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TOWARDS A CIVIC CITY: FROM TERRITORIAL JUSTICE TO URBAN HAPPINESS IN RIO DE JANEIRO

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Abstract

Nowadays in Brazil researchers are trying to define a WBB (Well-being Brazil) indicator. In this context, territorial justice and urban happiness are terms of our critical spatial perspective to discuss the civic city concept passing beyond preeminently normative discourses on the just city. In this work we approach the relationship between Geography and Ethics through the assertion of urban rights – emphasizing especially the right to the place – in Rio de Janeiro. We intent to clarify how applied ethical values could be designing some local urban structures which mean canopies to the convivial everyday life. Often, the nexus between justice and happiness doesn't comprise a geographical approach in order to decode the local civility challenges and to overcome the opportunity civic costs. We assert the idea of happiness could point us to an all-inclusive assessment of an urban condition. Our methodological standpoint: happiness theorizing can be a significant extended component of urban policies and we also suggest that civic spaces - contrasting to the oppressor spaces - become geographical evidences of the urban well-being. Our empirical study: a square located in the suburb of Rio de Janeiro in which people practice codes of civility and empower the idea of good life and urban happiness.

Keywords*: Civic city, territorial justice,urban happiness, citizenship, canopy place.*

1. INTRODUCTION

This text has an exploratory character, an essay meant to discuss the notions of urban happiness and urban citizenship from the perspective of territorial justice. This is a concept we have been developing in the past few years, examining its interfaces with Ethics of civility and the right to the landscape (LIMA, 2013a), with the right to the place (LIMA e GARCIA, 2013), with territorial political networks and citizenship (LIMA, 2013b), with urban well-being and happiness (LIMA, 2013c).

In present Brazil, some themes, formerly relegated to debates within intellectual groups, have gained a visibility worthy of its relevance, such as the case of happiness. A proposal of a constitutional amendment, for instance, indicates the inclusion of the word happiness in the Carta Magna. Thus, in the 6th article of the Federal Constitution, social rights would be taken into consideration (e.g. education, health, nutrition, and housing), and defined as "essential to the pursuit of happiness". An index is also being prepared to measure the level of happiness of the Brazilian people. Is it possible to calculate the Brazilian well-being, considering the notorious regional inequalities observed nationwide? This may be our first challenge. The

Fundação Getúlio Vargas, the "Mais Feliz" movement, and the social network MyFunCity are leading the development of a methodology to define the Well Being Brazil Index (WWB). The basic idea is to develop a complementary index to the existing and well-known PIB, IDH, among others. The criteria used in such methodology are: education, safety, health, family, relationship networks, government, consumption, sustainability, mobility, work, and income. The reference value in this case is the citizen's degree of satisfaction.

However, the WWB would be just one more index. What would then be the interest of Geography towards those indicators, without drifting backwards to the New Geography of the 60s and 70s? We understand that, by following the line of investigation that links Geography to Ethics, we can assure a geographical interpretation of those indicators. This can be done either from inside, that is, from ethical values such as respect, trust, decency, hospitality (or recognition) and solidarity, which sustain the notion of territorial justice. Therefore, the understanding of the relation society/space is no longer established through inequalities and contradictions but, mostly, by considering differences and acknowledging them as a basic principle of a democratic territorial management.

In our point of view, territorial justice must be conceived as an effective idea capable of expanding the horizons of social rights, by mobilizing people and contexts to build civic spaces. Within a strict urban context, we would deal with the construction of canopy places that may make the notion of a fair city a viable one. We would ultimately be dealing with the notion of urban happiness, permanently linked to the notion of justice. Good life, in the sense attributed to Yi-Fu Tuan (1986:10), "incorporating other people's experiences and worlds", would be the living face of that fair and happy city. Some areas of the city, such as its squares, could be the hologramatical version of that city, that is, the part within the whole, which is, in turn, within the part. Therefore, we use, as empirical example of our analysis, a square in Vila da Penha, a suburb in Rio de Janeiro, with the objective of explaining, within the idea of a civic city, the possible relation between territorial justice and urban happiness.

The question that guides this work is related to the impasses involved in the formation of civic spaces in the city of Rio de Janeiro, and its prospects of overcoming their present status. How does the civic use of spaces confirm the territorialization of social rights? We deal with a theoretical framework that tries to conceive and detect residents of Rio de Janeiro (*cariocas*) as both territorialized and territorializing individuals, within the context of urban citizenship conditioned to dignity, of urban happiness as mediator of civility and, finally, of the urban rights that make up territorial justice as a democratic prospect. This text is structured in two main sections. The first discusses the concept of territorial justice, and makes a brief description of urban rights, showing its connection to the concept of urban happiness. In the second section, we approach the notions of civic space and canopy places in the empirical example of a square in Vila da Penha, a suburban area in Rio de Janeiro. We close the study by suggesting that the city of Rio de Janeiro is moving towards becoming a civic city, even though it still presents perverse and historical inequalities. The Rio de Janeiro localization in the Southeast of country – the richiest region – explains our intention in order to understand its strategical and regional position. **[Fig 1]**

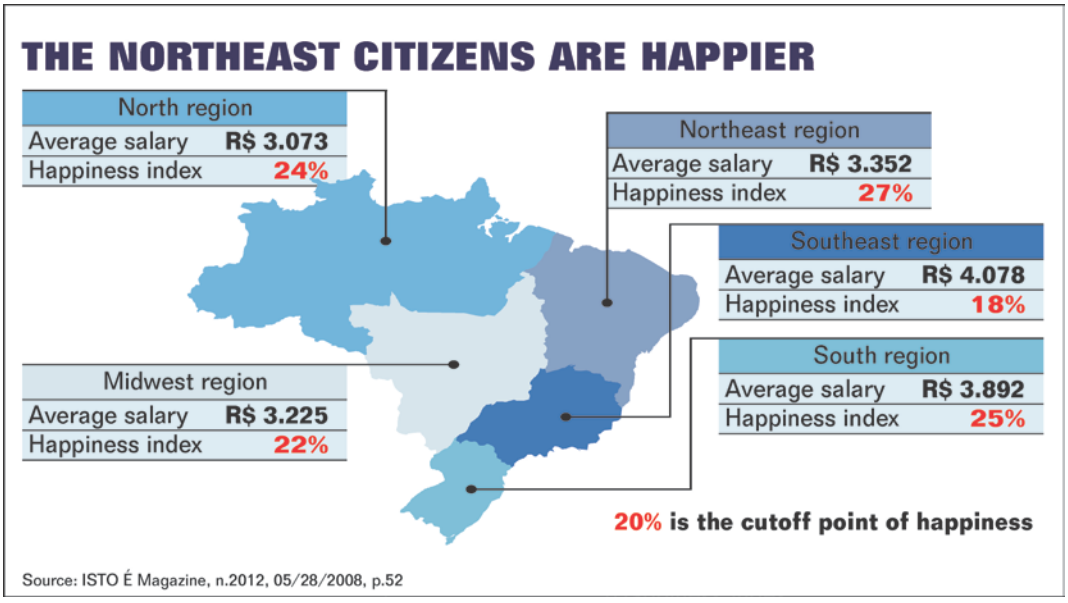

Figure 1: *Happiness index and Brazilian regionalization.*

2.GEOGRAPHY AND ETHICS: TERRITORIAL JUSTICE AS A GUIDING CONCEPT

As Singer (2002:9) says, "in order for the discussion on ethics be productive it is necessary to say something about ethics, so that we have a clear understanding of what we are doing when we discuss ethical issues". In this study, we will not engage in a deeper debate over the distinction between the two terms: Ethics and morality. However, we find it worth recalling that the word derives from *ethos* which has different meanings such as habitat, character, and costumes. This inevitably leads to the idea conduct, the most general meaning underlying the different uses of the term *ethos*. We agree with Droit (2012:19), when he says:

In short, if we wish to distinguish the two terms, "morality" would refer to inherited norms, "ethics", to norms being constructed. "Morality" would designate, mostly, existing and transmitted values; "ethics", the work of elaborating or making the necessary adjustments due to ongoing changes.

Cortina and Martinez (2008:22) emphasize: "[t]he basic question about morality would then be: 'what should we do?', whilst the central question about ethics would be 'why should we?' meaning "what arguments approve and support the moral code we have accepted as a conduct guide?". Smith (2000:10) understands that "ethics is the same as moral philosophy, or 'the conscious reflection on our moral beliefs' (…). Morality is what people actually believe and do, or the rules they follow." Finally, Vázquez (1992:22) warns us that if "there is a diversity within morality regarding not only time but also space, (...), ethics, as a theory, must imply a human behavior that varies and diversifies over time". To this, we add, historical time and geographic space, allowing us to outline a proximity between Geography and Ethics.

According to Proctor (1999:5), "the confluence of Geography and ethics represents no radical recent turn of events: one need only go back to Immanuel Kant to find 'moral Geography' propose as a major subdivision of the discipline". The author continues his argument by saying that the "metaphor of space provide perhaps the most familiar entry of geographers into substantive questions of ethics (Idem, *ibidem*)". It is exactly around this concept of territorial justice that we wish to extend our discussion over an evaluation of the

idea of urban happiness, of the construction of a civic city as an interface of this geographic concept.

Searching for alternatives in Ethics, Porter (1980:1) says:

People are not content merely to live, they feel impelled to evaluate their existence and to determinate whether they are living well or badly. They try to judge the value of the goals they are pursuing and the broad purposes that motivate their actions. They want to know whether their conduct toward others is right and reasonable or whether they are being unjust, unfair, or in some way morally blameworthy.

Among geographers, according to Jacques Lévy, the "association between justice and space is a recent idea. It presupposes, in one hand, that space offers enough content for a definition of what is fair and, on the other hand, that possible actions upon the space allow for a proximity to a fair agency." (2003:531). It is in this context that the atavic relation established between society and space defines the theoretical and methodological directions, and the intervention of Geography itself. This results in a scientific concern with fair access to space, in other words, with the democratic use of space, which is equivalent to the right to the space. Indeed, such concern enters the domain of a more comprehensive relation that links Geography to Ethics, as we emphasized above. Thus, the territorial justice allows us to clarify the role of ethical values applied in the process of social production of space.

All this leads to the conclusion that Bleddyn Davies was the first to use the term territorial justice, in a study of 1968 entitled *Social needs and resources in local services*; even though, for Bennetot (2011:116), the theme had already been seen by Jean Gottmann, in his work of 1951 *La politique des États et leur géographie*, in which he approaches the relation between equality, equity, and space justice. In 1973, David Harvey resumed the same expression to better explain the connection existing between social justice and spatial systems, mainly in cities, in his famous book *Social justice and the city*. Aiming at making it evident, as well as understanding a fair distribution of spatial resources, Harvey (1980) suggests the concept of social territorial justice, demonstrating his concerns with the physical and social environments, regarding income distribution, of the population's needs, and of essential and extra resources. However, we're trying to approach the problems of defining territorial justice beyond the service needs and service provision balance as found in Boyne and Powell (1991). This bold and legitimate proposal by these geographers apparently did not indicate solutions for the tension between satisfying needs and/or guaranteeing social rights, not envision them.

Smith (2000:136) justifies that the "term 'territorial social justice' is sometimes adopted when the issue is explicitly that of distribution in geographical space, among territorially defined populations". For Lee (2000:342), territorial justice corresponds to the "application of the principles of social justice to territorial units. As such, it can be the principle of territorial policies". In other words, for Ward (2009:274), territorial justice is "the territorialization of the principles of social justice. This involves examining the conditions under which wealth and social well-being are produced, distributed and consumed".

We also think that need, as a variable in territorial justice, requires an indispensable complement: social right. In this case, politics and ethics engage into a dialogue with each other, assuming the premisse that "one can only establish the relation between ethics and politics in complementary, concurrent, and antagonic terms", and that "one cannot separate nor confuse ethics and politics. The great ethical purposes often demand a strategy, that is, politics, and politics demand minimum ethical means and purposes, for which reason they are not reduced to ethics" (MORIN, 2005: 51 e 80). Based on these words by Morin (2005:86), we ask: "What can Ethics do? What can politics do? What could ethical politics and political Ethics do?" The questioning continues: What can an ethical territorial politics do? How could

territorial justice be inserted within ethical politics? Following this line of thought, we face the possibility of thinking over the meaningfulness of a practical Ethics, in accordance with Singer's proposal (2002), as well as with Cortina's works (2007, 2009, 2013) on applied Ethics.

As methodological resource to discriminate social rights emphasized in our concept of territorial justice, we will largely follow the systematization made by Borja and Muxí (2003), in which they identify social rights as: 1. Right to housing and place; 2. Right to public space and monumentality; 3. Right to beauty; 4. Right to collective identity and within the city; 5. Right to mobility and accessibility; 6. Right to centrality; 7. Right of the city to change from a marginal and illegal one to a city of citizenship; 8. Right to metropolitan and plurimunicipal government; 9. Right to political innovation; 10. Right to access and use information and communication technologies. 11. Right to have a city as refuge; 12. Right to be protected, by local governments, from higher political institutions, organizations, and companies; 13. Right to local justice and safety; 14. Right to illegality; 15. Right to employment and minimum income; 16. Right to environmental quality; 17. Right to difference, to intimacy, and to choice of personal relationships; 18. Right of all inhabitants of a city to have the same political and legal citizen status; 19. Right of citizens to have both institutional and social representatives at international conferences; 20. Right to equal mobility and access to transversal information; 21. Right of local and regional governments, and of civil organizations, to organize networks and associations. To these rights listed by the authors, we add five more, which, in our opinion, support the right to the space: 1. Right to the landscape; 2. Right to the memory; 3. Right to the feast to laziness; 4. Right to one's own rhythm (slowness); last but not least, 5. Right to happiness.

Conditions under which these rights are exerted must be considered a political and geographical question with a strong ethical bias. In short, we must think about the territory from both perspectives – ethical and political. Within this question, the concept of place is legitimately established, conceived as one possible form of space appropriation, in which the symbolic dimension plays a crucial role. In Humanistic Geography place is considered as a center of significance, admitting that "human places vary greatly in size. An armchair by a fireplace is a place, but so it is a nation-state" (TUAN, 1985: 149); which allows us to consider the spatial unity of a public square as a possibility of a place within the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro, as explained later in this study.

Yi-Fu Tuan (1980:156) told us that "intimacy among people does not require knowledge of details of everyone's life; it shines in the moments of true consciousness and exchange. Each intimate exchange happens in a place which, in turn, takes part in the encounter. Intimate places are as many as the occasions in which people truly establish contact". Intimate experience, a key-concept in this humanistic conception of place, leads to spatial awareness or geographical imagination that canopy places are possible – and necessary – to social life. Later, Tuan (2005:16), acknowledges that these spaces of intimate experience, such as hearths, not only represent one extreme of geographical scales, compared to the cosmos, and even revitalizing, "may be oppressive; the cosmos can even be liberating, and present overwhelming and threatening aspects". Certainly, hearths – and places in general – are no guarantee of a cozy and happy life, but, even so, we believe they possess great potential to be *loci* for a full and dignified human experience. It's enough to evoke "the simple idea that for a life to be good it must contain joyful, comforting, and import-laden experiences" (TUAN, 1986:7).

In this sense as Cresswell tells us (2004:11):

Neighborhoods, villages, towns and cities are easily referred to as places and these are the kinds of places that most often appear in writing on place. There is little writing on the

corner of a favorite room as place a tone scale, or on the globe at another. Yet, as Tuan suggested, there is something of place in all of these. (...) But place is also a way of seeing, knowing and understanding the world. When we look at the world as a world of places we see different things. We see attachments and connections between people and place. We see worlds of meaning and experience.

We understand that the processes of territorialization may include the construction of this kind of social space – the place – characterized by a network of relations that bring people together who, in turn, see themselves as co-participants in the construction of such specific spaces, that is, of those places. Therefore, right to the place can be unfolded as the right to such intimacy, to such proximity, and to such acknowledgement. These unfolding allow us to identify territorial justice, exemplified by the right to the place, as a favorable condition to social happiness.

Domenico de Masi and Oliviero Toscani (2011:8) pose this question: What do we, westerners, know of happiness? That it has always been a constant desire, an obstinate hope. Currently, the theme happiness, especially urban happiness, seems to flourish timidly in the Sciences – such as positive Psychology, Economics, and Sociology -, after having been examined exhaustly by Philosophy, from Seneca, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Bertrand Russel, André Comte-Sponville and José Antonio Marina. The first to study happiness were the great philosophers of the Antiquity, though to Albert Figueres (*apud* RICOU, 2012), "the first hominid capable of holding the sense of well-being with a word, a gesture or an ideogram, was the first to speak of happiness". Interestingly, to confirm the multiple conceptions that permeates the term, it is sufficient to observe the titles of some of the books devoted to the theme. Conceptions hidden behind the titles tell us that happiness is something real and independent of us, something one can stumble over, in other words, to find at any unexpected moment throughout life; it can also be conceived as a goal, or a kind of fate towards which we move in a search or adventurous journey. ("*Stumbling on Happiness*", by D. Gilbert; "*The Happiness Trip*", by E. Punset), and also, as something that we argue its own existence, as it may be only a discourse or a mith ("*The mith of happiness*", de G. Breno).

Happiness can also be considered as something which we should object to, questioning its unanimity as something that all of us, without exception, wish for ("*Against Happiness*: In Praise of Melancholy", by E. Wilson). We can also question the unanimity advocated by Pascal (*apud* COMTE-SPONVILLE, 2005:23) who stated that: "every man wishes to be happy, including that one is about to hang himself. If he, indeed, hangs himself, it is to escape unhappiness; and escaping unhappiness means approaching, at least as much as possible, a certain happiness, even if it be negative or nothing itself...".

Happiness can also be authentic or true, which presupposes the possibility of there being a kind of fake happiness, a simulacrum ("*Authentic Happiness*" by M. Seligman). On the other hand, as a hypothesis, happiness is translated as something that may or not exist. In another hand, as hypothesis, happiness can be defined as something that can exist or not ("The Happiness Hypothesis", by J. Haid). For other authors, however, happiness is something so truly real and desirable that it can historicized and even theorized ("*Happiness: a History*", by McMahon; "A brief history of happiness", by White, N.; and "A Theory of Happiness", by E. Rojas). Following the footsteps of a new science, happiness can also be conceived as something sustainable, and presenting a content that can be defined ("*Sustainable Happiness*", by A. Zuazua; "*Happiness*. Lessons for a New Science" by R. Layard, "*The Contents of Happiness*", by F. Savater).

Comte-Sponville (2005:49) tries to resume with this old Greek philosophical questions, the question about happiness, about a good life, about satisfaction, in short, about living well,

defending the notion of happiness as an act, that is, "the act itself as happiness: wanting whatever we have and do, what is and what is not missing. In other words, enjoy and rejoice". For the author, happiness "is not something absolute, it is a process, a movement, a balance, but a unstable one (we are more or less happy), a victory, but a fragile one, one to be constantly defended, to be continued or resumed" (COMTE-SPONVILLE, 2005:88, emphasis in the original). Quoting Montaigne, Comte-Sponville (2009:105) recalls that "it is natural that the secret to happiness is absolutely simple, and that it is not a secret: it is about propagating the idea of joy, and suppressing as much sadness as".

This ambivalent and unstable character pointed out by the philosopher is part of our conception of happiness as a dynamic and socially conditioned tension between satisfaction and lack of satisfaction, in which people develop a full and active existence, in their own rhythms, and in the spatial areas they autonomously elected as most appropriate. Such is our conception of happiness, inspired by the Cabala (Kabbalah), and summarized by Mario Javier Sabán (2012). According to Grönemeyer (2012), "shared happiness brings us twice the joy". Presence of the Other, and its inherent potential of social coexistence leads us to agree with Fox (2012), when this neuroscientist says that "happiness does not depend upon how much you earn, but on being satisfied with what you do, on being committed. This is one of the key elements of happiness". And commitment is necessarily linked to principles such as responsibility, solidarity, trust, and respect to the different, starting by acknowledging the Other as a legitimate being.

With regard to individual life rhythms, we recall the ideas of Honoré (2012, 2013), when he says that rush kills and "leads us to make huge mistakes, steals time from us, and prevents us from being happy". De Masi and Toscani (2011: 83) state that "at the end, of the 20th century", happiness collided with the frenetic rhythm of modern life, forcing us to a type of thinking that only slowness would allow." To the ideas of these authors, we add our notion that it is not only time that is stolen from us, but also space, a place devoid of human relations, that is, lacking density and social quality. This is not only about criticizing the hurry, the necessarily rapid social movement, but criticizing the uncontrollable standardization of this socially constructed time and space, the pursuit of satisfaction in contemporary metropolises, in particular. We are concerned about the "satisfaction originated from the fact of us being more relaxed, of having more time to be with family and friends, of having more respect for our fellow human beings, of having more alternatives in life", as posed by Skidelsky (2012)

We then ask ourselves if it is possible to discuss about a happy place. Can we speak of a place, classifying it as violent, dangerous, pleasant, and beautiful? Or even of a place where all these attributes coexist in a restless tension? How do we distinguish between the range of an attribute and that which it refers or applies to? A city or a violent neighborhood, for instance, is one in which the social phenomenon of violence prevails, that is, it occurs with noticeable frequency in both urban space and time. It is a social content conceived as inseparable from the concept of space, what Jacques Lévy refers to as substance (in a essential articulation with space metric and scale, three fundamental attributes of space). Such content or substance can be defined by the way they are used, in other words, as equivalent to the distinct uses the geographic space can have.

These observations converge with the methodological premisse advocated by Milton Santos when this geographer states the use as what qualifies space. Let us explain: uses of space, conceived as social practices in/of space, can be schematically categorized as economic, political, and cultural (-ideological), from which we have what is called economic space, political space, and cultural space. In our line of investigation, we are particularly interested by the interwining of political, public, and civic spaces, that is, spaces presided by territorial justice.

Thus, how would this happy space or territory become a reality? Would such territory be a just one? We know that justice and happiness are similar terms, considering the premise that we can only be happy with a morality that cannot predict how happiness and justice agree, "this exotic pair that makes a good life, and life a good one to be lived, happiness and justice can only remain united when apart" (INNERARITY, 2001:86). How can we outline an operational definition of happiness that works as a key to understanding the uses of space? In this case, understanding the specific use that characterizes space in which the basic components of happiness are incorporated into the geographic surroundings of a certain social system – in its national, regional, or local scales. Would that be a space into which ethics and civil spirit should be compulsorily incorporated? A happy place would be a synonym for a place where we can be happy, through personal and collective promotion or achievement – self-expression of who we are – and a non-oppressive, affective life, in which we interact based on ethical values.

It seems clear that the idea of a happy space would be antagonistic to the notion of an oppressive space. Hence the double theoretical and methodological necessity to define oppressive space, and assume that the less oppressive the greater the possibilities of having places presided by territorial justice and happiness. To this, we add that the strengthening of civic spaces would correspond to the motivation, to the formation, and to the consolidation of just and happy places. Within the urban scale, we can speak of a just city or of a happy city. To clarify this, we recall the words of Sabbag Jr. (2008:31), when he refers to physical space and its potentialities.

When appropriate to the needs to which it is destined, it allows for the balanced development of family relations and a good level of interaction with reality. If inappropriate, such space will promote the appearing of neurosis and psychosis, thus becoming oppressive and repressive. (...) how would we define an oppressive space? In general, it is the one imposed without a suitable study of the characteristics of what it is destined to. A badly planned space, whether large or small, oppresses because it incentivates the loss of freedom and individuality, as it violates personal space. (...) Interpersonal relations are the ones that suffer the most with the decreasing spaces. Some of the most traditional habits are disappearing or being changed by others, habits that amplify individualism and personal distance in its most negative aspects.

This definition of an oppressive space stimulates us to apply Ethics to our thinking about the notion of territory, in order to promote intellectual and social conditions that will allows for the flourishing and development of spaces of justice, of happiness, of civic spirit, especially in contemporary metropolises. We shall see how this can be configured in a metropolis such as Rio de Janeiro, considered the happiest city in the world among twenty countries. **[Fig 2]**

Figure 2: The happiest city in the world?

3. URBAN HAPPINESS AND CANOPY PLACES IN RIO DE JANEIRO: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMPLE

Based on the assumption that the Osvaldo Lima Square, located in Rio de Janeiro, in the suburban area of Vila da Penha can be considered a place – according to the concepts listed in this study – our study made direct interviews in that square, to investigate how its users put into practice civic codes or conduct such as respect, solidarity, and responsibility in their close social contact. We also investigated how the place is seen by local residents regarding social advantages, functional services and, above all, affective services found in that place. Following, we present some of the statements.

Regarding perception of the square as a place, we have the following statements by the neighbors:

The Square is cozy, clean and frequented by nice people. (respondent B)

The Square is a quiet, airy place, with nice visitors, and with good facilities, always well kept by people who come regularly and by the City government. (respondent D) **[Fig 3]**

Figure 3: *A quiet Square*. Photo by Rivaldo & Gisele Lima, 2013

The Square is a fine place, quiet, with lots of trees, which makes the climate very pleasant. At first, we had not only the space, but toys for children and a football court. Around 10 years ago, the City organized exercise classes on the court, which was great. By doing this, the concern with maintenance of the place was more visible both to users and local government. (respondent F) **[Fig 4]**

Figure 4: *Children and toys.* Photo by Cecília & Vinicius Gonçalves, 2013

Figure 5: *The chatting.* Photo by Cecília & Vinicius Gonçalves, 2013

Regarding the practice of civic codes in the square, that is, the civic use of the space, as well as the effective interaction with the functional services provided by the local government, we obtained the following statements:

People get along very well here. Once a month, we have a birthday party for those celebrating their birthdays, and we get worried and try to find out when someone does not show up. Everyone is always watching for the appropriate use of the place and objects, as well as the maintenance of the Square itself. (respondent A)

Coexistence is very good and respectful. We have started a Project of meeting once a month to share skills, teaching what we know and learning from others; for example, I teach crochet, and learn glass painting. We keep constant attention to the maintenance of the square, because the public institutions have fulfilled their role of cleaning and maintaining it. (respondent B)

I see people here having a very respectful relation with one another. I usually notice the concern of those who come to preserve the Square and toys, as I also notice that the officials responsible for it haven't disappointed. (respondent C)

I observe that people here coexist very well, and I notice a great deal of intimacy among them, regarding the well-being of their families. The area is very well preserved by local people and by the City government. (respondent F)

Companionship among people here is great. Everyone is always attentive of the other. And they all have respect for the place so that it is always well kept; and the City also does it part by taking care of it. (respondent G)

The final part the interviews focused on symbolic gains such as companionship and friendship, as well as the sharing of social intimacy among them. We were also interested in finding out what social stimulus made those residents frequently go to the square. These are the statements:

Neighbors we exercised encouraged me to participate. I made good friends in other streets of the neighborhood that I didn't know. We are invited for birthday parties and other events. (respondent A)

When talking to other neighbors on the Square, my husband heard of the exercise classes and was interested in participating, and invited me to go too. Like him, I made good friends in other streets of the neighborhood who I didn't know and now we are often invited to events. (respondent B)

I live right across the Square, and kept watching the attitude of locals, and decided to join them. Yes, I made very good friends. We go to the shopping mall, to birthday parties, etc. (respondent D)

As I really like birds, a neighbor told me about a friend of his who took his birds in the morning to the Square, and that he knew all about birds. I've made good friends. We visit the same families e even travel together. (respondent E)

My mother used to bring me to play when I was a kid and I grew up with the other boys. I made excellent friends here and we always hang out together on the weekends. (respondent G) **[Fig 6]**

Figure 6: *Placing kids.* Photo by Cecília & Vinicius Gonçalves, 2013

These statements allow us to say that the square used in the investigation can be conceived as a place, a site of symbolic relevance for local residents. Not only can we confirm this

theoretical hypothesis, but also develop the theoretical notion of canopy places, in accordance with Elijah Anderson, inasmuch as the costs of civic opportunity are reduced in such a place due to the attitude of residents and the retroactive effects that such behavior generate in the consolidation of welcome spaces, in other words, spots within the metropolitan area that constitute a shelter for their users. These canopy places are truly civic structures in view of their convivial everyday life. These places are characterized by the intensity of the mobilization of the so-called "relational goods", an expression proposed by Pugno (apud PICCINATO, 2008:7). In our standpoint, "the term 'convivial' coined by Ivan Illich is central in the sense that a convivial city is characterized by self-determined spaces, which mediate between legitimate differences and conflicting interests", following the Bonsiepe (2010:62). For Anderson (2011: 31, 33 and 104), canopy places, such as the Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, can be described as:

Occupying a full city block in the Center city Philadelphia, the reading Terminal Market is composed of numerous shops, restaurants, and kiosks that offer an array of goods and services. The terminal has always been known as a place where anyone could expect civility. (…) Under the canopy, within the exterior walls of reading Terminal Market or within the prescribed street boundaries of Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia's premier public park, the atmosphere is usually calm and relatively pleasant, as a mix of people go about their business, at times self-consciously on good or "downtown" behavior, working to "be nice" or at least civil to the next person they encounter.

Besides confirming that the square used in the investigation is a canopy place, refraining possibilities for the formation of oppressive spaces, simultaneously, - or for that matter – consolidating civic spaces in the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro, we come to the conclusion that the relation established between places and well-being allows us to contribute for the development of public policies ruled by territorial justice. According to Atkinson et al. (2012:1), "the centrality of two concepts, wellbeing and place, within contemporary governance and policy makes it timely to examine their possible meanings and the relationships between them through a range of academic inquires that can offer policy relevance and critical reflection".

Such contribution of the city's political geography for the elaboration, observation, and evaluation of public policies is close to the work organized by Giorgio Piccinato in the Italian city of Fermo. Piccinato and collaborators (2008:5), in their work entitled Study of Urban Happiness agreed with the hypothesis that "happiness was the true aim of public policies". The authors consider happiness to be a conceptual element belonging to the sphere of quality of life, and that "measuring happiness is, nevertheless, a complicated task, as it is most of the mental phenomena, due to the fact that it is only partly reflected on the behavior, though some social behavior are more frequent than happy people (PICCINATO, 2008:7). The author concludes that Fermo is a substantially happy town.

We suggest that the square investigated in this study is a canopy place endowed with high civic behavior and potentially happy, representing a sort of new spaces within the metropolis, "through a reconstitution of sociospatial relations", as says Neil Brenner et al. (2012:62). Then, we can rethink up and repratice "the 'Right to the City' as the 'Right to the production of urbanization'. Henri Lefebvre's clarion call about the 'Right to the City' is indeed really one that urges us to think of the city as a process of collective codesign and coproduction" (SWYNGEDOUW, 2011:53).

CONCLUSION

The right to the just city is strongly linked to the right to the civic city, and the promotion of canopy places is a very interesting path in order to create happier cities as humane places to be. Finally, we're intenting to affirm the relationship between public, civic and political spaces as a methodological and geographic resource to comprehend the urban happiness. We're trying to approach and expand the moral geographies horizons.

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NOTE

List of respondents:
A – 63, married, retired, living in the area for 24 years.
B – 61, married, housewife, living in the area for 24 years.
C – 41, married, tradesman, living in the area for 10 years.
D – 60, married, retired, living in the area for 30 years.
E – 50, divorced, free-lancer, living in the area for 27 years.
F – 53, married, civil servant, living in the area for 5 years.
G – 23, single, works in a bank, living in the area for 23 years.