

**CANAÃ DOS CARAJÁS:**

A LABORATORY STUDY CONCERNING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF URBANIZATION,  
ON THE GLOBAL PERIPHERY AT THE DAWN OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

**CANAÃ DOS CARAJÁS:**

UM LABORATÓRIO SOBRE AS CIRCUNSTÂNCIAS DA URBANIZAÇÃO,  
NA PERIFERIA GLOBAL E NO ALVORECER DO SÉCULO XXI

ANA CLÁUDIA DUARTE CARDOSO <sup>A, E, F \*</sup>

LUCAS SOUTO CÂNDIDO <sup>B, C, E, F \*</sup>

\* Universidade Federal do Pará, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Belém, PA, Brazil

ANA CAROLINA CAMPOS DE MELO <sup>A, E, F \*\*</sup>

\*\* Universidade Federal do Pará, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Economia, Belém, PA, Brazil

**ABSTRACT:** This article addresses the processes of urbanization and urban sprawl in Canaã dos Carajás, a small relatively recent Amazonian municipality. The analysis is dialectically structured according to Lefebvre's interpretation of the levels of social reality. The global level captures how capital-intensive activities (mining, ranching, and monoculture) have impacted the connection between the place of production and the global market. The mixed level explains how local social groups, inspired by global processes, have mediated urbanization. The local level demonstrates how blind spots in understanding the ongoing processes have impaired the strengthening of diversity, and led to the exclusion of social groups that most depend on the land and nature. We conclude that it is necessary to articulate contemporary formulations and studies on Brazilian urbanization so as to demonstrate the selective manner in which modernization takes place and is constituted in new forms of colonization, whenever economic opportunities formulate socioenvironmental issues in a conservative manner.

**KEYWORDS:** urbanization; modernization; mining impacts; Amazon; Canaã dos Carajás.

**RESUMO:** Este artigo aborda o processo de crescimento urbano de Canaã dos Carajás, jovem cidade amazônica. A análise é estruturada dialeticamente segundo a interpretação lefebvriana de níveis da realidade social. O nível global captura o impacto de atividades capital-intensivas (mineração, pecuária e monocultura) na conexão entre o local de produção e o mercado global; o nível misto explica como a urbanização inspirada em processos globais foi mediada por grupos sociais locais; e o nível local revela como pontos cegos na compreensão dos processos em curso comprometem o fortalecimento da diversidade e levam à exclusão dos grupos sociais que mais dependem da terra e da natureza viva. Conclui-se que é necessário articular formulações contemporâneas sobre urbanização aos estudos sobre urbanização brasileira, a fim de explicitar a forma seletiva como as modernizações acontecem e se constituem em novas formas de colonização, sempre que as oportunidades econômicas elaboram as questões socioambientais de modo conservador.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** urbanização; modernização; impactos da mineração; Amazônia; Canaã dos Carajás.

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**Contribution of each author:** **A.** theoretical and conceptual basis and problematization; **B.** research data and statistical analysis; **C.** producing figures and tables; **D.** photographs; **E.** preparation and drafting of manuscript; **F.** selection of references.

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## **THE RESEARCH: THE BACKGROUND AND THE SCOPE**

The effervescent debate regarding contemporary urbanization has exposed the contradictions and crossroads within studies that have dealt with the subject, with increasing levels of uncertainty and a diversity of processes. Both large-scale and internationally sponsored research have indicated tendencies that are vehemently presented by their authors, in the hope of offering the very last word on contemporary territorial processes (PECK, 2014), as in the case of the neo-Lefebvrian researchers involved in a research project dedicated to the theme of planetary urbanization. Here, texts regarding US and European cases have been adopted in order to support the thesis that the contemporary process of urbanization is producing a structure of planetary proportions, which articulates the transformations and dynamics of development, and is marked, above all, by intensifying the conditions of socio-spatial inequality observed in a generalized manner on different scales. For this reason they advocate the creation of a new urban epistemology capable of universalizing the concept and providing grounds for the emergence of a renewed critical urban theory (BRENNER, 2013, 2014; BRENNER, SCHIMDT, 2015). At the other extreme, activist researchers have highlighted Indian and South African cases in defense of an anti-colonialist approach, i.e., there is a need to construct new concepts in order to characterize the processes experienced in the Global South, given the manner in which current debate has been strongly contaminated by the thoughts and concepts of hegemonic development (WATSON, 2009; ROBINSON, 2011; ROY, 2011).

Other authors have characterized the contemporary city as an increasingly fragmented, asymmetrical environment regarding experience of (or exposure to) the so-called socio-environmental conflicts. Such authors acknowledge that much of the concern on environmental issues has been lost by greening forms of production, and has in no way affected predatory practices, with their strong social and environmental impacts, intrinsic to the capitalist development matrix. Such practices assume the control and destruction of nature as a form of rational, technical domination, and therefore genuinely admissible (SMITH, 1988), while at the same time imposing its impacts onto the most vulnerable social groups (ACSELRAD, 2001; 2010a). Another direction of analysis has discussed the link between the roots of fragmentation and inequality in the cities of countries in the Global North and the more recent metamorphoses of capitalism. Along these lines, authors who have labelled the contemporary city a “neoliberal city” (PECK, 2014) are accused of simplification by authors who have stated that the current scenario is not a rerun of liberal practices (STORPER, 2016, LE GALÈS, 2016). On this point, they reinforce that the theses on how neoliberal practices originated in countries of the Global North may not be compared with how they have developed in countries of the Global South (ROBINSON and PARNELL, 2011), given the specificities and diversity of the historical, economic and social formation experienced within these places. Storper (2016) emphasizes the manner in which the contemporary state has been co-opted by oligarchies and plutocracies and how the results on urbanization generated by the practice of economic liberalism (*laissez-faire*) have been very different to those obtained through state intervention on the failures of free competition, through

regulation and interventions based on empirical reality, and that contributed to the transformation of European societies during the nineteenth century.

In this article we have searched for clues on how this montage of positions may help to understand the phenomenon of urban growth, and the peculiar manner in which territory in the southeastern region of the Brazilian state of Pará has been reorganized, focusing on the city of Canaã dos Carajás. In this region, the provision of infrastructure for the logistical support of global dynamics (mining, ranching, monoculture) has generated new relationships between small and medium-sized cities and villages and the types of land use and occupation that provide support for such activities (company towns, industrial districts, accommodation, logistics centers). We have based our analysis on a Lefebvrian approach in which there is a dialectic relationship between the levels of social reality (LEFEBVRE, 2008 [1970]), and in which it is necessary to examine the global, mixed and local processes so as to understand the different layers that make up this territory, and identify how they relate to the different theoretical conceptions listed, although relatively modified by the peculiar way in which the contemporary processes under review have been adapted by Brazilian society.

Some important contributions from the fields of sociology (NUNES, 1997; BAUMAN, 2001), geography (HARVEY, 2013 [1982] and SANTOS, 2008 [1979]), architecture and urbanism (MUXÍ, 2004; LOGAN; MOLOTCH, 1987) and political economy (POLANYI, 2000 [1945], HARDT and NEGRI, 2004) regarding the field of urban studies, have very much aided the methodological course of this research. They have allowed us to capture the universal Brazilian, political, socio-spatial processes, which are tangential to the dominant narratives and that clearly reveal the peculiarities of the urbanization that has taken place on the peripheral borders, and that Canaã dos Carajás represents at this turn of the century.

This article has received input from research and technical assistance developed within the municipality over a period of two years, the aim of which was to assess the impacts of mining on the municipal center and reinforce local management. Support for this was provided by all available documentation on the city, through discussions held with managers, professionals, and technicians from Vale S.A., seminars, works meetings and interviews, and through continuous field surveys, which at each stage of the process filled certain specific gaps. During the consolidation phases, cartographies were produced, which were able to objectify processes, and open interviews were held to investigate the perceptions of the population. Later, structured interviews were conducted throughout the entire city. Some of these inputs, especially the reports, have been used to construct the narrative of this text so as to compare the ongoing urbanization process in the municipality with current theoretical debate, by exposing the layers that correspond to the spheres of life, and thereby highlighting the blind spots and overlaps in order to obtain a fuller understanding of the context under discussion.

## **THE GLOBAL LEVEL: THE CONSTITUTION OF A NEW TERRITORY**

The global plan can only be understood through the historical process of converting the tropical rainforest into a frontier area for the capitalist expansion and social (trans) formation of the region. This presupposes being able to distinguish between the

concepts of development applied to the area of study which, in the case of the Amazon, evolved from a complete integration between nature and the original populations towards becoming a frontier region for the expansion of capital (HECKENBERGER, 2009; BECKER, 2013). This last phase, characterized by an industrial vision, is marked by a sharp break with the ways that for centuries, man had interacted with nature in the Amazon, and where it had codetermined and participated in the activity of production as a living substance (COSTA, 2009). However, according to the developmentalist concept that led to the Grande Carajás Program (known as PGC), nature came to be seen as raw material for industrial processes, treated “in its mediate condition, as interchangeable and substitutable generic matter” (COSTA, 2009, p. 42) and not as an active element, capable of interweaving traditional knowledge and innovation based on local potential and socially constructed knowledge.

The PGC was conceived during the 1970s as a strategic action plan to guarantee state control over the world’s largest polymineral reserves, and covered: the production of energy from the Tucuruí Hydroelectric Power Plant (UHE); the extraction of iron ore from the Carajás mineral province; the beneficiation of bauxite ore in Barcarena; the construction of ports in Barcarena and São Luís, the Carajás-São Luís railroad and municipal highways; and the establishment of rural settlements to produce food for the manpower working on the project, in the area that now corresponds to the municipality of Canaã dos Carajás (COELHO, 2014). State action was introduced in order to curb the illegal extraction of ores and gems throughout the region, but this was just one of the strands of the modernization project. Based on analyses from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)<sup>1</sup>, state action was based on vast external loans contracted during the military regime (1964-1985). However, this came as a new colonization phase, in this case – industrial, installed after so many others experienced across the region during the mercantile stage of capitalism (missionary, Pombaline, the rubber system *aviadores*) (BECKER, 2013, CARDOSO et al., 2016).

It is only from within this context that we may understand the complementary arrangements that were implemented between the environmental macro policies and those related to mineral extraction during the 1990s, within which the Carajás National Forest (FLONA) was created in order to guarantee the integrity of the area containing the first mines, operated by the then state company Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD). With regard to the benefits of an environmental policy in the context of a frontier, the creation of a national forest enabled the removal of both the native populations and the adventurers, and advances onto territory unprotected from the entrepreneurial actions promoted by the public incentives of the Superintendency for the Development of the Amazon (SUDAM), where no attention was paid to the social and environmental transformations unleashed on a scale in which everyday life unfolded (FUNDAÇÃO DE AMPARO E DESENVOLVIMENTO DA PESQUISA, 2016).

As if all the transformations that resulted from these initiatives were insufficient, other functionalities were also encountered in the exploration of this territory, such as the administration of the migratory fronts, either to alleviate the drought crisis in the northeastern region of the country, or to create a mobile mass of workers needed so as to expand the urban-industrial forces moving towards the frontier (BECKER, 1982). The workforce, which was standing idle throughout the country, was directed towards

<sup>1</sup> Created in 1948, the commission was responsible for a generation of Keynesian-inspired regional theories, based on the idea that regional development could not be guaranteed through the free action of market forces. It would then be upon the state to correct regional inequalities and provide the necessary infrastructure for implementing the country’s modernization project (LEITÃO, 2009).

the major infrastructure works (hydroelectricity, railroads, ports, highways) and the exploration of mines, such as Serra Pelada, located 140 km from the Carajás mine. The pace and speed of transformation were overwhelming. Pathfinders (low-skilled pioneer migrants, but eagerly seeking quick riches), viewed at the time as heroes, quickly filled the social gaps of the social structure being created.

Among the military leaders, such as Colonel Sebastião Curió<sup>2</sup>, engineers, front-line workers, adventurers, illegal land grabbers, etc., a social division of labor was composed and elements from the old “Brazilian grammar” of the relationship between state and society were introduced, as indicated by Nunes (1997): clientelism, corporatism, bureaucratic insulation (characterized by the fear of popular participation in decision making) and the universalism of procedures involved in federal bureaucracy, which defined generic rules for the entire country, with complete disregard for the specificities of processes throughout the various regions, and particularly for the revolution that was underway in the Amazon<sup>3</sup>. The industrial, modernization orientation of federal action was obvious, within a concept of development that had adopted procedures from industrialized capitalist societies as a reference and parameter, and given the economic crisis of the 1980s, the PGC investments became strategic in promoting production aimed at exports and a favorable trade balance.

However, from a social viewpoint, although the state sought to act impersonally through bureaucratic procedures, Brazilian “political grammar” quickly established itself in this new Amazonian environment, to the extent that a bourgeoisie was quickly formed with political and economic advantages negotiated even before its arrival in the region, as a reward for its involvement in the process of national integration. As an additional bonus, this new bourgeoisie received control of the land and privileged interlocution with power. The fragility of state institutions in controlling the actions of both old and new agents in the region brought in laws and regulations that were somewhat remote, and that favored the use of violence and the subordination of other social groups, thus compromising the creation of a public sphere and the strengthening of entities that guarantee the visibility of all the interacting agents in that particular context (field research, 2015, 2016).

As themes related to land, environmental, and social issues, all the generated socio-environmental conflicts, which are currently characterized by the debate on social and environmental justice, were placed outside the development agenda (ACSELRAD, 2005; 2010a; 2010b; ACSELRAD; MELLO; BEZERRA, 2009). Thus, they became blind spots, invisible to those agents involved in the negotiations related to production, who were interested in the quantitative aspects of exports. Such blindness was further favored by the absence of conceptual formulations that would account for the diversity and overlap of rationalities that occurred in the region where, in spite of the benefits given to the private sector (financing, exemptions, land concessions), the great misunderstanding remained regarding the historical practices based on cooperation between man and nature and the substantial reliance on public investments for any conversion to take place (SILVA; DINIZ; FERREIRA, 2013).

Political power was quickly concentrated into the hands of the new local elites (from the central-southern states), who held important monopolies due to the amount of land they owned and the violence they used as a form of political and social pressure, benefiting from the fact that the modern state was to be seen as a place of authority. As local and regional authorities were co-opted by the new elites, especially

2 Major Curió, as Sebastião Rodrigues de Moura became known, was strongly active in the south of Pará during the Military Regime. In the 1980s, in addition to actively participating in the repression of the Araguaia Guerrillas, he was responsible for commanding the exploration of gold in the region of Serra Pelada, where at that time there were already around 30,000 prospectors.

3 Although the universalization of procedures was a strategy for universalizing the access to rights, it had lost its effectiveness since resolving historical conflicts (e.g., land management and urban control) was left to regional and local authorities.



through the municipalization of small growing villages (as in the case of emancipating Parauapebas from the municipality of Marabá, and then later the separation of Canaã dos Carajás from the municipality of Parauapebas), the expected universalism of the state bureaucratic procedures gave way to clientelism and corporatism. Melo (2015) and Fernandes et al. (2016) have investigated how SUDAM financed the transformation of entrepreneurs into real estate entrepreneurs that provide support for the local political groups.

One final fact that occurred during the 1990s is extremely relevant for understanding the global plan: the privatization process of Brazilian state-owned companies. Outstanding among them, in 1997, was the CVRD, which then went on to become the third largest mining company in the world, surfing across a period of fifteen years of growth made possible by the high valorization of mineral commodities in response to the pace of economic growth observed in China (COELHO, 2014). The new scale of investments and the new pace of change significantly altered the economic dynamics of the municipality of Canaã dos Carajás, linking it directly to the price fluctuations of ore practiced on the Chinese market, initially with the exploitation of copper ore through the Sossego Project during the early 2000s, and later, with the implementation of the S11D project, dedicated to the exploration of iron ore<sup>4</sup>. The direct interconnection between a small municipality along a frontier region and the dynamic Chinese market, as with the example of discussions on the new contemporary territorial configurations, thereby raises a debate regarding the end of the metropolis era as a warehouse of control between the regions of command and peripheral spaces (MOURA, 2012). It also ratifies Muxi's (2004) thesis concerning the extent to which the growing specialization of cities has created a global network based on business relationships and places them within a new framework of relationships, in which membership of this global network overlaps with the importance of becoming positioned alongside other cities in both national and regional contexts. From this perspective, the phenomenon of extensive urbanization presented by Monte-Mór (1994, 2015), which dialogues with the planetary urbanization thesis by Brenner (2014), may be observed, although it is much more responsive to the specificities of the Amazonian peripheral context than the universalization of consumption to the need of universalizing citizenship and of being rooted in development policies.

After years of research into the case of Canaã, it may be observed that the small vicinities that supported the actions of the former PGC have been abruptly shifted into the distant periphery of the global centers simply because they are close to the areas of commodity production regulated by the global market. There is a convergence between this dynamic and what Robinson (2011) considers as the movement of big capital towards the countries of the South. The author affirms that there exists a kind of "extractive neoliberalism", where neoliberal dynamics operate, but whose command center is maintained many kilometers away. The author further states that in the countries of the Global South, the dynamics governed by capital do not spread homogeneously throughout the territory, but focus on specific points, as is the case of zones where natural resources are exploited.

In Canaã dos Carajás, we observe that the accelerated, opportune modernization is a good representation of the interdependence between the two circuits of the urban economy presented by Santos (2008 [1979]), whereby mining, real estate production

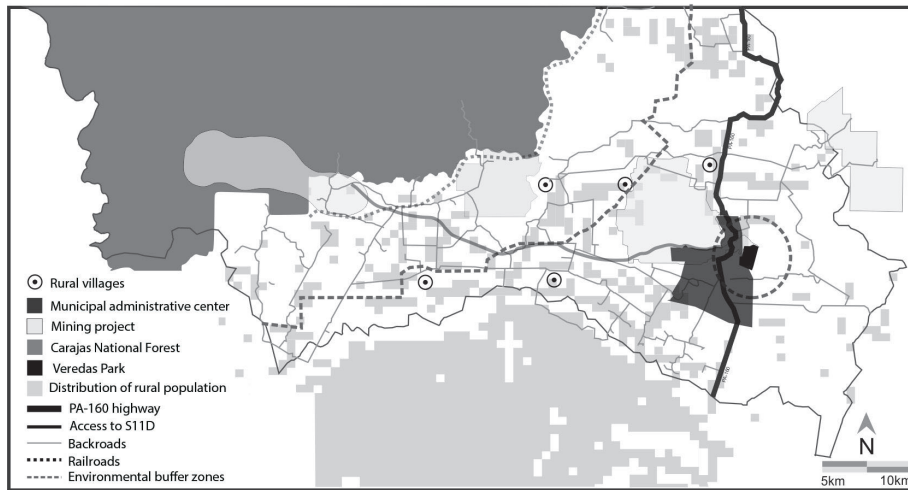
<sup>4</sup> The exploitation of copper placed the municipality of Canaã dos Carajás as the second largest exporter in the state of Pará between 2009 and 2011 (PARÁ, 2014). In addition, the quantity and quality of iron ore found in the S11D area (the world's largest open-pit iron ore mine with a very high ore content) led to investments of around US\$17 billion to make the S11D project possible (VALE S. A., 2016).

and extensive ranching comprise an upper circuit, while the practices of family production (urban agriculture, beekeeping, handicrafts, etc.) or retail and informal services make up a lower circuit. In addition to this, conditions were also provided for a complete reorganization of the territory, in that the processes already underway were co-opted by the new logics (the search for salaries, a specialized labor force, a utilitarian view of the territory as a basis for production, transforming the city into merchandise).

From a Lefebvrian perspective (LEFEBVRE, 2000; 2008 [1970]), the sense of the city as a meeting place (of people, goods, knowledge) has been supplanted by a sense of production and exploration aimed at benefiting those located in distant regions (field surveys, 2015, 2016). In this research it was understood that the implosion of the old town, metamorphosed<sup>5</sup> into a city, and the explosion of support structures for the new mode of production across the municipality (housing, logistics centers, mine operating area, dams, roads, etc.) quickly valorized the old rural lands and favored the imposition of speculative urban logic on the commercialization of rural lands, promoting the transformation of productive areas into sets of weekend country homes near the new roads in the north-west portion of the municipality. To the south of the municipal center, precarious housing estates begin to emerge, towards the small production areas, which are concentrated near the border with the municipality of Água Azul do Norte, while to the east of the municipal center and the municipality just one single farm defines the conditions of use and occupation of the land (Figures 1 and 2).

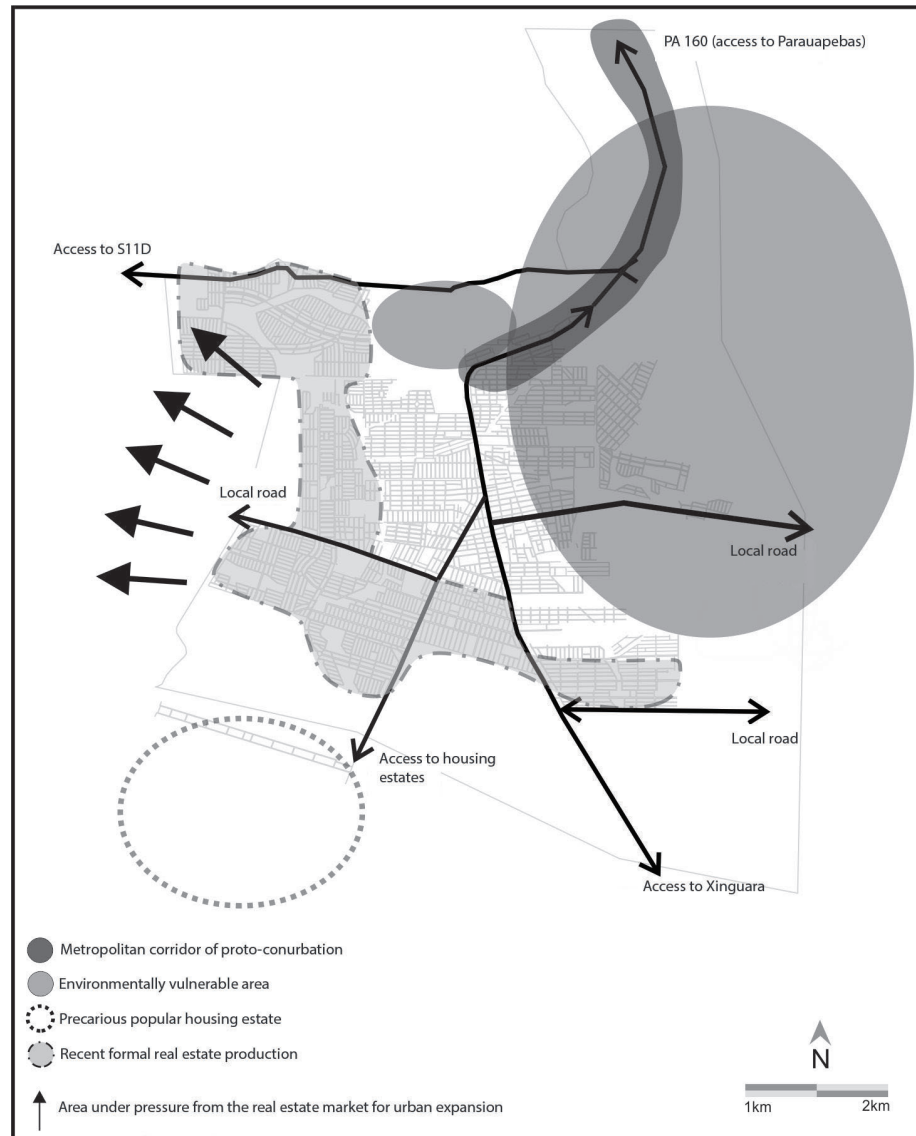
5 In this text, the allusion to the phenomenon of one type of metamorphosis is based on analytical tools offered by schools of urban morphology.

Figure 1: Territorial configuration of the municipality of Canaã dos Carajás



Source: Produced by Lucas Cândido based on information from Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (2010) and Diagonal Urbana (2011).

Figure 2: Illustrating the directions of the expansion dynamics from the municipal administrative center



Source: Produced by Lucas Cândido from the road and urban perimeter map (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE CANAÁ DOS CARAJÁS, 2012; 2015).

At the dawn of the 21st century, the production of urban space in southeastern Pará is still the result of oligarchic action and of a disregard for federal ruling that regulates the subdivision of urban land, environmental and urban management, and/or government authorities (regional and local), issues that are best inserted into the Lefebvrian sphere of a mixed level, discussed below.

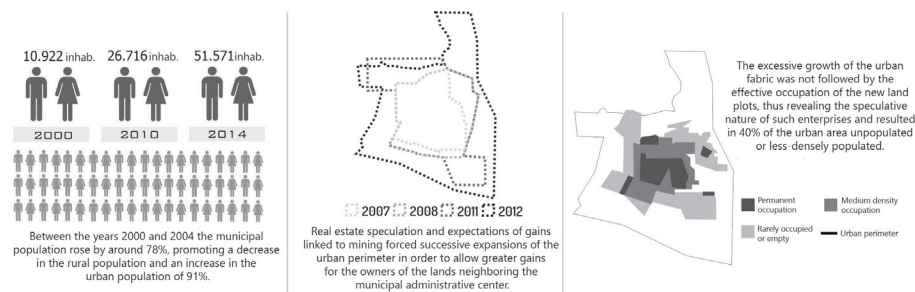


## THE MIXED LEVEL: THE GENESIS OF THE CITY

The introduction of new financial landscapes, made possible through transnational mineral exploration (e.g. shopping centers, gated residential communities), has triggered a population explosion and a completely new process of urban growth within the city, which has been able to articulate both the global networks (the distant order) and the most immediate sphere of the home (the near order) (LEFEBVRE, 2000; 2008 [1970]). All the urban transformation investigated was driven equally by the action of a transnational mining company and as a result of intense actions by farmers, landowners, local politicians, migrants and pioneers, who have acted according to their own self-interests, often involving noncompliance with environmental and urban laws, the use of influential relationships and privileged information, interlinking their own private interests with actions by local authorities, practices of spoliation, coercion and degradation of the natural environment, among other practices of social and environmental plunder, which, within these contexts, are viewed as perfectly natural conduct.

Thus, the real estate sector, also intertwined with the international financial system, has gradually transformed the city of Canaã dos Carajás into a possible variant of the growth machine, as described by Logan and Molotch (1987) for the American cities of the 1980s, attracted by the expectation of overflowing profits boosted by the mining boom. However, as Ferreira (2003) demonstrates that the growth machine theory, in the case of Brazil, only applies to formal areas, in this research it has been verified that the abovementioned agents understood that it was necessary to produce formal areas in Canaã dos Carajás through the guided expansion of the urban fabric. This process took place in two distinct cycles of expansion: a) the first, in which pioneering local agents, landowners, entrepreneurs and farmers benefited from access to privileged information regarding the installation of the Sossego Project by Vale S.A. and were capable of articulating and initiating a process of makeshift, highly speculative urban expansion; and b) a second cycle, led by real estate companies with national and regional capital, associated with international securitizers that gradually replaced the first agents (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Illustrating population growth, expansion of the urban fabric and the relation between the constructed urban fabric versus the effective occupation of the lots



Source: Fundação de Amparo e Desenvolvimento da Pesquisa (2016).

The peculiarities of the manner in which local authorities function have enabled the different practices and temporalities of the region to exist side-by-side, a socio-territorial mosaic where financialized capitalism, modern industrial capitalism,

mercantile capitalism coexist with modes of production and reproduction of life, in which capitalism does not prevail, and relations closer to the principles of reciprocity and of exchange (POLANYI, 2000 [1945])<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> These are taken as relations of reciprocity of the day-to-day practices of the poorest section of the population who manifest forms of economic relations that are not mediated by the market (sharing, cooperation). They may often be observed in exchanges between family members, relatives and cooperatives, and in activities such as urban agriculture, extractivism, handicrafts and street markets. In addition, in this region it is common to negotiate an exchange of services for products (intercity bus ticket paid with a bunch of bananas), or simply acts of solidarity such as giving a lift to a friend.

The empirical evidence obtained confirms the results reported by Melo (2015) for the cities of Marabá and Parauapebas: that the real estate market in Canaã dos Carajás also presents strong ties with local agents, who maintain themselves as protagonists due to land ownership, which historically has formed the basis for the traditional power relations across the region (FERNANDES et al., 2016), established with the introduction of policies that attracted entrepreneurs to “occupy” the region, by the provision of state loans through colonization projects and fiscal incentives operationalized by SUDAM. These actions constituted a land structure based on the privatization of land, concentrated in the hands of agriculturalists, loggers, illegal land grabbers and other groups linked to industrial-financial capital, thus positioning the logging and farming companies of the 1960s as the origins of the current real estate companies (MELO, 2015). The link between this generation of entrepreneurs and the new real estate companies is a key factor in understanding how the local real estate market currently functions and the recent transformations of urban space in Canaã dos Carajás. The diversification and transition of investments from these segments towards the real estate sector is an indication of the central role that land ownership has played in the modernization project: a form of financial asset so as to obtain increasingly higher incomes (HARVEY, 2013 [1982]).

Within this context, two characteristic features of the recent changes in land use may be observed: (a) the massive conversion of rural land into urban land, since urbanized land may provide larger gains; and b) the tendency to connect land to the financial system. Field research has revealed the recent connections between foreign investment funds and the production of real estate developments in southeastern Pará, including Canaã de Carajás. The coalition between global finance and the local real estate lends support to both of these dynamics. On the one hand, investment funds raise capital market resources to enable the extraordinary advance of urbanized subdivisions within the region, while at the same time these new real estate developments become part of the investment portfolio of the funds, thereby increasing their market values, even though the expectation of achieving these values (with the sale of the lots) is not fully certain. As a result of these articulation strategies, there has been a mismatch between the urbanization process conducted by the international investors and local entrepreneurs, united by the basic imperative of the (easy) accumulation of capital, and the actual demands of constructing the city, which has consequently left its residents, chiefly the very poorest, completely vulnerable to the contradictions created by the financialization process, when associated to the transformation of land use. This aspect will be discussed in greater detail below, with regard to the sphere of daily life.

The real estate dynamics emerging from within this context display a typical movement of peripheral and frontier space, where several temporalities converge and diverge within the same territory. In this context, the *modus operandis* of twentieth-century industrial activity coexists alongside the techno-informational innovations of the contemporary technological paradigm that operationalizes the spatio-temporal changes associated with the increasingly accelerated movement of capital. This is largely due to the manner in which the ever-increasing participation of the modern

tertiary sector (services and information), with the support of technological devices (computers), enables production and reproduction in a distant network, and reduces interaction within and between the places of production (HARDT; NEGRI, 2004).

The demand for highly specialized workers and the adoption of state-of-the-art technologies for the S11D mine to operate have been responsible for intensifying the polarization of work in Canaã dos Carajás. The real estate market is targeted at the few skilled professionals employed by the mining company (engineers, geologists, technicians) and its outsourcers, while the migrant masses who were attracted by the outlook of work are concentrated in the environmentally fragile areas or where land is cheaper, in areas of irregular occupation and on housing estates financed by the *Minha Casa Minha Vida* (My Home, My Life) program. While the mine was under construction, a greater correspondence existed between the expectations of the real estate sector and the consumer market, when 18,000 workers were attracted by the belief that purchasing plots of land on the new subdivisions would be a good investment deal. With the start of the operating phase approaching, it is expected that less than 100 direct (qualified) workers will settle in the city, as well as an additional contingent of unemployed (information obtained at work meetings held in July 2015 with professionals, managers from the City Hall of Canaã dos Carajás and with project technicians from Vale S.A. in the municipality).

The city's spatial transformations were governed by the interests of the few, imposed from above to ensure that gains were consummated for the local landowning elite, by installing an incomplete appropriation model of codes and matrices typical of exogenous contexts. The fragmented growth in Canaã dos Carajás, through new housing estates, subdivisions and gated residential communities, led to the socio-spatial fragmentation of the city, and generated vast spatial and social distances, without the necessary complimentary spaces and public services. The elitization of the central areas has already brought about the need for commuting to the nearest rural village 15 km away (the village of Planalto), with popular small holdings located to the south and to the north (along the road that connects Canaã dos Carajás and Parauapebas). Such facts indicate a kind of "proto-conurbation" along the axis connecting the two cities, a phenomenon calculated as being a manifestation of typical metropolitan processes within this reality.

In 1994, the process of municipal subdivision warranted the need to hold local elections. However, the fact that it was now possible for the population to decide on its political representatives proved little obstacle to the formation of a local oligarchic elite. The fact that the lands from the original settlers had been abandoned allowed the opportunities generated by the dynamics of mining to fall under the command of those who controlled the land and the conditions of its subdivision, and the induced centralities, use and typologies of land occupation. Field research has demonstrated that the loyalty shown by those in the most vulnerable social strata through the long-term sale of land and the use of plots as payment for services, aggravated the subaltern position of those at the bottom, strengthened the oligarchic actions of the elite and made holding onto land for future subdivisions much more lucrative. With the new revenues from mining (service taxes (ISS), royalties) and accelerated urbanization, it became difficult to obtain a global understanding of the ongoing processes and the need to train technical staff to handle such changes. While the measures taken by the public authorities – the construction of schools, health centers and hospitals

and improvements to roads and urban infrastructure – reverberated positively with the population that had previously faced enormous difficulties, the authorities were nonetheless unable to make advances in transforming the living conditions of the new migrants (decisions on locations and size of the amenities were based more on an interest to produce and expand the formal city rather than the actual needs of the population). The strength of private property as a structuring element in the production of urban space resulted in a lack of public spaces for coexistence and of political-civil representation in the city. The city lacks public spaces and green areas where the population may socialize, thereby inducing the transfer of people's public life towards semi-public and/or private environments (shops, restaurants, churches), where levels of access depend very much on income and belonging to certain groups, which thereby engenders more segregation and instability for the most vulnerable populations who neither have a voice to guide the municipal agenda nor the means or income to adapt to the new way of life.

Unable to meet the various dimensions of urban life, Canaã dos Carajás is described by its residents as the “city of work”, signifying that it is a city governed by market interests, in which its citizens act (and live), contrary to their civil status, as consumers (MUXÍ, 2004). Unlike the “anthropological place” described by Augé (1994), as a space that is capable of interweaving the physical plane and the activities that develop within it, Canaã has embodied spaces of supermodernity where the urban processes remain unmeasured – the “non-places” – that impose new experiences and episodes of a “solitary tension”.

It may be observed that the city's political conflicts have not been made explicit, and the preexisting practices have been supplanted by the logic of private appropriation, thereby undermining the construction of any instance of public domain, of either a spatial or social order. Lastly, mediating the interests of the various social groups has been subjected to arrangements, which has ensured that power and authority is concentrated in the hands of the few who have something to offer in the bargaining processes. The inefficiency of state action has also made it impossible to circulate the universalism of procedures typical of modern industrial states (NUNES, 1997). In this respect it is important to mention that Vale S.A.'s support for municipal management has created a culture of consultancies that, despite offering real contributions to the municipality, has always been poorly understood and internalized, both by the administration and by society. This has always been aggravated both by the fact that the products of these consultancies are of a metropolitan orientation and that the proposals rarely adhere to the needs of a large part of the population excluded from the mining operation circuit or from the export activities.

The primacy of the value of exchange in the expansion process of the urban network has encouraged the old forms of appropriating territory (of a rural nature) to be continuously abandoned, and through the subdivision of old established farms, has enabled a spate of metamorphoses or of minor metropolitan urban subdivisions in the city's Global North, through the spatial morphologies generated by the new productive arrangements and economic financialization (especially the upscale subdivisions and gated residential condominiums that have opened up in the expansion area since 2013). Initially, the central area was continuously subdivided with no regulation and/or inspection for the provision of basic infrastructure (sanitation, asphalt, pavements, afforestation), resulting in poorly-provided for spatial areas

and an extremely disconnected, fragmented road network, thus making circulation difficult for both pedestrians and motorists. The recent regularization of land tenure and urbanization, made possible after federal law 11,952 / 2009 (BRAZIL, 2009), brought about infrastructure improvements in the new areas, but little advance was made in providing public spaces and creating new centralities.

The exogenous spatialities have imposed new forms of daily life based on consumption and new ways of appropriating space to create mutations in the articulation between place, identity and daily life (CARLOS, 2007), in order to accelerate the speed of reproducing capital. The rapid transformation from the original typologies of the city (small wooden huts set in the middle of a lot, narrow roads) to the new spatial expressions (brick houses surrounded by high walls that cost a million Reals, 5 to 8-storeyed buildings, wide avenues) meet the demands of the power centers and neglect the stability and durability of the environment, which may provide subsistence alternatives to the population and serve as instruments to reduce the uncertainties and conflicts arising from such changes (TUAN, 2013). Moreover, they also reveal the difficulties in relating to others when faced with the inverted values of the contemporary city, given the continuous degradation of neighborhood and community relations, which have gradually been replaced by the individualism that has accompanied the “development” of the city, as Bauman (2000: 109) warned:

[...] a pathology of public space resulting in a pathology of politics: the wilting and waning of the art of dialogue and negotiation, the substitution of the techniques of escape and elision for engagement and mutual commitment. ‘Do not talk to strangers’ – once a warning given by worrying parents to their hapless children – has now become the strategic precept of adult normality.

## **THE LOCAL LEVEL: THE SPHERE OF DAILY LIFE**

The correlation of forces that were established by introducing mining into the municipality generated expectations that the region would undergo a continuous conversion to the rationality of “progress” and “development”, even if this signified that the socio-environmental conflicts, conveniently preserved as blind spots, would intensify. Visualizing these conflicts demands analytical approaches that articulate the processes manifested on different scales, and reveal how they are expressed in everyday life, illustrating how the denials are linked to strategies of domination and hegemonic ideologies. It is on this scale that we observe the manner in which the new configurations (typologies of land use and occupation) have interfered in people’s lives, thereby qualifying this scale as having the best resolution to reveal the obstacles that block the trickle-down effect of wealth (SANTOS, 2008 [1979]).

The adoption of industrial-based production practices, linked to financial capital and detached from the preexisting socioeconomic processes in the municipality, has introduced an opposition between urban and rural, through a range of new practical-sensitive morphologies hitherto unknown within the region. Values and forms of land use and occupation have been imported from metropolitan and foreign contexts, imposed onto an environment that follows a rural identity matrix, in order to depreciate the associations between people, land and historically



successful economic practices. The contamination of local practices by values of an urban-industrial order, permeated by the logic of consumption, paved the way so that the slow trajectories (SANTOS, 2008 [1979]) of a rural nature, which favored neighborhood relations and the value of land use and that encouraged the consolidation of knowledge in terms of managing nature, were stigmatized as being backward, and were surrendered to the hegemonic discourse of there being only one route towards development (FURTADO, 1974).

The ruptures have overturned the socio-spatial diversity that had emerged throughout the region and deepened inequalities that were potentialized by spatial adaptations directed solely towards the use of the automobile and the private usufruct of the city. The spread of the urban network has favored a metamorphosis from the traditional pattern of the street as a space for meeting and diversity, with suitable spatial qualities for the customary forms of moving around (pedestrians and cyclists), towards an arrangement adapted to individual transport, thus transforming the street into a quasi-exclusive element that connects the sphere of production (work) and the sphere of consumption, thereby dispossessing it of its social function, increasing distances and hindering the movement of the poorer population that inhabits the periphery, as demonstrated in the following testimonies from residents:

Interview 1: You know, the most difficult thing here is that we have to go into the center for everything we need. When my husband is around he takes me in on the motorbike [...], but when he's not we have to go on foot (resident, August 2016).

Interview 2: [Is it very difficult living so far from the center?] Very difficult! Because whatever we need to do urgently, we have to go into the center for. And as I say, either by bike or on foot. So we arrive late. Sometimes, say if it's for a job interview, we have to go in well before, and we arrive covered in dust. Nowadays, the road's been paved, but before... So, we'd arrive there and have to find somewhere to clean up, to be smart for the interview. Things have always been complicated here (resident, August 2016).

Hence, the expansion of the city of Canaá dos Carajás has shown a disregard for public spaces and freely accessible areas, rivers, hills and riparian woodland, and has homogenized the landscape to extend the stretches of urbanizable areas, and transfer socialization to the private spaces. By alienating nature (and the trails, canyons, waterfalls, rivers that exist inside the municipality) the demand for leisure formulas imported from the global city (the shopping mall) has been strengthened, and obscured the local landscaping potential both in and outside the city, which could otherwise have been used as spaces for preserving traditional leisure practices, and have therefore encouraged residents, according to several reports, to remain at home during their leisure hours, or even travel to Parauapebas in search of other options (shopping malls, cinemas), given the “shutdown” of the social spaces that the city has experienced.

Alternatives to the hegemonic vision have gone unnoticed, thanks to the mismatch between the time to reproduce capital (in constant acceleration) and the time to reproduce life. The voracity of the transformations has prevented the population's gradual absorption and overall understanding of the ongoing processes, and has alienated them with the presumption that their needs may be exclusively met through consumption. The abandonment of the rural area (villages, family production units)



and the imposition of the urban as a (fallacious) solution to the historical demand for infrastructure and basic facilities (health, education, sanitation) for the peasantry are accompanied by the devalorization of production practices (agriculture, fishing, hunting), used to justify the degradation of the biophysical environment in the name of progress, which does not reach all social groups in the same way.

Aligned to this, the polarization between the almost instant population growth of the city and the qualification requirements of the mining company and its subsidiaries have created a mass of inhabitants who are excluded from the opportunities provided by industrial rationality, while the valorization of land has discouraged agricultural work, and the restructuring of rural production has resulted in a rural exodus and the deterioration of people's living conditions: "This is why I don't like it very much here, because we've never had the chance to earn anything. I can't count on the companies here for work" (resident, July 2016).

In regard to this aspect, the city offers differentiated experiences to different social groups. Salaried workers employed in the mine are provided with company transport, and new inhabitants who own their own car may enjoy the region in a completely different manner to the former rural dwellers, who still have no alternative form of mobility or manner with which to access the new health and education facilities, for example, especially after the new roads have been completed. The group of pioneers who historically concentrated land tenure or established strong social relationships collected economic and political privileges. Land control enabled coalitions with the real estate industry, and good friendships enabled secure employment in the civil service plus access to the decision makers. Such articulations provided these social groups with a certain capacity to assume the costs of converting from village to city, either through access to private health and education services, or through the ability to pay the real estate prices in the central areas, either through ownership of properties in the city or through owning rural property as a form of leisure.

Social groups excluded from the opportunities generated by mining have sought ways of adapting to the new reality, and have created production and leisure strategies related to using land for urban agriculture in order to keep the scale of reproducing everyday life active. Interviewees placed strong emphasis on the traditional way of life, spatially translated into large numbers of small vegetable gardens in their backyards and short fishing and hunting trips into nearby regions, thus evidencing the partial conversion of the rural way of life into the urban, and highlighting such activities as being not only subsistence practices but also a way of resisting the imposition of urban logic, so common in the Amazon, but so neglected by generic public policies:

Interview 1: [Why do you grow vegetables?] To eat! But if ever anyone turns up to buy something, then we sell too. If people want to buy anything then we generally have it, but there are times when we don't! So it's better to plant (resident, August 2016).

Interview 2: I've always enjoyed planting. Tomato, onions, coriander. There [where the interviewee used to live] I lived for a while in the city, then a squat became available on the edge of the river, so my husband went and got a piece of land and we built a small hut. Right beside the [river] Tocantins [...] I really liked it there, I got used to it (resident, August 2016).

Interview 3: My husband works here as a scaffolder, but he enjoys hunting too, going into the woods to hunt game [...] Fishing as well, he likes fishing, he has a net and all the

fishing tackle. So it's good, when there's nothing coming in from one side, there's always something else [...] Now he's come up with the idea of having this vegetable garden [...] to at least give us our rice and beans [...] It's a way of getting by. Every little helps, doesn't it?! (resident, August 2016).

Municipal management, on the other hand, in the belief that mining alone is able to elevate the municipality to a position of greater prominence within the regional urban network, has also created obstacles for the continuity of these rural practices by assuming the classic opposition between the rural and urban universes, which is quite unreal in the context of Canaá dos Carajás. This situation may be illustrated by the agricultural producers' market, which on Saturdays, brings together rural producers from Canaá dos Carajás and its nearby localities, mainly from Parauapebas. They meet in a space near the City Hall in a fruit and vegetable market, fomenting the local economy and bringing vitality to this public space. In opposition to this well-established practice, the City Hall has recently built a large distribution center that may only be used by producers from the municipality, and has the intention of closing the street market, in an overt position of sanitizing "backward" practices and of disregard, especially if we consider the idea that development is derived from co-development, human capital and multiple ecosystems (JACOBS, 2001).

The invisibility of the rivers, hills and forest, due to difficulties involving access, stands in the way of recognizing the potential that these areas offer for the socialization of the population, and the social importance of their preservation: "I go [to the river], but it's a long way away. We go to Pebas [Parauapebas River]. But the Pebas has already dried up, it's all cracked open, just one big old hole now. You can only walk there now, because you can't fish there any more" (interview 2, resident, August 2016). The municipal management is currently in the initial phase of drawing up a municipal tourism plan aiming to bring to light these spaces that have remained hidden.

Nothing pays the same as mining, especially in terms of taxes, and even when it is not possible to absorb all the available labor force, the option is for the uncritical reproduction of the living standards of large cities where workers live far from the workplace, where the conservation of nature is subordinate to urbanization that, when destroyed, harms and excludes social groups that depend on biodiversity for their livelihood. While the parallels between modernization (industrialization) and claims for citizenship have been striking in countries of advanced capitalism, the context of the Lefebvrian utopia concerning the right to the urban and the city is still relatively imponderable. Following the contemporary trend of the "neoliberal" city, gestated through the privatization of productive means and the financialization of the economy, the city, which is still undergoing its genesis, unquestioningly accepts the deterioration of both the public man and the city as a space of sociability.

## CONCLUSION

The results presented in the present text demonstrate the fundamental importance of associating contemporary formulations with studies on Brazilian urbanization, given the selective manner in which modernization processes take place and constitute new forms of colonization that effortlessly homogenize and depoliticize the population.

There is a need for new methodologies and more interdisciplinary, comprehensive research in order to formulate the ongoing processes, so that the academy does not reinforce false dichotomies, or the denial of nature and mechanisms of colonization, when characterizing territory and, in particular, the insertion of cities within its regions.

It may be observed that the volume of resources and the rhythm with which it is moved by global capital generate both wealth and exclusion, in that they permit the exposure of territory to the simultaneous action of several fractions of capital (mercantile, productive, financial) and their coexistence with non-capitalist forms of life, without recognizing the diversity of socio-spatial formations that such coexistence has generated. Moreover, the way in which new opportunities are articulated with the pre-established social relations and power structures defines manifestations unexplained by theories formulated in the Global North.

The emergence of new spheres of consumption and denial of the public dimension in the village that has metamorphosed into the city, where its production has been captured by global financial capital, have produced new landscapes that have dialectically connected the various forms of expressing capitalist urbanization, although according to Santos (2008[1979]), always in an incomplete and selective manner. At each modernization, new points or zones of space are captured from neutral space, and have become a new portion of the operating space (SANTOS, 2008 [1979]). These are hybrid spaces, since they are tensioned both by external political and economic factors and by the relationships and hierarchies of power, which are articulated at a local level, as evidenced throughout the text.

The lack of analytical and structural concepts, well indicated by postcolonial authors, has maintained invisibilities and denied or disqualified previous knowledge and/or practices that have taken on nature as an active component of the production process. This decision has assumed that activity related to big capital is both desirable and a priority, even though the benefits are reaped by the few, and deny the possibility of creating innovative productive chains supported in the dialogue between new technologies and traditional local knowledge, as defended by Silva, Diniz and Ferreira (2013), which would be capable of promoting and articulating new work and old work (JACOBS, 2001). This would be one manner in which to promote the inclusion of social groups not included in the dynamics of mining, real estate, or large livestock production and reduce historical inequalities, recognizing the need to reproduce life and emancipate the population for the much-desired universalization of citizenship.

Additionally, in the context of Canaã dos Carajás, the global dynamics linked to the financial market, such as economies oriented towards the exportation of commodities, have been central to intensifying the extensive urbanization process, through the extraordinary production of subdivisions supported by capital from international investment funds. These new dynamics highlight the shift in the changes of land use, mediated by the interests of global and regional agents who have no links to what happens on the “floor” of the city, and the sphere of everyday life, which is deeply impacted by the project of modernization oriented through the upper circuit, through the demonstration effect, which includes the massive insertion of the population into the sphere of consumption. According to Harvey (2013 [1982]), the approximation of real estate and financial circuits determines how capital is allocated on the land. It shapes private investments and the geographical structuring of production, the

**Ana Cláudia Duarte Cardoso** is graduated in Architecture and Urbanism from the Universidade Federal do Pará (UFPA); she has a master degree in Urban Planning from the Universidade de Brasília (UnB); a PhD in Architecture from the Oxford Brookes University, UK. She is an associate professor at the Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo at UFPA; and has a scholarship for Produtividade em Pesquisa from CNPq.

E-mail: [aclaudiacardoso@gmail.com](mailto:aclaudiacardoso@gmail.com)

ORCID: 0000-0002-1866-453X

**Lucas Souto Cândido** holds a degree and is currently undertaking a master degree in Architecture and Urbanism at the Universidade Federal do Pará (UFPA).

E-mail: [candido74@hotmail.com](mailto:candido74@hotmail.com)

**Ana Carolina Campos de Melo** holds a degree and a master degree in Architecture and Urbanism at the Universidade Federal do Pará (UFPA). She is currently undertaking a doctorate in Economy at UFPA.

E-mail: [carolmelo.08@gmail.com](mailto:carolmelo.08@gmail.com)

ORCID: 0000-0001-9576-9362

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division of labor and, at the extremes, the dynamics of the reproduction spaces.

The adoption of the spheres of life proposed by Lefebvre as a structure of analysis seeks to demonstrate the great extent to which urban networks extrapolate the national territory, albeit from the perspective of some social agents, while for others, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the city may still not be understood as an area of rights. In this context the discussion on both access to nature and access to land should be inseparable from discussion on the urban and the city, which in all senses are still undergoing genesis.

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