social housing and the financing of private home acquisition, especially by the lower-income brackets of the population” (Presidency of the Republic, Law No. 4,380, dated August 21 1964). This broad scope of action, allied with a powerful degree of social segmentation, gave architects numerous opportunities for professional advancement. They began to become involved in disputes regarding ways of governing the population generically classified as “poor”.

The “problem of popular housing” had been receiving attention since the Vargas government, which proposed a policy of eradicating houses built in favelas and along urban peripheries, which was linked to the production of housing complexes through subsidies to the construction industry (Bonduki 1994). The real estate portfolios of the Retirement and Pension Institutes (IAPs) were then created from 1933 onwards, based on the premises of modern urbanism, with the aim of financing these housing complexes and aiding lower-class Brazilians who had formal jobs. Shortly after this policy was established, the federal government used the 1937 Building Code to prohibit the construction of “unhealthy housing”. This placed countless urban residents in a marginal situation, leaving them vulnerable to urban removal initiatives. In these projects there was, on the one hand, the expectation of moralizing the working class through the promotion of such notions as “public and private spaces”, “community life”, and “the nuclear family”; on the other, there was an orientation towards encouraging industry and control the urbanization process.

Although initiatives promoting construction-protection seem to be antagonistic to those pushing for removal-repression, both sets of policies contained complementary meanings. Both stated that Brazilian cities were facing chaotic situations due to lack of housing and situated favelas and other forms of informal housing were a “social disease”. In this way, both pointed to the same solutions regarding the “development”, “control”, and “moralization” of the poorer sectors of the Brazilian population, whether these were discursively constructed in a positive manner as belonging to the “working class”, or negatively as inhabitants of “unhealthy housing”. The end result was the establishment of a social hierarchy that legitimized protective management modalities targeting this urban *other*, who did not have the economic resources to access the private real estate markets. In other words, it was the implementation of a form of domination that would be increasingly characterized by mediation between different social agents and contradictory principles of care and subjection (Souza Lima 2002; Pacheco de Oliveira 2014).

These policies of the 1930s began the process of social classification by standardizing and imposing housing practices on sectors characterized as “working class” and “inhabitants of unhealthy housing”. At the same time, specific government apparatuses brought together forms of knowledge regarding urban intervention, establishing elaborate procedures that could cope with Brazil’s large and growing urban population. To integrate the vast territory of the nation, the State needed to expand governmentality. This required both a centralization of administrative bodies and a general refinement and diffusion of government tactics (Foucault 2004).

The Casa Popular Foundation was created in 1946 with the aim of “providing Brazilians, or foreigners with more than ten years of residence in the country or with Brazilian children, the means to acquire or build their own home in an urban or rural area” (Presidency of the Republic, Decree -Law No. 9,218, of May 1 1946). The population segment that was to be served by this foundation was defined in broader fashion than in previous policies. Its new policies sought to favor those “most in need”, including “private sector workers”, “public or

local government employees” and “other people”, prohibiting only those public works that were not qualified as a “genuinely popular type” (*idem*). In practice, this initiative financed and brought together areas of urban policy that had previously been disjointed. These included policies related to the water supply and sewage network, the provision of electricity and social assistance structures, and credit for the construction material industry, among others (Azevedo & Andrade 2011).

Several bodies emerged with the purpose of acting locally on the housing problem. These included the Department of Hygiene, the Surveillance Police, the Health Department, and the Leão XIII Foundation. This set of actors was centralized in 1956 through the Special Service for the Recovery of Favelas and Unhygienic Housing (SERFHA), which proposed a different vision to the principle of favela demolition and removal, arguing that the segment most served by the policy, “favela dwellers”, could and should participate in the process of improving their structural and living conditions in the favela in cooperation with government bodies. This model of action that became known as *Operação Mutirão* (Leeds & Leeds 1978; Castro 2004).

This proposal to incorporate favela residents into government practices did not become the main policy adopted after the civil-military coup, however. The new government looked towards solving the “problem” poised by the growing demographic concentration in Brazilian urban centers was the regulation of BNH/SFH operations in 1964. Via the receipt of voluminous resources raised through compulsory payroll contributions and the management of deposits in the social security fund (the Time Guarantee Fund Service (FGTS)), this system strengthened construction projects for large housing complexes along the outskirts of Brazil’s main cities. Based on an elitist State conception of segmenting urban areas based on socioeconomic criteria, this policy was not sufficient to overcome the country’s housing deficit. Real estate interests influenced the allocation of resources, leading the financing system to mainly subsidize apartment construction for the middle classes. In practice, then, the new policy transferred State functions to the private sectors linked to national real estate capital and the civil construction sector. These experienced a *boom* during the dictatorship (Botega 2007; Campos 2010).⁹

In this context of large-scale housing production, two distinct movements occurred in the architectural field. One benefited from the professional opportunities opened up by the BNH/SFH system; the other “engaged” in defending an “anti-project”, arguing that it was possible to provide existing informal occupations with the necessary infrastructure and legality, operating through a model close to that proposed by SERFHA. Interventions implemented in the state of Guanabara (currently the state of Rio de Janeiro)¹⁰ throughout the 1960s are paradigmatic of the different projects and worldviews revolving around State management of “low income” populations. Looking at the projects can help us understand the contradictions that permeated architectural practices.

Governor Carlos Lacerda (1960-1965) created a wide-ranging program to remove favelas from the Rio’s toney coastal neighborhoods. Some of the residents of these “unhygienic” areas were moved to housing complexes in peripheral regions. These measures were very unpopular, which led Lacerda’s political opponent, Negrão de Lima, to commit to ending removals. Sworn in as acting governor between 1965 and 1970, Negrão de Lima adopted an “on again, off again” model of intervening to eradicate favelas, promoting both removal and the development of an urbanization projects with the participation of favela residents (Heringer 2017).

We will look at the second type of initiative, as it was the one that most mobilized the field of “engaged” architecture. The pioneering case of the urbanization of the Brás de Pina favela, which occurred during Negrão de Lima’s administration, is particularly illustrative here. The proposal for this intervention arose from the

9 The huge investments stimulated the creation of the Association of Directors of Companies in the Real Estate Market of Rio de Janeiro (Ademi-RJ) in 1971. This was also due to the departure of real estate builders from the Civil Construction Industry Union of the State of Rio de Janeiro (Sinduscon- Rio), whose interests were mainly oriented towards the work of construction companies (Sousa 2020).

10 After the transfer of the federal capital to Brasília, the state of Rio de Janeiro was renamed Guanabara, holding this name from 1960 and 1975. Afterwards, it returned to the original name.

mobilization of residents threatened with removal by the Lacerda administration, representatives of the Federation of Favela Associations of the State of Guanabara (FAFEG), a priest of the Catholic parish that covered the area, and a small group of architects who yearned for social change in the broader context of the political repression of the times. As analyzed by Carlos Nelson Ferreira dos Santos (1981), one of the members of the Quadra architecture firm that intermediated urban planning actions with the employees of the recently created Community Development Company (CODESCO), the idea was to make use of the same weapons employed by the State by situating the demands of favela residents within the “language of urban design”.

For the architects involved in the project, the participation of residents in all stages of urbanization and home improvement would enable a kind of translation of architectural academic language into “local reality”, a term that Santos himself (1981) criticized as abstract and extremely idealized in the context of political tension then reigning in Rio de Janeiro and Brazil more generally. Santos’ remarks are very insightful regarding the ambiguous process of intervention that unfolded in the Brás de Pina favela. He claims that the architects had agreed to work with the project not only because it created the possibility of reacting against an authoritarian regime, but that they also saw a chance to change the practices of the architectural field itself (which, in this period, were still very much shaped by modernist planning ideals). Moreover, the architects understood that this unique experience of “engaged urbanization” could give them a degree of social projection.

As Santos (1981) demonstrates, although the action was successful in its urban objectives, mediation between the multiple interests involved in the project ended up individualizing the demands and the institutionalization of the social struggle. This occurred both through the bureaucratic incorporation of local leaders in the intervention procedures, and through the direct negotiations between families and constructions financing firms via operations between CODESCO and the BNH. The project thus rapidly incorporated the favela into the logic of the real estate market, with its residents operating at different levels according to the financial and construction capabilities of each family. Some residents even sought to profit from the sale of “vacancy rights” in the urbanist plan itself.

Paradoxically, despite having emerged as a response to a social struggle against eviction, the initiative ended up converging in its structural and socioeconomic aspects towards pushing favela residents into the real estate market and the BNH/SFH system – where many of them ended up in debt. Not only that the “anti-project” model reinforced discourses that the engaged architects themselves sought to combat, such as those that propagated the need for “integration” between the “formal and informal” cities that consolidated the establishment of inequalities and hierarchies among the urban population. The social identification of favela residents came to legitimize specific actions at the municipal administrative level and government incorporation of specialists to assume the organization of technical knowledge and methods of action especially aimed at this portion of the population. A new market for the architectural field was thus established via the incidence of State powers over space which sought the control, differentiation, and hierarchization of certain populations. These are all processes identified by Souza Lima (2002) as typical of management practices in the universe of public administration.

Consensus production as a strategy for urban intervention

The re-democratization process that began in 1975 was marked by political transitions and the establishment of a new consensus around democratic ideals.¹¹ The military regime’s loss of legitimacy strengthened of left-wing parties, unions, and neighborhood, favela, feminist, ecological, and black movements, etc. Previously excluded from places of power, these social actors managed to pressure the new legislators to incorporate

¹¹ The Brazilian redemocratization process is dated differently in historiography, depending on each author’s interpretation of the political context. In this article, we consider the period to be from 1975 to 1985, which encompasses the end of censorship of shows and publications, the repeal of AI-5, the return of multi-partyism, the Amnesty Law, the campaign for Diretas Já and the election of Tancredo Neves, Brazil’s first civilian president since 1964.

popular demands into political agendas, a process symbolically marked in 1988 with the promulgation of a new Federal Constitution and the subsequent calling of presidential elections via direct voting. The resumption of the democratic political system took place alongside the sedimentation of a discourse about “modern Brazil”, whose driving force was the exaltation of a competitive social order and the so-called global market.

Beginning with the administration of President Fernando Collor de Mello (1990-1992), a neoliberal logic began to consolidate in Brazil. A new governance pact was promoted among political and economic elites, marked by the accentuated Brazilian participation in the circulation of volatile capital and the molding of the State machine to meet the demands of transnational companies and financial markets. This increased internationalization of economic flows accentuated interdependence between national and global actors and reconfigured the arenas of political dispute and modes of State intervention. New models for managing populations and territories were experimented with, based on the circulation of reports and recommendations produced by international organizations and their agencies. These contained strategies for meeting demands and themes that were deemed to be universal, such as “cultural diversity, political democratization, and better distribution of resources”.

In the new proposals which bloomed after re-democratization, poverty became seen not as a problem originating in the individual (and which, therefore, should be criminalized and repressed), but as a consequence of insufficient social and economic development. Various segments that worked with the public administrations of so-called underdeveloped countries sought to align themselves with the resolutions of agencies that financed development cooperation programs, such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations (UN) (Escobar 1995; Dezalay & Garth 2002).

Poverty management thus began to appear in the diffuse domain of interventions regarding “social issues” and underdevelopment. Its actions focused on multiple fields: education, health, hygiene, morality, employment, housing, and etc. Global discourses and practices produced an understanding of the “poverty problem” as something that could not simply be addressed through administrative management, procedural solutions, and methodological innovations on the part of the State. As development programs became established as a means and end of obtaining resources for State social policies, business management models came to the fore, presented as efficient, neutral, and capable means of operating on any and all problems and spheres of action (Ferguson 1994; Dardot & Laval 2009; Montaña 2012).

Methods of business evaluation and productivity management captured the technical imagination of government actors in the public housing field and their private sector allies. These new methods became both a vector for the depoliticization of debates regarding development and for the legitimization of a standardization of the ways of evaluating the results of actions, allowing for their reproduction in different “backwards” countries and locations. Furthermore, the model presupposed a political balance and a form of domination based on consensus. That is, to function, it required a set of norms and institutions that were capable of absorbing tensions and conflicts. In the quest to legitimize themselves as “democratic practices”, State interventions became equipped with more complex procedures, such as “participatory forums”, “community management,” and “communicative actions”. They also incorporated methodologies and experts that continually performed what would or would not be considered by public power, producing symbolic boundaries between the spheres of action of the State, the market, and society (Baltar 2009; Castro 2002; Foucault 2004; Mitchell 2006).

This growing adherence to neoliberal rationality in political practices and grammars provoked a series of repositionings within the field of architecture focused on State works and projects. In statements collected by the IAB-RJ between 1976 and 1978,¹² nationally renowned architectural professionals expressed a critical stance in relation to modernist theoretical foundations and a growing interest in themes such as conurbation,

¹² The conversations were published by the IAB (1978) in the three volumes of the “Brazilian Architecture After-Brasília/Testimonials” series. The organizing committee was coordinated at the time by architect Sérgio Magalhães and was comprised of Cêça Guimaraens, Claudio Taulois and Flávio Ferreira.

megalopolis, and “social responsibility” (Guimaraens 2002). An inclination towards a broader management of territories and populations was also manifest in a significant decrease in calls for project competitions: as in the 1970s, there was an increasing propensity on the part of governments to once again invite renowned architects to carry out public works. The return to the system of influences and privileges of certain professional networks thus reinforced an “anti-modernist feeling” among architects, who criticized the movement as a “symbol of State bureaucracy and waste” (Santos 2002: 85-86).¹³

Another relevant topic brought up in the testimonies of architects of the period concerned the ongoing transformations in the ways in which architecture firms are organized. Specialization and professional expansion led to the gradual replacement of the old studio model, with a few architects organized around “masters”. The new format revolved around teams with multiple components, emphasizing greater incorporation of engineers and economists. There was also a marked integration of foreign firms, which, through partnerships and technical cooperation, strengthened discourses that attributed expertise to agents within the field and produced greater adherence to new lexicons of power (Guimaraens 2002).¹⁴ Within this new profile, local offices expanded the scope of their actions in State governmentalization. Several professional networks began to offer a package of methodologies, skills, and intervention procedures for public administration that were in tune with international agendas and their models of action.

These new global guidelines and their associated practices configured cities as territories for disputes between agents acting on different scales. They promoted unprecedented relationships between architecture, governments, and business sectors. In certain contexts, architectural professionals presented themselves as both designers and managers of territorial planning and development. In the establishment of alliances and communication channels between localized action groups, governments, NGOs, universities, and international agencies, some architects became mediators of conflicts of interests, seeing opportunities to gain positions of power in the political machine. This dynamic led to the rise of professionals who were also “business-minded politicians” (Wolf 1956: 83).

Among the notions that began to circulate in the new political and procedural lexicons of global neoliberal logic was that of “strategic planning”. This was a set of studies and methods that proposed to assist municipal governments in attracting foreign investments through urban interventions, the promotion of major events, and the economic and legislative facilitation of the installation of high-tech companies. In Rio de Janeiro, the promotion of this type of planning initially occurred during Cesar Maia’s mayoral administration (1993-1997), based on an agreement signed by the Mayor with the Commercial Association of Rio de Janeiro (ACRJ) and the Federation of Industries of Rio de Janeiro. Rio de Janeiro (FIRJAN).

The Consortium Maintaining the Strategic Plan of the City of Rio de Janeiro (PECRJ) was formed by 46 companies and business associations.¹⁵ It was responsible for financing the Plan’s activities and, through the appointment of the Municipal Secretary of Urbanism (architect Luiz Paulo Conde) for hiring the Catalan consultancy company *Tecnologias Urbanas Barcelona SA (TUBSA)*. This consortium then established a City Council made up of more than 300 members, associations, unions, academic institutions, experts, companies

13 For a study on the continuity of the legitimizing actions of “architectural geniuses” during the period of the civil-military dictatorship, see Alves (2021) regarding the elaboration of the Pilot Plan for the urbanization of the Baixada between Barra da Tijuca, the Pontal de Sernambetiba, and Jacarepaguá, commissioned by the government of Rio de Janeiro in 1969 from Lúcio Costa.

14 As an example of these technical cooperations with foreign offices, Cêça Guimaraens cites the Oriented Recovery Program (ProRio), developed between 1998 and 2000 on the Morro da Conceição in Rio’s port region. As analyzed by Guimarães (2013), the cooperation had the support of the French government via the Ministries of Equipment, Culture, and Foreign Affairs. The French provided consultants and specialists in heritage and rehabilitation, an action that later served as the basis for several reurbanization initiatives on the hill linked to the broader urban plans of the Porto do Rio and the Porto Maravilha. In the same post-redemocratization period, several other heritage policies were combined with urban actions in the city, composing a form of intervention justified by a discourse of “cultural valorization” and which acted to manage territories and redistribute resources between different regions of the city (Guimarães 2016, 2019).

15 Among the companies and associations were banks, real estate, and public works companies, shopping centers, federal-level state companies (Banco do Brasil, Petrobrás, Vale do Rio Doce and Embratel), a union of passenger transport companies, an association of tourism hotels, Texaco, Unysis, and *O Globo* newspaper (Vainer 2002).

and NGOs. These helped to prepare studies, evaluate proposals, and produce a “Diagnosis of the City.” The result was the creation of a discourse regarding the supposed history of Rio de Janeiro’s rise and decline, linking this to the formulation of a set of “strategic lines of action” that would guide the PECRJ (Rio de Janeiro City Hall 1996).

Although it included the participation of different social segments, the council relied mainly on “organized civil society” and “groups from the intelligentsia”, excluding political parties and popular social movements while establishing a “strategic agreement between elite groups” (Randolph 2001). The rituals it promoted aimed to build consensus around the “common objectives” that economic development and “social integration” programs should implement in Rio (Vainer 2002). Among them was the “normalization of the urban situation” of the favelas, which, it is worth noting, was already being carried out through the Favela-Bairro Program.¹⁶ What the PECRJ did was to socially endorse this through the incorporation goal into one of the Plan’s strategic lines: that of an “Integrated Rio”.

The Favela-Bairro Program presented itself as a government project that reinforced the production of social and territorial hierarchies in the city. By assigning a form of technical knowledge and a method of action aimed specifically at favela residents, the Program created a differentiated statute for the execution of administrative procedures and urban treatments. A “kind of spontaneous symbolization of social space” and a “naturalization effect” of inequalities thus occurred, which, as discussed by Bourdieu (1993), legitimized the different opportunities in access to urban goods and services allocated to different populations and territories. It also reproduced in minds and in language oppositions that constituted principles of spatial and social division, seen in the apparently neutral identifications of places mobilized by the pairs of categories such as “asphalt and favela”, “integrated and non-integrated”, and “rich and needy”.¹⁷

In this neoliberal turn in the governance of Brazilian cities, the reasons for intervention, the scope of action, and the profile of the architects involved in the Favela-Bairro Program also proved to be different from the precursor urbanization project in Brás de Pina, which we discussed above. In this case, it was not residents threatened with removal that led to mobilizations to urbanize favelas: there were dozens of locations in the city classified as “informal” and “poor” that received infrastructure works financed by resources from city hall and the International Development Bank and which were guided by “development” actions prepared by a business consortium.

The much-ballyhooed innovative nature of the program resided in the fact that its projects would be designed by efficient commercial architectural offices that would be selected via competitions. These thus differed from the previous group of architectural professionals who implemented social housing policies. Up to the extinction of the BNH in 1986, these were almost entirely public employees who implemented out standardized housing projects. In the new Program, each favela where intervention was taking place would have their own project, which would ideally allow for greater adaptation to local needs and characteristics. (Brasileiro & Duarte 2015).

It is interesting to note that the idea of “creativity” attributed to the architectural field returned with a makeover in this corporate management of favela territories and populations. Here, however, creativity was longer concentrated in the exceptional figure of the architectural “genius”. Rather, it was used as a justification for the hiring of several architectural firms whose value was in their ability to bring together the knowledge

¹⁶ Randolph’s (2001) systematization of the priority programs of Rio’s municipal housing policies shows that the Ten-Year Master Plan of the City of Rio de Janeiro (Complementary Law No. 16, of 06/04/1992) provided for urbanization and land regularization in the favelas. The Favela-Bairro Program emerged in 1993, with its legal basis established by Decree 12,994, of 06/16/94. The Program proposed to “complement or build principal urban structures (sanitation and democratization of access) and offer environmental conditions for reading favelas as neighborhoods”. The following year, the Program was consolidated as the Rio de Janeiro Popular Settlements Urbanization Program (PROAP), which was linked to the Allotment Regularization Program.

¹⁷ Categories of perception and appreciation of urban spaces in Rio de Janeiro have historically revolved around the gradations and nuances of such notions as “center and periphery”, with these being defined according to the production of urban hierarchies referring to where poor populations live. Thus, in addition to “favelas”, other specific forms of knowledge creation and government action aim at “suburbs”, “outskirts”, “occupations”, and etc. (Fernandes 2011; Guimarães & Davies 2018).

and technical skills of their teams and liberating these from the “chains” of public administration. In this way, the Favela-Bairro Program managed to meet the expectations of the city’s economic elites and the financing demands of the architecture market while, at the same time, particularizing and expanding interventions in favelas and expanding forms of control over urban territories.

Powers and procedures in the formulation of the Favela-Bairro Program

The Favela-Bairro Program became a major government initiative resulting in the urbanization of more than 100 favelas during the course of four municipal administrations: the first term of economist César Maia (1993-1996), the government of architect Luiz Paulo Conde (1996-2000), and the second term of César Maia (2001-2008). However, in the space between the formulation of the “favela problem” as something the municipality should concern itself with and the creation of interventions themselves, carioca architecture played an important role. It organized methodologies and it formed teams of specialists working with City Hall and in coordination with the IDB (the multilateral agency that contributed the resources guaranteeing the program’s broad reach). Other studies have already addressed the effects of these interventions on the physical aspects of favelas and the lifestyles of their residents. Here, then, we shall focus the analysis of architects’ roles in structuring the program itself.¹⁸

Through documents, public statements, and dialogue with architects and managers who participated in the creation of Favela-Bairro, we can understand some of the meanings they attributed to their actions, as well as the practices of power that they helped to establish. There is insufficient space here to examine the coherence, awareness, or intentionality of these practices. We thus limit ourselves to highlighting certain sets of power relations in the institutionalization and subjectivation of State principles that functioned through the organization of norms, laws, and procedures guided by the business principles of effectiveness (Castilho; Souza Lima & Teixeira 2014). Here, we seek an understand of urban interventions that highlight the perspectives of the experts involved and their passage through public administration.

The Favela-Bairro Program has been described by the architectural field as mainly connected to a consolidation of the changing understanding of the favela issue by policy makers and the accumulation of professional experiences and expertise in favela management (Ferreira da Silva 2018). When talking about the Program, then, architect Maria Isabel Tostes¹⁹ highlights the role of certain legal frameworks that made it possible. These include the Federal Constitution of 1988, the establishment of the Organic Law of the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro (1990) and the city’s Master Plan (1992). She also emphasizes the perception that favelas were areas of the city “could be urbanized”: all that was needed was government action to create planning, development, and regulatory solutions. This understanding was endorsed by Pedro da Luz and Cêça Guimaraens, who characterize the Program as “the beginning of a new era in which the focus stopped being the removal of favelas, instead considering the need to urbanize them” (Guimaraens & Luz Moreira 2013: 19-20).

The ideology of democratic rule of law thus permeated the feelings of members of the field of architecture during the period. This ideology morally justified their participation in programs like Favela-Bairro that were intended to regularize housing while, at the same time, boosting the earnings and prestige of architectural professionals. Linked to the lexicons and procedures of business management, the Program’s operationalization took place through new management technologies, including those aimed at producing consensus. This can

¹⁸ Although it is not the objective of the present article to develop this topic, we highlight that the Favela-Bairro interventions generated a series of studies on popular mobilizations and the program’s effects on the localities in which it was active. See Burgos (1998), Castro (1998, 2002), Fiori, Riley & Ramirez (2000), Freire (2008), among others.

¹⁹ Interview given to Paulo Vitor Ferreira da Silva in December 2017. Maria Isabel Tostes is an architect and urban planner, graduated from the Universidade Santa Úrsula (1982). She is currently a substitute for CAU/RJ on the Municipal Council for Urban Policy (COMPUR) and President of the Society of Engineers and Architects of the State of Rio de Janeiro (SEAERJ).

be seen in the process of unifying the architectural field around the Program, as exposed by Fernando Janot,²⁰ president of the IAB-RJ (1992-1993) during the Program's formative period. According to Janot, following the redemocratization of Brazil, control of the Institute was disputed between a "left-wing" group of architects linked to the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB) and the Democratic Labor Party (PDT), and a more centrist group that was led "by the UFRJ people".²¹

The main [group] that I took over from was led by Adir Ben Kauss, a person who was perhaps not so well known in the architectural world, but who was well recognized in the political world. Adir was a leader four years younger than me. He came up through the student movement and was active in the Communist Party -- the PCB. Afterwards, he joined the group of [Governor of Rio de Janeiro] Brizola, of the PDT, and became president of FEEMA. (...) This is not to say that I was directly a member of that group, but they saw in me an opportunity to win a contestable election against the UFRJ group. This was composed of Conde (a professor at UFRJ), Milton Feferman, and others. (...) I think Conde already imagined that he would become Secretary [of Urban Planning] under Cesar Maia and he wanted to take charge of the IAB. He saw this as an opportunity. So much so that he put together an electoral ticket with people from UFRJ to take over the IAB (...) The Conde wanted to make the IAB a tool for developing the projects he designed for the city. Not as a puppet: he wanted it as support. Unfortunately, his side didn't win the election: I won. But I have a very open personality. I agreed with [Conde's program]. I thought it was good for architecture, good for everyone. So we implemented it here at the IAB. (Fernando Janot, interview with Roberta Sampaio Guimarães in October 2017)

Janot observed that after his election as president of the IAB-RJ, a confluence of events produced a certain level of consensus, clearly based on the distribution of functions and resources within the architectural field. Luiz Paulo Conde became Municipal Secretary of Urban Planning and he created the Rio Cidade²² and Favela-Bairro Programs, both of which implemented by adopting public competitions for project selection, organized by the Institute. Janot's role in this mediation was confirmed by architect Fabiana Izaga,²³ who saw the new tone of the IAB's political activities being reinforced by linking the competitions to public administration, thus expanding the job market for architectural firms.

Janot was president of the IAB when the Favela-Bairro and Rio Cidade projects were carried out, for example. But in administrations prior to Janot' -- that is, back in the 1980s and 1990s, when there was very little work in Brazil -- the IAB was a nucleus of leftist resistance. Of the hard left! To fight the *status quo*, understand? So a lot depends on the tone that management has, but as the IAB organizes competitions, it has to negotiate with the public authorities. (Fabiana Izaga, interview with Roberta Sampaio Guimarães in September 2017)

20 Fernando Janot has a degree in Architecture and Urbanism from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (1966) and a master's degree in Urbanism from PROURB/FAU-UFRJ (1998). He is currently an assistant professor at FAU-UFRJ.

21 In Janot's description of this "other group" at UFRJ, he implies that it was composed of architects focused on working in the market via command of architectural offices. Although Janot did not mention this fact in the interview, Luiz Paulo Conde had already presided over the IAB-RJ during the redemocratization process, between 1974 and 1978, when he was still affiliated with the PDT. Antonio Pedro Alcântara (1979), Rui Rocha Veloso (1980-81), Claudio Cavalcanti (1982-83), Marcos Rissin (1984-85), Adir ben Kauss (1986-91) and André Solti (1991) preceded Janot in the presidency of the IAB-RJ. (Information contained in the "IAB-RJ Presidents Spreadsheet", provided by the institute's secretariat in March 2022.)

22 The Rio Cidade Project was carried out between 1995 and 2000. Like Favela-Bairro, it was part of the PECRJ initiatives. Implemented in two phases (Rio Cidade I and II), the project was implemented in a total of 30 different areas of the city. As Oliveira (2008) analyzes, the hallmark of the project was its scope and urban diffusion, although it did not actually constitute an urban reform plan. Its activities were restricted in time and space and took place along neighborhoods' commercial axes, promoting a spatial distinction both in terms of the elements that made up the urban network and the landscape in general, and the social control exercised by the police force over street commerce and street-based populations.

23 Fabiana Izaga has a degree in Architecture and Urbanism from Universidade Santa Úrsula (1991), a master's degree in Visual Arts from UFRJ (2001) and a PhD in Urbanism from the same university (2009). She is an associate professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism at UFRJ and a permanent professor at the Postgraduate Program in Urbanism at FAU/UFRJ. She was General Secretary of the IAB (2014-2017), a member of the IAB Superior Council for Rio de Janeiro (2019-2017) and the Vice-President of the IAB-RJ (2012-2016).

Izaga's testimony also helps us to understand how Conde gained prestige in the architectural field by opposing, in his practice as the owner and director of an architectural firm, to the "creative geniuses" historically linked to the modernist movement. Conde's charismatic leadership was related to his trajectory of forming large professional teams in his firm, where he encouraged architects to carry out compositional experiments in their projects, freeing themselves from the obligations imposed by disciplinary matrices. This sort of thing expanded Conde's powers in different way It placed him at the center of a network of distribution of resources and projects, expanded his alliances and friendships, and symbolically reinforced his image as innovative and competent in relation to the architectural field itself.

[Conde] was a person who really liked this team thing. He didn't focus much on the genius architect, on the architect who conceived [whole projects]: he placed much more emphasis on the teamwork and the study of architecture. I think this the key to understanding what he did. When you produce an architecture that is created by a team, it comes from studies of other projects that give you different matrices of ideas. From these, you create a new composition which is not a given. Because in modernism, the design matrix was a given: it was a compositional lexicon that meant that you didn't even need to look at other ideas. You just needed to know how a staircase combined with the circulation of people. You already had that, it was a given! (Fabiana Izaga , interview with Roberta Sampaio Guimarães in September 2017)

For the Favela-Bairro Program's interventions to be effective, however, other political alignments and administrative arrangements were necessary in addition to consensus within the architectural field. Sociologist and architect Fernando Cavalieri, who was a fundraiser for the Municipal Finance Department at the time, had several comments to make about the changes city hall made in structure the Program. Cavalieri said that shortly after Conde took over as Municipal Secretary of Urban Planning, a set of diverse urban programs and initiatives were concentrated in the Executive Group of Popular Settlements (GEAP), under the coordination of architect Sérgio Magalhães.²⁴ It was from this base that the Municipal Housing Secretariat was then created, enabling the inclusion of a team of architects that had hitherto been unrelated to public service (Freire & Oliveira 2008).

According to architect Demetre Anastassakis,²⁵ one of the members of Magalhães' team, Conde formed the Secretariat with the urbanization of the favelas in mind because he wanted to hold the Olympic Games and "do something like Barcelona" in Rio. He realized that it was essential to promote government actions for population and territorial control that would provide security for the financial operations and public-private partnerships that would be mobilized to this end. In this way, the greater institutional weight of the housing issue of in City Hall was driven by its strategic importance in the economic enterprise. This made Favela-Bairro a privileged case for thinking about the processes of financialization of capitalism in Brazil.

The favorable context for entrepreneurial-minded architects in the halls of power made Magalhães a prominent mediator between the professional field, public administration, and funding agencies. He played a decisive role in obtaining the IDB loan for the Program. According to Cavalieri, financing a program aimed at upgrading the favelas had already been something attempted during the administration of the previous mayor, Marcello Alencar (1989-1993). The bank discarded this proposal as inconsistent, however. The situation only changed during the visit of a new IDB mission that came to Rio to evaluate another program relating to the cleanup of Guanabara Bay. At the time, Magalhães and Anastassakis had already organized the theoretical ideals

24 Sérgio Magalhães has a degree in Architecture and Urbanism from UFRGS (1967) and a PhD in Urbanism from UFRJ (2005). He is an adjunct professor in the undergraduate course at FAU/UFRJ and a professor in the Postgraduate Program in Urbanism at FAU/UFRJ. He was President of the IAB-RJ (2010-2013), president of the national IAB (2012-2014, 2014-2016), Undersecretary of Urbanism (1986-1988) and Municipal Secretary of Housing (1993-2000) for Rio de Janeiro, Director of Urbanism (1989-1992) of Niterói, Secretary of State for Special Projects (2001-2002) and Undersecretary of State for Urban Development (2003-2004) in the government of the State of Rio de Janeiro.

25 Interview given in October 2017 to Paulo Vitor Ferreira da Silva. Demetre Anastassakis was president of the IAB-RJ (1994-1995), president of the national IAB (2004-2006) and participated in several projects of the Minha Casa Minha Vida Program. In 2006, he received the Architect of the Year award from the National Federation of Architects and Urban Planners (FNA). He passed away in 2019.

of public competitions for architectural projects and had started the urbanization of 15 small and medium-sized favelas, using a small amount of money made available by City Hall to this end (Freire & Oliveira 2008: 250).²⁶ With the results of these first interventions in hand, Magalhães met with Bank representatives to present his methodological package.

So, instead of asking for all the money in the world, because I want to upgrade favelas, I upgraded 15 as pilot projects and I took the results of these and said: “Pay attention, there are 600 of these here. Will you finance me?” Then came the World Bank, the IDB... The IDB put in money and the first contract was signed for 300 [favelas]. Did something go wrong? Yes, but that’s another conversation. (Demetre Anastassakis, interview with Paulo Vitor Ferreira da Silva in October 2017).

At the end of the process, the number of actually favelas served by the program was 105, around 1/3rd of what had been expected. But aside from the practical results of the pilot intervention, the commitment to public competitions as a mode for choosing projects was a fundamental element for the success in finding financing for Favela-Bairro. As Cavalieri was keen to emphasize, this was because the Bank worked “on projects and not on ideas. You know, it analyzes projects -- things that are more developed” (*apud* Freire & Oliveira 2008: 251). The Program received a contribution of 360 million dollars from the IDB and another 240 million dollars in matching funds from the municipality of Rio de Janeiro.

The documents, testimonies, and interviews presented above suggest that a set of strategies was mobilized in the 1990s by certain networks of architects in Rio de Janeiro in order to expand their insertion in public administration and deepen their political influence. Part of these strategies crucially involved offering up methodologies that increased the State’s capacity to obtain financing for its “social policies” and to govern territories and populations. The success of these projects was thus due to new business management technologies and the procedural lexicon that this group of agents mobilized. The conceptual, technical, and political bases were established for what became Favela-Bairro: a wide-ranging favela urbanization program, promoted within the framework of a business consortium where the contracting of works was approved of by a professional representation entity.

Discourses and practices in the field of architecture

In the present article, we have sought to highlight how the field of architecture adopted strategies to increase its political relevance and the recognition of its expertise in the governance of public affairs in different Brazilian scenarios and contexts. Our panoramic view is intended to offer multiple angles regarding the possible intersections between art, technique, and politics that architects and urban planners mobilized in the process of State formation, particularly during the consolidation of the “problem of popular housing” within the scope of public administration. In this kaleidoscope of practices and meanings, we have highlighted fragments of events and situations that helped to design the ideal types of the “creative genius”, the “engaged anti-designer” and the “business manager” in the field of public architecture.

At the beginning of the text, we situated the modernizing and developmental State project implemented from the 1920s onwards, analyzing how modernist architectural language was used to symbolically support the process of economic and social integration of Brazilian national territory. In this context, design competitions for public works were adopted by the federal government as a way of emphasizing technical skill. This modernizing

²⁶ The sources consulted indicate that the number of favelas served by the program was inadequate before IDB financing. While Anastassakis indicates that 15 favelas were served, a document entitled “Evaluation of the Favela-Bairro Program: Evaluation of the receptivity of the communities included in the program”, prepared by the Institute of Culture and Continuing Education Studies, counted only 16 favelas in the program (Castro 1998). In his statement, Fernando Cavalieri mentioned that there were 15 teams designated to work in 23 favelas (Freire & Oliveira 2008).

bureaucratic utopia coexisted, however, with practices that favored certain relationships of friendship and alliance. The resulting contracts were morally justified by appealing to the figure of the architectural “genius”. With the greater institutionalization of the professional field and the increase in public controversies in relation to competition results, different action programs and agents involved in State interventions began to come to the fore. A lasting platform for political action by architects was created. This transferred the regulations and procedures involved in the selection of public projects from the hands of the State to the domain of the representative bodies of architectural professionals.

In the 1960s, the themes of popular housing and city planning emerged in government agendas as “public problems” that lacked a unified action plan aimed at the masses. The political, institutional, and economic rearrangement that accompanied the establishment of the military dictatorship between 1964 and 1985 brought large construction companies and financial agents to the center of the formulation of housing policies, through the creation of the BNH/SFH system. The increasing adoption of policies seeking to discipline urban spaces -- such as those removing favelas and displacing their residents to housing complexes along urban peripheries -- opened space for local political disputes. A pioneering initiative for the urbanization of favelas emerged. This was implemented in Brás de Pina, where a political struggle by residents against favela removal led to the emergence of the “engaged anti-designer” in the improvement and regularization of housing.

With the transition to democracy in the late 1970s and ‘80s, global development programs aimed at “underdeveloped countries” presented themselves as a way of obtaining resources. Business productivity evaluation methods began to appear as a response to all types of “social issues”, consolidating a way of strategically thinking about cities that sought to attract resources and facilitate public and private investments. Architects adopted new government technologies such as “participatory management”, developing methodologies and procedures for establishing communication channels with different groups such as residents’ associations, NGOs, universities, international agencies, and etc. From these connections, opportunities emerged to gain positions of power in the political machine. Certain architects thus became mediators of different conflicts of interests and managers of wide-ranging government projects.

It was in this context that the process of conception, standardization, and financing of the Favela-Bairro Program took place, implemented in the city of Rio de Janeiro between 1994 and 2007 and considered to be a milestone in the growth of the influence of the architectural field on State housing policy. So much so that, more than a decade after its last phase of the Program’s implementation, similar initiatives continue to be developed in Rio and the architects who participated in the design of the program continue to maintain their position as experts (whether as government consultants or as university professors) of favela upgrading projects in formulating procedures and methodologies for the management of territories classified by the State as “favelas”.²⁷

We therefore conclude by drawing attention to the relevance of mediations in this professional field in the process of formation and governmentalization of the State. Through projects of construction and symbolization of spaces, architectural knowledge has directly or indirectly supported policies of categorization, regulation, and management of urban populations, continuously producing social hierarchies, contact borders, and unequal ways of distributing resources across different territories in Rio de Janeiro. In the context of the Brazilian neoliberal turn, the diffusion of business management technologies restructured the architectural field itself, encouraging the improvement of professional competition mechanisms and the adoption of a rationality aimed at maximizing profits through a variety of strategies and urban planning methodologies.

27 Political changes in municipal management led to the program being renamed in Rio de Janeiro, where it became Morar Carioca (2010-2020). The manners in which the program was executed also underwent reformulations (Leitão, Barboza & Delecave 2014).

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