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TERRITORY, CITIZENSHIP AND RIGHTS

THE CURITIBA OBSERVATORY OF URBAN CONFLICT: METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES

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Abstract

Urban conflicts, as an expression of social conflict, are significant phenomena and represent a prominent object for reflection on social dynamics and relations. The aim of this paper is to present categories and methodology that help to broaden knowledge on urban social struggles and their insertion into the most general range of social conflict based on the experience of building research instruments and theoretical contributions that contribute to the Curitiba Observatory of Urban Conflict. The global analysis of the 707 documented protests delivers elements with which to assess the theoretical-methodological potential of the proposal, thereby indicating that the protests, in different ways, have triggered demands for the qualification (improvements in infrastructure and services), appropriation (recognition of uses) and transformation (modification in production processes) of urban spaces.

Keywords

Urban Conflicts; Methodology; Collective Action; Protests; Curitiba

OBSERVATÓRIO DE CONFLITOS URBANOS DE CURITIBA: METODOLOGIA E CATEGORIAS DE ANÁLISE

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Resumo

Os conflitos urbanos, como expressão da conflitualidade social, são fenômenos importantes e objeto destacado para a reflexão sobre as dinâmicas e relações sociais. A proposta deste trabalho é apresentar categorias e metodologia que contribuam para aprofundar o conhecimento sobre as lutas sociais urbanas e sua inserção na dinâmica mais geral da conflitualidade social, com base na experiência de construção de instrumentos de pesquisa e aportes teóricos que subsidiam o Observatório de Conflitos Urbanos de Curitiba. A análise global dos 707 protestos registrados traz elementos para avaliação do potencial teórico-metodológico da proposta, evidenciando que os protestos acionam, de diferentes maneiras, demandas pela qualificação (melhorias em infraestrutura e serviços), apropriação (reconhecimento de usos) e transformação (modificação dos processos de produção) dos espaços urbanos.

Palavras-chave

Conflitos Urbanos; Metodologia; Ação Coletiva; Protestos; Curitiba.

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Introduction

The “Global Strike for Climate”, against environmental degradation in the Amazon, took place in Santos Andrade Square. On September 7, the streets of Curitiba were taken over by yet another act by the “Tsunami of Education”. Protests against the death of young people in the neighborhood of Parolin. Municipal civil servants mobilize against the “Greca¹ Package”. An act of solidarity with victims of homophobia.

Were it not for the characters and localities that particularize these news items, the speeches and images they trigger would be universal. Conflicts recur in the most diverse social formations and, for this reason, they become a privileged object of investigation in social and political sciences based on different epistemological configurations: as an interpretative key of societies and as systemic dysfunctions. Although conflicts do not end in manifest forms, in protests, they have an empirical expression. The GDELT Project (Global Database of Events, Language and Tones), which since 1979 has recorded news items published in the world press in more than one hundred languages, accounts for 1.3 million protest events in the world, with a significant growth over recent years. Beieler (2015) recognized, however, that the growth in the number of registrations is partly due to the increased access to information brought about by the digitization of news and by dissemination through the internet (GDELT, 2015; BEIELER, 2015).

1. Rafael Greca is the Mayor of Curitiba.

Despite the diversity of spaces, times, contexts and objects, it is undeniable that the city, in particular, has been a privileged stage for social struggles and manifestations. The occupation of public spaces, road closures and the depredation of monuments and public or private buildings are just some of the ways in which these struggles become manifested. They take place in the city because the specific form of capitalism is the urban form. Restricting the city, however, to the stage or to the continent of struggles is to neglect other dimensions: the city as an object of dispute, the city as a structured and structuring structure of social conflicts and, chiefly, the city as the content of struggles.

To attune the analysis of urban conflicts with an analysis of the urbanization process itself or, more specifically, of the capitalist production process of cities, however, is not a simple theoretical task. More traditional critical interpretations of social conflicts under capitalism have often underestimated the importance of urban conflicts (and, consequently, have analytically rendered them as being secondary), reducing them to the condition of the reproduction of labor and deprived of the transformative or revolutionary potential that struggles have for seizing state power or for appropriating the means of production. A purely structuralist interpretation of urban struggles would be a futile activity, since the response to the genesis of the mobilizations, as well as the significance of the content that such claims or protests proclaim, would be provided in advance by the theory, with the inevitable result of the global dynamics of the cities in capitalism. On the other hand, the theories of social movements, constituted in the confrontation with this teleology of social classes, while they valorize political organization, the identity of agents and collective action in itself, they often incur a phenomenological interpretation of conflicts that dissociate them from understanding the processes of social reproduction.

The research project, entitled the “Curitiba Observatory of Urban Conflicts”^{2,3}, began in 2013 - which aims to record, systematize, classify and provide information on urban struggles, social movements and the multiple, diverse manifestations of conflict in the city, by means of a database of georeferenced online data⁴ -, is part of an effort to provide an in-depth understanding of the material conditions and political processes that incite urban conflicts.

2. In Portuguese: “Observatório de Conflitos Urbanos de Curitiba”.

3. This research was funded by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), Called Human and Social Sciences MCTI / CNPq / MEC / Capes No. 22/2014, case number 471911 / 2014-3, period 2015-2017, and by the Universal Call MCTI / CNPq No. 01/2016, case number 432856 / 2016-1, period 2017-2021

4. The database is available online for registered researchers. To consult summaries of monthly surveys, see <http://conflitoscuritiba.blog.br>.

The research is part of the Observatories Network of Urban Conflict, an initiative by several national and international research groups, whose starting point is the Rio de Janeiro Urban Conflicts Map project, developed since 2004 by the laboratory State, Labor, Territory and Nature (known as Etern) at the Instituto de Pesquisa e Planejamento Urbano e Regional (Ippur) at the Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro. It currently involves several cities, such as Belo Horizonte (MG), Maceió (AL), São Paulo (SP), Porto Alegre (RS), Quebec (Canada), Mexico City, Los Angeles (United States), Medellín (Colombia), Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Santiago de Chile.

The recording and mapping of urban conflicts in Curitiba began by following the experience developed in the Rio de Janeiro Urban Conflicts Map project, using a number of categories as a basis, such as the object, the form of manifestation, the agents, the place (of origin and manifestation) and the date on which the conflicts occurred. The information was obtained mainly from reports in daily newspapers of wide circulation, news portals, radio, social networks, local newspapers and independent media, with the aim of identifying public manifestations and obtaining basic information on urban conflicts in Curitiba and the Metropolitan Region. In an attempt to minimize possible bias in the news, triangulations of journalistic sources were conducted, and the basic data was supplemented with information from the social networks of agents, location surveys on maps and web images, as well as through direct observation.

This article presents theoretical elements that indicate a review of the methodology initially used by the Observatories Network of Urban Conflict, in addition to an analysis of conflicts registered between 2013 and 2017 in the Metropolitan Region of Curitiba (MRC), considering the new proposed categories. In addition to this introduction and conclusion, the article is structured into three items. The first presents a brief theoretical problematization regarding urban conflicts, indicating the elements that should be considered in its analysis. The second topic addresses methodological issues, from the initial design of the research to the finalized formulations, which indicate the categories and the methodological structure for registering and mapping urban conflicts. The third item discusses the results of the analysis on the systematized data between 2013 and 2017. In conclusion, the main research findings are presented reiterating the need to incorporate categories for analyzing protest events in which the city is not only the stage, but the object of these actions.

1. Social and urban conflicts as an interpretive key for social relationships

Conflict is a form of sociation, an interaction that, according to Simmel (2011, p. 567), is amongst those that are most experienced and attributed to causing

or modifying interest groups, unifications or organizations. As a fundamental sociological and philosophical category in different interpretations of social relations, the conflict acquires a privileged position in dialectics, the driving force of history, according to Marxist theory. For Marx and Engels (1999, p. 40) “The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles”⁵.

In the Marxist tradition, however, there is a tendency to bring centrality to the conflict that opposes social classes determined by their insertion into the social relations of production, eventually revealing the transforming role of conflicts that are not registered in this condition. Urban movements are put into second place, since the germ of transformation resides in the working class, in the proletariat, as a privileged subject. The urban condition of this class is ancillary⁶ and it is the relationship of the exploitation of labor by capital that must ultimately be overcome. Since Engels (2008), in his analysis of the situation of the working class in England, the unwholesome, precarious condition of life in the city is the expression of class domination, the remedy of which is an end to private property and the collective appropriation of the means of production by the proletariat. In another text, on the housing issue (ENGELS, 2015), home ownership by workers, instead of advancing, is, to a certain extent, as a setback in the revolutionary process, understood as a bourgeois solution to the question and, therefore, as no solution, since the problem is insoluble within the framework of capitalism.

The effects of these interpretations are still felt today, as some analyzes on urban social movements have questioned their classist or transforming nature, characterizing them as “simply reformist attempts to deal with specific (rather than systemic) issues” (HARVEY, 2014, p. 17)⁷. There is, however, a field of Marxist thought that has, at least since the mid-1960s, with Lefebvre (2006), discussed the right to the city based on the idea of an urban content within social struggles: in addition to being the stage, the city it is a way of life, an object of struggle and a substratum of social organization. This field of thought gained expression with authors such as Castells, Borja, Lojkine (FORTI, 1979; MOISÉS, 1982; HARVEY, 2014) and others who have problematized the importance of urbanization in the reproduction cycle of

5. N.B. - For direct citations, the English version was used of MARX, K.; ENGELS, F. *The Communist Manifesto*. Marxists Internet Archive, 2010, p. 15. Available at: <http://activistmanifesto.org/assets/original-communist-manifesto.pdf>. Viewed on: October 19, 2020.

6. The controversy with Lenin about who should lead the revolutionary process is well known, distrusting the role of the peasantry in favor of the urban-industrial working class. This controversy resided much more in the insertion of each class into the production process (objective class) than in its territoriality, even if they are inseparable elements.

7. N.B. - For direct citations, the English version was used of HARVEY, D. *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. London: Verso, 2012, p. xiii.

capital (TOPALOV, 1979), with strong repercussions in the Brazilian urban sociology of the 1970s and 1980s. The concept of urban plunder, put forward by Lúcio Kowarick (1979), highlighted the sub-citizen condition of low-paid workers through not having access to good-quality housing and goods for collective use, indispensable for their reproduction as workers. This dual exploitation (workers and citizens), together with the context of redemocratization in Brazil, made sense of a broad mobilization of associations and urban movements during this period. For Cardoso (2008), however, this explanation for the genesis of the mobilization of urban movements was replicated uncritically, as a formula common to all urban movements.

The idea of an urban working class has gained more specific outlines through analyzing the urban struggles of the working class. It is not a mere a game of words, but the idea that the worker, in the current phase of capitalism, more than an industrial proletarian, constitutes a formation type of urban class "...- fragmented and divided, multiple in its aims and needs, more often itinerant, disorganized and fluid rather than solidly implanted" (HARVEY, 2014, p. 17)⁸ is insufficient to explain the character and content of social struggles. In other words, the fact that there is an urban condition of what is defined as a working class does not automatically invoke an urban content of the class struggle.

Exploring this field involves understanding (i) the link between urbanization and the social relations of production and reproduction and (ii) the political formations that operate the conflicts themselves.

Confronting the first point, Harvey (1982), in a 1976 article, analyzed the conflicts that are established in the production and use of the built-up environment (houses, roads, factories, offices, sanitation systems, parking lots, cultural institutions, educational facilities, amongst others). others) as a facet of the class struggle. He argued that the creation of space, filled with contradictions, generates strong chains of conflict. In his work *Rebel Cities*, Harvey (2014) reinforced an analysis of the urban dimension of capitalist crises, the centrality of urbanization in the process of capital accumulation and, consequently, the political importance of the struggle for the city in confronting capitalism.

The second aspect is also fundamental, since the very notion of class has been problematized in the analysis of social struggles and conflicts. According to Bourdieu (2003, p. 136)⁹, the "class on paper", or the theoretical class, is not objectively

8. N.B. - For direct citations, the English version was used of HARVEY, D. *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. London: Verso, 2012, p. xiii.

9. N.B. - For direct citations, the English version was used of BOURDIEU, P. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Oxford, Basil Blackwell Publisher Ltd., 1991, p.231.

instituted, it is not a real class “in the sense of being a group, a group mobilized for struggle”; for this author, it is in the analysis of political relations and actions that their effective existence is evidenced (although the theoretical class is “probable”). Even considering Bourdieu’s caveat, there is a risk that the analysis, which is sustained in the category of social class will subsume other forms of conflict. There is a wide range of analyzes on the sociology of social movements that relativize or deny the class approach.

For Melucci (2001, p. 156), many explanations regarding collective actions have been based on the image of the nineteenth century European socialist movement, with an emphasis on the necessary conditions as to whether a revolution would or would not occur. In another extreme, ideology, social science, philosophy and political practices became linked, with the aim of avoiding disturbances in the social order (ALONSO, 2009), producing negative understandings on collective actions. Collective movements and protests then became identified as indicators of social dysfunction, promoted by unconscious or irrational impulses present in the multitude or in the masses (CHAZEL, 1995), representing opposition to the expansion of representative democracy.

In the interpretation of social conflict, the tendency that associated protests and contestation with unconscious psychic impulses was strongly refuted by the current of resource mobilization and political processes in North American sociology, mainly by Tarrow, Tilly, McAdam, Zald, McCarthy (entitled McTeam), who demonstrated that collective actions were also marked by rational, objective and strategic decisions (FLACKS, 2005, p. 49). The thesis of the irrationality of collective action was challenged by the “new social movements” as from the 1960s, such as the feminist, black or pacifist movements, which - without promoting a return to class and the workers’ movement - reinforced the character of the movements and their new flags, such as gender, race, environment, pacifism and democracy. The struggles and mobilizations were not oriented towards the taking of the State, but towards expanding public policies, cultural changes (sociability and lifestyle) and improving the quality of life (distribution of material resources) and recognizing them as bodies and subjects. Its actors, middle class youths, women (as a movement), blacks and professionals, waged struggles outside the traditional channels of mobilization and representation, such as unions and political parties.

The interpretation based on resource mobilization highlights that the ability to undertake victorious struggles is often found in variables associated with the organization, such as the degree of bureaucratization, the division of labor amongst its members and the mobilized resources, such as the number of militants, financial resources and supporter networks (ALONSO, 2009). The chain of political processes

emphasizes the genesis processes of social movements, the notion of protest cycles and the connection between collective actions and the broader political context, which includes the notion of “political opportunities” for the mobilization of collective actors. The choices of the actors are reflected both in the preparation of an action and in the mobilized repertoires and in the possible contrary reactions to the action, indicated by the degree of repression and the extent of the mobilization or protest.

Thus, a collective action or protest may either fail or be an end in itself, because it takes place in a local, private and restricted environment. On other occasions, it may represent broader links between organizations or causes of struggle, of either a national or international character (TARROW, 2009). It is within this perspective that criticism resides of the interpretations of mobilization based exclusively on a priori conflict between social classes (as they would underestimate the conditions that effectively produce engagement in political struggles) and in claiming for the importance of analyzing confrontations as empirical resources in order to understand the phenomenon of collective action, whether it be protests, social movements or revolutions.

Thus, to a large extent, these authors have contributed towards bringing centrality to action, as a social phenomenon, in the analyses of social movements. Hence, they have proposed a theoretical framework that aims to map processes of political confrontation (McADAM; TARROW; TILLY, 2009), taking into account the different institutional conditions, the political opportunities and the organizational capacities (concrete mobilization capacities and choice of repertoires) of each movement and their contexts. This perspective reinforces the need to analyze concrete forms of political mobilization, to produce empirical material that underlies the interpretation of collective action, in order to avoid the limits of functional explanation (PERISSINOTTO, 2011). This leads to the conclusion that the working class comes into contact with political confrontation because it is exploited or, even more teleologically, that the relationship between capital and labor produces a kind of “genetic inscription” for struggle that would depend only on it achieving awareness. In spite of this, there are undoubtedly other limits to this approach.

Emphasis on the variable of political opportunities should be treated with caution, so as not to incur the substitution of economic constraints by political constraints in explaining the genesis and development of collective actions and social movements (ABERS; BÖLOW, 2011) or in the imprisonment of cyclical analysis, overestimating the modus operandi of social movements and neglecting macro-structural and far-reaching political processes (ALONSO, 2009, p. 53). Jasper (2016) emphasized the relative unimportance that the chain of political processes

attaches to culture and to the identity ties and all the mobilizing investment necessary to maintain a cohesive movement, mediating innumerable internal conflicts in the production of common causes and content, whether of a symbolic, moral or emotional character. The possible links should also be mentioned between the identity and class dimensions of social struggles, such as those well illustrated in the debate between Fraser and Honneth (2003), based on the categories of redistribution and recognition.

What needs to be highlighted here is that an explanation for the occurrence of collective actions and protests has to be dedicated, to some extent, to overcoming the dichotomy between structure and agency, or, at least, to understanding that the motivations for involvement in conflictive processes, which often contain the possibility of repression and violence, develop as a result of multiple reasons, from macro processes, such as institutional and political changes, modernization and societal and economic crises, to the construction of face-to-face relationships between actors, on a local and microsociological level for the most varied reasons. In our case, this signifies interpreting the city as a continent, although also as the content of struggles, protests and mobilizations, considering, at the same time: (i) the insertion of confrontational agents - situation, position and distinction - in the structure and in the contradictory social relations of urban production and reproduction and (ii) the political processes, the mobilization resources, the identities and the intentions aimed at by agents.

2. Protest events, the cycle of protest and conflicts: research methodology, units of analysis and interpretative categories

Initially, the Curitiba Observatory of Urban Conflict adopted the methodology developed by the Rio de Janeiro Urban Conflict Map project. Protests (initially called conflicts) were registered in Curitiba and in twelve other metropolitan municipalities, classified into five basic categories: (i) the object of conflict, (ii) the form in which the conflict was manifested, (iii) the agents of the conflict (mobilized collective and the institution or group being claimed against), (iv) the places of origin and manifestation and (v) the date of the event. The information was obtained from the records of wide-circulation daily newspapers (*Gazeta do Povo* and *Paraná Online*), as well as from independent media, social networks, news portals, radio programs (*Band B*) and local newspapers in the municipalities of the MRC. However, while the research was under the development, the methodology used began to demonstrate certain limits in view of the complexity of the protests.

One of them stemmed from the information sources themselves. The media, as a result of the political positions they adopt, implement selections as to which

events “deserve” to be highlighted in the newspapers, thereby restricting areas of coverage and themes, omitting information or presenting biases regarding the description of the event (SILVA et al., 2015). Recognizing these limits is important for problematizing the sources, without, however, disabling them, considering that one of the objectives of a broad, diverse collection of conflicts is to avoid the selection bias present in case studies, because, despite the descriptive gains of events, sometimes there is a generalization of particularities, which are not representative of the ensemble of manifestations. Silva et al. (2015) also highlighted that newspaper sources have been widely used in research on the cycles of protest because they are public, they remain permanent in time and are easily accessible, unlike, for example, police sources. In news items from radio stations or news portals, there was an attempt, when available, to record information from interviews conducted directly with the agents involved, with the particular aim of improving the description of the objects of conflict. Lastly, efforts were made to minimize any possible biases through the triangulation of different journalistic sources and of the complementation with data obtained from the social networks of the agents (leaderships and social movements) and through direct observations.

Another important limit refers to the tabular (two-dimensional) structure of the database, which enabled the single registration of protests, limiting multiple registrations for the same event. The cycle of protests and demonstrations in June 2013 strongly highlighted the need to renew the analytical instruments to provide greater flexibility and the ability to enable new correlations, such as registering multiple agents and objects of conflict, identifying sequences of events linked to the same conflict or analyzing the dynamics of the conflict based on its individualized events, in the diversification of the forms of manifestation and involvement of the agents. To overcome this gap, it was necessary to modify the tabular structure of the database, replacing it with a relational structure, as presented in Figure 1.

Additionally, in the record of events, the research began to incorporate categories that enabled them to be associated in chains of protests, thereby helping to improve the analysis of the mobilization structures, the behavior of the social movements and the changes in their repertoires of action. As well as the indifferentiation between the protest events and the urban conflicts themselves, restrictions on registering multiple actors and categorizing conflict objects and forms of manifestation also needed to be overcome, to mention but a few. The main methodological innovation proposals developed throughout the research concerned two orders of questions: (i) the units of analysis and (ii) the interpretative categories.

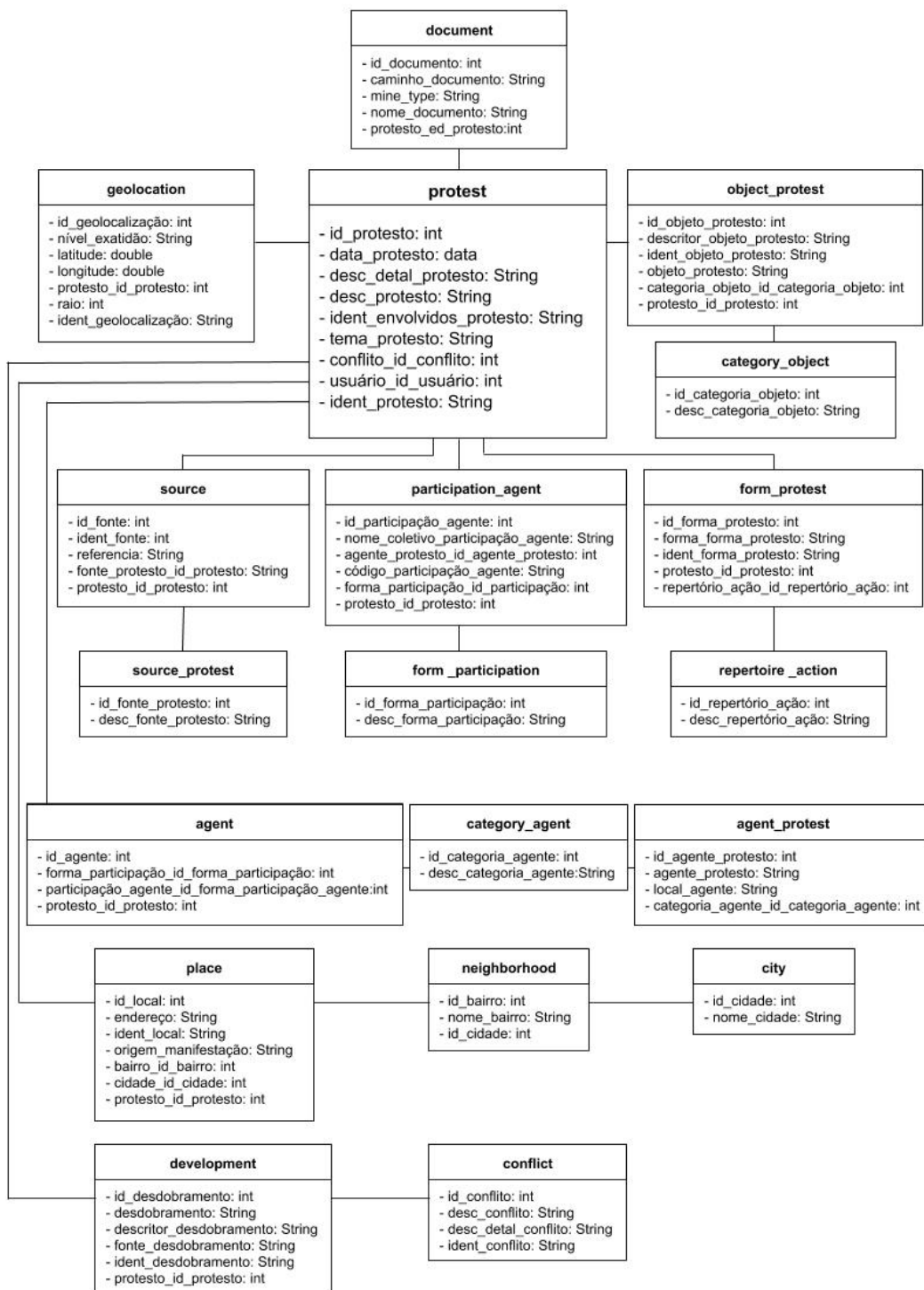


Figure 1. Relational structure of the database for urban conflicts in Curitiba

Source: Curitiba Observatory of Urban Conflicts (2020).

Assessments of the cataloged protests during the first two years of the research, of the theoretical review on collective actions, from the work of Silva, Araujo and Pereira (2011) and of the methodology of the “Observatoire sur l’activité conflictuelle” in the cities of Quebec and Montreal, Canada, members of the observatories network, were the starting point for creating a new database proposal, with a set of variables that presented the protest as a unit of analysis. From this, the other variables, which have multiple associations, became connected, as presented in Figure 1.

Protest events are recorded according to each demonstration that occurs in the public space, and the urban conflict is the litigation that gives cause to the demonstration and may be associated with a set of events linked to the same object. This differentiation enables the integrated classification of events in a “network” of protests, which, in turn, is able to aggregate into conflicts with greater durability and permanence over time. The relational analysis of protests triggered in “networks” allows us to register the diversity of objects, the repertoires of action and possible developments, and to identify contentious actions with the possible use of violence. It also provides a broader analysis of the inherent contradictions, the field of collective action, the logic of social movements and their network links.

In this perspective, the importance of building a research instrument that, over time, registers and catalogs the diversity, flexibility and mutability existing in the manifestations is assessed, bearing in mind that, when analyzed in isolation, they may go unperceived.

With the analysis of the cycle of protests, it is possible to perceive, for example, that conflicts over housing in Curitiba, usually associated with actions of occupying land or buildings, are not only limited to this form of action. Its mobilization has reached spaces of participation in institutional spheres, such as public hearings, proposing guidelines for the master plan, providing pressure to approve the bill that regulates social rent, participating in national forums and proposing lawsuits.

The network analysis of the demonstrations also enables a broader understanding of the participation of multiple agents and the existing connections between collectives, institutions and social groups, on the different scales of action. Unlike the methodology of the Rio de Janeiro Observatory of Urban Conflict, which identifies the main actors of the conflict in general categories, it is considered that there are several forms of agent participations. Thus, in addition to naming them, a two-dimensional classification is made: the type of agent and the form of participation. In this second form of classification, agents may be: (i) instigators - who take the initiative for collective action; (ii) respondents - towards whom the claim is directed; (iii) supporters - who participate directly or indirectly in the protest,

through financial, intellectual or operational backing to support the demonstration; (iv) opponents - who oppose the claim; (v) affected - those not necessarily related to the conflict, but directly and/or indirectly affected by the collective action. Agents may also be classified into more than one form of participation (for example, opponents and respondents).

The 2013 cycle of protests also made it more evident that classifying the objects of protest into pre-established thematic categories could overshadow the number and diversity of claims at each demonstration. Thus, the objects began to be described in a manner as closely as possible to the agents' discourse, including, besides the classification categories, phrases of summary description, with the aim of registering the object (s) of protest.

With regard to the repertoires of action, the database structure considers the possibility of including new categories, created and incorporated by the protesters, and that may be reproduced in different contexts depending on their effectiveness. This option recognizes that over time, social movements seek to create new forms that challenge the established codes and surprise the opponent (McADAM; TARROW; TILLY, 2009).

The main differences between the two methodologies are related to the flexibility in the way of registering and cataloging empirical material, by inserting into the Curitiba Observatory a definition of the protest as a unit of analysis and the possible associations of network protests as an integral part of the same conflict. The inclusion should also be mentioned of new categories such as "developments" and "contentious action", which aim to characterize the post-manifestation consequences, the occurrence or not of confrontation and the discovery of developments resulting from pressure exerted by the collective action. Lastly, the geographical coordinates were also incorporated of where the demonstration took place and the origin of the protest, which thereby enables spatial information on the protests.

3. Analysis of the protests in Curitiba: hypotheses for interpreting urban conflicts

In the period between 2013 and 2019, 707 events were recorded and mapped, and were predominantly, in terms of the object, protests related to State, government and democracy (25.46%), labor and labor rights (17.82%), transportation, traffic and circulation (10.89%), followed by education (9.62%), gender, race and diversity (6.93%), public safety (6.36%) and housing (5.94%), see Figure 2. Together, they corresponded to 83.02% of the protests and even contributed to the questioning of ideas widely disseminated in the "myth of the model city" (OLIVEIRA, 2011).

Motivation x Year	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		Total	%
	Curitiba	MR*	Curitiba	MR*	Curitiba	MR*	Curitiba	MR*	Curitiba	MR*	Curitiba	MR*	Curitiba	MR*		
State, government and democracy		●	●		●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	180	25.46
Work and workers'rights		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	126	17.82
Transport, traffic and circulation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	77	10.89
Education	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	68	9.62
Gender, race and diversity	●				●		●		●	●	●		●	●	49	6.93
Public safety	●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	45	6.36
Housing	●		●		●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	42	5.94
Health	●		●	●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●		33	4.67
Land issues			●		●		●				●		●	●	12	1.70
Water, sewage, drainage and solid waste	●		●					●		●	●	●		●	12	1.70
Neighborhood		●	●	●	●	●		●					●		10	1.41
Parks, gardens and forests			●						●		●		●		10	1.41
Access to and use of public space	●										●		●		9	1.27
Electricity and gas			●	●			●				●				6	0.85
Urban legislation	●								●						2	0.28
Others	●		●				●		●		●		●	●	26	3.68
Subtotal	36	10	29	9	35	15	87	21	64	9	181	25	163	23		
Total	46		38		50		108		73**		206		186		707	100

Legends: (*) Metropolitan region
(**) The year of greater manifestations but lower in total quantity of protests

Figure 2. Protests in Curitiba and the Metropolitan Region between 2013 and 2019

Source: The Curitiba Observatory of Urban Conflicts (2020).

One of the steps of the methodology was to insert new categories, such as “Work and workers’ rights”, “State, government and democracy”, “Gender, race and diversity”, which initially did not make part of the urban protest mappings, since they were considered to be social conflicts. However, as the ultimate goal was to analyze social conflict in the MRC, and these protests are expressive manifestations in the city, they were inserted as part of the project. If we analyze the first two categories, “Work and workers’ rights” and “State, government and democracy”, it may be observed that they are interconnected and associated with the various reforms and labor squeezes, especially for civil servants. The protest cycles of June 2013, the protests against former President Dilma Rousseff and President

Michel Temer, which took place between 2015 and 2016, and the acts in defense of *Operação Lava Jato*¹⁰, or the demonstrations demanding freedom for former President Lula, held between 2018 and 2019, were the main events registered in the category “State, government and democracy”. Political protests were also very frequent, fueled by the country’s political instability.

Observing the category that involves urban mobility, the themes of road safety and infrastructure account for 72% of the registered events. In relation to public roads, the main demands concerned paving, signage and safety infrastructures (traffic lights, elevated walkways, underpasses, accesses, speed bumps, speed reducers and adjustments to certain intersections considered “death traps”). In the case of broken promises, creative manifestations took place, with repertoires such as those involving birthday cakes and “Happy Birthday to you”, in addition to streets being covered in graffiti and blocked with garbage, pamphlets handed out at road junctions and community work forces to fill in potholes. Road accidents involving deaths or people being run over, however, were the motivation for most of the protests. In this case, the most common forms of protest were creating barricades of burning tires, blocking off streets and setting up banners and crosses in memory of accident victims. Both situations were put into practice by family members and neighbors of the victims or by neighborhood residents directly affected by urban precariousness.

Only 15% of the claims involving mobility were linked with fares, routes and the quality of public transportation in Curitiba and the Metropolitan Region, or cycling mobility. Part of these protests demanded investments in infrastructure and better services; the other part, however, challenged the urban policies adopted by the public authorities and demanded priority inversion as well as a new understanding of urban mobility. Clearly, on this topic, there are differences in terms of the organization and mobilization of agents. In events related to road infrastructure and safety, long-term mobilizations were rarer, whereas with regard to the constitution of social movements, these were broader, as in the case of certain events related to the themes of public transport and cycling mobility.

In relation to protests on the subject of “Housing”, there were numerous repertoires of collective action, from contentious actions in situations of forced eviction to claims for participation in institutional structures or in implementing projects. Institutional claims also revealed the sharing of political projects with agents from other scales of action (regional and national). The mobilized collective varied widely, but it consisted mostly of residents who felt threatened by evictions or by government intervention. To a lesser extent, national social movements

10. A huge anti-corruption task force known as “Operation Car Wash”.

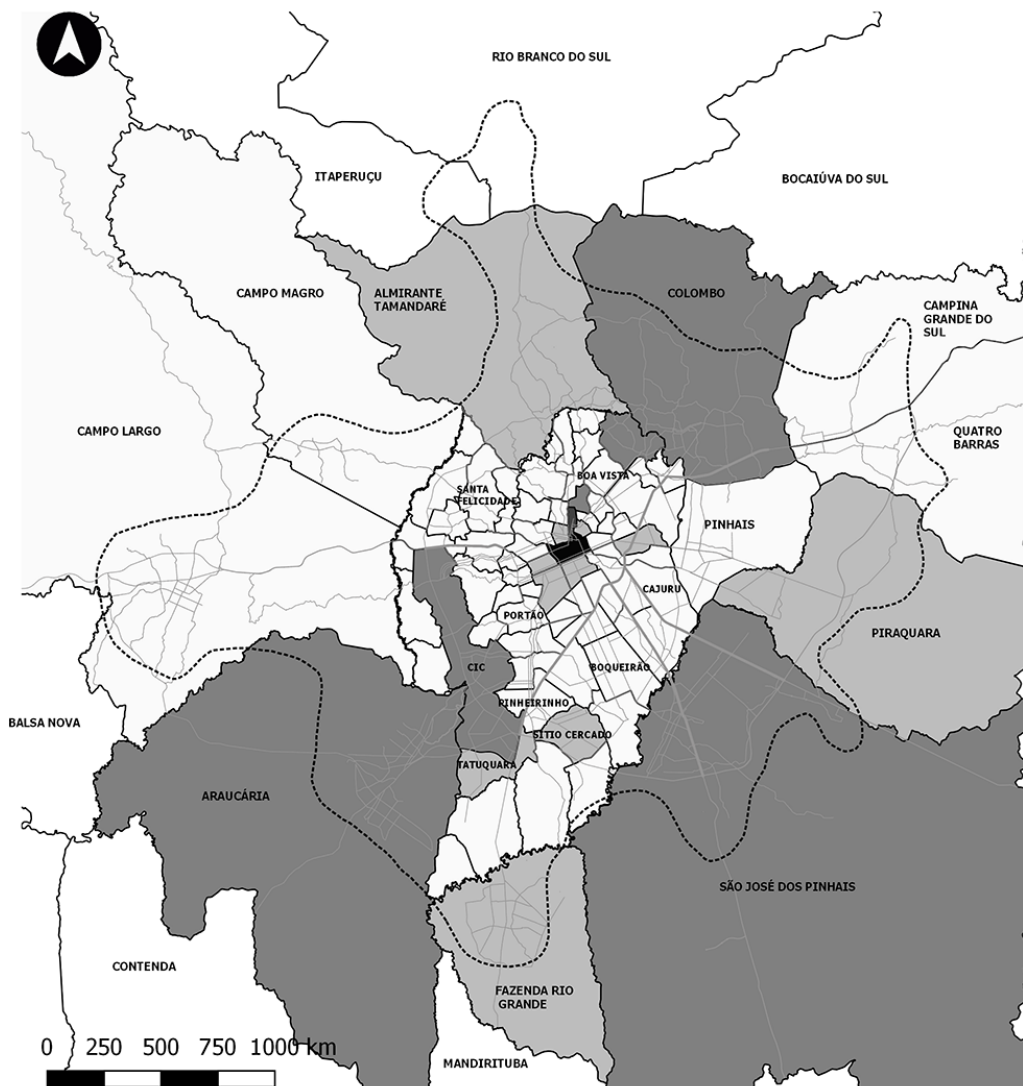
were included, linked in a network, as well as local movements, which often militated on different themes, thereby characterizing a broad range of actions for the right to the city.

It was also possible to verify the correlation between the object of the protest and the mobilized agents. In several manifestations restricted to the precariousness of infrastructure (preliminarily listed as “consuming” the city), groups of residents were more frequently identified amongst the instigating agents, with less recurrence of social movements or more institutionalized organizations.

In relation to the location, Curitiba accounted for around 84% of the registered protests, followed by the municipalities of Araucária, São José dos Pinhais and Colombo, which together accounted for 11% of the conflicts during the period. Few events were recorded in the other eight municipalities analyzed, with an average of less than one occurrence per year. It is important to add that Curitiba has greater journalistic coverage and receives more attention from the media. The limits of the information sources have been recognized in the research and impose the need for reservations regarding the conclusions on spatial distribution. In addition to the more specific guidelines, there were major events associated with national politics, protests over transport (the June Protests of 2013), the student spring, with the occupation of more than 100 state public schools, protests against the law on freezing social investments and the teacher protest (known as the battle of the Civic Center). The other municipalities accounted for protests mostly linked to infrastructure and neighborhood improvement.

The spatialization of protests has also provided a perception of the differences associated with the objects. In the “Housing” theme, there was a clear predominance of demonstrations located in peripheral neighborhoods, especially those greatly lacking in infrastructure and precarious ownership. In contrast, demonstrations in defense of green public spaces, such as squares and gardens, were predominantly held in middle- and upper-class residential neighborhoods, close to the most central regions.

Analysis of the database reveals a social segmentation, associated with the type of protest and its location in the city (Map 1). The central ring is the main stage for a wide variety of events, either for its symbolic value or due to its location close to public buildings, involving events classified in all categories. Some places in the central region of Curitiba are prominent reference points for demonstrations, such as Rua das Flores, Boca Maldita, Tiradentes Square, Santos Andrade Square, 19 de Dezembro Square and Rui Barbosa Square. On the periphery, the demands indicated the precarious conditions of urban life and, in neighborhoods close to the center, demands predominated for recognizing alternative forms of appropriating public space, such as the quality of green spaces.



**Number of Conflicts
2013-2019**

- 1 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 50
- 50 - 100
- >100

- ⋯ The Central Urban Core of the MR
- - - Municipal Boundaries
- Roadway System

Geographic Coordinate System
DATUM WGS84

Cartographic Bases:
Municipal Boundaries: IBGE, 2010.
Neighborhood Boundaries in Curitiba: IPPUC, 2018.
Central Urban Core: COMEC, 2006.
Conflicts: The Curitiba Observatory of Urban Conflicts, 2020.

Map 1. Map of urban conflicts by metropolitan municipalities and neighborhoods in Curitiba between 2013 and 2019

Source: The Curitiba Observatory of Urban Conflicts (2020). Produced by SIMIONATO, N.

Lastly, despite the high number of protests related to the national situation, there are two important features that stand out. The first refers to the scalar links and the local specificities of national manifestations. The June 2013 Protests, which began with demonstrations by the Free Travel Pass Movement, against the increase in bus fares, brought important consequences to municipal and metropolitan public transport policy, with a reduction in fares, a disintegration of the metropolitan transport system, the creation of a CPI¹¹ at Curitiba City Council and an investigation by the State Court of Auditors into deviations in municipal bidding processes. The acts against the national High School Reform policy, which took place in 2016, influenced by high school student demonstrations, and which had been occurring since 2015¹², known as *Primavera Secundarista* (The Secondary Spring), had their first school occupation, on a national level, in the municipality of São José dos Pinhais, which brought implications for the expressive adhesion of the secondary student movement in the state of Paraná and a significant multiplication of cases of occupied schools across the MRC. In the case of acts that defended *Operação Lava Jato* and that demanded freedoms for Ex-President Lula, the location of the Federal Court in Curitiba and the arrest of the ex-president at the Federal Police headquarters in the capital of Paraná structured permanent spaces of protest (the *Lava Jato* Campsite, in front of the Federal Court, and the Free Lula Campsite, in front of the Federal Police). Such cases illustrate the impact and association of protests motivated by the conjuncture or by national public policies that were echoed and reconfigured locally.

The second outstanding feature is related to the categories into which local manifestations were expressively concentrated. Transport, with an emphasis on road safety issues, as well as public safety and housing, accounted for around 55% of protests calling for municipal policies and actions or that opposed local agents.

Conclusions and interpretative categories

Despite the significant amount of registered protests, the analyzes have nonetheless indicated more problematizations than conclusions. However, the empirical evidence and theoretical interpretations that highlighted the urban issue in social struggles indicate that urban conflicts, as an expression of social conflict, are important phenomena and a prominent object for reflection on social dynamics

11. A Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry.

12. In 2015 and early 2016, school occupations had already taken place in other states, such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Rio Grande do Sul, related to the demonstrations against state education policies and the Constitutional Amendment Proposal to limit Government spending (PEC-241).

and relations. Thus, the aim of this work, in addition to analyzing urban conflicts in Curitiba and the Metropolitan Region, was to present categories and a methodology capable of contributing to more in-depth knowledge on urban social struggles and their insertion into the more general dynamics of social conflict. Critical reflection on the research practice of the Curitiba Observatory of Urban Conflict may provide references for other observatories and researchers working on the topic.

Analysis of the results indicates some of the issues problematized in this text. In different measures, and through conceivable links, the protests have activated demands for the qualification (improvements in infrastructure and services), appropriation (recognition of uses) and transformation (modification of production processes) of urban spaces, denoting the complex chain between urbanization and the social relations of production and reproduction of the urban space. This political economy of space illustrates an understanding of urban struggles resulting from both the consumption of space (use value) and its mode of production. These dimensions, critically present in the interpretations of Lefebvre (2006) and Harvey (1982, 2014), especially in the sense of the right to the city, highlighted by both authors, reveal that production and consumption, even though they are not evident in spatial practices as configurations of the sensitive world, because concrete collective actions do not necessarily dissociate these dimensions, are categories that may help to interpret urban conflicts.

Thus, the data presented reinforce a considerably exhaustive argument in the national literature on the links between precarious urban services and social struggles, enshrined in the concept of urban plunder by Lúcio Kowarick (1979), formulated in the 1970s and which highlighted the crudity of peripheral capitalism, especially on the periphery of major urban centers. This argument continues to a large extent in the diagnoses of Brazilian urban space, because, after forty years of writing, we have not yet overcome the (minimal) material bases of the extreme inequality in the class structure (MARICATO, 1995; 2011; ROLNIK, 1997). Although the prism of urban contradictions as an explanatory variable is loaded with a normative assumption regarding the emergence of social movements (CARDOSO, 2008), this has been an important interpretive framework and mobilizer of a wide ensemble of actors around the political agenda for the right to the city, which has objectively guaranteed certain achievements during this period.

The idea that these conflicts are related to the dynamics and inequality in the conditions for appropriating space, however, refers to another relevant theoretical debate on interpreting the struggles for social justice. If the reading of such contradictions brings centrality to the problem of redistribution, it is important to recognize that the mapping of conflicts in Curitiba has also indicated the

importance of registering the social and cultural conflicts related to the “recognition of difference” (FRASER, 2006) that mobilizes the struggle groups by ethnicity, involving race, gender, diversity and religion. In addition to the economic aspects, the empirical evidence of the conflict indicates objects, agents and forms of dispute that expand the idea of social justice by overcoming socioeconomic inequality. The debate between Fraser and Honneth (2003) demonstrates the understanding of social struggles supported by the categories of recognition and redistribution, confronting and linking the identity and economic dimensions and questioning the interpretations that restrict conflicts to the class struggle or conjuncture and political opportunities.

The protests surrounding the political crisis with threats to the country’s democracy and governance; the demand for gender diversity, in the Diversity and Sluts marches; and the right to cultural expression and manifestation at Carnival, amongst other events, are examples of social conflicts that have been added over time to the local mapping - even though such demands are oftentimes national in character, with a variation in the scales and interaction between agents, movements and political agendas.

Therefore, in addition to the need for considering aspects that imply conditions of material inequality, the struggles that denounce cultural domination are evident. Thus, Consumption, Production and Recognition may constitute explanatory categories for urban conflicts.

Despite the epistemological limits of the proposed theoretical treatment, it may be understood that by incorporating some analytical categories a broader understanding has been achieved of the dynamic relationship between the social struggles and of the transformation of society and the space to which it is correlated.

In the case of Curitiba, when analyzing the agents of the protests, the objects of the demands and the forms of collective action in a manner that is linked, the distinctions present inside the demonstrations and the symbolic character of places, of the polysemic meanings and of the network of collective action clarity is achieved, thereby demonstrating the complexity of these relationships and social agents. First and foremost, the motivations that are concentrated around the objects of housing and transportation bring into question the notion of a model city, with no conflicts, widely disseminated by the City of Curitiba and problematized in the analyzes of Oliveira (2011) and Sanchez (1997).

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