

Morphological Territories

From the Full to the Empty

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We pretend to expose some traceable questions about the perceptive reading of the contemporaneous metropolitan of the territory. Today the metropolitan territory is the result of huge transformations caused by the changes of the economy post-Ford, the named post-industrial city. The metropolitan territory shapes itself complex and mutant, in factions and slashed, and permeated by empties urban and changes of uses and meanings: the urban mutations rise out.

In this purpose it seems us to be urgent to retake the question of the urban perception from a crossed analysis between concepts and images to be possible to try to elaborate a new status of cognitive map of a metropolitan territory nowadays so mutant.

The Architecture is the tool that gives shape to the city, in its morphologies and ways, in the morphology of the built, of the public space and transformation processes. Being so there is a deep relation between the architectonics fact and urban one; between the construction process and planning one, in the time and collective memory of the citizen.

The city understood as architecture, translated in time, grows up over itself, acquires conscience and memory, keeping the permanency of the original lines. In its building the city clarifies the motives of its transformations and its own development. In this process there is a permanent relation between the particular and the universal, the individual and the collective, the private and the public.

It's necessary to reconsider the public spaces, revealing the public spaces, and the architecture and the urbanization. It's this new capacity of vision and of strategic thinking that will allow to project. The shape of the city is always the shape of a time of the city. The construction of the city,

or a part of the city, “agrees across the time several operations over the ground and building and the complexity of its result it is not only the repetition of the types or juxtaposition of tissues but it expresses the linking process in which the shapes and the building moments succeed themselves with own rhythms” (Sola Morales, 1997).

In the contemporaneous city one of the greatest resources for its evaluation is found in discussing the condition of the empty spaces – degraded places, “obsolete” or marginal ones, other illegitimate sons of the own paradigm of the Modern City that are themselves spread from the urban tissue consolidated to the peripheries, they form a hypothesis net which must be estimated together, and they can and must produce a deep reforming impulse of the city – Urban Empties - *Terrian Vague* or *Brownfields* are designations attributed to these places that must be present in a conscious and agreed in the strategic plans of the Cities.

It allows a reflection about the city (cities), these odd and extraordinary places of creation and opportunity and enable also a reflexion over the Metropolitan Area of Porto looking for generating general perspectives that deliver itself new protagonism, better performances and another dimension of project.

They frame a true net of hypothesis that when evaluated together can produce a deep reforming impulse of the city which must be present in a conscious and harmonized way, in the strategic plans of the cities because they have potential strategies for the urban drawing.

The urban empties detach themselves like structural morphological elements of the cities presenting themselves as essential ones to understand them on their genesis and their transformations. The empties, as part of the urban morphology, are susceptible areas of intervention that can perform an important role in the changes of the organization, drawing and qualification of the city in their different scales.

The metropolitan empty – the free spaces of different nature – is through its specifications a basis element of the metropolitan shape, as active support of the ways and processes of occupation occurred in the metropolitan formation and as negative space structural of the urban growth. They are spaces of metropolitan articulation.

In a morphological perspective, Matosinhos, municipality coalescent to Porto, keeps together the characteristics and one metropolitan context privileged for this investigation, a various and differentiated set of parts, meshes and layers, it shows a local dynamic so much proper (formerly strongly industrial, recently strongly tertiary), concentrating a great number of metropolitan infra structures and shares in an active way in the process of urban expansion of the Metapolis of Porto.

The purpose is to understand the role of the systems of empties in a metropolitan area among the overlapping of the nets of infra-structures, of concentrations and centralities of jobs and functions, and of mosaics of residential blocks that means the relations socio-spatial between the blocks, the nets and the interstice empties.

To understand the protagonism of the empty not only as paradigm of the verification of the several urban and contemporary phenomenon, but mainly as paradigm of transformation and maintenance of the metropolitan urbanity

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