

UAIG (Urban Areas of Illegal Genesis)

(re) living to (re) integrate

Ana Catarina Graça

PhD Student, ISCTE-IUL, Lisbon, Portugal
acatarina.graca@gmail.com

Alexandra Paio

Supervisor, ISCTE-IUL, Lisbon, Portugal
alexandra.paio@iscte.pt

“... the public space must be alive, used by many different groups of people.” *Jan Gehl*

At the beginning of the sixties, a phenomenon designated Urban Areas Of Illegal Genesis (UAIG) emerged in Portugal. This was a result of massive migrations of population of the rural regions to urban center (Lisbon and Setubal) in search of new opportunities and better living conditions. The arrival of thousands of people, without any planning or possible prevention on the part of local authorities, promoted an uncontrolled development of outskirts cities the law on areas that were not occupied or bought illegally.

These informal areas defined the image of the cities, as places of mass housing construction without any infrastructure, or plan. In our days, UAIGs' have good relationship with geographical urbanised areas and with the road network although have deficit of good urban physical conditions and is difficult to implement primary infrastructures.

In a direct observation of these areas of illegal genesis in the outskirts of the Metropolitan Area of Lisbon (MAL), emerges the inadequacy of public space, calling into question: How does public space, while space for meeting and sharing you can enable (re) living the neighbourhoods of illegal genesis and (re) integrate it in city dynamics?

Based on this basic starting question of the research project the aim is to analyse the urban morphology of the neighbourhoods of illegal genesis and apply innovative design strategies in order to promote public space, public life and integration.

The adopted methodology goes thought a theoretical and applied research. Three fundamental subjects are explored to answer the initial question: illegal genesis neighbourhoods, public space and participatory process. The research starts by mapping UAIG in MAL to identify and select three case studies to swot public spaces.

The innovative design strategies are based on participatory process as a means of addressing the social and political dimensions enforcing the needs and desires of the inhabitants and ensuring collectivity and identity of public space.

As architects and researchers is vital to have answers to these UAIG neighbourhoods problems and adopt strategies to (re) living the public space for (re) integrate into the urban structure of the city.

KEYWORDS: Urban Areas of Illegal Genesis, public space, participatory process