



## **The Grid and its Variations on the Extensive Occupation of the West of São Paulo State: a Comparative Study on the Four Railroads**

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This study comparatively registers, catalogues, systematizes and analyzes the construction and transformation of nearly 100 cities formed from the binomial coffee vs. railway, with the opening of pioneer areas vs. West of São Paulo from 1889 to 1950. The general aim of this study was to precise the incidence of the grid model as extensive occupation of territory, investigate its distribution, and because the sociopolitical and cultural features, identify its inclination to a discussion on Spanish and Portuguese tradition on the foundation of overseas cities. From the methodological point of view, surveys followed two patterns: First, following the four railways on the occupation of west São Paulo State and the second, comparatively exploring the cities founded at the same time, trying to extend relations with politics and culture. The grid is assured as a fundamental element to the extensive occupation of the territory engendering different logic and conflicting geometry at times. Its variation is shown in two ways: the relationship between the railway and the reticular tram and with geographic accidents such as topography and rivers, which appear as rupture elements in the orthogonal regularity. When the observation scale was decreased, the central urban space showed some variability from the axis that clearly demonstrated hierarchy over the grid. The isolation of these axis are more considerable in the cities founded during the peak of the Republic Period, given the agglomeration of some significant buildings, public spaces and gardens as well as the permanence of the facade accommodating consistent laterality. In other words, architecture shows its major role in which the building, through its various traces and its apparent and symbolic aspect, announces its function in the city. Thus, it outlines the moment that architecture, by its idyllic characterization, elevates itself to the scale of the urban relationships of distribution, composition and formal control. Some comparative studies, as in Raquel Coutinho Marques (2003) recognize the Portuguese-Brazilian tradition in these cities. This study, like Pierre Monbeig and Sérgio Buarque de Holanda recognizes an affiliation with a sort of border urbanism to the models of the American pioneers. Therefore, the formation of the American urban culture is seen as a possible way to the analytical board because since the second half of the 19th century, innovative and economical examples, relating income and profit, have made a solid basis, able to prove its own and true tradition.

**KEY WORDS:** Urban history, Sao Paulo, urbanism.