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Developing Cohesive Cities:
A Perspective From the Ground

DEVELOPING COHESIVE CITIES: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE GROUND ⁽¹⁾

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My presentation on a such a general subject intends to show, using the Portuguese case, that, in little over twenty years of experience with a new and growing migratory process, it is possible to learn how to lay out policy foundations answering the challenge resulting from a rapid evolution from a mono-cultural and traditional society to a multicultural and more cosmopolitan one.

It is neither my intention to develop a theory, nor to present a general (“comprehensive”) essay on the several issues of migratory phenomena in Portugal. Instead, I will use my experience as geographer and urban planner, taking lessons from several projects of rehabilitation and urban renovation strategies on which I have worked over the last years, to draw/select domains in which it is important to intervene, in order to reinforce the social and economic cohesion of our cities, and therefore make them more liveable.

In this context I intend to deal with the following issues:

1. The changing nature of cities
2. Immigrants in urban areas: concentration vs. dispersion
3. Immigration and housing policies
4. The structuring role of public transportation
5. The importance of a well designed and well kept public space
6. The integrating role of food-related activities
7. The networking potential of popular music
8. The integrating role of soccer and related social activities

Finally, I will try to come to a conclusion: designating policy orientations!

1. The changing nature of cities

Since their origin, cities have been the most dynamic elements of countries and regions. After a period of crisis, resulting from the process of economic restructuring, over the last decennia the cities in the most developed countries have generally shown a great capacity for the renovation of their economic base and the updating and recuperation of their infrastructure, their built historical patrimony and their urban environment (Hall and Ulrich, 2000).

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On the other hand, cities are sensitive places from the social, political and cultural point of view, forming the key both for cohesion (social, economic...) and for situations of rupture, which are easily spread to other places in the country or in the region.

It is in the periods in which there are the greatest transformations, which generally take place at a rapid pace, that the issue of social and economic cohesion becomes critical (Gaspar, 2000).

Several authors have established the turbulence in a large number of city systems in Europe, America and other industrialised regions as being the period going from the end of the nineteen-sixties until today. Perhaps rather rashly, there was even the creation of a “model”, which was largely accepted, according to which there was a life cycle for cities, with four phases (urbanisation, suburbanisation, de-urbanisation and re-urbanisation); on the other hand, a great deal has been written about counter-urbanisation – a process that described the abandonment of cities in favour of rural or semi-rural areas (Gaspar, 1999).

In fact, the processes in play are rather more complex and diversified. The profound alterations that have taken place in the urban systems have generated new situations both in the forms and in the contents of the spaces occupied and organised by man. These alterations have provoked the need to separate the concepts of city and urbanisation, and some authors have raised questions about the opposition between urbanisation and city – when historically urbanisation was the process that led to the development of the city: “urbanisation against cities” (Bookchin, 1992).

Thus there is the appearing of new concepts that attempt to better describe and interpret the new reality – some authors speak of the city/metropolis and of post-modern urbanity: diffuse urbanisation, physical and functional segmentation of the urban space, edge cities, metropolisation, gentrification, social/ethnic segregation, ...

Urban growth is no longer carried out from the **city**, as it was defined by the Chicago School of Urban Sociology, metropolitan agglomerations are increasingly polycentric and diffuse, even when they still have – at least in the field of political and economic power – the primacy of a **metropolis**. On the other hand, the segmentations are more and more intense and extensive (on the territory). There is, however, a dynamic aspect that remains: the (in and out) **migratory** movements, although with a significant alteration: the geographical field of migratory movements has become wider and, at the same time, the immigrants tend to come exclusively from urban areas – particularly from large urban agglomerations in other countries, in the main from less developed countries, where, in the meantime, there is an intense and accelerated process of urbanisation.

Thus there no longer are the presuppositions of the “classic” process of urbanisation. The urban areas expand according to multiple determining factors:

- urban dispersion, from older nuclei, from the city or from the suburbs; partly due to the natural growth of the population, partly to the new forms of the family: in a large part due to the new societal values (social status; individualism;...) and also as a result of the new locations of working spaces;
- immigration – affecting different poles of attraction, in which stand out the traditional centres and the distribution of national/cultural groups;
- other processes with less expression, such as gentrification ...

The fact is that any of these determinants, associated to the social and functional divisions (working spaces, consumer spaces, leisure spaces), contribute to difficult social cohesion in vast urbanised spaces.

2. Immigrants in urban areas: concentration vs. dispersion

Phenomena of immigration have been at the base of the profound alterations that cities have undergone since the early days of urban civilisations: for better and for worse; from sustained growth, often with the introduction of technical innovations, to the tensions and major shocks that generated the decline and even the fall of some cities. But it is above all from the nineteenth century that urban explosion, both in the old and in the new world, is largely the consequence of large-scale migratory movements.

These movements give rise to transformations not only in the place of destination, but also in those of origin, through dynamic processes that provoke the establishing of chains of relations that are prolonged over generations.

These transformations take place of different geographical scales (from the house to the state), and may vary in their positive/negative assessment.

In their most simple dimension, that highlighting territorial distribution, two very distinct patterns tend to be generated: concentration and dispersion, which may have different readings according to the scale of analysis. The high density of immigrants in a country may result from a relatively uniform distribution throughout its territory, whilst a low overall density may correspond to high concentrations in localised contexts.

The emergence of a determined pattern always has several explanatory factors, which correspond not only to the contexts (geographical, social, economic, political or cultural) that the immigrant encounters in the destination, but also to the intrinsic characteristics of the immigrant or of a given immigrant community. Often, the main determinants of the “settling” of the immigrants come from their culture, from the history of the migratory process and from the atmosphere of reception, namely in relation to local policies (of housing, employment, providing of social services...).

Numerous studies have shown both positive and negative aspects in the development of concentrations of immigrant communities in urban areas. If, on one hand, the concentration, as

long as certain thresholds are met, allows not only the provision of specific goods and services, but also the maintaining or even enriching of the cultural practices that make up the identity of each community, on the other hand, it may generate isolationism, marginalization and the danger of ghettoising. Dispersion, to the contrary, favouring (at least ideally) the deepening of dialogue with the reception community, may be painful and traumatic for the immigrant nuclei, generating acculturation clashes.

In the Portuguese case there is a clear tendency for African immigration to generate concentrations, both on the level of the country (a very strong polarisation in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area) and in the inner areas of urban agglomerates. However, in the LMA area as a whole, there is a relative dispersion of these agglomerates. It should be noted that it is often social housing policies (defined by each municipal area) that consolidate this dual facet (Fonseca, 1999).

The same thing takes place in relation to the communities of Indian origin, also the forming of nuclei are not only much smaller, but also less conspicuous (Malheiros, 1996). On the other hand, Ukrainian and Brazilian immigration tend to be distributed more regularly throughout the territory, including its occurrence outside urban areas, and never forming concentrations on a local level.

It is difficult to find a complete explanation for these differences, although the concentration of labour demand in the LMA, since the mid-eighties, and the tendency for the African communities to be organised locally by country, island or ethnic group of origin may largely explain the "African pattern".

The Brazilian immigrant, due to language, culture and, often, ancestral family ties, more easily adapts to such diverse contexts of settling as Lisbon or small towns in the interior of the country. The fact that they include a social and professional range that is much wider than any other immigrant group also may explain part of this pattern of localisation.

It is more difficult to explain the capacity of adapting of the Eastern European peoples, among whom the Ukrainians make up the largest group: most of them work in construction and on public works, but there are also factory and even agricultural workers. Lack of knowledge of the Portuguese language also does not favour the lives of these extremely small groups, often even made up of isolated individuals. Only the need for employment and the prospect of a short stay may grant these workers strength, although their physiognomic characteristics and cultural behaviour may contribute towards kindly reception from the local populations.

3. Immigration and housing policies

The **house** or, more generically, lodging, forms a factor of satisfaction or lack of satisfaction for the emigrant, both in origin and in destination.

It is not by chance that for many emigrants their first great desire is to build a house in their own homeland – and for this reason they are prepared to live in less than satisfactory residential conditions while they save enough to achieve this aim.

The **house** is also a key point in the destination countries or cities – with the exception of countries with well-defined immigration policies, such as Sweden, where the **house** is the first problem to be solved for the immigrant, the search for a place to live is up to the immigrant, when it is not as provisional as employment, with lodging being provided in poor conditions by the employer. The “self found” solution is often in the house of relatives or through their help.

Inhabiting a house, an apartment or a room introduces one more element into the social dynamism of the local community, which might equally contribute to the acceleration of the change in the nature of the neighbourhood as to its consolidation.

The **house** and the anxieties that each individual or family generate around the issue of lodging is a decisive factor in physical mobility – often associated to social mobility, both in the ascending and descending direction.

Immigrants observe identical behaviour patterns, although mobility may vary, sometimes due to their strategies (for example, the desire to return to their homeland as quickly as possible...), other times due to the precarious nature of their lodging (frequently located in areas of transition, close to the central areas, subjected to pressures of urban renewal), and other times the immigrant tends to remain for long periods in one place because this is where he has ties to the local community (frequently some family members only speak their mother tongue...), although the workplace may have moved and their income may have significantly improved.

It is from the place of residence that there is the establishing of relationships of friendship and camaraderie, but it also may be on this rung on the ladder that tensions and conflicts are generated ...

For all these reasons, housing policies cannot be restricted to the residence, even due to the fact that this aspect is often beyond the public sphere, or because state and municipal intervention is only supplemental (the providing of land or merely infrastructures; credit benefits...), but what is always fundamental is social insertion, the creation of conditions for access to citizenship: the providing of local services, public transportation, sporting and cultural activities (Fonseca, Caldeira and Esteves, 2001).

Articulation between leisure time activities and those of teaching (nursery, primary and high school) can provide excellent spaces for socialising between generations and cultures. A great number of experiments carried out by municipal councils throughout the country show the potential for intercultural and intergenerational dialogue that these actions by the councils may produce.

Theatre, music, local history, the learning and practicing of the new technologies of communication, dance and many other leisure time activities, today make up a living patrimony

on the local level – from villages to small and middle-sized cities, from the suburbs of Oporto or Lisbon, to the old, traditional neighbourhoods of these two cities.

Work carried out with schools, both by theatre groups and by associations more dedicated to music and dance, as well as contributions from living science nuclei, on museology, issues about local history (which often about general history), are very important actions to strengthen the social fabric, increasing cohesion both among the younger members and, often due to the latter, among the older ones.

Another dimension of the housing issue is that of commerce. The tendency, from small cities to major metropolises, is for the decline in local street commerce and the expansion of shopping malls and superstores, generally on the outskirts of residential areas and supported above all by individual motorised transportation. There is thus the establishing of the conditions for a social split in access to consumer spaces, although some shopping malls are increasingly spaces for interaction (or tension...) between different social classes, which also involve very large ethnic-cultural dimension. In the Lisbon area, the major shopping malls are not only inter-class, but also inter-cultural and inter-racial; yet, on the other hand, the streets of the residential areas are increasingly deserted, with the absence of local shops, and for this reason are more hostile (Gaspar, 1998).

One interesting phenomenon is the continued existence and updating of traditional markets, progressively adapted to the search for an urbanised, low-income population. In some areas of trading (particularly clothes and shoes) the gipsy community has a major role, with this activity being its main means of integration in the economy and in society.

In the Lisbon Metropolitan Area and namely in the poor areas of the city of Lisbon, these street markets also have a large component of African population, both in supply and in demand.

The fundamental question here is that of how a set of positive practices can be used and applied to housing policies in order for them to have a correct translation in urban planning and layout.

The policy of large concentrations of social housing has been (and in some cases still is...) disastrous; but the simplistic practice of integrated distribution (attempt...) of different social and ethnic groups has also raised great problems, in the sense that it generates small cists (ghettoes) inside urban fabric dominated by the middle class (Malheiros, 2001). On the other hand, this policy, that generally come from *in situ* re-housing of rundown neighbourhoods, leads to very high construction densities and to architectural typologies that are less suited to the populations for whom they are intended.

It is obviously still too early to make an overall assessment of the policies of social housing of the last twenty years, especially as there has been a great concentration of investment over the last decade. However, many negative aspects have been observed, both

from the urbanistic and the social viewpoint. The high density of some built outskirts, generally with a high number of storeys, and the poorness of urbanistic insertion are two of the most striking frailties.

Whenever minority ethnic groups can have access to the housing market the results, apparently, seem to be more positive, even when there are clear cultural differentiations.

4. The structuring role of public transportation

The boom in individual transportation, associated to and stimulated by the expansion, segmentation and fragmentation of urban areas, has been an important factor in social and ethnic segregation ...

It is not so much through socio-economic differentiation that the individual automobile provokes this disaggregating effect, as it has a symbolic value that cuts across all social and cultural groups. However, it is above all the economically less well-off groups and in particular ethnic minorities, senior citizens and younger people who are left to use public transportation. Tensions in transportation are clear in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area, especially on suburban trains. Although in some suburbs there are also situations of rupture on the bus system. In occasional cases there have been episodes of violence.

On the other hand, in the city of Lisbon, both on the underground railway and on the buses, despite situations of overcrowding, with great traffic intensity, public transportation functions as a public space of approximation and of mutual recognition among different social strata and cultural groups.

The question is then posed with the urban form and with the schemes of urbanistic growth, in which the promoters explore the tendencies for increment in consumption of space (residential space, of leisure, dedicated to the automobile...), providing more m² of built space per inhabitant, including garages for automobiles (the LMA has among the highest European rates of automobile per inhabitant). Thus, despite some effort to improve the quality and quantity of the supply of public transportation, the proportion of inhabitants that prefers individual transportation has been increasing (Nunes da Silva and Marques da Costa, 2001).

This process leads to an acceleration of social segregation not only of the urban space, but, and more sharply, of the suburban and periurban space. There is thus the forming of a vast urbanised territory, but without cohesion – neither physical, nor social, nor cultural – in which among the populated “islands” there is a dominance of increasingly segmenting channel spaces and vast interstitial spaces, which are deserted and hostile in the citizens’ mental depiction.

In this context, contradictions and tensions are clear not only between national and local politicians, but also among urbanistic technicians, in relation to the major options in the field of transportations and also in relation to the organisation and occupation of the urban space, given that the need to increase economic, social and cultural cohesion in our cities will lead to a new

idea of urban form and life, with public transportation being the structuring element (DGTT, 2002).

Meanwhile, there is a need for urgent measures to considerably improve the supply of public transportations, so as to remove a greater number of users from individual motor traffic. These measures, particularly in the metropolitan areas and more strikingly in Lisbon, face a certain number of difficulties: a large number of operators of different kinds (train, metro, boat, tram, bus), divided between the public and private sector and without any overall coordinating body for the Metropolitan Area (Marques da Costa, 2000).

5. The importance of a well designed and well kept public space

Several analysts and urban planners have called attention to the importance of the public space, in its various forms and dimensions, stressing that its lack or abandonment by the populations contributes to an accelerated degradation of the quality of urban life.

On the other hand, accent has also been placed on the need to promote good practices of urban design, both through the recovery of scale (the human scale...), as well as the elements of the specific grammar of cities: the avenues, streets, squares, places, the gardens... elements that should be harmoniously articulated, so as to be lived out by the whole population: which may thus also exercise its full rights of citizenship.

Without assuming and perceiving that the public space of a city is attractive and has a strong public dimension, the urban space and the polis tend to become disaggregated.

However, it is not enough for the spaces to be “open” to the public, often it is this space that most rapidly become disaggregated, inhospitable and from which people flee. We are speaking as much about green spaces – parks and gardens – as about squares, which may give rise to veritable deserts, generating states of **agoraphobia**.

Parks, if they are not well inserted into the residential and/or working spaces and do not enjoy continued use, are progressively marginalized and subjected to vandalism. It should be added that the middle classes, as they become dispersed into **suburbia** and **exurbia**, lose their sense of **agoraphilia** – the liking for open spaces – and prefer closed spaces: it is the victory of the **mall** over the **square** (Gaspar, 1998).

It is interesting to notice that, in Lisbon, as in other European cities, some urban public spaces with tradition and centrality have been appropriated by immigrant populations, namely Africans and Asians, who thus bring life to some squares and places, often with reflections on the traditional commerce (Esteves and Caldeira, 2001). These behaviour patterns are due to the fact that these immigrants come from areas where **urbanity** is still a very strong value; hence the reading they make of the city, with its central points as places for meeting and socialising, despite the profusion of mobile phones... but the latter are used to arrange meeting and not to replace them.

In this context it is also necessary to consider the values of solidarity and the gregarious spirit of the immigrant communities, as opposed to the increasing tendency towards individualism shown by the Portuguese population, namely the urban middle classes.

Recently, in Portugal, there was the launching of a very ambitious programme of recuperation and valorisation of the urban environment, oriented towards small to middle sized cities and some more lacking and problematic suburbs in the Lisbon and Oporto metropolitan areas.

The principles and objectives seem indisputable to us, and are part of conventional wisdom: to give the cities back to the citizens, to make cities more attractive and healthy, to articulate residential spaces and open air spaces. However, some doubts have been raised about plans that pay special attention to interventions that are not central (in relation to the central urban nucleus) and which have a very vast open air component, which might reveal some difficulties in maintenance and occupation, that is, they run the risk of being marginalized, accentuating the discontinuities instead of contributing towards articulating/uniting different city neighbourhoods.

6. The integrating role of food-related activities

Food and drink are powerful factors of approximation between peoples. Thus, in our time and in our cities restaurants from different cultures are excellent interfaces for cultural dialogue, and the immigrants from peoples with gastronomic traditions or with the capacity to adequate their cuisine to the existing demand in the cities of reception have shown a greater capacity to live alongside the local populations. The Italian and Chinese cases are paradigmatic, but other peoples have benefited from these entrepreneurial initiatives: Greeks, Lebanese, Turks (all referring to Ottoman gastronomy), Thais, Vietnamese, Indians (several...), and Iberian-Americans.

From sophisticated gastronomic weeks, promoted by some hotels in collaboration with similar entities or with official representations from the countries in question, to simple manifestations of socialisation and fraternisation carried out by immigrants' associations, often with the support of local councils, it has become clear that the diffusion of food and drink is an excellent instrument for an opening onto multicultural dialogue.

These actions may also be associated to initiatives from other areas, such as education, sport and other leisure time activities.

The culinary and gastronomic richness of a civilisation is naturally another decisive factor in its diffusion, as can be seen in the already-mentioned Chinese and Italian cases. In Portugal the last fifteen years have seen an astounding spreading of Chinese restaurants that, following the urban hierarchy, can now be found from the north to the south of the country, even in very

small cities, with there being no correlation between the number of these establishments and the community of Chinese origin: very few of the customers of these restaurants are Chinese.

There has also been considerable growth in the number of restaurants offering cuisine from the Hindustani Peninsula (Pakistan, Gujarat, Punjab, Goa, Bombay...). Both in the Chinese and the Indian case one should also highlight the spreading of fast-food establishments and dial-a-restaurants, as well as a certain number of foodstuff industries: pre-cooked food, pastries and frozen food.

Although more confined to the Lisbon Metropolitan Area, there has also been the spreading of African food restaurants, often owned by Portuguese citizens born in Africa, but there are also many cases of immigrants who take up restauration and similar activities (bars and discotheques...), particularly among the Cape Verde community (Esteves and Caldeira, 2001).

Portuguese emigrants to Brazil (1850-1950) took their cuisine with them and had some success on different levels of restauration. Over the last fifteen years one has witnessed the Brazilian "retribution": alongside a growing flow of emigration there has been the setting up throughout the country, even in small cities, of Brazilian restaurants, as well as similar establishments (cafés, bars...), to a great deal of success.

Following the spreading of activities connected to food and responding to the demand of the growing number of immigrants, there also appear grocery shops with food from different communities, particularly African and Indian shops (Malheiros, 2001). These establishments contribute towards the dialogue between cultures, taking place both in the centre of the city and in the residential areas. Demonstration of this demand has led to several supermarkets increasingly providing these so-called ethnic products.

Tourism not only complements these instruments of social and cultural cohesion, but make also them possible. Visiting a country is also a question of getting to know its food habits and, naturally, trying them, thus creating consolidations for the establishing of dialogues that will take place in the country of the tourist's origin.

Thus there has been a great increase in the movement of Portuguese tourists to Brazil and, although to a lesser extent, also to Cape Verde. The political and social instability that has been the case in Angola and Mozambique has prevented the growth of tourism in these countries, which has made the development of cultural dialogue difficult. One should note that the situation in relation to Mozambique has shown some progress.

To finish off, a note on the latest wave of immigrants, those from the Eastern European countries, to which we have already referred. These immigrants, in the main from the Ukraine, have not yet promoted the appearing of establishments representing their cuisine. This absence may be associated to two or three factors: the relative dispersion of the immigrants; the main

objective of saving money as quickly as possible; and also the fact of this being a movement that began only a few years ago and has not yet created roots.

7. The networking potential of popular music

Although not having the same expression as **soccer**, popular music is an important vehicle for intercultural dialogue. Over the last few years, like in many European countries, **rap** has contributed to make the message of the feelings of the ethnic minorities be heard, but as rap groups appear made up of whites, there is also a dialogue, an approximation: more important than colour, than north and south, are the problems of young people or of the underprivileged ... the lyrics of a song sung by a group of African origin, but then covered by a European group tell us ...

What team do you play for? What side are you on?

North, South, East, West, Portugal, it's all the same

What team do you score for? What side do you defend?

Represent your area and make sure you don't offend

Lisbon has a historical experience of how a popular type of music created in a low-class urban environment, **Fado**, ended up becoming an element of national identification, cutting across different social classes and generating its own mythology.

Fado resulted from a “mixture” of several rhythms and experiences, which also included an African component. Fado is the support for different discourses, from resigned weeping to a cry of revolt and even to celebration and joy, by rich and poor alike, and has been a factor of social and even cultural cohesion (many lyrics have stressed socialisation between whites (kadjos) and gypsies ... or gypsies and whites). Its fatalistic character (only in one of its dimensions), led to, in the early years of the fascist dictatorship, an attack on that which the dictatorial regime would later designate as the **national song** – it so noted its agglutinating strength, which could be used as a political instrument.

Over the last twenty-five years Portuguese composers and singers have explored the interfaces of the musical tones of three continents: Europe, Africa and Latin America (Brazil, in particular). The results are interesting, but there still has not been the birth of a “new music”. However, there is an evident renewing of Portuguese popular music with new instruments, new sounds and new rhythms, imported from Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde, and, of course, also from Brazil. On the other hand, the creativity and capacity for “mixture” on the part of popular musicians from the new officially Portuguese-speaking is also amazing. Some of their singers – let us recall only one world famous case: Cesária Évora – have done a great deal for the valorisation of their emigrant communities, not only in Portugal, but also in the United States of America, in Holland, in France, Italy and other countries where music functions as a vehicle for an opening to comprehension and dialogue (Esteves and Caldeira, 2001).

But the common denominator, particularly among young people, has to come from the United States of America: hip-hop, rap, a rhythm that has already spread into globalisation and which provides a support for the word and the feelings of many people, of many communities, wishing to show the need for a new path, that of dialogue, in respect for difference, in the presupposition of equality of opportunities.

8. The integrating role of soccer and related social activities

Soccer is among the most interclass activities, both in relation to its players as well as to its spectators and members, and also in relation to its governing bodies (Gaspar *et.alli*, 1981).

Progressively, beyond its interclass character, there has been the development of its multi-ethnic and multi-cultural dimensions. This process began in the countries with a strong colonial past (United Kingdom, France, Portugal) but has spread to the whole European space, from Moscow or Stockholm to Lisbon, from Liverpool to Athens. The best sides are always a “mixture” of Germanic, Latin, Slav, African and South Americans ... and the players are judged on their professional merits, with no interference of their ethnic or national origin (whatever segregation that might exist is much less important than in any other activity in which immigrants participate).

Only in soccer is the world number one a mestizo, king Pelé; in Portugal the king is an African, **Eusébio**.

In Portugal, as in many other countries, sport in general and soccer in particular are practices with a strong interclass and also inter-ethnic dimension. In the Portuguese case, in no other field (of economy or social practices) can one find such a convergence of social strata, both on the part of the participants as on the part of the spectators and the associated members. In a correlation with this, the governing positions of soccer clubs also attract individuals from different social and professional backgrounds – often forming a sort of form of “notabilisation” for those who have come from very low down on the socio-economic scale (Gaspar *et.alli*, 1982).

Historically, up to the beginning of the nineteen-seventies, the geography of soccer clubs showed the importance of the industrial areas, which were also the “breeding grounds” for players for the clubs with the greatest prestige, located in the major urban centres and which had since lost their connections to the field of certain socio-professional groups as the space for recruitment. The restructuring of the economy and the relocating of economic activities – including that of industry – gave rise to a new geography of soccer.

And in fact the more industrial north began to dominate the geography of soccer; but, in the meantime there have emerged new poles that did not correspond to the traditional “breeding grounds”: tourist areas, cities based on commerce and services.

What made these poles possible was, on the one hand, the migratory boom, the extraordinary increase in the mobility of soccer players: from Europe, from Latin America, from Africa; on the other hand, the new “breeding grounds” became the suburban neighbourhoods of Lisbon, in which the communities of Africans settled, having come from the former colonies/new officially Portuguese-speaking countries.

The great soccer players of African origin – either remote or recent origin – come here following on from idols who came from the former colonies – Eusébio being the most notable example of this. But now the numbers are of incomparable greatness, with a much greater territorial dispersion – throughout the whole of Portugal (from the Azores to the north) to other countries in Europe (Spain, France, Italy, the United Kingdom...) and, above all with enormous visibility in the media.

Soccer eliminates social barriers, but also ethnic barriers: in soccer, spectators and fans, the general public, learn multicultural living together.

But the integrating role of soccer is also carried out through the mobility between clubs and countries – many countries from Eastern Europe, Latin America or Africa come to the knowledge of the average citizen through soccer ...

Soccer is the only activity in Portugal in which there is a generalised distribution of foreign players throughout the whole territory: there are Nordic players, Slavs, Africans or Brazilians, from Madeira or the Azores to Lisbon, Oporto or even small cities in the interior of the country. The distribution more or less follows the geography of the clubs participating in official championships.

Such a distribution generates, particularly in small and middle-sized cities, multiple opportunities of socialisation and dialogue, in the streets and in restaurants, in stores and in discotheques, and, of course, in the stadiums.

The process of socialisation on the field between foreign players and the local communities is amplified through the various media, from newspapers to television.

In soccer, from the sports arena that is the stadium, one goes to the arena of confrontation between the supporters, with a whole ritual rich in a grammar of identity and decoration. This confrontation, in most cases, does not have a social base – and if it did have in the early days of some clubs it has been disappearing over time – nor an ethnic or religious base; the references that mark out identity and belonging are territorial in nature and these are what may explain the leaning of the class content: *Atlético* and *Oriental* in Lisbon, and *Barreirense* are clubs with a working-class base, but in the areas in which they are settled they cover the whole social scale. Just as the clubs termed “aristocratic” include a great number of working-class supporters (Gaspar *et. alli.*, 1982).

It is above all on the level of the local community that soccer (like other sports dominant in a given territorial space) has a role that approximates classes, ethnic groups and cultures.

In the “players’ schools” at the main clubs, but also in some other smaller ones, there is socialisation (and competition) between young players from different social classes and with a significant number of African players. Some clubs in the suburban areas play a key role in intersocial and interracial relations, functioning as screening stations for professional outlets (Malheiros, 1999).

While in the past (the 30s to the 70s) the working class was the main provider for these “players’ schools”, nowadays, although there is still a dominance of youngsters from the underprivileged classes, the number of middle-class young people is increasing. This integrating role of soccer could be more relevant if central and local administration were more active in articulating the role of sports clubs with the school system, so as to give a better education to young people with ambitions in a sports career, and in order to make education more attractive, valorising the role of the school in the process of learning and the forming of citizenship.

Finally, three notes on policy orientation:

- There is a need for the integration of a migration policy dimension on the urban policies, both at national and municipal level;
- This implies a great coherence between economic development, housing and transport policies; all with impact in the urban design;
- In what concerns leisure and sport activities, there are a great potential for active partnerships between school, community associations and local authorities.

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