

**Old and new peri-urban zones:
questions and challenges from the
Latin American experience**

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The LA urbanisation: two movements, similar model

- **Older peri-urban zones**
- **More recent peri-urban zones**
- **Dynamic areas and communities, but
unsustainable development model**
- **Land governance crisis**

Older peri-urban zones

- **Urbanization long consolidated: 80% (Brazil 84%)**
- **Metropolitanization (primary and others)**
- **Pattern of sociospatial segregation**
- **Huge housing deficit + serviced vacant land + empty/under-utilised private and public properties**
- **Concentration of infrastructure, services and equipment**
- **Backlog of urban-environmental problems: sanitation, transportation and mobility, urban security**

Urban development as informal development

- **Structural informality: rule, not exception**
- **Peripheral informal settlements (unlike US suburbs) and sometimes also central (favelas)**
- **More and better opportunities of access to land and housing than public policies and official markets combined**
- **Dynamic areas and communities, but insecure tenure and high socioenvironmental, political and economic costs**

The post-industrial LA city

- Increasing commodification; capitalist production *in* the city and *of* the city
- Growth of construction sector
- Growing penetration of national and global land and property capital
- Record-breaking land/property/rental values in formal and informal markets alike; speculation
- Old centers losing population
- Further peripherization of the poor (even favelas)
- Peripheral gated communities: rich and poor dispute space

The eviction game is back

- **Eviction by landowners**
- **Eviction by public authorities – large-scale projects, infrastructure, sports events, urban renewal**
- **Eviction by the market – gentrification, regularization programs, infrastructure, services and equipment, governmental subsidies**

More recent developments: the new peri-urban zones

- **Declining urban growth rates, though still high**
- **Changes in migration pattern: growth of middle-sized and small cities**
- **The new frontier: the Amazon**
- **New system of cities with different logic**
- **Expansion of new peri-urban zones**

Migrants' New Paths Reshaping Latin America

- Many Mexican migrants now shun the border for Mexican towns like Santa María Atzompa.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/06/world/americas/migrants-new-paths-reshaping-latin-america.html? r=1>

Main causes

- **Economic, sociopolitical and cultural rural-urban, urban-urban, national and international migration**
- **Changes in agricultural production**
- **Search for mineral resources**
- **Better infrastructure**
- **Information technology (youth)**
- **Industrial relocation strategies**
- **Displacement by conflict**
- **High land prices**
- **Money laundering...**

Growing disputes over use of land

- **Water reservoirs**
- **Vegetation and green belts**
- **Food production (encroaching of farming land)**
- **Impact of infrastructure projects (airports)**
- **National and international public, communal and private land grabbing**
- **Acquisition of coastal land**
- **Unlicensed industrial activities**
- **Costs of transportation and mobility**
- **Environmental impact – man-induced disasters**

New informal development processes

- **Significantly, if not largely, informal**
- **Poverty does not explain it all**
- **Rates higher than urban and poverty growth**
- **Lack of functioning land supply mechanisms**
- **Lack of adequate land administration and demarcated central areas for social housing**
- **Lack of adequate public housing policies**
- **Lack of options by formal developers**

The new peri-urban zones

- For all their dynamism, unsustainable model
- So much for the aspiration of compact cities
- Take a leaf out of Solly Angel's book *Making Room for a Planet of Cities*
- While trying to contain/divert process, anticipate urban expansion and prepare for it

Peri-urban zones: no one's land

- No legal-technical treatment of urban expansion
- Manipulated perimeters to generate tax revenue
- No territorial control or licensing of activities
- Lack of local administrative capacity to act
- Authority conflicts and interference from higher governmental levels
- Governance voids and representation failure
- Legal grey areas and corruption
- Need for integrated *land governance legal framework*

A land framework

- Democratize access to serviced land and housing and provide security of tenure
- Articulated territorial order: preventive and remedial land, urban, housing, environmental, fiscal policies in light of inclusive socioeconomic and socioenvironmental development; social function of private and public property
- Rural – “rurban” – policy
- Urban planning revival – different bases, not merely regulatory, but inducing land market movements
- Learn from dynamic informal markets

A governance framework

- **Local capacity building**
- **Intergovernmental articulation**
- **Metropolitan apparatus and regional scope**
- **Involvement of private and community sectors in land management**
- **Popular participation in decision- and law-making**
- **Financing urban development: traditional taxation and other forms of surplus land value capture**

The challenge of a new social contract

- **Peri-urban zones require a new sociopolitical pact to recognize positive dimensions and minimize negative ones, promote sociospatial inclusion and fairer distribution of costs and benefits of urban development**
- ***The Right to the City***