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## Abstract

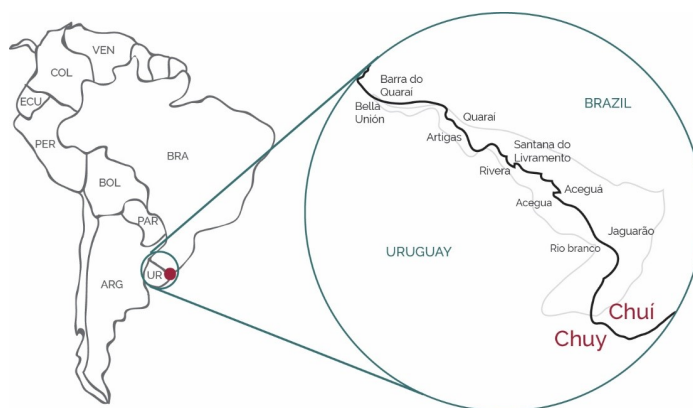
We have travelled around the twin-cities located in the Brazil-Uruguay border line, aiming to build and share information about public places found in this contemporary in-between-space. In the case of Chuí-Chuy, a line marks the division-connection that crosses the maps and the urban life of both cities. The methodology used was the urban cartography through exploratory walks along the border line, during in which we collected data in maps, photographs, videos and interviews in order to experience the border in the border. Urban cartography aims to follow processes and lifestyles in contemporaneity, bringing up what the unspeakable in the cities, as a way of composing new urban critiques. Walking, used as an aesthetical and ethical praxis, aims at a body immersion of researchers in the chaotic and complex scenery of a border city. In these urban places, it was possible to find Derrida's "hostipitality", a hostile hospitality of a reception that is subject to conditioning. To walk and to cartograph are encounters in opposite directions, a writing of the city that brings up a revolution, a possibility of creation as insurrection of devir in this space-between-border-line. The information obtained makes us question about the political, social and ethical responsibility of architects and urban planners in the unveiling of small and marginal happenings.

**Keywords:** Cartography, Walking, Border

## 1 To weave the path

Whereas a line presupposes a limit, border reveals an expansion. Etymologically, *fronteira* (in Portuguese, border, frontier) derives from ancient Latin *frons*, *frontis*, indicating what is ahead, also imparting an idea of movement. As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1997, p. 27) reveal, "in the limit, only the constantly mobile border counts" [our translation], a place of mutation and subversion. The border does not pre-exist, for it is always created and recreated. The composition of information about the border territory does not consist of a spatial-map, but also embraces relationships, creations and thoughts, configuring itself in arts, science and the possibility places of all areas, in different temporal and spatial compositions.

In the trace of the border line that limits and at the same time unites the countries of Brazil and Uruguay, this article investigates public space in the most connected and complex place between territories, the twin-cities, border cities that share a political international line, to promote economic and cultural integration and that can be conurbated or not. (Pucci 2010). In Brazil, there are 31 twin-cities, shared with nine different Latin American countries. We decided to approach one in the Southernmost of the country: Chuí, known as the last city of Brazil, which conforms with Chuy, in the North of Uruguay. We aimed to understand how some aspects of urban life develop, such as use, occupation and appropriation of this in-between public space, in an international strip of indiscernibility.



**Fig. 1:** South America map, locating the Brazil-Uruguay border line and highlighting the twin-cities Chuí-Chuy. Source: the authors, 2019. Edited by Taís Beltrame dos Santos. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPeI Collection, 2018.

The small towns of Chuí (Brazil) and Chuy (Uruguay), with a land border, conurbated, have, altogether, about 16 thousand inhabitants and are connected by a long International Avenue with a common central yard. (Figure 2) The avenue is agitated and busy due to commerce, with freeshops (international tax-free stores)

and also informal trade by street vendors, which attracts tourists from both countries. Urban development of Chuy, and later on, of Chuí, has been connected to commerce and private interests. It was an immediatist occupation, with late formation, intensified by liberal thoughts. One of the differential characteristics of these cities is the strong presence of Arabian-Palestinian immigrants, who have contributed for urban and economic expansion, as well as for the cities' architectural expression, marked by a grand Mosque that is still under construction.



**Fig. 2:** International Avenue in the twin-cities Chuí-Chuy. Source: photo by Vanessa Forneck, 2018. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPel Collection, 2018.

The border's density allows multicultural sharing and welcomes difference, as in Derrida's "hostipitality", that is, the coexistence of a hostile hospitality. (Derrida; Dufourmantelle, 2003; Fuão, 2014) This concept, proposed by Derrida (Derrida; Dufourmantelle, 2003), names the feeling of coexistence of welcoming and repulse. The border welcomes the foreigner (hospitality) and also imposes conditions, such as checking documents, inspecting personal objects, requiring information about reasons for crossing both customs (hostility). "Hostipitality" is composed of antagonisms: there must be a host for a guest to exist. Also, it always has two parts: it can be part of an unconditional hospitality, that is independent of limits, agreements or conditions, or a conditioned hospitality. The second one, which is the case of the border, is subject to rights and duties between hosts and guests. In this limit, at the same time as Brazilians are guests, Uruguayans are hosts, and vice-versa. The border is a place of waiting, or of what Fuão (2014) defines, in Portuguese, as *esperrância*: *espera* (waiting) and *errância* (wandering). The border waits for the wanderer-guest, the guest waits for the host. The border is the arrival and the departure, a door, a bridge, a movement, and also a wait.

These twin-cities are far from the political and administrative centers of both countries, and from the governmental powers decisions, but respond to rigid and limiting federal jurisdictions, as they are located in a national security zone. The bureaucracy of imposed laws and plans are not in accord with the reality in the border and thus intensify the delay of more effective public policies and integration guidelines. Due to their little autonomy, twin-cities face daily administration and management challenges regarding several border issues. However, temporary emergency agreements between cities – loopholes, law circumventing and informalities - are what bring little improvements in the quality of urban and social life.

In this scenario, one can question: How does urban life happen in the border line of the twin-cities of Chuí-Chuy? Who are the human and non-human actors that resist, in this strip of indeterminacy? How are the escape routes from the traced institutional planning, enabling the creation of new types of appropriation? How to learn from such urban revolutionary *devir* facts from active micro politics, contributing to a critical reflection about contemporary urban planning practices? How to deal with the production and sharing of these information – which are commonly against the laws – without creating complaints and misunderstandings, and yet potentializing these urban facts as other ways of practicing/living the city in its extreme complexity?

So, with the aim to map, analyze and share information about public spaces found in this in-between space of contemporaneity, we went on a trip along the whole border line Brazil-Uruguay, in order to experience, from up close and inside, the border in the border. For that we used the urban cartography, making exploratory walks along the border line and collecting data in interviews, photographs, maps and videos. Sensitive urban cartography (Deleuze; Guattari, 1995) aims to follow processes and lifestyles in the contemporaneity, bringing up what is unspeakable in cities, as a way to compose new urban projects. Walking, used as an aesthetical

(Careri, 2013; Jacques, 2012) and ethical praxis, aimed to a bodily immersion of the researcher/city/researched, in a chaotic and complex scenery.

The study herein is a part of the research project *Travessias na Linha de Fronteira Brasil-Uruguay: controvérsias e mediações no espaço público de cidades-gêmeas* [Crossings in the Line of the Border Brazil-Uruguay: controversies and mediations in the public space of twin-cities], which crosses homogenizing and totalizing urban plans provoking a revolutionary praxis. We believe that diversity, multicultural and *devir* issues present in cities, walking and inscribing in the body of urban experiences, teach us means that are more democratic and befitting to an apprehension and critique of cities. Complete information about these cartographies can be found at <https://wp.ufpel.edu.br/travessias/>

## 2 To cartograph the way

Through cartography, Deleuze and Guattari (1995) propose an analysis of events during the research process, from a view that disrupts traditional methods of anticipating hypothesis and results. In this methodology, researchers are interveners in their study object, and live it through a bodily experience.

Typical of the contemporaneity, cartography allows to register multiple crossings and does not stop at the representation of an object. It aims to understand subjectivities and coexistences in a plan of immanence and, precisely because of that, allows to pour the *devir* of each territory, that is, to give importance to issues that are sometimes considered minor. "The *devir* is a capture, a possession, an asset, never a reproduction or imitation." (Deleuze; Guattari, 2014, p. 29) [our translation] Urban cartography aims to reveal what the maps of traditional urban planning do not reach.

During the cartographic process, we have crossed the twin-cities through walking as an aesthetical, ethical and political act. Italian architect Francesco Careri (2013), in his work *Walkscapes: walking as an aesthetic practice*, proposes an innovation in the methodological process: the walking experience in "current territories" of urban contemporary space. In this perspective, cartography includes walking along the cracks, the city's in-between places, always willing to cross walls, borders, to know the edge, to pay attention to what is visible and invisible, to the places that are not in tourist guides. This way, there are no pre-established goals, aiming to allow oneself to be captured by *affections* and *percepts*. (Deleuze; Guattari, 1992)

Walking is the creation of senses, the discovery of the new, and it can be divided into: (1) crossing, the walking path; (2) line, the trace marked by the path and (3) narrative, the speech, the report about the walked path. Thus, it is along the way, both the physical one and the one of the thoughts, that one perceives nomadism, the suspension of (material) objects, for the insertion of (sensitive) experience. Careri (2013), in his "transurbancy", states that urban practitioners are the ones responsible for a "straight" city, that means, the nomad city, that is not marked in tour guides, that is often made invisible, but exists in its edges or in the unconscious voids of a spectacularized city. In the encounter with the other, crossing the paths of the fears, the unexpected, we acknowledge the nomad, active, living, loose, chaotic city, that teaches us new ways of thinking and appropriating of urban spaces.

This urban cartography (walk+cartograph) was supported by four methodological procedures: cartographic management interview, autophotography, production of maps and of videos. The interview consisted of talking and apprehending the voices of inhabitants, authorities, technicians and foreigners, and also to understand the ensemble of perceptions on the environment and of the forces involved in the narratives about and in the border. Meanwhile, autophotography, through the eyes of travelers-researchers, has captured photographs of the urban scenes experienced, a register of the *affections* provoked by the escape lines in the act of crossing. The production of maps, in its turn, recorded, through drawings and writing, the uses and appropriations perceived during the walk along the border line, registering urban facts that left marks on one's own body. Finally, the production of audio-visual material has documented the walking/crossings, the sceneries of urban life, naked of idealizations, cartographing the essence of the events in that singular space-time, allowing to somehow create what was already given.

The methodology adopted includes different tools (walks, interviews, maps, photography and audio-visual), with an intention to reach distinct and numerous layers of information that compose the contemporary city. Aware of the impossibility to fully cover such layers and committed to the integrity and peculiarities of each collection, we adopted this methodology facing the challenge of communicating the unspeakable, to show, through experience and through immersion in a 1:1 scale of sensibility, hidden urban fragments.

Cartographic analysis happens not only after the experience, but goes along the whole investigation process: "The analysis of processes is placed alongside with experience, which is quite different of stating that it is supported by evidence." (Barros; Barros, 2014, p. 198) [our translation] Through a superposition of the cultivated coexisting data, it was possible to extract other issues that allowed to create new clues about this

complex heterogeneous territory, bringing up questions about the roles of architects and urban planners, about the applicability of institutional urban plans and also, about how to deal with means of communicating and sharing such genuine information.

### **3 To cross the experience**

According to each methodological procedure, we prepared maps that compose the results obtained during the crossing of the Chuí-Chuy border line.

#### **3.1 The map-interview**

Cartographic management interview allows to comprehend different subjectivations that cross speech. That one that “follows the movement, and more specifically, the instants of rupture, the moments of changes in the speeches” (Tedesco; Sade; Caliman, 2013, p. 300) [our translation] proposes itself as an important tool for unveiling the experience, as it takes into consideration pauses, accelerations, breaths and speed of the narrative, more than the object that is being narrated itself. It allows, then, the pluralization of reports and affections about and from a territory, a stimulus and even an escape line.

In a meeting room at the City Library of Chuy (UY), we were received by Mr. CC-1 (fictitious name), Uruguayan, 81 years old, who told stories in a slow and peaceful Spanish. Nowadays, Mr. CC-1 has a political post that deals with international matters and showed great dedication to treaties and agreements that he does with the neighbor country.

[...] we make agreements that allow us to live as we are: we are one city (Chuy/Chuí). We are one city due to one composition and, for the geographic place where we are, it pushes us to work together all the time. So we work on the theme of health, we make meetings of agreements. (CC-1) (our translation)

During our conversation, it was easy to notice a wish for integration between the twin-cities, a will to propose border agreements according to the interests of different legislations and cultures. Many times, it is necessary to discuss and question the strong centrality of political power, as complemented by CC-1: “from Brasília, they do not know what it is to live in a border and they define how we have to live. It is a constant discussion and struggle.” He believes that local agreements between twin-cities are more efficient than treaties and laws decided in congresses with little representation. For him, “in the border, the law [making a gesture with the sleeve of his jacket], it can always escape.”

In another moment, in the City Hall of Chuí (BR), we have interviewed CC-2 and CC-3 (fictitious names), who have political posts in the city and told us about the challenges of managing a city with a dry border. Differently of the conversation with Mr. CC-1, this one was more cold, with a fast and direct speech. Apparently apprehensive about letting escape something he should not talk about, CC-2 was very articulated in his verbal expression and the whole time he based his speech on the Federal Constitution, on what was written in the laws and on what was solved through “gentlemen’s agreements”. CC-3 added that “people cross the central yard and have no idea that they are under another country’s jurisdiction”, revealing the problems of living in a territory with different legislations for each side.

Such interesting and diverse narratives reinforce the complex characteristics of these territories. Those speeches bring us closer to the border’s daily life and show their difficulties without the media’s idealism of an open, peaceful and homogeneous border. They express voices that are sometimes contradictory, that weave different stories in the same territory. The Portuguese and Spanish languages are bumping into each in a daily basis, and they mix in a third one, *portunhol*. This is one of the adaptations for coexisting and surviving in a border without any concrete walls, but guided by inflexible rules and legislations.

Information obtained through interviews – from the content of the speeches to gestures, expressions and ways to talk – composed a layer, or, according to Deleuze and Guattari (1992), a plateau of meaning. However, aiming to achieve the goal of sharing such layers in the site, we have faced an ethical impasse, for some statements reveal compromising opinions and facts that can possibly propel divergences. Even though we hide the interviewed identities and obtain their consent for publication, we have chosen to suppress, in our site, information collected through this procedure. We do use excerpts of these speeches in articles and books, but interviews as a whole are protected.

#### **3.2 The map-autophotography**

The procedure of autophotography has its origins in psychology studies and was firstly described by Robert Ziller (1997). Starting from some questions, some students and researchers are invited to show, through

photography, their perceptions on a given theme. After images are registered, there is a conversation with the author about the reasons that resulted in capturing the scenes. The two photographs (Figures 3 and 4) were selected by the traveler-researcher-architect Laís Becker, who has explained us her aspirations facing the question: What happens, exists and resists in the border line of the twin-cities Chuí-Chuy?

The first photo (on the left), is in the city center, in the more commercial zone and what called my attention was the amount of information. There is this huge, giant advertising display, many cars parked and covering all sight of the space pedestrians should be using. Then you see here, a small yard, without any use, completely clinging. As for the second photo (on the right), it is the opposite. I took this one as it was the last trace of the yard, the last trace of this public space in the border line. And from there, begins a new space that is more loose, more difficult to determine sides. So I found this contrast of the two landscapes interesting. One has a lot of information and the other is more calm, with less things. None has a very proper treatment of the public space for people to use. (Becker, 2018, our translation).



**Fig. 3:** Autophotographies of the crossing in the international yard Chuí-Chuy by Laís Becker. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPel. Collection, 2018.



**Fig. 4:** Autophotographies of the crossing in the international yard Chuí-Chuy by Laís Becker. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPel. Collection, 2018.

Autophotography allows this composition of image and writing. The look and the thinking of the investigator open new cracks and perceptions during the experience, helping to problematize the research. Spoken photography reveals, other than an image demonstration, the construction of a critical thought. The act of photographing, of instantly capturing a scenario, involves a choice, a desire and a restlessness that go on to the writing, in declaring a thought motivated by a rupture.

Walking, together with the cartographic process along the border line, allowed the building of new information in different times: the past path, the current steps and a blurry view of the future path. The practice of the space in a time within the walk + cartography imposes another rhythm over bodies. We are then deviated from a logic of "time-space compression" as observed by geographer David Harvey (1992), in which space is shortened to the detriment of time, to allow the logic of "losing time and gaining space", proposed by Careri (2013), that allows slowness, pauses for photographing, thinking, writing and escaping.

### 3.3 The map-map

The maps elaborated by researchers express the *affections and perceptions* of the twin cities Chuí-Chuy and bring some clues about what this border line is.

According to figures 4 and 5, the division between countries presents a well-defined linearity. The straight line stimulates wandering, waiting for something or someone, at the same time as detaching from what is left behind, abandoned. A striking element of the maps is the presence of *freeshops* in the Uruguayan city, that generates an intense flow of tourists and buyers in the cities' central area. Commerce is potentially attractive and stimulates waiting, as one notices in the words *carros* (cars) and *estacionamento* (parking) in the maps. However, this commercial flow may be understood as a conditional, selective hospitality, for those who have purchasing power. There are also indications of informal trade, by street vendors who occupy sidewalks and streets. Although it is a very busy avenue, located in the city center, exactly on the line of the border between the two countries, there is a central yard in which not many interactions happen. It is a line of abandonment, the transition, the in-between places, an imaginary wall that limits a territory. There are use marks, but it is not inhabited, there are empty benches, broken sidewalks, it is a place with no activities, no people, no life.

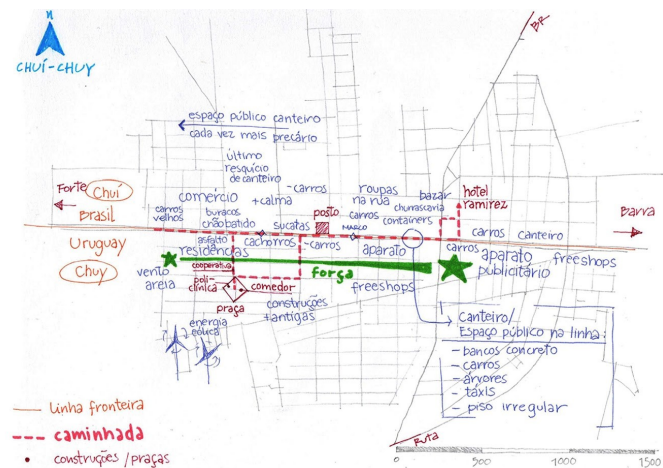


Fig. 5: Cartographic map of the twin-cities Chuí-Chuy, by Laís Becker. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPel Collection 2018.

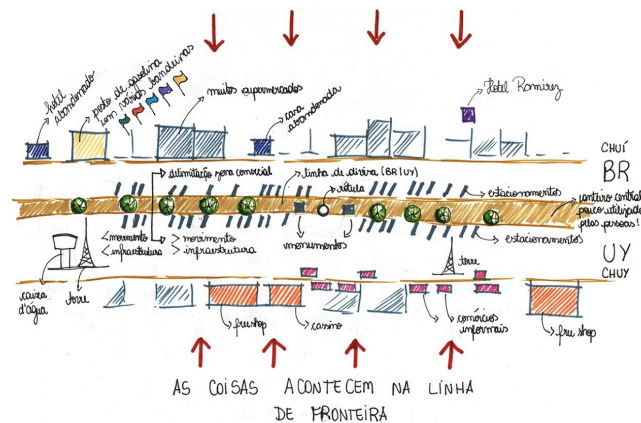


Fig. 6: Cartographic map of the twin-cities Chuí-Chuy by Vanessa Forneck. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPel Collection, 2018.

The creation of a map, such an important tool for urban planners, reveals another layer of information, beyond geolocation data. This layer is made of voices, smells, textures, thicknesses and other details. The results of the walk + cartography allows a static displacement from the Cartesian map (still attached to normative urbanism), towards an adventure of reading sensations and the naked urban life. A construction that makes one escape, at least for a moment, from the rigid structures of capital, market and consumption, opening the path for daily actions, for inventive ways of (re)appropriating places and for a praxis of the city as a political, ethical and aesthetical act.

However, the great challenge is to share and spread the collected information. In addition to the impossibility of having a dimension of its reach and outspreads, the very same data can generate different interests. On the one hand, information about the activities of street vendors can be used by the public power to punish informal trade, and the report on the complete abandonment of central areas in Chuí/Chuy can be taken by the real estate market as an opportunity for new developments. On the other hand, researchers of different nationalities can look at this information as potential for new studies, in other borders.

It is remarkable that, from the publication of a map, its content goes beyond a simple statement of the author's subjective thinking, offering a tool of power, whose positive or negative impacts cannot be predicted. Again, we face an ethical impasse: what to share? What to suppress? If we want to reveal what is unspeakable in cities, to unveil the face of urban exclusion, the diffusion of these existences is necessary, but with awareness of the possible reverberations of this act.

### 3.4 The map-video

The images presented below are frames of videos recorded in Chuí-Chuy. They are parts of recordings that present the "hostipitality" experienced in the border: bodies that cross the line going along the central yard and that are crossed by feelings of abandonment and freedom (Figure 7); close to the edges, in the periphery, they follow daily events (Figure 8). "Hostipitality" is configured in a route of coping and interferences among cars, vegetation, furniture, tourists and street vendors. This route along the border line composes a great undetermined void, which segments and alienates at the same time, as it becomes a place of the possible. The video capture, despite being a choice of what to expose or not, allows to uncover idealizations, through images that speak for themselves. In the act of stopping and positioning the camera, the city comes up as a stage of its own. The video registers an event, a duration in a space, memorized in frames.



**Fig. 7:** Frames of a video produced during the crossing of the border line, in the urban center of the twin-cities Chuí/Chuy by Humberto de Souza. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPel, 2018.



**Fig. 8:** Frames of a video produced during the crossing of the border line, in the urban periphery of the twin-cities Chuí/Chuy by Humberto de Souza. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPel, 2018.

Differently of writing and photography, audiovisual content is more democratic, as it allows an expansion of interpretations. Video is movement, a perception of the intensity of time. The sounds of the wind, cars with sound systems, a dog barking, conversations, the noise of the vehicles, allow a more complete and complex narrative about the events, which corroborates for a contemporary understanding of these cities.



#### 4 To revolutionize the praxis

The production of this cartographic maps wishes to create a revolution or a possibility of creation as insurrection of the *devir* in cities. To walk and to cartograph are encounters in opposite directions, a writing of the city as "carto-graphy", which allows the new to appear, in this in-between-place-line of the border. Differently of a rigid urban planning designed out of this border context, that often imposes totalizing and generic rules for the cities, or even a replication of projects from other places, we believe that this investigation from up very close that crossings, walks and interviews allow may contribute for more participative and collaborative urban conceptions.

The map-interview contributes as it rescues the inhabitants' history, memory and daily life, registers wishes and impasses of multicultural coexistence, warns about the complexity of agreements and legal adjustments for new interventions. To welcome the voices of the border is to include them in decisions about urban creation. The map-photography (spoken image) helps researchers to absorb and criticize events they experience during the walk, it is a form of registering the restlessness of thoughts facing information that come unexpectedly and touch us. The research group does not go after something or someone. Actually, it is the group that is found, by humans and non-humans who have, in the research, a place as actors, as subjects. Similarly, the map-map also collaborates with the process of discoveries. It adds the reference of places, giving name, coordinates and direction; it shows hidden, forgotten, abandoned scenes that have gone through us. Finally, the map-video can freeze a the time, can revivify the compass of events in its smallest details, diffusing the reality of naked urban life, without any cuts.

With the information obtained from all the methodology, we noticed that, in the border line in Chuí-Chuy, abandonment resists. Even in the commercial center, with an intense flow of people and vehicles, the central yard only served as parking, and closer to the periphery, limits are completely diluted. However, such abandonment leaves traces and motivates escape lines (Deleuze, 1999) that make identity restrictions go away, in order to open up for difference. It also imposes conditions, for this is a line that is under constant surveillance of the power of the State. Because of that, the other – whether it is the foreigner, the tourists, the fugitive – is welcomed in the thickness of "hostipitality".

According to Ermínia Maricato (2000, p. 168), "the propagation of information and knowledge about the real city or the urban reality has the important function of withdrawing the mist that covers reality and unveil the dimension of exclusion" [our translation], a thought that corroborates the research herein. The information collected in this experience communicate what is beyond the consumption spotlights of *free shops*, allowing to open up for what is excluded, abandoned, discarded in the border abyss. However, the comprehension of these information can be manipulated according to interests and economic, political and social articulations involved. Because of that, ethical issues are mediators of advancement or pauses in the study outspreads.

This way, the group believes that to silence, to not to share the information collected, would make the whole investigation effort unusable and would not allow to reach the goal of recognizing the public place of the border line and its potentials. To mediate is necessary, just like it occurred with the omission of the authors of some narratives, but to silence, never. We chose to expose our study, despite the risk of deviation of information. The exposition demonstrates that informality, illegality, the abandonments and the several kinds of contraband in these cities in the border are urban strategies, contemporary creation (re)appropriations. Our intention is not to report or punish them, but to understand the logic that moves and promotes interculturality in these twin-cities.

Still with a modernist background, architects and urban planners search for new proposals of urban planning as "THE" solution for problems and impasses of the city's complexity. However, at this point, we question how efficient would an urban plan – that means, a plan for strategic organization – be in these international twin-cities, that day by day create and recreate new lifestyles and new ways for an appropriation of the city? Shouldn't one of the enterprises be to take the opposite way, to learn from the cities, instead of dictating other rules of organization?

Finally, with a revolutionary attitude, we also made our provocation. The intervention was extended in the arts field, as researchers have pasted poster-bombers (Figure 9) and small stickers (addresses of the site through a QR-code) along the way. This practice also allowed to promote the research project, in a dialogue for and with the city, reinforcing the importance of sharing and discussing about information. Revolution spreads as a scar in the urban environment, as a material and concrete mark, leaving clues about the place that is inhabited by guests and hosts in constant transformation.



**Fig. 9:** Frames of the video produced during the pasting of poster-bombers, by Taís Beltrame dos Santos. Source: Laburb/FAUrb/UFPeL Collection, 2018.

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