



Geographies of contemporary childhoods in Brasilia/Brazil

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Abstract

Studies from different fields suggest that contemporary childhood experiences in unplanned cities are increasingly lived in a fragmented way (Valentine, 1997; Mikkelsen; Christensen, 2009). However, how do children experience a city that was actually planned to be functionally fragmented? The article pursues some answers to this main question. It also proposes a contrast between Lucio Costa's 1957 Brasilia master plan and the tridimensional wooden block cities built by children. The first section argues that, after 56 years, the master plan and especially its superblocks concept have failed to guarantee economic and social equality in Brasilia. The second session revises the map-like model approach showing how different elements of children's lives in Brasilia were captured when they built their cities. The third session explores the idea of hybrid cities upon the recognition of how children express emotions; desires; fears; and also reference real cities when they create imagined ones.

Keywords: Brasilia - map-like model - Childhood - Geographies of children - Geography of emotions.

Right from the outset of his mandate, in 1956 when he had only recently taken office, Juscelino Kubitschek, President of the Republic of Brazil, decided to implement a project that foresaw the changing of the location of the Federal District which at the time was in Rio de Janeiro. One of the ideas behind the new capital was to move the country's development towards the interior and the Central-western macro-region was chosen for its construction. Following that decision a competition was announced to select an urban project for the new capital. In 1957 Lucio Costa won the master plan (Plano Piloto) contest for Brasilia, which came to be inaugurated on the 21st of April, 1960. The construction of Brasilia represented a political and economic revolution that left deep marks on the period, especially because it stood for the country's development and modernization. In alignment with that intention, Costa (1991:22) stated that the urban planning would be a 'deliberate act of ownership', which can be understood as a first attempt to transform the space into a territory. It meant the construction of a territory organized by means of the state's power to regulate money, the law and politics, and also the use of coercion and violence (Harvey, 2000).

And what would be the function of that territory? The city was planned for 'orderly and efficient work' (Costa, 1991:22). That is, defining the space for an efficient

exercise of state administrative power is in the very nature of Brasília. The city was also intended to be an important cultural reference for the country.

The movement toward the creation of territoriality is shown in the conception of specific areas for each function, i.e. sectors for housing, for shopping, for the ministries, for leisure, etc. Costa went so far as to even describe the sectors for administering the deaths of the future inhabitants. Furthermore, mentally ill people and criminals were to have their places in asylums and prisons located far from the urbanized center. For that reason, each single part of Brasília was designed according to the 'peculiar nature of the respective function' (Costa, 1991:34).

In the 1980s James Holston (1989) proposed a critical ethnography of modernism, taking Brasília as a case study. Insightfully he analyzed Brasília in its different aspects and pointed out how the city served as President Juscelino Kubitschek's political agenda. Kubitschek's project was to reform Brazil itself, and Lucio Costa's master plan was intended to work in the same direction. Holston called attention to the idea of the residential sector – the superblock –, where the buildings were to have the same architecture, be built with the same materials, and accommodate families from different backgrounds. Indeed, the reform issue is clearly identifiable when Costa (1991:31) planned the superblocks as a way to ensure 'a degree of social cohesion, avoiding an undue and unwelcome stratification'.

Lucio Costa (1991:32) designed Brasília in order to ensure the 'social comfort that everyone has the right to'. However, what was the role conceived for children in this project? Children were not mentioned in the master plan, but implicitly a very big role was imputed to them regarding social equality. Theoretically children of every social class would attend the same government-run schools, go to the same playgrounds, and live the same experience in the superblock. Almost every superblock building had 'pilotis', which means the buildings were raised on pillars very characteristic of modernism. It created spaces on the ground floor where children were supposed to play and be able to hear their parents calling them home. Children, like the city itself, had a function. They were sectorized in the space – in the superblocks and in schools – in order to further the Brazilian reform.

It is important to stress the role of the superblock in the original plan. The idea was that children and mothers would spend their days without leaving the superblock they inhabited. Each block was supposed to give access to schools, basic services and shops. Children would study and play in the superblock while the parents (at that time, the fathers) would zoom across the city on the four lane highways to reach their modernistic workplace.

Brasília, the capital and the most appealing city of the Federal District, was meant to be apart from its own construction process and work force. It was intended to be the future, inaugurating a completely improved Brazil, rid of its history of inequality and exclusion. In some sense Brasília and children had something in common in the social thinking insofar as they both needed to be taken care of since they were both at the stage of 'becoming'.

However, while Brasília was still being built, a set of unforeseen circumstances led to considerable alterations being made to the project. Thousands of people moved into

the Federal District attracted by employment opportunities in the construction of the new capital. The workers who arrived to construct Brasilia were treated as pioneers, men of courage, doing their best for the country. However, their presence was unforeseen; so much so that Lucio Costa's plan made no provision for housing them. To solve the problem the government and the construction companies set up temporary camps.

Despite the absence of the necessary infrastructure, families installed themselves there and populated the areas. Most of such occupation took place in an unorganized manner and later the areas were to become Brasilia's satellite cities (Epstein, 1973; Holston, 1989). Consequently, in view of growth in the population, swelled by those migrating to the Federal District and the lack of accommodation for them, the government saw no other way out than to establish other cities in the areas surrounding the Plano Piloto. Accordingly it planned the satellite cities of Taguatinga, Planaltina and Sobradinho and they were founded in 1958, 1959 and 1960 respectively.

56 years after its foundation, what remains of the original plan?

A brief macro analysis shows that Brasilia has become the 4th most populated Brazilian city. While the original plan forecasted a five hundred thousand population, nowadays the Federal District has 2.8 million inhabitants. The master plan and the South and North Lakes are among the priciest areas in Brazil. Curiously enough, in the original master plan no housing areas were to be installed in either of the lake areas, but today it is possible to see luxurious mansions there.

Also the Federal District has the highest *per capita* gross domestic product in Brazil, and its Human Development Index is likewise in first place, compared to other Brazilian metropolitan areas. However, it has always been one of the most unequal cities in Brazil as regards economic and social conditions. Since land use is rigorously controlled and all superblocks have approximately the same quantity of buildings, with the same pattern (four or six floors), living in the Plano Piloto of Brasilia is just a dream for the majority of the population. Indeed the poor have never lived in the Plano Piloto; they have gone directly to these ill-equipped towns, with subpar public transportation. Even the lower middle classes do not live in the master plan area anymore.

The Brazilian anthropologist José Jorge de Carvalho presented an interesting review of Holston's analysis. Discussing Brasilia's socioeconomic situation from the late 1980s on, he foresaw what would happen later. According to Carvalho (1991:361) 'the plan has been improved precisely on its anti-utopian side: social and economic inequality has grown, and with it high statuses and elitism that are now unabashedly expressed in architectural terms'.

Indeed the master plan as a mediator of agents and structure played a big role here. The superblock project failed as a way to attain social equality. After some years Brasilia started to suffer from the same urban problems related to violence, traffic congestions, and social disparities as the other Brazilian cities. Meanwhile, however, new geographies have been created and we will first explain that from a macro point of view.

Children who live in the superblocks seldom study in the government-run schools built there. The majority studies in private schools, which were built in new areas in the master plan specifically for that function – the education of the middle and upper middle class children. Brazilian demographics changed, and it was no different in Brasilia, which means that, nowadays, fewer mothers take care of their children full time¹.

Playgrounds have always been taken for granted as ideal places for children. It is possible to find one in almost all of Brasilia's superblocks. Jane Jacobs (1992) makes several criticisms about that showing how, underlying them, there is a game of power and arbitrariness of adults. However, the superblock is hardly used as a place for play. Instead, middle class children have been increasingly engaging in extracurricular activities in private spaces such as social clubs or recreational centers. Carvalho (1991:361) explains that 'there is a clear tendency among middle-class inhabitants to negate the public side of the city'. The superblocks themselves have become a sort of ghost mini cities where the most frequent noise comes from the cars.

On the other hand, poor children from the other satellite cities have gradually targeted the superblock schools. Considering the total displacement of students in the Federal District, 38% target the master plan (Moraes, 2015:50). There are no doubts that in terms of infrastructure they can be better than some schools in their own neighborhoods. Students travel long distances on a daily basis, usually accompanying their worker parents, in order to have a better education. Neither buses nor the single line metro are examples of a good transportation system. Frequent strikes, disruptions and malfunctions make the official transportation system unreliable. Both illegal buses and taxis are also available, offering prices that can oscillate according to a certain situation – a bus drivers' strike, for example.

Studies from different fields, such as geography, sociology and anthropology have suggested that contemporary childhood experiences in unplanned cities are increasingly lived in a fragmented way (Valentine, 1997; Mikkelsen; Christensen, 2009), but how do children experience a city that was actually planned to be functionally fragmented? We intend to answer this question.

Our primary goal here is to analyze children's urban experiences. Considering all that has been stated so far, social class is an important element to be considered, and more than that, it affects different socialization practices in public spaces. The article is organized as follows. The first section argues that after 56 years of the master plan's construction, which incorporated the superblocks concept, Brasilia has failed to guarantee economic and social equality. The second section revises Blaut's & Stea's map-like model approach, insofar as they have inspired us, but we have also left room for new aspects during the research process, especially when children build their own cities. The third section explores the idea of hybrid cities in recognition of how the children expressed emotions, desires, fears and also references to real cities when they created imaginary ones. We present brief conclusions in the last section.

¹ The fertility rate for Brazil in 2015 was 1.72 children born per woman (IBGE, 2016).

Revising the map-like model approach

In the course of 2013 we carried out a project focused on middle class children, two girls and two boys, aged 5, who lived in the Brasilia master plan North Wing and attended the same private preschool. Greg, Amanda, Daniela and Lucas lived with their families, which were basically nuclear oriented. Since 2009 preschools have been mandatory for all 4 and 5 year old Brazilian children and 95% of this population already attended them. Preschools can be considered a major specialized childhood space.

Children were visited three times in their apartments or houses, where activities were proposed. First a storytelling was prepared with the book 'Animal Adventure', 'Aventura Animal' in Portuguese (Vilela, 2013). It was intended to be an icebreaker as the story creatively shows what a city with a group of wild animals mingling with ordinary people in different urban settings would be like. Eventually they reach the forest, which is narrated as an ideal place for them, free from any problems.

However different they might be, both cities, the one planned by Lucio Costa and the other represented in 'Animal Adventure', express utopian ideals. Utopian cities always project the idea of a perfect society, free from any defect in cities inhabited by their creators. Lewis Mumford (1961) compares the medieval cities to the contemporary ones, arguing that the former were the closest to the ideal, while the latter, which were based on the megalopolis model, tend to collapse. However, how about a city imagined by middle class children who do indeed live in the social comfort conditions desired by Lucio Costa for all the population of Brasilia?

Our research design took children as participants and co-constructors of meaning. In this paper we use the concepts of Stuart Aitken (2014) as a reference and the children are seen as capable beings through their own peculiar way of being in the world, of taking part and provoking transformations in the space they inhabit and in the social relations they establish with their peers and other generational groups.

This parallel that we draw with Aitken's (2014) ideas lies in our proposal that when we listen to children and allow them to express their opinions and feelings in regard to the city, even if the process is intermediated by a game, we are making it possible for them to propose interventions, display any tensions and take control of the organization of the space.

Likewise it was influenced by ideas from the geography field. Since we intended to give children the possibility of working with tridimensional resources, the map-like model approach inspired us. Blaut et al (2003) assumed that spatial learning is linked to the different ways in which children relate to the space, which results from direct experience or through representations such as maps or landscape images.

Blaut & Stea (1971:387) elaborated the assumption that 'mapping behavior is a normal and important process in human development, and that map learning begins long before the child encounters formal geography and cartography'. Similarly Blaut & Stea and their international collaborators explored the ontogeny of environmental behavior, since their objective was to improve and implement geography-teaching

methods targeting young children. That is, geography teaching methods should start from what children are capable of and not from what they cannot do. For this reason, the toy-play method was taken to be an important precursor of real map-reading and map-making (Blaut & Stea, 1971).

Thus, Blaut & Stea developed arguments concerning the ability of children to produce maps with different techniques, since they wanted to establish criteria and scales to measure the process of learning maps. They developed the concept of the map-like model to study mapping abilities in pre-literate children, defending the idea that young children could build maps but not necessarily using the conventional language that older children or adults do. Map-like models allow children to interpret and represent their context. It suited our interest in capturing children's representations of the space and not just formal logical location of buildings and streets.

However, we have not followed the exact protocol the map-like model approach demanded. Blaut & Stea (1974) carried out a placement analysis, a maze test, and a verbal test with children aged 3 to 6. They considered 80 participants and explored age differences in their analysis. Also, they prepared a toy set and a measured piece of paper to cover the floor. Blaut & Stea planned a 10-minute session with each child and counted on vertical three-second time-lapse photography, tape recording, and notes.

Our study counted on the participation of four children. They were invited to build a city, having 220 pieces available, including wooden blocks and miniature devices (cars, trees and sights). While building their cities they could make decisions and talk freely with the researcher. So, there were no time or space limits to accomplish this task. We video-recorded the meetings, transcribed them and compared them with notes.

Despite those differences, we definitely recognize the innovative conception regarding children those authors presented as far back as the 1970s. Blaut & Stea even challenged Piagetian theory of child development to stress young children's complex competencies. They believed children could tell stories, like we do; they were looking for stories about the toys and their locations, while we wanted stories about cities.

In any event, by partially following Blaut & Stea (1974) we are agreeing with some of their conclusions one of which is that children show themselves to be capable of reading and creating maps. Furthermore, offering three-dimensional materials to children may foster their skills for understanding the space they inhabit. The invitation to build a city using three-dimensional materials motivated the children to participate and at the same time mitigated the researcher's interference. That methodological stance is in alignment with the concept of the children as a being capable of speaking for themselves and giving an opinion about their experiences (Alderson, 2008). Furthermore, the children have an opportunity to organize the landscape in ways that are different from the one they experience in their daily lives and in which, as a rule, they are not consulted about any eventual changes.

While they are manipulating the pieces, the children are free to assemble and dismantle their constructions as often as they like and that underscores and enhances the value of their potentialities in the aspects of organization, sensibility, perception of space and others.

Although Blaut & Stea (1971) did not investigate children's feelings in regard to the map-like models, they were fully aware that the game with the miniatures could arouse emotions in the children. Nevertheless, when they elaborated a method that should be a valid one, they ended up not addressing or even allowing the children space for that kind of emotion-related expression.

In our research activity, during the interactive process stimulated by building the city and the conversations that were held in a separate session, we sought to explore the children's desires, emotions, fears and relations established in and with the city. The conditions created for each meeting with the children were designed to catalyze questions directly related to their lives and, consequently, their feelings and emotions could be expressed in speech – verbal resources and prosody – and by the body – using gestures, looks, facial expressions and postures.

As Aitken (2009) has pointed out, emotions are important elements for appropriating space; they permeate human relations and are part of our daily lives. Our emotions are evoked at certain moments and in certain places through the intermediation of pain, anger, love, exaltation and they cannot be ignored. Thus the social relations established are lived out by means of emotions and the latter may well be 'ways of knowing, being and doing in the broadest sense' (Anderson; Smith, 2001:8).

In cities children have an opportunity to establish different kinds of interactions. Children are aware of the presence of others and what happens in the most diverse public spaces. Also they establish face-to-face interactions which, as Erving Goffman points out, involve verbal and body communication. Anssi Peräkylä & Marja-Leena Sorjonen (2012:4) call attention to the role of emotions in interactions, stating that 'the expression of emotion is constructed and managed as a collaborative process by the participants in interaction'.

It seems to us that the city can be seen as a space that is lived in and transformed both individually and in a collective manner. According to Vasconcellos (2005), it is crisscrossed by affections and meanings that undergo transformation in a process of construction. In that sense, space is a social product of interrelations and interactions. Furthermore, if we take human emotions into account, we can propose an alternative approximation in order to reflect on the relations between space and experience.

Bosco and Joassart-Marcelli (2015) propose that emotions are often understood in a biological way that is static and non-spatial or at least spatially restricted. However, emotions are what help us to understand, interpret and experiment the spaces. That is also true for children who produce intense emotions associated to their homes, schools, cities and other spaces of their daily lives.

Thus the geography of emotions connects with the children's physical geography insofar it reveals the role that emotions play in constituting the spatiality of children's

social relations and experiences, as the studies of Bosco & Joassart-Marcelli (2015), Den Besten (2010), Murray & Mand (2013) and others have underscored.

Hybrid cities

In the course of this study, the participating children showed no resistance and presented no objections or questioning when they were asked to build a city with the material offered to them. All of them seemed very willing and promptly selected material to shape the structure of their cities.

Eventually, the children's city representations presented diverse structures. For example, Amanda, Greg and Lucas piled up the wooden blocks, while Daniela maintained a flat construction. Amanda and Greg built somewhat sprawled cities, but Daniela and Lucas, dense urban areas. Daniela even announced: 'This city will be a small city, right, auntie?.'

Figure 1 – Daniela



Source: Photograph databank (2013)

Figure 2 – Amanda



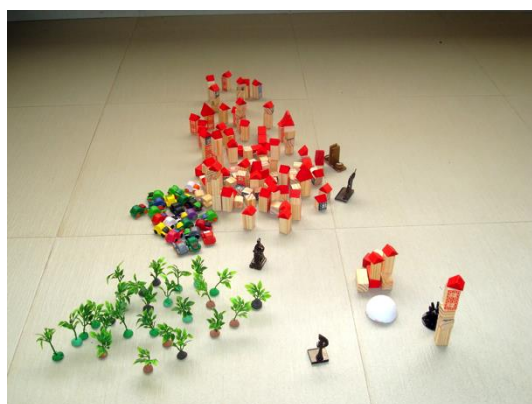
Source: Photograph databank (2013)

Figure 3 – Lucas



Source: Photograph databank (2013)

Figure 4 – Greg



Source: Photograph databank (2013)

When Daniela began to build her city, she first arrayed all the blocks on the floor and looked them over and she chose to use the blue blocks first. As she went ahead with the building, she verbalized her plan as to the sequence and the pieces she would use. Even though she announced that her city would be a small one, Daniela used all the trees and all the cars and more than half of the blocks available as well as incorporating the three lids of the cans that the pieces were kept in. She took 17 minutes and five seconds to build her city, using one hundred and twenty-five pieces.

The first things Amanda placed in her city were two trees with a car between them. With that car as the reference point she used all the other cars forming a long queue behind it. As she went along adding pieces she made little comments and hummed and sang to herself. Amanda used less than half of the materials available but she did use all of the cars and trees. She completed her city in eight minutes and used seventy-three pieces altogether.

Lucas was completely silent while he was building his city. First of all he put all the pieces representing monuments together in one corner and right in front of them he placed a mixture of cars and trees. Around the cars and trees he constructed a limit made of blue and red blocks. The only thing he said was 'Ready!' when he had finished. Lucas used all the cars and trees and took seven minutes and ten seconds to complete his city. He used seventy pieces altogether.

During the time he was building his city, Greg verbalized what he was about to do and asked the other children participating in the research questions about the city. At the beginning, he piled some red blocks on the top of the other and announced 'I am going to use everything!', In the process of mounting the blocks and pieces Greg would knock them down and then construct others, thereby remodeling his city. He did indeed use all the pieces available in his city and it took him thirty-four minutes and fifteen seconds to build it. What struck us most forcibly about the children's behavior was the organization and aesthetics that were present in it. As Aitken (2014) has stated, we are often so absorbed in our daily activities that we fail to notice the aesthetic aspects of the spaces we pass through. By creating for themselves a city of wooden blocks and later talking about it, the children evince very particular aesthetics that represent their imaginations and emotions associated to the spaces in which they spend their daily lives.

After analyzing studies of language, socialization and jazz, Alessandro Duranti and Steven Black (2011) affirm that creativity and improvisation are not the opposite of repetition and imitation, but, instead, are all part of socialization processes. The ubiquity of improvisation, in their view, could be perceived by means of two categories, i.e., improvisation as flexibility and improvisation as performed creative behavior (Duranti & Black, 2011:450). Although children live a routine in a planned city, mediated by different experiences (at school, in clubs, swimming classes, capoeira classes, etc.) that are repeated on a daily or weekly basis, their cities are very creative, provided they are allowed to improvise.

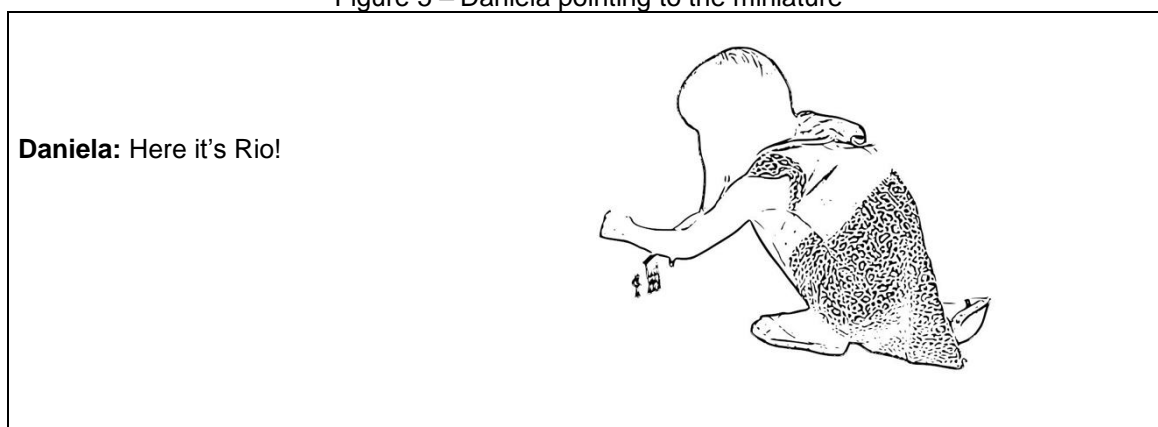
The children demonstrated both prior knowledge and improvisation skills when they gave other meanings to the formal monument miniatures of Brasilia. For example, Daniela took the Candangos sculpture (paying homage to the workers who built Brasilia) and associated it to Rio de Janeiro. First she took the miniature and sang

part of Jorge Benjor's song 'Mas Que Nada' (1963). The song itself is kind of halfway between Samba and Bossa Nova, and it has been a success in Brazil ever since it first appeared.

What does it have to do with Daniela's embodied action? She took the miniature, then sang and gesticulated, and subsequently she spoke and simultaneously pointed 'Here, is Rio'. In fact actions are always shaped by the environment created by our ancestors, which is now inhabited by us. Language and gestures are always developed together as integrated and complementary actions, and they are both part of a communicative process. Daniela used different references to build an action, and make the action meaningful, taking into account both the addressee (the researcher) and the object (the miniature).

Charles Goodwin (2003:218) argues that pointing is not a simple action, but on the contrary, it is one 'that can only be successfully performed by tying the act of pointing to the construals of entities and events provided by other meaning-making resources, as participants work to carry out courses of collaborative action with one another'.

Figure 5 – Daniela pointing to the miniature



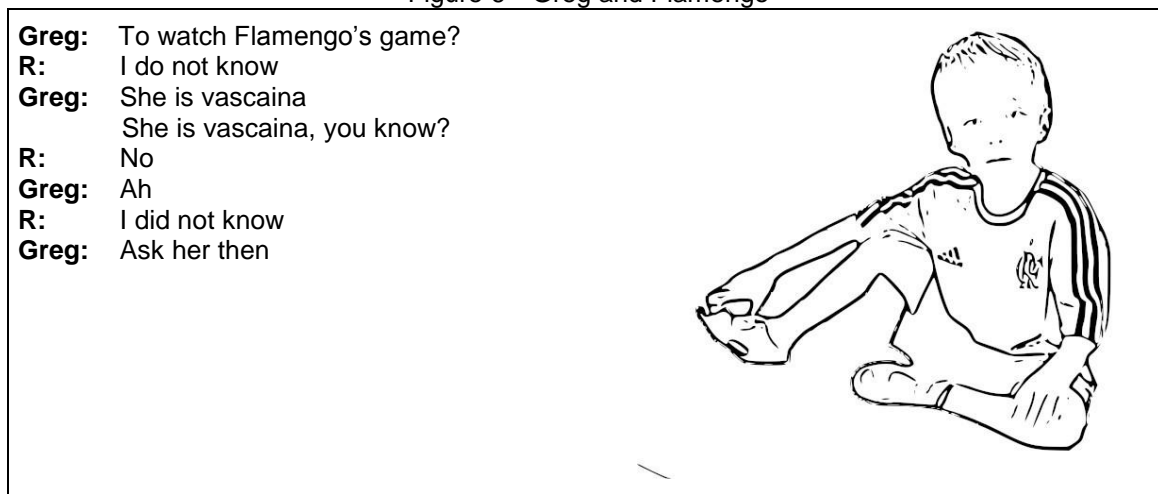
Source: Video-recording databank (2013)

Rio de Janeiro is the former Brazilian capital. Highly-qualified civil servants were moved to Brasilia in the late 1950s, having received some benefits for that (e.g. they were placed in new apartments in the superblocs). On the other hand, in the social imaginary, Brasilia could not be more despised by the 'Cariocas' (people from Rio de Janeiro), who miss the beach, the nightlife and the urban amenities.

Without exception, the four children in our research mentioned Rio de Janeiro during the construction of their cities. Rio de Janeiro seems to be seen as a real, unplanned city. Amanda mentioned her trip to Rio de Janeiro where she would meet her cousins, whom she missed so much. She also mentioned that she liked the beaches in Rio de Janeiro because she could pick up shells on the sand. Lucas had already explained that his city had many trees, since it was Rio de Janeiro itself. He also mentioned the beach. In addition Greg demonstrated a close attachment to Flamengo, the most famous soccer team in Rio de Janeiro and one of the most competitive in Brazil.

In fact almost nobody cheers for soccer teams from Brasilia, which are quite modest. People cheer for the teams from all over Brazil, as a way of attaching themselves to the cities they lived in or that their parents lived in, or maybe those they would like to live in. Greg was wearing a Flamengo T-shirt, and he wanted to know what his peer and fellow research participant Amanda would be doing on her trip to Rio de Janeiro. He explained to the researcher (R) that Amanda roots for another Rio de Janeiro soccer team, Vasco da Gama. His facial expressions showed that he was mocking Amanda. He transmitted the idea that Vasco was inferior to Flamengo.

Figure 6 – Greg and Flamengo



Source: Video-recording databank (2013)

Based on some specific points, we conceptualize the children's cities as hybrid cities. The most comprehensive one is related to the fact that the children united elements from real cities, not necessarily Brasilia, with others from imaginary ones. That idea was compatible with Homi Bhabha's 'The Location of Culture', in which in-between spaces and in-between times mark oppositions between the 'known' versus the 'unknown'; between 'us' versus the 'others'. The first issue related to hybridity has to do with the need for the children to name their cities. Greg, for example, was wondering first if he lives in Brasilia or in Brazil. He asked the researcher several questions and was in doubt about some of them. First he decided on Italy, then Mexico, and eventually Brazil and Mexico, even pointing to a border. Amanda said her city was Brasilia. Lucas called his city 'The Wonderful Country' and said that it was Rio de Janeiro; indeed Rio de Janeiro is commonly known as 'The Wonderful City'. Daniel said at first that his city was in the United States and the name of the city was 'Pernambuco' (the name of one of the Brazilian states).

Another issue related to this hybridity is the mixed feelings regarding close people versus strangers, comfort and fear, freedom and prohibition. The children built different versions of the others and of themselves when talking about their cities. Greg wants his city to be very exclusive – just his family and some friends would live there, so it would not be open to outsiders.

When she spoke about the people in her city, Daniela made an association with the affections and hostilities encountered in her preschool. In that space she finds 'nice, good friends' as well as various kinds of conflict. She remarked how some of the boys called her 'dunce' and that others, even among her friends, called her 'unfriendly' and liked to boss her around. In her opinion those were the 'the bad things' about her city.

As Marjorie Goodwin (2002:409) argues, playgrounds are often taken for granted as a romanticized place of interactions. On the other hand, she demonstrates the different and long-lasting kinds of micro aggressions that mark differences and inequalities among children. Goodwin (2002) helps us draw a parallel between the playgrounds and the preschool that Daniela described insofar as the latter is also a space constructed for children by adults and generally romanticized as a place where they all live together in harmony. Daniela, however, refers to the conflicts, aggression and difficulties with her peers that she has to face in her daily life in that space.

Lucas justified the barrier he constructed around the cars and the miniatures of monuments by saying 'That is so that the thieves can't get in'. Given a reality permeated by constant concern about urban violence, Lucas found a solution by fencing off a space that would be free from such problems. In his world, a wall would protect the inhabitants from all and any kinds of violence and that is a kind of reminder of what Le Goff (1998) wrote about medieval cities.

In Amanda's city all her friends and relations lived close by and she was free to visit them and play with them whenever she wished. However, those were not the only persons she mentioned in her narrative. She told a story about a poor boy who came from Rio de Janeiro and who, when he passed in front of her house took some clothes that she had separated for donation. Right after that she said that one of the bad things about her city was the poor people who had no money.

The city arouses different feelings; Lucas refers to fear while Amanda shows her solidarity. Both appear to be aware of their families' relative comfort and good financial conditions given that 'walling off' the city may be synonymous with protecting something that you already have. Donating clothing, on the other hand means recognizing that you possess more than is necessary. Thus the children managed to find practical solutions to address their anxieties.

Also, what is intermittently interdicted in real cities became possible in their constructed ones. Which place did Greg plan the most for in his city? It was a restaurant where he would drink beer, Redbull, and soda as much as he could. Furthermore he wanted to eat pork and duck there. His imagination challenges the rules the adults created for each single space of the city for children. In his city he could do just whatever adults do.

Conclusion

Elinor Ochs & Bambi Schieffelin (1984:311) theorize socialization as a 'continuous and open-ended process that spans the entire life of an individual'. The research subject itself promotes a contrast of ideas, which is never unilateral. Adults also build different concepts about cities in general and the cities they live in. Furthermore, the

children expressed their opinions, but also asked for ours. Children and researcher interacted and made meanings together. Children showed us other ways to be and act as inhabitants of Brasilia.

To answer the question displayed at the beginning of the text, namely 'how do children experience a city that was actually planned to be functionally fragmented?' we based ourselves on the participating children's economic and geographic contexts. The children themselves belonged to the middle and upper middle classes and they all lived in Brasilia's Plano Piloto. That means that they experienced the city in their lives in a very different way from children belonging to other social strata who live in the satellite cities².

The children targeted by this study spent far more time confined in private spaces especially designed for them, such as regular school, music school, and recreational sports centers. The four children have a broad experience in and around the city since they cover long distances on a daily basis, driven in cars, going to preschool in the afternoon and several recreational and learning settings in the other shift. Thus the evidence uncovered by our study shows that the life of the children has been incorporated to the spatial fragmentation of Brasilia's urban landscape.

We noted that the four children do not fail to create meanings for themselves or to feel emotions in their daily circulation in the city and for that reason they were able to construct their own cities creatively through the intermediation of a game. Later they revealed their desires, feelings, suggestions and expectations in regard to the city.

In methodological terms we revised the map-like model approach. We were inspired by this method in our endeavor to design the three meetings with children, which were aimed at deeply exploring their experiences in Brasilia. Like Blaut & Stea we believed that the children were capable of locating themselves in space and we also stressed what children were capable of doing. We did not strictly adhere to Blaut and Stea's protocol, however, preferring to leave more room for the interactive processes that are established between the researcher and the child and also for the children's communicative activities in other interactions that they experience in the city.

We identified this category of hybrid cities in children's representations; they took elements from real cities and also from imagined ones. Their constructed cities reveal children's great creativity, since children did not automatically associate the cities they built to Brasilia. On the other hand, all of them mentioned Rio de Janeiro landscape features as part of their cities' features, and named them considering other cities as references. Last but not least, they revised concepts about the cities by introducing a certain amount of chaos in them. Maybe children's cities are not as aesthetically pleasing as Costa's master plan for Brasilia, but they are more interesting and meaningful for them.

² In another research project we are investigating poor children's urban mobility, especially those students who commute from the satellite cities to attend school in Brasilia. Apart from several differences, one common aspect of the experience in comparison with middle class children is long commuting time.

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