CALL FOR PAPERS

Extitutional Urbanism in Latin America

"Good politics are ones that multiply possibilities"
Viveiros de Castro

edited by Adriana Goñi Mazzitelli and Mauro Gil-Fournier

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This issue of **QU3** aims to explore new research, projects, and collective actions in Latin America that are both observing and remaking the city from the vantage point of the various contemporary networks currently at play there and the processes and battles that have composed them. Those who would invoke and observationally assess these new phenomena, as well as those who perform the new practices of what we will here qualify as a 'complex and open urbanism'; are able to do so as the result of a permanent interaction of a multiplicity of agents and agencies, as well as innovative processes in the redistribution of urban decision-making. In this time of great political upheaval and institutional crisis on the continent of Latin America, our objective here will be to highlight, valorize, and to safeguard the assorted knowledges and practices, collectivities, and urban projects that we contend can trace out for all of us some new and exciting paths for remaking our cities.

We wonder if URBANISM and PLANNING can themselves become far less institutionalized: or if self-organizing or autonomous movements can find ways to bridge together what so far have all too often remained disconnected and isolated experiences. We can imagine a new urbanism whose centres of creative control emerge not from on high but from open and continuous collaboration. This urbanism would reinforce the often innovative struggles of its citizenry, while remaining deeply attuned to eco-social and feminist sensibilities. It would respond to human (as well as 'non-human') rights issues; and it would draw upon a kaleidoscope of different cultural influences amongst its other constitutive formations. An urbanism then which would have been brought into being, or even having been won, by the various agendas of the many social movements and activists might also provoke theoretical reflection on what might be termed '*an extitutional urbanism*'.

Planning: institutional process

Planning has always been a colonial tool in Latin America, where an instrumental ideology linked to extractivism and societies that have not included everyone in anything resembling egalitarian social relations have largely prevailed (Angotti, Irrazabal, 2017). The social divisions created by the invasion of the Americas were often based upon concepts of race; placing the Indigenous and African slaves at an extreme relative disadvantage to the settler populations. More contemporaneously, these racist historical divisions have been reproduced and amplified through a set of economic practices and across a diversity of new spaces such as the local 'maquiladoras' (or factories characterized by very precarious environmental conditions and poorly paid work for indigenous or "mestizo" people): and 'housing slums' such as the Afro-Brazilian 'favelas', as well as throughout numerous other sites which have drawn upon the initial colonialist acts of profound domination and social exclusion. The colonialist model has been sharpened further still by the emergence and history of capitalism; this time also excluding ecosystems, biodiversities, and traditional indigenous technologies from anything that might have constituted something of a more egalitarian 'commons' (Rolnik, 2015).
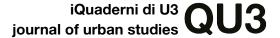
At present, and yet in spite of the growing power of social movements, with much of it deriving from the historical left; the 'representative democracies' of Latin America have maintained a set of institutions that are characterized by rigid hierarchical structures; seemingly unresponsive except to the dictate of economic power, or to put it quite simply in terms of hegemony; the same groupings as before, have retained power for themselves and have taken control of politics or the decision making processes, in closed sessions almost always dominated by experts' (Le Gáles, 2011). Today, we can observe the consequences of this colonially derived model in the territories of Latin American as constituted as they are by fragmented spaces, and with populations co-existing in what appear as a plurality of historical times that have accentuated the tremendous inequalities already present.

Self-organization: deinstitutionalized process

Yet this is not the entire story at all in Latin America. For on the other hand, a vast array of processes linked to the self-organization of what might be termed 'the de-institutionalized' populations have now also undeniably given shape to a large part of the Latin American territory. This may be thanks in part to its still exuberant diversity of nature be it from the spectacular jungles of the Amazon, the mountains of the Andes, the desert of Atacama, or the seemingly infinite Pampa; and at present practices of self-organisation can be witnessed not only in these vast zones but through to the concentrations of many of the populations making up the growing megalopolises. Practices of self-organisation, to a partial extent, have allowed for the creation of communities and habitats in which networks of mutual support, care, and solidarity, have been able to be self-constructed on scales and typologies that seem far more responsive and 'human' than those that have been dictated by institutional power 'from above'. Self-organizing communtities have built entire portions of many contemporary cities with innovative aesthetics, newfound identities, and they have done so across unique landscapes (Oiticica in Bernstein Jacques, 2013). As Tylor has reflected, the favelas are not the problem, but the solution.

Nevertheless, with the rapid expulsion of many populations from rural areas because of extractivism, the forced imposition of monocultures, and the ongoing privatization of that which were once 'natural commons'; as well as in some cases, through urban gentrification, difficulties for large segments of the Latin American populations have accelerated. This is generating structures of maximum material, economic and social precariousness (Maricato 2017), with top-down dictated policies that have resulted in living conditions for all-too-many which are pushed to the limit. Therefore, networks of organized crime cannot always be counteracted by other community forms based upon more benevolent aggregation, or even brought under control by any hierarchical institutional interventions.
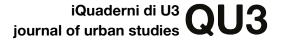
In recent times, urban studies has begun to take interest in the tactical aspects of many of these new communities specific forms of self-organization with an eye towards developing a greater understanding of the often very local cultural practices, and has focused itself upon their architectures, aesthetics, and forms of relational collaboration. All of this with the explicit aim of bringing their examples to greater prominence in thinking how we might remake urbanism.

Open Networks: the extitutional

An extitucional urbanism makes possible connections, where the permanent interaction between agents and agencies prevails (Latour 1997). An urbanism that has as its main subject the territory, the place, the positions, the neighbourhoods, the proximities, the distances, the commitments or diversity of significant relationships (Serres, 1995). The extitucional is then characterized by the potentialization of movement and displacement, by urban experiences where control operates in a continuous and open mode (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980). This is a spatial world where the dynamic and non-linear movement of actors, spaces, technologies and ecologies ceases to be a brake or an impediment and becomes an indispensable resource for urbanism, economics, and contemporary politics (Manuel de Landa, 1997): and where the only thing that is not allowed is the non-relation of all of the multiplicities in space and time (Tirado and Montaner 2001).

We believe it is important to focus our attention on understanding, reinforcing and conceptualizing this new urbanism that contains in its projects and research many of the implicit contradictions of the Latin American extractive economies, of the new urban actors and their movements, of the flows of non-human entities; and in the project of moving the focus of urbanism from the mere planning of the organization of urban objects, of zoning, of mobility, of infrastructure, of housing, etcetera and towards an understanding of what is actually constitutive of all of this urban fabric; or the affective relations, the dreams and desires, and the urgent need to bring inequalities and alienation/lonlinesses front and centre so that we can all learn to live better collectively. Here new thinking emerges from the urban networks that have been devoted to improving life in our cities, from circular economies, and from the diversity of multinaturalism (Viveiros de Castro, 2008); as well as the ecological and cultural wealth created by past and recent migrations. We also ask ourselves what type of interventions and architectures can be support or provide the infrastructures for transmitting this complexity, such as designing them together with open and participatory communities or citizen initiatives at their different levels: which might generate the type of environments that these communities would be proud to call their own and which would promote socio-cultural, economic and environmental justice.

Call for PAPERS

Questions

1. What urban research do we need to do or create to adequately describe the open and distributed networks that operate in Latin American territories?

2. How do we understand the participation, collaboration, or composition of diverse human and non-human networks for the distribution of decision-making power in city projects?

3. Are there post-colonial urban planning practices that can challenge the current hegemony of planning in Latin America? Is there a Latin American urbanism identity which is committed to the creation of genuinely collective cities?

4. What programs do we need to open 'lines of flight' (or escape) in the extitutional process? That is to say: with what actors, mechanisms, methodologies, languages, narrations, financing and necessary skills, can experiences be built-up beyond the huge urban regulatory plans and institutionalized urbanism?

5. How do we conceptualize and visualize urban co-production from the dynamic and non-linear movement of actors, spaces, technologies, bodies and ecologies?

6. Should we adapt urban planning or totally reformulate it from the ground level up in order to engage in an embedded manner with the eco-social transition, feminism, multinaturalism, Indigenism and the new migration experiences?

7. Can extitucional urbanism become a tool for the creation of the commons?

Please send an extended abstract of maximum 1500/1800 characters with essential references by **March 30th** to **iquadernidiu3@gmail.com** articulating the object of the contribution, a reference of how it relates to the call and to one or more of the topics listed, its disciplinary and methodological context and its main interpretative arguments.

Authors will be notified of the status of their proposal by **UrbanisticaTre** and then ask to submit a full paper of maximum 14.000 characters to be submitted to a standard peer-reviewing process.

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In 2010 she founded the Laboratory of Civic Arts, Community Planning and Urban Studies with Francesco Careri. Her action- research projects could be found in her books: Beyond borders, new urban policies for multicultural cities and young gypsies, Ed Aracne- Amnesty International, (2015). Emerging Democracies, Ed. Gangemi (2013), Mandrione Metropolitano, practices and strategies of re appropriation of the city, Ed Aracne , (2011). Conexions between architecture and cultural practices in Afro Uruguayan neighbourhoods Sur y Palermo, Ed. Trilce, Montevideo (2007). She contributes as well with international magazines Metropolitiques, Lo Squaderno, Comune Info, Geografers, Virus Revistas dos Nomades and scientific journals Ecology and Society, Revista Brasileira de Estudos Urbanos e Regionais, Estado y Comunes Ecuador, Tracce Urbane Italia.
She obtained in 2013 the european prize Borders to cross, for her research in democratic innovation and civic driven change, given by The Universities of Amsterdam and Leuven, Netwerk Democratie, European Alternatives, European Cultural Foundation and the City of Amsterdam.

PhD Mauro Gil-Fournier (Spain) graduated in architecture from ETSAM, Madrid. His work and research focuses on the progress of architecture, city and territory from urban co-production and citizen innovation. He is co-director of the research-based office Vivero de Iniciativas Ciudadanas (VIC). VIC is a platform of urban that investigates the ways in which the relational, material and technological are linked into citizen innovation practices, working on a radical inclusion of the multilateral and collaborative process in the urban fields and architecture. His doctoral thesis is entitled: "The disappearance of exteriority in contemporary architecture: a complementary operability, networks and foams." Write and speaks in digital magazines as La Ciudad Viva, El estado Mental, Cadena Ser or El Pais Newspaper. Since 2017 he has been co-leading the EU urban resilient program (2017-19) called maresmadrid.es as part of the Urban Innovative Actions program (UIA). Since 2014 his work focused in Spain, Portugal and Latin America where VIC has develop a digital tool for urban empowerment of communities called Civics.cc . The digital platform has mapped citizen and urban innovation in more than 28 latinamerican cities with more than 5.000 civic initiatives. This work has been recently recognized by Eulac Foundation as 2018 best citizen initiative practice in Ibero-America. Vic is nowadays development complex urban projects such as Chavela (2017), in Guadalajara-Mx, OpenLabs In Mexico City (2016) with Tec de Monterrey, and MañanaLabs (2018) with Montevideo MvdLab in Uruguay.
The work of VIC has been exhibited in many international forums such as the recent Venice Architecture Biennale (2018), Oslo Architecture Triennale (2016), Householding Fair Bauhaus-Dessau (2015), Lisbon Architecture Triennale (2013) and Rome Public Space Biennial (2013) and has also been awarded with the Detail Prize (2009), the Bauwelt Prize (2009), and honoured with selection of the Mies Van der Rohe European Award (2007) AR Awards, the FAD Prize (2008), and others. Works is periodically published in publications of architecture and urban studies and he is invited in conferences in diverse forums and meetings. Mauro is architect in residence at artOMI, New York. (2019)