
THE NEOLIBERAL URBANIZATION IN SAO PAULO, BRAZIL: THE CASE OF AUGUSTA PARK

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The current neoliberal environment transforms the urban space and restructures the city, creates marginalized and segregated urban environments and replaces public spaces with private amenities. Augusta Park represents a kind of resistance to accelerated neoliberal urbanization in São Paulo. To demonstrate this we contextualize Augusta Park as a public space, in the downtown area of São Paulo, representing a significant green area. Then we show how, in recent years, the region has become a strong target for the property market who intends to suppress the Park to make way for luxurious housing. This fact has generated a large mobilization of the park's users, locals and others, who demand that this area be preserved and handed over to the population in the form of a public space. The case remains a legal process in the courts. So, we analyzed urban planning in São Paulo to understand the effectiveness of urban management and social actors involved in the protection of public spaces. In conclusion, we believe that despite the devastating effects that neoliberal practices are having on the local way of life, promoting the disintegration of history as well as the memory of the city and decaying urban spaces definitively, Augusta Park reveals itself as a potential resistance to this neoliberal influence.

Keywords

Neoliberal Urbanization; Resistance; São Paulo; Augusta Park

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that urban sprawl threatens public spaces and green areas in the city. From this perspective, we will analyze the trends of the current neoliberal urbanization in São Paulo, using as an example the case of Augusta Park. For this, we must analyze urban planning in the city of São Paulo throughout the twentieth century to understand the performance of urban governance and social actors involved in the protection of public spaces and green areas in the city. Then we must understand that metropolis of São Paulo and the current neoliberal model prioritizes urban spaces privatized to the detriment of public spaces, and as an example, we discuss the case of Augusta Park, a private green area very important to São Paulo who needs be protected for all inhabitants of to the city. This case was chosen because it shows that green spaces in big cities should be protected, that the public interest in a park should be given preference over the interest of private investment and that environmental protection in Brazil is insufficient. The case was examined by a bibliographical and documentary research about the Park. Earlier this year, we made contact with some key actors such as Mr. Augusto Aneas, a member of the Augusta Park Organism or *Organismo Parque Augusta (OPA)* who uncovered relevant information about the area. Mr. Aneas leads a community on facebook called Augusta Park Movement that is fighting for total preservation of the park, free of private capital and adverse effects arising from neoliberal urbanism. In fact, we believe that neoliberal urbanization transforms the city and while it generates social segregation and urban fragmentation it creates spaces as a symbol of resistance to this new urbanism such as Augusta Park.

URBAN PLANNING IN SÃO PAULO: A HISTORICAL VIEWPOINT

To understand urban planning in the city of São Paulo during the twentieth century, we highlight four important periods in the process of the city's expansion, they are: the city as a national locomotive metropolis between the years 1889-1945¹; the city as a vertical metropolis between the years 1945-1964; the modern metropolis between the years 1964-1982; and the metropolis of democratic management since 1982². These periods are directly related to the historical and political scenario of the country at each moment. Since the proclamation of the Republic in 1889 until the end of the military dictatorship in 1982 and the restoration of democracy, noting that urban policies were (and still are) driven by the interests of elites and big capital. At first, urbanization came in São Paulo as a result of the transition from coffee based commerce to industrial activity, which as a result brought the modernization of the city. The coffee industry provided the first urban infrastructure because "(...) established banks and railroads, requiring financial and business development, as well as manpower training for complex production tasks, all allowed and encouraged subsequent industrialization in São Paulo³". São Paulo⁴, in this period, presented itself as an agro-export market town formed by a ruling class that identified with city planning models of a European structure, in terms of the physical arrangement, sanitation and overall aesthetic of the city. The urban landscape was composed of green areas and parks, establishing limits on the buildings and the size of the streets, reproducing the aesthetic-sanitarian European standard⁵, especially in the central areas, where today Augusta Park is located.

In the same vein, Campos⁶ points out that:

The urban transformation policy undertaken in the first decades of the twentieth century, seen as the modernization and "Europeanisation" of São Paulo, had as its main objectives the creation of prestigious central spaces each capable of optimizing their performance in regional and urban dominance as well as the creation of luxury residential neighborhoods for the upper-class with an advantageous connection to the city's infrastructure. For the remainder of the city the segregation of social housing and disfavoured use of low cost land was undertaken.

As an example, in the early twentieth century, many wealthy families such as that of Fabio Uchoa built their "palaces" in the *art nouveau* style as their residences. Such constructions were seen to implement the intended

standard aesthetics of the city. Such residences had large green areas thus following the European model of urbanization at the time. The Uchoa's residence and its garden is where Augusta Park is located today as will be explained in the next section. In the 1930s, urbanization in São Paulo was concerned, predominantly, with the formation of roadways, replacing trams and rail systems with motor vehicles through an economic standpoint which aimed to modernize the city-locomotive. The most significant urban plan of that period was the "Avenues Plan" of the then mayor Prestes Maia⁷ who remodeled the road system of São Paulo, consolidating the city's southwest sector with the greatest urban infrastructure, stimulating the automobile industry and segregating spaces of the city. In the second phase, São Paulo⁸, a vertical metropolis presents itself as a true industrial city, based on the Fordist model of development, driven by an Urban Basic Plan which aimed for integrated planning linking all urban functions. From the 1950s onwards, the real estate boom driven by the first planned neighborhoods such as Jardim Europa, Pacaembu, Cidade Jardim, City Lapa built by City Company⁹, all in an attempt to better define the urban framework, denote true private urban planning and capital trends in São Paulo.

At the same time, this plan accelerated verticalization in the form of skyscrapers, consolidating the trend of the city's urbanization which is "A focus on a certain area of the city, that of housing of the elite and the capital's leading economic activities"¹⁰. This segregating and uneven process of urban verticalization is the result of ineffective urban planning, because it generates deep antagonisms in the city, such as the threat on the quality and quantity of urban public spaces.

In the third period, the city of São Paulo¹¹ is marked by the shifting of industries out of the city, with a view to reconfiguring the production process that generates competitiveness, boosting the modernization of business activity.

At this time, the urban space modified by the strength of capital and its influence from an economic planning standpoint enhanced socio-spatial segregation, reinforced urban inequality and caused land overvaluation, as it served only the interests of real estate capital. This process was encouraged by mayor Figueiredo Ferraz who created the Master Plan of Integrated Development – MPID by law number 7,688 in 1971.

In the fourth and last phase, the metropolis of democratic management, the city's growth was subject to the global economy and due to the sharp deindustrialization process of the city¹² was marked by a high concentration of multinational companies which provided advanced services.

This post-industrial city represented by transnationalization and flexibility of capital now requires new forms of production of the urban space and city planning. Fordism was replaced by a flexible accumulation regime, resulting in new urban forms and in new city networks.

In this fourth degree of increasingly heterogeneous and unequal modernization, we perceive the emergence of new "specialized centers" brokered by private capital, reshaping the idea of public and private spaces, such as: business complexes, gated communities, hypermarkets and shopping malls, that result in the transformation of the urban space of São Paulo.

Within the significant contemporary urban change of this process, Frúgoli Jr.¹³ points out: "the widely decentralized pattern of urbanization, changes in public space, the residential segregation model, the extensive system of freeways, considerable ethnic diversity".

From 1988 with the Federal Constitution of Brazil and the democratization of the country, cities with more than 20,000 (twenty thousand) inhabitants are required to draw up their own master plan, a valuable instrument to implement the National Policy of Urban Development in Brazilian cities.

Based on this, the mayor of São Paulo Erundia in 1991 produced the first Participative Master Plan with direct involvement of various entities and actors of civil society, creating regional units planning to boost law enforcement in all areas of the city of São Paulo.

In 1993, the mayor Paulo Maluf disabled the regional units of planning and intensified the urban infrastructure projects at level of roadway transportation, stimulating mega real estate projects of large real estate developers.

Only in 2002, the then mayor Marta Suplicy could approve the City Council's Strategic Master Plan – SMP of São Paulo by law number 13,430/2002 and create among other institutes, special areas of social interest. Recently, in 2014, the SMP was amended by Law number 16,050/2014.

Actually, the tendency of São Paulo urban planning still prioritizes individual transportation where the urban space is the indispensable instrument of economic growth, and urban planning is subordinated to the logic of global economic power, where Augusta Park is an exemplary case.

Today, the real estate market in São Paulo is the expression of market logic, because the strength of the volatile capital changes and defines the built environment, according to Harvey¹⁴, transforming attributes into merchandise. This notion of a merchandise city raised by Vainer¹⁵ is strengthened, because only those who have money to pay for the land have the right to the city.

The logic of reproduction of space as a commodity, together with the forces of urban globalization, is the same logic as neoliberal urbanism¹⁶ that threatens urban green areas and public spaces as the center of all social activities, whether cultural, political or economic.

This demonstrates that the master plan (as well as other laws regulating the cities) is not properly fulfilled. Private capital, coupled with the State's failure, plans, directs and builds the city according to its interests. In São Paulo, as well as in several cities around the world, this process contributes to the loss of public space in view of the deepening of urban fragmentation that transforms the cities.

It is important to understand that urban planning is a state tool to guarantee all citizens the right to the city. It is a political instrument required to implement the national urban development policy, and should be developed through a participatory and democratic process in order to generate more public spaces, more urban green areas to improve the quality of city life.

REGULATION OF URBAN ENVIRONMENT IN BRAZIL

In this section we will address the legal instruments supporting the urban environment in Brazil, as a way to thoroughly examine the following discussion about Augusta Park. We will then note that there is an extremely advanced set of environmental and urbanistic regulations in the country; however, their compliance conflicts with greater forces or interests, such as the globalized economy and the real estate market, which mold the urban space.

Urban environment in Brazil is regulated by the National Urban Development Policy (NUDP) provided in article 182 of the Federal Constitution of 1988 (CF/88). According to CF/88, it is incumbent upon the municipality to enforce the NUPD. That policy must give priority to the organization and full development of social functions in the city and ensure the welfare of its inhabitants.

The City Statute, Federal Law number 10.257/2001, regulates the NUDP and establishes the principles, guidelines and objectives for urban development and planning in Brazil. Among the guidelines provided in article 2 of that Law, the following stand out: (i) the guarantee of the right to sustainable cities; (ii) the democratic management

of urban space through popular participation; (iii) the cooperation between governments, private enterprise and other sectors of society to meet social interest; and (iv) the protection, preservation and recovery of the natural and artificial environment, and cultural, historical, landscape and archeological heritage.

As such, urban planning and popular participation must give priority to sustainability, that is, it must contribute to social justice in urban environment, to the quality of life in the city through the equilibrium between natural and artificial environment, thus promoting the need for development related to the capacity for support¹⁷. Concerns over sustainable urban development represent the possibility of ensuring social-political changes that will not endanger the ecological and social systems supporting cities. This is the most important reason that we need to protect green areas in the city, especially those areas that have native vegetation that represent the history and memory of urban space like Augusta Park. Protecting these areas means protecting the environment holistically to ensure better quality of life in the city.

In this sense, to be sustainable the urban development must contribute to:

“(...) the improvement of the material and subjective living conditions in cities by reducing social inequality and ensuring environmental, social and economic sustainability. In addition to the quantitative dimension of urban infrastructure, services and fixtures, urban development also involves an individual and collective expansion of social, cultural and political expression as opposed to prejudices, segregation, discrimination, nepotism and co-optation¹⁸”.

The basic instrument of the NUDP to achieve sustainability at municipal level is the Master Plan set forth in §1st paragraph of article 182 of CF/88 and articles 39 to 42 of the City Statute. To Mattos¹⁹ “the master plan is the instrument that establishes the basic requirements for property to perform its social function”. That plan is mandatory for cities with more than twenty thousand inhabitants, making it, therefore, the true municipal law governing urban planning.

Recently, the city of São Paulo²⁰ reviewed its Strategic Master Plan (SMP) through the Municipal Law number 16,050 of July 31, 2014, which regulates the Municipal Urban Development Policy and is the basic definitive instrument for all public and private agents acting in the urban space of São Paulo.

Among the principles set forth in article 5 of the SMP, which govern sustainable urban policy in São Paulo, the following stand out: (i) the social function of the city that comprises the satisfaction of citizens’ needs related to quality of life, social justice, universal access to social rights and socioeconomic and environmental development, including the right to urban land, proper housing, environmental sanitation, urban infrastructure, transportation, public services, work, peace and leisure; and (ii) the right to the city comprising the universalization of access to the benefits and conveniences of urban life by all citizens through the offer and use of services, equipment and public infrastructure.

In addition, one of the guidelines of the São Paulo urban development policy is the expansion and requalification of public spaces, green and permeable areas and landscape. In the same sense, the production of private real estate must contribute to expand green areas in the city and the harmonious coexistence between public and private spaces.

According to article 32 of the SMP, the territory division is established by special zones determined by São Paulo municipal zoning. Such zones take into account the characteristics and specific destination of the territory²¹. Among the main special zones, it is worth highlighting the following: (i) the Special Cultural Preservation Zone²² and the Special Environmental Protection Zone²³.

Further, article 265 of the same Law defines the Green Area System, which includes areas protected by the environmental law, such as the public or private parks or spaces with vegetation. Urban parks, when created, are public green areas. However, private green areas, according to the law or as requested by the owner, may be included in the Protected Area, Green Area and Free Space System.

In this sense, we note that the Brazilian regulations, and particularly the legislation of São Paulo, include several guidelines guiding the growth and development of cities and regulating the use and occupation of urban soil by providing principles and guidelines aimed at sustainable urban planning, the basic objective of which is to contribute to social justice in the urban environment ensuring the right to the city for all citizens.

But, unfortunately, despite the modern set of laws aimed at the protection of urban space in Brazil, we observe intense lack of protection of green areas in Brazilian cities like São Paulo, where the property market leads the transformation of urban space according to their interests. This is what we see in the case of Augusta Park.

THE CASE OF AUGUSTA PARK

The area known as Augusta Park is a private property measuring approximately twenty-five thousand square meters and located in one of the most valued regions in the center of the city of São Paulo, between the streets of Augusta, Caio Prado and Marquês de Paranaguá. At the beginning of the 20th century, this area accommodated a large residence built by the architect Victor Dugubras (french architect living in Brazil at time) to be the official residence of the family of Fábio Uchoa, a family that created its wealth with the coffee trade. The home with eclectic style could be considered a precursor work of Paulista School of Architecture²⁴.

This building and a lot of constructions around downtown São Paulo could be represented by the first period in the process of the city's expansion: the city as a national locomotive metropolis, according to Souza²⁵. At this moment São Paulo implemented the intended standard aesthetics of the city, following the European model of urbanization at the time. But the Uchoa's family sold the house to a missionary group of Belgians based on the philosophy of St. Augustine. The house together with the surrounding park became the location of the famous female college Des Oiseaux that operated from 1907 to 1969.

The college was demolished in 1974²⁶, leaving a wood with several native species of the Atlantic Forest that was home to several species of birds, as well as being the site of the walls and an old house that remained from the school. The demolition of the college represents the transition between the second and third period in the process of São Paulo's expansion when the city started to become more vertical and the old buildings disappeared to make way for new modern constructions. Nowadays, downtown São Paulo is one of the largest areas of interest for large developers. This area is the target of large enterprises and strong real estate speculation and it suffers the global symptoms of gentrification and neoliberal exploitation of urban territory. This is the fourth moment of São Paulo's expansion, when the metropolis of democratic management should prevail but was influenced by the neoliberal urbanization process, where land has great value and the city is considered a commodity²⁷.

This violent process leads to the sudden change of the landscape, the demolition of historic buildings, the destruction of the social and cultural fabric, the expulsion of the surrounding population, especially those using the space as a historically recognized meeting place.

For more than forty years, the civil society has endeavored to transform the area into a public park with the support of the association of local residents and urban social movements, such as the Cerqueira Cezar Society of Friends, Residents, Commerce and Services – SAMORCC and the movement Allies of the Park. Currently, several collective cultural movements support Augusta Park free of buildings, such as the Artistic Movement of Urban Occupations – M.A.O.U.

Since 2002, when the Master Plan was approved by law number 13,430/2002, the Augusta Park was considered as a green area to be protected and utilized by population until 2014, but in fact the law was not applied. Actually, Augusta Park represents part of a green corridor, the structural axis of the city that should be preserved also for the absorption of rainwater. It's part of a green belt required for quality of air and quality of life for all city residents.

In 2004, given the importance of the area and through the Resolution No. 23/2004, all species of existing trees were listed by the Municipal Council for the Preservation of Historical, Cultural and Environmental Heritage of the City of São Paulo – CONPRESP. In addition to trees, the buildings of Des Oiseaux College, the main gate, the right-of-way gate, the walls of the landed estate and the wood house were also listed. According to the Counsel, the area must be expropriated to become public, which would cost the municipal government a large amount given the strong real estate speculation in the region.

In 2013, the mayor of the city of São Paulo, Fernando Haddad, approved the law number 15,941/2013 and authorizing the creation of Augusta Municipal Park. However, due to political and economic interests, the law has not been complied with, it's supporting the private interest of companies and encouraging real estate speculation. In the same year, shortly after the approval of this law, the building companies Cyrela and Setin Incorporator bought the landed estate and announced the construction of a mega real estate project in the area, which gave rise to major protests from the community in favor of the preservation of the area. The Figure 1 below sums up the case.

This image shows the period between the approval of the law that established Augusta Park and the reaction of the companies which are the owners of the area, Setin and Cyrela. Before this, the Park was open to the public despite being degraded and abandoned by the government. Since 2014, the Park is closed because some movements filed a class action in court to prevent the contractors from building their project. At this moment, some activists held a meeting to create the most important social movement called Augusta Park Organism or Organismo Parque Augusta (OPA).



Before Setin and Cyrela
Without walls, gates or fences



Today Still Closed:
The area is like this



After Setin and Cyrela:
All gates are sealed



Setin & Cyrela, and the Government:
They want it like this

FIGURE 1 Augusta Park in four moments

“OPA is a self-managed, horizontal and heterogeneous movement. It has no leaders or group or entity officially constituted to represent it. It is organized by public meetings, working group meetings, direct actions in the streets and on the worldwide web. It is open to the participation of anybody interested in supporting the cause²⁸”.

The principles of the movement are: primacy of the public space; total transparency; direct democracy; world citizenship; pluralism and horizontality. One of the aims of the movement is to demonstrate that urban sprawl threatens public spaces and urban green areas in the city. Furthermore the movement fights for the maintenance of public spaces in the city. It is considered that public spaces are a center where all social activities such as cultural, political and economic happen.

In other words, OPA wants to prove that great urban planning should be based on a participatory urban policy to improve the quality and quantity of public spaces in the city. It means that urban planning creates public space and facilitates social cohesion.

In 2015, to prevent the action of construction companies, OPA encouraged the occupation of the park by organizing cultural events to keep it occupied and ensure the transit of pedestrians inside the area surrounded by walls. Since then, demonstrations by OPA, local residents, users of the area and activists have increased, which call for the maintenance of the rare green area as the last permeable area in the region, and one of the few areas that still preserve native species of the Atlantic Forest, like we see in the Figure 2 below.

Presently, the park remains closed and the actors are waiting for the resolution of the case in court. Until the end of this paper, there was an audience of conciliation between the companies, the social movements and the city hall. The judge understood about the importance of the park to the city, because “São Paulo needs breath”. The action passed to the next phase: the trial process.

In the case of Augusta Park there are basically three big social actors: (a) social movements like OPA that represent the neighborhood’s residents, the users of the park and all people who want to enjoy more green areas in the city; (b) the owners of the space that represent the strength of real estate capital, the private interest of companies and the power of neoliberal exploitation of urban space; and (c) the government that is not motivated to enforce the law.

In consequence, this resistance symbolizes the political struggle, the fight against property speculation, against neoliberal urbanization. This area is a place of permanence and endurance; it is a place of emancipatory relations of population, a symbol of a new urban public life.

So, there is a clear relationship between the power struggles in the case of Augusta Park and the issue of urban planning and governance. This case demonstrates forms of resistance to the neoliberal urban model, guided in collective strategies as a political phenomenon.



FIGURE 2 Boy tries to see the Augusta Park after the gates were sealed.

The resistance translates in the mobilization and fight against the threat of destruction of public spaces in the neoliberal city. These collective strategies should be understood as a grassroots initiative that result from the collective construction of urban social movements and their actions.

As Margit Meyer²⁹ states, we are facing a new phase of urban social movements that have as a common base the plea for the right to the city³⁰. Together with the right to the city accounts the potential to unify the diversity of urban quest improvement defying, therefore, neoliberal politics and practices. To the author, urban social movements are facing the neoliberal city and are mobilizing around two fault lines: the growth politics obsession and the entrepreneurial agenda guided by urban marketing/competition - leading to protest from those who do not fit in that way of thinking and doing city, and the neoliberal politics of social and labour issues - leading to the fight for preservation of welfare state and for social and environment justice. The movements challenging this neoliberal city are intensifying and acquiring global expressions and impact in the last decades³¹.

The case of study reflects the logic of real estate speculation in the city of São Paulo, which is a particular characteristic of the accelerated neoliberal urbanization process that devastates the capital city of São Paulo, most Brazilian cities and a lot of metropolis around the world.

Thus, we understand that neoliberal resistance is socio-spatial because the space is both strength of object and part of the political strategy. The political character of the neoliberal urbanism resistance is based on collective actions, such as the numerous mass protests in the streets and squares of Istanbul, the Arab countries, the United States and Brazil.

For example, in 2013, the Park Gezi in Istanbul was the catalyst of major protests in Turkey. These cases represent resistance processes between the irresponsibility of the government and the companies that insist on environmental failure of urban public policies based on unbridled neoliberalism³².

In a broader context, we realize the importance of discussion despite many differences with other cities and metropolis - starting from the differences between the places'/cities' urban scale and between the production processes and scenarios - a dialogue between them is possible and somehow enlightening. If the adverse effects of this process are global the resistance must also be global.

That model is based on the assumption of the phenomenon of global economy, financial globalization or even the "capital globalization"³³. This shows us that the trend of urban planning is based on the dynamics of space production as a commodity subordinated to the logic of the globalized economy³⁴.

In this sense, the real estate market assumes the marketing logic, as the power of volatile capital definitively modifies the constructed space³⁵ by transforming attributes into commodities. The city, as a commodity³⁶, expresses the global interests of real estate capital that increasingly commercializes the space by reproducing segregation and fragmentation as characteristics inherent to that reality. In the process of neoliberal urbanization, the concept of the commodity city prevails, as it is owned by those who can pay for it, as in the mentioned case.

The process of neoliberal urbanization is based on an economic planning that strengthens the socio-spatial segregation and the inequalities in the urban environment through the overvaluation of land that exclusively satisfies the interests of real estate capital. Augusta Park is an example of this dynamics.

As such, the urban growth of the city of São Paulo is marked by the global capital that causes deep social and urban changes that result in uncontrolled and/or disorderly urbanization and make the city more vulnerable. The logic of the reproduction of space as a commodity, combined with the forces of the process of urban globalization, interferes with and influences the planning by projecting new forms of experiencing the city.

These circumstances have quickly changed the landscapes, the formation of cities and, primarily, given a new meaning to public spaces and eliminated the few urban green areas like Augusta Park. This situation, which is represented, among other factors, by the proliferation of gated communities, the hybridization of public and private spaces and an exclusive and non-inclusive urban area globalization, contributes to the increasing urban fragmentation that transforms cities.

Finally, it is in the public space that social networks and interactions among individuals are created to support rich and complex acts that feed the concept of urbanity³⁷. In such spaces, we are able to exercise citizenship and enjoy the right to the city in a fairer and more equitable way.

While threatening the existence of public space, natural and urban environment and the memory and history of the city, this process provides for the creation of new spaces of resistance that fight in the face of the urban segregation caused by neoliberal urbanism, such as, for example, Augusta Park.

CONCLUSION

This article was intended to show the real need for environmental protection in view of the tragic effects of the accelerated urbanization process in the city of São Paulo. To illustrate the discussion, we have presented the case of Augusta Park.

Firstly, we analyzed urban planning in the city of São Paulo throughout the twentieth century and we understand a clear relationship between public and private capital that has always built the city according to their interests in order to profit through real estate speculation.

Then we agree that the metropolis of São Paulo is currently a neoliberal city that prioritizes urban spaces privatized to the detriment of public spaces, and as an example, we analyzed the case of Augusta Park as a symbol of resistance to this new urbanism. So, it is clearly perceivable that the forces of market, capital and global economy mold the growth and development of the urban spaces of cities. This is the first evidence that the governance and private capital in Brazil do not prioritize democratic, participatory and emancipatory urban planning to improve the quality and quantity of public spaces in the city.

The case of Augusta Park showed that this process is clear, as it redefines the urban space through an economic planning in which the city is treated as a commodity and real estate speculation decides the way the soil is used and occupied. That neoliberal urbanism makes the materialization of sustainable urban planning difficult, as it wrecks the quality of life, without ensuring greater dignity to present and future generations.

In the case of Augusta Park the power struggles are divided into three actors: social movements; private capital and public capital. The latter two actors unite against the first to implement the neoliberal model of urban space exploration.

In consequence, the resistance symbolizes the political struggle, the fight against speculation, against the neoliberal urbanization. This area is a place of permanence and endurance; it is a place of emancipatory relations of population, a symbol of a new urban public life.

In response to the problems of this article, we understand that Augusta Park in its essence represents a space of resistance and of the fight against the ruthless consequences of the neoliberal urban model adopted in the city of São Paulo, driven by the private capital under the indifferent eyes of the public authorities.

Although it is still a private area, Augusta Park has a great symbolic, historical, cultural and environmental value for the city, there being countless reasons for it to remain open without private business ventures, to be fully considered as a public area for all inhabitants of the city. Augusta Park is a symbol of the fight against real estate speculation.

In urban space terrible losses are committed by construction companies with the connivance of the public authorities has an environmental, social, patrimonial and urban aspect. Damages caused by speculative exploitation of the landed estate affect the whole of society when the social function of the park is not achieved and private interest prevails over public interest.

Finally, we understand that the urban landscape of São Paulo has been quickly and intensively modified by the neoliberal practices of the market, consequently entailing great changes to the structure of the city and to the urban way of life by promoting the disintegration of the history and memory of the space, within which Augusta Park demonstrates itself to be a potential resistance to this neoliberal influence.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Endnotes

- 1 Before this first period São Paulo did not stand out as a major urban center, for over three centuries "was a small town, without greater economic importance, a mere symbolic and administrative center of colonial power". Jorge Wilhelm, "Metrópole e crise: o caso de São Paulo", in Secretaria Municipal de Planejamento. América Latina. Crise nas Metrôpoles. (São Paulo: Sempla, 1985). 86
- 2 Maria Adélia Aparecida de Souza, "A metrópole global? Refletindo sobre São Paulo", in *Metrópole e globalização. Conhecendo a cidade de São Paulo* (São Paulo: CEDESP, 1999).
- 3 Jorge Wilhelm, "Metrópole e crise: o caso de São Paulo", In *Secretaria Municipal de Planejamento. América Latina. Crise nas Metrôpoles* (São Paulo: Sempla, 1985). 86.
- 4 In 1900, the last census of the 19th century, the population of the city of São Paulo was approximately 240,000 (Two hundred and forty thousand) inhabitants (SMDU, 2007), accessed May 23, 2016, http://smdu.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/historico_demografico/tabelas/pop_brasil.php.
- 5 Nadia Somekh, "Globalização e forma urbana: a intervenção urbanística na cidade de São Paulo", in *O novo mapa do mundo: fim do século e globalização* (São Paulo: Hucitec, 1997).
- 6 Candido Malta Campos, *Os rumos da cidade. Urbanismo e Modernização em São Paulo* (São Paulo: Senac, 2002). 96.
- 7 According to Campos, "The urban model of Avenues Plan brought a new status to the city, in which the industrialization would take on leading role over the previous condition of agroexport city. In the beginning, the plan embraced the expansionist model such as radial-perimetral and contributed to capitalist and industry modernization: 'the succession of rings around the center (...) seem to synthesize the formal framework, of the basic assumptions of the intrinsic logic of capitalism and industry (...): the idea of permanent expansion". Candido Malta Campos. *Os rumos da cidade. Urbanismo e Modernização em São Paulo*. (São Paulo: Senac, 2002). 396-397.
- 8 In 1940, the population of the city of São Paulo was approximately 2.200.000 (Two million, two hundred thousand) inhabitants. It means that population grew nine times greater than in the 1900s because of strong immigration of Italians and Brazilian Northeasterners to São Paulo (SMDU, 2007), accessed May 23, 2016, http://smdu.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/historico_demografico/tabelas/pop_brasil.php.
- 9 A british company called City of São Paulo Improvements and Freehold Land Company Limited, based on the urban planning model like city garden developed by Ebenezer Howard, It was the company responsible for the first neighborhoods planned in São Paulo. Nicolau Sevckenko, *Orfeu Extático na Metrópole*. (São Paulo: Cia das Letras, 1992).
- 10 Wagner Iglecias, "Impactos da mundialização sobre uma metrópole periférica", in *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* (17(50), 2002). 51.
- 11 In 1970, the population of the city was approximately 5.925.000 (Five milion nine hundred and twenty five thousand) inhabitants. It was a vertiginous population growth four times greater in only thirty years (SMDU, 2007), accessed May 23, 2016, http://smdu.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/historico_demografico/tabelas/pop_brasil.php.
- 12 In 1980, the population of the city was approximately 8.494.000 (eigth milion four hundred and ninety four thousand) inhabitants. The geometric average annual population growth was 3.7. (SMDU, 2007), accessed May 23, 2016, http://smdu.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/historico_demografico/tabelas/pop_brasil.php.
- 13 Heitor Frúgoli Jr., *Centralidade em São Paulo. Trajetórias, conflitos e negociações na metrópole* (São Paulo: Cortez; Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 2000). 32.
- 14 David Harvey, *Condição pós-moderna. Uma pesquisa sobre as origens da mudança cultural* (18ª Ed. São Paulo: Loyola, 2009).
- 15 Carlos B. Vainer, "Pátria, empresa e mercadoria. Notas sobre a estratégia discursiva do Planejamento Estratégico Urbano", In *A cidade do pensamento único: desmanchando consensus* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 2000).
- 16 We agree that neoliberalism is a socio-spatial transformation process, materialized by an uneven spatial development, by unequally developed and unstable topography that generalizes social insecurity in the urban space. In this sense, there are spaces of neoliberal policies in cities like São Paulo such as creating business areas, based on public-private partnership, driven by various forces, among them real estate capital. According to Theodore, Peck and Brenner neoliberalism represents a multiscale phenomenon because it reconstructs relations in different scales (regional, national and international) between institutional and economic actors like the local states and financial capital. Neoliberal cities develop strategic centers for uneven advance of neoliberal restructuring projects. Nick Theodore; Jamie Peck; Neil Brenner. "Urbanismo Neoliberal: la ciudad y el imperio de los mercados" (Temas Sociales (66), 2009).
- 17 Pedro Jacobi, "Urban Environment and Sustainability: some elements for consideration", in *Meio Ambiente, desenvolvimento sustentável e políticas públicas*, ed. Clóvis Cavalcanti (São Paulo: Cortes; Recife: Fundação Joaquim Nabuco, 1997).
- 18 Brazil. *Política Nacional de Desenvolvimento Urbano* (Ministry of Cities: Brasília, 2004). 8.
- 19 Liana Portilho Mattos, "Urbanistic limitations to property," in *Direito Urbanístico e Política Urbana no Brasil*, ed. Edésio Fernandes, (Belo Horizonte: Del Rey, 2001), 70.
- 20 In 2010, the population of the city was approximately 11.254.000 (Eleven milion two hundred and fifty four thousand) inhabitants. (IBGE, 2010), accessed May 30, 2016, <http://cidades.ibge.gov.br/painel/painel.php?lang=&codmun=355030&search=sao-paulo|sao-paulo|infograficos:dados-gerais-do-municipio>.
- 21 The Municipal Law No. 13.885 of 2004 establishes the use, division and occupation of soil in the city of São Paulo.

- 22 According to article 61 of PDE: “Article 61. Special Cultural Preservation Zones (ZEPEC) are parts of the territory intended for preservation, valuation and safeguard of historical, artistic, architectonic, archeological and landscape assets hereinafter referred to as cultural heritage, which may include constructed elements, buildings and their respective areas or plots; architectonic groups; urban or rural sites; archeological sites, indigenous areas, public spaces; religious temples, landscape elements; urban sets, spaces and structures supporting the immaterial heritage and/or uses of socially assigned value.”
- 23 According to article 69 of PDE: “Article 69. Special Environmental Protection Zones (ZEPAM) are parts of the territory of the Municipality that are intended for the preservation and protection of environmental heritage, the major remaining attributes of Atlantic Forest and other formations of native vegetation are, woods of environmental relevance, significant vegetation, high rate of permeability and existence of springs, among others that provide important environmental services including the preservation of biodiversity, control of erosion processes and flood, water production and microclimatic regulation.”
- 24 Augusta Park Organism, *Revista OPA*. Vol 2. (São Paulo: Revista OPA, 2014), 13, accessed May, 30, 2016, https://issuu.com/organismopa/docs/revistaopa_2____v3b.
- 25 Maria Adélia Aparecida de Souza, “A metrópole global? Refletindo sobre São Paulo”, in *Metrópole e globalização. Conhecendo a cidade de São Paulo* (São Paulo: CEDESP, 1999).
- 26 Estefânia Knotz Canguçu Fraga, *Homenagem à Ir. Leda*. (São Paulo: Revista Cordis – Revista Eletrônica de História Social da Cidade, 2010). 2.
- 27 Carlos B. Vainer, “Pátria, empresa e mercadoria. Notas sobre a estratégia discursiva do Planejamento Estratégico Urbano”, In *A cidade do pensamento único: desmanchando consensus* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 2000).
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- 29 M. Meyer, “The right to the city in urban social movements” in *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City* (New York: Routledge, 2012).
- 30 Henri Lefebvre, *Le Droit à la ville* (Paris: Éditions Anthropos Paris, 1968).
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- 34 David Harvey, *Condição pós-moderna. Uma pesquisa sobre as origens da mudança cultural* (18ª Ed. São Paulo: Loyola, 2009).
- 35 David Harvey, *Condição pós-moderna. Uma pesquisa sobre as origens da mudança cultural*, (São Paulo: Loyola, 2009).
- 36 For more information refer to: Maura Pardini Bicudo Vêras, *Trocando olhares: uma introdução à construção sociológica da cidade* (São Paulo: EDUC/Studio Nobel, 2000); David Harvey, *Los limites del capitalismo y la teoría marxista* (México: Fondo de cultura económica, 1990); Carlos B. Vainer, “Pátria, empresa e mercadoria. Notes on the discursive strategy of Strategic Urban Planning” in O. Arantes; C. Vainer; E. Maricato (eds.), *A cidade do pensamento único: desmanchando consensus* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 2000).
- 37 Jane Jacobs, *The death and life of great American cities* (London: Pimlico, 2000 [1961]).

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Figure 2: Movimento Parque Augusta, 2015, accessed May 30, 2016. www.facebook.com/search/photos/?q=movimento%20parque%20augusta.