

# URBAN AGE CITY SURVEY

As part of the 2008 research focus, Urban Age commissioned a city survey about quality of life in São Paulo to better understand the public's perception of current urban trends. **Luci Oliveira**, Manager of Public Affairs at Ipsos Brazil, and **Ben Page**, Chairman of the Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute in London, highlight the survey's major findings.

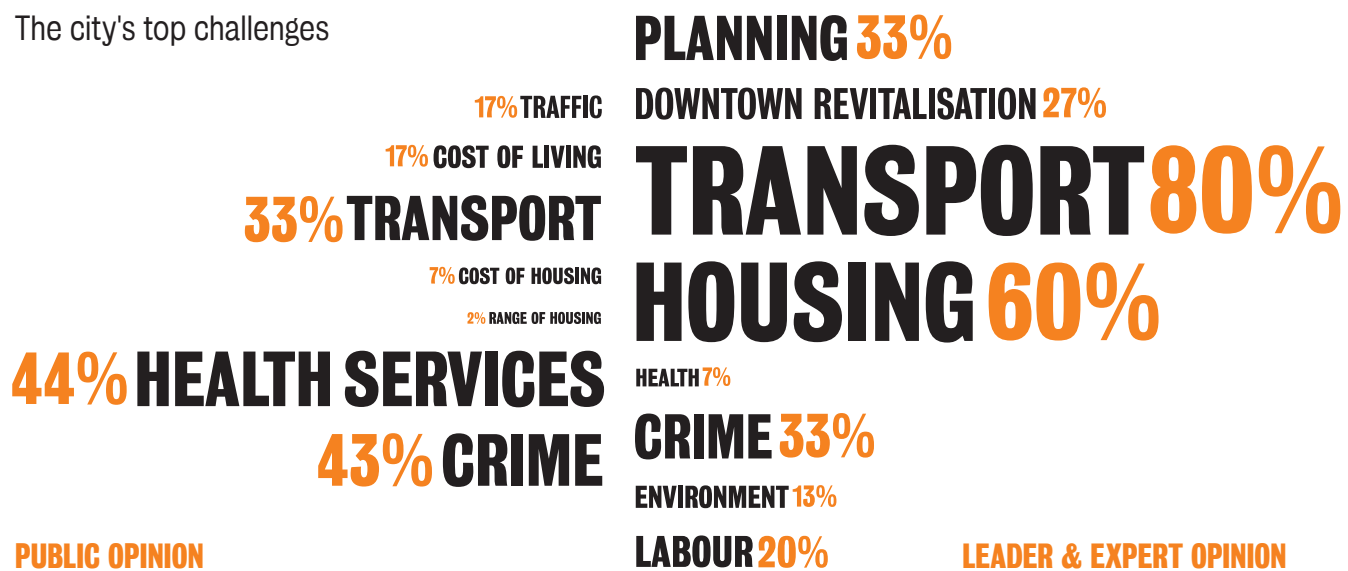
As one of the biggest cities in the world, São Paulo shares many of the beauties and the tragedies of being a major cosmopolitan centre. What is most striking is the level of inequality and diversity inside this one city. As in many other world cities, in São Paulo one will find modern buildings, the most up-to-date fashion, services and goods, the best brands from all over the world, high-tech commercial and entertainment centres, and modern hospitals and health services, as well as fine art exhibitions. At the same time, it faces the same structural problems as many cities but in very severe forms: appalling traffic, poor public transport, high levels of unemployment, very high levels of crime and violence, very poor air quality and in general high levels of pollution.

How do its citizens feel? Comparing the views of Paulistanos and Londoners, living in a very different global city, both single out job opportunities and the range of shops as the best things about it. In London many people also single out the diversity of the city – London is more diverse than anywhere else in Europe. Interestingly this is not an issue in São Paulo: although the city has a diverse series of migrant communities, most of its inhabitants don't seem to take it for granted – only 5 per cent see it as a positive factor worth mentioning. Perhaps that is the difference between a city built on international migration and one that is thousands of years old but has only changed dramatically by migration recently.

It is when we come to problems and priorities for change that people in the two cities are very different. While for Londoners the top three issues are the cost of living, traffic, and crime, Paulistanos are more worried about health services, safety and crime rates, and public transport. The top problems in São Paulo are all related to public services – problems aggravated by the fact that the city has grown too fast without adequate planning. In the 1930s São Paulo became an industrial centre, and population in the 'locomotive of Brazil' exploded. In the 1900s, São Paulo had a population of 240,000 people. By the 1960s it was 3.8 million. In the 1990s, the Metropolitan Region had around 15 million, and now it totals more than 19 million people.

While the migration of people to São Paulo is diminishing and the pace of population growth is slowing down, public services are now under huge pressure. Ratings of these are very negative compared to London (where

The city's top challenges



## PUBLIC OPINION

There are marked differences between the public's perception and that of key stakeholders and experts with regards to the top challenges in São Paulo. The public view (left) was gathered by the Urban Age São Paulo poll conducted by Ipsos Mori in June 2008 of 1,000 residents living within the São Paulo Metropolitan Region. The perception of leaders and experts (right) was extracted from meetings in August 2007 with 44 key individuals working in various urban spheres of government and private practice. Clear differences are the degree to which 'health' and 'crime' are regarded as the top two challenges by the general public compared to 'transport' and 'housing' for urban leaders and experts. The latter view might partially be informed by which services city government is responsible for in contrast to the major overarching societal concerns identified by the general public.

criticising them is a popular hobby, but satisfaction is much higher), and an ageing population will increase pressure on them in both cities, especially in terms of health care. Health services stand out as a huge challenge for São Paulo, with a very low level of satisfaction compared to most European countries.

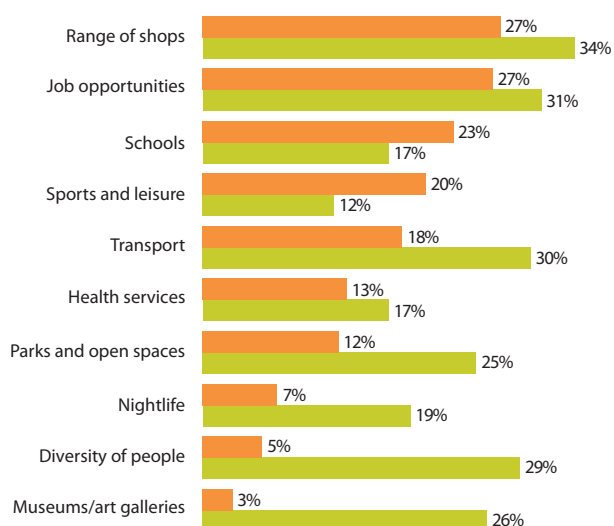
In fact, the only services the majority of Paulistanos are satisfied with are banks and supermarkets. All others have very low satisfaction scores compared to London or many other 'western' cities. Clearly the quality of public services has a huge impact on how satisfied people are with the city as a place to live. The more satisfied they are with public services the more satisfied they are with the city. But when asked how their city can improve, Londoners also cite healthcare, education and transport, although their views are less acute and more varied. In São Paulo the problems are more fundamental and there is far more consensus on what is needed. First people want to see the basic needs

being supplied: the needs for better health and education services are seen as most pressing. These and public housing are absolutely key for the future of 'Sampa', taking precedence over even crime.

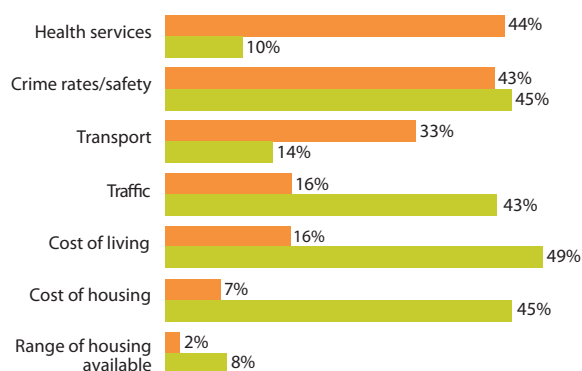
Londoners actually attach more priority to crime levels than São Paulo residents: despite murder and kidnapping rates being much lower, and despite feeling safer in their own local areas than a decade ago, they are appalled by high profile 'signal' crimes such as teenage stabbings that now make the news daily in London.

Interestingly, once we look at the statistical relationship between what people say matters most, and what is revealed in their views via analysis, crime levels and traffic (among the most startling features for foreign visitors to the City), turn out to matter, if anything more than public services for quality of life. São Paulo faces many major challenges that its residents are well aware of.

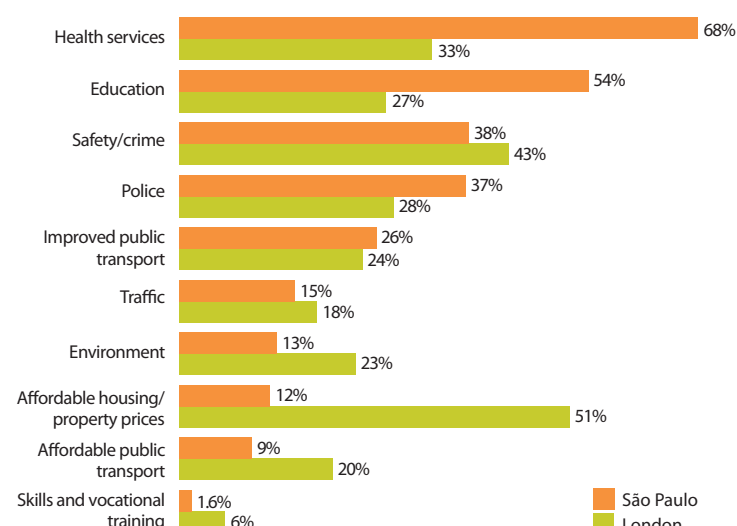
## What do people like most about the city?



## What concerns people most about the city?



## What would improve quality of life in the city?

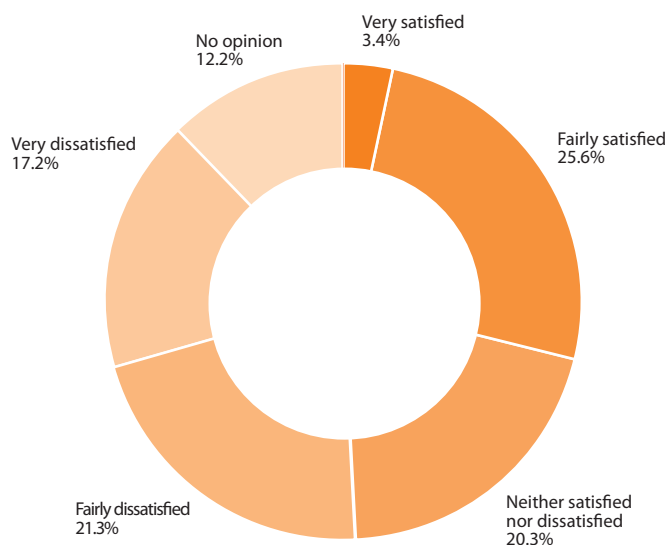


## URBAN GOVERNANCE

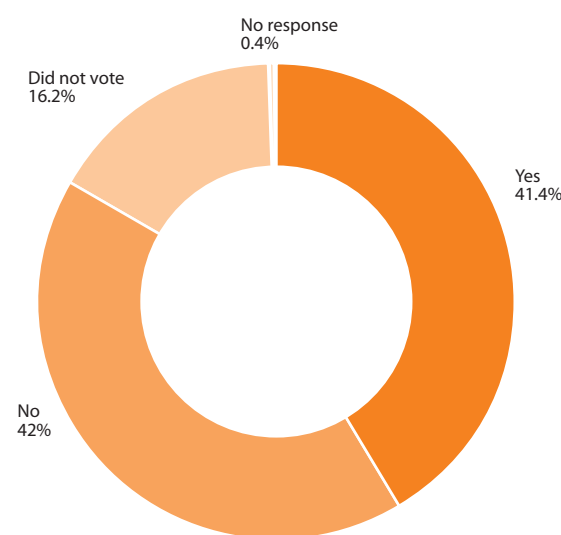
A peculiar characteristic in São Paulo is that civic and political society seem much less effective than elsewhere. Its people are less politicised than in other big cities of the developed world. In Brazil voting is compulsory, but half of people in São Paulo cannot remember who they had voted for in the last elections for governor, while around 42 per cent are not sure who they voted to be mayor. In this context, accountability is weak. Satisfaction with the government in general is low, although as in other countries it is a little higher for local government than for the state government, reflecting criticism of health services and public safety.

But despite low satisfaction with so many public services, residents do not see elections and political engagement as an effective way to improve urban life. This illustrates a cyclical problem where lack of education, and the slow development of a 'middle' class, together with a very polarised society contribute to a lack of political culture and participation. São Paulo has a long way to go before it can be considered a developed city, especially given its social and economical inequalities. It needs to keep growing its economy but in a more sustainable manner. It faces huge challenges on quality of life, and to make progress, the city will need to try to reduce social and economic inequality, despite a political system that seems destined to preserve the status quo.

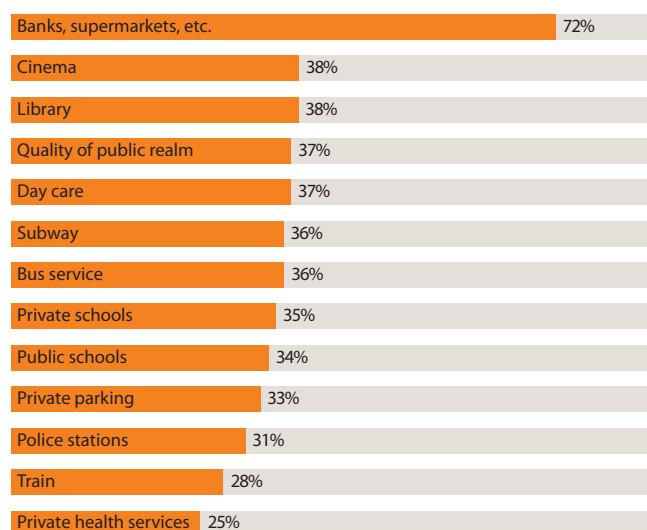
Satisfaction with current city government



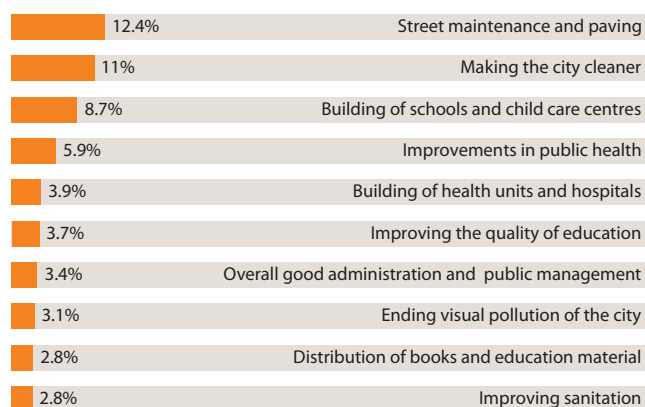
Remembering last vote



How satisfied are residents with services in the city?



Reasons to be satisfied with city government

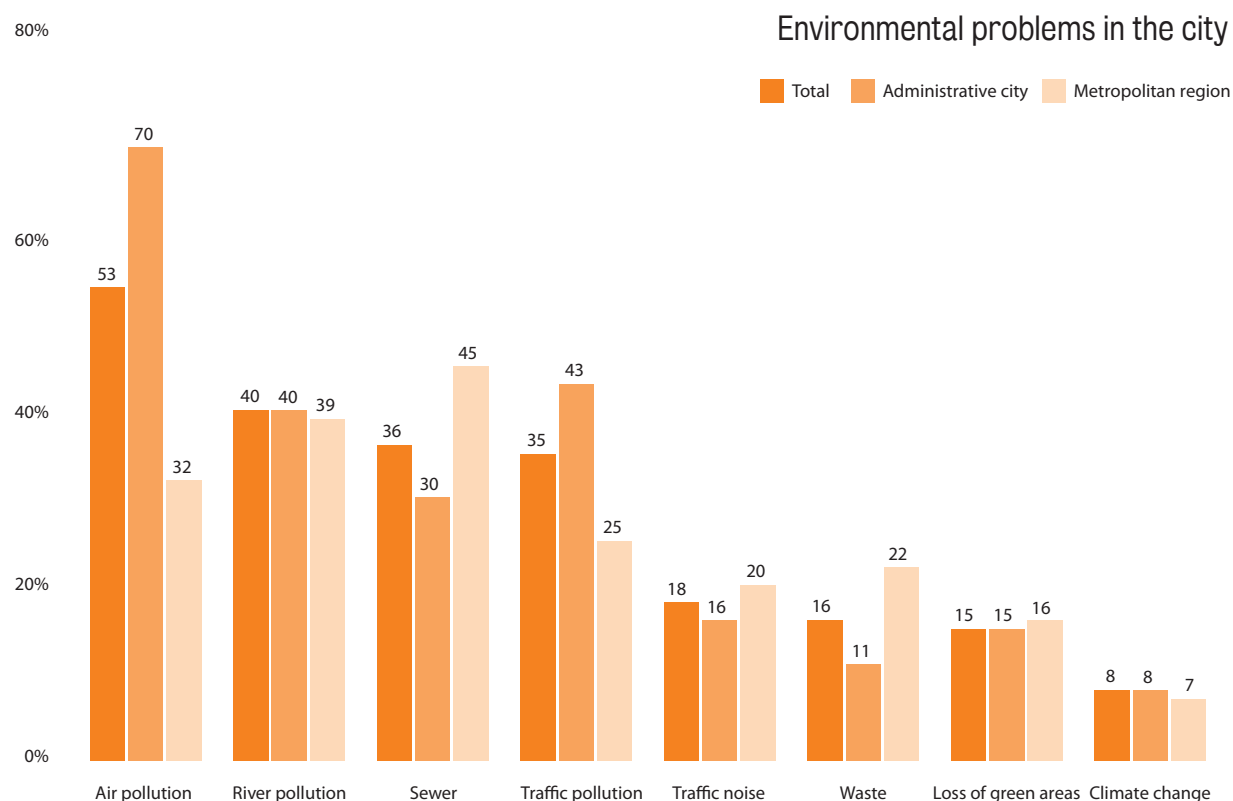


Reasons to be dissatisfied with city government



## ENVIRONMENT

The high volume of traffic and poor fuel quality (in Brazil, diesel has 500 particulates per million, while in Europe and the US, diesel has 10 particulates per million), as well as the sparse amount of green areas in the city make air quality a serious problem for residents in central areas of São Paulo. In outer areas, sewerage systems are seen as more problematic. Interestingly, climate change – a topic which features high among environmental concerns for residents in many European cities – gets little recognition in São Paulo.



## SECURITY

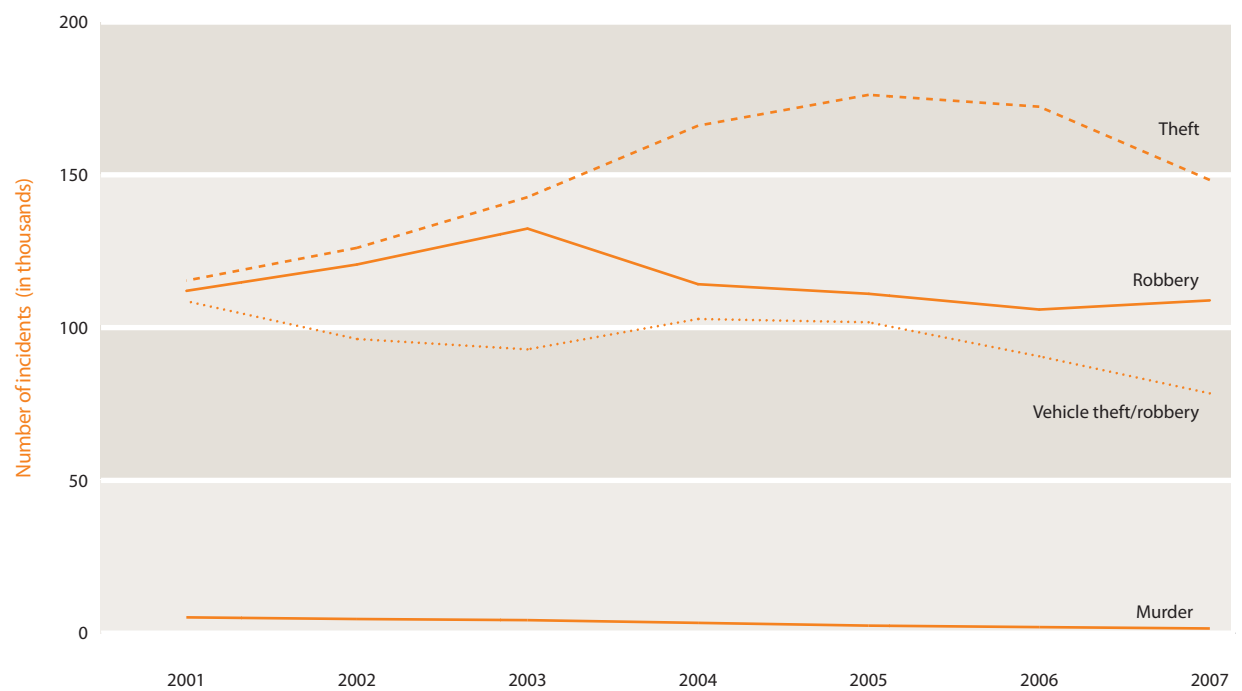
São Paulo is a city of dramatic contrasts. As one walks through the city you will see people of all ages on the streets, begging in the traffic jams, prostitution, and huge favelas alongside middle-class neighbourhoods. The latest and greatest example of São Paulo's contrasts is a compelling architecture symbol of the city, the modernist Ponte Estaiada bridge. Its futuristic design is surrounded by favelas. In São Paulo overall, 11.1 per cent of the population live in favelas.

The same inequalities are vivid when it comes to public investment. Some areas and neighbourhoods have reasonable public services and infrastructure and low crime, for example Jardins, Pinheiros, Itaim, Moema, and Higienópolis. In contrast, neighbourhoods like Campo Limpo, Casa Verde, M'Boi Mirim, Brasília, and Cidade Tiradentes have low public investment and the highest crime levels in the city. According to official statistics, crime rates are in decline across the city as a whole from astronomical levels. Residents are extremely fearful of crime in their own neighbourhoods after dark – twice as concerned as in London (despite Londoners being as or more likely to see crime as a major problem in their city).

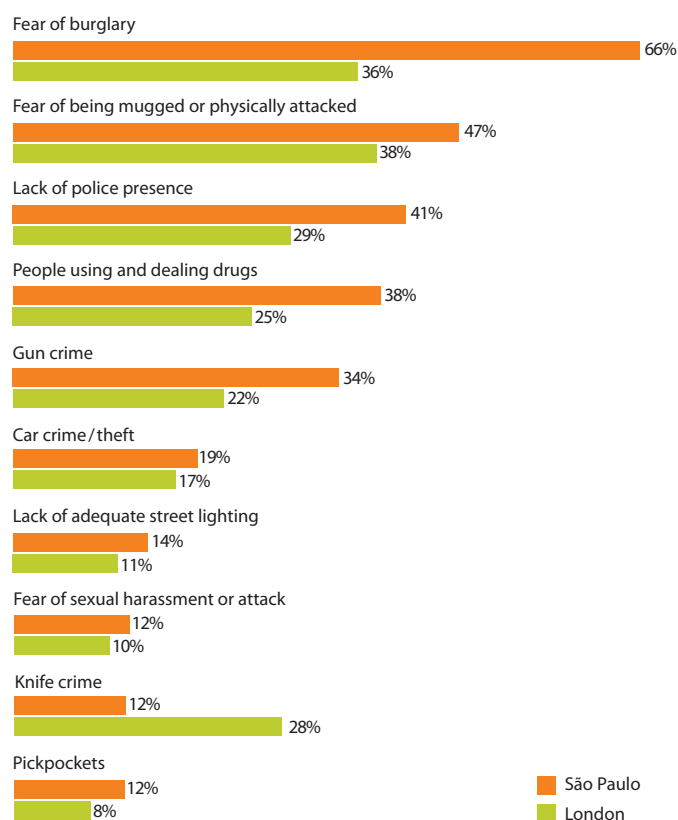
The vast majority are worried about being robbed or attacked. And the absence of adequate policing is seen as a big issue. Overall 57.3 per cent report being robbed or a close family member being robbed. Half (47.5 per cent) say they know someone who has been murdered and 4 per cent have direct experience of kidnapping. As a result there is real demand for more visible policing, with more police posts in the city, for a faster and more severe judicial system, and for tougher punishments for teenagers, giving them the same penalties as adults.

The use of CCTV in public spaces is a reality in São Paulo, and the population wants more of it. Use of private security is also extensive, and most people approve of the idea – the lack of police patrols is the third most important reason for fear of crime, and this fear is even stronger in the Metropolitan Region than in the centre. Other typical problems of the developing world can be found here, such as a significant informal economy, drug dealing, and lack of basic infrastructure in some neighbourhoods, poor urban environments and street furniture, degradation of public spaces and graffiti. A short walk through the city centre presents a mixture of neglected but beautiful architecture together with a massive informal economy and high levels of crime. Even so, education levels and formal employment are improving. The city still needs to answer to some basic needs, especially in terms of public health services.

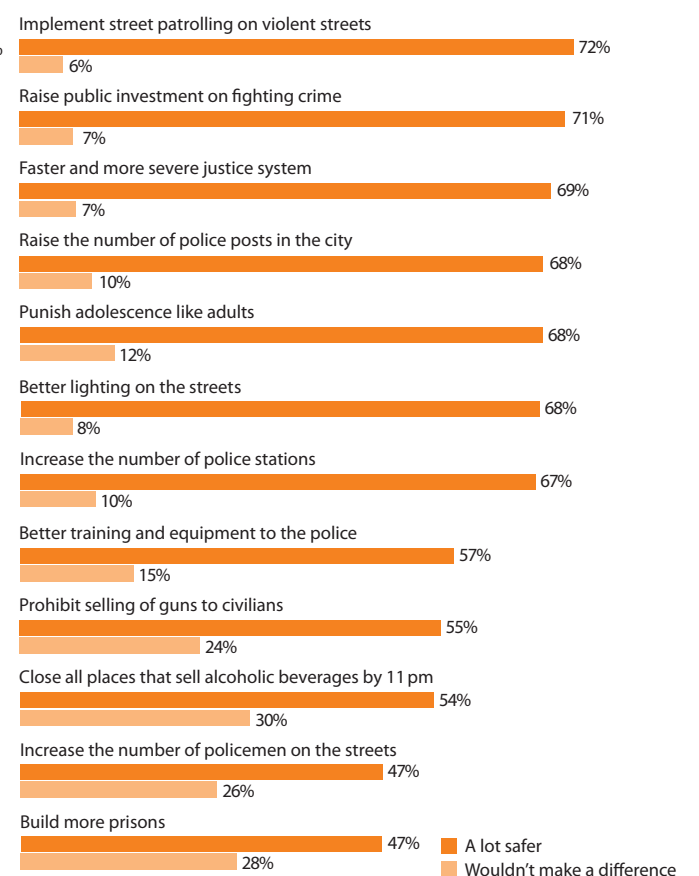
Incidents of Crime (in thousands)



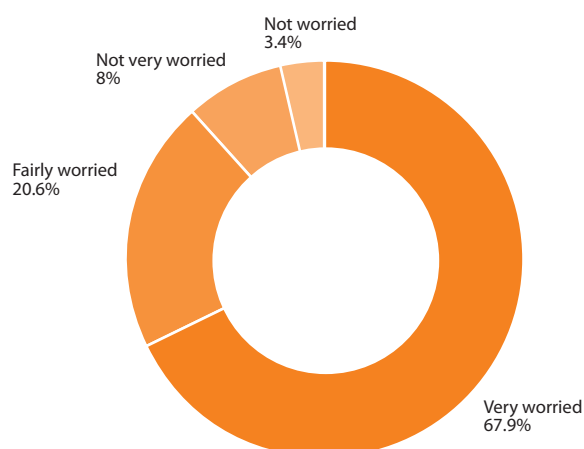
Reasons for feeling unsafe



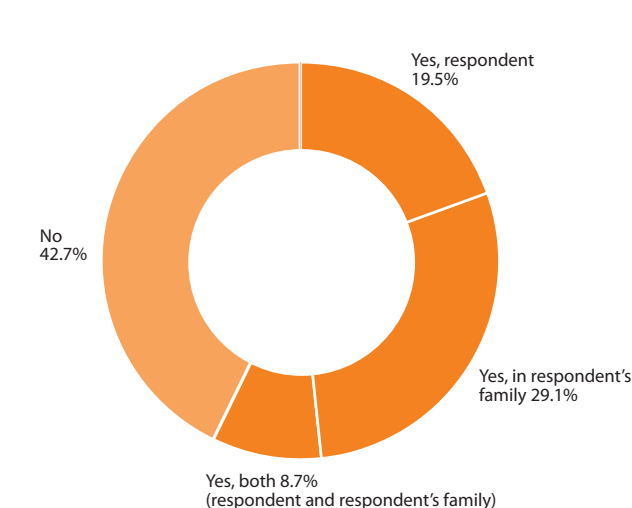
How to improve safety?



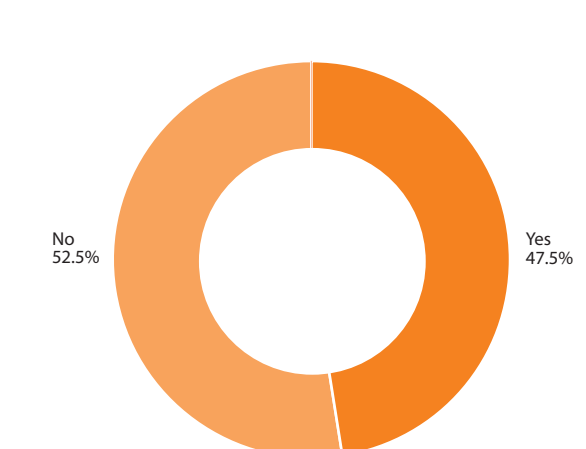
How worried are residents about crime?



Ever been assaulted?



Close relationship with someone who was killed



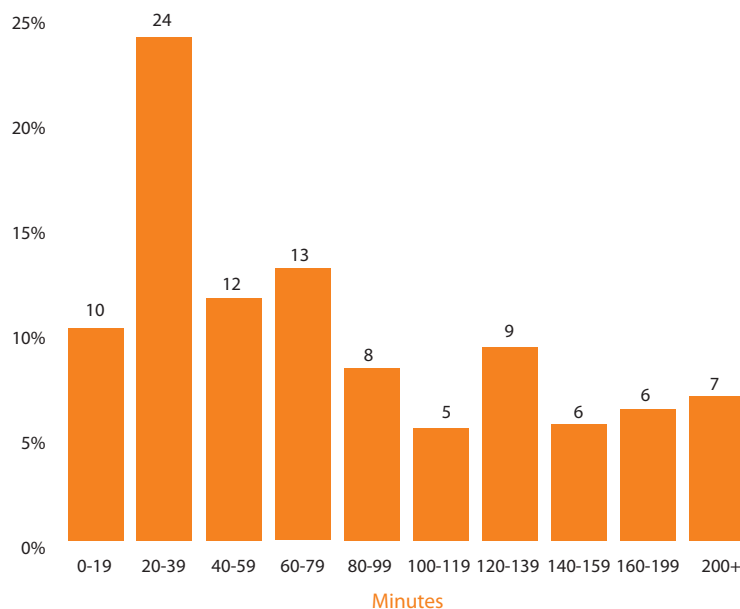
## TRANSPORT

Problems of pollution and traffic are common to cities around the world, but are more dramatic in São Paulo due to the city's role as the economic and financial heart of the country. The richest city in Brazil – and the 19th in the world – faces huge pressures on its infrastructure with economic growth driving some of its most significant problems.

The traffic congestion is due in part to the late development of mass public transport systems; the metro was planned in the 1930s but the first line only started to operate in 1974. Today the metro is still only 62 km long. On the other hand, the city has 18,000 km of streets, and 15,000 urban buses and almost four million cars. Today people spend an average of 42.8 minutes to get to work. But even with terrible traffic, most Paulistanos would not think twice about buying a car if they could afford it. And they would use that car as their main form of transport. Although high concentrations of traffic are disturbing to many visiting Europeans and North Americans it is a phenomenon which the general population can cope with much more easily than inadequate health and education services.

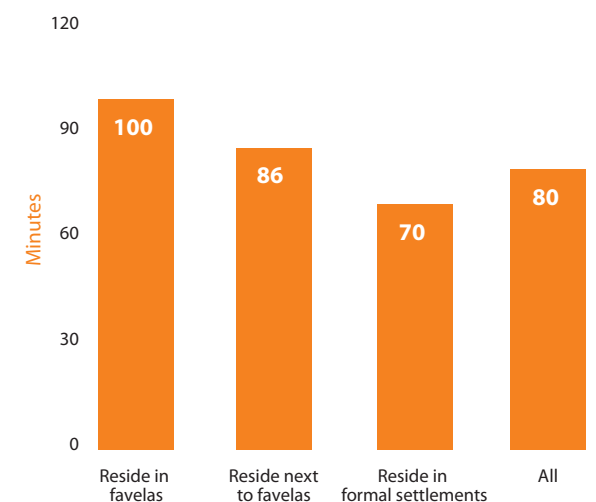
When thinking about what could improve traffic congestion the top two solutions residents point to are investment in the metro system and the expansion of bus corridors in the city. At the same time, the great majority affirm that they would use public transport if there was more of it available and if it was more comfortable, less crowded and faster.

### Return travel times to main daily destinations



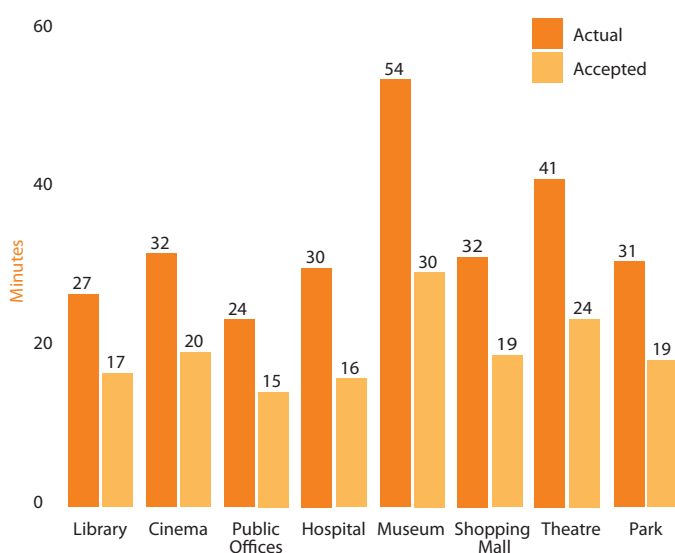
Almost one quarter of those surveyed require between 20 and 40 minutes for their combined return journeys to their main daily destination. More than 7 per cent spend more than 3 hours on these daily journeys.

### Return travel times by household type



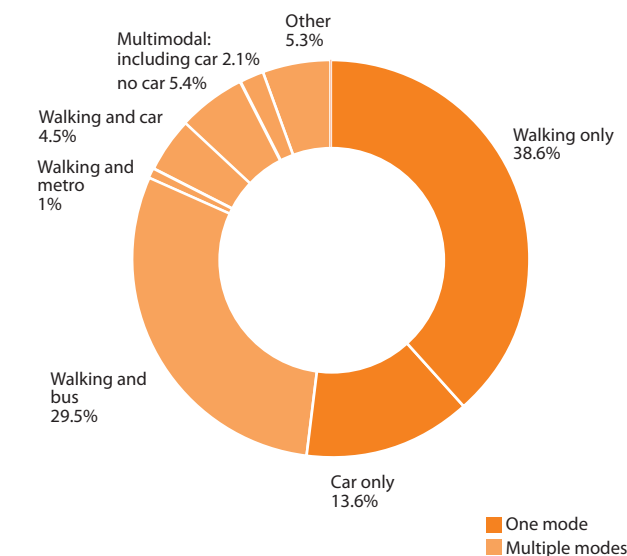
Average travel times for residents of favelas are significantly higher (100 minutes) than those living in formal settlements which are not close to favelas (70 minutes). The average return travel time for the main daily activity of those surveyed is 80 minutes – slightly lower than the travel to work average (85 minutes).

### Travel times to key destinations



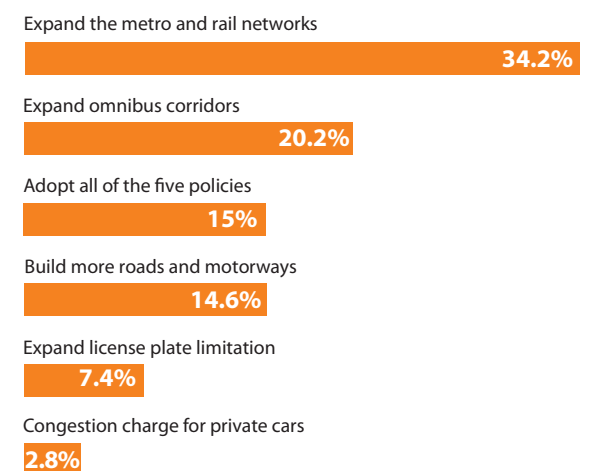
For all urban destinations above, actual average travel times exceed the acceptable levels as stated in interviews. The ratio between the two is similar although slightly higher for those facilities further away, for example museums, theatres and concert halls.

### Means of travel



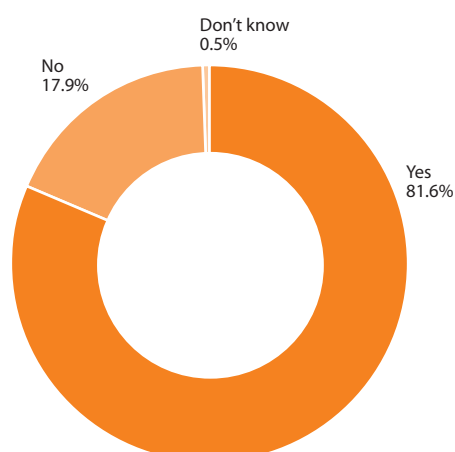
In the past, most surveys of the way people move in cities focused only on motorised transport. Furthermore, they have tended to assume that journeys occur by only one mode of transport. This survey allowed for more specific and dynamic information about the main daily journey and it captures the multiplicity of different means of transport used by those surveyed. The largest percentage of people (39 per cent) only walk to their main daily destination; the second largest travel mode (30 per cent) combines walking with bus transport.

### The public view on solving the transport problems

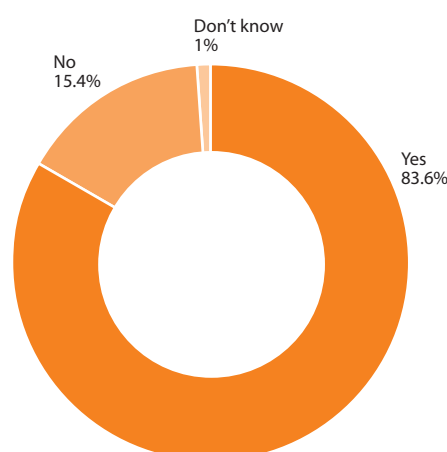


A vast majority of those surveyed would prioritise the expansion of the metro and rail network followed by expanded bus corridors. Approximately fifteen per cent of those surveyed adhere to the classic – and in most cities unsuccessful – strategy of building more roads and motorways as a priority.

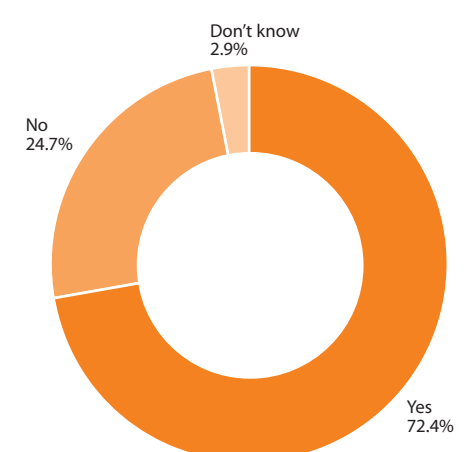
### Would potential car owners buy a car if they could afford one?



### Would car be used as the main mode of transport?



### Agree to reduce car use and promote public transport, walking and cycling





# NEW URBAN OPPORTUNITIES

In a critique of the status quo's preference for privatised urban development and banal urban forms, **Raul Juste Lores** advocates a fundamental shift to reclaim the architectural richness of existing infrastructure in São Paulo's centre.

Every Friday afternoon, an insane race begins for millions of *Paulistanos*. Who manages to escape São Paulo first? The city's fugitives know they will face miles of congestion, that it will take up to four hours in a car to make a 150 km-long journey, and that the same punishment awaits them on their return the following Sunday. Yet this breathless race is repeated every weekend and on national holidays, accompanied by traffic stopping over 220 km of the city's streets.

São Paulo's biggest challenge is invisible, but it is both the cause and effect of its most renowned problems: security and traffic. This challenge is the feeling of being in an urban prison and the need to escape it. Residents complain about it daily, and even those who love the city say 'São Paulo is hopeless'. But how can such a young city, which only became important in the second half of the twentieth century, now be seen as an incorrigible old hand?

In this era of global competition, in which cities want to impress investors and tourists and recruit talented nomads and resources, São Paulo does not present an image of modernity. Missing are Shanghai's Maglev, Dubai's new skyline and Tokyo's high-speed trains. Old and insufficient infrastructure is everywhere: 62 km of metro lines compared to 200 km in Mexico City; hour-long connections between the airport and city centre that depend on taxis; and rivers, the city's business cards, which are dead and stinking despite decades of investment to clean them.

Trying to assess where São Paulo went wrong or to identify solutions involves confronting questions, which range from a lack of mobility to architectural ugliness and residents' feelings of insecurity – even in safe areas. São Paulo needs to analyse itself, and correcting its future growth would be a good starting point.

Over the last 20 years, the Berrini and the Nações Unidas Avenues have shown the greatest economic strength in São Paulo. Yet the area's expansion reveals a series of mistakes, especially in the inhuman, arid and unsustainable form the city is adopting – mistakes that were not due to a lack of money as with other cities in the developing world. The roads that surround the area are only suitable for cars, never for public transport, and they send a clear message: use your car because you cannot rely on access via a metro line or bus.

Real estate speculation has transformed what was once a marginal area inhabited by slums into a series of so-called 'intelligent' high-rise buildings that shut out the city. In some cases, it is difficult to find an entrance other than the car park or the garage. Blocks are over-sized, there are no trees or public spaces, and the ground floors lack bars, restaurants and shops. Even during the day his areas seems uninhabited apart from the permanent traffic congestion surrounding it.

Property developers bought the area cheaply and built-up the last square centimetre. Subsequent lobbying on behalf of the corporations that settled there forced the government to bring in electricity and water supplies, as well as public transport and other public services, leaving the bill to be picked up by the public coffers. São Paulo has repeated this property market cycle now several times: first abandoning the centre for Avenida Paulista in the 1960s, then Paulista for Brigadeiro Faria Lima Avenue in the 1980s and now with this western area since the 1990s. Rehabilitation and modernisation of the city's architectural heritage is alarmingly rare – existing buildings are neglected while new financial districts are created.

São Paulo is, increasingly, an octopus whose tentacles stretch further and further outwards, making it impossible to provide efficient public transport. The tentacles head in all directions: to the West, where the corporate world, gated communities and high-rise buildings proliferate. While the centre has hundreds of empty areas, abandoned buildings and waste land, the poorest people seek housing on the edge of the city, in the North, East and South, polluting areas that should be environmentally preserved, and contaminating the reservoirs that provide the metropolis' drinking water.

In both the expansion of the suburbs and of financial districts, public powers arrive too late, and thus institutionalise the errors made. And despite São Paulo's construction boom and unprecedented economic growth over the last 30 years, resources are not being directed to correct previous mistakes. Both the Mayor and the state government are required to act as educators and regulators for managed growth, and neither should be afraid to curb certain investments, put up barriers or impose conditions.

The unwelcoming character of the Berrini and Marginal Pinheiros areas can be addressed through demands to the property developers themselves. Buildings over fifteen-storeys high should allow for the creation of a square, a garden or a public space that enhances the street-front experience. Avenues need restaurants, bars, shops, pharmacies and bookshops on the ground floors. These functions animate streetlife throughout the day and night, and provide the social surveillance that São Paulo so desperately needs.

Why is it, then, that Avenida Paulista is more secure day and night than other parts of the city? It is because its design embraces the city and mixed-use. There is Trianon Park, public squares, wide pavements, medium-sized blocks and an eclectic occupation. Next to large residential buildings, such as Paulicéia, Saint Honore, the Nações Unidas and Tres Marias, there are banks, schools, colleges, hospitals, pharmacies and pubs, newspaper stands and cultural centres such as the Theatre of SESI, Itaú Cultural and MASP.

Conjunto Nacional proves that São Paulo once knew

how to build intelligent buildings. On its 33 floors, divided into three blocks, there are offices and apartments with separate entrances. The wide pavements outside the building are made of the same material as the floors inside, thus obliterating the boundaries between public and private. The ground floor hosts cinemas, shops, banks, pharmacies and restaurants. This varied use demonstrates how to inject modernity and new life in a 1950s building without damaging it. The result is that the block of the Conjunto Nacional is the liveliest on Avenida Paulista. Continuous streams of people walk the area, weekdays and weekends. In a city that is prisoner to the paranoia about safety, the generous and welcoming architecture of Conjunto Nacional offers coexistence and safety for thousands of people. Criminals, who prefer dark and abandoned places where they can be left alone, are unwelcome there.

Why have the postmodern buildings of the Marginal Pinheiros and Berrini never managed to repeat the success that the Conjunto Nacional, designed in 1953, still has in 2008? If the current real estate market of São Paulo prefers repetitive and simple solutions, it is the responsibility of the public powers to make demands that can 'build the city'. The same permissiveness exists in the planning for shopping malls despite extensive literature about how malls damage the urban landscape. São Paulo now has nearly 80 malls. In five years, the Daslu, Cidade Jardim and Vila Olímpia malls were built next to older ones such as Iguatemi, Morumbi, D&D and Market Place. The result is a chain of seven malls within 10 km<sup>2</sup>. Just as the Mayor can veto building a hundred-storey tall tower because of its impact on the neighbourhood, or can prevent the demolition of a house built in the 1920s, permission for the construction of new shopping malls should require contractors to think about alternatives.

Any intervention that makes a Paulistano not use a car, but instead walk for a few hours on the street in public space, would already have an educational value. Not only because the streets – like the ones in Manhattan, Buenos Aires, Paris or Rio de Janeiro – would be full of people, but also because if São Paulo's elite occupied the streets, there would be greater demand for the care of pavements, traffic signs, and urban furniture.

The new malls could remember the trade streets that marked the Paulistano centre, such as the Barao de Itapetinga. The shopping mall typology that has dominated the past 40 years is not sustainable. Beijing has just inaugurated the Sanlitun Village mall which features 19 low buildings, up to four-storeys high, designed by 16 different architects.



High-end office space is concentrated in towers such as these overlooking the Marginal Pinheiros River in the Berrini region, the second largest financial district in São Paulo. A deficiency of integrated transport here makes the area less attractive than the new growth corridors along Avenida Paulista near the city centre.





The business services which make São Paulo the leading financial centre of South America have yet to occupy the modernist structures in the city centre. These commercial buildings, the result of feverish building activity accompanying industrialization, encapsulate the city's entrepreneurial spirit yet remain largely vacant.

The result creates diversity among the buildings, vast pavements and safe alleyways. It is, in effect, an open mall. So why continue to allow projects that do not give anything back to the urban landscape?

In Tokyo, where real estate is more expensive and scarcer than in any neighbourhood of São Paulo, municipal regulations required the multifunctional complex of Tokyo Midtown to set aside 40,000 m<sup>2</sup> of gardens, with an art gallery in the middle, as public space. Roppongi Hills sponsored the design of banks around the enterprise. In Berrini, builders have already demonstrated that they will not care for the city of their own volition. Regulations could force them to look after the design and maintenance of bus stops, benches and squares – investments that would only enhance their property values.

Palácio das Indústrias, Casa das Retortas, Memorial da América Latina, Casa e Parque Modernistas e Parque Trianon, are all well-known names for Paulistanos, but what do they have in common? The first two are large historic public buildings that have been empty for years, waiting for a new use. The others are freely accessible public spaces that are empty during weekends. Meanwhile, São Paulo has built several theatres in recent years in a region beyond the Marginal Pinheiros and Berrini. For most of the public it takes up to an hour and a half by car to get to a concert or a play. The public authorities have failed to create incentives to use empty and centrally located places that already have infrastructure and public transport.

In a city that has only a handful of buildings more than 150 years old, the heritage of the small town that became the largest metropolis in South America should make preservation and re-investment in the centre a priority. There are dozens of empty or underused twenty-storey buildings. Yet despite the rhetoric about revitalising the historic centre, the last remaining large companies and law offices have left in the last five years.

Residential projects in the centre do not succeed because either humble people without savings are installed in twenty-storey buildings in which the lifts alone generate service charges expected of middle-class housing; or because the 'brand' of the centre still has a negative connotation. Buenos Aires with its Puerto Madero, Mexico City with its historical districts of Condesa and Roma, and Bogotá with Macarena prove that even cities poorer than São Paulo can recover derelict neighbourhoods and transform buildings of past

### The public authorities have failed to create incentives to use empty and centrally located places that already have infrastructure and public transport

decades into local versions of Soho and Chelsea in New York City or the fashionable Marais district in Paris.

São Paulo's centre has the highest concentration of museums and cultural facilities in the city, the most metro stops and bus stations, several squares, wide pavements and public buildings, and the police is more present there than in other areas. The centre is also strategically located in the middle of the city.

Why, then, has the revitalisation of the centre not worked? The answer is that the boost given by the public authorities was too timid. Large construction companies could have been required to think about alternatives in the empty centre or even retrofit buildings whose historical charm is an added bonus. Photographers, visual artists, stylists, advertising executives, musicians and designers have never needed an explicit and direct invitation from the authorities to occupy these voids. The city quickly expropriates whole buildings to make room for viaducts, tunnels and other works, but it cannot allow new uses for empty buildings in the centre for professionals in the creative industries who are priced out of overvalued properties in Vila Madalena, Vila Olímpia or Jardins.

The Pinacoteca, the Sala São Paulo and the Museu da Língua Portuguesa, all excellent cultural institutions, suffer from a pre-supposed revitalisation of their neighbourhoods. They remain isolated buildings, where users arrive and leave hastily by car, avoiding any intrusion into the areas beyond their walls. Nobody thought about creating offices, residential use or studios – subsidised or not – which could have provided a halo effect for the surroundings.

One of the recent examples of São Paulo's vitality can be seen at Roosevelt Square. A pile of concrete since the 1960s, when it was constructed to connect express roads and viaducts, Roosevelt Square was the locus of drug trafficking and prostitution until five years ago. Its devalued residential buildings, however, now have new uses on the ground floor: cinemas and bars sit next to alternative theatre groups in search of cheap space. From the dramaturgic talent to

urban opportunity, Roosevelt Square now hosts bars and seven theatres that offer plays throughout the day to pay for their expenses.

The courage of the pioneers and the growing movement in the area has driven away criminals. Roosevelt Square has thus turned into a small village in the city centre. But despite years of discussions and promises, a 'pentagon' of concrete prevents it from becoming a real square. A landscape design project would allow the Roosevelt 'movement' to spread to neighbouring streets, building even more theatres, pizzerias, and bars and bringing even more lively youngsters to the area. Several other areas in the centre could host clusters of creative industries, such as the beautiful working class village next to Casa de Dona Yayá in Bexiga, the empty plot beside the Teatro da Oficina, the large pavements with galleries from the 1950s, the beautiful Largo do Arouche, the Avenida Vieira de Carvalho, and the abandoned Vila Itororó.

The success of the Cidade Limpa (Clean City) project, which focused exclusively on removing billboards and outdoor advertisements from the streets of São Paulo, shows how even very small interventions can have a strong impact on Paulistanos' perception of their city. This was not an expensive project, but it managed to counter the belief that 'São Paulo is hopeless'. That the project stopped working reinforces the idea of timidity of São Paulo's public management. The billboards hid an ugly and grey metropolis that is now visible, and the government's failure to improve the urban landscape only adds to Paulistanos' low self-esteem.

Twenty-two years ago, Barcelona changed its landscape with the 'Barcelona, posatè Guapa' project, which combined the withdrawal of outdoor advertising with concessions for temporary billboards. When renovating the façade of a historic building, the sponsors were permitted to put their logo on the protective mesh covering the work. With the ban on billboards, street advertising was thus transformed into something more valuable that gave the local authorities enormous bargaining power when it came to making better use of existing resources.

São Paulo has one of the world's largest collections of architectural modernism: from the 1930s to the 1960s the city was what Shanghai is nowadays. Yet despite several works by Oscar Niemeyer, a cultural or tourist map does not utilise this heritage. Recovering the self-image of the city would start with these architectural landmarks. If it wants to be beautiful, São Paulo needs to dust off, polish and illuminate its past glories as any old European city knows. That the façade of Copan is in poor condition, that the Esther building from 1936 has a decrepit front, and that historically important if not architecturally revolutionary buildings like Martinelli or Sampaio Moreira seem semi-derelict, show the challenges ahead for São Paulo.

São Paulo needs to re-embrace architecture, just as it did in the years of accelerated boom and confidence in the future – in the years when its elite created the MASP, the Biennale and the Museum of Modern Art. This could give its young talent the opportunity to build better than the repetitive and awkward custom of today's real estate market. It could ease the entry of talented foreign architects, who would bring new perspectives, new materials and sensibilities to the city. It could also allow the creation of social housing projects by local architects finding new forms rather than the hundreds of identical 'crates' on the periphery. Lastly, the city could create public-private partnerships and international competitions for the construction of major buildings, with prizes awarded by the public for projects that stimulate beauty and create collective spaces that, rather than frighten, attract the Paulistano.

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# THE MULTICULTURAL CITY

**José de Souza Martins** connects the roots of São Paulo's transitive multiculturalism to the everyday experience of urban life for Paulistanos.



The Bandeiras Monument marking the entrance to Ibirapuera Park was inaugurated in 1953 and pays tribute to the founders of São Paulo. To capture its non-stop economic progress and successive waves of immigrants, the city adopted 'São Paulo: cidade que não pode parar' as its slogan – the city that is not able to stop.

The city of São Paulo and its Metropolitan Region form without a doubt a multicultural whole. The list of cultural diversities that characterises them is extensive and complex, which is not only due to waves of foreign immigration since 1870, but is also a result of the diversity that characterised this immigration.

The most significant of them, the immigration of Italians, was not actually 'Italian' per se. They did not constitute an influx of tens of thousands of immigrants coming from Italy proper. They came from a newly unified Italy, a new state and nation while they originated from many political realities, and hailed from regional cultures that formed the map of Italian diversity, unified by the *Risorgimento*. They arrived here speaking their regional dialects, bringing local customs and traditions with them. In some of São Paulo's neighbourhoods people still speak Portuguese with a Neapolitan, Calabrian, Venetian or Mantovanian accent.

They became 'Italians' in Brazil, through their children who possibly went to Italian schools to learn their parent's native language. São Paulo became a city characterised by cultural duplications, where people would speak their mother tongue, whichever it was, at home, and speak Portuguese with a strong foreign accent on the streets. It is no coincidence, then, that the engineer Alexandre Marcondes Machado invented an ironic Italian-Paulistano dialect in his literary work, under the pseudonym Juó Bananere, and that his first book, *La Divina Incrência*, published in 1915 – a parody on Dante's *Divine Comedy* – imagined multiculturalism as confusion instead of an encounter.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Portuguese with a foreign accent mixed with foreign words has been the language of comedy in the work of different authors in São Paulo. This was not meant to be ironic about the immigrants, but to provide an external point of view that

Multiculturalism was, and somehow still is, experienced as a way of life in which people move through different cultures daily, depending on the roles they play in a fragmented life of slow and difficult convergences.

could highlight, in a critical way, the municipal and political absurdities of the city, which was being transformed through the influx of money from the coffee export: money that would be multiplied in the financial world, in industry and in trade. Money that also disrupted social relations, especially social differences, took away prejudices and in a short time inverted relations of dominance and power.

In his book, Bananere traces a portrait of intense sounds, of the daily mentality of the population of São Paulo in the 1920s and 1930s, their ways of recognising the city and living the contradictions of life. Immigrants had become Brazilians by the time they had grandchildren, in a process of slow cultural migration to the culture of the society they had adopted, which wasn't a strong culture either, but rather a patchwork of contributions from various sources, among them Italian regional cultures and foreign immigrants in general. The work of an Italian descendant – João Rubinato – illustrates this. He made a move in the opposite direction of Bananere, by adopting a Brazilian pseudonym: Adoniran Barbosa. His musical and popular compositions talk – also ironically – about the life of simple people and are written in a residual Brazilian language, mixed with traces of the Italian accent of the working-class neighbourhoods of São Paulo. Many people believe that this was a made-up

language, like in Bananere's book. However, in reality Rubinato spoke exactly like that. When dealing with matters of daily life in the city, as in 'Saudosa Maloca' and 'Trem das Onze', he transformed the accent into a disguised ironic language that tells of the small daily dramas of workers and drunks, just like himself.

This diversity had countless other important manifestations that showed a kind of recognition and respect for multiculturalism, which separated the new generations of children from the generation of their parents (which involved just one or two cultures). Such was the case with a successful radio programme in the 1940s, the *Escolinha* of Nhô Totico. Nhô Totico was the nickname of Vital Fernandes da Silva, who was born in the countryside near São Paulo from an Italian mother and a Brazilian father from Bahia. He had a multicultural background as he was born into and educated in a third culture, the caipira culture, which was formed by old descendants of Indians and whites. In his radio school, Nhô Totico performed all the voices of its different characters: the Brazilian professor, as well as the Italian, Spanish, Syrians, Portuguese and Japanese students. He transformed the diversity of origins, so characteristic of São Paulo at that time, into a pluralist panel unified by the school and by the Brazilian teacher, turning it into an invitation to overcome cultural differences through education.

Later in the 1950s, the vast and intense stream of immigrants from north-eastern Brazil, expelled by the crisis in sugarcane farming caused by episodes of drought, and attracted by the new industrialisation developed by the car industry, made the culture of São Paulo even more diverse. Not only by the way they spoke, but also because of their kitchen and customs, the Nordestinos from North-Eastern Brazil added to the São Paulo culture specific traces of their own. Like there are typically Italian, Spanish, Arab, German, Jewish, Eastern, Russian and Ukrainian neighbourhoods, there are also typically Nordestino neighbourhoods in São Paulo. In recent decades Latin American immigration has added new colours to the city, particularly through immigration of Bolivians. The culinary cultures of these various national groups, which can be experienced through the many restaurants that represent them, easily make any tourist and the city's population recognise it as a multicultural city.

The same can be said regarding its religious diversity, with buildings of worship ranging from synagogues to mosques, from Protestant and Evangelical temples to a great diversity of Catholic churches organised around different devotions which are all expressions of cultural diversity. You can follow a Mass with Gregorian singing in the church of São Bento, or a popular Mass in the shrine of Santo Amaro, an Orthodox Mass in Vila Mariana, a Protestant worship in the city centre, a Muslim celebration on the Avenue of the State, a Jewish worship in one of the several synagogues, a session of the Pentecostal cult in a church in Vila Pompéia or in the Baixada do Glicério, a Protestant worship with the sound of balalaicas in a church of Russian immigrants in Vila Prudente, or even a Protestant worship in a Korean church from Luz.

However, São Paulo is multicultural not because it was historically open to diversity and tolerance. On the contrary, it carries the weight of two kinds of slavery in its history, together with the restrictions and prohibitions that all forms of slavery eventually resulted in. First, the indigenous slavery, which formally terminated in the early-eighteenth century, and subsequently black slavery, which was abolished in 1888. In a city with few slaves, one would anticipate slavery to end in several ways. However, it happened not as the result of a generous commitment to the idea of freedom and equality, but because slavery was an obstacle for a society hungry for cheap labour, which had already established a regular flow of immigrants and free workers that could fulfil its demands. In economic terms, slavery was a disadvantage.





Túca Vieira

A diverse mix of Paulistanos crowd the bustling commercial area surrounding 25 de Março Avenue. Among the nearly 19 million residents in the Metropolitan Region are the largest Lebanese population outside of Lebanon, the biggest Japanese community outside of Japan, and the third largest Italian city outside of Italy after Buenos Aires and New York City.

Influences from those periods of slavery in the language remain in culinary and religious traditions and in other customs. There are even remnants of hybridisations from the time of indigenous slavery. Saci Pererê for instance is a mythical being of indigenous origin, which in its African version appears as a black boy with only one leg. As a regular appearance in stories as a naughty character, he still inhabits children's imagination. His original name, Saci Pererê, is indigenous. He became a black character in the eighteenth century, when indigenous slavery was abolished and the flow of black slaves to São Paulo increased, especially to the sugar cane plantations that flourished within the Capitania, the state of São Paulo.

Studies by Renato da Silva Queiroz show the Saci Pererê was a mythical figure related to limits and boundaries, and therefore he usually appears in fences. In the eighteenth century he had crossed the boundaries and passed on to the side of the new subordinates, the black slaves, taking on their skin colour and identity while continuing to be an indigenous being in a society with social stratification, with more or less rigid boundaries between races, ethnicities and social groups. This cultural transgression of Saci Pererê was the first highly symbolic demonstration of adaptive multiculturalism in the region of São Paulo.

It is not strange that, at that time, the abbot of São Bento paid a black slave from his Order, a magician, to remove the *banzo* from his slaves. This means that a representative member of an emblematic Catholic order turned to voodooism to have his slaves freed from curses and spells. This is a demonstration of diversity and multiculturalism that do not converge, as if society was composed of a structure of specific and distinct cultural layers, each with its own logic, values and reach. Multiculturalism was, and somehow still is, experienced as a way of life in which people move through different cultures daily, depending on the roles they play in a fragmented life of slow and difficult convergences. This is something that persists in practices such as the attendance at shrines of Umbanda, and some people's adherence to Candomblé and to traditions of African and black religious orientation, while at the same time moving in entirely different cultural and religious circles.

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### It is therefore not strange to find a Japanese descendant singing Italian tarantelas in a canteen in Bras, still an Italian neighbourhood.

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It is in religion and religiosity, indeed, where we find the most relevant signs of original traditions' survival, which is a very typical Paulistano way of continuing to be what one once was, rather than ceasing to be what one is. That is what makes São Paulo peculiar and multicultural. Not because it accepts the cultural diversity of those who arrive in it without conflict, but mainly because it ensures each one of the living experience of diversity is allowed to be what it has always been, and at the same time embracing it as the novelty of the daily coexistence of similarities and innovations.

It is therefore not strange to find a Japanese descendant singing Italian tarantelas in a canteen in Bras, still an Italian neighbourhood, or a black man from Bexiga spilling his sins into a priest's ear in Calabrian during confession. Or to have a Frenchman, such as the sociologist Roger Bastide, who is of Protestant and Calvinist origins, dive into African cultures so deeply that one could say that being black is not based in colour of one's skin but on the structure of how one dreams. These are examples of how São Paulo's multiculturalism is, essentially, an invitation to continue to be what it always was, and to become someone new and different. It is a call for cultural creativity and for a free and constant move between different cultural standards.

In that sense, the multiculturalism of São Paulo and its surroundings can be better understood as a transitive multiculturalism, which makes it very different from other multicultural metropolises that are characterised by the collage of a certain diversity of cultures. In such cases, we are dealing with a multiculturalism of confinement, where diversity is accepted as an aggregation of cultural differences and not as a way of communication and transit between differences. With this, I am not saying that multiculturalism

should be faced in terms of rigid forms of organisation of diversity, but as diversity that may be considered from two opposing cultural trends.

The transitive multiculturalism of São Paulo, despite its historical references tending to confinement, ended up being imposed by the complex need for a multicultural transit in a city that was re-created in an urban, architectural sense, and, in terms of its population, at least thrice in modern times: in the 1880s, 1910s and 1960s. These were culturally cataclysmic moments that added new characters to the scene and at the same time, cancelled out old conspiracies.

The rigidity of cultural traditions and customs softened to allow the new and reciprocal adaptation of the former residents and welcome the new residents. However, it would be wrong to say that Paulistanos are unconditionally open to multiculturalism. They are, in relation to aspects of everyday life, in areas where plurality is inevitable, not failing to recognise that this plurality of coexistence is largely responsible for the breaking down of previous identities and the dilution of possible cultural resistance to change and adaptation. Simultaneously, they are not, when it comes to aspects of their private life, family and community, where they will take care for certain elements not to become mixed up in a pluralistic re-socialisation. As is the case of marriages in some of the cultures that persist in São Paulo, reasonably protected from the outside, especially when they involve rituals between young and old generations, such as Japanese and Korean. It has been typical, however, that the dilution of these obstructions that happens with the passing of generations, which is what characterises the transitivity to which I refer, exists in a meaningful balance with maintaining the essential elements of the cultures of origin and a complete assimilation of what does not conflict with them or complements them.

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# SÃO PAULO'S URBAN TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

A research team\* led by **Ciro Biderman** assesses how to improve the current transport system in the São Paulo Metropolitan Region.

Over 19 million inhabitants and 6.2 million cars occupy the São Paulo Metropolitan Region, Brazil's largest, while the municipality of São Paulo accommodates more than 11 million people and 4.2 million cars. São Paulo boasts the second largest helicopter fleet in the world, and its main modes of transport are private vehicles, public transport and walking. Public transport is feebly subsidised however, with nearly half of the city's households opting to commute by car. To date, traffic management has been limited to 'plate restriction' (*rodízio*) through which 20 per cent of cars are not allowed to circulate in the extended centre between 7 am and 10 am and 5 pm and 8 pm on weekdays. Local and state authorities are taking actions to remedy the city's infamous traffic congestion and although official proposals are heading in the right direction, a more conceptual change would prioritise public transport, as well as pedestrians and cyclists.

There are currently 313 km of metro and rail lines dedicated to passenger transportation in the Metropolitan Area. This is less than half the networks of either London, Berlin or New York, all in metropolitan regions smaller than São Paulo. Within Latin America, only Mexico City's rail network is on a par with São Paulo with a total of 553 km. To further complicate matters, some of São Paulo's major commuter rail lines accommodate freight as well as passenger transport. Since the late 1990s, the State Secretary of Transport through Dersa (Empresa de Desenvolvimento Rodoviário) has started to implement a plan to segregate freight from passengers through construction of an outer road ring, the Rodoanel, and an outer rail ring, the Ferroanel, so that passengers will no longer have to share the same rail lines with freight trains.

The Brazilian transport system is highly concentrated by the use of motorised traffic. Even so, in 2002 about 7.4 million journeys on public transport and 8 million car journeys took place in São Paulo, compared to 4.2 million public transit journeys and 4.9 million by car in the other municipalities combined. Then, the number of journeys by

car represented 53 per cent of the daily total of motorised journeys in the Metropolitan Region, an increase from 48 per cent in 1997. Recently, though, this trend has begun to reverse: preliminary data from 2007 shows that car journeys are down to 45 per cent. It is thought that the introduction of the *bilhete único* (single ticket), which allows users of the rail network to pay a standard fare, regardless of distance or number of connections, has reinvigorated the use of public transport. Use is very much concentrated on buses (76 per cent of journeys in 1997 and 72 per cent in 2002). And while the current use of bicycles is negligible, preliminary data from 2007 shows that 33 per cent of families in the Metropolitan Region own at least one bicycle. Increasing the supply of dedicated cycle lanes might increase the use of bicycles considerably.

São Paulo's dedicated bus lanes, Corredores de ônibus, are similar to the TransMilenio in Bogotá, but are much less segregated from general traffic. Furthermore very few stations have passing lanes, and there is no high-level entry or fare pre-payment as in the TransMilenio. Operating at speeds only half that expected of a bus rapid transit (BRT) system, in 2005 the city's Corredores de ônibus occupied just 112 km of the 4,300 km of roads covered by the bus network. The first stage of a new bus line, the Tiradentes Expressway, was recently opened in the South-East of São Paulo, connecting the city centre with the largest social housing complex in Latin America, Cidade Tiradentes. When fully implemented, the Tiradentes Expressway will

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The Minhocão must be seen as an exemplar of what could be achieved across the city if a new approach to public transport and the public realm were introduced in São Paulo.

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be able to transport 50,000 passengers per day. It is the only system in São Paulo comparable to a BRT as it currently runs at speeds over 30 km per hour along permanent, demarcated lanes. The current investments will add around 160 km of corridors.

The general overall public transport plan for the São Paulo Metropolitan Region has been consolidated into an Urban Transport Integrated Plan (PITU) to include projections up to 2025. The PITU 2025 implies very few extensions to the commuter rail network, but a considerable improvement using profits generating from the separation of freight transport. The PITU proposal calls for the partial duplication of lines with new expressways, a single extension outwards as well as the extension of several lines inwards to make them all converge in one area. It also envisages two new lines, one of which will be an express train to the airport. In terms of bus corridors, besides adding more than 300 km to the network, PITU proposes 110 km of 'urban corridors' including passing points to increase their speed to the equivalent of a BRT system. The proposal projects a total of 580 km of new corridors by 2025. To generate these significant change, the system should be highly integrated, a priority of PITU 2025, which calls for 15 key terminals connecting the different modes of transport. Future terminals would start in the metro system and connect directly to buses or rail services at street level.

Since the 1950s, transport policies in the São Paulo Metropolitan Region, as in most other Brazilian metropolitan areas, have neglected public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. The result is a chaotic and inefficient system with long commuting times, especially for the poor. The obvious way forward is to improve the supply of public transport. However, just improving the supply is not enough. A fundamental shift towards more equitable and sustainable transport modes is needed. Cars, buses, pedestrian, cyclists, motorcyclists and street sellers all compete for limited space on city streets, avenues and sidewalks. The government has the power to regulate the use of these spaces and to decide how they are distributed through a range of instruments. Increasing the space allocated to public transport, bicycles and pedestrians is an important first step to redistribute resources as these will specifically improve the lives of the poor. Since the poor have less access to private space for non-motorised uses, they use more public space for those purposes. This modal shift would also benefit the environment by reducing travel distances considerably.

There is no doubt that the PITU proposals represent an advance in standards for public transport in the greater



With one of the largest fleets of helicopters in the world, the business elite in São Paulo opt to commute by helicopter to avoid paralysing traffic throughout the city and the Minhocão (shown centre), completed in the early 1970s to alleviate already debilitating levels of traffic congestion.





Tuca Vieira

Almost 30 per cent of Paulistanos travel by bus on privately operated lines.

metropolitan area of São Paulo. Apart from increasing the length of its rail-based network, they also envisage integration of a bus rapid transit system in the region. Even so, the proposals may still be seen as rather timid given the magnitude of the city's transport challenges. To this end, the study developed by our research group has identified a number of strategies and initiatives that could enhance the impact and efficiency of the plan. Detailed analysis and proposals will be published in a separate report, but the main recommendations include expanding the proposed network of BRT lines by 190 km, upgrading all public transport corridors to BRT standard and adding 60 stations to the system. In addition to spatial strategies such as the future of the Minhocão, the study proposes new funding schemes that rely less on general state taxes and more on tax revenues from petrol, which have remained stagnant despite the massive increase in car ownership in recent years. The overall objective of this new cocktail of proposals is not simply to increase the supply of BRT lines but to bring about a paradigm shift in transport policy in São Paulo to prioritise the balance between public transport and the private car.

One of the key focus areas of the study is the Elevado Costa e Silva, a major elevated motorway known as the Minhocão (big worm) built in 1971 by the national dictatorship government. Apart from its significant political associations, the overpass cuts East-West through downtown São Paulo and is considered to be partially responsible for the deterioration of the city's historic core. Despite this, the Minhocão is the main vehicular link between the centre and the city's western region. The Sé municipality that surrounds it is a socially diversified area characterised by a highly mixed land-use pattern, located close to São Paulo's main public transport hub with access to metro, bus, and rail.

The Minhocão covers an area of 3.4 km, about 5.5 metres above ground and its width varies between 15.5 and 23 meters, with some adjacent buildings within a very close distance of 5 metres. No bus lines run on the Minhocão while 80,000 vehicles pass on it each day. Its construction accelerated land and building depreciation in the downtown area, especially along the urban blocks which border it. In 1976, degradation was so severe that the city decided to close the Minhocão at night because of high accident rates and noise pollution. Today the structure is closed to vehicles on Sundays when it is used by city dwellers as a linear urban park. In 2003 a public transport corridor system was introduced at the lower level to integrate the network to the metro through the Marechal Deodoro and Santa Cecilia stations even though no physical connections were implemented.

## MOBILITY AND THE URBAN POOR

Exploring the links between public transport and quality of life, **Alexandre Gomide** posits a reframing of the public debate about mobility for the urban poor.

Poverty is a phenomenon of many dimensions. It is not just about insufficient income to meet basic needs, but also about the deprivation of basic social rights and limited access to essential services such as public transport. Urban poverty manifests itself through the spatial segregation of the poorest in the peripheries – areas characterised by insubstantial public services and deficient infrastructure – where the provision of mass transport is inappropriate in terms of price as well as availability. As a result, the poorest have restricted access to the opportunities offered by life in the city.

For the poorest, expenses for transport are very high in relation to their low household incomes. IGBE reported that for 20 per cent of the poorest people living in the São Paulo Metropolitan Region, the cost of urban transport represented around 8 per cent of total family expenses – double the average of 4 per cent for the entire population. This association between mobility and income is important. The Origin and Destination survey for the São Paulo Metropolitan Region reported in 2002 that people with lower incomes make about 60 per cent of their trips each day on foot while the rich make five times more per day on motorised transport. This indicates serious problems of access to employment opportunities, recreational activities and social facilities, since the distance the poorest are able to reach each day is restricted solely to walking.

Another survey conducted by the Institute of Information and Development in Transportation and the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada identified problems of urban mobility for low-income populations in four Brazilian metropolitan regions, including São Paulo. It showed that people with family incomes up to three times the minimum wage are deprived of access to collective public transport because of the high prices and infrequency of services as well as the difficulty to physically reach distant stations. It also showed that low levels of mobility for leisure activities during weekends are partly due to the prohibitive total cost to transport a family, but also because the scarcity of public transport is even worse on weekends.

The formulation and implementation of public policies for urban transport towards the poor is imperative, especially for those living in metropolitan peripheries. Suggestions to facilitate the mobility of low-income

populations include mainly a reduction in the price of tickets, but also an increase of the quantity of services and the reduction of waiting times. Since a large part of the poor live in areas with deficient road infrastructures, paving streets was also recommended to allow vehicle access to their neighbourhoods.

In this sense, it is understood that there needs to be means to subsidise transport for the poor by, for example, extending the benefits of *vale-transporte*, which is currently provided by employer to employee, to low-income people employed in informal markets. Mechanisms to provide financial assistance for people searching for employment should also be developed. Funding of such programmes must also be taken from sources outside the current revenues from ticket sales, and not from a cross-subsidy among users of the services. A legitimate cross-subsidy in urban transport systems would tax cars in congested areas in view of their negative impact, with the collected resources allocated to subsidise public transport.

Mobility can be improved not only by investments in rapid and efficient transport systems, but by a better distribution of economic and social activities in urban space. Doing so would reduce the distances required for travel. Here, the relationship between land use and transport policies is critical. Their proper integration is a key issue to ensuring sustainability and mobility in cities. Through their integration, it is possible to reduce distances, increase the productivity of the available infrastructure, reduce costs and travel times.

However, such actions are not going to be solved by technicians, but in the political sphere where conflict – around public budgets, the location of urban activities, the use of property or the granting of public services – is inevitable. From this perspective we see the need to strengthen and improve democratic institutions and political dialogue. Civic participation in the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of local policies becomes more important every day.

*Alexandre Gomide is a PhD candidate at Fundação Getúlio Vargas and a researcher at the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada. His research includes urban development, public services regulation, strategic planning and public management.*

The study has identified the Minhocão as a major strategic component of the city's public realm. It proposes that the Minhocão be converted and that the resulting open space be turned into a permanent urban park for pedestrians and cyclists. Currently there are four lanes for cars on the top level and two lanes for buses and four lanes for cars at the lower level. The system could be easily modified in such a way that the entire upper level and two lower level lanes are given over to pedestrian and cycle routes. Overall four lanes that are currently used by cars could be used by public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. This strategy would transform an urban problem into an urban asset, increasing land values and potentially leading to a significant upgrading of the wider area, even though the economic impact would need to be carefully regulated.

This proposal for the Minhocão must be seen as an exemplar of what could be achieved across the city if a new approach to public transport and the public realm were introduced in São Paulo, bringing with it considerable

social, economic and financial benefits to the surrounding areas. On balance, the study proposes a new way of thinking about transport policies which prioritise modes of transport that have never been prioritised before. Its implementation does not require a substantive increase in expenditure but a diverse investment approach that shifts the balance away from individual to collective modes of travel.

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# WORLDS SET APART

**Teresa Caldeira** defines the inequalities, fear, and transgressions which determine the social and spatial configurations of urban life in São Paulo.



Extremes of wealth and poverty in São Paulo, as is often cited by this image of the Paraisópolis favela sitting cheek-by-jowl to gated complexes of wealthy Morumbi, only partially capture the city's deep inequality.

One of the most iconic views of contemporary São Paulo, commonly used in international publications dealing with the city, is a picture in Morumbi showing the favela Paraisópolis on one side of a wall and a luxury building with tennis courts and one swimming pool per balcony on the other. However, the scholarly literature on the city and several of its main instruments of urban policy insist on another image: one that contrasts a rich and well-equipped centre with a poor and precarious periphery. According to this view, the city is made not only of opposed social and spatial worlds but also of clear distances between them. Since these imaginaries are contradictory – one pointing to the obscene neighbouring of poverty and wealth and another to a great distance between them – can both represent the city? If so, how well?

Undoubtedly, São Paulo has always been a city marked by sharp social inequalities. However, in the last few decades, the multiple meanings of inequality, the quality of urban space, and the distribution of social groups across the city have changed considerably. The peripheries have improved and some of the physical inequalities between spaces have been reduced as the peripheries have improved. Yet the city that no longer believes in progress – as it did during the second half of the twentieth century and where violence and fear came to occupy the central stage in citizen's lives – is now a city in which the markers setting social worlds apart are carefully and emphatically drawn. It is also a city in which the public space abandoned by most is reinvented as space of contestation inscribed on its walls.

São Paulo is a complex city that will not be captured by simplistic dual models: neither of the proximity nor of the distance of its opposed social groups. Together, both pictures represent the city. In isolation, neither can capture the pattern of spatial and social inequality that structures the metropolis today. These images are the result of two historical processes that have now coalesced and their material expressions are superimposed in the spaces of the

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Together, both the picture of proximity of wealth and poverty, and that of their distance, represent the city.

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city. The view of the rich centre versus the poor periphery corresponds with the pattern of urbanisation consolidated around the 1940s that dominated the city up to the 1980s. During this period, São Paulo's urbanised area expanded dramatically due to the spread of auto-construction. Workers moved to the city by the millions and settled in non-urbanised areas on the outskirts. They bought cheap lots of land in areas without infrastructure and spent decades of savings and family work to build and improve their dream houses. In São Paulo, as elsewhere in Brazil and in the developing world, workers have always understood that illegality and precariousness are the conditions under which they become property owners and inhabit the modern city. The middle and upper classes remained in the centre and benefited from good infrastructure and services, and regularised and subsidised access to land. Thus, metropolitan regions have been marked by a dichotomy between the 'legal city', the centre inhabited by the upper classes, and the precarious peripheries.

However, since the 1970s this neat separation started to be transformed by processes affecting both the centre and the periphery. One of the main sources was the organisation of social movements by residents of the peripheries. These urban activists, a majority of them women, were new property owners who realised that political organisation was the only way to force city authorities to extend urban infrastructure and services to their neighbourhoods. These social movements contributed significantly to the democratisation process and a new concept of citizenship. They also provoked a significant transformation in the urban environment of the

peripheries. The state administrators responded to their demands and the city of São Paulo, among many others in Brazil, borrowed heavily to invest in urban infrastructure. As a consequence, the peripheries substantially improved road access, as well as sewage, sanitation, and electricity. These improvements sharply reduced infant mortality rates. As a result many neighbourhoods in the peripheries that began as 'bush' just a few decades ago have been completely urbanised. Although the urban social movements started to diminish in the 1990s, São Paulo remains highly organised. NGOs and associations of all forms, from religious to artistic – not to mention criminal – are everywhere. These heterogeneous associations signify the consolidation of democracy and the civic engagement of citizens.

A second process that transformed the centre-periphery pattern started in the centre. Beginning in the 1970s, wealth steadily moved away. On the one hand, a new business pole was formed in the south-western zone of the city along the Pinheiros River which today concentrates high-end office complexes, shopping malls, media headquarters, hotels, and new cultural centres. On the other, some of the middle and upper classes began to retreat from the centre and its public space. Fear of violent crime – which grew from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s – was their main justification for migration by the hundreds of thousands. They built fortified enclaves for home, leisure, and work in areas where only the poor had lived before and from where they were not entirely expelled, as in the case of Paraisópolis. Thus, the dramatic proximity of wealth and poverty is a recent phenomenon caused by the voluntary displacement of the upper classes.

Although the image of the favela side-by-side with luxury apartments outside of the centre captures a recent configuration of social inequality in São Paulo, it misses important factors. Favelas are not the type of housing in which the majority of São Paulo's poor live, and the heterogeneous peripheries cannot be described by the term favela. What distinguishes them is home ownership. Although there are many conditions of illegality and irregularity, the majority have bought the land on which they built their houses and have claims to ownership. Favela residents also own their homes, but not the land, which has typically been invaded. Moreover, the increase in homeownership in the municipality of São Paulo from 19 per cent in 1920 to 69 per cent in 2000 is due to high rates in the peripheries rather than in the central wealthy districts. In many of the poorest neighbourhoods, it is more than 80 per cent. Approximately 10 per cent of São Paulo's population lives in favelas, while Rio de Janeiro and a few other Brazilian cities have an exceptionally high percentage of favela residents. Yet, if the view of the centre distant from the periphery misses the new developments that have brought people from radically different social conditions to live side by side, the picture that features this proximity misses the complexity of the peripheries and their significant improvement.

Increased violent crime and fear have also provoked dramatic changes in the space and quality of everyday life across the city since the mid-1980s. The circulation of fear and discourses about violence have created the idiom under which polarised representations proliferate and dualistic and simplistic representations of inequality and are framed.

Violent crime increased substantially from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s. With an overall annual murder rate of more than 60 per 100,000 people in the late 1990s, São Paulo became one of the most violent cities in the world. However, violence is distributed unevenly. Many of the neighbourhoods in the peripheries had a murder rate of more than 110 per 100,000 people, compared to less than fifteen in the city's central districts. The main victims of murder are young men, especially black. Moreover, most of the outrageously high number of cases of police abuse and killings happen in the peripheries. In the 2000s, violent crime rates decreased from 57.3 per 100,000 people in 2000 to 12.1 in 2007, which includes decreases in the peripheries. But it is not yet clear



what this change will generate in terms of representation as the city still seems to operate under the stereotypical mode of the talk of crime.

Conversations about crime have been common since the 1980s. Amid the chaotic feelings associated with the spread of random violence people talk. Contrary to the experience of crime, which disrupts meaning and disorders the world, the talk of crime symbolically reorders it by trying to re-establish a static picture of the world which is expressed in simplistic terms and clear-cut oppositional categories, the most important of which are good and evil. Such reductions and caricatures are central mechanisms associated with the talk of crime. Like other everyday practices dealing with violence, crime stories try to recreate a stable map for a world that has been shaken. These narratives impose partitions, build up walls, establish distances, segregate, impose prohibitions, and restrict movements. In short, they simplify and enclose the world, elaborating prejudices and eliminating ambiguities.

Fear and the talk of crime also organise the urban landscape and public space, generating new forms of spatial segregation and social discrimination. Their most emblematic form is the fortified enclave. These are privatised, enclosed, and monitored spaces for residence, consumption, leisure, and work structured by the discourse of security. They can be shopping malls, office complexes, residential gated communities, and edge cities. They depend on private guards and high-tech security for protection and for enforcing exclusionary practices that guarantee their social exclusivity. They reproduce inequality both as a value and as a social fact. They treat what is enclosed and private as a form of distinction. As this logic becomes dominant, it spreads throughout the city. Walls are now everywhere, even in the most remote areas of the peripheries, not only to protect from crime, but also to distinguish neighbours from each other and express claims of social belonging.

It is in this context of simplifications and stereotypical interpretations anchored in the fear of crime that the heterogeneous peripheries of São Paulo started to be called favelas, a process that obscures their significant urban and social improvements. The tendency to homogenise the conditions and spaces of poverty and to identify them with their worst configurations is now widespread. It is found in several recent Brazilian films that make poverty and favela, blackness and violent crime coincide. The iconic example is *City of God*. It is also the procedure Mike Davis uses in *Planet of Slums* to reduce the most diverse urban housing conditions of the poor worldwide to a single symbol of the worst: the slum.

This tendency is also reproduced by residents of the periphery themselves. In important ways, São Paulo's rap music elaborates a dichotomy between there and here and the denunciation of the inequality that exists between them. Rap articulates the experience of young men in contemporary peripheries growing up in a context of high violence and few chances for inclusion in the formal markets. Hip-hop wants to save their lives and contain violence. By portraying the conditions of the poor in the peripheries, and critically incorporating the prejudices usually voiced against their young and black residents, rappers articulate a powerful social critique. They denounce racism, express an explicit class antagonism, and create a style of confrontation that leaves very little space for tolerance and negotiation. Their raps establish a non-bridgeable and non-negotiable distance between rich and poor, white and black, the centre and the periphery, and articulate a position of enclosure. They think of the periphery as a world apart, something similar to the American ghetto, an imaginary that has never been used before in Brazil in relation to the peripheries, whose residents have always considered themselves unprivileged but nevertheless an integral part of the whole city. As one of the most famous rap groups, the Racionais MC's, put it in the rap 'Da Ponte pra cá' ('On this side of the bridge'):

*in the party with us you don't go  
We here, you there; each one in his place  
Did you get it?  
If life is like this, am I to blame?  
The world is different on this side of the bridge.*

As hip-hop followers reflect on the conditions of life on the outskirts of the city, they transform the quite diverse peripheries into a symbol: a *periferia*. As this new symbol, the periphery is homogenised to represent the worst social inequalities and violence. This transformed space of despair contrasts sharply with the image of improvement and mobility that dominated its representation from the 1940s to the 1990s. It is also sometimes called favela, not to describe the peripheries but to refer to its poor conditions which are re-signified to represent and denounce poverty in general.

The construction of clear and non-negotiable social separations, the circulation of imaginaries of despair, the construction of left-over spaces, and the use of stereotypical symbols to represent opposed social worlds is nowadays found on both sides of Brazilian society. Rappers' construction of self-enclosure is paralleled by upper-class practices of enclosure. Dichotomisation, simplification, and intolerance structure the imaginaries on both sides.

Fear, the talk of crime, and the adoption of walls and separations all transform the character of public space. Privatisation, enclosures, policing of boundaries and distancing devices create a fragmented public space in which inequality is an organising value. Even so, this left-over public space has not remained empty or unmarked. In São Paulo, in addition to walls and fences, graffiti and *pixações* proliferate on almost every street. These public inscriptions are usurpations that recreate a public domain in a city privatised by walls. Graffiti and *pixação* reclaim the streets, the façades, and the walls as spaces of communication and contestation instead of separation. Most graffiti artists and *pixadores* are young men from the peripheries. Through their inscriptions, they transgress, ignore boundaries, and appropriate spaces to mark their discrimination. Obviously, many interpret these appropriations as vandalism, crime, and proof of the deterioration of the public space.

Although both graffiti and *pixação* have similar roots, they constitute different types of intervention in public space. Graffiti is represented frequently on large public surfaces such as viaducts and tunnels. It is accepted as a

type of public art authorised by the city, and occasionally sponsored by private institutions. Several graffiti artists from São Paulo are known internationally, and a few sell their art in private galleries for high prices.

But if graffiti can be assimilated into the imaginary of art and beauty, *pixação* has remained much more transgressive. *Pixação* is equivalent to the American tagging, the writing of words, especially names, in public spaces. It is conceived by its practitioners as an anarchic intervention and as a radical urban sport, an urban alpinism. *Pixadores* inscribe the most impossible of spaces and are never sponsored by City Hall. Instead, they are targets of police harassment and the general population's disdain, who think that they deteriorate and deface, not improve, public space. For *pixadores*, though, their intervention signals the character of a public with few other forms of belonging. With *pixação* and graffiti, those who have been kept outside of the dominant cultural systems master writing and painting in the same way that rappers master rhyming. They invent new styles, spreading signs of their transgressions and powerfully transforming the character of public space.

Together, walls, fences, fortified enclaves, raps, graffiti, and *pixações* configure public space with unmistakable signs of social inequality and social tension. When the city was growing and violence was not an issue, the imagination that dominated the city was one of social mobility, improvement, expansion, and incorporation. Distances embodied spatially and socially were relatively unmarked symbolically. They had to remain fluid to anchor the strong belief in social mobility. Nowadays, inequalities and differences are prominently produced and are rarely left unmarked. Exaggerated and simplified, they mask processes of transformation and of improvement, and inevitably amplify the tension among social groups. Inequality has become naturalised, the taken-for-granted part of everyday life, the matter of social communication, even while it is denounced by unexpected interventions. Therefore, it is the tense and multi-layered production and contestation of inequality that we should look at to capture both the city's predicament and its vitality.

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Graffiti such as that on Rua Cardeal Arcoverde defines the streetscape experience of Vila Madalena, São Paulo.



# SAFE SPACES IN SÃO PAULO

A detailed study by **Paula Miraglia** traces the complex relationships between crime, spatial segregation and quality of life in the centre and the periphery.



Crime in Jardim Ângela, once declared by the United Nations as the homicide capital of the world, is today substantially reduced thanks to community and state interventions.

Violence and therefore safety – as themes and elements of social configuration – play a major role in the construction and characterisation of Brazil's major urban centres. Since the 1980s, marked increases in urban crime alongside the emergence of democratic openness and urbanisation have transformed Brazil's cities. The proliferation of robberies, thefts, kidnappings and violent deaths has promoted criminality and a consolidation of fear and insecurity as commonplace characteristics of urban life. Murder rates in the country's capitals have grown significantly, especially among adolescents between 15 and 24 years old. While the average rates for the entire population remained stable between 1980 and 2002, ranging from 21.3 to 21.7 for every 100,000 inhabitants, those among young people skyrocketed from 30 to 54.5. In São Paulo, violence today conjures two opposing trends: while in the 1980s and 1990s a systematic increase in murder rates scared the city (in 1999 the rate

was 43.2), both the state and the Metropolitan Region benefited from a significant reduction over the last six years, so that by 2005 the murder rate had already dropped to 22.

São Paulo, with a rate now lower than the national average and that of Recife, Vitoria or Rio de Janeiro, presents itself as a genuine exception. For although violence remains a constituent part of the city's configuration, especially with regards to its recent history, the city has nonetheless established new patterns of sociability that allow for a renewed understanding of the city and its public and private spaces. This understanding and subsequent use patterns influence the city's spatial and architectural configuration as well as the opposition between centre and periphery. At the same time, the reduction of murders entails a reflection on the strategies involved in the process of confronting a violent sociability and also signifies

broader trends related to concepts of violence and safety.

Despite the constant reduction in murder rates, neither academics nor policy makers have been able to form a consensus about its causes. The reduction has been attributed to an extensive and varied set of factors: state interventions such as the improvement of management policies (for example the creation of INFOCRIM, an electronic database that facilitates communication between the city's various police districts to produce an overall mapping of crime statistics) and increased investigative police activity; the work of non-governmental organisations and community engagement in the most violent areas; policies such as the 'dry law' in some municipalities; reduced availability of firearms; demographic changes in the state and other parts of the country over recent years; and even the rise of Evangelism in the suburbs.

The justifications alternate depending on who constructs the explanatory narrative, with each proposed cause subject to ongoing research and controversy regarding its relevance and effectiveness. Even so, besides the multiple causes of violence, an important battle in the political and institutional arena is taking place over the factors creating the supposed increase in safety and the different ways of confronting it. Which is the best strategy: prevention or suppression? Must safety be a subject that is primarily the responsibility of the police, or does it deserve the attention of other areas of public policies such as urbanism, health or education? If we add safety and violence to the top metropolitan problems – contrary to transport, flooding and pollution, the city's other major challenges – solutions are typically not addressed through urban interventions. In the face of violence and insecurity, typically resources emanate from the criminal justice system, the police force, or other repression apparatuses. This equation shows a failure: originally, safety is a problem of the city, but not for the city. The metropolis assumes a secondary role in formulating policies for the prevention and confrontation of violence, as it is unable to actively participate in changes that promote safe spaces for living and social interaction.

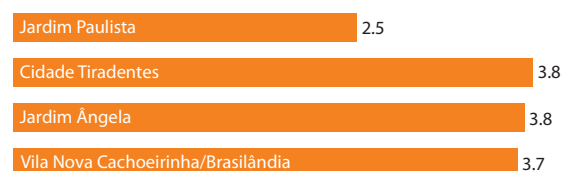
However, an analysis of São Paulo shows how a district, as a place of transformation as well as physical and social interaction, plays a key role in these processes. Mapping the types of safe spaces in different neighbourhoods can reveal the unequal distribution of violence in the city. The concentration of murders, along with other violent crimes against life, in the suburbs demonstrates how São Paulo practises an uneven risks economy. Territorial analysis also allows a deeper understanding of how the city deals with the issue of safety: which are the strategies of each district or region? What are the consequences of each option or arrangement? What is their potential for universal application? And finally, what is the impact on the city's sociability and the life of its inhabitants?

Mapping the heterogeneity of social expressions in an apparently homogenous area in socio-demographical terms allows the differentiation of forms which define the 'periphery'. Research developed by the Centre for Metropolitan Studies (CEM) of four areas in São Paulo – Jardim Paulista in the centre, Cidade Tiradentes in the East, Jardim Ângela in the South and Vila Nova Cachoeirinha/Brasilândia in the North – has revealed various conditions of poverty within the same area. To distinguish between them, the studies considered social group characteristics, combining variables associated with income, education, unemployment, access to urban infrastructure and race or ethnicity. From these isolated indicators, it was possible to make a detailed description of the distribution of such social groups and their living conditions.

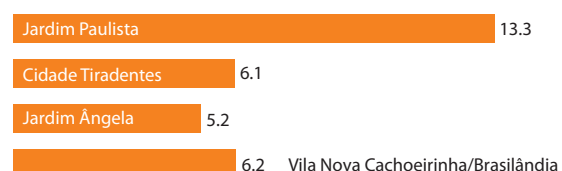
As the distribution of violence and safety influences patterns of sociability, and affects each district differently, the answers revealed phenomena that also take into account the particular characteristics of each area. Thus combining social and demographic characteristics such as income, skin colour and education with symbolic and material resources such as public services, community engagement



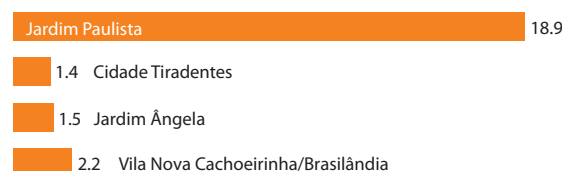
### AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD



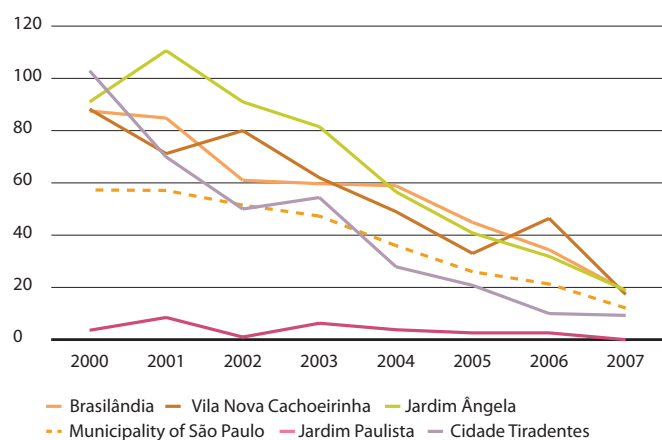
### AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS OF EDUCATION



### HOUSEHOLD INCOME PER CAPITA (IN MINIMUM WAGE)



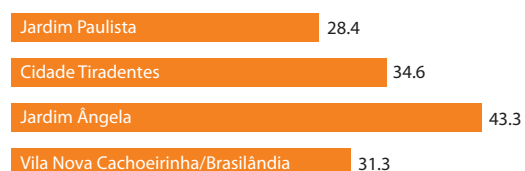
### MURDER RATE PER 100,000



levels, informal arrangements or the very history of the neighbourhood, each community creates its 'repertory of safety' to be assessed against certain violence scenarios. Crime distribution in São Paulo is a good starting point to examine this diversity. If, on the one hand, the association between poverty and crime is discarded, the coincidence of lower income, higher concentration of slums, greater presence of black and brown people, low education levels and the concentration of murders on the other hand cannot be ignored. Other than emphasising the unequal distribution of violence, such a scenario offers a macro-analysis which – alongside other elements – helps to trace a portrait of the periphery and ultimately forms a major contribution to understanding the relationship that is established between the periphery and its residents and the centre. Certainly the occupation and distribution of groups in the city also results from state interventions (or the lack of them), therefore these social indicators are essential to limit periphery areas. But the relational character of the centre/periphery opposition, and its attendant spatial understanding, implies a certain perspective that must also recognise the diverse political and cultural context of what peripheral signifies.

The victimisation of neighbourhoods alone is not enough. Firstly, because not all districts with high rates of vulnerability in São Paulo have high murder rates. Secondly, even in those districts where we find a combination of vulnerability and violence there is a wide range of strategies. We are much more interested in exploring the differences that such scenarios may produce and in identifying cycles in which violence and safety are at the same time producers and products of a particular type of social interaction. Selecting two opposing poles in the Metropolitan Region

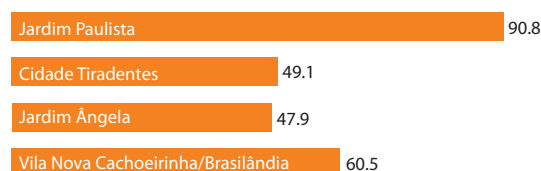
### % OF PEOPLE BORN OUTSIDE SÃO PAULO STATE



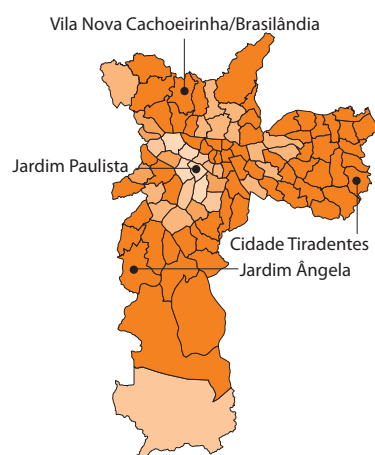
### % OF BLACK PEOPLE



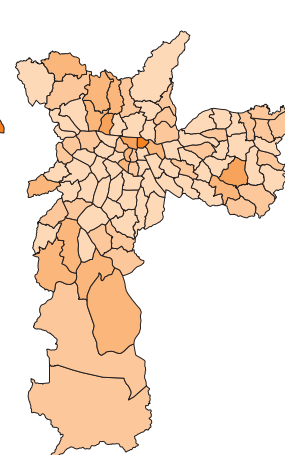
### % OF WHITE PEOPLE



### MURDER RATE 2000



### MURDER RATE 2007



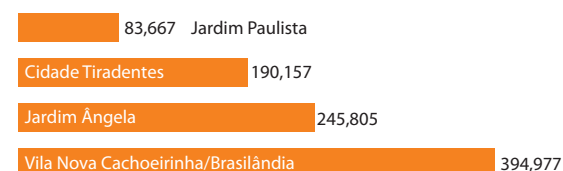
per 100,000 inhabitants  
 0 - 10   10 - 15   15 - 20   20 - 30   30 and over

provides information that can help build a repertory of safety in the city. Doing so reflects on how these strategies combine the categories of 'space' and 'sociability' and how this interaction and diversity are building the city.

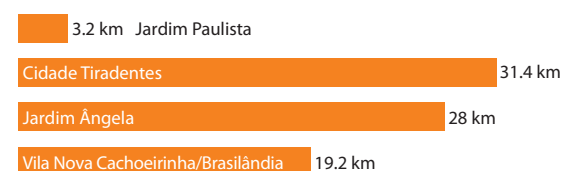
Located just three kilometres from the centre of the city, the neighbourhood of Jardim Paulista (Jardins) corresponds to the city's urban development pattern and constitutes a wealthy neighbourhood in the city's South-East area. Jardins is considered very safe, with a mix of residential and commercial spaces that bring together a wide range of shops characterising the city's luxury retail market. The clientele combines local residents with visitors who enjoy the leisure activities and shopping offered by the district. Recent changes increased the area's safety, although they were intended to improve something that already existed, such as the widening of pavements or enhanced lighting. These interventions were not substantive; on the contrary, the objectives promoted consolidation and stability associated with a sense of peace and safety. An idea of completeness is added to this perception. From the perspective of the residents, the fact that shopping, leisure and social activities can all be carried out with relative proximity is experienced as something positive. 'I don't need to leave the neighbourhood', is often heard. Strategies to protect shops and residential buildings include mixing private security guards or signs indicating that the space is being watched with more hidden features such as surveillance cameras. Even large shop windows generate selective action, and together these interventions both appeal to, and inhibit, passers-by.

One of the most recurring elements when talking about fear or the feeling of insecurity is – not incidentally – based

### POPULATION



### DISTANCE FROM CITY CENTRE



### MURDER RATE



on the presence of someone else, usually a non-resident or a worker from the region. But these 'others' are not random: street sales people, beggars and the homeless populate the category of those that are 'displaced' and are all blamed by local residents as potential threats to peace and safety in the neighbourhood. The CAPE (Centre for Permanent Assistance) of the Secretary of Social Assistance offers a service that is advertised on the residents' association website, which receives 'complaints' about homeless people that are near or in front of their homes, and they 'intervene'. In this quick description, the various attempts to homogenise the area reduce diversity using strategies of avoidance of non-equals, and promote urban interventions that ensure a single standard of sociability.

On the other side of the metropolis, more than 31 kilometres from the centre, the Cidade Tiradentes district and housing complex – the largest in Latin America – occupies a peripheral location in the city's far East. The area, previously a farm called Santa Etelvina, was acquired by Cohab, the metropolitan housing authority, at the end of the 1970s, to be incorporated into the urban network as low-value lots. Built from the 1980s onwards, the large scale of this housing complex eventually produced a uniformity to the landscape which became a defining feature of Cidade Tiradentes. For two decades the neighbourhood had a reputation as one of the worst places to live in São Paulo. The main problems highlighted by residents were the long distance from the centre, violence, limited public investment in basic urban infrastructure and almost no shops. Added to this was the fact that, until recently, the region lived under territorial dispute between criminal organisations, further evidence of its high murder rate. In recent years, however, a series of profound transformations such as the construction of the Tiradentes Bus Terminal have transformed the area. The terminal has significantly improved access to other regions of the city, thus reducing the distance and sense of isolation, while ensuring greater movement of residents to other sectors of the neighbourhood.

Over time the structure of the housing complex has changed. The first- and second-generation buildings were subjected to interventions proposed by the residents. The construction of walls, sentry boxes (though permanently disabled) and the addition of security bars accompanied attempts to enhance the buildings aesthetically. These interventions went beyond the mere improvement of safety standards and defined a process of 'consolidation' of the property that incorporated new standards and references. As a result, more recent buildings were constructed with active sentry boxes and electronic gates already in place.





**Cidade Tiradentes, the largest social housing development built by state and city authorities in the far eastern periphery of São Paulo, is defined by hundreds of identical residential buildings and poor social infrastructure. Residents spend between two and three hours commuting each way for work.**

Alexandre Calças

At the same time the neighbourhood became dominated by a single criminal faction: the First Command of the Capital (PCC). Its exclusivity marked the end of territorial disputes in the area, causing a reduction of murders in the immediate vicinity. With the arrival of the police and expansion of the district police squad, crime today occupies an area called 'Fundão' with a clear territorial demarcation of the activities showing that they have therefore lost a central position in the life of the neighbourhood. The arrival of shops and more diversified public and private services in the area have completed its transformation. Major chain-stores and supermarkets now serve the residents and are seen as important achievements by neighbourhood residents. In this sequence of progressive acquisitions, a bank is one of the last elements still missing.

Thus, even if the area is not totally homogenous, with some pockets benefiting more than others from such changes, the image of a violent neighbourhood is changing into that of one with potential for economic and social development. This process was able to transform the residents' sense of belonging and has changed perceptions among residents about how to access their city.

The presence of public power, exemplified by the increase of police action and by the bus terminal, as well as the multiplication of services offered were responsible for the diversification of the landscape and its social fabric, which nowadays is more pluralistic and varied. Therefore, it can be argued that Cidade Tiradentes has made use of a social diversification strategy. The heterogeneity of the neighbourhood has become a factor of resilience. The permanence of the PCC indicates that it is not impossible to live with violence or crime; the continued proliferation of slums emphasises that the region is still extremely socially and economically vulnerable. But these changes show that the district was able to lift itself beyond a position of victimisation.

Despite the ethnographic wealth of both examples, we are not interested in caricatures to illustrate the differences

between rich and poor neighbourhoods. Instead, the issues and problems that actually are in permanent dialogue with the wider structures of urban interaction that merit attention. Many of the elements mentioned in both cases have been repeated, with appropriate contextual adaptations, and offer themselves as genuine choices for the city and its residents. Together with other tools of segregation, they form a fragmented city in which the channels of communication between centre and periphery are constantly weakened. Using a so-called 'repertoire of safety' may become a permanent mechanism to promote the actualisation of inequalities.

Taking the difference between homogeneity and heterogeneity in Cidade Tiradentes as an example, the void resulting from the lack of public and private services, together with an endlessly repeated anonymous architectural pattern, created residents' resignation about the region's vulnerability. Therefore the strengthening and enhancement of the complexity of the social fabric are associated with changes that, in this case, produce movement and circulation: elements that can provide physical, symbolic and social interaction between groups from within the district and from the rest of the city.

In the case of Jardins, however, the transformation takes the form of permanence and repetition. The maintenance of certain urbanisation patterns ultimately perpetuates the homogeneity of the area, either in terms of space, or with regards to visitors' profile and characteristics. It has established itself as a well-maintained progressive area. Jardins reinforces a sense of community that is generated by an organic enclosure of the neighbourhood. There is nothing new about using separation strategies inspired by protection: the high walls of closed apartment blocks, the gates and the guards make it easy to identify this set of mechanisms. But when it comes to open spaces, involving streets and pavements, segregation tools go beyond physical aspects. From this perspective, imitating the fluidity and the ample capacity of the circulation of violence, safety appears to be a continuum, that, like violence, is supported

by urbanisation resources that are merged with segregated sociability strategies. This projects the distinct separation of a determined area without building intentional explicit physical limits.

The comparison between these two strategies to reduce crime and violence raises questions about the effectiveness of solutions. Although a reduction of murders is evident throughout the city, the question persists whether the peripheries will some day be less violent than the centre. The applied strategies are not able, or do not contemplate a reversal of the patterns of victimisation. Even if reduced, most violent deaths are concentrated in the periphery. The continuing victimisation and levels of violence, as well as the strategies of segregation, are obstacles in the subversion of the relation between centre and periphery which occur today.

Spaces are able to determine patterns of sociability, but coexistence and interaction are also powerful elements in the configuration of community. If we assume that safety and its distribution shape the city, the opposition between 'strategies of protection' and 'safety development' seems to summarise the available options and translate the implications of each model. The first, more reactive strategy, mobilises an individual dimension of avoidance, while the second, propositional, emphasises the collective dimension of interaction between individuals and groups. The contrast suggests the limits of partial solutions to the problem. This is evident not only in the tension between the models of safe spaces in a safe city, but also through the way they announce a struggle for the city itself. In other words, the creation of safe spaces is not complemented by the perception of a safe city. Such models are exclusionary, and show that either the entire city is safe or no one is.

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# IMPLEMENTING URBAN CHANGE

By comparing São Paulo's realities with international examples of urban regeneration, **Nadia Somekh** and **Carlos Leite** explore the constraints and opportunities to deliver high quality design in the city's major urban projects.

When it comes to the realisation of major urban interventions, São Paulo is lagging behind other world cities. Buenos Aires, our closest neighbour, has with Puerto Madero succeeded in creating a high-end development on brownfield industrial land, which attracts business and visitors, despite its lack of integration within the city.

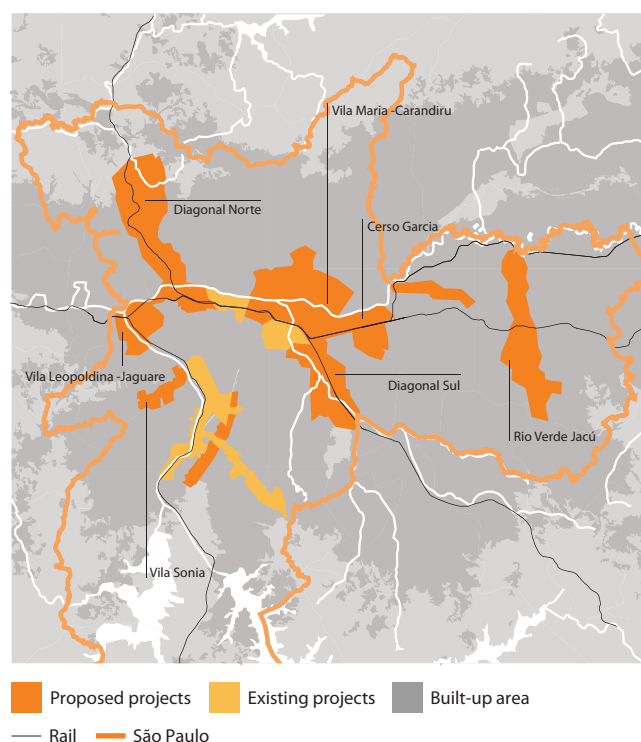
But who wins and who loses in these projects? How are these projects delivered? What institutional arrangements impact on design quality and the creation of sustainable environments? How many jobs are created? And for whom? These are the questions that São Paulo's political, design and development communities need to address to formulate a new urban policy and to deliver a strategy to implement high quality urban design that works with the grain of the city.

Many of the international success stories in the regeneration of large-scale sites – such as redundant ports, railway, manufacturing and transport areas – suggest that considerable levels of public investment and management are necessary to make them work. In Brazil the private sector has historically taken the lead due to the lack of public funding or involvement in urban regeneration. Yet, a long-term perspective is a prerequisite of sustainable planning as opposed to the short-term returns on investment required by any commercial operator. In Washington DC, for example, the Corporation for the Development of Pennsylvania Avenue developed a 25-year vision for the regeneration of the area. The establishment of a delivery vehicle – an administrative structure with strong public as well as private sector representation – that manages and implements the project from inception to realisation is critical to its success in promoting economic development and generating new activities.

The compact city model, with its reduced energy footprint that promotes intensification of well-connected inner city sites, has become the central objective of many European cities. Urban containment, smart growth and sustainable development within a defined urban footprint are central components of this new urban vision that not only drives the identification of individual sites – often highly contaminated areas near the centre – but also shapes policies that promote sustainable living such as the introduction of the Congestion Charge in London or the Velib public bicycle in Paris. This approach has driven the development of a new urban hub at Paris Rive Gauche on the Eastern edge of the city – coordinated by SEMAPA (Société d'Economie Mixte de Paris) – which has attracted 60,000 jobs, counterbalancing Paris's better-known financial centre at La Defense in the West.

Paris has developed its urban interventions within a clear regional and metropolitan perspective of economic restructuring that prioritises the international service sector, while London has focused some of its spatial policies on the creative industries through the actions of the Mayor's London Development Agency. Bilbao, instead, developed plans at various regional and metropolitan scales before empowering the RIA2000 agency with the strategic implementation of the plan that gave rise to Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum, Norman Foster's metro stations and Santiago Calatrava's bridge. These interventions were instrumental elements of a successful marketing strategy that has promoted the city as tourist destination, placing it in competition with world capitals.

The wide-scale adoption of neo-liberal ideologies and their impacts on social exclusion has led to what Neil Smith has identified as the new 'global strategy for gentrification'. In Paris traditional, old-style policies – enshrined in the ZAC (Zones d'Aménagement Concertés) – still constitute the legal



Sites identified by the city authorities for urban regeneration, *Operações Urbanas* (urban interventions), include areas often – but not always – adjacent to existing transport infrastructure.

starting point for urban and social housing projects, as they do across the whole of France. Exceptions to this rule are the implementation structures applied to the redevelopment of Paris Rive Gauche, Parc Citroën, Bercy and the former Renault car-works area. In the case of Paris Rive Gauche, a direct confrontation with the local community resulted in the provision of an appropriate number of affordable housing units and the incorporation of an old industrial mill as the seat of this industrial mobilisation.

The evidence from these projects points to the development of new management tools and the involvement of a wider range of social agents to better define successful urban regeneration. A key element is public transport, a critical component of sustainable urban development. Canary Wharf, the massive office and commercial complex in London's East, only took off after the Jubilee Line extension connected it to the city's main metro network. The success of the Kings Cross development and the London 2012 Olympics site in the Lower Lea Valley are also highly dependent on their location next to major rail-based transport hubs that will create higher density clusters of a polycentric nature. In Milan, the viable redevelopment of ex-industrial sites at La Bovisa and La Bicocca into major office and residential neighbourhoods were predicated on their proximity to the city's extensive public transport network.

By analysing international case studies, it becomes clear that the state has played a key role in their implementation, despite the high level of private sector investment. Even in the United States there is evidence of substantial public investment – at federal, state and city level – to implement infrastructure, transport, public spaces and cultural institutions in major urban projects. Another lesson is that solutions to urban problems depend on the involvement of local actors, civil society and the active participation of government at many levels. On balance it can be observed that highly centralised traditional planning tools which regulate land use and urban development – as they are currently implemented in Brazil – have become obsolete.

São Paulo's strategic plan – the Plano Diretor Estratégico – is a case in point. The PDE 2000 determined that 20 per cent

of its built-up area should become sites for *Operações Urbanas* (urban interventions). To date these have been the subject of repeated criticism with piecemeal results which lack a comprehensive vision of urban design. There is no vision for a sustainable urban model with clear environmental objectives, nor has there been any public debate about public space and rebalancing the role of public transport and the private car in the city's future

The crisis of contemporary Brazilian urbanism reflects the weakness of the system of large-scale 'strategic masterplans', which wrongly assume that all urban problems can be solved by one single instrument. The successful strategy for city-level 'urban interventions' must be considered as an instrument of structural transformation, built on a partnership between the public and private sectors. It is a process that requires the participation of landowners, investors, residents and representatives of civil society which identifies particular urban areas for transformation as part of a wider metropolitan strategy. To be implemented successfully, such a strategy requires a series of medium and long-term measures, including land tenure reform, evaluation of real estate potential, strict land use regulations and public space interventions.

The São Paulo experience has since the 1990s failed to deliver an effective and democratic urban vision for the city. The major reason for this failure is the absence of a proper management and implementation vehicle that takes into account the full social and economic costs and benefits of projects of this scale and complexity. Any intervention of this sort must embrace the various actors and agents involved in the production of city space, constructing a communal fabric that values the individual citizen. Yet, this approach assumes public engagement to achieve a shared objective. Demolition of entire pieces of city and their replacement by 'model' projects will do little to improve the lives of existing urban dwellers, and will simply cause displacement and erosion of its existing social and urban fabric.

Given the extreme levels of social inequality found in most Brazilian cities we would argue that a more subtle and sophisticated approach to urban regeneration is necessary: one that is based on a collective effort and broad participation, and that aims to promote local development and social inclusion. To this end we would suggest that São Paulo adopts a new system for the implementation of its urban interventions founded on the following principles: require a clear political commitment to implementation, innovation and inclusion through a metropolitan masterplan that integrates the development potential of urban sites with public transport provision; establish a legal framework that promotes social inclusion and public participation (by creating a Participatory Management Forum for individual urban projects); establish an independent local development agency to implement specific urban projects, that includes all key stakeholders and is responsible for project management and delivery, inward investment, funding and project financing; develop an integrated mobility plan that optimises public transport use incorporating metro, bus, bicycle and pedestrian movements and minimises private car dependency; establish a metropolitan-wide development fund that can capture value of future return on investments; promote a sustainable environmental approach that integrates the remediation of water and river systems with redevelopment of brownfield land; propose mixed-use centres that provide housing and employment and support the 'new economy'; and identify special conservation areas across the city that take into account the historic value and architectural merit of buildings and spaces.

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