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Romano, S. Días-Parra, Ibán. 2016. Andalucía, from a peripheral urbanism to real-state bubble. Hiperdevelopment of real-state sector as a sign of underdevelopment. *Revista de Estudios Andaluces.* (33) 40-63.

During the nineties and early thousands Spain went trough a process of rapid and unmeasured urbanization known as the housing market boom, which later led to the biggest economic crisis in recent history. The municipality of Andalucía was arguably the most affected in both terms. It experimented the biggest participation of real estate development, and later suffered the harshest conditions of poverty. The author of this article takes a profound look at the andalucian community, the historical events, its geographical characteristics and the policies that have shaped its demographical and economical traits; tying it all together with his idea of hyperdevelopemnt as an indicator of underdevelopment.

The author describes Andalucía as a peripheral region; arguing that because of its agricultural function in the Spanish and European system, the cities or urban concentrations in it emerged as living spaces for the wealthy landlords of the area who lived off of the exceeding product of the crops, resulting in urban growth with little or no industrialization. To this type of city he refers to as “parasitic”, listing some of them as: Granada, Seville, Jerez and Córdoba. These peripheral zones are common in the Mediterranean area, as he explains, and can be found in countries who recently have suffered a similar fate as the Spanish community in terms of unmeasured real estate development followed by an economic crisis (Italy and Greece). He compares the process of urbanization of Andalucía to Latin America’s, based on the idea that just as the new world was discovered on 1492, the recapture of the south of Spain took place. Even though Al Andaluz is considered one of the most advanced and complex kingdoms of Europe at the time, the “Reconquista” meant total political, cultural and structural destruction. Andalucía was starting from scratch, and its development took place with the mercantilist approach of the epoch. It is a the colonial era that it starts serving as “the basket” of the crown, functioning as another colony that fed the kingdom, but contrary to the American counterparts, the cities were already settled, which meant faster development.

During the Spanish civil war (1936 -1939) the agricultural industry took a big blow; exporting products through out the country became much more difficult, and many of the crops were oriented towards any of the sides, making it unprofitable and unreliable. Andalucía as the most dependent region of this industry was devastated. The residents were forced to move to the cities, or take there chances staying. The reduced agricultural labor force took another turn for the worse. As the war ended, new technology entered the country requiring less and less people working the fields, forcing them to move to the non-industrial surrounding cities.

In 1986 Spain became a member of the European Union. Judging by the author’s description, he was not a fan. Not only did the imposition of the euro, as he explained, raised prices in general, but the new border laws facilitated immensely the movement of residents of the European Union. With easier movement, the tourism industry began to flourish in Andalucía, but the lack of facilities soon came troublesome. The government then started to promote and invest in construction in 1992, in the hopes of attracting foreign investment. This became the first wave of major urbanization in the region, which kept growing steadily until the boom in the later nineties and early thousands. The growth was occurring in coastal areas that had little to no existing urban areas. The author describes this type of investment as a gamble, way to susceptible to foreign economic cycles. 1.5 million house units were constructed between 1991 and 2011, of which 600,000 never sold. Now, Andalucia has a staggering 36% unemployment rate, and a fleeing labor force.

Hyperdevelopement, as the author explains, can be seen as a sign of underdevelopment. A region that saw the fastest growth rate in all of Europe is now the host of 12 of the poorest neighborhoods in Spain, 8 of the 15 poorest cities and the highest unemployment rate in the country. He closes the paper by explaining that what we are seeing in the case of Andalucia is a form of acceptance to their peripheral nature. They are shifting to a speculative economic model that depends on foreign capital and are neglecting their historical roll of “basket”.