

CRITICAL REVIEW ABOUT THE TEXT

THE FAVELA OF GEOGRAPHY

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The concept of favela emerges as a dominant proposal in studies on areas of irregular occupation, this concept began to be generated from the development of the term and the symbols related to what was conventionally called favela.

In Brazil, the ideological reproduction of this concept is historically linked to the construction of discourses that create a social and socioeconomic function for these spaces. However, speeches that gave up addressing issues related to the favelization process, being thrown under the rug. This being done by the dominant groups and managers of the economy, with a very important social issue.

This being so, occurring during different periods, and so society's groups that address interests of the dominant classes question and position themselves regarding the favela concept and its organization.

The favela itself is a phenomenon inherent to the city itself and does not behave as an isolated fact, as it represents the capitalist mode of production and how it develops in the territory, reproducing the different social classes in the urban space.

In this way, the landscape of a place is a product of the ideals, cultures and habits of a society. This is a striking feature of the favela concept. And with the passage of time, what has become a worldview about a favela, for the dominant classes, is that they are spaces of illegality, marginality, criminality and unhealthy conditions. Having full connection to the capitalist mode of production.

Favelas have several characteristics, but none of them seem to be as specific as their illegal legal status, as an occupation of public or private land belonging to third parties.

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The poverty of its population is undoubtedly a very common distinguishing characteristic, but the level of poverty is quite variable not only between favelas (a recent favela on the outskirts tends to be poorer, on average, than an old and consolidated favela, located close to privileged neighborhoods), but also inside large and consolidated favelas, especially when located in privileged areas. The lack of infrastructure, as well as poverty, is also a very common feature, but, no less than poverty, variable. To these criteria could be added the completely irregular road network and a few others. (SOUZA,

Favelas are territories of illegality and social exclusion. It is the expression of inequality. Favela definitions translate two of its main characteristics: land and urban illegality.

In Brazil at the beginning of the 20th century, intellectuals still in the process of accumulating on the favela, without any other parallel, led them to make constant analogies of the favela with the occupation of the Belo Monte camp or, as it became known in official history, the resistance of Canudos .

The spread of this thought was due to the fact that Euclides da Cunha's work "Os Sertões" was appreciated by a large portion of the intellectual elite of the time (VALLADARES, 2005, p. 29).

The lighting was gone. We were from the countryside, in the hinterland, far from the city. The path that wound down was both narrow and wide, but full of dips and potholes. On one side and on the other, narrow houses, made of coffin planks, with fences indicating backyards. The descent became difficult [...] All are made on the ground, regardless of the depressions in the terrain, with wooden boxes, tins, bamboo [...] you had, in the luminous darkness of the starry night, the real impression of the entrance to the Canudos festival or the funky idea of a vast multiform chicken coop. (MARTINS apud VALLADARES, 2005, p. 30).

In this way, when comparing the favela to Canudos, a dichotomy between city and favela spread, building an analogy to the jagunços and sertanejos regarding the image of the inhabitants of the favelas, originating the interpretation of the favelado as "Other", culturally distant, differentiating who is the city dweller and who is the sertanejo or who is the city dweller and who is the slum dweller.

The socio-spatial processes of the current spatial development pattern of cities tend to express themselves in segregation and deterioration, in the absence or precariousness of urban sanitation equipment in some areas, in the precarious quality and insufficiency of health services, education and especially security, unemployment, etc. Subordinated to the market, the marginalized population becomes increasingly poorer, at the same time that goods and services become rarer in the fractions of the city where the poor are segregated and cities are increasingly fragmented. This analytical perspective is corroborated by the fact that in the first nine months of 2007 alone, the police of the State of Rio de Janeiro executed the deaths of 961 people living in the favelas, an average of seven lives taken every two days, most of them summarily.

Favelas are historically identified as the expression of the antithesis of public order, and perceived by society as a whole as a transgressive space, as it goes beyond geographic and moral boundaries. The favelas rise to the hills and the mistaken image of a “lawless” space is created. However, in human relationships, the figure of the transgressor and the transgressed tends to get confused based on shared actions in time and space.

Committed to resisting and existing, the favelas impose themselves on the territory and create their own rules, opposing the external image created as a locus of exclusion. In the favela, its inhabitants found a sense of belonging that they did not enjoy in general society, but only related to territory and self-organization.

There are countless cultural and resistance manifestations witnessed in the favela. Architectures are created through fragile wood and now masonry; the cradle of samba, rap and, more recently, FUNK, as musical identity manifestations, the importance of religious yards, among other examples. These are some of the expressions that mark this cultural heritage, but announce this process as a dynamic and unstable movement. Hence the enormous difficulty of its conceptualization.

The logic of removal and invisibility of the favelas is replaced by the discourse of integration and rights. These are new times for everyone. Those inside and those outside it. To some extent, the pact of non-interference is broken and conflict begins between the divided city. Public actions and projects are developed and the presence of favelas is given enormous visibility. For good, and for bad.

The integration of the favela into the city should be marked by the incorporation of rights for all its residents. Without that, this space will still be destined for citizens with few rights and few duties. Have you ever seen a traffic fine imposed inside a favela?

The main hallmark of the favela, then, would be the absence of formal regulation of activities carried out within communities. Situations are dealt with according to defined norms, in many cases, through private decisions within the same, aggravated by the absence of public policies. This perverse combination of low social institutions and little recognition of rights (by residents and the state) marks a still limited process of democracy in favela spaces.

The favela becomes, therefore, a focus of public interventions and with it the emergence of countless alternatives to solve these “problems”. The discovery of the “favela problem” by the government does not arise from a postulation by its residents, but rather from the inconvenience it caused to the urbanity of cities.

We understand, then, that the landscape is a product of the culture of a society, and that in ours, which is made up of different social classes hierarchized according to their economic possibilities, what spreads in general about the favelas is that, these are spaces of great illegality, marginality and criminality, but which also have a great culture of their own, a large inventory of music and dance and which, in recent times, have even become tourist attractions, the so-called “social tours” of large cities.

I argue that the favela commercialized as a tourist attraction condenses the assumptions of both types of reality tours, while allowing altruistic and politically correct engagement, it motivates feelings of adventure and wonder. It is the experience of the authentic and the exotic, the risk and the tragic in a single place.

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