Urban Governmentalization and Public Participation in Sao Paulo

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Abstract

This study evaluates the thesis that planning is a government strategy aimed at 'governing' urban populations. To discuss this statement the paper takes as a reference point the post-structuralist discussion of power, the state and government in contemporary societies. By taking planning as a practice of government the text assesses the Brazilian experience of planning over the last ten years, and shows how planning as a practice of urban regulation has become a legitimation strategy of government.

Introduction

Post-structuralist propositions on power sustain that power is not something concrete or objectified from which one can take possession or maintain ownership, but instead it is a social relation that is established between individuals, and takes the form of webs or networks that exist in the social environment (Foucault, 2008, Laclau and Mouffe 1985, Lemke 2007, Veiga-Neto 2005, Rose 1992). These networks of relationships involve varied combinations and multiple connections between the agents targeting the government of people's consciousness and the conduct of individuals. In these networks the individual is not only an object of the power relations, but he is also subject to these relationships. In the context of democracy, individual autonomy is not opposed to political power, but rather it is the foundation for its exercise, to the extent that individuals are not only objects of power, but they also constitute themselves as subjects of power relations.

The focus is directed to political power, that power generally related to the sphere of the state and which, in a Marxist analysis, means the endorsement and guaranteeing of the reproduction of the social relations of production. Here political power is understood as a system of forces which is concentrated and monopolized by the state and whose function is to exercise power and influence on other spheres of society. Based on the ideas of Foucault, Laclau and Mouffe, this study deals with state action as an object of analysis and examines it as a constitutive element of the government's *problematique*. This analysis is developed by evaluating those strategies of government that are carried out through the various institutions that make up the sphere of governance (public and private). This study takes as its specific objects of analysis those tactics and strategies of government designed to regulate social conduct and individual behavior.

The study investigates the strategies of government that are carried out through the practices of planning and urban management. Particular attention is given to how technologies of power work to control and regulate human actions within cities. It also discusses the mechanisms that make urban planning, a technology of power, while also examining how planning becomes a technology of resistance and social emancipation.

The text covers the strategies of urban government by building on the concept of governmentality developed by Foucault, and investigates the power relations that are established between the agents within the microcosm of urban planning policies. The concept of governmentality draws attention to the kind of rationality embedded in the actions aimed at

understanding and controlling the various aspects of people's lives. This rationality involves manipulating crucial dimensions of people's lives and they include issues such as health, housing, work, leisure, happiness and wealth. Governmentality is an idea designed to capture a form of power that becomes predominant in the modern world – called political power – that emerges from the historical process of institutionalization of power and its concentration in the dispersed state. This form of power is characterized first, by the proliferation of government devices, and second, by the consolidation of a system of knowledge about who, when and how to govern. This knowledge will provide, on the one hand, the expertise for defining the means for the exercise of the art of governing and, on the other, the appropriate techniques for revealing the nature and idiosyncrasies of those upon whom government will be exercised.

The above framework underpins the analysis of the following sections. The working hypothesis starts with Foucault's concept of government which denotes a "historically constituted matrix within which the tactics, strategies and maneuvers of governance agents are articulated in order to manipulate the beliefs and behaviors of people and drive them to certain directions" (Foucault, 1991: 87-104). These maneuvers intercept the perceptions, interests and understandings that people develop regarding the world they live in and affect their behavior and their ways of organizing the physical space. It is in the context of these relationships that the different forms of government emerge and become hegemonic. According to this view the historical process by which governing strategies are constituted is a necessary condition for the formation of different societies throughout history. According to this view, the state is not an autonomous institution, which is outside and disconnected from society, but a structure that is formed alongside and via the same processes that constitute the society itself. Therefore, the state cannot be a central institution which occupies a privileged position within society, with unique and deterministic capabilities for exercising structural functions of social and economic reproduction, because the state itself is a product of relations of reproduction. For Foucault the key issue of modern societies, in addition to the power and domination exercised by the state, is its governmentalization itself.

The contemporary changes in the ways of acting of the state that occurred through the neo-liberal turn of the late twentieth century are examples of the governmentalization of the state. The shrinking of the state and the consequent cooling of its active power in society, are not seen as degrading the sovereignty of the nation-state, but as the emergence of new forms of governance. This type of government produces a new matrix of relations that favors autonomy, free will and individual responsibility. This new form of governance transfers to the private sphere the risk of social reproduction and turns market rules into ubiquitous and immanent rules. In this formulation the government is a concept that goes beyond the idea of government as the management or administration of the state to include other forms of government, such as individual management, family orientation, the administration of the house, the orientation of the soul, etc. Within this approach government is defined as the conduct or management of others' conduct and seeks to synthesize both, i.e. government of the self and government of the other. This work is divided into two parts. The first discusses the concepts of state, government, and governmentality, and assesses the changes in the logic of government that led to the governmentalization of the modern state. In the second part, planning is considered as an instrument of the process of governmentalization. It discusses five propositions about planning as a practice of government by focusing on Brazilian experiences with planning after 1984.

The genealogy of governmentality

The concept of governmentality refers to a set of practices of government that "has the population as their object, the economy as their most important knowledge and the safety devices as their basic mechanisms" (Machado, 2008, p. xxiii). Governmentality is understood as a strategy of governance directed to create docile citizens and governable subjects and which

uses various techniques to control, normalize and shape the individual´s behavior. The concept, governmentality, identifies, on the one hand, the relationship between the state´s government (politics) and the government of the self (morality), and, on the other, the construction of the subject (genealogy of the subject) with the formation of the state (genealogy of the state).

The term governmentality as proposed by Foucault is constituted by three different but interconnected approaches. The first describes governmentality as a structured mechanism, consisting of institutions, strategies and tactics of action. In this approach, governmentality is defined as the set of devices, procedures and calculations directed to exert a rather specific and complex power, which has the population as its target, proposes political economy as knowledge and safety devices as an essential technical instrument. The second describes governmentality as a trend. In Foucault's own words, by 'governmentality' he understood "the trend, the line of force which in the West led to the supremacy of such power that we call 'government' over all others – sovereignty, discipline – and that led to the formation of a set of specific devices of government and the development of a series of knowledge" (Foucault, 2008a). The third approach describes governmentality as a process: "by 'governmentality', I believe that we should understand the process, or rather the result of the process by which the state of justice of the Middle Ages, was converted into the administrative state in the XV and XVI centuries, and which little by little became 'governmentalized'" (Foucault, 2008).

In short, the word governmentality highlights four aspects of the historical processes behind the constitution of power: (1) its embodiment in the form of an object, i.e. a structured mechanism consisting of <u>institutions, strategies and tactics of action</u>; (2) the hegemony of government as a modern kind of power; (3) the emergence of <u>government apparatuses</u> and of <u>specialized knowledge</u>; (4) <u>the historical process</u> by which the state has become governmentalized (Foucault 1992).

Foucault argues that governmentalization is a historical process by which "the law society and the State of Justice of the Middle Ages was transformed into discipline society under the command of the administrative state and then, to the society of police, controlled by the safety devices that constituted the state government" (Foucault 2008). This process is termed rationalizing the policies and practices of government and became the primary mechanism of change, or the engine behind modern history. Such political rationality is not derived from a larger reason, either transcendental or universal, but is the product of historical developments that, in the case of modernity, produced "this fundamental phenomenon in Western history: the governmentalization of the state" (Foucault, 1991).

The governmentalization of the state means the historical process of "rationalization of government practices in the exercise of political sovereignty" (Foucault, 2008a). From this formulation Foucault develops the concept of governmentality as a guide for constructing the genealogy of the modern state as a category of analysis and then demonstrates his working hypothesis. The concept of governmentality serves to illustrate the multiple relationships between the institutionalization of the state's apparatus and the historical forms of the subjectivity of the individual. The intent is to capture the various processes of mutual determination between the modern sovereign state and the individual in contemporary societies. In this conception, government policies undertaken through state agencies are understood as a contingent and singular political process – a historical event that needs to be explained since it is not a given fact. If the state does not exist as a concrete form of data, but as a historical and contingent constitution of policies that are implemented through government institutions, how does the state act as a coherent political force? Does a multiplicity of institutions and the articulation of disconnected processes combine to form the state?

The State and the Problematic of Government

In the poststructuralist view (Laclau and Moufe, 1985; Foucault, 2008; Lemke, 2007) the state does not have an essential need or functionality inherent within society, but it must be understood as: (1) a 'medium' through which the government problem is discursively codified; (2) a way to separate the political from non-political spheres; (3) an institutional support by which the technologies of government are carried out in mutual coordination. In this approach the problem of government is not limited to the issue of 'state power' but involves verification of how and to what extent the state is linked to the activities of government including: (a) the relationships established between the political authorities and other authorities, (b) those funds, forces, people, knowledge and legal instruments used; (c) the devices, techniques, tactics or political actions that are operationalized. In the context of governmentality the state is not seen as the central institution or the social superstructure, but as another product of a complex and changing system of the discourses, regulatory techniques and power that emerge from the process of government. For Foucault the government is the central issue because it determines a <u>system of thinking</u> – by which the authorities specify the problems – and a <u>system of action</u> – through which government is carried out.

In this conception, the government is not a technique to be used by public authorities or a strategy of state, but instead the state is seen as a tactic of government and a historical dynamic for stabilizing power relations in society. This shift in focus is what Foucault calls governmentalization. In this perspective both the governmentality and the tactics of government are internal and external to the state, and this makes it possible to generate a continuous redefinition of what concerns the state, as well as what is public or private. The state is understood – both in terms of its existence and its limits – as a general tactic of governmentality. For Foucault, what is important for our modernity, our present, is not the growth of the state in society, but the governmentalization of the state because, according to him, since the eighteenth century we live in the era of governmentality.

It is through the analytics of government that Foucault aims to contribute to a theory of the state, because he believes that the formation of the state in contemporary capitalist societies is a crucial event for society's governmentalization. This analysis emerges from the history of governmentality and produces three approaches of the state in the age of governmentalization. The first stresses the importance of knowledge and political discourses for the constitution of the state. In this line the state is defined as a transactional/temporary reality given that it emerges from a dynamic set of relationships that produces simultaneously the institutional structure and the knowledge of the state. In the second dimension Foucault deploys the concept of technology – which incorporates both political and symbolic devices – and specifies the political technologies and the technologies of self. The state in this dimension is seen as a mode of articulation in which certain technologies of government emerge, and create temporary institutional validities by interacting with each other in particular ways.

The third dimension illustrates the state as an instrument and as an effect of the political strategies that will define the boundary between public and private, and between the state and civil society. State action is an effect of the political strategies, because that action cannot be assigned to a single and coherent actor, but is the result of conflicting, contradictory and competitive governance practices that emerge from a number of specialized sources of public government. This explains the relational and temporary character of 'state plans'. To think of the state as part of a network of governance does not mean to consider it a secondary category of analysis, but on the contrary, the state is a strategic instrument for sustaining the differentiation between public and private spheres, for subsidizing the idea of nation and for supporting the creation of sovereign (or territorial) limits. The state is also the instrument that shall determine the conditions of access to public assets and resources. In addition to its status as an instrument, the state is seen as a strategic field – the locus – which is defined as the general

guidelines of social government and where decisions are taken, benefiting certain actors and excluding others. This is the so-called the strategic selectivity of the state

Governmentalization and Planning

The following text discusses four hypotheses extracted from the poststructuralist analytical context and, in particular, from Foucault's propositions on the governmentalization of modern societies. The goal is to analyze the historical relevance of some poststructuralist philosophical conceptions and their implications for urban and regional planning. Each hypothesis addresses a specific issue and opens up the debate on the ontological and epistemological implications of Foucault's approach to the nature of knowledge and the practice of what we call planning in today's world.

Hypothesis 1: *In modern forms of government, the main device for social reproduction is the association between the 'political' authorities and the authorities of 'knowledge' (economic, legal, spiritual, medical, technical). This association is established in an attempt to regulate social life and govern the collective affairs based on conceptions of what is good, healthy, virtuous, efficient or profitable.*

In the context of Foucault's reflections there is no direct reference to planning as a technology linked to government practices. However, it is possible to understand public policies and urban planning as manifestations of the governmentalization of the modern state, in so far as they seek to organize life, regulate the space and control the actions of the urban citizen. In general, these policies are involved in the search for greater efficiency in the use and deployment of resources (power) aiming to control human conduct. As in cost-benefit analysis, the goal is to "achieve maximum result from a minimum application of power" (Goldstein, 1994, p. 198). The object of public policies is 'the citizen's conduct' and their objectives are to preserve and promote life and their guidelines are based on the concept of 'bio-power'. In this sense, policies seeking to organize the urban space can be seen as planning of the individual's conduct in relation the use of land, in order to promote and preserve the citizen's life in the city.

For Foucault 'bio-power' means those projects directed at individuals in their spatial and temporal characteristics, aiming to promote that community life of which the individual is a part. Foucault observes that the invention of the concept of bio-power, in the mid-eighteenth century, was related to the invention of the concept of population, which since then came to mean a collectivity of individuals who are thought of as a unit that can be describable, measurable, knowable and therefore governable. Bio-power creates the object of public policy in the era of governmentality: population. The population is understood as a collective of individuals that must be preserved through government policies, or as Foucault called 'biopolitics'. Since then, the population is understood as a living body, a body-species that should be governed in order to promote life. It is up to the state – also an eighteenth-century invention – to assume the role of coordinating the policies that will promote the life of the population.

For Foucault the idea of promoting life means to consider two dimensions of biological life. Promoting life first involves caring in such a manner that each individual remains alive and productive; and, secondly, seeks to avoid the human species' extinction. These changes in relation to the concept of life, as well as the invention of population control technologies, serve as generators of the so-called bio political-turn of the seventeenth century, by which the aphorism "to let live – to make die" during the reign of the sovereign is replaced by the guideline "to make live – to let die "of modern times.

In summary, strategies to govern populations were formed from biopolitics, and the latter was based on bio power. As we know, that does not mean the disappearance of power as a

discipline, but involves an interweaving between disciplinary and bio power: a rearrangement of complementarity by which one acts to enhance the other.

Hypothesis 2: *Governmentality is the product of political rationality. It defines what is governable and promotes the means to govern. Planning as a mode of governance can only be analyzed in terms of their political rationalities. These rationales are constituted by: (1) discursive fields within which the exercise of power is scientifically delimited; (2) moral justifications for particular ways of exercising power by diverse authorities; (3) notions about what are the means, objects and appropriate limits of the policy; and (4) ways to distribute the driving tasks among different sectors of society.*

In the case of planning policies that are designed to guide and discipline urban growth it is not difficult to perceive the political rationality that emerges from the discourse of planning and citizen education campaigns. The state intervenes by means of plans (master) in order to regulate how the individual can use and occupy the urban space, which also involves where and when citizens can move around the city. Utilizing a discourse of competency, founded in technical and scientific knowledge, the state uses the city as an environment for the implementation and dissemination of technologies directed to control citizens' actions, for the purpose of minimizing inefficiencies and to reproduce life and capital.

Public campaigns are meant to act as cultural pedagogies as they use the discourse of mobilization as a technology of government. Public campaigns seek to inculcate appropriate behaviors, rational attitudes and appropriate ways of acting. The rationality manifested through public campaigns, consists of a set of statements that put into circulation certain regimes of truth supported by technical knowledge. What is always at stake in these campaigns is the government process and those power relations associated with this, both underpinned by the discourse of rationality.

Technologies of governance manifested through planning policies should articulate two main mechanisms in order to achieve their goals. First, they must rely on the discourse of persuasion and cultural pedagogies in order to teach and persuade the population concerning their goals. In these cases planning policies and public campaigns work side by side to create awareness and specific worldviews. Second, in order to consolidate strategies of governance, urban planning policies must be put into practice, that is they only hold if and when fully implemented materially, and this means allocating all bodies – normalized or not – in the same space and effectively lend them a purpose.

For Foucault there is no pure rationality that has a universal character and stands outside the world of practice. Rationality is only attained at the level of everyday practice and not at the level of utopias. In the case of government planning policies, rationality is always contingent, permeated by power and dependent on specific interests in each spatial and temporal context. Therefore, all the forms of rationality that orbit around public policy can be understood as a discursive strategy aimed at the governing of populations.

Since the goal of public policy is to perform the best (the most effective, economical and permanent) government of the people, it is necessary to promote the highest possible ranking of the elements that compose them. In such an ordering the logic of planning policies is based on the idea of the deployment of 'rational' planning, the provision of 'proper' uses of the urban space and in some cases the pursuit of the universal right of access to the city.

In the case of public housing policy, the governance logic (or rationality) aims to provide access to 'ownership' (house property) and the ordering occurs through operations whereby the population is compared and classified in terms of poverty, shelter (or lack of) and life conditions. Thus, institutions that seek to ensure access to housing aim toward the principle of inclusion, even if, during the process of comparison and classification, they have to promote exclusion, by choosing a certain criterion and excluding others. Thus, it can be stated that policies that create

spaces for inclusion are also the same ones that create spaces of exclusion. It follows, therefore, that equal access does not guarantee inclusion, in the same measure that it does not remove the shadow of exclusion.

In the case of urban planning policies the rationality underlying governance practices work by creating, ordering and selecting the realities by which they intend to intervene. The problems that are chosen to be the objects of political action are carefully defined, specified and 'technically' delimited, and the solutions that follow will obviously be the technical elimination of those problems. By strategically creating the object of the action and convincing people of the existence of a problem, the government also creates a sense of what is 'appropriate', 'desirable' and truthful. Thus, in seeking to meet the needs and desires created (by the manipulation techniques of bio power) policies end up reproducing or recreating the same problems that they seek to reduce since they are not able to universalize the realization of the promised truth. The logic that creates problems of government, also recreates them as new problems of government.

Hypothesis 3: *Knowledge is the foundation of government and therefore the essence of planning practice. As government is the domain of cognition, calculation and experimentation, planning as part of the government involves the knowledge of urban life in order to be able to govern it.*

Government is a problem-solving activity, in that it represents the obligations of governments in terms of the problems they seek to solve. The agenda of the government and consequently of the planning process is closely linked to the problems it intends to govern, that is, the 'errors' to be corrected and the 'deficiencies' to be eliminated. The analysis of government throughout history suggests a sequence of *problematizations*, in which experts (politicians, scientists, philosophers, military, etc.) assess what is real and what is ideal, and then seek to reduce or eliminate the distance between them. The concepts thus formulated define what we understand by, for example, poverty, urban problems, productivity, competitiveness, social crises, educational deficits etc. Through this process, needs are identified, proposals for action are drawn up and then linked to the instruments of government available.

As part of the process of government, plans are drawn up and within them strategies of action and techniques of intervention are organized to confront those specific situations defined as deficient or problematic. It is within the realm of plans, policies and proposals prepared by experts (philosophers, politicians, physiocrats, etc.) that it is decided what is desirable, viable or sustainable and what goals should be pursued and when, how and why. This is the domain of strategic plans, programmatic actions and dogmatic justifications. This is the locus of norms and controls; the place where the decisions are made, policies formulated and targets set and, ultimately, who benefits from them.

The transformation of political rationality into plans and government programs does not occur by a deterministic or mechanical process, but through a subtle objectification that translates moral values, knowledge and languages of political power into a technical language of action. This translation involves moving from one space to another, whereby definitions of government, political priorities and strategic concerns are transformed into intervention technologies.

In the context of governance practices, government programs are not only a statement of desires or intentions, but they are also assertions of power grounded in knowledge and competence. First, whoever is in power arrogates competence over society's issues (the economy, nature, health, poverty) and gives to the experts a mandate to deal with them. Second, the knowledge embedded in government programs is essential for legitimating the strategic exercise of power on such problems. Knowledge, in this case, is intertwined with power and thus in turn with the action effected. Third, the political management of an issue requires specific knowledge to represent and describe it in order to expose its truth and allow its reframing in terms of political calculations.

An essential practice for production and consolidation of expertise are the technologies of government that are linked to the activities of registration and calculation that are monopolized by the state. In Foucault's conception the state is not the central apparatus of government, and nor does it represent a class in power, but is an extensive institutional complex where several centralities are constituted and organized to make up the process of government. This complex consists of several scattered apparatuses of government, where multiple centers of government work at producing information and knowledge, raising and evaluating the data and facts of reality in order to maintain appropriate control over the various contexts of government.

The kind of government that emerges in the seventeenth century is closely linked to the notion of statistical data – called the science of the state – because it becomes clear that government as the conduct of conducts is only possible with the accumulation and organization of data related to the object to be governed. This practice progresses over time and since then broadens the range of information that is made available to government in order to guide the behavior of others. The goal is to control all aspects of everyday life, monitor the social accounts, and manage people's desires by using market researches, censuses, economic polls, school surveys, etc. Increasingly 'government' means to analyze, judge and decide based on information and records collected in the real world.

The representation of the object of government is a permanent technical activity that is carried out systematically by government institutions. The effective operation of government requires putting into action an extensive network of research and a meticulous documentation system with the aim of turning the events and phenomena of reality in systematic information: births, deaths, diseases, marriages and divorces, income levels, types of diet, employment, unemployment etc. These recording practices turn reality into something stable, comparable and combinable. The real world is then converted into an object to be examined and diagnosed or modeled. Evidently the information produced in this production line is not neutral, since the action of recording is, in itself, a way of interfering in the real world. In fact, the procedures for collecting and recording information, as well as techniques for evaluation, measurement and modeling, make the object of investigation (the real world) susceptible to different interpretations.

The recording of reality made through procedures of data collection, makes room for the establishment of centers of planning and applied research with the goal of providing profiles or elaborate scenarios of urban social processes it is intended to intervene in. Therefore information collected in a decentralized way must be transported and accumulated in specific locations (planning institutions, research agencies, centers of intelligence, logistics) in order to facilitate undertaking comprehensive diagnoses and effective policies. The concentration of data in specific places gives individuals or groups who run such sites exceptional powers, as these positions allow them to control the calculations and actions to be undertaken. With a privileged knowledge of the object to be ruled, such groups or individuals accumulate power and authority in order to claim legitimacy for their plans and policies. It is in this sense that the production and control of information plays a key role in power relations within society, in that it contributes to the empowerment of certain agents, and this enables them to exert power over those whose only role is to be the objects of such information.

The calculations also have the ability to transform the object of government to the extent that they enable, aggregate or disaggregate phenomena in time and space, revealing regularities, patterns or deviations that will support and enable interventions on a specific reality. The calculations, by themselves, are only mechanical manipulations designed to reveal trends and justify relationships between different phenomena, however, they make entities such as population, economic data or public opinion, thereby they become calculable and predictable variables.

Government is a process intrinsically linked to technical expertise, to the extent that the determination of government targets depends on cognition, calculation and experimentation which are the domains of expertise, par excellence. In planning, the role of expertise is not limited to developing a network of rules aimed at controlling urban life, but also to support the various efforts to consolidate a calculated administration of various aspects of citizens' conduct in cities. Expertise is the key element of policies that seek to drive the behavior of the citizen in urban areas, it is through it that government seeks to educate, persuade, induce and incite people's lives in cities.

Technical knowledge, as we know it today, comes about in the seventeenth century, with the transformation of rationalities and technologies of governance, seen as a solution to the impasse of the liberal conceptions about the role of government. The problem was to reconcile the liberal idea of politics as a field restricted to the public sphere, with the recognition of the political implications of the activities of private companies. It is the spread of technical expertise across the public and private spheres which will allow for the construction of a new rationality of government, one capable of connecting the issues of public and private life. This new rationality will make the private company an object vital for controlling the economic life of the nation, and the family an agent for the control of social life.

In this scenario the task of sewing together the overall objectives of macro political governance, with the detail of everyday governance (corporate or familial) is essentially performed by the expert. Here the expert becomes engaged in a dual role. On the one hand, he acts as a member of the government by seeking to translate the problems of the economy and society into technical language. On the other hand, he acts as an independent expert, and seeks to provide solutions to the everyday concerns of the ordinary citizen (investment, work, children, health, etc.).

Throughout this historical process, various social sciences are created (economics, sociology, psychology) and they gradually construct a repertoire of intellectual visions, versions and justifications that will provide the necessary technological instruments for government action. These new insights provide explanations that make the world something thinkable and intelligible and are expressed in the form of procedures for taming intractable realities, subjugating them to the logical analysis of rational thought. Thus, for example, the management of urban problems involves defining, a priori, all the elements, processes, and relationships targeted for government intervention. In the case of urban public policy, problems are reset through a technical language, and then transformed into laws, processes, and urban features, in order to provide the necessary elements for the city to be understood, designed and managed with a view to increasing efficiencies or reducing dysfunctions.

Government plans assume the world as a mechanical device, consisting of fixed rules, recurring processes and predictable behaviors, which can be programmed and controlled. Such plans turn citizens into objects of government, 'things' to be manipulated, susceptible to diagnoses and prescriptions by means of calculations and normalizing interventions.

In short, knowledge defines and shapes every aspect of social life and, by doing so, makes social life something liable to be governed, that is an object to be managed, planned and disciplined. The city – as we perceive it with its features, peculiarities and problems – can be understood as a product of rational knowledge, which makes it an object of intervention, i.e. a governable entity. The city, seen through the concepts of the social sciences (such as public policy and planning), is but a device that builds on the ideology of scientific rationality and which aims to create an image of the real world that allows us to think about and understand it so as to make the issues of everyday life in the cities something liable to be planned.

Hypothesis 4: *The government of social life is expressed through technologies of governance. Such technologies reveal an intricate complex of plans, policies, programs, calculations,*

documents and procedures. It is through these practices that the public authorities seek to carry out government aspirations. The technologies of urban governance are manifested in four types: (1) technologies aimed at disciplining the body of the individual; (2) the technologies that aim to regulate population processes; (3) technologies that seek to encourage self-control (technology of self); and (4) political technologies of individuals.

As explained earlier, the government is a process by which plans are formulated and government strategies designed. Both plans and strategies are formed by a web of programs, procedures and tactics by which different political forces seek to operationalize the actions of government so as to allow the establishment of connections between the aspirations of government and the activities of individuals and groups. This set of techniques, plans and procedures is termed 'government technologies'. It is through technologies (and the plans that operationalize them) that the government carries out its political rationality in order to achieve social control. The implementation of such rationality does not only mean the replacement of the real word by the ideal world. It also involves the assembly of a complex system of forces and values (legal, moral, architectural, administrative) that functions as official criteria, regulating and shaping the actions of individuals, groups and organizations.

By focusing on the techniques and strategies of government, the analytics of government examines how the government operates in everyday practice, in order to understand the transformations taking place in the state and public policy. In this methodological maneuver Foucault proposes the concept of technology to grasp the four different strategic modes designed to control society's conduct. The first is related to the techniques of observation and recording. The aim is to control the actions and behaviors of individuals, in order to discipline their body. The strategy is to create docile and responsible individuals able to live in dense communities, such as cities. The discipline as a technology of government begins to be used in the seventeenth century, with the intention of organizing the process of urbanization and to promote the concentration of populations. The target is to ensure the appropriate supply of a tamed population according the needs of the nascent industrial revolution.

A second group of technologies is linked to those forms of regulation of the population, particularly those living in cities. Here the techniques aim, not only curb undesirable actions, but also to create knowledge of collective behaviors in order to predict and control future events. The systematic observation of urban phenomena is the key elements of the practice of town planning. They allow you to accumulate knowledge about social behaviors, migratory movements, and forms of use and settlement of individuals in urban territory. These skills are crucial for planners, since they allow diagnosing, predicting and even anticipating emerging social problems in urban areas. The purpose of policies for social discipline is to create healthy and functional urban environments which are able to meet the needs of industrial capital.

A third kind of technology refers to the technology of self. Such technologies address the processes by which individuals exert self-control and the ways they see themselves as ethical beings. These are forms of self-imposed control and are derived from broader processes of control and social discipline. The technology of self-control involves a process of curtailment of consciousness, focusing on parameters of normality and proper conduct that are inculcated through laws, public campaigns, education, etc. Here individual experiences that deviate from the standard behavior can become social problems (moral, political, legal, public health). In the case of urban areas, behaviors conceived as deviant from normal, worthy or appropriate, are considered social problems to be removed – as in the case of urban slums.

A fourth group of technologies, termed the political technologies of individuals, act on how we recognize ourselves as members of a social body, and strengthen our sense of belonging as members of a community, participants in a society, inhabitants of a city or citizens of a country. These technologies also act on the level of consciousness, constituting identities, perceptions and creating an intelligible world that will be seen as natural. These sensitivities will

produce an idea of 'we' that will be different from the 'other'. Such technologies are also essential for practices of urban government, because they require collective involvement in situations of social exceptionalism (epidemics, floods, disasters, etc.).

Conclusion

Foucault's theory of power does not start with oppression or domination schemes in order to identify mechanisms that affect and/or constrain freedom. Instead it is a research project that aims to provide analytic tools for understanding the origins and regimes of power and its relations with rationality and knowledge. His theory is designed primarily to produce knowledge that can provide assistance to promote change.

It is worth noting the normative attitude that, throughout the history of planning, has been dominant both in theory and in practice, has not contributed or has been of little help for social development and to advance planning. The ideals of modernity, democracy and social justice are, in general, distant and sometimes unreachable, and may be seized by a shift in the epistemological focus of the discipline. This means that rather than continuing to follow the path of normative rationality, it may be worthwhile to pursue a practical rationality in order to guide planning actions. If, on the one hand, the normative rationality offers noble ideals of struggle, on the other, it does not provide any indication of the routes to be followed in order to achieve those ideals. The analysis developed here explores the dilemma of idealistic planners who strive to formulate coherent plans and magnificent proposals: they know what they want to achieve and where to go, but do not know how to get there, because in most cases the normative ideals are oblivious to the world of the real city.

Idealistic-normative planning concentrates on questions such as 'what is the goal we want to achieve' and 'what is necessary to achieve it.' This study proposes a reversal of such and suggests that planning should concentrate on questions such as 'what are the strategies of the everyday' and 'how they are carried out in the real world'. By focusing on the real city and not the utopia of the ideal city, planners will understand the city as an object-subject with which planning will share actions that aim to change it and to turn it into something better

Foucault develops a kind of analysis that can be useful to construct an idea of planning as a social practice aimed at promoting social change through democratic means. In this formulation the conflict of interest is not something destructive or socially dangerous, but rather is seen as the foundation of freedom. In this sense the possibility of conflict is an opportunity to build a more just world.

Therefore, theories that ignore or marginalize the conflict are potentially oppressive. The idealism of the plans and planning policies seeking utopias, and disregard the conflicts of everyday life, are seen as authoritarian and sectarian, since they advocate the pursuit of a 'single' truth. Political and social life in the real world is made up of diverse views and conflicting interests, and it is these differences that should guide the practice of planning, and not the idealistic models based on fundamentalist ideologies and absolute truths.

The advanced democratic societies tend to value diversity and encourage autonomous groups to constitute their own ways of life, thus legitimizing the differences and conflicts of interest that emerge from them. In this sense, the political consensus is seen as oppressive. The consensus should never suppress or neutralize the interests, commitments, or beliefs of a particular group. In this view, consensus is only possible inside the group, where there is no exclusion.

Every democratic society must guarantee the permanence of the conflict. The role of planning as a democratic practice should be to support the understanding that power and conflict are always at the center of social processes, as suggested by Foucault. As part of this argument, this paper argues that the practice of planning committed to dialogue and open to

conflicts provides a more realistic and rational basis for planning than the idealistic paradigms based on utopias insensitive to the real world and built on oppressive consensuses.

By exploring the counter-face of planning, we found that beyond the oppressive aspect of planning as a rational-idealist activity there is also our failure as planners in making a difference through planning. This study proposed to investigate the practice of planning, in order to assess how it is done in the context of everyday practice. By directing attention to the intricacies of the hidden practice and not to what planning should do, we intended to shed some light on what planning really does in practice The research also sought to provide an explanation of how power is structured and how it involves us. This helped to elucidate some mechanisms involved in the planning process as a steering device. This study is part of an effort directed at providing an understanding of planning in the context of general government practice. The intent was to contribute to specifying the paths to a more effective planning thereby suggesting how to make a difference.

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