

THE SURVIVAL OF THE MARKETS IN EUROPE: THE BARCELONA SYSTEM, SPAIN

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the permanence of the markets as a form of commercial distribution in Europe. A comparative study between different cities and takes as a case of study the city of Barcelona, in Spain, where a comparison is effected between the market model system of Barcelona with other existing business in the city, especially shopping centres. Theoretically based on the logic that specific historical moments engender specific space forms, it analyzes the city of the pre-industrial to the hypermodern period, with emphasis on the relationship between the forms of commerce and the reproduction of urban space.

KEYWORDS: Barcelona. Forms of commerce. Market. Urban structure.

LA SUPERVIVENCIA DE LOS MERCADOS EN EUROPA: EL SISTEMA DE
BARCELONA, ESPAÑA

RESUMEN

Este trabajo analiza la permanencia de los mercados como una forma de distribución comercial en Europa. Realiza un estudio comparativo entre diferentes ciudades y toma como caso de estudio la ciudad de Barcelona, en España, donde se efectúa una comparación entre los mercados según el modelo de Barcelona con otros tipos de comercio existentes en la ciudad, especialmente los centros comerciales. Basado en la idea de que momentos históricos

específicos engendran formas propias del espacio, se analiza la ciudad de la época pre-industrial a la hipermoderna, con énfasis en la relación entre las formas de comercio y la reproducción del espacio urbano.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Barcelona. Formas del comercio. Mercado. Estructura urbana.

HYPERMODERNITY, COMMERCE AND URBAN SPACE.

This work aims to make a theoretical and practical analysis about the relations between the concepts of hypermodern commerce and consumption and the production of urban space based on the forms of commerce. It examines the reality from the perspective that there is the installation of a cultural paradigm that goes beyond modernity, characterized by the overcoming of rational logic, from the deployment of a world view guided by the supremacy of the individual. This logic, with a tendency to universalize the process production of reality as a whole, has directed a pattern of behaviour that leads to the use of new opportunities for commerce and consumption, of which production involves a material differentiation which requires new ways. These forms make up a structure of space different from the default of location followed by the rational city, modern and industrial, producing a structure that has multiple personalities, similarly called schizophrenic. The commercial forms shape the commerce places, whose characterization tends to be specific to the type of existing commerce, consumer and the uses of the form. Beside these new spaces the old ways persist, which keeps the same uses of the past and represents the metamorphoses that occur in the city. These ontological foundations give support to the proposed work. On the other hand, the growth of the city and the paradigm shift represented by the overcoming of modernity will be able to produce new forms and set in the metropolis in constant growth, a new structure of urban space. Especially the use of the automobile, which since the 1950s in the United States of America and France had permitted the removal of the traditional centre of commerce and led to the destruction of the commerce

centre in these countries, it will be responsible for changes in the structure of the city. The creation of the periphery not only in big cities as areas of housing, but also as areas of large commercial enterprises, nationally and internationally, is guaranteed by the construction of large parking areas in new commercial areas. Now the location is determined more by proximity to major routes of travel, to ensure easy accessibility.

The mobility of the consumer on the other hand, and its ability to preserve the products allow for the expansion of the area consumption. The city builds a new structure with various peripheral centralities. In Barcelona, specifically, this model of commerce in large area of peripheral location took some time to arrive, which marked its beginning in the 1970s. Until then, the surfaces were represented by large department stores existing in the city. Therefore, the city has managed to maintain a structure in which the two models remain, the new centre and the peripheral centralities. Still, it has a hierarchical structure with little autonomy of the new centres.

More recently, in the 1990s, another type of centrality starts to be generated, marked not only by commerce in traditional and consumer goods, but also by commercial forms that combine the provision of services, entertainment and recreation. In some cases, these forms do not have commerce as the main element of attraction and centrality is generated by new elements that point to a postmodern paradigm. Consumptions are based on the image, the symbol, the ability of a media event, many times. Certainly, diversity is a feature that has always marked the city that throughout its existence has been the place of freedom, the different, the traditional and the avant-garde. However, what is observed in these new places of hyper commerce is that it is not just a way of expressing diversity, but of a different logic, which tends to create a different identity in each place. With this, the city becomes an archipelago where each centrality has the sense of an island, while isolated, but linked by their connections to others, even if they are liquid,

volatile and built to the delight of individual interests, such as a rhizome. Thus, the different centralities that may exist in the city are equipped with their own personalities, attended by a specific consumer who is attracted to subjectivities that are present in the uses proposed or suggested. The resulting city has the character of schizophrenia in its structure by this fact: multiple identities. On the other hand, the structure has a new look, the rhizome, just for the unpredictability of the location of these forms, which occur in every part of the urban system.

MARKETS IN BARCELONA.

The markets studied in Barcelona are those that arose or transformed drastically in the second half of the nineteenth century. Precisely because they are representative of the whole transformation that society was going through that time, welcoming in its way, with the use of iron and glass, the new organization of commerce and consumption resulting from population growth, industrialization and increasing range of products. The markets also represent the submission of small merchants.

It happens that the changes undergone by modern society are structural changes, resulting from technological changes, especially in transporting people and goods and the media. These changes have the ability to change the social organization, and this caused a corresponding spatial organization. Ascher (2004) pointed out very well this process to examine the form of the contemporary city, which he called *metapolis*. In the same way, this study aims to demonstrate that the current structure of post-industrial city (though not necessarily post-urban), is strongly associated with the transformations that take place in commerce and consumption. And in this sense, both the new forms will demonstrate a new pattern of distribution and concentration of activities and people, as the old ways. Thanks to the transformations that are submitted by capitalism will do the same, creating a pattern of use of urban

space tending to concentrate in specific locations generating the multiple personalities that characterize the present metropolis. If at first the modernist model, rational and hierarchical industrial city was replaced by a proliferation of new centres, what is observed is that these centralities tend to become autonomous, generating their own logic and relationships, making it an urban, an analogous space to a schizophrenic personality.

RESILIENCE AND METAMORPHOSIS.

Over time the changes observed in the capitalist mode of production also makes changes in the behaviour of commerce and consumption. Consumers change, commerce changes all at the same time and almost imperceptibly, sometimes abruptly, or other way. The culture was able to introduce modern mass consumption and industrialization which led to the production of consumer goods in such a fast way that also introduced new requirements. If industrial production is guided by the needs, at first, it was able to produce needs, soon after, anticipating consumer demands and even causing them. Also the forms of commercial space have changed, given the changes in technology and adapting to new demands of capitalism in permanent change. Thus, the tertiary space also mutates: the great magazine of the beginning of modernity becomes the department store that evolved into the Mall and continues to change. The urban area where there is also transformed commerce, seeking to meet the demands placed by the metamorphosis of the production process: the centralized urban commerce is pulverized, the centres adapt to pedestrians, the old forms giving way to new uses and functions and continuously adapting following the movement of time. When not accompanying this movement, commerce shifts, produces new centres, leaving the original sites and causes more changes in the old and the new place. All these changes occur by the adaptations of the capitalist mode of production to the movement of history in order to always maintain its hegemony, it survives (Lefebvre, 1973). Surviving,

by metamorphosis, causes similar movements in other sectors such as commerce, causing the same way, metamorphoses. In this respect previous study (VIEIRA, 2002), deepens this discussion.

The paper analyzes how commerce can influence the shapes of the production structure of urban space. It is intended to work with the view that new forms of commerce, ruled in a logic that goes beyond the rational paradigms of modernity, are capable of producing an urban structure different from that experienced by the modern city. Thus, we face a very strong relationship between the forms of commerce and production structure of the city. These new forms are installed on a dynamic that no longer follows the traditional location of commerce, reinforcing the mononuclear centrality existing but producing themselves, a new centrality. These centres, in itself, have a tendency to be autonomous often disconnected from the environment. For the analysis of a case some categories of analysis that can support the study were chosen. Thus, if elected to work with the category of all, contemplated here under a dual logic, the place lived, recognized and identified by their users, to a place that encourages social contact, interaction, intercommunication between users and other relationships of primary order and, in contrast, another logic presents itself in places whose dynamics is averse to the meeting, relational intercommunication and conviviality. The first, Castelo (2008) name places of urbanity, the second, places of cloning.

The study took the city of Barcelona, Spain. To perform the analysis of the local municipal markets it was chosen as representative sites of the first case, those places of urbanity. The malls were taken as illustrative of the cloning sites, although these categories do not need to appear, as indeed they do not appear absolute in these places. To further substantiate the analysis we used the categories of stimulus perception and stimulated awareness (CASTELO, 2008), to complement the understanding of these places.

It is analyzed that the places of commerce are capable of generating a

spatiality, from consumer relations they engender, may on one hand, develop a territorial endowed with politeness, interaction, relationships and personal autonomy (free will, self- determination), in the sense that consumers have greater freedom in the selection of goods they will consume with respect to identity with their own habits. On the other hand, there are places where generated social relations are capable of producing heteronomy (over determination, alienation), imposing itself on the will of an evident fetish (BRUNO, 2010, p. 16). The municipal markets represent the best commerce model equipped with urbanity, because consumers establish closer relationships, more directly choose the products and find these products in their closer to natural state. While the malls would be a place closer to cloning, endowed with a homogenization that generates no identification with the consumer, it does not offer choices that are not pre-formatted, choices that are independent of consumer interest, the products are more standardized, in a sense. Thus, the markets tend to be more connected to the consumer where they are inserted, creating stronger linkages between merchants and consumers, establishing more personal relationships between those involved in the process of commerce and consumption. Meanwhile the trend in shopping malls is a relationship mediated by the roles of traders and consumers, with almost no interaction.

THE MODEL OF MUNICIPAL MARKETS OF BARCELONA

Markets are a well-known reality throughout the world today, because, regardless of the form, on every continent practices of commerce, buying and selling of goods are always

made somewhere that, at different times, gave rise to special forms where they were performed. Whether outdoors, on streets, squares, fairs, or covered places people always developed sites suitable for conducting business, particularly for commerce in daily consumption of food most of the time in

nature. Throughout the history of local societies it will be prolix in presenting multiple forms of organization of the commerce, creating very particular and specific examples of expression of these practices.

The markets in order of commerce of food specifically, the way we know them today in the western world, will be responsible for generating a new form of specific architecture and urbanism beginning to deploy in urban Europe in the early nineteenth century and then will extend throughout the continent and around the world. With the widespread use of iron and glass business this way it will be generalized in the second half of the nineteenth century and then with the use of concrete shall be increased again in the twentieth century, becoming an important manifestation of the formal practices of capitalist society.

These markets have come in response to social development experienced by the urban society after the Industrial Revolution, because of the need to meet the demands imposed by the emerging reality. Population growth, the concentration of people in cities, the need to control supply and price of food for industrial workers, improving the logistics of distribution of agricultural products, among others, are elements that appear justifying such organization. Otherwise, its emergence can only occur as a function of its own technological development that favours the use of new materials and techniques from industrial development. It is a form of commerce that stems from the deepening and the increasing complexity of social relations in a given time and place, inherits elements from past practices and plays like a more sophisticated model of realization of the production process. As a result, it will be responsible for a spatial restructuring, due to the adopted form and the derived relationships, greatly influencing the patterns of internal organization of cities, both adapting to existing structures, in some cases, such as creating new structures and it is responsible for defining socio-spatial city, in others.

The role played by the markets in the relationship with the structure of the city differently occur in different locations and vary over time. In general,

markets have been extremely important in defining the structure of cities as soon as they appeared, suitable for a practical production of hierarchically structured urban space type, with the strong emergence of a structure based on a centre-periphery pattern. Over time, the technological changes in emerged society were imposing new standards and practices in the city that led to the replacement of many existing forms including in commerce. With this, the markets will change their importance in the present, making them almost disappear, as it happened in England, keeping their existence under new functions, as occurred in most places, or subsisting on importance in contemporary business logic, as only occurs with significant importance in a few cities, like Barcelona.

In the early twentieth century, covered markets were important functional poles in the urban structure particularly with regard to the neighbourhoods. The market has stalls selling not only food, but all sorts of household products. The force of attraction was further undermined by the shops surrounding it which played a very complementary character and not competitive with the markets. Many of the stores had sales of banking market to extend the area of family business. Thus, the market has established itself as a centre of daily life that mimics, to a lesser extent, their own surroundings. As the vendors of the markets that were often residents of the neighbourhood setting other workers as well, what would eventually generate sociability very close to the market.

We always have people in the neighbourhood - said a buyer in the traditional market Sants, a popular suburb in Barcelona - [...], from the busy neighbourhood, where everyone greets you when you walk, where everyone knows everyone, where we make social life conversation in the market and food shops. (GUÀRDIA and OYÓN, 2010, p. 54).

Here we call attention to the market as a specific genre site, because besides the frequent shoppers women also appear as a key work of commerce

in the markets. The article by Miller (2010) will take care of this analysis, particularly emphasizing the role played by women in the markets.

However, even with all the strength represented in the organization of urban space, the sociability and the urban economy during the nineteenth century, above all, was not enough to maintain the hegemony of markets in most cases. Guàrdia and Oyón (2010) have identified two distinct moments in the so called "sunset" of the European markets. The first decline can already be seen in the early twentieth century, particularly in countries, which initiated the model. The first and most significant decline occurs in the United Kingdom, where it takes place starting in 1890 and especially after the First World War, so that is not seen more construction of new markets between 1910 and 1920 and there are few cases until 1950. A big reason for the change in the direction of food commerce in the cities is the area reached by the distribution chains controlled by large wholesalers who would stop the old direct relationship between the producer and seller, which was the basis of the model of commerce and distribution of food in the nineteenth century. Large number of imported manufactured goods would be dominated by intermediaries directly or indirectly related with large cooperatives and food chains. The same occurs in the French case, where new models of marketing of agricultural products and the decline of traditional agriculture disrupt markets. In France the vitality of the markets still remained longer, but it happened that the public coffers began to have less capacity for market investment and renovation, which explains why the survival of the outdoor markets. In other countries, where the covered model arrived later, the markets were still important commerce players in the early twentieth century. The new markets were still built of concrete as a business innovator in many places, as in Germany. The Spanish case is significant where one observes a modernization of the commercial network between 1910 and 1936 also with the construction of a large number of markets. In Madrid, you can see a renewal of the market system in the 1930s and in many other cities metal market was not

built relying on the first and only concrete market, which is often the most significant building in the city. Anyway this third generation markets were much less significant than the previous ones they did not have the same intensity in the diffusion model. The markets in this period are of the single central market type; therefore, they do not help to constitute a system based on network equipment as before.

Soon the second decline of markets comes, which occurs after the second post-war. Now it seems that it struck a structurally definitive crisis on the markets caused mainly by progressive motor and dispersion of the population. This process was further supported by the long lack of investment for the renewal of the period and historic centres. On the other hand, caused by the revolution and the self-service supermarket leading to a standardization of the series of products which permanently appear are markets as an anachronistic solution. The product quality is increasingly being linked to factors related to appearance, as the brand rather than the place where the product is sold. The emergence of new commercial forms that proliferate even more rapidly from the 1950s and 1960s is central to the collapse of the markets.

Here the case of Barcelona to demonstrate how unusual if not unique in the history of the markets, just as in the period between 1939 and 1977 were built twenty-six markets. Some of these markets are substitutes of the “mercadillos” taking place outdoors, but most will be deployed as planned equipment in remote areas of urban expansion. While in Madrid we observe the disappearance of the metal markets. In Barcelona on the contrary, there is almost total maintenance. Guàrdia and Oyón (2010, p. 63) explain this as “the paradox of a latecomer city that has kept the legacy much denser than the cities that served as a model.” However it must be noted that many other cities have implemented even later than Barcelona covered market model, as a system is not always true, but nonetheless managed to maintain such equipment assets with the same intensity that exists in Barcelona. It is, therefore, a credit that deserves

more complex explanations and point to the adoption of the market not only as a model of food distribution, but as a model for structuring the process of urbanization. In Barcelona, markets remain not only as heritage buildings, but also from the standpoint of its commercial operation. While in the rest of Europe the decline of the covered markets are unmistakably shown, as well as reducing the importance of markets in the context of urban consumption in Barcelona these facts appear in a different way, perhaps you can join here too Turin, Italy, which has a network of 42 markets almost all built in the twentieth century.

The possibilities posed for several European cities are vast and may differ across the role that the markets may have, either as elements of the built heritage or to support commercial activity and structure of cities, according to the variety of the history dynamics that are made for each place.

In Spain, the impact caused by large retailers would take a little longer to arrive and, between 1984 and 1996 the expansion of large commercial formats coincided with the adoption of the French administrative business model. As in Turin, with the network of outdoor markets in Barcelona, with the system of covered markets, there is an evident attempt to use markets as a tool for organization of urban structure, recognizing the value of these urban forms and gathering the urbanity local shops.

Here we call attention to an important conclusion, which the authors arrive and on which has already been invested in examining, in the sense that the maintenance of markets, often requires a transformation of existing relations of production. As stated Guàrdia and Oyón (2010, p. 68) "these interventions have improved the infrastructure and the image of many markets, but the cost of a decline in newsstand sales and planning more themed market practice." It points out, in fact, a tendency observed in these analyzed cases so profound transformations that can subvert the very nature of the activities in the markets, ensuring their survival in terms of form, adapted by new technologies, but giving up its original logic. More and more markets become scenic, tailored to the social

and cultural hypermodern manifestations, and less authentic. Besides the fact that it can already be observed regarding both the range of products sold in the remaining markets, more geared to meet an invented demand and tourism, as the increase of prices compared to other establishments, demonstrating the selectivity of the public who begins the show itself.

Best would be a policy that could also combine with the renewal the popularization of the food supply, so that markets could meet demands from various sectors and had its life guaranteed by the full integration in the food commerce system. Moreover, you cannot get the market to its essence that is founded in sociability afforded by commerce, which argued for years that relationship that the city allowed it to make. Guàrdia and Oyón (2010) still believe in the possibility that markets are able to structure the cities where such systems exist, a more effective way for the urbanity of the cities than those who adhered to an extensive urbanization and abandoned the market. Survivors believe that markets can contribute to the city and they do not lose their truly urban character, based on solidarity, belonging and owner of public space. It is a Herculean task assigned to the markets, but also a way to go, because if we abandon the city to the experiences and innovations of each era, making *tábula rasa* of the past and its teachings, we hopelessly risk abandoning the bonds that bind us to the history as a process. Resume of everyday urban practices based on human relations is essential for the continuing sense of the city.

CONCLUSION

The detailed study of the forms of commerce allows a glimpse at the evident remains in the landscape of society and its complex manifestations. The commerce has always been a space capable of concentrating the dynamics of society and its occurrence in an exemplary manner reflects the different social perspectives, economic and cultural experienced at a particular time and place. Through the ways, you can understand the logic and dynamics that explain social

functioning.

The markets generally, and the model of Barcelona, specifically, are able to translate the different phases that have passed their builders and users. At every moment, as they were staying or changing shape and use to survive, you can enter the game of social relations that produce urban space. The survival of markets reflects well the changes sought by concrete subjects in capitalism to remain hegemonic in the production process. Rather than having resilience mutation, since the shapes are modified and become no longer the same starting and, over time, leaving only what will contemplate the essence of the process, in case the goods. The transformations experienced by the markets make clear the meaning of survival, the search for adaptation to new logics and strategies that make old ways survive.

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