



The Planning Habitus

Notes from São Paulo Experience

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Abstract

This paper is organized in two sections. The first, deals with the propositions advanced by Bourdieu, by focusing on his theory of structural constructivism. It draws on notions such as “habitus”, “field”, and “dynamics of struggles within the field”, in order to assess the extent to which Bourdieu constructs can help to understand the dynamic of planning practice in Brazil. The second section assesses four working hypothesis dealing with Bourdieu concepts of social field and **habitus** and, with the dialectical relation between **structure** and **agency** in the planning process. The empirical analysis and theoretical confrontations are simultaneously developed by taking the experience of Brazilian planning practice and particularly that of Sao Paulo city. The concepts of field and habitus are analyzed in detail, and then connected to notions such as power, domination and class struggle, which according to Bourdieu are central for understanding the process of structural change. The paper attempts to sketch a framework for analyzing planning practice as a field of struggles, where conflicting social forces seek to keep or change the social structure.

Key words: Habitus, social field, planning, urban governance, power.

Introduction

This work deals with planning as a practice of governance and takes Pierre Bourdieu notion of “*habitus*” and “social field” as driving concepts. The objective is to identify the nature and the *modus operandi* of this practice, aiming to clarify the role of the governance agents on the social structures transformations. The concepts of habitus and social field are taken from the struggles that take place within the planning and governance fields, as these struggles are directed to accumulate power and impinge domination. The first part of the paper discusses the main concepts of the structural constructivist theory of Bourdieu, and in the second four hypotheses about planning and urban governance as a social field are analyzed and evaluated. These hypotheses are extracted from Bourdieu theoretical propositions and then confronted with the reality of urban governance by taking Sao Paulo planning and governance experience.

By articulating Kuhn ideas of scientific revolution and paradigm change with Bourdieu concepts, the paper evaluates the extent to which planners practices within the urban governance field can contribute to change or to perpetuate the existing social relations.



This paper intends to develop an interpretative reflection on the public administration in Brazil in order to shed light on some aspects of planning as a practice of governance. The test of these hypotheses is accomplished by comparing them with existing governance and planning practice reality, in both professional and academic fields. The following section presents an operational synthesis of Bourdieu method aiming to raise research questions that can be of interest to fields such as planning, geography, management and policy sciences.

1. Bourdieu meta-theory of practice

Bourdieu's critical structuralism seeks to unveil the nexus between the social processes of change and the subjacent structures to these processes, by analyzing the mechanisms of both domination and production of ideas and the genesis of individual behavior. The main objective is to overcome the social sciences opposition between objectivism and subjectivism. The notion of habitus is developed as a mediating concept between the structural and behavioral determinism, aiming to break through the common sense duality between the agent and the social structure. By capturing the "internalization of exteriority and the externalization of interiority", the *habitus* seeks to explain the way society becomes 'deposited' in social agents as forms of 'durable dispositions' and 'structured propensities' to think, feel and act. Such capacities will guide the agents in their creative responses to the constraints and requirements imposed by the social structure they take part.

The method of analysis is empirical and systemic and the fundamental premise is that the social dynamic occurs inside the group (field) within which individuals (agents) as bearers of specific attributes (*habitus*) establish confrontations among themselves seeking group hegemony. The field is organized by specific values or kinds of capital that are produced within it. The social dynamic is framed by struggles between agents seeking to keep or change the ways capital and power relations are distributed within the field. The struggles and conflicts inside the field follow strategies that are driven by the habitus which constitutes the determinant element for the action. The field is constituted by the positions the agents occupy which determine the way individuals or groups behave within the field. To the concepts of '*habitus*' and 'field' Bourdieu attaches a myriad of secondary concepts that evolve among themselves in order to underpin a relational understanding of the social phenomenon.

1.2. *Habitus*

The concept is developed not only to escape from the rational objectivism of structuralism that reduces the individual to the structural determinations, but also to avoid the philosophy of consciousness which makes the individual solely responsible for



the construction of reality. The habitus is a generative scheme of shared of perceptions, judgments and categorizations designed to mediate the relationship between structure and agency, and which constitutes itself historically. In other words, it serves to explain the dialectical relation between the social structure and the agent¹. According to Bourdier, the habitus is a ‘matrix of dispositions’ which is acquired through inculcated social experiences and which can be understood as practical wisdom. That matrix bounds the ways of perceiving, feeling and thinking that leads the agent to act and react differently according to each situation. The dispositions are not mechanical neither determinist. Instead, they result from a complex process of mutual incorporation and interdependency between the structure and the agency. The agent acquires them by internalizing the social structures. Such structures while the repository of individual and collective history, are internalized to the point that the agent ignores their existence. They are both mental and bodily unconscious routines that allow the agent to act without thinking, because they are product of an unconscious learning that are expressed by a “natural” behavior in a given environment.

The *habitus* is a system of long-lasting and transferable dispositions operating as a foundation of social practices and representations attached to a specific form of existence. The *habitus* frames and is framed by our actions and emerge in the form of symbols, beliefs, tastes and preferences that characterize the social status of the agent. It is embedded in social relations and works to sort and classify these relations. Once embedded, the habitus becomes a natural component of the agent’s behavior. The embodiment of the habitus occurs in two ways. The first, through family education and class rules and, is implicitly and unconsciously inculcated in the agent’s mind. Second, it is an explicitly and methodically organized process that comes from formal education, the cultural industry and the mass media.

The habitus are plastic and flexible dispositions and manifests itself in the daily social relations in different ways. It emerges as a tacit knowledge and as a world view, being expressed as reactions to experiences, game perceptions, hypotheses, intuitions, sensibilities, ways of doing, feelings, predispositions, expectations, sense of place, time and timing perceptions, preferences, desires, knowledge of each one's positions within the field, logical sense, aspirations, inspirations, tactics and strategies. The habitus is central to social life organization since it works as an immanent rule to guide the agent daily interactions and the construction of practical knowledge what allows the agent to operate in the world. Thus, the habitus defines individual behavior so that it works to determine the modus operandi, motivations, preferences, aspirations and expectations of

¹ Bourdieu (1984); Hiller (2001:2).



the social agents. The habitus offers no ready solutions for every situation or context, but it is an improvised response to the circumstances of the moment. The habitus is basically adaptive as it changes and adapts to each new situation and to each change in the social structure: new behaviors, new technologies, new realities, new conditions and restrictions. Constantly, the actor must and is forced to innovate their habitus in order to adapt himself to the new situations and social demands. The critical reflexivity in the process of habitus' adaptation accelerates its transformation. In this way the habitus works as a dynamical attribute: at the time the agent enters a field or game which is not familiar, there is a habitus' transformation and the agent develops new facets of himself. By changing his habitus the actor adjusts his way of seeing, perceiving, judging and valuing the world, which in turn will determine the physical and mental way he acts. Thus, the habitus, as social structures embodied by the agent, can be understood as "practical knowledge ... of worlds that result from the division of classes ... (age and gender, social class)", which runs below the level of consciousness and speech². The habitus is the mechanism for transmitting and "inculcating" norms, values and beliefs of the group which operates in the socialization process of the agent and, which in turn, will become the principles of action, attitudes and opinions of the individual in his daily practice. Once internalized, the habitus is converted into a provision that will produce perceptions that create meaning and practices that make sense of reality.

The habitus is not a natural space but a socially built construct that is incorporated into the mental structures of the agents. It is a mechanism that allows the production and reproduction of social practice, since it is a structured perception on how to act and behave, in accordance with rules of the field. The habitus is shaped by mimetic and participatory actions in line with the logic of social interaction within the field. It is through the practice of repeating that the agent learns a way of being and assimilates them as correct. In this process, he incorporates a worldview, a particular way of being and doing which in turn, will distinguish him from the others.

It is through the habitus that the agent takes place in the social field and allows others also occupy their respective spaces in a relationship of complementarity and reciprocity. The social agent is multiple and variable and develops "multiple habitus", for he is not inextricably immersed in a sole habitus, but can move from one habitus to another and develop adaptive behaviors within the same habitus.

The habitus is always seeking to overcome the antinomies that emerge from the past and future tension. Bourdieu argues that the habitus varies according to changes in the social

² Bourdieu (1984).



and historical conditions. By this, the habitus incorporates new perceptions which will contribute to preserve or transform the structures of the social field. By legitimating the agent actions, the habitus contributes to re-signify that action in such way as to keep or change the acting of that agent within the social field. The habitus is both a product (effect) and produces (cause) history. As a producer it yields individual and collective practices that affect the social structure. As a product it emerges as a construct from of the social structures it has created. In other words the habitus – as a result – is framed by the incorporation of social structures, and as cause it frames the individual actions and representations.

Because the habitus acts as a regulator of the social actions both in the subjective and objective dimension it can be used to evaluate the subjective attitudes that structure individual representations and also the generation of new social practices. Each subject experiences life according his position in the social structure and such experiences determinate his subjectivity forming a kind of “matrix of appreciations and perceptions”. This matrix will serve as a guide for the actions of the agent in later situations. By having the habitus as a foundation, practices and representations can be directed to the actor's goal, without engaging clear and conscious actions about the purposes or take complete control of the operations necessary to achieve them. These provisions are objectively regulated and regular, but not the product of obedience to rules. They are collectively orchestrated, but not coming from a guideline.

1.2. The Field

For Bourdieu, the field is the space that delimits the structure in which the habitus operates. It is a structured social space in which actors struggle to achieve their goals. It is the *locus* of praxis that mediates the relationship between actor and structure. Each field has its own structure and autonomy in relation to other social spaces, and is governed by specific rules of operation and stratification, which serve to regulate the relations among social actors within that space.

The field is a structure shaped by social practices and social interactions, in which specific rules prevail to determine what is practical, objective and rational, which is appropriate, acceptable or reprehensible and, what should be encouraged or restrained. These values will then consolidate the habitus of a particular context. A field can be understood as an arena of disputes where the agents play, develop strategies and fight for resources: symbolic goods and social positions. Inside the field individuals struggle to control production and to legitimate the goods produced within the field. These assets consist of various types of capital: cultural, economic and social *status*. These capitals have different degrees of importance and vary according to the field. Their possession determines the social position of individuals within the field. Individuals owning



significant amounts of capital are considered important within the field and will occupy dominant positions within it. The subjects occupy closer positions within the field, according to the quantity and, type of capital they own. They are far away; if they differ in the volume and type of capital they hold. Bourdieu explains that economic wealth (monetary capital) and accumulated culture (cultural capital) generate internalizations of dispositions (habitus) which works to differentiate the positions occupied by the agents. Bourdieu seeks to overcome the dichotomy between subjectivism and objectivism, by merging the system of objective positions with the system of subjective dispositions of individuals. The habitus that exists within a field works to mediate between: 1) the invisible system of structural constraints (which shapes the actions of individuals and institutions), and 2) the visible actions of these actors (which structures the relationships). It follows that the field is not a static structure, but results from both the history of the various positions and the provisions they favor³. The field survival and the field boundaries depends on the interests therein, on agents' psychological and economic investments, and on the institutions embedded in it. For Bourdieu, fields are established by processes of social differentiation and modes of being and knowing the world of their members, which will determine its specific object and its principle of understanding. Bourdieu constructs the concept of field by taking a constructivist view of structuralism. He seeks to analyze fields as objective structures, apart from their member's characteristics. The analysis concentrates on the structures of different fields, approaching them as product of the incorporation (geneses) of existing structures⁴. Fields are then conceived as “universes” (such as universe of arts, of politics, of music, of science) which emerges as autonomous spaces inside the social world. Society, is seen as set of fields (universes or spaces) displaying concrete relations, specific functioning logics, which are incommensurable, not reproducible and irreducible to the logic of other fields. A field is then defined as (1) a “field of forces” over which domination is exercised; (2) a structure that restrain the agents action inside it; (3) a “field of struggle” among agents that fight to preserve or change the field structure⁵. Any field has an internal structure of relational spaces (inside which agents and institutions coexists in different structural positions) and an external space (which is not field)⁶. Internally, a field is constituted by an objective structure of positions and by a subjective structure of dispositions. In this process the field builds the habitus and the habitus shapes the field⁷. Therefore, the field is the exteriorization or the objectivation of habitus and the habitus is the internalization or the incorporation of the social structure.

³ Cf. Bourdieu (2001, p. 129)

⁴ Ibidem

⁵ Bourdieu (1996, p. 50).

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ Bourdieu (1992b).



The agent's position within the field influences the way he access and consumes the field social and cultural objects and the way he produces and accumulates values⁸. The field is the place where the agents (individuals, groups or institutions) establish objective disputes and compete to command a specific type of capital. Inside the field the agents are seen as homogeneous habitus bearers, because they play the field games and compete for field positions and capital⁹.

The field owns universal properties found in all fields, and specific ones that belong to a particular field. The universal properties are: (1) the field habitus; (2) the structure; (3) the laws for regulating the struggle for domination; (4) the *doxa*, or the consensual opinion. The specific properties are defined by the *nomos* (general laws governing the field's life). The *doxa* is a consensual discourse that all agents can agree, and works as a collective understanding – a common sense. The *doxa* involves issues which are accepted as natural, such as the systems of classification of reality. The concept of *doxa* was developed to elucidate the Marxist conception of ideology (as false consciousness). It is understood as a particular point of view, which is the dominant class point of view, and which is presented as universal belonging to all field members¹⁰. The *nomos* are stable general rules that regulate the field operation. The fields have different *nomos* because each field has a different historical evolution. For instance, the XIX century artistic field *nomos* was, “the art by the art”; the twenty century modern architecture had as *nomos* “the search of rationality between the form and function”. These *nomos* must be accepted and legitimated by means of historical processes of struggle that takes place inside the field. The *nomos* is like a ruling principle which is inculcated in our minds by a socialization process.

All social fields are constituted by smaller subfields, which display the same characteristics of the circumscribing field. As social spaces formed by unequal distribution of various kinds of capital, the field and subfields are marked by class struggle among the agents, Some agents seek to keep the field structure other seek to change it, aiming to modify the hierarchical principle (economical, cultural, symbolical) that regulates the positions inside it. Dominant classes are those which succeed imposing their typologies of capital as the field hierarchy criteria. This struggle is waged in the political field and results mostly, in struggle for power.

The field is also marked (1) by the relations of force emerging inside it ; (2) by strategies (of defense or subversion) used; (3) by external pressures it experiences; (4) by other fields' conflict interpenetration and, (5) by other fields' ideas. The autonomy of a field

⁸ Bourdieu (1984).

⁹ *Ibidem*

¹⁰ Bourdieu (2010).



depends on the volume and pattern of dominant capital. The search for autonomy requires constant interpretation of reality and refraction from influences and contaminations introduced from outside. Life within the field is not determined by the external pressures, but by the internal translation of these refracted pressures. The external struggles (economic, political, etc.) contribute to change the relation of forces inside the field, but such influences are always mediated by the structure of the field, which stands between the agents conduct and his social position. The relative autonomy of the field stems from its ability to establish its own rules, even when under pressure or influence from other fields.

2. Habitus and practice in the field of planning and governance

This section deals with planning, through the practice of urban management with reference to the propositions advanced by Pierre Bourdieu. The goal is to test the explanatory and generative elements of Bourdieu theory -considering the governance practices undertaken through planning - and to evaluate to what extent the results provide evidence to clarify specific situations related to this practice. The analysis focuses on the agents' practices. The focus of analysis is the practice of agents that directly or indirectly participate in the universe of planning as urban governance. The objective is to explain the principles guiding the action of those agents. The planning universe itself is the object of reflection. It seeks to analyze the structure of planning as a field of practices and assess to what extent this structure depends on the state tutelage.

The following text evaluates four hypotheses about the practice of planning as a process of urban governance. They are explicitly drawn from Bourdieu theoretical framework. The hypotheses tests are carried out with reference to episodes, events and situations experienced by the agents and institutions over the recent history of planning practice and governance in the city of Sao Paulo.

2.1 Hypothesis 1: The agents integrating the planning field incorporate habits that are common to all members, regardless their ideological views or field position.

Evidence suggests that urban managers, both conservative and progressives perceive planning as a “strategic instrument” with the mission to organize and discipline the social and economic physical space. The planning experience in Sao Paulo tends to confirm such hypothesis. By analyzing reports, discourses and practices of government, it is observed a convergence of perceptions, understandings and actions among the agents of the planning field. The recurrent and consensual idea is that planning, as governance instrument is a process of rational articulation of means, in order to discipline and control the social object of intervention: the urban thing. Over the years, most of the products that emerged from the planning field in Sao Paulo were statements



about the need of rationalizing and organizing the urban development in order to avoid “diseconomies,” “waste,” “exclusions,” and damages to the various kinds of uses, activities and interests within the urban space. The ultimate goal is to develop a cohesive and harmonious space in order to rationalize the actions of various actors in the urban environment.

From the reading of the master plans and public programs produced over the past 30 years in São Paulo, one can observe a clear logic of intervention and control. The habitus that emerges from this planning practice, regardless the different administrative regimes that followed, suggests the prevalence of a homogeneous perception and a common understanding on the role of "strategic" planning as an instrument to promote and coordinate the several towns within the city. As Bourdieu states, by participating in a field, the agent incorporates a system of specific provisions, which allows him to play the game inherent to the field. Taking the planning for a social field, as Bourdieu suggests, it is not inconsistent to conclude that planners incorporate habitus common to all members of the field: that sees planning as a strategic tool to propose technical, logical, and rational solutions to the issues of urban development.

As it can be noticed the habitus is not dependent on the agent ideological views, because it is already inculcated as a disposition in the agent perceptions of the world which determines how natural to have planning in order to predict, organize and provide solutions, for it would no sense being otherwise. The habitus are unconscious mental routines that allow planners to act without having to reflect on their actions. Governing seems to be a natural and reasonable attitude of those seeking "appropriate" solutions for urban problems – the object of the intervention. After all, planning is the antipode of market chaos and the anarchy that reigns in the worlds of liberalism. Without control and some form of restriction and policing over the chaos, the social order and the city could collapse. The habitus are like consolidate and unreflective certainties that produces a rationality which is not reducible to reason. They are products of learning and of a process which we no longer have consciousness and expresses itself as a natural way of being and thinking in a given context.

The daily discourse of planning shows that there are significant ideological differences among the agents of governance, regarding the meaning of their practices. In fact, these differences emerge, for example, in defining an appropriate solution to a given situation. Thus, for instance, while for some the housing issue and access to a shelter is the central object of urban governance – a mean for reducing social injustice and exclusion – for others, housing is a secondary problem, facing the imperative of recovering the depressed areas in the city. Despite the differences, what is homologous between both views is the belief in public intervention and on the ability of technical solutions. The Strategic Master Plan of Sao Paulo city, enacted in 2002, is a remarkable example of the



antinomy between the ideological antagonism and the habitus convergence. In this experience we observe more clearly how homologous habitus and opposing ideologies are connected together in a single discourse: On the one hand, the discourse of technical rationality prevails, and imposes controls to land use and land development seeking to organize the space for the convenience of the capital. On the other, the plan includes, in admirable way, all innovative dispositions of The Statute of City¹¹ in order to support the democratic planning and the social inclusion discourse. Finally, as an immanent totality to all these visions and discourses, hovers the idea of tactics and strategies, something like collusion among military generals, through which the planner is given the prerogative to set the rules and direction of the game.

2.2 Hypothesis 2: The planning habitus are practical knowledge that is inculcated in the agent through: (1) professional participation on governance institutions staffs, (2) tacit learning accumulated throughout professional practice, (3) formal education.

In the planning field, it is observed that habitus are assimilated in three different ways. First, through professional activity and tacit learning acquired over the practice. It is in daily confrontations with professional challenges, experimenting success and failures, that the planner constructs his way of doing and being which will constitute the field habitus. According to Bourdieu, the agents acting inside a field are directed to adjust their thinking, perceptions and actions to the objective requirements of that social space. It is through a process of adjustment and change to field requirements that the social agent constructs his practice. Those experiences he gets through field interactions are gradually integrated to past learning and that will constitute a matrix of knowledge generation that will guide the planner future practice. Bourdieu sustains that: “practical knowledge is a construction that triggers classifications systems and these are used to organize perceptions and appreciations that structure the practices”¹². Planning practice thus constituted, is defined as knowledge built and embodied over the agent professional life. Along this trajectory, the planner incorporates knowledge about planning, about images and roles of planner, about beliefs and convictions of their practice. The *habitus* built in this way, becomes a social constraint which lead the agent/planner reproduce the social conditions of its own reproduction, which, in turn, will become the generative principle of action of the urban governance.

Second, habitus is also embodied through the culture (or habitus) that preexists in governmental institutions in which public policy is carried out. In these contexts, persists a diffuse and universal discourse about the planner social and administrative responsibility with the city. The planner in governmental contexts increasingly

¹¹ This is the Brazilian Federal Law enacted for regulating the urban development.

¹² Bourdieu (2010).



incorporates an awareness of his mission as the “*corpus publicus*” member which can be summed up as to care for the “common good”, the “public interest” or the “general welfare.” To be in the planning agent position as a member of the state, means to work for the public interest (or state interest). The “intrinsic culture” of Sao Paulo planning (*habitus*) is another unique way of assimilating the field's game. In the case of Sao Paulo, this culture is marked by the way of doing planning that has as its starting point the synoptic view, i.e. planning as a process that goes from top to bottom, in which the act of planning has its genesis in the development of a Strategic Master Plan that defines the general guidelines for development. The synoptic “need” becomes integral part of a tacit knowledge that comes from non-written rules which are incorporated to the administrative practices of government. To the planner eyes (*habitus*), it does not seem that the practice may be different. Through the *Habitus*, planning must run from general (*global guidelines*) to particular (*local solutions*) in a deductive process that provides control and articulation capacities of the proposals and actions.

A third way of incorporating the planning *habitus* is through professional education and by different modes of inculcating a way of thinking which is transmitted through the academic settings, research institutes and universities. There are several streams of thought within the academic world offering different conceptions on the meaning of planning and about its social, political and ideological roles. Such streams of thought have different premises, axioms and methods which are transferred (inculcated) to the students through the study years. These students will later constitute cultures and schools of planning which will determine the way of seeing perceiving and doing planning.

2.3 Hypothesis 3: Planning can be understood as a *habitus* incorporated to practices; that is it is a set of dispositions and habits that determine the way of doing planning.

Planning as a *habitus* can be understood as a set of dispositions defined by beliefs, ways of thinking, of understanding and perceiving. They are assumptions which are materialized in the form of truths, rooted ways of doing and perceiving. The planning *habitus* perceive planning as a way of carrying out a rational and strategic management, capable of articulating the administrative action to achieve the control of the urban processes. This *habitus* understands that the planning action starts from general formulations (*global guidelines*) by integrating the several dimensions of the urban space (land use, transportation, and housing) and articulating them to actions of the various administrative branches (works, health, transportation, culture, infrastructure, etc.). Likewise, as product of already established *habitus*, the planning is constituted through the game of repression and tutelage, in which the police action becomes an integral part of planning. Inculcated in the minds of the planner, there is a concern of protecting the public interest and a sense of social responsibility, motivated by the ideas of zeal, vigil and command.



According to planners, without planning and under the exclusive action of market forces, the city enters the chaos. Approaching the world through planning habitus, planners take the regulatory power of planning in order to minimize spatial dysfunctions and social injustices. They think that the competent state intervention and struggles within the field can promote social inclusion, enforce the social function of private property and guarantee the right to the city.

Bourdieu states that each field has a *doxa* formed by the common sense view that expresses as an ideology through which the world is accepted as it is. They are like perceptions, appreciations and values shared by all inside the field. In the field of planning the *doxa* is established by the idea that planning is a rational, strategic and calculated process, for resolving the impasses and maintaining the field game. This *doxa* includes directing, coordinating and regulating and in order to achieve that planning must prohibit, restrain or encourage. For this reason, the planning *doxa*, includes implicitly, the idea of “reproduction”, because it emerges as a point of view of the dominant class, but are presented as universal interests belonging to all members of the field.

The *nomos* are stable general rules that regulate the game in the field. In the field of planning these rules are linked to the field *raison d’être*, i.e.: planning exists to rationalize government actions, maximize benefits, prevent undesirable situations, control agents’ actions and penalize misconducts. As a general rule, planning exists to fulfill these functions. Regardless the meaning of the actions (to focus on the functionality of the market or to favor the social income balance), the *nomos* of planning is always to act through the state in name of public interest.

The land use policy of Sao Paulo, for instance, reproduces old habitus long ago consolidated in the way planning is carried out in the city. Such habitus perceive the city as a *bricolage* of areas with specialized land uses (zones) and different densities. The goal is to control the urban land use and urban development, in order to maintain and the city economic functionality and guarantee the reproduction of social relations. For that reason Sao Paulo zoning ordinances are seen as normal, natural and the most efficient way of governing the urban activities within the city. In the view of planners (habitus) inside the planning field, it seems to have no other way to administrate the land use besides the tutelage mechanisms and symbolic violence exercised through legal punishment. In this way, the land use management in Sao Paulo can be seen as a habitus deeply rooted in both the mental structures of planners and the objective structures of urban governance institutions. The zoning ordinances in Sao Paulo perform a fundamental role of promoting (and perpetuating) the idea that planning is a force or police instrument to control deviations, anachronisms, and dysfunctions among the



various land uses in the city. The idea of segregating the urban land in diverse ghettos of people and activities, as well as the idea of “protecting” uses and places (zones) from those undesirable people and activities was and still is a dogma (habitus) of Sao Paulo Planning tradition. Although such habitus is slowly changing –consequence of struggle within the field – and the idea of existing a mixed urban land use starts to be conceived, struggles inside the planning field still goes on, since it is never admitted an urban space with mixed social classes. The conception (habitus) that the city territory has to be divided in different areas and zones is still fundamental.

2.4 Hypothesis 4: The field of planning produces two kinds of values (capitals) which both the economic field and the political field depend on. Planning has the power of legitimating political decisions through the technical and scientific rationality discourse and by coordinating the distribution of public money through the governmental budget. The police and regulation power attached to planning acts as a strong instrument of income distribution, by redirecting public resources.

The capacity of legitimating political decisions and to provide a less arbitrary image to closed and sectary office deals is one of the most coveted products of the planning field and yields, as suggest Bourdieu, symbolic capital. It's the capacity of producing this kind of capital that allows planning to articulate proposals and justify essential referrals for an effective public administration. Planning carried out by planning agents' becomes a form of symbolic capital, since it functions as strategy domination because it sets limits, imposes conditions, formulates assumptions, proposes goals that will little by little become the *nomos* of the entire population. The *nomos*, according to Bourdieu, synthesizes the dominant view and is imposed to all society (dominated groups). Therefore by submitting their proposal in the form of “the city we want” or “Sao should not stop” or the “health city”, planning agents, in fact, defines a conception of city attuned to the dominant interests and expressed in the plans and policies. It can be argued that the habitus which commands planning practice (and science) can incorporate worldviews and perceptions that ultimately manipulate values, constrain possibilities and condition guidelines.

In the context of society as whole, planning is a strategic field because it produces values of main importance to the struggles in other social fields, since it is the locus where the distribution of economic and political capitals is legitimated. This power allows the planner command various ways of distributing capital on the territory and that enables to change the balance of power and capital among various agents. For this reason, intense struggles take place within the field of planning, since its operation becomes strategic for keeping or changing the relations of domination within society.'

Conclusion



Bourdieu's key contribution for our understanding of planning as urban governance is, in my view, the idea of *habitus*, and its confrontation with a specific situation from which practice emerges. It advocates that, there is no absolute truth or pre-conceived action template to follow, because practice is the actor's casual answer to issues he faces at each moment. In the case of planning, we can infer that the habitus of planning in different historical times, places and situations proves to be a key variable in the *modus operandi* of the planning field.

Planning as a habitus is a possibility and a field of research and opens an opportunity for investigating planning through the practice of planning. In this new field of study there is no pre-given determination, because there is no permanent, or priority object of analysis. The focus is not on the structures of planning or on the social actors, but on dialectic relations they establish. Bourdieu approach allow us understand planning as a structured field of forces and practices, which are permeated by structured and structuring habitus. Planning, thus defined, allows us capture planning practice as a habitus that emerges from internalization of the structures (of planning) and the structural changes in planning as a product of externalization of planners' interiorities.

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