

editorial
editorial

entrevista
interview

ágora
agora

tapete
carpet

artigo nomads
nomads paper

projeto
project

expediente
credits

próxima v!rus
next v!rus

V!22

REVISTA V!RUS
VIRUS JOURNAL

issn 2175-974x
julho . july 2021



Mariana Tealdi Sant'Anna has a degree in Architecture and Urbanism and is a Master's student in Urbanism at the Postgraduate Program in Architecture and Urbanism at the Catholic University of Campinas, Brazil. She is a member of the Urban-Regional Strategy Design Laboratory at the same institution. Its research topics are participatory design, socio-spatial and environmental weaknesses, belonging, and PICO Colectivo. mari.tealdi@gmail.com
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/4528252278208162>

Vera Santana Luz has a degree in Architecture and Urbanism and a Ph.D. in Architecture and Urbanism. She is a professor and researcher at the Postgraduate Program in Architecture and Urbanism at the Catholic University of Campinas, where she conducts research on the themes of architecture, urbanism, the environment, sustainability and nature-based solutions, and territories with socio-spatial and environmental weaknesses. veraluz@puc-campinas.edu.br
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/2708934593900531>

How to quote this text: SANT'ANNA, M. T.; LUZ, V., 2021. PICO Colectivo as a project methodology in fragile territories. Translated from Portuguese by Vera Santana Luz and Gustavo C. da Mota. *VIRUS*, 22, July. [online] Available at: <http://www.nomads.usp.br/virus/virus22/?sec=7&item=1&lang=en>. [Accessed: 17 July 2021].

ARTICLE SUBMITTED ON MARCH, 7, 2021

Abstract

Through the analysis of three case studies, this article aims to discuss methodological and design solutions as an alternative to the phenomenon of socio-spatial segregation, perceived mainly in dependent countries of Latin America. The continent has a history rooted in colonialism and inequality, sharing similarities and differing in socio-territorial aspects. PICO Colectivo, a Venezuelan multidisciplinary architectural collective, operates in fragile territories, especially in its country, for which it aims to recognize the specificities of Venezuela as a systemic situation. This case study has been conceived in dialectics through the interpretation of theoretical references and critical investigations of the collective's performance. The results include the initial acknowledgement of possible outcomes for other dependent South American countries as an analogy to the event of socio-spatial segregation. The investigation of the principles of the collective, its organizational processes, social insertion, and project methodologies aims to craft an inventory of guidelines that consider the variables of other countries and territories in the Global South to suggest hypotheses of replicability in them, intending to reflect on the role of architecture and urbanism as agents in a segmented society to overcome actions instrumented by the hegemonic system of

PT | EN

capital accumulation. We investigate possibilities for such an investment-reliant profession and discipline in finding alternatives in method, design and technique that can promote transformations with their insertion in territories and ponder on the ensuing structural and political changes.

Palabras-chave: Latin America, PICO Colectivo, Participatory project, Place, Right to the city

1 An introduction: searching for possibilities in architecture for the autonomy of communities

This article is linked to a research¹ that investigated, in a dialectical way, methods of a multidisciplinary architecture collective to propose solutions and its commitment to the territory in which it operates, such as participatory actions. Through the selection of projects based on the investigation of the methodologies defined by the collective, we intend to establish critical analysis and explore their effects as an instance of resistance to socio-spatial segregation in Latin American dependent countries². We have taken this approach with theoretical bases premised by several authors whose principles revolve around autonomy and counter-hegemonic emancipation in situations of dependency and subordination, which has recently been defined as the Global South due to the advent of a global economy.

Based on this localized case study, we intend to consider its systemic conditions and correspondences for the reflection on structural problems of urbanization processes in dependent, peripheral territories and mainly Latin America, in which unassisted regions reveal their precariousness and exclusion through socio-spatial stratification. We consider that certain aspects are constant in all of them, given the colonial history and the global structure that have shaped the Latin American countries, even when contemplating different socio-territorial characteristics. Discussions about recent progressive waves point towards a crossroad between autonomies of culture and civilization on one hand, and subservience to the capital on the other; these come to be the foundations for national projects. In such projects, the most unfavorable limits of adhesion are executed, as capital and the State form plundering alliances for the overexploitation of work and the overexploitation of natural resources, where the income from urban land is an instrument of accumulation and power as in per the works of Santos (2019) and Harnecker (2019).

From an observation point that starts at Brazilian conditions – that is, from our point of view, our daily experience, and within the context of our actions –, we have attempted to focus on Venezuelan circumstances as a strategy of approach through local visages, and territorial awareness. We believe that the contextualization of a relatively particular phenomenon in its smallest details can demonstrate the reverberations and simultaneities of purposes between our Latin American territories, whether by summation, establishment of networks, exchange of experiences, or the systematization of common or contrasting conditions, as one more step towards the assertion of a Latin American identity. Such tension of method and concept does not aim to reach dilutive generalization, but to indicate similarities, without the pretension of being final. It seems fertile to us as an approach to make our foreign, Brazilian point of view explicit in order to detect correspondences.

The main references to which we resort from a conceptual point of view are Freire (1982) and Santos (2018), both authors of planetary recognition and very up to date. Freire, as a pioneer of anti-oppression by autonomy through education, whose precepts remain inspiring and necessary to keep the discussion alive, and Santos, who states the Epistemologies of the South are an alternative to colonialism and capitalism. We have contrasted classic references related to the Brazilian urban context, which we believe are seen all over the continent given the constancy of the processes already mentioned, with studies on urbanization in Venezuela, in its political, economic, and socio-territorial conditions. By the hypothesis of this globalized state of the art, we have expected to confirm the chances of immediate autonomy that can generate resistance and powerful insurgencies built in a hegemonic way to face the *status quo*. Based on the case study of the PICO (*Proyecto de Interés Comunal*, in the acronym in Spanish) collective, its principles, methodologies, and social praxis, the intention is to understand this experience as one of the possible universes for architecture in the systemic condition of precarious urbanization in Latin American countries.

The PICO Colectivo is a Venezuelan collective of architecture that defines itself as a structure for political and territorial action. They invest in the development of strategies and operations of infrastructure – the architectural project is part of this notion – in environments where socio-spatial precariousness and urban conflicts occur. Founded in 2011, it seeks to bring up the debate on the role of architecture and how this discipline can be an alternative to the State's neglect in fragile areas of the city.

Questions such as "What types of negotiations can be implemented in the neighborhood?", "How are they produced?", "How are they paid for?", "How are they maintained over time?", are kept away from popular participation. Resolving this paradox involves, according to the Collective, promoting new productive relationships that refute the dominant, pre-established coexistence agreement to constitute a complex network of multiple complementary associations based on cooperation and social engagement (Pico Colectivo, 2017).

2 Socio-spatial segregation in Venezuela as a Latin American example

Initially, we present considerations on structuring factors that determine the current situation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which may indicate parallels in the Latin American universe as a territory marked by neocolonialism and dependence. The Venezuelan socio-political structure has undergone through several phases, fluctuating between hope and of harsh military and dictatorial repressions, a dichotomy that can be seen even in speeches by its most significant leader, Hugo Chávez, in two different periods. In 1998, in his first victory through elections, the leader defended a government that was neither socialist, nor capitalist, similar to Tony Blair's British government, as if it were a humanist hypothesis. Ten years later, with the concrete experience of a trajectory of ambiguities, full of opposition and coup attempts, Chávez reformulated his speech and started to defend the creation of a socialist path for the country because, he argued, only so Venezuela would achieve its freedom (Santos, 2019, p. 23).

According to Fabio Luis Barbosa dos Santos (2019), the election of Hugo Chávez in 1998 marked the first victory of a candidate who was effectively opposed to neoliberal policies in the recent past of Latin America. To properly analyse the situation of the country when he was elected, it is important to consider a determining feature of the Venezuelan economy: oil. By 1920, Venezuela had already become the largest oil producer in the world. For the delight of the dominant elites, such prosperity had made the Bolivarian homeland into an extractive economy and an importer of industrialized goods. Celso Furtado defined this condition as "underdevelopment with an abundance of foreign exchange" (Furtado, 2008). The appreciation of the *bolívar* by the so-called Dutch disease³ raised the price of exportable agricultural products, leading the country to become a food importer. In turn, that triggered the migration of population to urban centres and, consequently, the massive decrease in productive activities (Maringoni, 2009; Santos, 2019). As Mito (2015) states, the Venezuelan economy benefited from the increase in oil prices and invested in real estate. However, deficits in current transactions along with neoliberal adjustments implemented by the State due to international capital have led the country to an ever-increasing external debt and aggravated the urban poverty situation. Alarming statistics show that, in 1980, the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty was 25%. In 1991, the country's urban poverty reached the 85% mark, 35% of which was poverty and 50% of critical poverty.

Venezuela has increased its urbanization level concurrently to the decrease in its population growth rates. The deepening of social inequality between the 1980's and 1990's occurred in a territory that was facing deindustrialization over an already weak industrialized foundation, further affecting urban unemployment (Mito, 2015). In the case of Caracas, such inequality was observed mainly in the tertiary sector, which had its heterogeneous characteristics expanded. Amaya (1999) mentions two consequences of that process: the first one concerns the geographical distribution of economic hubs, as the second relates to the geographical segregation of the population. According to Hirao (2015), Caracas has become a hub for companies associated with international capitalism, taking on various functions within the hierarchy of global cities, such as academic research. The implementation of new centralities in the east side of the city contributed to the fragmentation of the capital's urban area: a global business center was established along the port areas due to the country's new links with the global economy and the needs of national and international capital. The structuring of cities according to the market was a phenomenon that became common in the whole Latin America during the conurbation processes (Hirao, 2015).

Gorelik (2005) argues that the Latin American city could be thought of as a cycle that ranges from the optimism of modernization to its critical and radical inversion: the stage of inequality and socio-spatial fragmentation. We can already infer that the phenomenon of accelerated urbanization in dependent countries, observed especially since the post-war period, occurred largely due to the pressure of the capitalist process in the outskirts. Circumstances of late and incomplete industrialization ignited the explosion of large urban centres, where the State was not able to constitute sufficient instruments for the provision of housing, infrastructure, and urban quality for the populations expelled from the countryside and newcomers to the cities. We can observe the constancy of this phenomenon of dependence and exclusion — even within the specific characteristics of each country — in the vast literature that deals with the Brazilian case (Maricato, 2000; Rolnik, 1997; Kowarick, 1983; Villaça, 2001), in opposition to the dualist vision predicted by Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in the 1970's in the pioneering essay by Francisco de Oliveira (1975).

According to Villaça (2001) and Rolnik (1997), that process creates landscapes with different levels of privileges and, consequently, of market values according to their location. Thus, the outskirts can be roughly defined as spaces of exclusion and irregularity that refer to multiple spatial configurations. As Kowarick (1983) states in his analysis of the Brazilian case, the expulsion of contingents of population from the countryside and the quantitative increase in urban labour results in a crescent pressure for popular housing paired with the appreciation of the value of lands closer to factories. Throughout history, the expenses on housing are transferred from the factories to the workers, and the burden of infrastructure is left to the State. Workers' villages gradually disappear, and housing becomes a negotiation to be solved by economic relations established in the real estate market, where wages were not enough for the reproduction of the labour force itself, especially regarding the provision of adequate housing.

In this original context, despite the existence of welfare programs, there is a constant insufficiency and confrontation — in which Harnecker (2019) identifies three factors drawn from the argument of the crisis of the left: the lack of self-thinking, the lack of study on socialism, and the lack of study on capitalism. The author states that the progressive left in Latin America has looked at its territory through European lenses, by not studying the successes achieved by socialism, and to a lesser extent, its defeats.

3 PICO Colectivo: a feasible utopia?

Considering the discussion about the clash of forces in which modern society resides, the collective has concluded that a democracy based on the political representation model does not allow their insertion. They promote the imminent challenge of transforming the hierarchical structure of the State and the constitution of a horizontal system of power originated from countless local groups capable of managing their own environment (Pico Colectivo, 2017). According to Valencia (2015, p. 1, our translation), "Similarly to a great part of Latin America, Venezuela has been a fertile ground for the emergence of young architectural collectives committed to joining forces, maintaining autonomy, bolstering their own voice, and, above all, social focusing". PICO Colectivo is among those collectives — whose founding members graduated ten years after the Venezuelan revolution — with the principle of questioning the role of the architect in society through participatory projects. In its own publication (Pico Colectivo, 2017), the collective presents its work processes, highlighting concerns with territory, communities, and the social and constructive techniques used.

Therefore, the purpose of architecture according to the collective would be the promotion of interceding actions capable of merging technical knowledge with popular experience. This integration aims to hybridize the reasoning and strategies related to the decision-making and the necessary actions to conduct meaningful transformations that modify the exclusive character of the structuring of shared actions. By doing that, architects will get involved in common problems and assume a position of shared co-leadership, working as design technicians along with their status as citizens in social relations, as well as collaborating in political dialogue with state institutions. The premises indicate that the architect questions the models of engagement by market competition and its mechanisms for the project's insertion, understanding that each problem in a community presents an opportunity to execute and trigger other processes directly connected to real popular demands.

For the collective, architecture is not an end but a support for processes that go beyond infrastructure itself, projecting the discipline as a science capable of building and addressing programmatic and cultural potentials and promoting intense social relations. It is only under such conditions of transversality that it would be possible for architects to become true agents of transformation (Pico Colectivo, 2017). Regarding the approach towards the community, Marcos Coronel, one of the founders of PICO, clarifies in a direct testimony via e-mail to the authors that all the projects are a product of years of persistent struggle alongside communities which long before the project had already developed their own plan, dealt with precise diagnoses, and identified their workforce. As for the constructed spaces, they are the result of an intense process that precedes concrete intervention. Architects divide their work into three categories: Territorial Structures, Platforms of Collective Development, and Functional Devices.

Defined by the collective as political strategies, Territorial Structures aim at elaborating management protocols based on systems of networks, fabrics, and cooperation, promoting physical and social transformation operations in socially complex territories based on precise actions that seek to gradually irradiate to a broader scope. They incorporate principles of non-hegemonic organization in which morphology, the programmatic demand or the constructive technique used varies according to the context. These are small systemic operations that direct attention to local communities, looking for actions with clear objectives, low friction, immediate results, and the encouragement of new motivations. They pursue answers to the real demands of the community and territory, where new coexistence relationships are woven through the reconstruction of infrastructure in places indicated by the residents (Pico Colectivo, 2017).

The second category, Platforms of Collective Development, nicknamed “subversive microeconomies”, consists of operation pillars that aim to establish and strengthen cultural and sports programs in popular settlements and areas of urban conflict. Those interventions intend to provide spaces of support for community activities with great participation of community groups and social movements in the choice of programs, places where they can be implemented, and their execution. Unlike Territorial Structures, this category does not recommend serialization, which allows for isolated projects in different scenarios. The third category, Functional Devices, brings together projects featured as preset solutions for specific problems. The set of such devices forms a primer of applicable elements as a basis from which they can be reinterpreted according to the conditions in each reality with optional participation of the community in the process of implementing the construction.

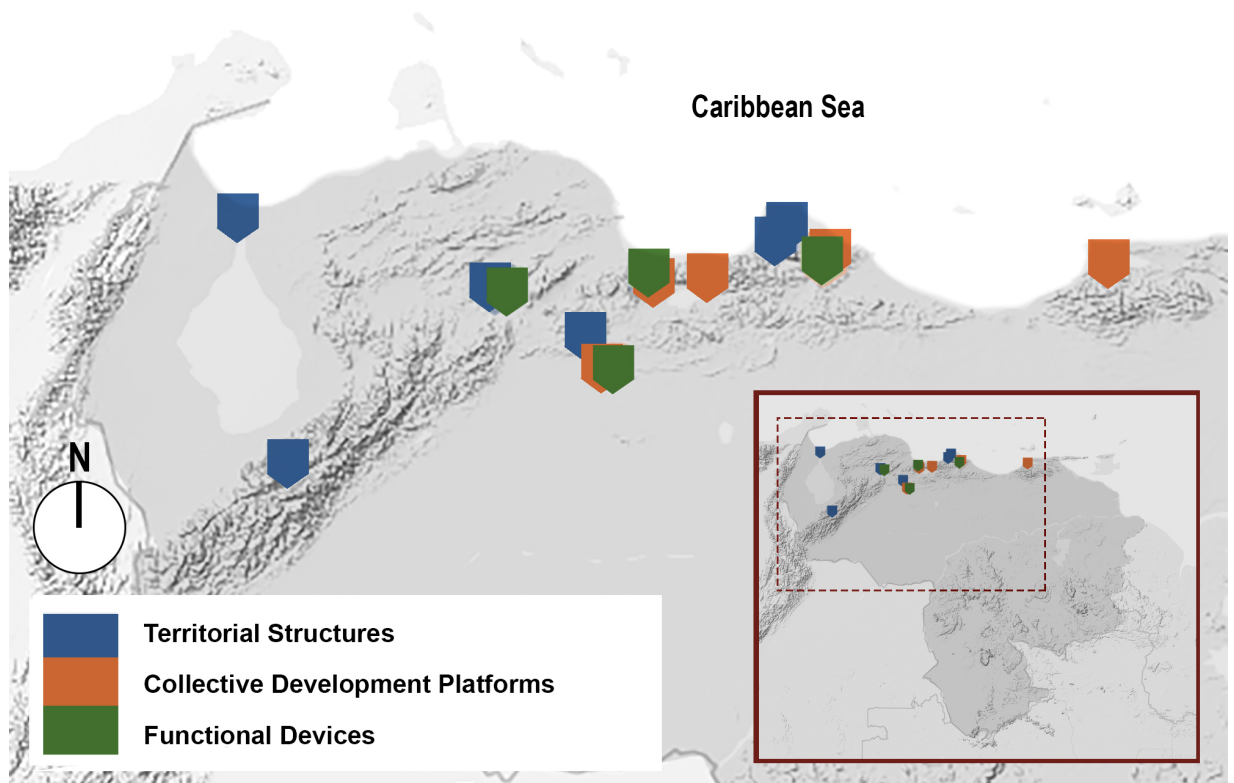


Figure 1: Interventions by PICO Colectivo in Venezuela. Source: Google Earth map with authors' notes, 2021.

Picture 1 presents a map of PICO Colectivo’s interventions in Venezuela. Most of them are located in areas of great declivity, on slopes of the Andes Mountains. The map also shows their northern spread, in areas at risk prone to natural disasters, segregated communities, underprivileged neighbourhoods, and slums. We examine some of these experiences below.

3.1 Productive Housing of the Neighborhood: architecture and urbanism into a single model

Configured as different prototypes of habitable units to be built at the outskirts of the formal city, they consist in the creation of replicable models of domestic infrastructure that merge the environments of habitation units according to programmatic features for each case. They encompass productive activities on family scale, respecting the agricultural characteristics in the neighborhood, such as vegetable gardens and orchards in-between houses or on free patios. The strategy of the program is to engender focal transformation points that generate an enhanced residential network, such as cooperative spaces and areas for production. The system foresees procedures and technologies already known to the community, and mixes them with industrial solutions, uniting popular knowledge to proper technical professionals. Each of the fifteen prototypes has undergone a review process carried out along with the community before its construction — a horizontal dialogue — to define what would be implemented in set locations in the future.

The pilot neighborhood was interpreted as a large ecosystem that incorporates three dimensions: environment, society, and territory. In the environmental dimension, the natural qualities of the site designated for the implementations were reported and led to a dossier focused on a detailed understanding of soil geology, existing topography, vegetation types, and microclimate aspects. Based on that environmental study, a comparison of possible sustainable energy sources was carried out with the intention of covering services not provided by the State as well as the hypothesis of collective gardens in family farms, common areas, or around river streams. The social dimension consisted in community organization, substantiated by

the creation of spaces for collective participation such as dining rooms, technical rooms, and places for the discussion of political and cultural agendas. The objective was to unite the technical-professional dimension to the strength of the population involved through agreements and work chains characterized by horizontal exchanges of information and public discussion.

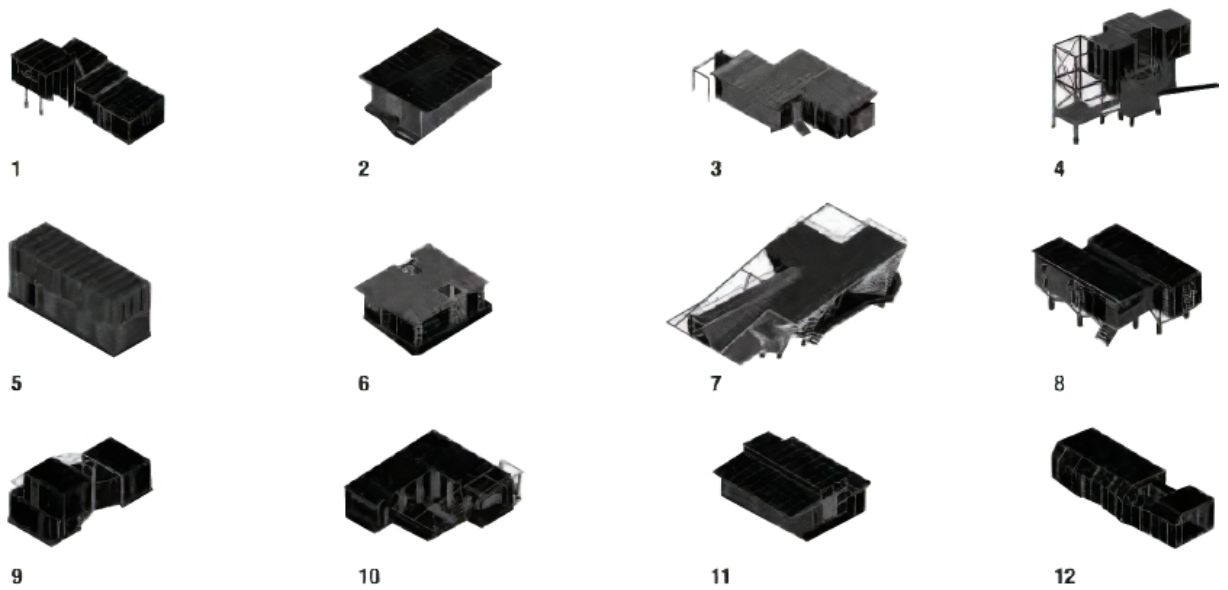


Figure 2: Residential prototypes made by the collective for the pilot neighborhood. Source: PICO Colectivo, 2017. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3ytKl1i>. Accessed 19 September 2020.

Considering each territorial dimension, they produced a micro-scale urban plan aiming to reorganize physical territory through the redefinition of public areas for socializing, access, and security routes under high voltage cables. The plan proposed unification among neighborhood sectors to dissolve their limits so that the population could build pacts whose focus would be guided by relations of coexistence and solidarity. Part of the prototype system of the Productive Housing of the Neighborhood program, as shown in Figure 2, follows the precepts of housing typologies connected to a network of solutions to manage strategies in an emerging rural ecosystem. It offers a view centered on the development of new ways of living in rural-urban contexts while stating the assertive possibility of exploring models that distance themselves from those prefigured in the formal city (Pico Colectivo, 2017).

3.2 La Ye Cultural Center: social catalyst from within



Figure 3: View of the Petare neighborhood. In the center, the La Ye Cultural Center project. Source: PICO Colectivo, 2017. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3ytKl1i>. Accessed 19 September 2020.

The La Ye Cultural Center (Figure 3) is in Petare, a slum located in the metropolitan region of Caracas, Venezuela, considered the largest shanty town in the country with approximately 369,000 inhabitants (Dio, 2021). The project is characterized as a self-managed community environment attended by young people from the neighborhood. The building that once had been in precarious conditions was recovered and became a space for sports and cultural use. Imagined as a hybrid microorganism of alternative economies — a fact that highlights its pre-existence — La Ye has its values based on the conduction of atypical activities in a restructured unoccupied construction: an old, man-made house, which had been used as a betting place and liquor store. It was previously considered a vulnerable and inappropriate place for community gathering. On the ground floor, with an area of 120m², there were several segregated rooms, separated by a corridor that lacked lighting and natural ventilation. On the roof, there were rebars exposed as part of a never-fulfilling plan to expand into future flooring. Finally, a staircase on the perimeter allowed access to neighbouring buildings.

The starting point of the program was the transformation of the house into multipurpose spaces to be used by the community. One of the steps of the project was the construction of a multisport court as an integrating space for different recreational activities, adapting the covering board and finishing it with the addition of a wraparound plateau. Four interconnected teams were created as per methodology, and its different agents acted simultaneously: the design team was tasked with defining the program of usage of the construction, strategies of intervention and work planning; the identity team would set a picture that represented the project, as well as its symbolic elements; the activities team was tasked with proposing a program of events that would take place during and after the renovation; the communication team was responsible for developing the documentation work in the form of a work diary.

During the intervention, the four teams made together the analysis and diagnostics, which led to a horizontal conversation that made it possible to find the basic needs of the work and project and a consensus about common objectives. Actions and solutions were formulated through decision-making processes in real-time, which made them more flexible and adapted to the scenario, attending to questions of conjuncture and logistics. According to Pico Colectivo (2017), an especially important factor for the execution in the established deadline was the creation of such a dynamic and procedural method of work, headed by the main principle of "learning how to do".

3.3 Cineteca: reverberating and replicable features for urban landscape

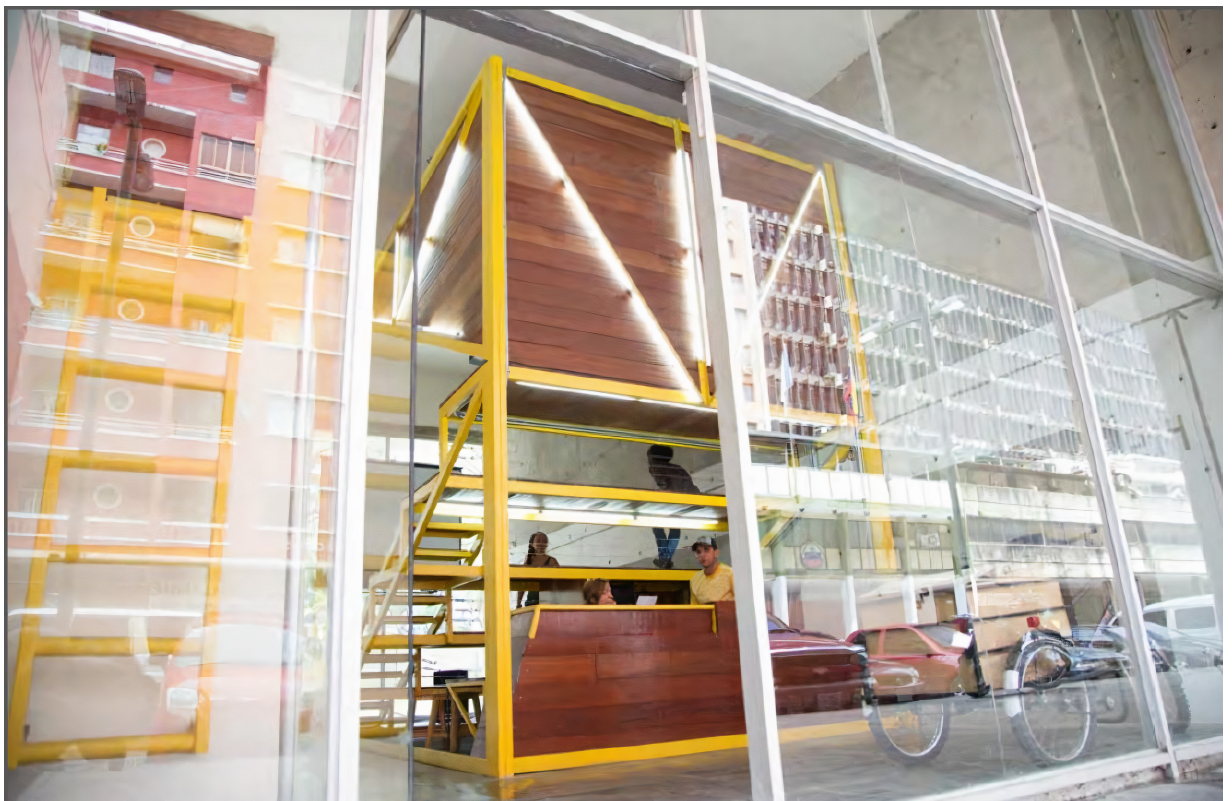


Figure 4: External view of the Cineteca intervention. Source: PICO Colectivo, 2017. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3ytK11i>. Accessed 19 September 2020.

In the kit labelled as modules for reflection, Cineteca (Figure 4) comprises a public occupation that took place in 2014 on the ground floor of the Omar Torrijos building, at Avenida Bolívar in Caracas. It includes equipment for recreational activities from management to self-production developed by young people. The primary installation consists of two warehouses with double height, with an area of 50m² each, which communicate visually and physically with one another. The objective is to consolidate the first system of integrated and open public spaces for the city to promote the daily meeting of its dwellers.



Figure 5: Intervention acting as Cineteca and recreational space for resident children. Source: PICO Colectivo, 2017. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3ytKl1i>. Accessed 19 September 2020.

Cineteca (Figure 5) revolves around two fundamental needs: the construction of a space for audio-visual and theatrical projections, community meetings, and various uses, replacing the access porch of the building, and an alternative playground to the conventional ones for the resident children. Its use, capacity, and techniques were organized based on a modular structural system, guided by simple interlocking triangular trusses. That concept permits easy replication in different scales and configurations and can be adapted to different environments and uses. For its production, a production line was put in place based on four simple protocols: measurement, cutting, assembly, and painting. Due to its constructive simplicity, the project aimed to become an easy-to-learn school focused on the stimulation of leisure and mainly the active participation of young people who live there. The result was the community interaction so that its residents could get acquainted with each other more, a step towards advancing their autonomy and consolidating their political recognition in the place.

4 Final considerations: a continuous struggle

Our objective was to understand the approaches of PICO Colectivo in different scenarios through a theoretical framework, comparative studies, and the election of three sample projects of different circumstances, methods, and scales, as a case study that may correspond to analogous situations in Latin American universes. For that end, we have presented a project of networked, residential prototyping, which was conceived and built with the community; a cultural and sports center, previously an old gambling house that had already been deteriorated and marked by violence; and the design of a replicable object, with recreational usage for children and adults as a *playplace* or a mobile movie theater.

By observing projects that differ from each other a deeper understanding of their connections comes about due to their purposes and methodologies. The awareness of political insertion ends up emerging from them and requires the definite participatory collaboration of the community. The focus does not necessarily lie on standardization of techniques, formal characteristics, or programs. Our interpretation guides us to state that the importance of such architecture resides in projects that can reverberate and carry designs of a constant struggle for dignity and the right to equality. Those will reflect on good public and intimate spaces leading to the definition of the city as an infrastructured, equipped, environmentally, and socio-spatially fair property.

In view of the recurring socio-spatial segregation and the inefficiency of the State — which is a deliberate project — and its diverse and perverse consequences, which reach conditions of a planetary urban crisis (Davis, 2006), we sought to focus on small-scale horizontal possibilities. As a paradigm, we selected conceptualizations of structural scope references to guide the analysis of tangible and accomplished situations that could point out correlations due to the understanding of concrete and localized procedures. Their common

motto is the hope for greater dignity in our continent. One of the ways resistance can happen is through the proposition of alternative paradigms to face the systemic situation in urban outskirts through projects of community participation as a hypothesis of proposals of conjuncture for structural problems. They all help to set the identity of places, the autonomy of a community, the qualification of collective spaces, and indicate an expansion of popular claims for the right to exist.

We bet on a counter-hegemonic overturn towards a feasible utopia (Luz, 2020, p. 6) based on an epistemological revolution. Its objective is to refute the consequences of capitalism and march in the direction of a horizontal and egalitarian system, where specificities are not excluded but seen as alternatives to problems for which the same rational and market solutions have always been given (Santos, 2018).

By examining a recurrent situation in the Latin American continent, this work has sought to perceive an architecture methodology of disciplinary integration to popular strata, especially those in conditions of oppression, fragility, or socio-spatial precariousness, through shared decisions, tying their knowledge about the territories and themselves to professional theory and praxis in a horizontal dialogue free from colonizing arrogance (Pico Colectivo, 2017). This action reveals that nobody knows the dynamics and needs of a place better than those who experience it, and that such knowledge is essential for an egalitarian architecture that aims to contribute positively to the transformation of places weakened by the abyssal line that polarizes capitalist society. That factor is aggravated in the territories submitted to globalized hegemony, understood, as from Santos (2018), as the Global South. Processes and actions of this nature can be considered as a pedagogical project, socially necessary and defining the social function of architecture and urbanism as disciplines and profession, along the lines recommended by Freire (1982).

TProjects of conjuncture such as those presented here must be attached to political actions that foster organized forms of appropriation processes, civic formation, and constituting instruments for claiming rights towards social experience living, reaching the status of conceptual understanding to be able to touch on the structural scope and eventually point out transformations of greater amplitude. The oppressed population needs to become class conscious and reach the theory of their practices as a methodology to plan their action to claim freedom and autonomy. While resting only in theory, such efforts can be reduced to abstract thoughts and, in contrast, poorly grounded praxis may not result in transformative actions, to which architecture and urbanism must be inexorably committed to making important contributions.

Parallels could be woven regarding contradictions between localism and individualized initiatives, recurring since the 1990s and later grasped by neoliberal discourses, in which the consequent devaluation of the State or its pure and simple substitution by these pulverized processes echoes. The permanence of those actions, however, seems to us to act more in the field of resistance and the intention to form community staff capable of raising awareness and fighting for their rights and less accepting to incorporate eminently public functions of responsibilities. The fine line between the set of accommodation to worthlessness, solving emergencies, action in the present and the group of processes of fighting for equality, autonomy and emancipation goes on. We believe that the PICO Colectivo case follows that direction.

In the acceleration of the capitalist, rationalized instrumental world – in search of success, efficiency, and accumulation –, we forget to look to all ranges around us with respect and empathy, essential perks for the construction of a more horizontal and fair society, which must be a fundamental premise for the field of architecture and urbanism. This seems to us to be the configuration of PICO Colectivo as an example. Otherwise, due to the professional *status quo*, there is a recurring risk that resistances may be crushed by the hegemonic ideology that makes them believe that they can do nothing to change that situation (Kowarick, 1983; Freire, 1982). And so, we go on, offering an effort of understanding in a reverse direction.

References

AMAYA, C. A. Desarrollo histórico del sistema urbano venezolano: modelos de organización. **Revista Geográfica Venezolana**, Mérida, Venezuela, v. 40, n. 2, p. 167-199, 1999.

DIO, H. P. Venezuela: the most violent slum in the world. **Large Movements: storie di esseri umani**, 18, jan. 2021. Disponível em: <https://migrazioniontheroad.largemovements.it/petare-venezuela-slum/>. Acesso em: 21 maio 2021.

Amaya, C. A., 1999. Desarrollo histórico del sistema urbano venezolano: modelos de organización. *Revista Geográfica Venezolana*, 40(2), pp. 167-199.

Dio, H., 2021. Petare, Venezuela: the most violent slum in the world. *Large Movements: storie di esseri umani*, [online]. Available at: <https://migrazioniontheroad.largemovements.it/petare-venezuela-slum/>. Accessed 21 May 2021.

- Davis, M., 2006. *Planeta Favela*. São Paulo: Boitempo.
- Freire, P., 1982. *Pedagogia do oprimido*. 11th ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.
- Furtado, C., 2008. *Ensaio sobre a Venezuela: subdesenvolvimento com abundância de divisas*. Rio de Janeiro: Contraponto in association with Centro Internacional Celso Furtado.
- Gorelik, A., 2005. A produção da "cidade latino-americana". *Tempo Social Revista de Sociologia da USP*, São Paulo, 17(1), pp. 111-133.
- Harnecker, M., 2019. *Os desafios da esquerda latino-americana*. São Paulo: Expressão Popular.
- Hirao, F. H., 2015. *As questões habitacional e urbana na Venezuela contemporânea*. Master thesis. Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, University of São Paulo.
- Kowarick, L., 1983. *A espoliação urbana*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.
- López Maya, M., 2016. La crisis del chavismo en la Venezuela actual. *Estudios Latinoamericanos, Nueva Época*, 1(38), pp. 159-185.
- Luz, V. S., 2020. *Cultura, técnica e política: fronteiras contemporâneas de resistência perante fragilidades socioespaciais e ambientais*. Research Project. Architecture and Urbanism Postgraduate Program, Pontifical University of Campinas.
- Maricato, E., 2000. As ideias fora do lugar e o lugar fora das ideias: planejamento urbano no Brasil. In: Arantes, O., Vainer, C., and Maricato, E., eds. *A cidade do pensamento único: desmanchando consensos*. Petrópolis: Vozes, pp. 121-193.
- Maringoni, G., 2009. *A revolução venezuelana*. São Paulo: Editora Unesp.
- Mioto, B. T., 2015. *As políticas habitacionais no subdesenvolvimento: os casos do Brasil, Colômbia, México e Venezuela (1980/2013)*. PhD thesis. Economy Institute, State University of Campinas,
- Oliveira, F., 1975. A economia brasileira: crítica à razão dualista. In: *Estudos CEBRAP, Seleções CEBRAP 1 – Questionando a Economia Brasileira*. São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, CEBRAP.
- PICO Colectivo, 2017. *Proyecto de interés comunal: infraestructuras de empoderamiento social: contextos emergentes en Venezuela*. [online] Available at: <https://picocolectivo.org.ve/>. Accessed 12 July 2019.
- Rolnik, R., 1997. *A cidade e a lei: legislação, política e territórios na cidade de São Paulo*. São Paulo: Studio Nobel, FAPESP.
- Santos, B. S., 2018. *Construindo as epistemologias do sul: antologia essencial. Para um pensamento alternativo de alternativas, Volume I*. Buenos Aires: CLACSO.
- Santos, F. L. B., 2019. *Uma história da onda progressista sul-americana (1998- 2016)*. 2nd ed. São Paulo: Editora Elefante.
- Sant'Anna, M. T., 2021. *Alternativas projetuais para fragilidades socioespaciais e ambientais na América Latina: estudo de caso PICO Colectivo, Venezuela*. Master thesis. Architecture and Urbanism Postgraduate Program, Pontifical University of Campinas.
- Valencia, N., 2015. Venezuelan urban acupuncture: Spaces of Peace by PICO Estudio. *The Architectural Review, Essays*, [online]. Available at: <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/venezuelan-urban-acupuncture-spaces-of-peace-by-pico-estudio/8686647.article>. Accessed 30 March 2019.
- VILLAÇA, F., 2001. *Espaço intra-urbano no Brasil*. São Paulo, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Studio Nobel in association with Fapesp, Lincoln Institute.

Catholic University of Campinas, Brazil (Sant'Anna, 2021). This study was financed in part by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel - Brazil (CAPES) - Finance Code 001.

2 The term dependent countries sound to us as the most suitable to use, considering that the definition of underdeveloped or emergent countries presupposes the hegemony of industrialized countries viewed as central to those in the periphery of capitalism as an economic and geopolitical system.

3 According to López Maya (2016, p. 168, our translation), "the Dutch disease is known as a disease that occurs in national economies because of a massive inflow of foreign exchange (dollars), which usually comes from the payment of raw materials in the international market, such as oil, copper or natural gas. This entry leads to an overvaluation of the currency that, if not stopped, ruins the productive apparatus, especially the industrial one. From the original in Spanish: "Se conoce como enfermedad holandesa un mal que ocurre en economías nacionales por los efectos de una entrada masiva de divisas (dólares), que suelen provenir del pago una materia prima en el mercado internacional como petróleo, cobre o el gas natural. Esta entrada acarrea una sobrevaluación de la moneda que, si no frena, va arruinando el aparato productivo, sobre todo el industrial."