



DEMOCRACY ON THE STREETS: A BALANCE OF URBAN MOBILITY POLICIES IN THE CITY OF SÃO PAULO BETWEEN 2013 AND 2016

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to analyse the public policies of urban mobility promoted by the São Paulo City Hall, through bodies such as CET (Traffic Engineering Company), SPTrans (São Paulo Transportations SA) and the Municipal Transport Secretariat, between 2013 and 2016. The period corresponds to the mandate of the then mayor of São Paulo, Fernando Haddad (PT). The analysis was based on a historical and theoretical recapitulation to better understand and evaluate the transformations in the orientation and execution of the policies of that period in question

Key words:

Urban Mobility, Public Policies, São Paulo,

Introduction

Urban mobility is for a long time an unsolved topic especially in big cities in underdeveloped countries. This research goes along this necessity to a better understanding of how policies help shape the actual structure of the user's transportation system in the urban space. The choice of São Paulo and the specific period (2013-2016) comes from the initial hypothesis of a sensible transformation in the policies practiced by Haddad's administration in the City Hall, but also the even greater public aware of the problem by society as whole - as it was seen in the series of demonstrations that took place in Brazil that became known as "Jornadas de Junho".

Results and Discussion

A comprehension of the urban mobility as a field of study can vary in innumerable ways; the choice here was to do it as three-dimensional topic, so it was evaluated as a *right*, a *service* and a *business*. In the first section, we argue that the accessibility to the city as a whole is a right and to disrespect this right means to induce greater disparities (RIBEIRO, 2015; MARICATO, 1995). In the second section, the analyses is greatly based on Matela (2014) arguments that public transportation is a natural oligopoly and regulator must acknowledge that in order to the service properly operation. In the third section, the discussion pass through land occupation and capital interests to argue that urban mobility is fundamentally linked to these two points and that a democratic approach is hardly noticed (MARICATO, 2008).

As for the historical recapitulation, we can say that since 1988 a small number of policies may have had some positive impacts in the organization and structure for example the "*Municipalização*" in 1989. However, for the most part of the period 1993-2012 the orientation of the policies not only sustained a perverse logic of maintaining the system but also made it more and more expensive for the users and the public sector (RIBEIRO, 2015; ROLNIK, 2011).

For the policies concerning the period between 2013 and 2016 we have that for the collective motorized transport (buses) the infrastructure especially dedicated to it was greatly enhanced by 356,31%, making this administration responsible for 72% of all infrastructure of the genre – the results were also positive for the traffic speed but also for

the environment. For the cars and its users, the traffic became not just faster but also safer by policies such as the reduction of speed limits in some major avenues, but also in areas with a great number of pedestrians (CET, 2016). Last, but probably one of the most consequential policies of Haddad's administration, is the construction of dedicated infrastructure for bicycles in the city: 400km were built in four years (82% of the actual total available today) and with a cost per km 15% smaller than the predicted, and also smaller than what is internationally considered standard (MIRANDA, 2009).

Conclusions

In the effort of trying to make a balance of these four years we can arguably say that some important achievements were mainly made in a conjunctural analysis by the construction of dedicated infrastructure which may turn the urban mobility of São Paulo somewhat more democratic. However, more structural reforms such as the regulation system of bus system in the city remained almost untouched by the administration, which may lead to social and economically unsustainable situations for the next years.

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