The construction of a public problem: activism in Lisbon's historic center

A construção de um problema público: ativismo no centro histórico de Lisboa

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Abstract

This article presents an empirical study of collectives, associations, and institutions that are active in the city of Lisbon and mobilizes theoretical and methodological references of pragmatic sociology. The aim is to analyze how a set of individual complaints of evictions gained collective status, making the struggle for the right to housing in the capital's historic center a priority on the local and national public agendas. Based on the understanding that the city's public problems are not an objective reality, but social and political constructions, this research aims to contribute to reflections on urban activism, mapping its dissemination strategies and public awareness campaigns.

Keywords: urban activism, Lisbon, right to housing, public problem, pragmatic sociology.

Resumo

Parte-se, neste artigo, do estudo empírico de coletivos, associações e instituições atuantes na cidade de Lisboa e da mobilização de referências teórico-metodológicas da sociologia pragmática. Busca-se analisar como uma série de denúncias de casos individuais de despejos ganhou o estatuto de coletividade, tornando a luta pelo direito à habitação no centro histórico da capital um assunto prioritário nas agendas públicas local e nacional. Partindo do entendimento de que os problemas públicos da cidade não são dados da realidade, e sim construções político-sociais, pretende-se contribuir com as reflexões sobre o ativismo urbano, mapeando suas estratégias de publicização e de sensibilização de públicos.

Palavras-chave: *ativismo urbano; Lisboa; direito à habitação; problema público; sociologia pragmática.*

From personal involvement to a public problem

Through correspondence, received towards the end of 2017, a tenant of an apartment, located on Rua de São José, in the center of Lisbon, became aware of the new conditions of his lease (in Portuguese termed *arrendamento*), which, until that moment, had been subject to automatic annual renewal. The proposal, formulated by the landlady, owner and administrator of the entire building, provided him with two possibilities: either forcibly vacating the premises with less than two months' notice, or paying an amount 25% higher than that which had been agreed two years before, in 2015. To ensure her prerogative over the future of the property, she resorted to the *Novo Regime do Arrendamento Urbano* (New Urban Lease Regime)[1] of 2012, which facilitates the process of terminating contracts. With this, the possibility would be open to negotiate a new agreement between the interested parties, including a proposal to implement a rental increase much higher than the coefficient for updating the national income (calculated in 2017, at 1.0054%).

Unable to afford the new rent, the abovementioned tenant sent a reply, casting suspicions on the legality of the owner's action. He questioned her disregard for the deadlines determined by the terms of the contract, and that the letter had been sent unregistered and therefore he had not signed for it on receipt, as required by law. His strategy in this matter, based on the same regulatory laws that had mobilized the owner, enabled the agreement to be reestablished under the previous terms, much to the relief of the tenant. It was through

this problematic situation that the author of this article first came into contact with the housing problem in the zones of the center and historic center of Lisbon.[2] The property under dispute was where he lived during his doctoral internship, and the tenant threatened with eviction, his partner. Although this began as a personal problem, and took less than one month to resolve, it was sufficient to generate an intimate concern that ultimately became transformed into an investigative interest.

In a city where a large portion of the population lives in rented accommodation – a reality that contrasts with the rest of the country, where home ownership predominates (Guerra, 2011) – it is estimated that situations such as this occur on a daily basis. This is common in contexts where the housing and real estate markets are strongly active, as suggested by the most recent, comprehensive studies on the issue from the National Statistics Institute of Portugal (2011, 2013). Between 2016 and 2018, Lisbon faced a 54% overall increase in rental contracts (Confidencial Imobiliário, 2018). These levels are even more expressive in the historic center, where properties aimed at temporary housing, tourist accommodation (or "local accommodation", as referred to by local legislation)[3] and foreign investment have multiplied to the detriment of those intended for long-term rent. This is a process that, on the one hand, expresses the city's ability to attract national and international investments to its real estate sector, thereby contributing to the dynamism of the local economy. On the other hand however, due to the very speculative and predatory nature of this type of activity, it has become difficult for the most vulnerable population to access the housing

market in these areas, being pushed out to the most peripheral regions, where the provision of public services is scarce and the job market is slack.

Current legislation, in turn, is frequently referred to by residents, activists and academics as being one of the factors responsible for increasing the number of evictions in Lisbon and has become the target of great social contestation. This questioning began to echo around the spheres of political representation, particularly after 2015, when the central government (center-right coalition),[4] responsible for approving a series of austerity measures in the post-capitalist crisis of 2012, was replaced by a coalition of left and center-left parties, the Portuguese Communist Party, the *Bloco da Esquerda* (Left Block), the Greens and the Socialist Party, whose secretary-general, António Costa, was chosen as prime minister. Within the context of urban policies, the change brought about the political conditions to question the measures approved by the previous government, and encountered in the City Hall of Lisbon, run since 2007 by the Socialist Party, a favorable environment with which to face the issue. Action, however, has not always been viewed with optimism by those affected.

In the same manner by which there are no research problems that remian disconnected from the trajectory and practices of those who dedicate themselves to investigating them, public problems also do not emerge as objective reality. They are political and social constructs that depend, firstly, on the ability of the agents directly affected to produce a denouncement that deems a collective status upon their problems, thereby transforming a series of dispersed, individual cases (such as

the author's personal experience, with which he began this article), into an integral part of a common cause. Afterwards, they assume that the groups formed around these causes enter the public arena and define the issues that they consider problematic as being priorities and, therefore, are able to demand measures that contribute to their resolution, which is conducted through strategies to publicize and raise public awareness that go beyond those directly affected by the problem (Spector and Kitsuse, 2001; Gusfield, 1981; Cefaï, 2009).

These are the general lines of the case that resulted in the phenomenon that this article seeks to analyze: how the housing problem in the historic center of Lisbon transformed into a public problem of local and national expression. It is of interest to discover the means that allowed the collectives, associations and institutions formed around the specific subjects to overcome the rhetoric of self-interest through the construction of a grammar of public justification, which requires public devices to solve the problem.[5] The investigative challenge however, unfolds onto many other issues: "Which groups were able to access the public arena?"; "Which dramatic, theatrical devices were mobilized?"; "Which systems of engagement and principles of justice are evoked to challenge public opinion and the public authorities?"

Resulting from an experience of ethnographic immersion in the historic center of Lisbon, by observing as a participant at events and meetings of collectives in the struggle for housing, and from informal conversations held with academics, activists and residents, this article seeks to contribute to the debate on the performance and effectiveness of urban collectives in the fight

for the right to housing. Or, in broader terms, to produce a reflection that collaborates in constructing the means of resistance and insurgency against the processes of financialization and of the pillaging of social goods and services, such as urban land and housing. We have sought to accomplish this through recognizing the strategies and repertoires which, whilst they concurrently aim to combat the local problems, are connected to broader networks of global urban activism.

Furthermore, the intention is to promote theoretical reflection on the construction of public problems based on three key assumptions for the theoretical and methodological references mobilized throughout the analysis. By focusing on the dramatic and performative quality of the construction of public problems, it is intended, along with Gusfield (1981 and 2012), to reject the idea that the public is mobilized by the objectivity and truthfulness of facts represented by technical data or scientific analysis, whilst not denying that its constitution is committed to reality.[6] In addition, it also seeks to draw more attention to what Cefaï and collaborators have defined as a public arena,[7] enabling to bring into contact the different logical principles that integrate the constellation of overlapping scenes (Cefaï, 2002, 2009, 2017;[8] Cefaï, Mota and Veiga, 2011). Lastly, following the tradition of pragmatic sociology (particularly Boltanski's sociology of critique), we seek to seriously consider the critical operations of ordinary actors and their ability to operate different senses of justice, breaking with

the perspectives that understand all social relations as relations of forces (namely those of Marxist or Bourdieusian inspiration) and those that interpret the actions of actors as strategies to optimize their interests, typical of a sociology inspired by the utilitarian tradition (Boltanski, 2000, 2014, 2016; Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006).

The article is divided into four moments. In the first, a brief tour through Portuguese urban policies is undertaken, especially those aimed towards tackling the housing problem. Notes that only make sense when related to the broader logic of post-Fordist accumulation, the economic crises that have undermined the national economy over recent decades and the international interventions that have accompanied the economic recovery plans. Following this, we analyze the construction of an interorganizational arena as a strategy for access into the public arena, an option that aims to abandon the abstract idea of "social problems" in favor of analyzing collectives, associations and institutions that are engaged in defining the problem and demanding its resolution (Spector; Kitsuse, 2001). The third moment investigates the process of producing a grammar of public justification by these groups, adopting the pages of the newspaper *Público* as a revealing mediation of the rhetorical devices of engagement which they mobilized in different public scenes. The final lines will be dedicated to discussion on the potential and limits of the actions and strategies of the groups analyzed in relation to the growing commercialization of urban space.

The crisis of the Welfare State, the European Troika and the commercialization of housing

The long-lasting regime of the Estado Novo, inaugurated by Salazar in 1933 and overthrown in 1974, left profound marks on the precarious Portuguese housing situation. Portuguese cities received a large population movement from the countryside and later, in the second half of the twentieth century, from the former colonies. This phenomenon was driven by the processes of industrialization, urbanization and decolonization. Due to the State's inability to respond to new housing demands, there was a proliferation of informal and clandestine development for new housing. The government opted for symbolic measures in order to cover it, such as the incipient supply of affordable housing through the Housing Development Fund (1969) and the freezing of rents (Silva, 1994). In the political-social framework, such actions were associated with the "paternalistic strand" of the regime, which saw in the policies a means of neutralizing certain sectors of society by promoting social and, above all, family integration (Serra, 1997).

It was only after the fall of the Estado Novo and with the social, political and economic upheaval that a move was made towards the project of building a Social Welfare State and that encountered favorable conditions for implementing policies guided by the values of universal and equal access to social goods (Barata, 2014). Thus, in 1976, housing was recognized as a constitutional right and the decentralization of housing policies was inaugurated, along with a strong component of community participation, sometimes supported by a process of self-construction (Amilcar et al., 2011). For the first time, a more direct and systematic intervention by the State was observed in the promotion of housing, although the volume of public investment in the sector was significantly lower than the other components of social expenditure – such as education, health and social security (Santos; Telles; Serra, 2004).

With a reduction in taxes and a proliferation of neoliberal ideas, characterized by distrust in the role of the State and a focus towards the centrality of the market and competitiveness, Portuguese housing policies have suffered a new adjustment; a scenario that has also been repeated in other European countries (Rolnik, 2015).[9] From being an affordable housing provider, the State began acting as a facilitator for the private market by granting subsidized bank credit for the construction and acquisition of homes. As a consequence of this policy, Portuguese families began incurring a huge level of debt, the speculative and rentist logic of the real estate sector was fortified, the rental sector was strangled and the process of suburbanization and socio-spatial exclusion was encouraged (Guerra, 2011; Fonseca and Malheiros, 2011; Carmo, Ferrão and Malheiros, 2014). With the idea of housing as a social good being abandoned and a focus on transferring responsibility to individuals for their own well-being, the country today has one of the lowest public stocks of social housing in Europe.[10]

This logic, following the financial capitalism crisis of 2008, has assumed an even more radical feature (Mendes, 2014). As a condition, imposed by the International

Monetary Fund, the European Commission and the European Central Bank (the so-called *Troika*), for conceding a loan of 8 billion Euros to Portugal, approval was given for what became known as the Troika Plan (2011), composed of measures that depleted public funds for social housing, favored the opening of the national market and, lastly, boosted the private rental market. To attract foreign investors, a tax regime favorable to Non--Habitual Residents (2009)[11] became linked with the Golden Visa program (2012).[12] The New Urban Lease Regime (2012), in turn, was responsible for the extinction of contracts signed before the 1990s, and for updating rents to values incompatible with the income of former tenants. This framework created a fiscal and legal context with profound repercussions on the real estate market in the city of Lisbon – the country's political and economic center.

During the second half of the twentieth century, Lisbon had already experienced a significant change in its urban-territorial dynamics that altered the logic of determining the value of interurban land. Through public and private investments in the most peripheral regions, the city saw its urban area expand (Nunes, 2010; Salgueiro, 2001); which was then followed by the devalorization of the real estate sector located in its center and historic center, which resulted from the departure of the upper classes, the divestment of the public sector and the abandonment and degradation of existing properties. This devalorization enabled an impoverished middle class to remain and, in some cases, the arrival and settlement of ethnic groups with a less recognized social status (Fonseca and Malheiros, 2011).

Once the metropolitan area had become consolidated, a trend towards recentering the city was sketched out at the end of the twentieth century, similar to other world capitals (Harvey, 2012; Bidou-Zachariassen, 2006). The process was induced by the government through programs to promote and encourage the rehabilitation of degraded buildings. To this end, the Degraded Property Recovery Program (1976) and the Urban Rehabilitation Program (1985) were created, in which concern may be observed for maintaining the resident population. This was changed with the constitution of the Urban Rehabilitation Societies (2014), at a time when the market became the guiding principle for measures taken in this sector. It was sufficient to create favorable conditions for attracting private investors, who chose the historic center as a new frontier for extracting value-added land (Mendes, 2013 and 2014). After all, the combination of a central location and the state of degradation and abandonment of part of the properties created an opportunity for safe investment in the reproduction of real estate capital via the rent gap, a process observed in other cities worldwide (Smith, 2012).

Lastly, it is still necessary to take into account one further factor when analyzing the dynamics of the real estate market and its consequences on the housing dynamics of the region: urban tourism. With the 2008 capitalism crisis, the sector became central in creating jobs and in mitigating the impact of austerity policies on Portuguese families, and also stimulated a network of economic agents who, with tourism, saw the possibility of increasing their profits. This was the case of property owners in the historic center, who began to invest in accommodation

and in businesses aimed at tourism. This ultimately removed a significant number of properties from the traditional rental market, strengthening the already unequal relationship between demand and supply of this type of property.[13]

The result was immediately felt by those who, depending on rental contracts, saw their homes being transformed into a financial asset and, as a result, their permanence being put under threat. In a short period of time, cases of direct and indirect eviction, both for residents and traditional businesses, began to increase, gaining prominence in the local and national media and beginning to echo across the spheres of political representation. Finally, a combination was formed that wove the backdrop to the problem, and which is analyzed throughout the following pages: the uncontrolled exploitation of central urban lands by national and foreign economic agents, after a long period of disinterest, with the indignation of those who began to discover that the only way to avoid threats of eviction was through collective action.

The construction of interorganizational arenas as a strategy to access the public arena

The *Morar em Lisboa* (Living in Lisbon) movement marked its public debut with the publication of an open letter addressed to political representatives and city dwellers denouncing the "drastic rise in the values of residential leases that has led to the expulsion of people from the most central areas of the city" (*Morar em Lisboa*, 2017). Launched in the first month of 2017, the manifesto letter, for the first time, presented to a wider public, the reasons that motivated the creation of the group, the problem they elected as being a priority and their proposals to confront it.

To substantiate its denouncements, the group presented data that confirmed the uncontrolled growth of the real estate market aimed at housing[14] and designated the "causal responsibility"[15] for the problem: 1) the State, through the creation of legal and financial instruments to attract international private investment in the Portuguese real estate sector (New Urban Lease Law, Non-Habitual Residents Law and Golden Visa Portugal); and 2) the underlying dynamics of global financial capitalism, with a strong expression in the local real estate and tourism market. The consequences, according to the group, were perceived due to the difficulty of accessing the housing market in the historic center and the forced displacement of its former residents to the more peripheral regions of the city.

Appointed as being "politically responsible" for aggravating local socio-territorial inequalities, the State, in the figure of the central government, deputies and the City Council, is the main target of the movement. From the political representatives, Morar em Lisboa demanded a new housing and spatial planning policy, measures to regulate the tourism sector and a revision of tax policies aimed at investors and foreigners. As a publicity strategy, the dissemination of the open letter was able to guarantee an expressive insertion into the local and national mass media,[16] to attract around 5,000 signatories over the following months and to ensure the presence of its spokespeople

at meetings, public hearings and forums,[17] strengthening the housing agenda in the Assembly of the Republic, the City Council and the *Juntas de Freguesias* [types of Parish Councils].[18]

The symbolic strength of the initiative cannot be explained merely by the quality of the arguments developed or by the aggravation of the indicated problem, since similar documents had already been produced by academics, activists and political representatives over previous years. Its power would appear to reside in the ability of *Morar em Lisboa* to connect a plurality of collectives, associations and institutions that already existed around a common "problematic situation", producing an "interorganizational arena" (Cefaï, Mota and Veiga, 2011). This was a strategy that took advantage of the bonds of solidarity and of belonging that had been established along the trajectory of the actions of each of these groups; groups that, when meeting and connecting, produced a new manner to engage and participate in collective action. The association contributed to strengthening the capacity of those involved for questioning, criticizing and negotiating.

Of the 37 collective signatories, there were several groups, amongst which were those who: 1) are active in the struggle for the residents' rights to remain;[19] 2) are concerned with the social production of architecture;[20] 3) defend the preservation of the cultural and architectural heritage;[21] 4) are committed to artistic activism;[22] 5) are linked to urban activism;[23] 6) are active in the academic production of knowledge;[24] 7) are involved in the struggle for the rights of workers and

pensioners;[25] 8) are active in the field of social innovation and the production of local development;[26] 9) are sports enthusiasts;[27] 10) are militants in the socio-environmental field;[28] 11) defend the rights of people living with HIV or at risk of contracting it,[29] and 12) fight for transparency in the decision-making processes.[30]

Given the plurality of the action agendas involved, it is interesting to note how, despite the issues considered as priorities for each of the groups, the issue of access to housing in the historic center of the city managed to bring them together in a common struggle. For this, two processes were fundamental to the success of the initiative: the production of an agenda for the defense of public affairs anchored in the logics of proximity and building the idea of shared ownership of the problem.

On investigation of the construction of a public problem, two apparently contradictory movements may be perceived. Initially, there is an "entanglement of proximity structures of the lived world" that are inseparable from the process of public engagement (Cefaï, 2011, p. 70). The experiences lived, the local sociability and the territorial ties help to build a regime of belonging and non-public engagement, which weaves a network of support and solidarity aimed at the community itself. Simultaneously, at the risk of being accused of localism and communitarianism, groups need to reject the logic of proximity, making use of a grammar of public justification to universalize their denouncements and demands. It is through this interpretive lens that the reading of the open letter produced by *Morar em Lisboa* is

proposed herein: treating the document as the materialization of the passage of actions anchored in the logics of proximity in order to construct an intended agenda detached from particularistic ties.

It should be noted that the signatory groups did not operate specific devices for universalizing their issues, but the construction of an interorganizational arena based on a unified agenda enabled a broader public engagement. In the case under analysis, the *Associação Habita pela Direito à Habitação e Cidade* [the Inhabit Association for the Right to Housing and the City] and the *Associação dos Inquilinos Lisbonenses* [Lisbon Tenants Association] began to focus their attention on the center and, especially, on the historic center, while *Renovar a Mouraria* [Renew Mouraria], *Vizinhos do Areeiro* [Neighbors of Areeiro], *Pensionistas e Idosos dos Olivais* [Pensioners and Older People of Olivais] and the *Associação do Patrimônio e População de Alfama* [Alfama Heritage and Population Association] strengthened the struggle in other locations and, lastly, *Left Hand Rotation* and *Academia Cidadã* [Citizen Academy] understood the struggle for local housing as a priority urban agenda. Every one of them, groups and actors engaged in a common collective action, began to assume a new, temporary identity, manufactured by the "type of problem against which they unite or confront, according to the provisional configurations of alliance and enmity in which they are involved" (ibid., p. 73).

Another relevant process, when analyzing the capacity to raise public awareness, is the dispute waged by groups regarding certain problems. Gusfield (1981) argues that the trajectory of the problems is marked by their appropriation by different groups, which, at specific times and situations, come to have control and authority over the subject. This immediately poses a fundamental question: if the groups do not have the same power, influence and authority in defining a problem, what enabled the studied network to establish a dominant relationship over it? The answer would seem to be in transferring the fractional ownership of the problem towards a unified collective control, represented by the letter from *Morar in Lisbon*. This process is not free from internal and external disputes, since the relationship of authority is never crystallized, but is an object of constant contestation.

It may be observed, therefore, that, in order to understand the process of building a public problem, it is necessary to recover the institutional arrangements that dispute authority over the matter, and over the set of action and enunciation devices. This is because, in the pragmatic perspective that underlies this text, we are not faced with processes based solely on the strength and power of those who announce them, but on the ability to produce socially accepted arguments (Boltanski, 2014, 2016).[31] This is why it is so important, for these groups, to build statements based on universalizable principles of justice, recognized by audiences that share expectations and values amongst themselves. This symbolic dimension will be analyzed in the following pages.

Constructing the grammars of public justification as an engagement device

"I live in Alfama and I have recently received a letter to vacate my home because the landlord will not renew my contract. I'm desperate. My husband is bedridden, he neither speaks nor walks. What do I do in this situation?" With a choked voice and teary eyes, Elisa interrupted her speech and rested the microphone on her lap. The immediate response to this gesture is a round of applause and expressions of support from the audience that filled the main hall of the Independence Palace on April 5, 2018. Before her, Carla had reported that her water and electricity had been cut off in order to force her out. Eduardo bemoaned the eviction order he received from the owner of the house where he and his wife have lived for 60 years; and Diana wept as she remembered her family's move to the periphery of the city.

On stage, Lisboners shared the pain and fear of being evicted from the home where they had always lived. In the audience, residents, activists and supporters followed the emotional speeches and expressed their solidarity with cries of "No, don't leave!"; "Courage!"; "Pigs; landlord pigs!"; and "No, they'll not get us out!". These reactions were recorded by two television cameras and by journalists covering the act. This was how things unwound throughout the first part of the event promoted by the *Junta de Freguesia* of Santa Maria Maior, the political-administrative unit for the neighborhoods of Afama, Baixa, Castelo and Mouraria, which had registered the highest evasion rates of their electors in recent years, and the most

expressive concentration of properties for tourist accommodation in the city (Quaternaire Portugal, 2017).[32]

Entitled "The Faces of Eviction – For the right to live in the historic center", the event sought to turn individual reports of suffering into a mechanism for raising awareness and bringing in supporters. This intention is already revealed by the title chosen for the event, which, with the addition of the term "faces", personifies, through the legal idea of "eviction", the pain of those who are forced to leave their homes, thereby challenging the sense of justice of those who defend the legality of the act. This was a strategy that the spokesperson, President Miguel Coelho[33] made no attempt to hide from the public:

> While organizing the event, we thought about how to get our message across; whether we should deal with it more aggressively. We thought a lot about whether we should shock. And we came to the conclusion that "yes!", it was necessary to shock in order to raise awareness of both the public and all those who share the responsibility in this matter [...] we wanted to show that these people exist. The people who have come today are just a small sample of the people of flesh and blood who are having to go through this drama. We are not talking about statistics; we are talking about the suffering of real people.

The *juntas de freguesias* in question, even though they have no power to create legislation that could protect tenants or develop expressive social policies for helping them to remain, transformed the seemingly intermittent and particular cases into a drama

capable of sensitizing even those not directly affected by the phenomenon.[34] It was what Spector and Kitsuse defined as the first phase of the "natural history of social problems": "to affirm the existence of a condition, which they (the group that denounces) define as harmful or offensive", provoking, in its audience, a feeling of indignation and compassion (Spector and Kitsuse, 2012, p. 90). The effect was to bring about an immediate reaction on the audience, but which also had the intention of reaching those not present and who were following the repercussions of the event through the media.

On the one hand, the decision to use the testimonies of the residents as a sensitization strategy proves that the construction of a public problem is not only "cognitive", but "involves collective affectivity, sensitivity and morality" (Cefaï, Mota and Veiga, 2011, p. 42). On the other hand, the second moment of the event demonstrates that, for the problem to reach the level of generality, other grammars are also necessary. The shift from criticism (based on emotional evidence) to denunciation (based on universalizable justice categories) took place when the president of the *junta* (Santa Maria Maior), by mobilizing technical, legal and statistical categories, questioned the economic balance of the tourist activity, defended the preservation of the local material and cultural heritage, denounced the socio-spatial inequality generated by the new dynamics of the housing market and also advocated for the constitutional right to housing.

From the singularity of suffering, the phenomenon becomes generalized. It is not by chance that statistics are mobilized – previously accused of being unable to express the suffering of those families. With a diversity of data (on the evasion of electors, the increase of licenses for properties for tourist accommodation, the rise in demand for legal support from the *junta* and the unequal tax treatment given to long and short-term rental contracts), the spokesperson built a system of evidence and arguments that make up the public reality of the phenomenon. Read from the perspective of rhetoric, the data produced by technical and scientific organizations are not opposed to the personal statements that preceded them. On the contrary, they confirm the reality of the problem they denounced and, through this, generate adhesions that surpass those directly affected by it, assuming the condition of a public problem in the city.

The event promoted by the *Junta de Freguesia* of Santa Maria Maior is just one example of how groups use rhetorical and performative strategies to give the issue of housing in the historic center the status of a public problem. It is now necessary to analyze the arguments they have mobilized. By focusing attention on the critical operations that actors and groups undertake when engaging in criticism and denouncing situations that they deem to be problematic, we turn to the perspective developed by Boltanski and Thévenot – or, more specifically, to "the work of model creation"[35] undertaken by the actors and groups studied (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006; Boltasnki, 2000). This is followed by an attempt to analytically construct the principle of justice on which each relies, the typified construction of a victim and the identification of those responsible for the problem.

The newspaper *Público* was chosen as a privileged source, due to the fact that, amongst all the newspapers in wide

circulation, this had paid more attention to the topic. As a documentary source, the newspaper is analyzed as a revealing mediation of the different scenes that make up the public arena and, with this, of the logical variables and intersecting regimes of engagement. This methodological option is only possible when it is taken into account that the means of communication are both fundamental devices in publicizing and in justifying the actions and arguments of the groups in question and producers of their own agendas, the "media agendas" (Cefaï, 2002). The pages of the newspapers are not an expression of the totality of the groups that participate in the debate or of the set of arguments which they mobilize, but a possible means to apprehend part of the arguments mobilized in the public arena.

Initially, there is an emphasis on arguments the principle of which are based within a world guided by the justice system, which is to refuse the legitimacy of actions and engagements supported by violence, i.e., when there is a flagrant abandonment of the search to construct a common good. In such situations, disputes do not erupt in argumentative or rational terms, but rather, they are a reference to the negation of the humanity of those who confront one another (Boltanski, 2000, pp. 105-118). In order to underpin the defense of what will be called the principle of *legality*, there is no lack of examples in the reports: electricity cuts in the common areas of buildings, cutting off electricity and gas supplies to homes; excessive noise and dirt from works being undertaken; the removal of mailboxes, handrails, windows, doors and skylights; and

other measures introduced so as to debase the living conditions of those who refuse to leave the buildings.

Furthermore, also part of this ensemble of threats is the use of force and the mechanism of fraud and trickery when producing documents in order to terminate rental contracts. In the newspapers, several reports have been dedicated to this topic.[36] In collectives, associations and institutions, concern gave rise to several different actions, such as the offer of legal support, as with the *Associação Habita* and the *Junta de Freguesia* of Santa Maria Maior,[37] and the production of materials aimed at reporting cases of violence.[38] At the City Hall, through the initiative of the *Bloco de Esquerda*,[39] a helpline was set up exclusively to provide assistance to residents in situations of eviction or "real estate bullying", a term that became commonly used to name the practice of harassment by landlords.[40]

The second set of arguments analyzed is based on the defense of social types understood as those most in need of help, herein named as the principle of *protecting the vulnerable*. Through the typified idea of victim, collectives sought to associate the condition of precariousness and social disadvantage to three groups: older people, the disabled and single-parent families. Once again, the newspaper served as an important reporting tool, this time publishing dramatic cases of members of the three abovementioned types.[41] The same occurred by the collectives fighting for housing, which sought to highlight the drama of the victims: carefully selecting the testimonies that composed the event "Faces of Eviction"; a collage of photographs

of older residents on the streets of Mouraria; attempt by the *Stop Despejo* collective to avoid the eviction of Rita, a single mother with two children; organizing the event "Housing for all: the right of older people to remain", by the *Associação de Inquilinos Lisbonenses*. On the parliamentary scene, it may be observed that the denouncements ultimately produced a public response, such as approving the provisional moratorium on all evictions involving tenants aged over 65 years or with a 60% level of disability who have a rental contract of 15 years or more.[42] The discussion on a government program to support access to housing through subsidized loans was placed on the agenda, for which the inclusion of single-parent families would be facilitated.[43]

Although the discourse produced by collectives rarely refers to the rights contained within the Portuguese Constitution,[44] it is interesting to note that the first two groups are directly referred to in its articles – "Art. 71 Citizens with Disabilities" and "Art. 72 Older Adults"–, which guarantee special social rights and protections (Assembly of the Republic, 2005). As for the third, the reference lies at the intersection of "Art. 36 - Family", "Art. 69 - Childhood" and "Art. 70 - Youth", which ensure that families must receive protection from the State when they are prevented from guaranteeing the care of their younger members, as is the case of many single-parent families. Such an occurrence helps to explain the high capacity for the sensitization of and engagement in arguments based on this type of principle, since legislation, in principle, is the crystallization of universal and abstract values shared by the group whose relations are regulated by it.

Two other principles that make up the repertoire are *equality* and *social justice*. These are largely expressed through the accusations that certain groups enjoy privileges in accessing the housing market, while the local population is being expelled from the central and historic regions of the city. Amongst the privileged are foreign investors and retirees benefited by measures to attract foreign investments via tax advantages – such as the Gold Visas and the Non-Habitual Residents Regime.[45] Real estate investment funds, economic agents in the tourism sector and the owner who assigns her/his property for short-term rent (tourist accommodation) are recriminated for actions that encourage the tourism sector – such as programs for the rehabilitation of built heritage, the simplified approval of hotel developments and the fragile regulation and taxation of tourist accommodation.[46] On the opposite side, there are all those who depend on the rental market for a living, failing to compete with those who understand land and real estate as a means of securing income, a source of profit.[47]

With this, there is an attempt to confront worlds with opposing functioning logics: that of the relations of exchange and that of the relations of use.[48] In the first, the conception of housing as a commodity prevails, regulated by operations of buying, selling and renting; in the second, there is a predominant idea of housing as a social right, which must be preserved from market relations. With signs and slogans, the studied groups occupied the streets of the city, on September 22, 2018, to defend the primacy of the second over the first, as seen in the demands: 1) respect for the constitutional right of housing[49] ("Article

65, the right to housing"; "Housing is a social right", "Occupation is not a pleasure, solutions are a duty, Article 65", Now, now, now, the right to housing"); 2) by condemning the transformation of housing into a financial asset by the banking, real estate and tourism sectors ("There is no pride in being a banker", "Down with Gold [Visa]", "Houses are not profits", "Rents = Theft" , "Enough of Greed", "Banks suck our lives dry", "Stop financialization", "Real estate speculation = poor housing", "A good remedy for housing is capitalism falling to the ground", "End speculation!", "Once upon a time in Lisbon, the market never forgives", "What if your life was sold to a vulture fund?"); 3) for denouncing the expulsion of families from their places of residence, especially in the most central neighborhoods ("Hands of our houses", "For our lives, for our houses, we fight", "Lives matter, not profit", "The city united, will never be sold "," Your paradise is our hell "," Get out, get out, get out. Get out of my street. And take your crane with you").

Part of the same repertoire is the defense of the principle of social mixing, which is validated in opposition to two other logical principles: that of segregation and that of the elitization of spaces; deeply rejected by the groups studied. Amongst those appointed as holding "causal responsibility" for the social homogenization of the historic and central neighborhoods, are those who, through the proliferation of the tourist activity and the international opening of the real estate market, are instigating the departure of its former residents: tourists and foreigners. Attributing such responsibility may be observed in the material produced for the aforementioned demonstration, in which both types are the favored targets of attacks,

whether by demanding their departure or control over their presence: "No more local accommodation"; "Tents for tourists, not residents"; "Tourists don't vote"; "Think before using Airbnb"; "Mass tourism is terrorism"; "Local accommodation is not housing, but the offer has run out"; "This is AL [local accommodation] for you. And me?"; "Lisbon = Disneyland"; "The city is ours, bye bye money men". Or even, by denouncing the effects of their arrival: "If the inhabitants are taken from the city, where are we?"; "We want to live in the city, for sure"; "Take back the cities"; "Baixa is ours, Alfama is ours, Castelo is ours. Take your cameras elsewhere". Denunciation also found space in the media, which has provided a wide coverage of the seizure of central neighborhoods by these groups,[50] or initiatives that accuse the privatization and touristization of the city, expanding the issue to their public spaces.[51]

When accessing the public arena, actors do not invent from scratch justifications aimed at the public; "They seek [them] in repertoires of typical and recurring argumentation, identifiable in other situations" (Cefaï, 2011, pp. 90-91). It is not by chance that the assumption that the city and its spaces have a collective, non-marketable value, is so easily identifiable in other situations of urban struggle. With regard to the last three principles mentioned, it should be noted that technical and academic discourse, especially that produced in the field of urbanism, geography and social sciences, has also played a relevant role in producing arguments by the studied groups. Thus, for example, the circulation of terms coined in environments regulated by academic agreements and conventions in other scenes, which have gained

new meanings and connotations. This was the case with the notion of "gentrification",[52] which started to appear frequently in the texts of the daily press,[53] as well as becoming part of the militant repertoire, as seen in interventions on the city walls and on the posters produced: "Gentrification, no"; "Fuck gentrification"; "Good bye, Mouraria. Hello, gentrification"; "Gentrifuckme".

This circulation of repertoires was also driven by the actors who are part of the academic world, who, through different channels, began to intervene more directly in the public debate surrounding the city. In the media, for example, there was a recurring presence of academics across the pages of newspaper, either through interviews they had given or through articles under their authorship.[54] Their strong presence may also be noted on the militant scene, producing and signing public manifestos[55] and participating directly in collectives.[56] The same may be observed on the parliamentary scene, in which the data and diagnoses produced by its research help to make the problem a reality and, eventually, serve as a basis for the construction of measures aimed at solving it.[57] The ability to influence the dispute is only possible to the extent that these actors adjust their discourses and repertoire to the environments in which they intervene, while maintaining their status as a researcher and, therefore, legitimate enunciators of a discourse that is socially accepted as disinterested and objective. This does not mean that its authority may not be challenged, and its competence may be discredited (Gusfield, 1981, pp. 74-76). It is not by chance that one of the strategies used to disqualify and disallow academic discourse is to accuse the enunciators of being

affiliated to political and social causes, thereby compromising the supposed objectivity of the knowledge produced by it or, in the words of interviewee Luís Mendes, his "academic habitus" (Moura, 2018).

The sixth principle is related to the idea of *tradition*, more specifically to the preservation of social and cultural practices in the studied neighborhoods. After a series of public measures aimed at recovering the physical heritage of the historic city center,[58] the complaints turned to the lack of public concern regarding the permanence of its former residents and of maintaining the ways of life associated with them. This argument was present in actions that, taking advantage of the period of the Popular Marches, during which the various districts of Lisbon parade the streets competing with one another for the best performance, denounced the risk that this cultural manifestation could cease to exist. This may be observed in the documentary "*Alfama é Marcha*" [Alfama is all about the March], by the collective *Left Hand Rotation*, and in the material produced by the *Junta de Freguesia* of Santa Maria Maior, which, while celebrating the the district of Alfama's victory, warned that on its "streets, almost no one lives any more". Similarly, there was a series of newspaper reports on traditional commercial establishments and local leisure centers that, with the reduction of customers and regulars living in the neighborhood, were in danger of closing.[59] Concern resonated in the speech of the President of the Republic, Antônio Costa, who, in an interview, demonstrated his apprehension regarding the loss of the "authenticity" of historic neighborhoods, which would not be guaranteed by the "preservation of physical heritage, but by the

experiences of those who live there". The president referred to the risk of transforming the city into a "Disneyland for adults",[60] a position that confirms the capacity of awareness and adherence of the mobilized argument.

The limits of the actions of resistance and the risks of demobilization

In order to analyze the performance of collectives, associations and institutions involved in the struggle for access to housing in the central neighborhoods of the city of Lisbon, it was decided to favor a reading that did not assume public problems as a given objective, but as a social construction that places the studied groups as the collective agents responsible for their production and social validation. To this end, we have investigated the construction of an interorganizational arena, the dramatized exposition of the cases of suffering as a mechanism of awareness and adhesion, and the production of a repertoire based on universalizable principles of justice, thereby revealing the elements that may contribute to a reflection on the possible modes of resistance towards the growing process of the commercialization of urban space and housing. Other dimensions of the problem, however, have been omitted; an absence which will be sought to overcome through brief considerations on the limits and risks of the investigated resistance actions.

Perhaps the most expressive absence is that related to the manner in which social, ethnic and economic inequalities are expressed

in the production of urban space and in the demands and struggles of these groups. The literature on the housing issue in Portugal and, more specifically, in Lisbon, demonstrates that the difficulty in accessing decent housing is an old problem of the less privileged groups, most notably the poorest, immigrant, Romanui and black populations (Pereira et al., 2001; Castro, 2007; Carmo, Ferrão and Malheiro, 2014). What seems to be new in this process is the accelerated financialization of the housing market and the real estate sector in general, placing Lisbon on the investment route of a transnational capitalist elite (Mendes, 2017a). As a result, the center and the historic center have also become inaccessible to the Portuguese middle class, a group that has historically occupied these spaces. This enables us to suggest that part of the power of the groups, which today are protesting for the right to housing, may be explained by the social place occupied by its members and by the social, economic and political capital they have accumulated. Although this hypothesis needs a more systematic analysis, it would seem to be confirmed when observing the social, economic and ethnic composition of the groups with the most prominent actions in the public arena and the recipients of the main actions of the public authorities.

In addition to the limits resulting from the ethnic and economic cross-sections, it may be observed that, since the end of the twentieth century, new strategies of demobilization have made it difficult to build a collective agenda of struggle for the right to housing. This may be explained by means of a specific understanding of neoliberalism and its manifestation in all spheres of life. Through Dardot and Laval (2013), it is interpreted that,

from the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, a new "way of the world" was inaugurated, which altered the way we are led to think and relate with others and with ourselves. According to the authors, it is a rationality that goes "far beyond the strict boundaries of the market, notably by generating an 'accountable' subjectivity by systematically creating competition between individuals" (p. 19). Thus, the condition of existence of all types of collective action is affected, since individuals are subjected to the regime of competition regime.

As part of this change, the responsibility for constructing and acquiring housing has been transferred to private agents, both through tax exemptions aimed at the real estate sector, and through credit subsidies for acquiring a home. These measures have been accompanied by the growing divestment of public social housing, thereby strengthening the process of deterioration and stigmatization of these spaces. The welfare provision model has been placed at risk through private access to housing, a process that has contributed to eroding the engagement conditions of workers in the collective struggles and has favored their engagement with financialization through paying interest.

During the first decades of the twenty-first century, policies aimed at recovering the housing stock in the central and historic areas were accompanied by the deregulation of the financial market, the easing of rental contracts and encouraging foreign investment. At the micro level, where the

owners and tenants are located, privately owned homes have become a stock of wealth capable of providing extra income to those who have surrendered to rentier micro-capitalism. There has been an expansion in the demand for short-term rental peer-to-peer platforms – such as AirBnB, inserting property owners into the competitive tourist accommodation market. Guided by the logic of competition, landlords and, in some cases, tenants (through subleasing) have begun to lubricate the mechanism of rentier capitalism, identifying the struggle for social housing as a threat to their income. It is a sophisticated mechanism, the origins of which are in the global financial market, which crosses State policies and, lastly, penetrates the subjectivity of individuals.

At the same time that finance capitalism needs the resources and local agents in order to materialize, it is important to highlight that urban struggles also have a multi-scale dimension. On the one hand, the housing problem in the historic center is directly related to the ability of global agents to reproduce the interests of major globalized capitalism on a local scale, engaging both the municipal autarchy through to small property owners. On the other hand, networks of local struggle connect with networks of global confrontation, such as *Left Hand Rotation* and *Rede Set*. Initiatives that, despite being viewed with great enthusiasm by their members and activists, demand a more cautious investigation so as to prove their capacity and efficiency as a local device for making demands.

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Notes

(1) In the press and everyday conversations, the law has been commonly called "Crestas Law". The name refers to the then Minister of Agriculture, Sea, Environment and Spatial Planning, Assunção Cristas, responsible for the negotiations that led to its approval.

(2) Since 2012, the city of Lisbon has been divided into 5 management zones, called the Territorial Intervention Unit: north, east, west, center, historic center.

(3) The term "local accommodation" refers to all properties that are authorized to provide, for a fee, short-term accommodation services, mainly for tourist accommodation.

(4) Between 2011 and 2015, the country was governed by a coalition formed by the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Popular Party (PP).

(5) The term "public problem" is understood, as defined by Gusfield (1981, p. 5), as the problems that, unlike "social problems", become issues of conflict and controversy in arenas of public action. In other words, these are matters that require a public response from those accused of being responsible.

(6) The insert is important to avoid the risk of falling into relativism, a criticism that, at times, Gusfield's perspective, inspired by symbolic anthropology, is the target. If, on the one hand, statistics, scientific analysis and legal arguments have a symbolic function of bringing reality to the problems it indicates through selection and targeting operations, on the other, they are based on real problems, which that community seeks to face (Cefaï, 2017, pp. 134-135).

(7) The public arena is understood as "a constellation of scenes that overlap one on top of the other, which reveal behind the scenes with variable geometry, where the degrees of publicity are determined by the framings of the actors and whose audiences change according to the performance" (Cefaï, 2017 , p. 136).

(8) This and all other non-English citations hereafter have been translated by the author.

(9) Rolnik (2015, pp. 35-78) indicates that the 1970s and 1980s were marked by the dismantling of basic components that supported the State of Social Welfare, which was expressed in the sale of the public housing stock, in the stigmatization of public housing and expanding credit for home ownership.

(10) In 2003, only 3.3% of the Portuguese housing stock was made up of public accommodation, while in northern European countries the percentage reached or exceeded 20% (Fonseca and Malheiros, 2011, p. 62).

(11) In force since 2009, it attributes a series of tax advantages to non-resident professionals who apply for tax residency in the country.

(12) Implemented in 2012, it allows foreign non-EU investors to obtain a residence permit in the country through real estate investments.

(13) In a study published in 2011, Guerra had already indicated that in the regions of Lisbon and Porto the demand for rental properties was 10 times higher than the offer.

(14) Without referring to the source of the data, the letter states that "over the past three/four years, rental housing prices have increased between 13% and 36% and, for acquisition, have risen by up to 46%, depending on the areas of the city, the result of which, it is estimated, is an effort rate with housing of between 40% and 60% of the family income, when the common standards recommend an effort rate of up to 30%" (*Morar em Lisboa*, 2017).

(15) In his analysis of the construction of a public problem, Gusfield (1981, pp. 13-14) differentiates the attribution of responsibility from a problem through two concepts: "causal responsibility" and "political responsibility". The first is linked to what actually explains the existence of a problem, while the second is related to the assignment of a person responsible for solving the problem.

(16) In the written press alone, it is possible to find notes and reports on the action on the sites of *O Corvo*, from *Sapo 24*, *Observador, Idealista, Público* and *Diário de Notícias*.

(17) The *Morar em Lisboa* website documents meetings with the presidents of the *Juntas de Freguesia* of Misericórdia, Penha de França, Santo António and Santa Maria Maior, with municipal representatives from the Left Block, the Green Party, the Socialist Party and the Portuguese Communist Party and the Leader of the Municipal Chamber and, finally, with the Secretary of State for Housing and other members of the Assembly of the Republic. Similarly, as reported by the promotion of the debate on housing in Lisbon with candidates for the Chamber, which was attended by members of the CDS – Popular Party, Animal People and Nature, United Democratic Coalition, Socialist Party, Left Block and Social Democratic Party.

(18) These *juntas de freguesias* are the units of political and administrative representation closest to the citizen, their representatives being elected by residents registered in their area of activity. Hence, residents are commonly referred to by the administration of the *juntas* as "electors". Unlike the neighborhoods, these are a category with no administrative strength in contemporary Lisbon, but are often mobilized by residents in reference to localities that are distinguished by the collective identities of the groups that are part of them.

(19) *Morar em Lisboa, Associação Habita pelo Direito à Habitação e à Cidade, Movimento Quem vai poder Morar em Lisboa, Aqui Mora Gente, Associação dos Inquilinos Lisbonenses* and *Vizinhos do Areeiro*.

(20) *Artéria – Humanizing Architecture, Atelier Mob – Arquitectura Design e Urbanismo, FAZ – Fundo de Arquitectura Social, Cooperativa Trabalhar com os 99%*.

(21) *Associação do Patrimônio e População de Alfama* e *Associação Portuguesa para a Reabilitação Urbana e Defesa do Patrimônio*.

(22) *Associação Portuguesa de Arte Fotográfica, Largo Resistências, c.e.m – centro em movimento, FrameColectivo, Pátio Ambulante, Sociedade Boa União* and *Plano Lisboa*.

(23) *Left Hand Rotation* and *Academia Cidadã.*

(24) *Geota – Grupo de Estudos de Ordenamento do Território* and *Ambiente* and *Gestual – Grupo de Estudos Socioterritoriais, Urbanos e de Ação Local da Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade de Lisboa.*

(25) *Associação de Combate à Precariedade – Precários Inflexíveis, União dos Sindicatos de Lisboa, Sindicato dos Professores da Grande Lisboa, A Voz do Operário, Inter-Reformados* and *Associação de Reformados, Pensionistas e Idosos dos Olivais.*

(26) *Bairros Associação de Desenvolvimento Local, Renovar a Mouraria* and *PAR – Respostas Sociais.*

(27) *Associação das Colectividades do Concelho de Lisboa* and *Lusitano Clube.*

(28) *Cooperativa Fruta Feia* and *Gaia – Grupo de Acção e Intervenção Ambiental.*

(29) *Grupo de Ativista em Tratamento*.

(30) *Transparência e Integridade*.

(31) The relations of power and domination have a particular place in the pragmatic tradition, which, by taking the critical capacity of the actors seriously, ultimately rejects an analysis of society centered on the relations of power, between those who have power and those who do not. Which, as suggested by Boltanski's writings (2014, 2016), does not signify denying that the actors have unequal capacities in the disputes they engender in the social world.

(32) Over the last four years, the *Freguesia* of Santa Maria Maior has registered the departure of more than two thousand electors, which represents a loss of 16.5% of its population. At the same time, this region has presented the largest number of properties licensed for tourist accommodation, with a 28% concentration on the city's records (Quaternaire Portugal, 2017).

(33) The fact that its representative is affiliated to the Socialist Party, the same party as the President of the Municipal Chamber, Fernando Medina, should also be considered in the negotiation and awareness-raising process.

(34) The *juntas de freguesias* are responsible for "contributing to municipal housing policies, by identifying housing shortages and available dwellings (properties intended for housing) and, also, the performance of specific interventions to improve living conditions" (Assembly of the Republic, 2012). This responsibility was responded to by the *freguesia* in question through studies on the number of vacant properties and evicted residents and, in the action plan, by the creation of a legal support group for residents and the reinforcement of social actions aimed at the subsistence of the community.

(35) Boltanski (2000, p. 59) defines "the work of model creation" of the actors as the competence of being "able to obtain access in order to produce arguments, in specific situations, that are acceptable, convincing, to others; in other words, arguments that are able to support a claim to intelligibility and that are also endowed with a high degree of objectivity and thus of universality".

(36) "The letter with the eviction order in Mouraria 'has no validity'" (*Público*, 22/2/2018); "For Carla, Maria and Rafael, the crisis has started now. Residents of the historic center of Lisbon pressured to leave their homes" (*Público*, 31/3/2018); "'My husband was born and died in this house. There's no way I'm going to leave now'. Entire families are furious, and residents in the same buildings know that they're being deceived" (*Público*, 31/3/2018).

(37) "For Carla, Maria and Rafael, the crisis has started now. Residents of the historic center of Lisbon pressured to leave their homes" (*Público*, 31/3/2018).

(38) The *Stop Despejo* [Evictions] collective reported the threats suffered by the families in the Santos Lima building with the use of a short video; the Junta de *Freguesia* of Santa Maria Maior reported cases of violence to the press at the event "Faces of Eviction"; and the *Habita* and *Left Hand Rotation* collectives produced a short film which, amongst other issues, addressed the harassment suffered by residents of Rua dos Lagares, in Mouraria.

(39) On a national level, more than three dozen bills were presented to the Assembly of the Republic on the subject of housing in the years 2017 and 2018. Amongst the authors were: the Socialist Party, the Left Block, Greens, Portuguese Communist Party, Socialist Party Democrat and CDS Popular Party.

(40) "Requests for assistance in cases of eviction compel Lisbon City Council to create support office", (*Público*, 31/3/2018); "Block proposes limits on the increase of rents and fines for bullying landlords" (*Público*, 27/4/2018); "The SOS Eviction Line in Lisbon has attended 141 people since June" (*Público*, 19/9/2018).

(41) "'My husband was born and died in this house. There's no way I'm going to leave now'. Entire families are furious, and residents in the same buildings know that they're being deceived" (*Público*, 31/3/2018).

(42) "SP presents a bill to condition evictions of disabled people and those aged 65 and over" (*Público*, 27/4/2018; "Lifetime lease for seniors and IT discount on long contracts" (*Público*, 4/5/2018); "Left approves suspension of evictions until new rent law" (*Público*, 23/5/2018).

(43) "State supports single parents who lose lease" (*Público*, 17/4/2018).

(44) The exception is in the disputes within the parliamentary scene, in which the legal repertoire is constantly used.

(45) "'Real estate funds, banks and insurance companies have bought entire streets and the consequences are disastrous'" (*Público*, 31/3/2018); "Low prices, the Cristas law and security explain the foreign invasion" (*Público*, 29/5/2018).

(46) "Most new lease agreements are for just one year" (*Público*, 23/4/2018); "European Commission accused of impeding efforts by cities to limit Airbnb" (*Público*, 21/5/2018); "Low prices, the Cristas law and security explain the foreign invasion" (*Público*, 29/5/2018).

(47) "Chronicle of an impossible lease" (*Público*, 30/10/2016); "Number of families burdened with housing costs almost doubles" (*Público*, 21/4/2018); "Lisbon goes up 44 positions in the world ranking of the most expensive cities" (*Público*, 26/6/2018); "Failure to pay rent causes 90% of evictions" (*Público*, 28/6/2018); "House rents register 'the sharpest increase in the last eight years'" (*Público*, 11/7/2018); "Rents increase in 2019 will be the highest in the last six years" (*Público*, 1/9/2018).

(48) In the model developed by Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), the tension between these two worlds is expressed in what they called the "*cité marchande*" [market city] and the "*cité civique*" [civic city]: in the first, relations of competition for scarce goods reigns, reducing men to buyers and sellers; in the second, the egoistic will must be abandoned in favor of the general interest, thus accentuating collective relations. Although the model developed by the authors served as a reference for considering the principles that integrate the repertoire of the actors and collectives studied, it was decided not to operationalize their categories. In the case employed, the antithetical pair of use value versus exchange value – mobilized in abundance in Marxist urban studies – is sufficient to account for the valuation game operated by the groups under analysis.

(49) Article 65 of the Constitution of the Republic of Portugal (Assembly of the Republic, 2005) states: "Everyone has the right, both personally and for their family, to a dwelling of adequate size, that meets adequate standards of hygiene and comfort and that preserves personal and family privacy".

(50) "Wanted: a city with accessible houses and balanced tourism" (*Público*, 29/9/2017); "The city centers are being rebuilt at the rate of T0 and T1. The 'financialization' of urban housing is imposing small typologies on rehabilitated buildings" (*Público*, 14/11/2017); "Rock in Riot – music and discontent against gentrification in Lisbon" (*Público*, 23/3/2018); "'Real estate funds, banks and insurance companies have bought entire streets and the consequences are disastrous'" (*Público*, 31/3/2018); "To save Lisbon. Costa clearly states, as Prime Minister, what everyone knows" (*Público*, 20/5/2018); "Low prices, the Cristas law and security explain the foreign invasion" (*Público*, 29/5/2018); "Condemned to the periphery. Paradoxically, cities that are full will increasingly become empty cities" (*Público*, 27/7/2018); "How many tourists can Lisbon receive without harming the city?" (*Público*, 28/8/2018).

(51) In the exhibition *Futuros de Lisboa*, promoted by the Museum of the City, an image was displayed representing the hypothetical delivery of the Comércio Square, one of the main squares of the city, to a hotel complex, prohibiting the free access of the population. A dystopian image that echoes in the protests against the closure of the Adamastor *miradouro* (lookout point), from a denouncement that the request had come from a hotel annoyed by the noise of its visitors. "Terreiro do Paço will be a hotel ... in an imagined Lisbon" (*Público*, 3/7/2018); "Lisbon group fears 'social cleansing' in Santa Catarina" (*Público*, 17/8/2018).

(52) From the moment it was coined (Glass, 1964), the concept was mobilized to interpret the capitalist logic of urban space production (Smith, 2012), to identify the pioneering actors and groups in the process of elitizing spaces (Featherstone, 1991), to understand the transformations of the urban environment and the urban landscape (Zukin, 1991), to analyze the effects of neoliberal urban restructuring processes (Mendes, 2013) and to describe the class struggle that the old popular areas have as a stage (Harvey, 2014). With the intensification of urban struggles and, above all, with the radicalization of the process of expelling the popular classes from the most central areas of the cities, the concept began to take on a more political connotation, integrating the repertoire of those groups that fight for a less segregated and more plural city.

(53) "Rock in Riot – music and discontent against gentrification in Lisbon. 'Gen-tri-ficate'" (*Público*, 23/3/2018); "'We cannot have city centers like Disneyland for adults'. In an interview about the 20 years of Expo'98, António Costa is concerned about the gentrification of Lisbon and Porto" (*Público*, 18/5/2018); "The samba without frontiers of gentrification" (*Público*, 28/5/2018).

(54) "Ten theses on the historic center of Lisbon" (Seixas, João, Público, 8/8/2016); "Interview with Luís Mendes: 'Mouraria, Intendente and Anjos are proving to be a new frontier of interest for real estate capital'" (*Público*, 13/10/2016); "The city centers are being rebuilt at the rate of T0 and T1. The 'financialization' of urban housing is imposing small typologies on rehabilitated buildings" (*Público*, 14/11/2017); "Real estate capitalism and the housing crisis in Lisbon" (Cocola Gant, Agustin, *Le Monde Diplomatique Portugal*, 1/2/2018); "Urban rehabilitation in Alfama is almost always 'selective' and 'tourism oriented', says researcher Ana Gago" (*O Corvo*, 19/4/2018).

(55) This was the case of the open letter from *Morar em Lisboa*, which had amongst its contributors the researchers Ana Bigotte Vieira (Ifil-Nova), Joana Braga (ISCTE-UL), Antonio Brito Guterres (ISCTE-UL), Luís Mendes (Igot-UL) and João Seixas (FCSH-UNL).

(56) The collective *Habita*, for example, has among its members, professors and university researchers, such as: Luís Mendes (Igot-UL), André Carmo (Igot-UL), Eduardo Ascensão (Igot-UL), Ana Esteves (Igot-UL) , Caterina Francesca di Giovanni (ISCTE-Nova), Ana Gago (Igot-UL), Agustin Cocola-Gant (CEG-UL) and Jorge Malheiros (CEG-UL).

(57) In this sense, the work of the researcher Luís Mendes is exemplary, whose article "Anti-Gentrification Manifesto" (Mendes, 2017b) ultimately served as a basis for discussing, at the City Hall, measures to curb the bourgeoisefication process of historic neighborhoods and reduce the negative impact of the tourism activity in these neighborhoods. Later, this resulted in an invitation from the Portuguese Communist Party to conduct a study on the tourist carrying capacity of the city in 2018; a document, which today, amongst others, guides the proposals for the norms and regulations for the tourist activity at the City Hall. This was announced in the following report: "How many tourists can Lisbon receive without harming the city? PCP defends the study and definition of the 'tourist carrying capacity' of the city and, at the same time, a plan for organizing the norms of the activity" (*Público*, 28/8/2018).

(58) Actions that had as a landmark Decree-Law n. 104, of May 7, 2004, which created the Exceptional Legal Regime for the Urban Rehabilitation of Historic Areas and Critical Areas of Urban Recovery.

(59) "The artisans are (still) in the historic center" (*Público*, 20/11/2017; "The Ginásio do Alto do Pina is at risk of losing the headquarters it has occupied for 106 years" (*Público*, 23/11/2017); "Books and antiques are being expelled from Rua do Alecrim" (*Público*, 21/3/2018); "After the closure of Casa Frazão, a limit is requested for the rents of historic spaces" (*Público*, 16/4/2018).

(60) "'We cannot have city centers like Disneyland for adults'. In an interview on the 20 years of Expo'98, António Costa is concerned with the gentrification of Lisbon and Porto" (*Público*, 18/5/2018).

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