

# 5 Work as a Housing Right

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This chapter is based on “Work as a housing right: The transfer of residents from favelas to social housing” (2018)

*“... For people who fight against poverty and misery in neoliberal society, the house becomes an accessory to labor needs, necessary to acquire capital and thus, to earn the right to housing.”*

Cavalcanti, 2018

## 5.1 Introduction: A New Paradigm for an Old Housing Question

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This paper hopes that architects designing social housing for people originally living in informal settlements consider the importance of social practices, namely work activities, held by residents within the established informal settlements. Both the analysis and reflection hinge upon the practices previously established by a group of resettled inhabitants from the *Favela Sururu de Capote*, that exists in Maceió (Brazil) since the 1970's, to *Vila São Pedro*, a housing project developed by Brazilian Government in 2009. In fact, the research shows that labor, the social practice that most of all shapes and governs spaces in the *favela* (Cavalcanti, 2017), also drove the modifications that significantly altered the original shape of the social housing designed according to principles of formal architecture.

The ethnographic research was developed according to participant observation through a multi-year field research started in 2008, before the resettlement of residents and continued after one and seven years from relocation. Information consisted of interviews, audio records of residents' monologues, drawings, photos

and video. In sum, the socio-economic traditions of residents were analysed before and after the resettlement process, both in the *favela* and in the social housing. Already little time after relocation, the social housing was profoundly modified and 'mischaracterized' by residents. Thus, the original project failed its mission, as it happened twenty years before in a similar attempt, in a project designed by the housing program PROMORAR, in 1989. From the analysis, it emerges that the herein emplaced working activities mostly drove residents to profoundly change the social housing designated to them according to traditional design and management schemes. According to this research, nearly 87% of the incremental changes in external spaces and ground level of the 380 housing units of the Vila São Pedro were devoted to give room to labor activities. The elaborated information constitutes the roots of an intellectual reflection about the in-depth reasons of this phenomenon. In fact, all the observed modifications are emplaced to preserve the source of income of residents of *favelas*, needed for the inhabitant to pay their bills and therefore to guarantee their permanence in the new housing units. Thus, these necessities overcome any aesthetic rigor, hygienic standards, canons, program, formal/legal constrains that are inherent the designing criteria of formal housing. This impellent necessity of unprivileged groups of society should question the role of architects within the delicate mission of providing dwelling solutions to informal settlements. But the consequences arising from this reflection invest many sectors, from institutions to academia. In fact, in the context of informal settlements, the right to have spaces to work is embedded in the right to have a housing unit. Possible strategies to rethink policies, knowledge on incremental processes, urbanization, design strategies, and the right to dwelling in a neoliberal society to consider the socio-economic tradition of labor within both the context of the architecture in informal settlements or, the resettlement process of its inhabitants, are presented in this paper.

## 5.2 Sugar, Sururu and Labor/ The Favela Sururu de Capote: A Spatial Analysis of the Emergence and Growth of an Informal Settlement around Labor Practices

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The *Favela Sururu de Capote* has emerged at the margins of northeastern city of Maceió, which is one of the fastest urbanizing cities in the world (Rojas, 2008; Cities Mayor Foundation, 2015). This is a middle-sized city, as most cities undergoing fast urbanization in developing countries (World Bank, 200, p. 129; UN Habitat, 2016, p.1). Maceió is characterized by strong social polarities, poverty, and inequality. The city accounts for 42.261 deficit of housing units. The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the main government agent responsible to keep record of the country's data, accounts that there are 114.659 people living in 32.359 houses (IBGE, 2010) in 163 subnormal settlements (IBGE, 2010) in its urban area but this number can be even higher since only the settlements with more than 50 houses can be considered a 'subnormal settlement.' These informal settlements are mostly irregular occupations in areas of environmental preservation such as the borders of sea, rivers and lagoon, especially along the margins of the *Mundaú* Lagoon and in declivity areas of the city, mostly concentrated along the Vale do Reginaldo, a 30 kilometer valley in the city. The typology of these settlements varies, from *palafitas* (along the flooding areas), *grotas* (*favelas* in craters or declivities of the city, the most prevalent form of informal settlement to imaginaries of the residents of Maceió, due to geomorphological characteristics of the relief the city) and in *morros* (commonly depicted *favelas* on the top of hills). The *Favela Sururu de Capote* is situated in the southwest portion of city, along the Lagoon *Mundaú* which was one of the first urbanizing areas of Maceió. On the one hand, this area is key to programs of urbanization due its potential for becoming a tourist area in the city, and on the other hand, there is a concentration of poor settlements such as informal settlements and formal residences of unprivileged groups whose livelihood derive from small economies such as small commercial activities or provision of services. Located in the Neighbourhood of *Levada, Vergel do Lago, Ponta Grossa* and *Trapiche*, the *Favela Sururu de Capote* is composed by four different communities, *Mundaú, Muvuca, Torre* and *Sururu de Capote*, along 2,3 kilometres of the coast of the lagoon. The popular nomination of these four communities as "Sururu de Capote" is mostly because its residents derive their livelihoods from the fishing of a typical mussel, the *sururu*. The settlement is extremely precarious, with a few houses having an

improvised sewage system and residents reported that almost all houses do not have a proper toilet. The actual *favela* landscape is composed by houses made by all materials that modern society discards: cardboards, canvas, aluminium sheets, wood plates and a few houses made by bricks. Houses are predominantly self-constructed barracks of one storey high, and *palafitas* houses close to the potential flooding areas, but there is also a smaller incidence of houses made by bricks and having up to two storeys. According to the interviews performed with residents, the appearance of the *favela* dates back in the decade of 1970's when there was a high incidence of demission of workers in sugar cane farms (*Usinas de açúcar*) of the state of Alagoas (Cavalcanti, 2009, p. 21). The migrants have found in the margins of the lagoon, in the middle of an empty and still barely populated region, colonies of fishermen living in *taipa* houses (rammed earth houses), and there stopping and starting to fish as well as a mean of subsistence.

The fishing verve of this settlement is nowadays still present in the landscape of the *Favela Sururu de Capote*, which accounted for around 2500 residents in 2009, but the typologies and landscape configurations barely recall the descriptions of the first occupations. The field roads of clay that were predominant amidst the native tropical vegetation and mangrove had gave way to roads in which high speed cars pass frenetically on the daily basis (fig.5.1).



FIG. 5.1 Modifications in the landscape of the area of the lagoon within the particular context of the *Favela Sururu de Capote*. Source: Excerpt from author's thesis, 2008.



In 1982, a main avenue has been completed, the *Dique Estrada*, linking the region to other areas of the city (within the ambit a program of urbanization of the lagoon). It denotes the opposite border of the *favela*, which has the lagoon on the other edge.

Research performed by the author in the field has revealed that many of the logics of the *favela* are orchestrated by the activity of fishing the *sururu*. They divide the community through age and gender. Starting from the noon, the young men leave their houses and follow the alleys in the direction of the lagoon. While diving they cave with their hand the soil of the deep parts of the water to find *cocotes* of *sururu* (concentrations of the mussel shells). They then return to the *favela* in the early hours of the morning, where carriers of *sururu* will be already waiting for them, with their walking carts. (fig. 5.2).



FIG. 5.2 Fishermen *Favela Sururu de Capote*. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2008.

Then, from men, the work begins to be performed by young and elderly women, who after receiving the *sururu*, clean the shells. Further, the carriers transport the *sururu* through the alley up until the margins of the lagoon where it boiled and sold to entire parts of the city from within improvised kiosks. Clients from diverse parts of the city stop in front of the *favela* with their cars to buy the mussel. It also can be sold to central market by carters, where it is distributed to all parts of the city. The extensive work of residents who navigate the *favela* is payed per amount of work in the settlement where residents earn less than a dollar per day. Circa one third of the population lives fixedly from the practice of *sururu* and most residents interviewed by the author referred to work with the *sururu* seasonally, part time or full time. The corporeal process of going to the lagoon to fish, cleaning the mussel in the house, and then selling the products around the borders of the so-called formal city cannot be disturbed. The working activity dominates the planning of the *favelas* and constitutes an expression of the individuals and groups. These practices and traditions influence the design of alleys, that are straight originating from the lagoon up to the margins of the *favela* with the formal city, along circa 70 meters (Cavalcanti, 2009, p.20). (fig.5.3).



FIG. 5.3 Alley of the *Favela Sururu de Capote*. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2008.

These are evidences of labor physically shaping the infrastructures of that settlement, recalling the ancient way of building cities before industrialization with the body as a measure to plan, the corporeal paths as a measure to alleys and the ergonomics of the body in the field. Also the process of emergence of *favelas* can be traced back to the labor practices of residents, by the migration of job seekers from country side, migrants, family members to the *favela*, which enforce the initially established traditions of the first fisherman settlement who originated the *favela*.

*Sururu* does not constitute the only source of income for people living in the *Favela*. Many other forms of work predominant in the settlement includes all sorts of manufacture, commercial activities and providing services, yet small agricultural practices and raising animals for both subsistence or transportation purposes are also noticed. Many of the microbusinesses serve both the internal community of the informal settlement and also occasional clients from the formal city. These activities repeat over and over, especially at the borders of the *favela* and the avenue: car wash services, several repair services and businesses such as bike repair, electronics repair, bars and restaurants, carter services, grocery shops, and diverse forms of craftsmanship. They also influence the design of houses built by residents and the incremental process of construction of house, since many of them occur inside the homes of residents. (fig. 5.4) (table 5.1).



FIG. 5.4 Car wash service in the *Favela Sururu de Capote*. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2016.

TABLE 5.1 Work activities performed by residents living in the Favela Sururu de Capote. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017.

Economic activities in the Self-Constructed Neighborhoods in Maceió	Economic Activities outside of the Self-Constructed Neighborhoods in Maceió
Favela Sururu de Capote	Favela Sururu de Capote
Fisherman	Hawker
Mussel cleaner	Carter
Mussel cleaner assistant	Garbage recycler
Mussel vendor	Carriers
Craftsman (wood, glass, iron, furniture)	Maid
Upholstery furniture makers	Vendor
Caregiver	Seller
Vendors	Carpenters
Hairdressers and manicures	Mason
Owner of grocery shop	Business Assistant
Car washing services	Motorcycle Courier Services (motoboy)
Car repair services	Cashiers
Electronic repair services	Carter
Prayer services	Garbage recycler
Nurseries	Ocasional Worker
Tattoo chops	
Groceries	
Cake shops	
Restaurants	
Bars	
Construction shop	
Clothes repair shop	
Vendors of international companies	
Internet Shop	
Bakery	
Meat Shop	
Deposit of Construction	

Convivial and domestic activities occur in the house, meanwhile working, usually separated by curtains or improvised walls, in the fragile home landscape of the *Favela do Sururu*. Whilst hard and constant cooking, sewing, repairing, or selecting, separating and transforming raw materials into forms and objects through craftsmanship. While marketing groceries, hygiene and beauty products. Among offering prayer services, repair services, carrying, transporting with carts and walking carts.

These activities occur usually in the front portion of the house, or in the entrance rooms of houses such as home businesses related to commerce and services, and home industry. But they can also occur through spatial attributes of the house, such as in the case of window shops. (see fig. 1.2, chapter 3)

Moreover, noisy and craftsmanship activities occur in the backyard, such as carpentry, repair, and other home industry works. This brings back the notion of the house as a production space in the realm of the non-fully industrialized cities, a space for thriving livelihood, before it stopped becoming a space of production until becoming a commodity (Madden and Marcuse, 2016, p.18-26). These small economic activities occur in the domestic space and is typical of economies in the so called Global South, characterized by houses of small scale intertwined with commercial activities in the landscapes of cities and not by strong sectorial demarcations as industrialized cities of the global north. Mostly prevalent forms of employment in the formal city includes carters, filler jobs, hawkers, masons, maids, carriers, guards (domestic economies and street economy).

All in all, the entire labor activities of residents is a testimony of the phenomena of how taking profit of surrounding resources, using limited resources and the constant learning of skills produce urbanities. The traditions of this informal settlement revolve around the need to work and the settlement logics based on the organization of the community to govern and manage the resources. Residents established these traditions as a manner to organize and govern the common resources of the community and the community itself, who in their turn are inserted in broader economic system through resistance and resilience as could describe Michel de Certeau. They follow the rationale of cities of the evolution of cities, in which dwellings emerges from the encounter of labor and domestic life (Arendt, 1958; Mumford, 1961, p 281;Madden & Marcuse , 2016, p. 18) and settlements emerge and grow to store and create the goods of civilization (Mumford, 1961; p. 38-39).

The work shapes, plans and governs the logics of the planning of the *favela*, resulting in straight alleys and houses that were planned and incremented to accommodate work activities, the strong presence and invention of microbusinesses to the livelihood of residents, houses as production spaces, and strong presence of spaces for the storage of working material that in the *favela* translates into horses, carts, cannons, walking carts and hawkers' cars. It is indeed, signed by the resident's reference to the lagoon as a factory.

*"The lagoon is the factory of God"*

Vania Teixeira, 2008. (Cavalcanti, 2008, p. 19)

Today the *Favela Sururu de Capote* is still existent and in process of expansion, in the landscape of a city marked by strong polarities, contradictions and inequalities and despite several programs that aim to tackle urbanization in the area and resettle the residents and redevelop the *favela* such as the *Conjunto Virgem dos Pobres*, after a flood, in 1889 by PROMORAR and the National Housing Bank, *Vila São Pedro*,

*Conjunto Santa Maria, Cidade Sorriso*, in 2009 within a program of redevelopment of *favelas* (*Projeto Integrado da Orla Lagunar*) designed by Brazilian Government in 2007. They reveal the same strategies and weaknesses to approach this settlement, omitting the importance of labor to the production, design and planning of housing to the unprivileged.

### 5.3 The Transfer of Residents from Favelas to Social Housing and the Transformation of Housing Units

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This chapter analyses and debates what happened during the transfer of inhabitants from the *Favela Sururu de Capote* to a social housing, the *Vila São Pedro* (fig. 5.5-5.7) (Table 5.2). This social housing, built in front of the *favela*, was designed to shelter the residents who live from the fishery of *sururu*.

The housing project of the *Vila São Pedro* is part of an ambitious program aiming at transferring the inhabitants of the *Favela Sururu de Capote* into the houses projected by the government. According to the Ministry of the Cities, in Portuguese, *Ministério das Cidades*, back in 2009, the project consisted on the ‘eradication’ of the *Favela Sururu de Capote*, through the urbanization of both the *favela* and the areas near the Lagoon *Mundaú* (MINC, 2009). The initiative was subsidized by the Brazilian Government, within the Program of Acceleration of Growth (PAC) English for *Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento*, within the activities of the Program of Urbanization of *Favelas*, in Portuguese, *Programa de Urbanização de Favelas*. These projects act in joint efforts for the re-urbanization of the *Mundaú* Lagoon, the Program of Integrated Urbanization of the Shore of the Lagoon, English for *Programa de Urbanização Integrada da Orla Lagunar*. Moreover, it was expected that the development related to the urbanization process of the lagoon could reinforced tourism all that it revolves in Maceió, and its construction could generate capital liquidity and employment for the economy of the city.

The project cost 35, 8 millions of Brazilian *Reais* and, benefited 1 181 families through the production of 1 181 family units with water provision, sanitary sewage system, drainage, pavement and street design (MINC, 2010). In order to facilitate the transfer of the inhabitant from *favela* to *non-favela*, families were divided by



groups according to the places where they worked. Theoretically, while the fishermen were supposed to be resettled in a terrain close to the lagoon in the *Conjunto Vila de São Pedro* the families who did not live from fishery were transferred to a peripheral area of the west part of city, the *Conjunto Santa Maria* and a few to *Cidade Sorriso*, both located 23,5 kilometres away from the *favela*, in the neighbourhood of *Benedito Bentes*. Practically, though, a great number of fishermen and marisqueiras was also transferred to the *Conjunto Santa Maria* and to *Cidade Sorriso*.



FIG. 5.5 *Vila São Pedro* (green block). Source: MINC, 2010.



FIG. 5.6 Playground in the green block of *Vila São Pedro*. Source: MINC, 2010.



FIG. 5.7 Floorplan of the housing units in the *Vila São Pedro*. Source: SEPLAN, 2010.



PLANTA BAIXA

TABLE 5.2 Some numbers and characteristics of housing of the 'Program of the Re-urbanization of the Lagoon' within the the Brazilian federal program 'Reurbanization of the Favelas' (Program of Aceleration of Growth). Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017.

Numbers of the "Program of Re-urbanization of the Mundaú Lagoon":	
Number of Families	1181 families. (divided as 360 Fishermen families/Housing Vila S. Pedro; and 821 non-fishermen families/other sources of income/ Housing Santa Maria and Housing Cidade Sorriso).
Housing Vila S. Pedro	60 housing units/ located in 5 areas in front of lagoon
Number of housing units	Vertical housing of Two floors and four apartments.
Typology of housing	1 church, 3 football yards, 4 piazza, garden,
Components of housing	playground, gym equipment.
Layout of a single housing unit	One Living Room, Two Bedrooms, One Bathroom, One kitchen, One Laundry
Housing Conjunto Santa Maria e Cidade Sorriso	821 serial houses/located 23 kl far from lagoon
Number of housing units:	One Living Room, Two Bedrooms, One Bathroom, One kitchen, One Laundry
Cost	35,8 Million Reais

The *Vila São Pedro* and the *Conjunto Santa Maria* diverge in form, location and size. Dwellings in the *Vila São Pedro* are composed 360 vertical multifamily units with two floors, and four apartments of 45 square meters and facilities such as a church, 3 football yards, 4 piazzas, playground gyms, located between buildings. *Santa Maria*, is composed by 821 individual serial housing units. Other inhabitants of the *Favela Sururu de Capote* who did not received houses to live in the previously mentioned projects were resettled in *Cidade Sorriso*, another social housing project aimed to the inhabitants of *favelas* in the North of Maceió, in 2009.

The interviews and monologues transcripts of residents occurred in the period between 2008 and 2009, before the transfer of the residents and after their resettlement in the social housing. Participant observation tools such as photography, documentation, drawings and mapping were conducted throughout the period between 2009 and 2017. The first questions raised by residents hinged upon the expectations regarding the new houses:

*"this surely will not work, see, they[the community] will find a way to sell their houses as soon as they get the right to live there [in the social housing], they always invite someone else from their family to come here [to the favelas], it isn't possible to afford a living there, the favela will continue".* (Resident monologue, 2008)

The fisherman actually tells that the reason why inhabitants would not keep living in the housing projects, and return to the *favela* (a problem that is constant in resettlement and redevelopment context of residents of informal settlements) was



unrelated to the social housing as a space that would provide shelter and quality of life to the inhabitants but, rather, with social practices of the inhabitants, such as, the ties of residents of *favelas* with their families and friends that are important to the livelihood of individuals and groups living in the informal settlement, that are relevant due to their contingent context. He wasn't thinking about the aesthetic features of the new houses, nor on the fact that he would have more living space in the social housing, nor that his house would be coated and insulated; he was predicting what would happen based on his possibilities, and contingent resources, the possibility to pay the bills of his new house, that would be higher than the lower cost typical of the life in the *favela*. His speech opens a non-parochial and reversal post-colonial argument that does not depicts the ties and commons of the *favela* as a romantic practice or promote an 'aesthetization' of poverty.' (fig. 5.8).His monologue tackles the universal need to preserve livelihood.



FIG. 5.8 A fisherman and his house in the *Favela Sururu de Capote*. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2008.



FIG. 5.9 Pictures show the housing project *Vila S. Pedro* in 2009 (after delivery). Source: Agência Alagoas, 2010.



FIG. 5.10 Pictures show the housing project *Vila S. Pedro* six years later, 2016. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2016.



FIG. 5.11 Pictures show the different economic activities that changed the houses in *Vila S. Pedro*. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2016.

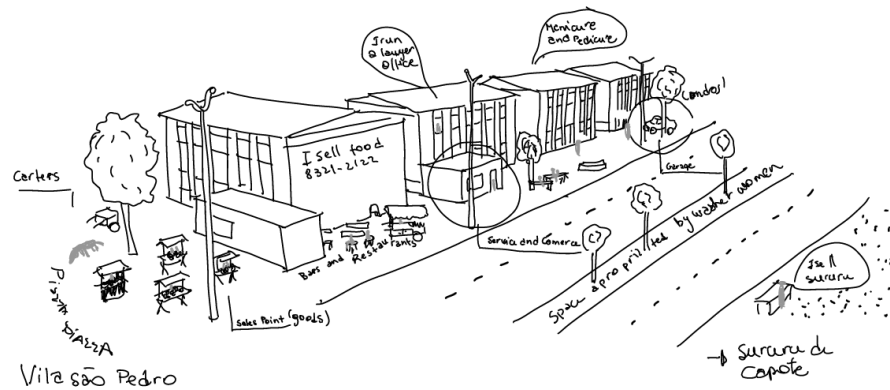


FIG. 5.12 Graphic describes and shows the appropriation and uses of space by people after 6 years of relocation. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017.

Indeed, the design and planning strategy did not facilitate the social and working practices of inhabitants. Overall, from a distance of seven years since the transfer of inhabitants, the social housing *Vila São Pedro*, as it was originally thought, is nowadays unrecognizable. Field research revealed that it was strongly adapted to incorporate working activities both in the ground floor and in the upper floor. Many inhabitants extend the ground floor of the housing units to place a microbusiness spaces to storage goods related to their work. Meanwhile, modifications on the top floor of units range from extensions of rooms, changes in the interior of the houses and work related to provision of services. Letter boards and paintings at the façade of the housing buildings also emphasize the presence of working activities in the houses (fig. 5.9 - 5.12).

There is a significant presence of services, trades and commerce in in the mediations of the social housing. As it occurs in business in the *favela*, these micro businesses serve also communities in other neighbourhood. The small economic activities repeat in the landscape of the social housing, there are many hairdressers, grocery shops, sewing services, restaurants, internet shops, print shops, prayer services, street food, key repair, construction material shops, electronic repair services, resellers of international companies, hawkers, car repair services, carpenters, iron workers. In total, almost 87% of housing changes where performed by residents to provide a livelihood activity. ( table 5.3 -5.6)(fig.5.13)

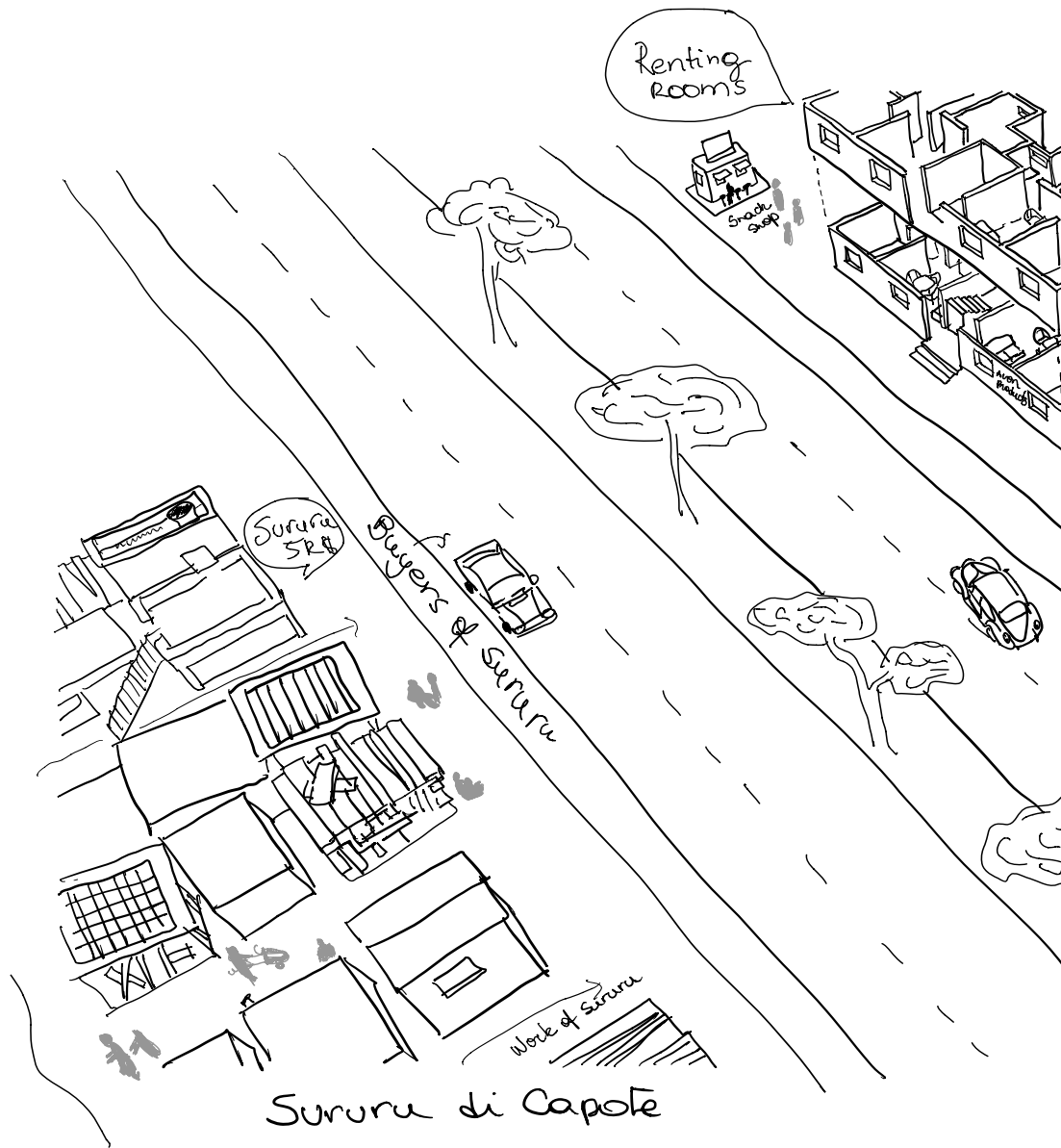


FIG. 5.13 Work Activities in the Favela Sururu de Capote and in the Vila São Pedro. Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017.

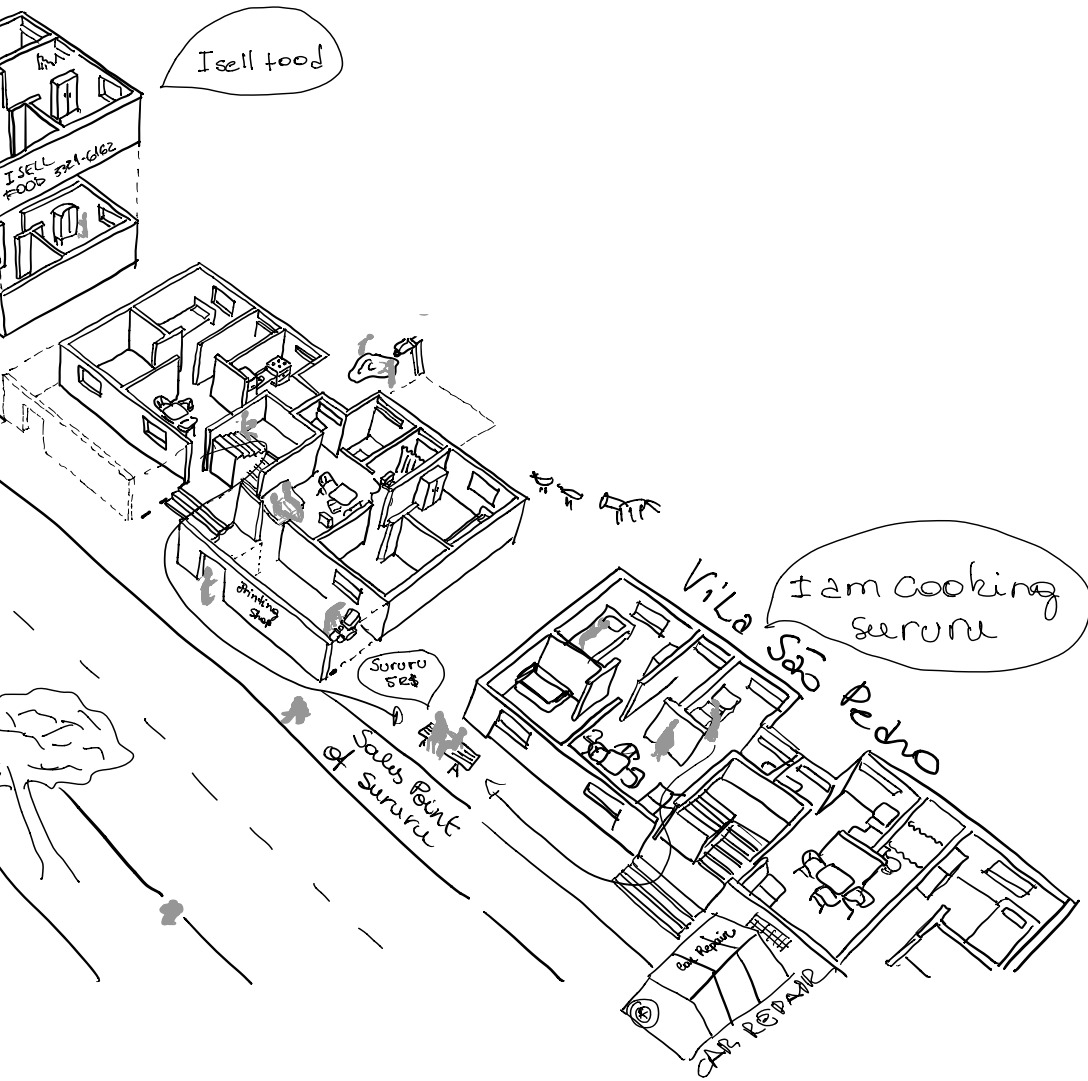


TABLE 5.3 Purpose of incremental changes in Vila São Pedro (Blue Block). Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017.

<b>Number of Housing Blocks</b>	15 blocs
<b>Number of Housing Units</b>	15 blocks of 4 dwelling units
<b>Number of changes in the external structure</b>	14
<b>Characteristics of the Activities:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sururu (shop)1</li> <li>2. Sururu (shop)2</li> <li>3. Sururu (shop)3</li> <li>4. Sururu (shop)4</li> <li>5. Sururu (shop)5</li> <li>6. Iron workshop</li> <li>7. Garden/ cultivation of fruits and vegetable</li> <li>8. Deposit of Beverages</li> <li>9. Stable for horses (carters use)</li> <li>10. Service Microbusiness</li> <li>11. Snacks Bar</li> <li>12. Condominium2*</li> <li>13. Condominium1*</li> <li>14. Extension of House*</li> </ol>
<b>Change of units (external areas) for working purposes)</b>	78,58%
<b>Change of units for other purposes*</b>	21,42 %
<b>Sururu work</b>	35,71%
<b>Changes per block</b>	15 blocks and 14 changes

TABLE 5.4 Purpose of incremental changes in Vila São Pedro (Yellow Block). Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017

<b>Number of Housing Blocks</b>	17 blocs
<b>Number of Housing Units</b>	17 blocks of 4 dwelling units
<b>Number of changes in the external structure:</b>	15
<b>Characteristics of the Activities:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grocery Shop</li> <li>2. Shop of sweet potatoes</li> <li>3. Snack shop (coxinhas)</li> <li>4. Fruits shop</li> <li>5. Hawker</li> <li>6. Food Shop</li> <li>7. Repair of furniture (shop)</li> <li>8. Room for private parties and religious events</li> <li>9. Barbecue Vendor</li> <li>10. Car Repair Shop</li> <li>11. Services of Repair and commerce of electronics</li> <li>12. Garage *</li> <li>13. Garage 2*</li> <li>14. Canopy for several purposes*</li> <li>15. Condominium*</li> </ol>
<b>Change of units for working purposes (external areas):</b>	73,34%
<b>Changing Units for other purposes.*</b>	26,66%
<b>Sururu Work</b>	0%
<b>Changes per block</b>	(17 blocks and 15 changes).

TABLE 5.5 Purpose of incremental changes in Vila São Pedro (Green Block). Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017

<b>Number of Housing Blocks</b>	9 blocs
<b>Number of Housing Units</b>	9 blocks of 4 dwelling units
<b>Number of changes in the external structure</b>	3
<b>Characteristics of the Activities:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Snack Bar</li> <li>2. Sururu (shop)</li> <li>3. Stable</li> </ol>
<b>Change of units for working purposes</b>	100%
<b>Change of units for other purposes*</b>	0%
<b>Sururu Work</b>	50 %
<b>Changes per block</b>	9 blocks and 3 changes

TABLE 5.6 Purpose of incremental changes in Vila São Pedro (Pink Block). Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017.

<b>Number of Housing Blocks</b>	18 blocs
<b>Number of Housing Units</b>	18 blocks of 4 dwelling units
<b>Number of changes in the external structure:</b>	20
<b>Characteristics of the Activities:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scrap Yard</li> <li>2. Bar1</li> <li>3. Room for private parties or religious celebrations</li> <li>4. Food Shop</li> <li>5. Shop pf Cassava</li> <li>6. Car washing services</li> <li>7. Sandwich shop</li> <li>8. Bar2</li> <li>9. Bar3</li> <li>10. Fruits Shop</li> <li>11. Bar 4</li> <li>12. Sururu (shop)</li> <li>13. Cultivation of fruits and vegetables.</li> <li>14. Deposit of beverages</li> <li>15. Condominium*</li> <li>16. Snack Bar</li> <li>17. Printing shop</li> <li>18. Service Shop</li> <li>19. Car Wash Service</li> <li>20. Scrap Yard 2</li> </ol>
<b>Changing units for working purposes</b>	95%
<b>Change of units for other purposes*</b>	5%
<b>Sururu Work</b>	5%
<b>Changes per block</b>	18 blocks and 20 changes



While relocated in the social housing, the inhabitants kept the practices previously performed in the *favela*, being included the practice of fishing and selling *sururu*. Although the inhabitants who now live in this social housing are still working with the *sururu*, the *favela*, which continued to grow by new migrations despite of the transfer of residents, has still a central role in the production processes of the *sururu* in the city and, most of the selling points of *sururu* are still located in the *favela*. Nowadays, the resettled inhabitants no longer work in front of their houses in the alleys of the *favela*, women can cook the *sururu* in their apartments and they clean it in front of the social housing, together with groups of other *marisqueiras*.<sup>15</sup>The fishermen and the *marisqueiras* cross the streets on a daily basis in order to fish the *sururu*. They sell the *sururu* in front of their new homes in self-constructed barracks in front of the housing blocks since the housing project did not built spaces for their working practices. The numerous passers-by and “clients” now have the choice to buy the *sururu* either from self-constructed kiosks in front of the lagoon or, from self-constructed kiosks in front of the social housing. Indeed, the ‘workers’ of the social housing are still connected to the ‘workers’ of the *favela* through their everyday working practices.

The residents adapted the social housing to their needs. All the social practices have been maintained and simply transplanted in vertical houses. The social and working practices, that happened in the *favela* are not brought by the transfer of inhabitants, being included the domestic, the common and the traditional social practices. The logics of incrementing the buildings barely changed, as well. All the ‘ecologies of working’ and all it revolves persisted after the transfer. Design and planning have not predicted and facilitated these working practices. The lack of consideration of spaces for work in the new houses in *Vila São Pedro*, was also observed in the *Conjunto Santa Maria*, and *Cidade Sorriso*, where the inhabitants were also transferred (fig. 1.14). These groups are commuting daily by bus over the distance of 23 kilometres from the social housing to the *favela* in order to work in the *favela* or meet family members and friends who now live in the *Vila São Pedro* (fig. 1.15). In fact, Vânia Teixeira, the community leader of the *favela* who nowadays live in *Cidade Sorriso* claims that many families are being involved in criminal activities due to the lack of employment which is emphasised by the peripheral location of the project. This implies in the resistance of the *favela* as a central working space for the residents, and emphasizes that housing strategies did not addressed the need to work of residents.

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15 Marisqueiras is Portuguese for “women shellfish cleaners.”



FIG. 5.14 Photos of housing units in *Cidade Sorriso* before (upper-left) and after (upper-right) the relocation of residents with the presence of commercial and services activities run by residents, and satellite image of the project (bottom). Source: Agência Alagoas, 2011 (top left), adaptation by author (top right), and Agência Alagoas, 2011 (bottom).

## Conjunto Cidade Sorriso vira pasadelo para famílias

Por Janylle Bezerra - Gazeta de Alagoas 03/03/2013 08h06

### Moradores transferidos de favela reclamam de descaso



Conjunto Cidade Sorriso vira pasadelo para famílias (Foto: Ailton Cruz)

A realização do sonho da casa própria virou sinônimo de problema para os moradores do Conjunto Cidade Sorriso 1, no bairro do Benedito Bentes, em Maceió. Desde que receberam as moradias, em 2009, a comunidade, que antes vivia às margens da orla lagunar da capital, tem enfrentado muitas dificuldades para sobreviver. Longe da lagoa, de onde tiravam o sustento, famílias inteiras precisam, atualmente, buscar alternativas que possam garantir o pão de cada dia.

### Longe da lagoa, fica difícil achar trabalho

O problema da falta de escolas é apenas um enfrentado pela comunidade que, de fato, tem crescido a cada dia. Muitas pessoas que viviam na lagoa, não foram beneficiadas com as casas e não queriam ficar longe dos amigos e familiares, acabaram também se mudando para a parte da cidade, formando uma nova favela, batizada de Santa Cruz. Segundo Vânia Teixeira, hoje existem quase 500 barracos de lona erguidos em um amplo terreno localizado próximo às casas construídas pela prefeitura.

Lá, muita gente ainda arrisca sobreviver do trabalho com o sururu. Com a longa distância da lagoa, essas famílias enfrentam um verdadeiro martírio para trabalhar. Maria Irene da Silva, 42 anos, diz não saber fazer outra coisa da vida. Ela decidiu morar em um dos barracos na parte da cidade para poder ficar perto do filho e da nora, que foram contemplados com um imóvel no Cidade Sorriso 1.

Para ter acesso ao sururu, um grupo de pessoas sai do Benedito Bentes, todos os dias, de ônibus, nas primeiras horas da manhã, em direção à orla lagunar. Além da distância entre a parte alta da cidade e a região das lagoas, os pescadores e marisqueiros enfrentam dificuldades para transportar o marisco, já que motoristas, cobradores e passageiros reclamam, a todo instante, da sujeira e do mau cheiro causados pelo sururu.

FIG. 5.15 Picture shows an article in the newspaper Gazeta de Alagoas which explicits the difficulties faced by residents living in the *Favela Sururu de Capote* who were resettled in the formal housing units of *Cidade Sorriso*. In particular, their critiques regard the distance from the units to the lagoon where they work. Source: Gazeta de Alagoas, 2015.

In both cases, residents perform these practices to preserve the work activity that were previously established in the *favela*, which could have been planned and considered in the social housing. This occurs at the expenses unprivileged groups whose right to housing is usually translated in providing them a roof, and transforming the unprivileged into a small owner of property, whose housing quality usually low. In fact, it is highlighted how both the dramatic 'disfiguration' of housing structures, the lack of thought on systems and infrastructures and mobility regarding their labor, and the 'failure' of the housing scope to prevent inhabitants from selling their housing units and return to the *favela*, can be traced back to the defence of working practices and the modalities of everyday life as they were undertaken by inhabitants.

The study shows that inhabitants did not change their planning behaviour and their planning strategies when they moved to the social housing units. It also points out that they 'urbanized' the housing complex'. Therefore, forms of legitimizing and understanding the socio-economical practices, especially the working needs of the residents of the *favelas*, must be inquired beyond a mere technocratic approach of city plan and their codes, in order to address the work of residents of *favelas* for the purpose of resettlement or redevelopment of unprivileged groups living in the informal settlement. An architecture of the social practices must be inquired. Finally, it emphasizes that social housing design could have been better addressed considering income generation activities. The modifications of the residents in both cases show the construction of neighbourhoods and cities typical of the global south in which small economic activities intertwined along manufacture, commercial and services activities that occur inside the houses. The same logics of appropriations occurred in the social housing *Conjunto Virgem dos Pobres* (CVP) I II e III in the mid 1980's. That social housing was built by PROMORAR, subsidized by Brazilian National Housing Bank (BNH), and aimed at relocating the inhabitants of the area of the *Favela Sururu de Capote*. In comparison to the patterns of labor observed, the changes in the housing units, in the FSC, in the *Vila São Pedro* and those observed in the social housing CVP, the are equal (fig. 5.16-5.19). Looking at these aspects is important, especially, by taking into consideration that a new housing project by Brazilian government is being formulated to the inhabitants of the *favelas* near the lagoon.

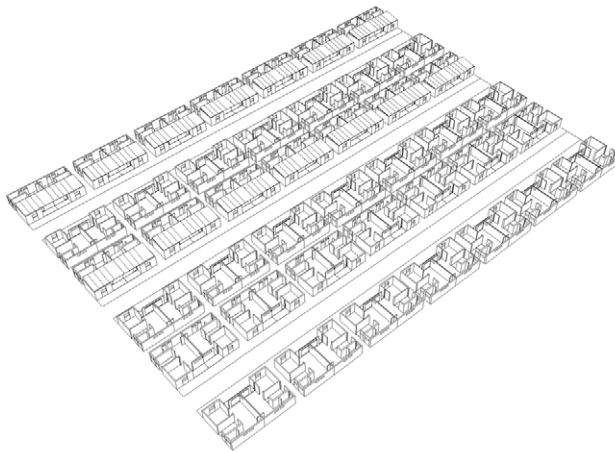


FIG. 5.16 Spatial design of geminated houses in the *Conjunto Virgem dos Pobres*. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2016.



FIG. 5.17 Temporary houses and the site in which the residents of the self-help project *Conjunto Virgem dos Pobres* were settled, in order to build their houses via a '*mutirão*' (self construction) in 1989. Source: *Gazeta de Alagoas*, 1989.

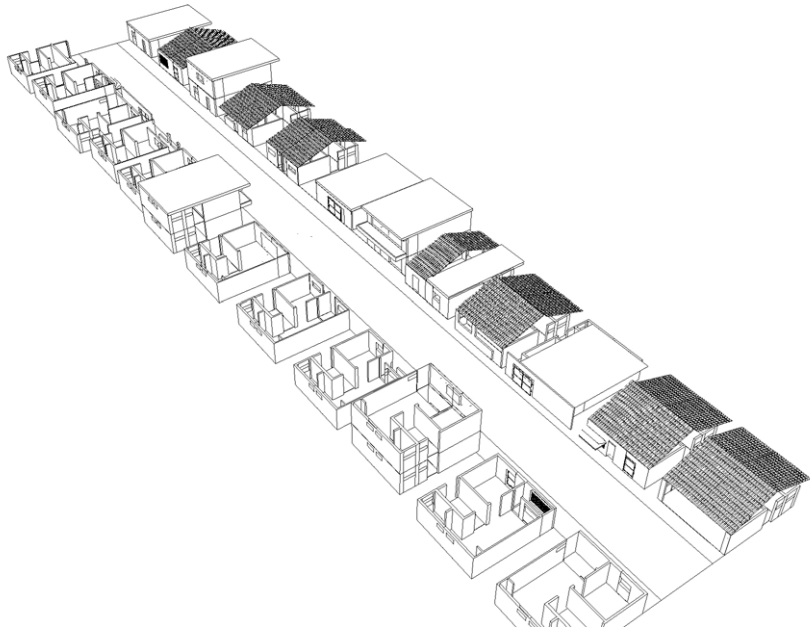


FIG. 5.18 Later transformations in *Conjunto Virgem dos Pobres* self employed by residents, revealing the aspect of houses nowadays. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2016.



FIG. 5.19 Both the areas of *Favela Sururu de Capote* and of the Housing Project *Virgem dos Pobres* before(left) and nowadays (right). We can notice the persistence and growth of the informal settlements near the lagoon, despite of housing projects aimed at re-urbanizing the *favela*, or to the resettlement the residents of informal communities. The urbanization of the housing project has acquired spatial characteristics of the surrounding neighbourhood. Source: *Gazeta de Alagoas*, 1989 (left) and Google Earth (2016).



FIG. 5.20 *Indiranagar, Lucknow Project in India, restaurant (left). Source: justdial.com. Photo of a business shop in the Housing project Kariobangi in Kenya (centre). Source: mutula.com.ke. Business in Quinta Monroy Project (right) in Chile source: Google map.*

Moreover, the appropriation of working activities in the social housing is not only a feature of Brazilian Cities. It can be deduced from the analysis of several texts in the literature of housing around the world, about the post occupation of housing by ex-residents of informal settlements, in incidental sentences. Weisner described a site and services scheme in the heart of African informality in which after completion, only 13% of the initial occupants (ex-residents of informal settlements) remained in the plot. The others sold it illegally. Four years later: 200 hundred illegal business took over the 732 plots, that is, businesses activities took over more than one third of the total number of plots. Moreover, the initial density of the plot doubled, with 17 people per plot instead of 8 people per plot (Weisner, 1976). These are similar evidences of the priority of livelihoods to unprivileged residents. Many other cases outside of the contexts of the informal settlement can be described in minor proportions. For example, the *Lucknow* project (Sinha, 2004, p. 26) and even the iconic *Quinta Monroy*. It is a universal need of the human being. (fig. 5.20)



## 5.4 Work as a Housing Right

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Data collected in the present study does not find a correspondence/validation in the traditional definitions of architecture. Many observations emerge from the narrative of this case study. At an epistemological and ontological level, the manner through which inhabitants changed and adapted structures in the presented social housing can not only be reduced to a speculation on the materiality of the social housing because that cannot anticipate the urgent needs of inhabitants. But they can be understood through the flows and ecosystems of people that are asked to populate them. Ananya Roy already highlighted the importance of looking at the 'land ownership' and plot cartographies of livelihood', instead of focusing on the aesthetic features of informality (AlSayyad and Roy 2003, p. 296). Also, according to Ananya Roy and Jenifer Robinson, an effort has to be made in order to contextualize the study of these settlements beyond common frames used to describe urban knowledge in the Global North, because this is apt to imply a colonial perspective to these studies (Robinson & Roy, 2016). In this sense, efforts have to be made in order to read the urban spaces of informal settlements as if they were any other place in the world, starting from an ethnographic perspective, as suggested by Partha Chatterjee (Chatterjee, apud Robinson & Roy, 2016) and the reversal colonial perspective. Thus, ethnography must look upon the social practices. These practices in their turn are traditions established in the everyday, as defended by Nezar Alsayyad and IASTE community (AlSayyad, 2006). All these claims of the literature of informal settlements operatively implies to analyse, interpret and finally design the practical contexts in which space in informal settlements is produced and addressed (Cavalcanti, 2017). A change in the way of teaching and educating architecture, that place people over technicalities in the design and planning process must be also inquired.

The main message of this paper is that for people living in informal settlement, the need to work is a priority, overcoming the need to occupy a space designed with principles of formal housing. Thus, this need is placed over any aesthetic value, any principle of sanitation, any details on the light, on the proportion of windows, on the ordination of spaces. What it does prevail is the functional role of dwellings for making a living. For people who fight against poverty and misery in neoliberal society, the house becomes an accessory to labor needs, necessary to acquire capital and thus, to earn the right to housing. In this sense, for the inhabitants, labor is essential to afford the costs of maintenance of the received house and thus to gain the final ownership of the house in the long term, that is the scope of formal housing programs. This discourse deserves a deeper reflection from the academic community starting from a multidisciplinary perspective, such as an institutional perspective and



from the policies. In fact, this message is apt to have significant consequences also at a practical/operative level of planning and design, of economies and geographies of the informal settlement.

In the realm of norms, human right documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948 (UN, 1948) indicates the right to housing as inserted in a group of other rights, such as food and clothing. Although Brazilian Constitution of 1988 and constitutional amendment of 2001 follow this guideline of United Nations, the design of housing which prevents to access the initial form of livelihood is detrimental, especially within the realm of housing as a commodity and the disparity of land and capital of the poor. Planning can address these issues by expanding the notion of dwelling beyond a providing a mere roof to unprivileged groups. A revision of these concepts pervades a step necessary for citizens to acquire the right to the city, that is the right to change the city by changing ourselves (Harvey,2006).

In the practical realm of architecture, within formal social housing, this work may suggest that the shape of the social housing itself can be an indication of its success. Resettled inhabitants take profit on the characteristics of surrounding areas near the social housing, on the location, on the availability of common spaces, as an asset to create spaces for labor. The design of the social housing itself must be thought in order to guarantee and facilitate inhabitants to create and foster their working conditions. Models of architecture of housing and social housing are still based on the 'ideal of housing for the industrial which travel to the working places in order to work workers' (Engels, 1844; Lefebvre, 1968, page 34; Mumford, 1071, p. 552-553), but does not consider the ideal needed for housing planning and design, to address the work of the microentrepreneurs in the global south. Social housing were born to shelter working groups (Madden and Marcuse, 2016, p.23) and they refute their aim of their scope when they do not tackle the needs of workers, when they provide them a mere roof.

Second, still in the operative realm of architecture: planning policies not often allow mixed functions in the social housing and this should also be revised. Brazilian urban law such as the *Plano Diretor* is not specific about the construction of commerce and services in social housing areas and this does not address the real needs of inhabitants resettled from the *favela* (Cavalcanti, 2017)..

Third, vertical dwelling units do not prevent residents of informal settlements to stop their social practices. In this sense, inhabitants of the Vila São Pedro opened their businesses either in the ground floor and in the top floor of the housing units. The modification strategies employed by inhabitants are adapted to the configuration of pre-existing contexts and according to the diversification of activities.

Fourth, as observed in the field, resettled favela inhabitants have the capability to reproduce many services previously provided within the favela. Thus, small ecosystems linked to the city nearby were created. Inhabitants' working activities resulted in a un-contestable benefit for the city who could 'benefit' of the 'cheap labour and services' provided by inhabitants of the social housing, as it already occurs with the services and commercial activities in the favela. They created a specific porosity in the city that is characterized by the labour practices of inhabitants (Cavalcanti, 2017) (fig. 1.21-1.22).

Not only do these rights refer to the reality that people in in the northeast of Brazil face, but they speak about the subsistence, needs and priorities of the human being. Working is a priority for people living in informal settlements and it is necessary to earn the right to housing and gain the ownership of housing.



FIG. 5.21 Vila S. Pedro Housing Project with respect to the Favela Sururu de Capote. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017.

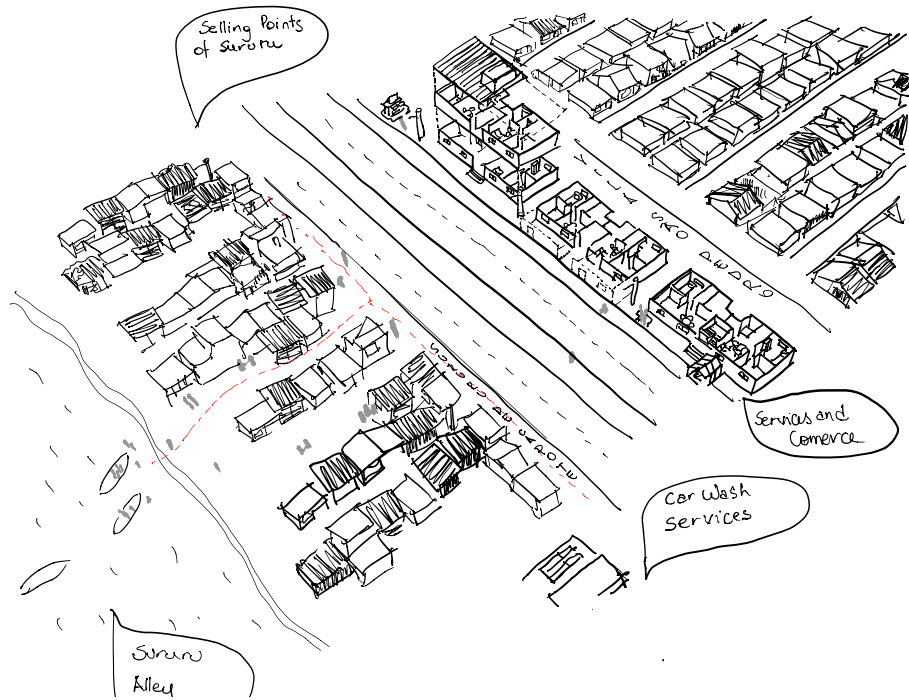


FIG. 5.22 Same economic activities are performed either in the social housing and in the favela. Source: Ana Rosa Chagas Cavalcanti, 2017.

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