



A Dream for a Metropolis: The Impact of the Plan of Avenues on the City of São Paulo

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This text is part of the collective project “Saberes eruditos e técnicos na configuração e reconfiguração do espaço urbano. Estado de São Paulo, séculos XIX e XX” (Scientific and technical knowledge in the configuration and reconfiguration of the urban space. State of São Paulo, 19th and 20th centuries), FAPESP- Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo, February 2006-January 2010. It explores the correlation between such knowledge and the renovations of the city of São Paulo, as well as the cities founded or renovated when the railroad network was built in the State of São Paulo countryside. It also studies the formation of the industrial heritage installed during the quick urbanization process that, in the space of a century, transformed this State and its Capital city into the Brazilian area with the highest economic growth, both in terms of agricultural/agro-industrial and urban industrial productions. As part of the studies carried out these last two years within the thematic project, this research seeks to discuss the paths of urban planning in the city of São Paulo, more particularly in the 1930s and 1940s. It explores the first Urban Planning Plan for the city of São Paulo proposed in 1929 by engineer Francisco Prestes Maia who, as he was twice Mayor of São Paulo, could readapt and implement most of his avenue proposal.

Through the study of his complete works, we strive to present his theoretical assumptions inspired by the European and North-American urban planning traditions. We also compare the city of São Paulo with other cities where this urban planner intervened.

This research line tries to demonstrate the impact of the implementation of the plan of avenues, from the 1950s onward, and the occupation of urban space by private companies and constructors. On the other hand, it reveals other names that emerged in the history of São Paulo’s urban planning as well as the presence of modern architecture.

KEY WORDS: Urban planning, history, São Paulo.