Space: appropriation and representation

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The appropriation of space allows to the actors, their organization at the strategic level and at the social intervention level. In the relation between space and individual characteristics can be adopt two different positions. One of them, it is the vision of space like neutral structure and its study will be concentrated in the social characteristics of the inhabitants who have the capacity to control how to do the appropriation. The other position believes at the existence of a causal connexion between space morphology and social position structure because these characteristics depend on space morphology. Balsa admits the pertinence of these two positions in different situations. In this way, he defends that in stigmatized spaces, the social morphology determines attitudes, relations and social representations. He also admits that spatial morphology and social structure form a matrix of elements semi structured (Balsa, 2006: 14-16). Space is a physical and social support but also a cultural code. This is by the territoriality concept that operates the physical support. Already the social support is the basis to the social interaction network where the individual presents himself to the other in view the community life and the organization or their multiple activities. In this way, it is through the spatial appropriation that is defined the solidarities and the antagonisms where space assumes the role of cultural code when it uses symbolic forms in acquisitive domains and in the support of relational play. (Lopes, 2006: 137) The conception of space like representation or closed system is one way of chain up it, or ignore it the trajectories which develop in parallel and in the other way, the spatial subjectivity. The space should be conceived like "open, multiple and relational, not finished and always in becoming". (Massey, 2008: 94-95) The space, for Doreen Massey, is based in the following elements: (1) product of interrelations and interactions that is established between global and local; (2) sphere where coexists distinct – and dissimilar – trajectories; (3) and last, there is a product always in construction because of result from the interaction itself. Therefore, the understanding of space like product of interrelations is based on a not essentialist politic which emphasises the "relational constructivism", instead of to accept and to work with entities/ identities already formed. So, the identities and the interrelations are formed together and the identities/ entities, the relations betweens them and the spatiality are all co-constitutive. (Massey, 2008: 29-30) Last - and it is not to much underline – the space haven't significant form and meaning before its interpretation and its place and its identity in the social and

cognitive world of human experiences, which have the capacity to order and to organize what, in the other way, it will see like something of chaotic, disorganized and without sense. Then, the known is immediately recognized or like something near while the unknown is far way, invisible or "out of sight" either in temporal level, either in spatial level. (Helms, 1999: 20-21)

Spatial practice is also social practices to incorporate themselves in modalities through which the human being lives in space producing and reproducing inside. The social practice encompasses the reproduction of the production of social relations, particularly the work division, the interaction between people of different groups of age and sex, and the biological family procreation and the provision of future labour power. Includes the material production of daily needs (houses, cities, roads) and the accumulated knowledge with which the societies change spatial and social environments. (Dinmenberg, 1988: 20) It is in this case created the opportunity for the reinvention of space from a materialism either geographic, either historic. To this, João Teixeira Lopes considers necessary overcome two obstacles: the understanding of space like mental reflex and reification of space, indifferent to the contents and social practices. (Lopes, 2002: 32-33) All social relations are abstracts to their implementation spatial, in other words, until to become material and symbolic spatial relations. Therefore, the specificity of urban problematic comes from the complex interaction between geographic sights macro and micro of urban spaces, which there are in the origin of tensions and contradictions of social production of space. (Soja, 2004: 9-10)

Thus, beyond the necessary bibliographic revision about concepts like "space", "social space" and "social practice", we propose in our communication a comparative and critical analysis about public spaces in the cities of Barcelona (Spain), Oporto and Vila Nova de Gaia (Portugal).

Key words: space, social space, social practice.

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