

# URBAN PLANNING, AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS: CREATION OF THE BANHADO, SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS LANDMARK<sup>1</sup>

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DOUGLAS ALMEIDA SILVA<sup>2</sup>  
PAULA VILHENA CARNEVALE VIANNA<sup>3</sup>  
VALÉRIA REGINA ZANETTI<sup>4</sup>

## Introduction

The incorporation of nature into the theoretical and practice fields of urban planning is a social-historical process that began in the 19th century, by valuating the scenic aspect of the landscape. Such process was supported and punctuated by different views of nature – romantic, scientific or utilitarian, constantly opposite to and in conflict with urban development (MELLO-THÉRY, 2011). Currently, the environment has entered the political urban agenda as a natural heritage, a common asset to be preserved as environmentally protected areas (PA). Heritage enlistment and urban regulation of those areas, in the Brazilian segregated cities, is permeated by conflicts of ethnic, economic, political and cultural character (SANTOS, 2009).

This article reviews how urban planning thoughts and actions played a role, historically, in the construction of the naturalized social representation of the landscape, and investigates the processes by which, once established, this representation influences and drives the current propositions of use and management of environmentally protected urban areas, institutionalized in the directive plans.

To MirafTAB (2011), urban planning is a practice field whose social representation of neutrality, driven to common good, fails to match the actual historical practices. Planners would be “facilitators of state agendas for social control and of planning decisions that systematically displace disadvantaged populations, through zoning and urban renewal projects, to create exclusionary cities” (p.860).

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2. Historian, Doctorate, Postgraduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning, UNIVAP - University of Vale do Paraíba, SP. E-mail: douglas.almeida9000@gmail.com

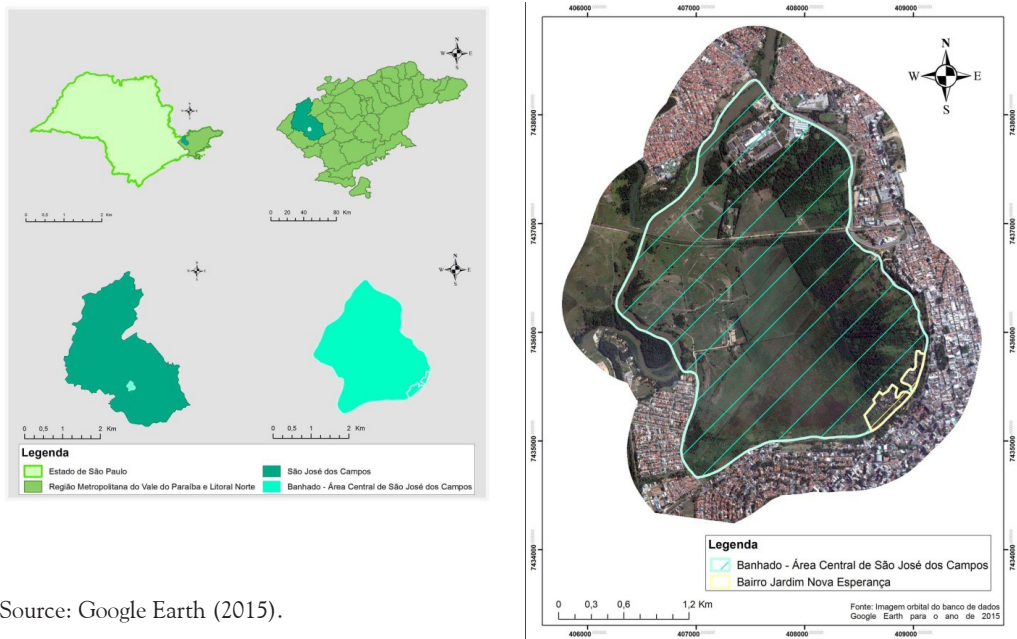
3. PhD in Preventive Medicine, Postgraduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning, UNIVAP - University of Vale do Paraíba, SP. E-mail: paulavianna@univap.br.

4. PhD in History, Postgraduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning, UNIVAP - University of Vale do Paraíba, SP. E-mail: vzanetti@univap.br

Concealed from the legal city, the exclusionary city, from the environmental point of view, expands and densifies itself in the outskirts, most commonly in fragile or strategic areas (ROLNIK; KLINK, 2011), housing populations in a network of iniquity, risk and vulnerability (HOGAN, 2005; SPINK, 2014). Such communities tend to, with new codes of urban and environmental regulation, be reallocated by the government authorities, usually to peripheral areas, in a movement that simultaneously disrupts life territories and maintains their precariousness (SPINK, 2014).

The area of study herein, the *Banhado*, an alluvial 5,2 million-square meter plain (532.000m<sup>2</sup>, of which, public lands) located in the center of the city of São José dos Campos, SP, was instituted as an Environmentally Protection Area (APA) of Public Utility in 1984, and State APA in 2002. Geographically, it is formed by the Paraíba River and its floodplain, delineated and framed by a semicircular hillside which characterizes it as a unique natural phenomenon (MORELLI; SANTOS, 1996; AB'SABER, 1991).

**Figure 1 – Location map. Municipality of São José dos Campos and the Banhado area**



Source: Google Earth (2015).

The City's 2006 Directive Plan and the Urban Structuring Program linked to it projected transforming a portion of the area into a Municipal Park. The *Banhado* public lands would make up the Park that would total 1,5 million square meters (SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS, 2012). The hillside on the east side of the area holds an old housing settlement, Jardim Nova Esperança (Garden of New Hope), an area of subnormal conditions, where 1,302 people live (INSTITUTO..., 2010). Although the APA classification

legally allows the area to be occupied, the Directive Plan sets out removal of the families, to jointly implement the municipal park and a thoroughfare project.

This is not the first urban planning proposal for the *Banhado*. In this paper, urban planning is considered a field (LACERDA, 2013) and symbolic system (BOURDIEU, 1989) and the urban planners, actors whose decision making and actions are influenced by their positioning in the field of knowledge, by their social relations network, as well as by the economic, symbolic and cultural capital accumulated in their social path. As a symbolic system, urban planning is a logical structure, at the same time structured and structuring, of ways of thinking and acting - a field of dispute and conflict mediated by language.

From that standpoint, this case study analyzes the urban planning proposals related to the social construction of the *Banhado* as an urban landscape, in a municipality that historically sustained its identity and representation in the industrial and technological vocation (ZANETTI, 2010). This research aims to understand the material and symbolic disputes involved in the urbanism proposals driven to a physical area of unique environmental and social characteristics, located in the center of a city in the state of São Paulo.

From the methodological perspective, it is a historical research, based on documents, from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources involve legal documents, institutional acts in particular, urban directive plans and respective implementation documents relative to the *Banhado*, as well as official letters and correspondences of the legislative branch, available from the public archives and from construction and urban planning offices of the municipal prefecture. The secondary research sources were the local printed newspapers: *Correio Joseense* (1938 and 1939); *Jornal Agora* (1973 and 1974) and *Vale Paraibano* (2008-2013).

The documents were analyzed based on Bakhtin's (2006) guidance for discourse production analysis that emphasizes the subject in the production of discourses and the social and historical conditions that shape the statement.

The text is presented in three sections. The first one presents the concepts that ground the analysis; the second one analyzes the historical and current plans of intervention in the *Banhado*, in a periodicity that privileged three different times, designated by their theoretical foundations: sanitary planning (1937-1945), functionalist planning (1970-1974) and environmentalist planning (2008-2012). At the end, considerations are made.

## Landscape and the urban planning field

The modern concept of landscape, divided into culture and nature (SILVEIRA, 2009), legitimates the reallocation of people living in environmentally protected areas. Latour (1994) considered that naturalism, the founding science of modernity, divided nature into primary qualities, objective and subject to scrutiny by science; and secondary ones - subjective, not scientifically recognizable. Such bifurcation would allegedly have naturalized human relations and subtracted their political character.

In contemporaneity, disruption from the naturalist science and recognition of nature as being hybrid would enable the applied sciences, such as urban planning, to incorpo-

rate subjectivity and social and political dimensions into the proposals for intervention in the urban space. Silveira (2009) disclosed how the landscape, considered beyond the contemplative and esthetic bias, emerges as a spatial dimension laden with triangular practices of meaning, in which groups, agents and the environment interrelate constantly and mutually, in a hybrid of nature and culture that influences what is yet to come.

Therefore, landscape is a complex concept: agent of a two-way relation, simultaneously affected by and influencing man's action; cultural product (ROZO, 2010) of a significant symbolic value (CORREA, 2011). To Cosgrove (2006), it is a dialectical term that connects incommensurate elements such as nature and culture, earth and life, and, despite its unquestionable material presence, it cannot be materialized unless it is apprehended by an external observer. Thus, the landscape's unique "poetics and politics" (COSGROVE, 2006, p. 50) that characterize it as a visual ideology.

To Bourdieu (1989), the ideology production analysis requires relating the structure and the ideological functions of the discourses to the social conditions in which the ideas circulate and are produced, as well as to the functions that serve for specialists and non-specialists, considering both specific interests of those who produce them and the logic of the production field. Besides the position of the field agents, their communication and legitimation strategies in the eyes of their pairs matter, as well as the way in which they disclose cognitive structures that provide a certain apprehension of the world.

Since the 90s, the discourse that articulates "environmental" and "urban" has updated the debate between the "political" and "technical" treatment of space (ACSELRAD, 1999). In the ideological and instrumental dispute that frame the propositions for the inhabited protected areas, the technical concept of risk, in its mathematical definition (probability of occurrence of a dangerous event) has become limited before the urban environmental and social-demographic dynamics complexity and was coupled to the notion of vulnerability (HOGAN, 2005; SPINK, 2014).

The notion of vulnerability takes into account the social, economic and cultural conditions of individuals or groups that make them more or less susceptible to danger, considers the subjective component of risk perception and its hierarchization in regard to other jeopardies, providing a better understanding of the decisions made and ambivalences in the face of the risks revealed (SPINK, 2014). As an operative concept, it favors the construction of more impartial urban policies.

The following topics will analyze three proposals for urban intervention in a unique landscape, articulating the concepts presented.

### **The 30s: sanitary urbanism unveils the landscape**

The first urban transformations in São José dos Campos, a municipality of small relevance in the 19th century, economically surpassed by the neighboring localities in the Paraíba Valley benefiting from the coffee cycle, took place in the early 20th century (ZANETTI, 2010).

A remote reference to the *Banhado* can be found in the work of the European naturalist Augusto-Emílio Zaluar (1862), "Peregrination in the Province of S. Paulo".

Amidst the poverty of the *borough* and its constructions, the traveler highlighted the beauty of the fields and the pleasant views:

“One of the most dignifying things to be observed in this locality is the enormous marshes, which they here call *banhados*, and that extend to a great distance to the foot of the mountain on which the *borough* is seated. [...] it seems like we are in the presence of a *sea* in constant stillness” (ZALUAR, 1862, p.109, emphases of the authors).

The *Banhado* metaphor as “sea” may have already existed in the common sense since the mid-19th century; however, as it seems, by then no landscape valuation existed, since the houses, built with their back turned to the *Banhado*, used it only as a backyard (MORELLI, 2002).

Inserted into the modern context, naturalist Zaluar’s observation acquires a peculiar meaning, such as separating the village from the idyllic landscape; the incipient urbanity framed by the lush nature, domesticated as a “sea in constant stillness”.

The first economic use of the *Banhado* derives from the *Central do Brasil* railway branch in the far north of the plain, in the early 20th century (MORELLI, 2002). Clearing of the woods facilitated using the floodplain area to grow rice, favored by the constant floods and by the accumulation of organic material. The plantations, supported by the vast network of drainage canals, practically occupied the entire alluvial plain. Such use prevailed until the 70s, when the formation of dams on the heads of the Paraíba do Sul River reduced the floodplains overflow and introduced cattle breeding.

The municipality, in the early 20th century, started a modest industrial activity and began to consolidate itself as a region proper for the treatment of tuberculosis. In the late 20s and early 30s, those activities, along with the disruption of the agrarian economy in the South of Minas Gerais, lured migrants that, with few resources, set up in the *Banhado* floodplain and, in 1931, set up the first precarious settlement in the municipality (ROSA FILHO, 2002). The small owners built wattle and daub houses and worked as farmers or peddlers in the central streets of nearby places (ZANETTI, 2010).

In the 30s, the city underwent the first planned urban intervention, implemented with state funds (SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS, 1938b) and in line with the urban changes promoted by Adhemar de Barros, the São Paulo intervener, privileging the automotive mobility projects and the architectonic incorporation of progress. The Paraíba Valley Region, inspired by the *Estado Novo* (New State) proposals, was contemplated with a specific plan, the “Plan to Rebuild the Paraíba Valley”.

Aligned with the hygienist urbanism concepts, the municipality was officially instituted as a Health Resort for the treatment of tuberculosis in 1935, a condition settled over a precarious urban infrastructure inherited from the negligible economic dynamic of the previous period. The authoritarian process of physical intervention was commanded by sanitary engineer Francisco José Longo (1938-1941). Following São Paulo projects, Longo invested in the thoroughfare system, transforming the central area, rectifying and widening streets and sidewalks, at the cost of demolishing several properties, under the

excuse of modernization and of the airing and sanitation of the sanitary city (SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS, 1938a). The mayor's alignment with and proximity to the SP intervener facilitated the inflow of resources from the State to the municipality, driven to urban infrastructure projects (SOARES, 2007).

A major urban modification in that period was the demolition of houses that prevented the city view of the large plain:

Considering that to build the public promenade projected, aiming to unveil the *Banhado*, it is necessary to demolish the constructions there existing; [...], in their majority inadequate and in precarious hygiene conditions, [...] solar irradiance and greater ventilation will come from the city to the projected development (SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS, 1938b, p, 1).

The following year, an Institutional Act, claimed by the local newspaper, *Correio Joseense*, to be an extremely urgent action, increased the number of houses to be demolished (SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS, 1939). On the sanitary engineer's drafting table the "sea" gained its "seafront"; the landscape acquired scenic value, framing and embellishing the surroundings that the urbanistic plan wished to make esthetically and symbolically urban (Figure 2).

**Figure 2 –São José Street following the expropriation, 1939-1940.**



Source: CHUSTER, 2012.

The administrative reports emphasize the demolition's contribution towards the city's embellishment, its hygiene and public health (SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS, 1938b). In the local press, the works "of civilizing character" were announced in a celebration fashion, in pace with the "State's progress": "our land will have a public thoroughfare that will cause envy to the most advanced cities in our State" highlighting "(...) the plateau's exceptional situation that serves as our city foundation" (SURTO..., 1940, p.1). While the sanitary, technical engineering that would modernize and embellish the urban center was reiterated in the official documents and in the printed media, an eloquent silence hovered over the people living in the *Banhado*.

Unveiled, open, seen, named, reaffirmed in official documents and in the printed media, the *Banhado* became a "pictorial icon" (COSGROVE, 2006, p.56): an element of unique esthetic and affectionate relation that generalizes itself and produces identity. The author points out that those icons, of conservative character, usually combine people and nature. However, the *Banhado* was taken as a purified entity, liable to contemplation and delight, thanks to the sanitary engineering technique, prescribed in the urban planning of the Health Resort. Merged into, however separated from, the city, the farm-working migrants, invisible to the public policies, became an obstacle stuck in the beautiful landscape.

the 70s: the Functionalist Urbanism projects a park

In the 60s, the Brazilian developmental movement manifested itself in São José dos Campos in the accelerated industrialization, leaning on the arms industry (LESSA, 2001). The city grew and changed, oriented by a functionalist urban planning. In 1970, brigadier Sergio Sobral de Oliveira took on the Prefecture of the Hydro-mineral Resort of São José dos Campos at the height of the 'Economic Miracle', backed by the direction of the Military Regime, legitimately turning the municipality into a technological hub.

Sobral introduced a technocratic language in the municipal administration. The changes to the urban infrastructure included encouragement for the installation of new multinational companies and expansion of the ones already installed. In 1972, the 64% economic growth mark surpassed four times the growth mark of a year earlier (AMARAL, 2008).

Sobral instituted the Integrated Development Consortium of the *Paraíba* Valley (CODIVAP), signed in 1970 by 35 prefectures. An embryo of the Metropolitan Region of the *Paraíba* Valley and *Litoral Norte*, CODIVAP aimed at the integrated regional development (AMARAL, 2008). Sobral headed it between 1971 and 72, conferring São José dos Campos a regional leadership that consolidated, technically and symbolically, the city's representation as a Technological Hub (LESSA, 2001).

The *Banhado* was inserted into this developmental project as a regional park. The administration foresaw for the Regional Park of the *Banhado* large grass areas, tree-lined routes, a large lake and a vast network of services (motels, a riding area, a zoo, bars, restaurants, camping areas and recreation equipment) (Figure 3). The prefecture allegedly started negotiating with the US company Disney World to install a theme park (PROJETO, 1973). Three months before he passed away, in 1997, Sobral reaffirmed his intent in an interview: "There is still room for [...] the idea of my time of turning the *Banhado* into a mestizo Disneyworld" (AMARAL, 2008, p.159).

Modernization of the city's infrastructure became a reality in 1971, with the implementation of the II Directive Plan of Integrated Development of São José dos Campos. The Plan was drawn up by the office of architect Jorge Wilhelm, SERETE S/A, retained by the previous administration, and preceded by a Preliminary Study (AMARAL, 2008).

Focusing on the roads network, the Plan boosted real estate speculation (LESSA, 2001). Keeping the authoritarian and technicism tradition of urban planning, the construction of an ample *Avenida de Fundo de Vale*, advocated by the urban knowledge of the time, connected the center region to the south region of the city and expropriated, once again, the popular houses in the central area (AMARAL, 2008).

Associated with the thoroughfare plan, Wilhelm and his team envisaged the technical project for the Regional Park in which participated Rosa Grena Kliass, a renowned landscaper. The projected park, of 4 million square meters, covered practically the *Banhado's* entire amphitheater area, reserved a 200 meter strip on the left margin of the Paraíba River for the construction of a high standard housing development (PROJETO..., 1973) and foresaw the expropriation of the dwellings in the "*Banhado* Shantytown".

According to the project, the park's location in the center of the downtown area would prevent future "undesirable occupations", ensuring that the landscape characteristics would be preserved (São José dos Campos, 1974, p.18). The technicians proposed to maintain the "sea impression" for those who would look at the *Banhado* "from the city", complementing the natural landscape with engineering techniques and two artificial lakes that would reinforce the sea and bucolic representation of the *Banhado* in the technical, industrial city (SÃO JOSÉ dos CAMPOS, 1973, p. 34). The Project was inserted into the functional and utilitarian urbanism, emphasized the tourism potential of the regional park, its modern recreation devices, compatible zoning and thoroughfare system interconnected with the city (SÃO JOSÉ dos CAMPOS, 1973).

The national development thought coupled with the technical legitimacy of the actors and of the urbanistic proposals for the *Banhado* restated its landscape-image. The purpose, however, had changed: no longer the contemplative leisure, but now functional, utilitarian leisure that included commercial activities. The project condemned the precarious dwellings and foresaw a residential district for people of higher purchasing power, in the *Banhado's* private area.

Simultaneously, the *Banhado* edge became more crowded, receiving worker migrants (ALBERINI, 2015). The occupation was in the agenda of the legislative branch. In an official letter sent to the municipal prefecture, councilman Tertuliano Delphim Junior requested a survey on the *Banhado* dwellers' records. He argued that it was necessary to defend the "Municipal Heritage" against the "profiteers" that were turning "this area, an inalienable heritage of the people", into a matter of land division. According to the councilman, the invaders would be squandering the public heritage and the executive branch interference, representing "the yearnings of the 1964 Revolution", was mandatory (DELPHIM JUNIOR, 1973, p. 1).



Figure 3 – *Banhado* Regional Park Project

Source: Jorge Wilhelm, 2015.

The claim counted on academic support. Nice Lecoq Muller, a geographer and historian, had related the deepening social problems in the municipality to the migrations. She characterized the area as “a major urbanistic and social problem of the city”, an “actual shantytown”, “nestled in São José dos Campos urban space and quite close to the center” that housed, in “precarious dwellings”, “a poor and misfit population, frequently of newcomers from the Country’s Northeast” (MÜLLER, 1969, p.175).

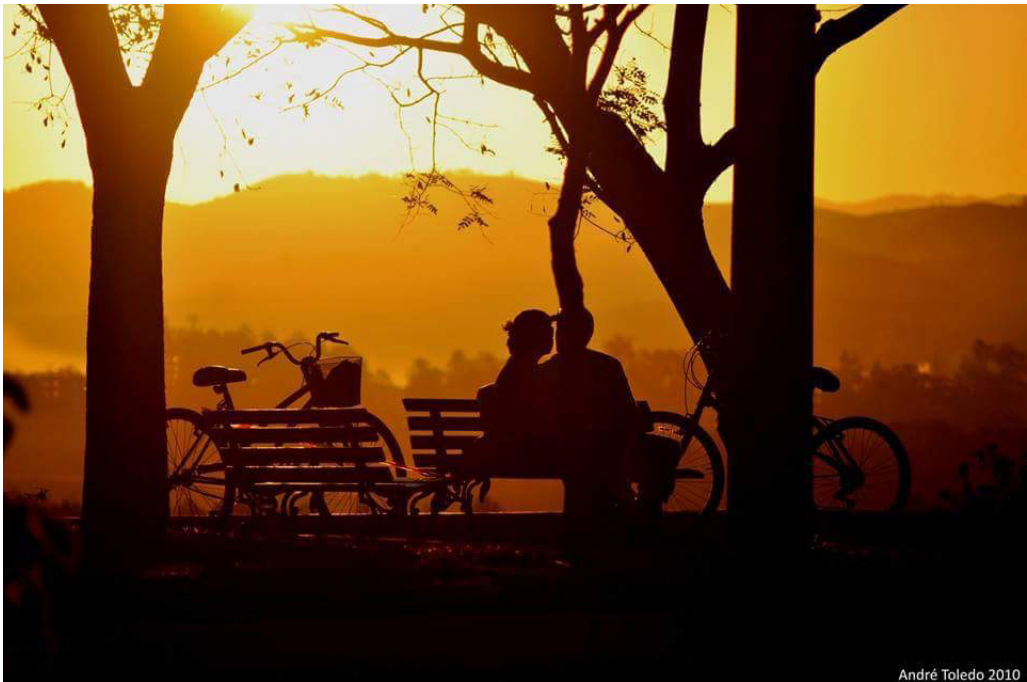
While the life in the *Banhado* was criticized, the bird’s eye view was promoted. Military celebrations took the “Greek-Roman mega amphitheater” (MORELLI; SANTOS, 1996, p.83) beyond the geographical dimension. Using the floodplain as scenery for

aircraft overflight celebrating the municipality's anniversary reinforced another identity representation: the technological one, linked to aviation.

Simultaneously, postcards reinforced the *Banhado's* sea metaphor. Photographic resources such as the framing angle, arrangement of the signs and praising of the green area mimicked the visual treatment of the sea and heightened, in the symbolic field, the association (MORELLI; SANTOS, 1996), coupled with the seafront terminology, that leads to the sea genesis. As geographer Ab'Saber (1991, p.3) highlighted there is no "seafront" in the *Banhado*, but rather a very rare "winding escarpment", a landscape defense of the swampy area: "The *Banhado* is a swampy area, however, far from being a sea" (idem, p. 17).

Other representations were highlighted based on the prefecture's pictures taken in the 70s: the sunset, the *Mantiqueira* Range, the animals grazing, the train, smoke from a wood-burning stove coming out from the chimneys of the houses; elements that, to Morelli & Santos (1996) present an idea of rurality (Figure 4). A landscape devoid of people, pictorially reinforced as an identity landmark.

**Figure 4. Sunset in the *Banhado*.**



Source: Toledo (2010).

In different fields, the *Banhado*-landscape used to be presented and disclosed and its illegal occupation denounced in a discourse that stigmatized it and blamed the dwellers for their vulnerable situation. To Bourdieu (1989), the logical and gnoseological

structure plays an important role in the symbolic systems, and the symbolic productions are amplified by the communication relations, always relations of power.

In this case, one observes the articulation between the authoritarian regime developmental project, the technical proposal of a functionalist urban planning that privileges the circulation routes and the academic analysis consolidating representations of the urban. Naturalization of the *Banhado* landscape – the counterpoint that complements and reinforces the image of the technological city – is directly related to its inadequate habitability, denounced as invasion by the legislative branch. The economic and political interests and the academic perspective consolidate the landscape/territory separation and the discourse denounces veiled interests: occupying the *Banhado* “seafront” was unacceptable, but building and commercializing a high standard residential condominium on the plain meant improvement and progress.

## 21st century: environmental planning: protection for whom?

In the 2000 decade, the municipality consolidated its regional centrality. Holding the eighth gross domestic product of the State and a diversified economy, it firmed the social representation linked to technology. The municipality’s housing program, however, had identified, in 1997, 18 “shantytown centers” (SÃO JOSÉ dos CAMPOS, 2008). In them was included the *Banhado/Jardim Nova Esperança* “shantytown”. In an environmentally protected area, it could not be urbanized, “its removal being required” which would be followed by implementation of a regional park (p.12). The institutional document of resettlement presents a brief environmental characterization of the *Banhado*, emphasizing its integrating function that incorporates the “expression of the urban landscape into the involving regional macro-landscape” and functional role, minimizing the weather oscillations connected with the urbanization of the surroundings (p.13).

Ademir Morelli, an ecologist specialized in geosciences and the environment and Ademir Pereira dos Santos, architect and urbanist, both holding a doctor’s degree and lecturers in a postgraduate course in a regional University, contributed towards understanding of the landscape and environmental aspects of the *Banhado* described in institutional documents. In a paper that aimed to help understand the *Banhado* as an environmental and landscape heritage of the city, the authors treated the urban image based on Lynch’s concept of an individual’s “generalized mental picture”, “product both of the immediate sensation and of the memory of past experience” (LYNCH, 1960, p. 4). Morelli & Santos (1996) treat the *Banhado* within this dialectic dimension: simultaneous manifestation of the space users’ aspirations and of the actual, urban, daily uses.

From the two last decades in the 20th century, urban planning came closer to the environmental sciences. At the national level, in 2001, the enactment of the City Statute made the directive plan compulsory and included the analysis of the urban landscape as well as of the historical and cultural heritages in the neighboring impact studies (BRASIL, 2001). In 2006, São José dos Campos instituted its PDDI –Integrated Development Directive Plan, elaborated during the administration of mayor Eduardo Cury, a PSDB member (2005-2012). Inclusion of the thoroughfare network among the principle and

general objectives of the plan influenced proposals for the *Banhado* area (SÃO JOSÉ dos CAMPOS, 2006).

Execution of the PDDI and its details were organized in the PEU – Urban Structuring Program. Another actor came on stage: the Inter-American Development Bank–IDB granted loans for the PEU to direct the urban development of the municipality, combining projects from the environmental, infrastructure and transport sectors. The program’s financial support was based on the 2010 economic projection for the municipality, and it included the creation of the Metropolitan region of the Paraíba Valley and partnerships with the state, Federal Government and private initiative. The actions were centralized in three axes: expansion of the thoroughfare macrostructure; land regularization, including resettlement of the families living in the *Banhado*, and creation of linear parks, including the PNMB – *Banhado* Municipal Natural Park, made viable through a R\$ 10,2 million compensatory allowance from Petrobrás Oil Company, by expanding the Henrique Lage Refinery - REVAP, located in the east area of the municipality (INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, 2011).

The PEU elaborated by the IDB reaffirms the pictorial *Banhado*: “It carries a very important symbolic value, since it represents the “beach” of the São Jose people: a place for your eyes to rest, that unveils in the horizon the beautiful silhouette of the *Mantiqueira* Range, lightened by the sunset that varies every day” (INTER-AMERICAN..., p 10). (Figure 5)

The traces in São Jose’s social imagination reveal the historical construction path of the concept. A research with focus groups of people living in the city was conducted by the Institute of Research, Administration and Planning (IPPLAN) for the *Centro Vivo* Project, part of the PEU that aims to “requalify” the city’s historical center (INSTITUTO..., 2012). To the respondents, the *Banhado* “invites to contemplation”; stirs up past memories, permeated by a certain mysterious enchantment, in which it reveals itself to the spectator, however not entirely; because “crossing the physical space that separates the historical center from the *Banhado* is like crossing another dimension”. The *Banhado* is the “city’s rest” and it counterbalances the urban agitation (INSTITUTO..., 2012, p. 82-86).

The highlighted contemplative character contrasts with the invisibility or classification of the people living in the area: “the fear of robberies drove away the population [...], here, also, you see an abandonment and the resulting occupation by less favored segments that bring bad reputation to the place” (INSTITUTO..., 2012, p.82).

Concealed in the PEU, the people occupying the area were studied in the Integral Plan of Social Action (PIAS), required by the IDB and elaborated by the Housing Office (SH). According to the report, the dwellers are young, with a poor level of education (61% with incomplete elementary/middle education) and income; most of them (51.8%) have been living in the area for more than 21 years; the community had had little participation in the discussion of the environmental and housing issues and most of them (94.1%) are said to have accepted the reallocation (SÃO JOSÉ dos CAMPOS, 2008).

In the SH technicians interpretation, Municipal Law Ner. 2792 and State Law Ner. 11.262/02 set out removal of the families from Jardim Nova Esperança, subject to the risk of floods, erosions and bush fires; risks that are mitigated by engineering techniques in the high economic standard condominiums, whose occupation is ensured to be safe (SÃO JOSÉ dos CAMPOS, 2008).

Figure 5 –*Banhado* Boulevard (Project).

Source: Instituto... (2012).

However, Law Ner. 9.985 enacted on July 18, 2000 that instituted the units comprising the SNUC – National System of Protected Areas, does not make unfeasible the occupation by low income dwellers in an Environmentally Protected Area. The APA category was instituted in art. 7 of the SNUC as an area comprised of public and private properties, usually large, with a certain degree of human occupation, where the traditional communities are favored by the forms of sustainable use and management of the nature (BRASIL, 2000).

The land regularization of the low income occupations was described more in depth in Federal Law N. 11.977/2009 that provides for the *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* Program and reinforces the possibility of “land regularization of social interest” in the APAs, provided the intervention implies “improvement of environmental conditions in relation to the previous situation of irregular occupation” (BRASIL, 2009, p. 8).

Sociologist Marilene Alberini, in a technical report elaborated for the Center of Housing and Urbanism of the Office of the Public Defender of the State of São Paulo, identified two housing centers in Jardim Nova Esperança, besides dimensions not addressed in the Housing Office report. According to Alberini (2015), the properties situation demands different forms of intervention. The latest housing center, on the hillside that

originated from the migratory wave in the 60s/80s is more crowded, the houses were built with coarse methods of rural tradition that mingle brick and wood materials; there are bushes and orchards, backyard vegetable gardens and creation of pets.

The oldest center, in the floodplain, inhabited by the heirs of the first dwellers that occupied the area in the 30s, is less crowded, formed by small farms. The dwellers dedicate themselves to the production and commercialization of vegetables and annual cultivations. In both centers, the multi-generational homes maintain the ties of belonging to the neighborhood; the downtown proximity facilitates access to commerce and public services (ALBERINI, 2015). The dwellers, in their majority, have papers proving ownership of the lots and deed of land. Asked by the office of the defender's agents about the possibility of removal, all respondents living in the area allegedly do not want to leave the *Banhado*. Although not intending to leave the place, some of the dwellers showed to lack confidence because of the pressure put by the prefecture, fearing they would have no future alternative but removal. Alberini (2015, p.18) analyses the issue under the vulnerability perspective, emphasizing the "intrinsic relation between land and work", "the base on which they have built their experiences and identities".

In the institutional discourse, reinforced by the media coverage, the removal is treated as a "*fait accompli*"; many story titles reduce the landscape plurality to the reified image of the shantytown: "By the end of 2013 São José has to remove the shantytown" (ROSA, 2012). The journalists circulate the dominating ideologies, blaming the *Banhado* dwellers for their situation of social vulnerability, writing terms that link people to obstacles: the *Banhado* dwellers "hinder" the creation of the environmental park; they are considered an "impasse" and an obstacle to the preservation of the environment: "Obstacle. To use the funds, the prefecture would have to remove about 200 families from the *Banhado* shantytown, known as the *Nova Esperança* community" (PEREIRA, 2013).

The municipal administration's technical discourse on urban planning legitimated itself by appropriating the environmentalist academic discourse. By selecting pieces from the academic production and separating them from the context in which they were produced, it gave the ideas a new meaning. The idea that the *Banhado* dwellers' actions harm the environment and destroy the postcard was isolated and reinforced. Removed from the context in which it was delivered, the statement became an argument and justification for removal of the *Banhado* dwellers, condition taken as indispensable for the natural park to be implemented with public resources and international credit facility. Through this ideological resource, the reasons for the occupation of the "illegal city", resulting from the exclusion dynamic of the capitalist city, were concealed and the dwellers were blamed for the existing state of affairs.

In the field of technique and thought, one notes a return to the sanitation/urbanity association, not resolved yet, and that moves on to incorporate a new element, the environmental dimension. The vehicles circulation, the roads, esthetics, remain in the center of the politics while people are left aside. In the common sense, one observes the incorporation of the built up ideology: the city people look at the *Banhado* based on this structured symbolic system, built on the fields of technique, of politics, of culture, as a place to be seen, not to live in – unless the large houses, in condominiums of esthetic

and economic value, mitigate the risks and match the beauty of the landscape. To the society, the people who live in precarious houses sully the city's postcard.

## Final Considerations

The analysis of the plans and intervention proposals for an urban area of special environmental and landscape value that houses people in an environmental vulnerability situation, through Pierre Bourdieu's concepts (1989), confirms the possibility of understanding urban planning as a symbolic system. Holder of the modernity and scientificity ideology, urban planning is a symbolic system crossed over by the practices and ideologies of the agents that constitute it as a field.

An urban landscape, the *Banhado* holds the physical quality of "evoking a strong image in any observer", image with an identity, structured, of readable power; not simply seen, but equally felt, perceived (LYNCH, 1960, p.9). Landscapes have culture and social life, they connect nature and society; nevertheless, the *Banhado*, in the urban plans analyzed, was repeatedly affirmed in its contemplative function, built as a postcard. Such representation promoted its appropriation for profitable purposes and, simultaneously, condemned the appropriation by people of less resources who remain in the margin of society.

It can also be said that the disconnection between the environment-*Banhado* own values and the utopic values have provoked, along the years, changes in the forms of use and occupation of the area. The agents and groups of agents, by privileging the utopic, pictorial values, ignore the values that are proper of the environment, such as the culture and the history of the communities living in the area and the environmental wealth of its fauna and flora.

The urbanistic proposals for the urban landscape, since the sanitary period, including the proposals of the rationalist and functional planning, to those of environmentalist inspiration, carry this disconnection between the image and the environment-*Banhado*. The planning technicians, by analyzing and proposing interventions in this landscape, treating it as two-dimensional, contemplative, of functional leisure or ecological in a strict biological sense, split its multi-dimensional aspect, laden with material and symbolic values. Structured in symbolic systems that separate nature from culture and privilege the profitable use of the land for certain segments of the society, the urbanistic changes proposed by the government and legitimated by the biased use of the academic production, backed by the selective use of the legislation, erase social-historical values that are proper of the *Banhado* and, in their place, institute images that feed the social representation of the untouchable nature.

Excluded from the life that exists in it, the landscape idealization is reactionary and conservative, maintained by a feeling of nostalgia and loss of an immemorial past (COSGROVE, 2006). Urban planners, by building and reiterating the *Banhado* as a postcard, have reproduced the social order that favors removal of the population that have historically lived therein. However, as Cosgrove (2006) points, nostalgia associated with the landscape can be restorative and rebuild memories. It is up to the urban planners, by

recognizing their social and political role in the field of the physical and symbolic construction of the landscape, to help avail it as a hybrid element of connection, considering the legal referential not as a framing and justification of renewed projects of exclusion, but acting, as proposed by Acserlad (1999), as powerful initiators of innovative social strategies.

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# URBAN PLANNING, AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS: CREATION OF THE BANHADO, SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS LANDMARK

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DOUGLAS ALMEIDA SILVA  
PAULA VILHENA CARNEVALE VIANNA  
VALÉRIA REGINA ZANETTI

This historical and sociological research explores urban planning as a symbolic system. By means of a case study, and the use of documental analysis, it assesses the symbolic capital contained in urban planning propositions developed for the Banhado, an Environmental Protected Area of São José dos Campos – SP, which houses an urban-rural community. The area has been a target of several urban planning propositions in the last 60 years. The analysis showed that the field of ideas and the actions held by urban planners have historically contributed to the construction of a social representation that excludes the dwellers from the idealized landscape. Such position is reinforced by the academic production and influence and guide segregationist propositions for the use and management of urban environmental protected areas, institutionalized in directive urban plans.

**Keywords:** Urban planning. Symbolic system. Landscape. Banhado. São José dos Campos.

**Resumo:** Este trabalho, fruto de pesquisa histórica e sociológica, é uma análise exploratória do Planejamento Urbano como sistema simbólico. Por meio de um estudo de caso, com análise documental, investiga o poder simbólico contido nos planos de intervenção urbana propostos para o Banhado de São José dos Campos – SP, área de proteção ambiental que abriga uma comunidade de traços urbano-rurais e tem sido alvo de diversas propostas de planejamento urbano nos últimos 60 anos. A análise evidenciou que o ideário e as ações do planejamento urbano contribuem, historicamente, para a construção de uma representação social que idealiza a paisagem e a destitui das pessoas que a habitam. Esse posicionamento é reforçado pela produção acadêmica e influencia e direciona proposições segregacionistas do uso e manejo da unidade de conservação urbana, formalizadas nos planos diretores.

**Palavras-chave:** Planejamento Urbano. Sistema Simbólico. Paisagem. Banhado. São José dos Campos.

La presente investigación es un análisis histórico y sociológica respecto a la Planificación Urbana como sistema simbólico. A través de un estudio de caso y análisis documental se

investiga el poder simbólico presente en los planos de intervención urbana propuestos para el área conocida por “Banhado”, en São José dos Campos, SP. El local, una área de protección ambiental (APA), abriga una comunidad de rasgos urbano-rurales que, en los últimos 60 años, fue objeto de propuestas de planificación urbana. El trabajo de investigación dejó claro que los ideales y las acciones de planificación urbana contribuyeron, históricamente, a la construcción de una representación social que idealiza el paisaje y al mismo tiempo lo destituye de las personas que lo habitan. Esta postura es reforzada por la producción académica que, a su vez, ejerce influencia y direcciona las proposiciones segregacionistas de uso y manejo del unidad de protección ambiental urbana formalizadas en los Planos Directores.

**Palabras clave:** Planificación Urbana. Sistema Simbólico. Paisaje. Banhado. São José dos Campos.

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