



Modern Urbanism and Architecture in Brazil: The Emergence of New Concepts in the Vargas Era. A Look at the Capital, the City of Rio de Janeiro

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The article discusses the relationship between the emergence and growth of the concepts of modern urbanism and architecture and its achievements with the dictatorial government of Getúlio Vargas, the Vargas Era, in Brazil. His government, which began with the Revolution of 1930 and lasted until 1945, represented a period of great political and institutional centralization. The goal of building a new nation, different from the previously existing, the Old Republic, led to broad reforms in various sectors, including public administration and urban planning. From 1937, urban planning in Rio de Janeiro presented an inflexion due to the adoption of tools such as the Commission of the City Plan, intended to formulate and to supervise urban interventions and the excess condemnation, adopted to accelerate the execution of urban works. The institutional centralization played an important role in the process of urban transformation, mostly concentrated in the Central Area, the area gained from the dismantling of hills and the landfill resulting from it, and a number of arterial routes, including Presidente Vargas Avenue. The following points are brought to the debate:

- In 1936, Le Corbusier visited Rio de Janeiro invited by Minister of Education and Health, when were discussed the projects of the Ministry of Education and Health and the University Campus. His lectures diffused the modernist principles, reproduced in technical journals.
- In 1938, in the XIth International Samples Fair of Rio de Janeiro, the City Plan Commission presented its urban projects, revealing the hesitation between traditional and modernist vocabulary. While models represented blocks inspired by the modern movement, the drawings showed traditional solutions.
- In the same year, alignment projects approved by the city administration in 1928, based on the Agache Plan, were repealed. Blocks in "rédent", typical of modernism, replaced the traditional blocks with open interior. This fact was a milestone in the consolidation of new concepts in the Municipality technical staff.
- The official decisions at the federal level did not comply with the choice of modern architecture for the construction of public buildings. Other office buildings such as the Ministries of Labor and Treasury have been built within traditional typologies.
- The development of modern architecture from 1930 to 1945 was undeniable, with the subsequent recognition of its outgrowths as the Brazilian Pavilion at the 1939 World Fair in New York, among others explored in the book and the exhibition "Brazil Builds" at the Museum of Modern Art (New York) in 1943.

The article concludes that, although modernism in urbanism and in architecture cannot be considered the official choice of the Vargas Era, the growth, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, was the result of the support of sectors of the government, the government initiative to promote construction of public buildings and urban development projects and the accession of young architects to the modernist cause. Moreover, it resulted from symbolic reasons, benefited from the centralized form of planning: the new urbanism and architecture conformed to the image of a nation reformed, modern and urban.

KEY WORDS: Brazil, modern urbanism, modern architecture, centralized planning, emerging concepts.