

THE “GOUVÊA E CUNHA” OFFICE: AN IMPORTANT PLACE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF MODERN CAMPINAS (1924-1936)

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ABSTRACT

Founded by the Portuguese Empire in the 18th century and later developed by the wealth of the coffee industry, Campinas grew into one of Brazil's most important political and cultural centers in the State of São Paulo. In the early 20th century its architecture was designed by a small group of professionals who helped transform the city in two aspects: in its territory - the city grew and new neighborhoods were developed - and in its architecture, particularly in these new neighborhoods. This article elaborates on the contribution of one architectural office, Gouvêa e Cunha, and their many contributions to the architecture of Campinas between 1924 and 1936. Antonio Gouvêa and Lix da Cunha were alumni of the Rose Polytechnic Institute in Terre Haute, Indiana, in the United States where they received degrees in Architecture and Civil Engineering. Although the U.S. played a significant role in Brazilian architecture and urbanism, broad aspects of this relationship remain unexamined in Brazilian historiography. The American influence on, or references to American design, in the cities of Brazil has been addressed only of late. Titles discussing this can be found in Brazil beginning in the 1990's, but these investigations have broadened in just the last five years. Fernando Atique's PhD thesis (2007) extended this discussion, and now he is examining the topic with his undergraduate students and several professionals who have also studied in the U.S. and work in Brazil. This research has revealed that certain American architectural references were used by Gouvêa and da Cunha to shape the architecture of Campinas, and for this reason the work of their office was chosen for further investigation. This article demonstrates how the Mission Style was a constant in the office's design palette, as well as picturesque styles such as Floreale, Fiorentini and Art Déco. This article also describes the formation of the office, and provides tables demonstrating the geographical distribution of the partner's projects in Campinas. Finally, an analysis is presented of the contribution of these two professionals in adapting and assimilating American architectural references, opening new paths to the understanding of this important city.

INTRODUCTION

Campinas is a significant Brazilian city in the Southeastern state of São Paulo. Its history originates with the Portuguese Empire when many villages were founded in the hinterlands of Colonial Brazil in the 18th Century. This expansion helped maintain Portuguese domination in this part of the South America against the will of the Spanish Crown. Campinas itself can be seen as the result of steps taken by the Portuguese Luis Antonio de Souza Botelho Mourão, better known as Morgado de Mateus. Sent in 1765 by the Marquis of Pombal, he was responsible for establishing new means for the governance of the Province of Sao Paulo. These included the development of agriculture and agricultural commerce, and especially sugarcane and its derivatives. Military needs led to the establishment of new towns and villages, and the improvement of local troops and other matters. In the words of Paulo Eduardo Teixeira, “*The settlement of people in villages would be the only effective way, according to the Metropolis, to obtain the necessary means for strengthening of the infantry and cavalry, volunteers or paid*” (Teixeira, 2002).

These geo-political concerns resulted in the eventual expansion of an old village situated on the road known as “*Estrada dos Goyases*” into Campinas. The road was an important link between the village of São Paulo and the Minas Gerais region, formerly the center of gold mining in Brazil. The first name of Campinas was “*Nossa Senhora da Conceição das Campinas de Jundiá*”. In 1842 the original name of the town was changed again and Campinas was elevated to the status of city. Under the government of Morgado de Mateus the town was laid out on a regular

grid, with streets intersecting at right angles in a Portuguese manner known as a “rossio”. The *rossio* of Campinas was for many decades the extent of the city itself. Inside the *rossio* were located the church, the city hall and jail, the market and the houses of those who moved from other villages and cities within the Province of São Paulo to populate the town (Teixeira, 2002).

From 1822 until 1889 Brazil was an Empire, separated from Portugal by Dom Pedro I. By the time Campinas was established as city in 1842, its wealth was well known throughout country. It was home to many sugar cane planters, and then in the 19th Century to the owners of coffee plantations, the “coffee barons” as they were known among the rural inhabitants of the area. The economic resources arising from this trade provided for the construction of huge mansions on the plantations. In the city, people linked with public affairs such as priests, politicians, as well as wealthy merchants, lawyers, teachers etc., created a diverse society. In the first half of the 19th Century, the city was mostly confined to the *rossio* and its architecture was hardly more sophisticated than what was found on the surrounding farms. In the final decades of the 19th Century, however, transformations to the urban texture took place. The construction of railways connected the city with other regions and with the Port of Santos, the largest port exporting the coffee of São Paulo. Industrial plants and accommodations for workers sprang up around the city’s train depots, centering principally on the Cia. Paulista Station. The neighborhood of Vila Industrial (Industrial Borough) is an example of this growth which extended beyond the *rossio* of Campinas.

While thriving in economic terms in the last decade of the 19th Century, the population had to contend with terrible epidemics of yellow fever that revealed a lack of medical care and spatial organization in the city. From 1889 to 1897, Campinas lost significant numbers due to death and fear of disease. The fleeing population settled in far-flung parts of Brazil, transforming Campinas into a ghost town.

The municipality was forced to act. Laws that defined aspects of hygiene, land use and construction codes were enacted. Professor Badaró shows that:

“The law n. 43, 1895, regulated in 1896, established for buildings in urban areas, hygiene standards and sound that became the first city’s Building Code. Defined minimum dimensions for setbacks, areas of lighting and ventilation, rooms and windows and height of floors and floor rooms. Also defined the thickness of walls and determined their coats. Also prohibited the construction in wetlands and swampy land. Exhibited sewage connections and collection of rainwater, keeping the previous rules that determine the prior approval of any plans by the municipal engineer” (Badaró, 1996, p.32).

From this period until 1925 there was no significant growth of urban areas. In the 1920s, the urban lot was re-configured as a commodity, and the control of urban sprawl was lost to the need for taxable sources of income (Badaró, 1996). As consequence, the limits of the *rossio* were exceeded, and the expansion of the city was in the hands of private interests that began to divide farms into lots that bordered the fringes of the urban perimeter, beginning a process of transformation of both urban and rural areas (Ferreira, 2007, p.25).

In this same period, professionals such as Lix da Cunha and Antonio Dias de Gouvêa became responsible for the design of many neighborhoods that arose due to the expansion of the city.

THE ARCHITECT LIX DA CUNHA

The historical and contemporary documents of Campinas provide little information about its architecture. Given the importance of this city, research such as this article is all the more valuable. By focusing on the career of the prominent engineer and architect Lix da Cunha we found a window into understanding the construction of modern Campinas. In Campinas today, da Cunha is known by highway SP-73, by a local avenue and by a construction firm of national scope, all of which bear his name. In the spheres of urban studies and local history, however, little is known about this prominent figure.

Our survey revealed that da Cunha was born in Mogi Mirim, São Paulo, in 1896. He completed primary school in Campinas, which suggests that his family took up residence in the city in the first decade of the 20th Century. Before completing his studies at the very highly regarded “Culto à Ciência” high school, he left for the U.S. and completed his studies at the Randolph-Macon Academy in Bedford City, Virginia (Santa Casa de Campinas, 1972, p. 31).

This educational institution is affiliated with the American Methodist Church, which itself has many links with Brazil. By beginning his education at a premiere Brazilian school and graduating at another in the U.S., da Cunha took the educational route which many members of the “Paulista elite” follow. (Atique, 2007a and 2009). This study abroad, especially in the U.S., reveals links with the U.S., yet few specific details have been traced in works on Brazilian history.

Later in 1913, da Cunha attended a small, prestigious school in Indiana, the Rose Polytechnic Institute, located in Terre Haute. This institution was famous at the time for its qualified training of engineers and architects, and the numerous awards received from the U.S. government for its teaching methods (www.rose-hulman.edu. Accessed on November 25, 2009). da Cunha graduated in Engineering and Architecture from the Rose Polytechnic Institute in 1918. As with other Brazilians such as the engineer Antonio Francisco de Paula Souza (Gitahy and Atique, 2008), he worked in the U.S. building railways. One of his biographies, apocryphal, reveals that he was employed by the Louisville-Nashville railway until 1919, when he returned to Brazil (Santa Casa de Campinas, 1972, p. 31).

The biographical profile produced by Flavio Botelho for the radio program “Personagens da História”, meaning roughly “Characters of History”, and aired on CBN Campinas, reports that upon returning to the country in 1919 da Cunha was employed by “Standard Oil do Brazil”. The company had been operating there since 1911, and for them he designed a series of warehouses in Belem, the capital of Para (www.portalcbncampinas.com.br/noticias_interna.php?id=22899#. Access on January 05, 2010).

Some time later da Cunha worked as an engineer on the South Minas and São Paulo Railway (Santa Casa de Misericórdia de Campinas, 1972, p. 32). In 1921, according to Flavio Botelho, da Cunha married Nair Valente. The couple had two sons, José Carlos Valente da Cunha and Lina Valente da Cunha (www.portalcbncampinas.com.br/noticias_interna.php?id=22,899#. Access on January 05, 2010).

In 1924 da Cunha returned to Campinas and began to integrate himself into the business of the city. In that same year he began to collaborate with the engineer Antonio Dias de Gouvêa. Two years later they opened the design and construction firm “Gouvêa e Cunha”. Between 1926 and 1936, the firm provided designs and important services for Campinas and other areas of São Paulo, such as the stores of “Companhia Industrial” in Cravinhos, a town near the important city of Ribeirão Preto (www.portalcbncampinas.com.br/noticias_interna.php?id=22899#. Accessed Nov 12, 2009).

Lix da Cunha maintained his partnership with Antonio Dias de Gouvêa until 1936. According to Flavio Botelho, the two came together in part because they were both alumni of Rose Polytechnic Institute, and also classmates. However, this information does not seem to be quite accurate since, according to documentation found in the Municipal Archive of Campinas, their professional information was recorded as follows:

“Title: Engineering graduates at Rose Polytechnic Institute. Gouveia (sic) and Cunha - signature. Presented a public form of diplomas issued by the Rose Institute Polytechnic - Lix da Cunha - engineer-architect (leaf 82 verso, 83 Book of Records of

degrees of Engineers in. 1, which exists in the 2nd section - File and Registry of the Department of Agriculture) - Lix da Cunha (leaf 83 verso to 85 ditto ditto) to January 14, 1926. Antonio Dias de Gouveia (sic) - Engineer Mechanica (leaf 79, back to 81 - 9 / 1926) - Electrical Engineer (sheet 81 to 82 verse 11/1926)"(Booklet Registration number Professional 19, leaf 19, c. 1926)

This record, dated in 1926 and taken from the Book of Registration of Professionals in the Municipal Archive of Campinas, reveals that Gouvêa requested and obtained registration within the sphere of engineering, while da Cunha was enabled to pursue work in the fields of architecture and urban engineering. These registrations, which gave them license to practice in Campinas even before the decree of Brazilian President Getulio Vargas in 1933 which regulated the professions of Engineer, Architect and Agronomist, proves that the partners, in association, could cover a great part of the duties inherent to the engineer and the architect in the 1920s. This broad range of abilities helps to explain the large number of projects that they become involved in.

The fact that da Cunha and Gouvêa were alumni of the same American school may be the source of the notion that they were also both architects. However, by reading the document quoted above, and by the analysis of projects signed by Gouvêa, it can be seen that Gouvêa, despite his architectural practice, was less than ambitious in his graphic design and, in addition, with the designed aspects of the projects themselves. There is a noticeable difference in quality of designs filed from time when Antonio Dias de Gouvêa worked alone when he joined da Cunha. It is also clear that after the partnership dissolved, the quality of design and the spatial solutions improved in da Cunha's work due to his abilities as an architect.

In 1936 the small design firm was transformed into "Lix da Cunha: Buildings and Architecture". Prior to this survey, it was assumed that there was some sort of disruption between Gouvêa and da Cunha, but documents in the Municipal Archive of Campinas revealed that in 1936 Antonio Dias de Gouvêa died. Flavio Botelho's report, quoted above, corroborates this. This information was not confirmed by published documents, such as obituaries, but appears reliable nonetheless. This biographical event can be a plausible reason for the opening of this new office and shows that the solo career of da Cunha could find new means, and especially in the area of civil engineering.

During the 1920s da Cunha and his wife worked as benefactors to various charitable associations in Campinas, such as the House of Paralytic Children and the Association of Parents and Friends of the Exceptional, APAE. These activities yielded new projects, including the verticalization of downtown Campinas, for which da Cunha is regarded as a pioneer and as is shown in the Master's dissertation of Caio de Souza Ferreira (2007).

Additional data on the career of da Cunha can be helpful at this point. In 1948 his firm's range of business was expanded and it was renamed "Construtora Lix da Cunha SA". In 1960 the "Construtora e Pavimentadora Lix da Cunha SA" was created, and in 1968 a conglomerate of companies encompassing other sectors involved in the practice of the civil engineering was founded, including "Concrelix" - dedicated to the production of concrete - and "Pedralix SA" - specialized in gravel production (Santa Casa de Misericórdia de Campinas, 1972, p. 32). In 1980 the company went public by listing itself on the stock market, pioneering this type of arrangement in Campinas (www.portalcampinas.com.br/). Accessed on 12 November 2009).

Although the career of da Cunha lasted more than 60 years it is still relatively unknown, and this research attempts in part to shed light on the early years of his professional practice in Campinas. In particular, this investigation is devoted to understanding his reception in Campinas as an

engineer-architect educated in the U.S., and also the working relationship with Antonio Dias de Gouvêa, a figure completely unknown in historiography today.

THE ENGINEER ANTONIO DIAS DE GOVÊA

Antonio Dias de Gouvêa, also identified as “de Gouveia”, studied engineering at Rose Polytechnic Institute in Terre Haute, Indiana, in the U.S. He graduated in 1918, the same year as da Cunha. Little is known about his life after this point, but it is pertinent to point out that he was associated with protestant schools in Brazil that sent many students to pursue professional degrees in the U.S. (Atique, 2007).

The professional activity of Gouvêa in Campinas in the early 1920s occurred in association with an unidentified engineer named Lima. This partnership was discovered during the research process in the Municipal Archive of Campinas. Searching the archive for projects designed by Lix da Cunha, Antonio Dias Gouvêa and Gouvêa e Cunha, it was noted that in the early years pertaining to this study, 1924 and 1925, there were no records of these professionals. However, a detail caught our attention. In a surprising number of documents from the early 1920s we found that the professionals responsible were “Lima e Gouvêa”, a partnership whose existence was as yet unknown. Further research revealed that this Gouvêa was the same that we were interested in. Finally, we confirmed that before his association with da Cunha, Antonio Dias de Gouvêa had in fact formed partnerships with other professionals in Campinas.

This task was difficult because there were no records in the Book of Professional Registers, but by the comparison of signatures we reached the conclusion that Antonio Dias de Gouvêa was part of the Lima e Gouvêa office, between 1924 and 1927. Beyond a partnership with the unidentified Lima, Gouvêa also reveals himself in construction documents in which he appears as solely responsible. These documents, in which the author was always identified as Antonio Dias de Gouvêa, were dated between the years 1927 and 1936. Finally, we realized that the office of Gouvêa e Cunha was officially established in 1926, and not 1924, as previously assumed.

At this point a clarification is needed. This research presupposed, based on current literature, that the company Gouvêa e Cunha had started in 1924. As demonstrated above, the company actually started in 1926. However, it is entirely possible that da Cunha had collaborated with Lima e Gouvêa as early as 1924, when he returned to Campinas. The partnership with Antonio Dias de Gouvêa began, in fact, in 1924, but only with legal documentation beginning in 1926. This helps explain what we call the phases of the office.

THE PHASES OF THE OFFICE

The professionals studied can have their work divide into phases, namely:

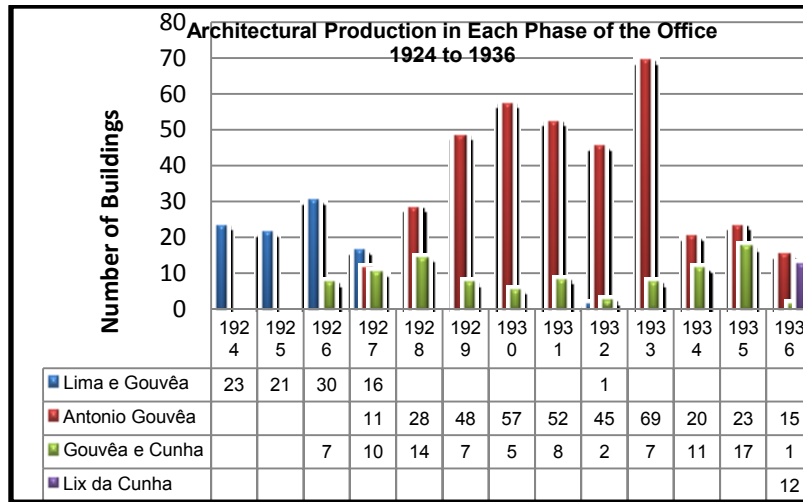
Phase 1: Lima e Gouvêa (1924 to early 1927);

Phase 2: Antonio Gouvêa (1927 to 1936);

Phase 3: Gouvêa e Cunha (1926 to 1936);

Phase 4: Lix da Cunha (1936).

In the chart below we can see the number of works designed in each stage of Antonio Gouvêa and Lix da Cunha’s career within the proposed period of this survey, 1924-1936:



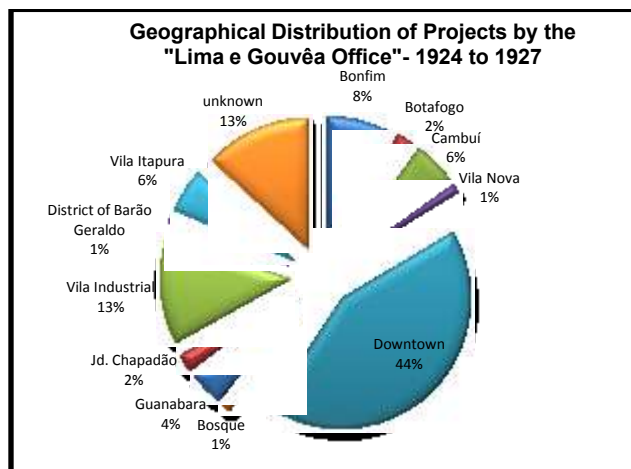
Graphic 1. Architectural Production in Each Professional Phase.
Elaborated by Montanhez, 2010.

To compile the information in this chart, we included residential, commercial, institutional, hospital, religious, educational and mixed-use buildings, including those we could not identify due to the lack of documentation, but which we knew to be individual construction projects, including renovations and miscellaneous services.

Looking at the chart, one can note the large number of works led by Antonio Gouvêa, especially in the late 1920s and early 1930s. During this period, through the analysis of designs, we realized that Antonio Gouvêa did something that was not completely legally by putting his signature and seal on projects that he effectively did not design.

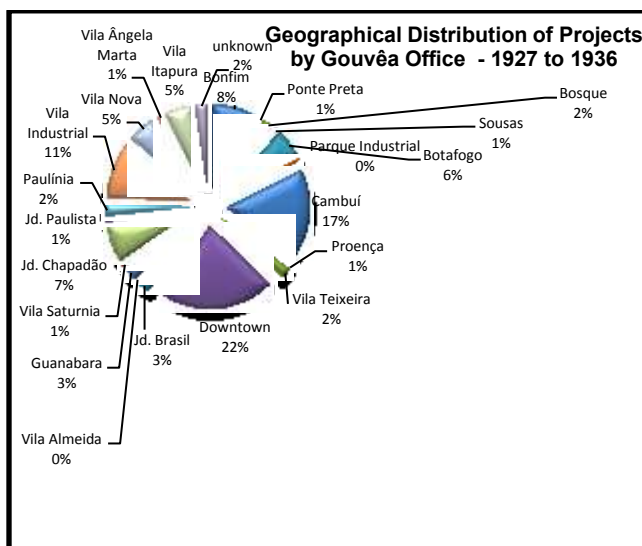
The chart also shows that the firm of Gouvêa e Cunha increased production in 1935, the year before its dissolution. If the company had not been running so well at this point, it might help to confirm the possibility of a disruption among its partners. Because this was not the case, the chart instead suggests that the indicated death of Antonio Dias de Gouvêa was more likely the reason for the company's dissolution.

The solo career of da Cunha came to prominence in 1936, and from what we find, only grew after this date. Analyzing the numerical coefficients of the production of these professionals shows in what regions of Campinas buildings were being erected. Based on stamps and letters of approval it was possible to map these sites. Chart 2 demonstrates these findings:



Graphic 2. Geographical Distribution of Projects by the Lima e Gouvêa Office.
Elaborated by Montanhez, 2010.

What is noticeable in this second chart is that the largest number of works were erected in Downtown Campinas (44%), followed by the Vila Industrial. As discussed already, these two neighborhoods are the oldest in the city. The chart also shows that 13% of the project locations could not be identified. This was due to two factors. First, many streets names were changed in the 20th Century, and the elaboration of this toponymy will demand specific research. Second, in many cases the documents did not provide complete information.



Graphic 3. Geographical Distribution of Projects by Gouvêa Office. Elaborated by Montanhez, 2010.

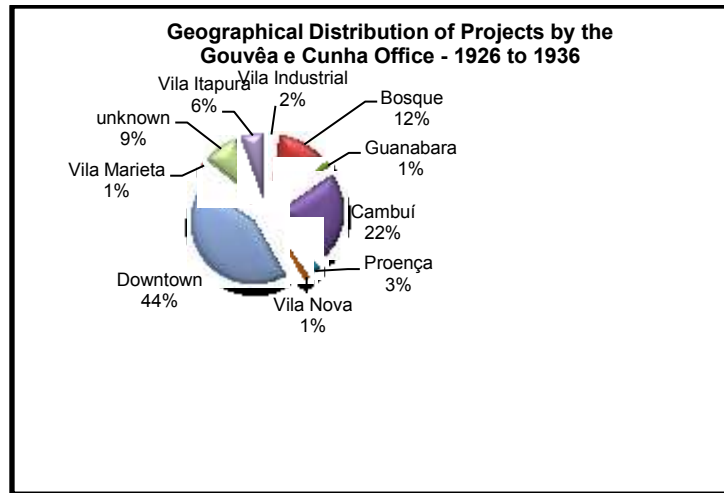
Chart 3 organizes the solo activity of Antonio Dias de Gouvêa in Campinas between 1927 and 1936. It is important to highlight that in this period the “detached houses”, e.g., the housing units located in larger lots, in comparison with the old town, were desired by the local middle-class. The healthy aspect and the symbolic status of this type of house were discussed by Pedro Rossetto in his master’s dissertation. This author showed that the Cambuí neighborhood was the main example of this “new city” in Campinas. By the chart above, we can notice that the owners in Cambuí neighborhood contracted 17% of the work done by Gouvêa, an amount exceeded only by his work in downtown Campinas which contains 22% of his residential projects.

This chart also reveals the concentration of projects in new areas of the city, like Bonfim (8%), Jardim Chapadão (7%), Botafogo (6%), Vila Itapura (5%) and Guanabara (3%), all of which are neighborhoods with a predominantly residential character, and geographically contiguous.

We may note projects in other neighborhoods of the city in smaller percentages, which helps us to understand the hypothesis that Gouvêa assumed technical responsibility for projects that he, effectively did not.

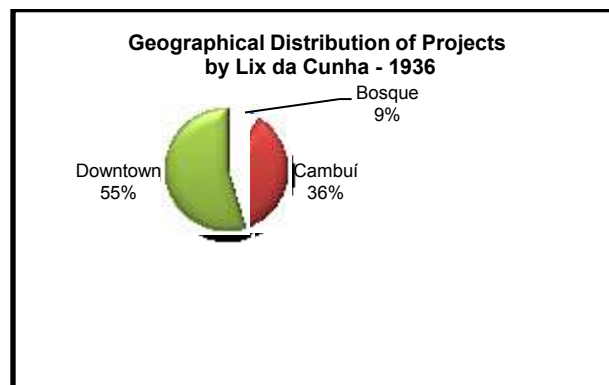
Chart 4 summarizes the activity of the Gouvêa e Cunha partnership. It reveals the amount of detached houses in residential neighborhoods and the concentration of projects in Cambuí (22%), Bosque (12%), Vila Itapura (6%) and Jardim Proença (3%). Downtown Campinas was the locus of 43% of the buildings designed by the office.

Chart 5, which summarizes the solo architecture career of da Cunha in 1936, shows that he worked in only three areas: Cambuí (36%), Bosque (9%), and once again, downtown Campinas (55%).



Graphic 4. *Geographical Distribution of Projects by Gouvêa e Cunha Office.*
Elaborated by Montanhez, 2010.

The renovation of downtown Campinas by the town planner Francisco Prestes Maia, which opened the Avenida Francisco Glicério in the 1930s, partly explains the large concentration of projects found in all phases of the firm's activity. We can also point to the construction of commercial buildings in the downtown area, the center of commercial life at that time, and the desire for homes in residential neighborhoods bordering the city's core.



Graphic 5. *Geographical Distribution of Projects by Lix da Cunha Office.*
Elaborated by Montanhez, 2010.

If we cross-reference the data concerning the geographical distribution of projects with their formal and stylistic aspects, it is clear that the designs of Lima e Gouvêa were grounded in Eclecticism. It is important to say that the eclectic architecture in Campinas is, in a broad analysis, a product of the Republican regime, installed in Brazil, in 1889. So, when we analyze Antonio Gouvêa's production as a designer, we find that the Mission Style typified only 1% of total output, while the Brazilian Neocolonial showed 2%, and the Art Déco, 5%. Projects that demonstrate Eclecticism and other eclectic styles accounted for 85% of Gouvêa's production.

The architectural styles practiced by Gouvêa e Cunha as a firm between 1926 and 1936 already show an increase in preference for the Mission Style (16%), while the Brazilian Neocolonial reached only 5%, which was below even the Art Déco (8%). On the other hand, Eclecticism and other eclectic styles accounted for 41% of total works.

The analysis of da Cunha's solo production proves the hypothesis that this architect designed largely in the American Mission Style. This style accounted for 33% of all his works, while Art Déco showed up in 17% and

the eclectic styles and others only in 8%. In short, we can say that the picturesque styles, including Neocolonial Architecture and Mission Style were applied broadly in residential neighborhoods erected in the years under examination. They were used by the architects in bold examples of detached residences, and demonstrate a break from the town houses common to the previous period of architecture in Campinas.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Modern Campinas must be understood not only by its verticalization, as much literature describes, but also by the constitution of the neighborhoods surrounding its downtown, the old *rossio*. This paper is a contribution to the articulation of this concept, and an attempt to reveal social characteristics that occupied important leadership roles in this process which remains unexamined in Campinas and in Brazilian historiography. It is also important to note that the development of specific residential neighborhoods reveals one of the first procedures for the introduction of zoning in Campinas, before the law itself was enacted in the 1930s.

The division of housing into specific boroughs, as well as the industrial plants, commercial and service buildings, configured a city quite different from what is known as Old Campinas. The effect of architects and engineers on this process of metamorphosis also reveals the organization of these professionals and the need on the part of the Municipality to register them in an attempt to professionalize their fields.

It is also interesting to find that the North American models of architecture were, decade after decade, increasingly assimilated by the architects and engineers of Campinas. This is one of the reasons for the great concentration of the American Mission Style there. This style was promoted in Brazil as an ideal form for the detached house. And with the research behind this paper it can be proven that as residential neighborhoods grew in this region, the Mission Style became linked to their identity.

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