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CREATIVE SPACES

Urban culture and marginality in Latin America

edited by Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda

INSTITUTE OF
LATIN AMERICAN
STUDIES

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Cover image: Still from *La multitud*, Martín Oesterheld (2012). Produced by Laura Bruno.

Contents

List of illustrations v
Notes on contributors vii
Introduction 1
Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda

I. Where are the margins? 29

1. The politics of the in-between: the negotiation of urban space in Juan Rulfo's photographs of Mexico City 31
Lucy O'Sullivan

2. The interstitial spaces of urban sprawl: unpacking the marginal suburban geography of Santiago de Chile 55
Cristian Silva

3. Cynicism and the denial of marginality in contemporary Chile: *Mitómana* (José Luis Sepúlveda and Carolina Adriazola, 2009) 85
Paul Merchant

II. The struggle for the streets 105

4. Community action, the informal city and popular politics in Cartagena (Colombia) during the National Front, 1958–74 107
Orlando Deavila Pertuz

5. On 'real revolution' and 'killing the lion': challenges for creative marginality in Brazilian labour struggles 133
Lucy McMahon

6. Urban policies, innovation and inclusion: Comuna 8 of the city of Buenos Aires 155
Anabella Roitman

III. Marginal art as spatial praxis **181**

7. Exhibitions in a 'divided' city: socio-spatial inequality and the display of contemporary art in Rio de Janeiro 183
Simone Kalkman

8. The spatiality of desire in Martín Oesterheld's *La multitud* (2012) and Luis Ortega's *Dromómanos* (2012) 201
Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda

9. Afterword
Creative spaces: uninhabiting the urban 241
Geoffrey Kantaris

Index 253

List of illustrations

Figure

0.1 Anonymous graffiti on a bridge on the approach to the exhibition grounds for the Venice Architecture Biennale 2016. 14

1.1 Corridor of the Nonoalco rail yard. 32

1.2 Intersection at Calle de la Santa Veracruz. 43

1.3 Courtyard of tenement basement in Colonia Guerrero. 46

2.1 An infrastructural interstice between Cerrillos and Pedro Aguirre Cerda communes. This is a boundary area composed of high-speed motorways, a railway line, derelict spaces, a canal and electric lines. 60

2.2 Historical expansion of Santiago. 68

2.3 Santiago and the location of the La Platina and Campus Antumapu sites, La Pintana commune (left). View of Campus Antumapu (top right). View of the La Platina site (bottom right). 73

2.4. The interstitial boundary space between Lo Espejo and Pedro Aguirre Cerda communes. 77

2.5 Santiago and its suburban interstitial spaces 77

6.1 Buenos Aires – Comuna 8. 156

6.2 South Buenos Aires State Society Corporation and Comuna 8. 159

6.3 Territorial Units of Urban Inclusion and Comuna 8. 160

6.4 Economic Districts and Comuna 8. 164

6.5 Youth Olympics Games (YOG) venues and Comuna 8. 166

6.6 Comuna 8 slums (Villa 20 highlighted). 167

7.1 Travessias 2015 opening event, exhibition overview. 196

8.1 Map of relevant locations. 204

8.2. Ciudad Deportiva de La Boca in the foreground, with Puerto Madero skyscrapers in the background. 204

8.3 Interama in the foreground, including the Torre Espacial in the background. 205

8.4 Brasil arriving in Barrio Compal. 224

8.5 Pedro renouncing his delinquent past as part of a religious ceremony, immediately followed by Camila's process of divine healing. 230

Notes on contributors

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Paul Merchant is lecturer in Latin American film and visual culture at the University of Bristol. His research investigates artistic and political creativity on Latin America's Pacific coast, with a particular focus on port cities. His doctoral project, currently being prepared for publication as a monograph, explored the political potential of domestic space in contemporary Argentine and Chilean cinema. He has co-edited a special issue of the *Journal of Romance Studies* on housing and domesticity in Latin American film, and published articles on Chilean documentary, the legacy of Italian neorealism in Argentina, and the fiction of Roberto Bolaño.

Lucy O'Sullivan is currently a teaching fellow in Hispanic studies at the University of Warwick. Lucy's research interests lie primarily in 20th-century Mexican visual and literary culture. She recently completed her doctoral thesis in medieval and modern languages at the University of Oxford, which explored shifting intellectual and artistic interpretations of post-revolutionary nationhood in Mexico through a comparative reading of the bodily imagery presented in the murals of Diego Rivera and the fictional and photographic works of Juan Rulfo. Lucy's second project focuses on the role of visual propaganda in the ongoing struggle between the post-revolutionary Mexican state and popular catholic movements such as the Cristeros and the Sinarquistas between 1920 and 1945.

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Introduction

Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda

This book is an interdisciplinary exploration of the different ways in which marginal urban spaces have become privileged locations for creativity in Latin America. At the most basic level creativity can be defined as the ability to produce the new. In this way, the essays within the collection engage with new art forms, political organisations and subjectivities emerging from *within* a range of Latin American urban spaces which can, in different ways, be regarded as peripheral or marginal. In addition, the essays the volume contains seek to understand the ways in which artists, architects and urban planners from *outside* such spaces have sought to harness this creativity in their own representations of, and interventions in, marginal locations. In line with the work of Henri Lefebvre, then, within the collection space is understood not only as the setting where creative processes unfold, but also as a dynamic part of those very processes, as well as its continuously changing outcome.[1] We do not intend to imply, however, that creativity is the only process at work within marginalised urban spaces, nor that such spaces represent some kind of romanticised ideal of the creative potential within Latin American cities: we are well aware that cities throughout the region, and their inhabitants, face continuous and extremely urgent problems. On the contrary, the book explores the intersection of problems and complexities that lead to, or arise from, the production of the new, with a focus on the ways in which this production reveals, manifests and challenges existing tensions in Latin American space, culture and society.

If we opened by suggesting that 'creativity' is the production of the new, perhaps we can unproblematically venture that 'marginality' is first and foremost a description of a relation. Given the term's negative connotations, it could also be suggested that 'marginality' defines a relationship of power. Borrowing from Foucault, then, it could be proposed that marginality names a process that 'compares, differentiates, hierarchises, homogenises, excludes' and '*normalises*' by measuring individuals against an artificial standard.[2] This

1 See H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

2 M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by A. Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 182–3 (original emphasis).

N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda, 'Introduction', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 1–28. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

definition certainly seems to fit with the numerous characteristics of marginality that emerge throughout the present volume. While the term is challenged and reworked over the course of the book, the authors consistently use 'marginality' to describe a condition whereby an individual or a group is placed outside decision-making structures; where their relative income hinders their access to elementary goods, spaces and opportunities (which is to say, access to their basic rights); and where it implies that some cultural, psychical or bodily trait is deemed to be of lesser value than the 'norm'. Nonetheless, there is a twofold danger in adopting this approach to marginality. First, it ascribes the power to define the characteristics of the 'marginal' to the dominant group. And second, it invariably leads to a linear and dialogic understanding of the term which reinforces a centre-periphery model where the 'marginal' becomes the Other for the 'normal'. As we shall later see, this definition is also insufficient to account for the complexity of the multiple 'marginalities' contained in the volume and the creativity that we insist they represent. Nonetheless, it does provide a practical entry point through which we can reconsider the contested historical use of the term 'marginality' within the Latin American context.

By invoking Foucault in order to define marginality, we are proposing that the term both denominates an act of grouping, and simultaneously defines the power relations within that group. Within the context of Latin American urban studies, recent work by Felipe Hernández and other post-colonial thinkers has deployed a similar conception in order to propose that marginality can be linked to the persistence of colonial legacies in cities, cultures and societal structures throughout the region. This is a vision we share, given that the essays in the collection undoubtedly argue that the distribution over what is visible and sayable in Latin American spaces is not accidental but closely linked to Spanish, Portuguese and Creole legacies of domination.[3] While such marginal urban areas are most frequently associated with poor informal settlements such as the 'villas miseria' in Argentina, the 'favelas' in Brazil, and the 'pueblos jóvenes' in Peru (among several others), we do not, however, agree with the frequent assumption that urban forms of marginality are synonymous with informal housing. Instead, we recognise that neither the economic condition of such settlements, nor their geographical location, can entirely account for their present status. As the essays in the collection make clear, such spaces arise from a complex web of relations incorporating political, racial, cultural, geographic, economic, and numerous other dimensions. Moreover, while all of the chapters in some way spatialise the concepts of both marginality and creativity, this need

3 F. Hernández, 'Locating marginality in Latin American cities', in F. Hernández and A. Becerra (eds.), *Marginal Urbanisms: Informal and Formal Development in Cities of Latin America* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), pp. 3–49. See also E. Lander (ed.), *La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales* (Buenos Aires: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales, 2000); and S. Castro-Gómez and R. Grosfoguel (eds.), *El giro decolonial: reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global* (Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre, 2007).

not take the form of bounded territories at the periphery of the city. Indeed, several chapters argue that 'marginality' can be a path, a trajectory or a vector within the formal city space. This is simply to say that, while it may be that all informal spaces are marginal, it does not follow that all marginal spaces are informal.

Discussions of urban marginality and informal housing in Latin America continue to attract increasing academic and public attention. Indeed, it has become something of a truism to assert that the world is rapidly urbanising in contexts of urban poverty which place communities at a distinct disadvantage, if not at risk.[4] While the highest rates of urban growth are currently found in Asia and Africa, Latin America experienced this process most acutely during the second half of the 20th century, and it is still an important factor driving the development of cities in the region. Correspondingly, issues of informal urbanisation, housing shortages, the lack of basic services, and the segregation and stigmatisation of the poor, feature as some of the most pressing concerns in contemporary urban studies, and they rank high in the agenda of international organisations, professional associations, think tanks and NGOs.[5] In the field of architecture, for example, this renewed interest is reflected in the fact that Alejandro Aravena, an architect who focusses on participatory design in marginalised areas, was both awarded the 2016 Pritzker Prize and invited to curate the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale, respectively the most important international prize and exhibition within the profession. Despite this sustained and growing interest, however, the very complexity of the topic ensures that there are still many important issues to be explored.

Given this context, this book emerges as an attempt to start bridging two important gaps that we identify in the existing scholarly literature concerning urban marginality. First, while there is a widespread recognition of the interdisciplinary nature of contemporary urban problems, cross-disciplinary studies remain particularly scarce. This is to say that scholarship produced within the social sciences, urban planning or architecture does not enter into dialogue as often as would be desired. Moreover, this scholarship rarely (if ever) engages with analysis from cultural studies. For these reasons, and in an attempt to account for the complexity and multifaceted nature of urban

4 See UN Habitat, *Planning Sustainable Cities: Policy Directions. Global Report on Human Settlements 2009* (London: United Nations Human Settlements Programme/Earthscan, 2009), p. 4; United Nations, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision. Highlights* (New York: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014), p. 1; also note the overwhelming success of M. Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006).

5 To provide only a few examples published within the last five years, see C. McFarlane and M. Waibel (eds.), *Urban Informalities: Reflections on the Formal and Informal* (London: Ashgate, 2012); B. Fischer, B. McCann and J. Auyero (eds.), *Cities from Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2014); in addition there was a wide range of publications produced following the celebration of the UN Habitat III conference in 2016. See, for example, the April 2016 issue of the journal *Environment and Urbanization*, 28 (1).

marginality, the essays in this collection are drawn from a wide spectrum of academic fields, ranging from cultural and urban studies to architecture and sociology. The collection is designed to promote dialogue between disciplines and contains contributions that discuss urban planning, engage in visual and textual analysis, and study popular protest movements and community projects in marginal areas. Ultimately the book begins discussion of how these different conceptions of marginal spaces work together in order to contribute to the imagined and material reality of the wider city.

The second gap we identify in existing studies of urban marginality is already implied in our comments thus far, and in the very title of the volume: an exploration of the creative potential of marginal urban spaces. It appears that, over the course of the 20th century, two competing conceptions of the urban margins have emerged in the existing literature. On the one hand, the margins have frequently been viewed as spaces of deprivation, of violence, and of dangerous alterity. On the other hand, however, and particularly since the 1970s, they have been considered spaces of opportunity, of creativity and of popular empowerment. This dichotomy is readily identified in the arts. For example, early attempts to represent marginal spaces artistically, such as Luis Buñuel's (sur)realist film *Los olvidados* (1950) and Lucas Demare's melodramatic *Detrás de un largo muro* (1958), frequently depicted them as deprived, dangerous and in desperate need of intervention. Similarly, Leónidas Lamborghini denounced the painful realities of life in the Argentine 'villas miseria' in his poem 'Villas' (from *Partitas*, 1972). In contrast, Hélio Oiticica produced his *Parangolés* with the Mangueira Samba School in Brazil, and brought the vibrancy of *favela* architecture into the art gallery with works such *Tropicalia* (1967). Similarly, Bernardo Verbitsky's novel *Villa Miseria también es América* (1957) views the Argentine shantytown 'as a site of positive values, particularly collective, socialist work'.[6]

Such a neat dichotomous division is easily challenged, however, and several other artistic works sought a more balanced appraisal of marginal areas, celebrating certain aspects while denouncing others. Thus, Antonio Berni sought to capture the 'villas' in a playful manner in his *Juanito Laguna* series (1960s–1970s) while simultaneously highlighting the degradation of their environment. For his part, José María Arguedas documented the potential loss of cultural values as Andean peoples migrated to the port city of Chimbote in his final (incomplete) novel, *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* (1971). This text vividly depicts the violent lives of fishermen and prostitutes in the city's bars and brothels. However, as the title and the style of the novel make clear, the text equally demonstrates that the urban margins are an inherently hybrid space through which alternative belief systems and cultures can penetrate the

6 J. Scorer, *City in Common: Culture and Community in Buenos Aires* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2016), p. 175.

contemporary metropolis.[7] Despite these counter-examples, however, within the academic literature the dualistic division previously described has remained stubbornly persistent. Moreover, due to the urgency of many of the problems that the inhabitants of marginal spaces face, much scholarly literature and public discourse has focused on their unmet material and symbolic needs. Consequently, the creative dimension of marginal spaces has remained somewhat under-examined and, when considered, frequently romanticised. Thus, while conscious of the problems and needs still faced by those living in disadvantaged conditions in Latin America, the essays in the volume collectively reassess dominant theoretical notions of 'marginality' in the region and argue that, in contemporary society, marginality consistently (though not unproblematically) allows for and leads to the production of the new.

On the nature of marginality

Marginal urban spaces in Latin America have drawn considerable artistic, political and scholarly attention particularly since the mid 20th century, when the unprecedented growth of cities led to the massive expansion of informal housing constructed on occupied land. Nonetheless, and as previously articulated, recent research suggests that marginality in Latin American urban space *pre-dates* the 20th century, as it also *exceeds* (yet includes) housing informality.[8] Indeed, it is possible to argue that Latin American cities have always included marginal spaces (due, for example, to the segregation of indigenous groups) and certain authors have recently proposed that such processes are inherently linked to the modern constitution of Latin America as a conceptual entity, and to the very process of modernisation at the global level.[9] Indeed, as the essays in the collection make particularly clear, the issue of urban marginality continues to be linked to class, political, racial, sexual, corporeal and other differences, as it is necessarily implied in the exercise of power. For example, Lucy McMahon draws on the work of authors such as Frantz Fanon and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, and integrates their work with theoretical

7 As Mario Vargas Llosa notes, the novel's title makes reference to mythological beings from the pre-colonial period and Arguedas seeks to resituate the myth in an entirely different context some 2,500 years later (*La utopía arcaica: José María Arguedas y las ficciones del indigenismo* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1996), p. 297). Martin Lienhard also argues that the novel is an attempt to provide a description of *all* of Peru utilising the marginalised voice of the Andean people ('La "andinización" del vanguardismo urbano', in José María Arguedas, *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo. Edición crítica coordinada por Ève-Marie Fell* (Madrid: ALLCA XX, 1990), pp. 321–32, at p. 322). See also M. Lienhard, *Cultura popular y forma novelesca: zorros y danzantes en la última novela de Arguedas* (Lima: Tarea/Latinoamericana Editores, 1981).

8 B. Fischer, 'A century in the present tense: crisis, politics and the intellectual history of Brazil's informal cities', in *Cities from Scratch*, pp. 9–67; Hernández, 'Locating marginality'.

9 W. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011); Hernández, 'Locating marginality'.

discussions of social mobilisation in order to show the ways in which ethnicity, gender and labour are intertwined, and how this leads to the emergence of different qualities, degrees, and strategic uses of marginalisation in political and social movements in Brazil. Moreover, pre-colonial space is continuously shown to merge into the Latin American land- and cityscape, as can be seen through Lucy O'Sullivan's analysis of pre-modern and modern ruins. Similarly, Simone Kalkman demonstrates the persistence of the stigmatisation and segregation of favela residents in spaces of colonial origin, while Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda analyse the intersection of spatial, bodily and psychic marginalisation and the role of counter-hegemonic religious and spiritual practices which come to serve as alternative symbols of power. Nonetheless, despite our initial definition of the term and the common features perceived by the authors contained in this book, we cannot assume that there is a critical consensus with regards to the term 'marginality'. Indeed, the concept contains a long and significant history, and our use of the term is deliberately provocative and immediately situates the volume within important contemporary debates in urban studies.

The term 'urban marginality' in Latin American scholarship has remained excessively linked to a particular school of thought that gained momentum in the 1950s through the studies of such authors as Gino Germani, Matos Mar and Andrew Pearse, who, in turn, followed in the steps of Robert Park, Robert Redfield and Oscar Lewis from the Chicago School of Sociology.[10] Confronted with the aforementioned growth in Latin American cities and the concurrent expansion of informal housing constructed on occupied land, these authors regarded informal settlements as a problem of social marginalisation, a vestige of a rural past which would gradually fade away as industrialisation took root and modernisation spread throughout the region.[11] Implicit in this approach was the identification of the city with modernity, and the countryside or the village with tradition. This optimistic view of Latin American industrialisation has variously been referred to as 'developmentalism', 'modernisation theory' or 'marginality theory'. Nonetheless, within the arts, such positive views of modernisation were frequently contested. For example, David Kohon's short film *Buenos Aires* (1958) denounced the contrast between the modernising city centre and the precarity of the constructions in Argentine *villas*, as he also sought to highlight that these were the very settlements where the workers

10 A. Gorelik, 'La aldea en la ciudad. Ecos urbanos de un debate antropológico', *Revista del Museo de Antropología*, 1 (2008): 73–96; L. Benmergui, 'The transnationalization of the "housing problem": social sciences and developmentalism in postwar Argentina', in E. Murphy and N. Hourani (eds.), *The Housing Question: Tensions, Continuities and Contingencies in the Modern City* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 35–55.

11 See, amongst others, P.M. Hauser (ed.), *Urbanization in Latin America: Proceedings of the Seminar on Urbanization Problems in Latin America (Santiago de Chile, 1959)* (New York: International Documents Service, 1961); J. Matos Mar, *Las barriadas de Lima, 1957* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1977).

who fueled modernisation efforts were forced to live. In subsequent years new arguments questioning the validity of modernisation theory came to the fore. As with many academic debates, in the 1970s the developmentalist paradigm came to be heavily questioned by what would become known as dependency theory. During this period, economists such as Fernando Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, Marxist philosophers such as Enrique Dussel, and even theologians such as Gustavo Gutiérrez, argued persuasively that the poverty experienced in countries such as those found in Latin America was not a vestige of a pre-industrial past that would soon fade away as the region industrialised. Rather, they contended that this poverty was the unavoidable effect of a wider, international, economic, political, and ultimately, structural problem.[12] Thus, they argued, those countries whose economies were dependent on industrialised world powers would never be able to attain a state of full industrialisation as modernisation theory proclaimed, precisely due to the fact that they must compete in the international market as dictated by the global capitalist system.

Dependency theory had a tremendous impact in the field of urban studies. Manuel Castells was central to its propagation in books such as *La question urbaine* (1972) and his edited volume *Imperialismo y urbanización en América Latina* (1973), which included contributions from authors such as Aníbal Quijano and Paul Singer.[13] In the same year, Marta Schteingart edited a volume, *Urbanización y dependencia en América Latina* (1973) which adopted a similar perspective.[14] For these authors, the exploitation of the working class and the imbalance of development between countries were unavoidable within capitalism, and marginalised urban spaces (as the materialisation of capitalist inequalities in urban space) were thus an essential component of Latin American cities. Indeed, these researchers emphasised that shantytown residents were members of a working class essential for the reproduction of the city (as proposed in Kohon's *Buenos Aires*). That is to say that residents' labour was necessary to sustain that same Latin American industrialisation celebrated by Germani and those working within the framework of modernisation theory.

Concurrent with these developments (and particularly from the 1970s onwards), writers and researchers began to pay increasing attention to the social, political and economic networks that 'marginal' residents created among themselves and within Latin American cities at large. Scholarship in this trend ultimately came to question the very idea of 'marginality' itself. Such ideas

12 F.H. Cardoso and E. Faletto, *Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 1971); E. Dussel, *América Latina: dependencia y liberación* (Buenos Aires: Fernando García Cambeiro, 1973). See also R. Packenham, *The Dependency Movement: Scholarship and Politics in Development Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 7–16 and 190–1.

13 M. Castells, *La question urbaine* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1972); M. Castells (ed.), *Imperialismo y urbanización en América Latina* (Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 1973).

14 M. Schteingart (ed.), *Urbanización y dependencia en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: SIAP/Nueva Visión, 1973).

were condensed and described in books such as Janice Perlman's well-known *The Myth of Marginality* (1976).[15] These persuasive critiques ultimately led to the concept of 'marginality' falling out of favour in urban studies for several decades. More recently, however, the term has experienced something of a revival resulting in fresh debates as to its relevance.

In the early 2000s, researchers such as Loïc Wacquant started to analyse what he denominates 'advanced urban marginality' in the United States: a set of forms of material and symbolic exclusion and socio-spatial relegation, caused by late 20th-century neoliberalism.[16] This return to 'marginality', however, has not gone unchallenged. For example, Teresa Caldeira has argued that the (re) use of the term cannot but hark back to mid 20th-century, developmentalist, conceptions of the city.[17] In Caldeira's view, Wacquant's theoretical framework resembles traditional marginality theory not only in the use of the term but in the idea that those living at the urban margins constitute a 'redundant mass' for the labour market. Caldeira's critique, however, is not unproblematic. While it is true that both theories relate spatial and social marginalisation, Wacquant points to repeated stigmatisation and extreme levels of unemployment, while marginality theory focused mainly on the lack of social integration among those recently arrived to the metropolis. Marginality theory did not necessarily conceptualise these residents as redundant labour, but rather as migrants from a rural culture who remained marginalised in urban contexts precisely because they retained their traditional culture.[18] Wacquant instead argues that contemporary marginality is linked to the high levels of unemployment and precarity that stemmed from 1990s neoliberalism, and he makes no mention of rural/urban dichotomies (a model which would not, in fact, apply to the US ghetto of the 1990s).

In a somewhat different vein, Perlman points to the numerous families able to move out of the favelas that she studies as a counter-example to Wacquant's emphasis on socio-spatial seclusion.[19] She also refutes Wacquant's take on

15 J. Perlman, *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 251–7. See also L. Adler de Lomnitz, *Networks and Marginality: Life in a Mexican Shantytown* (New York: Academic Press, 1977); A. Ziccardi, *Políticas de vivienda y movimientos urbanos: el caso de Buenos Aires (1963–1973)* (Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios Urbanos y Regionales, 1977); L. do Prado Valladares, *A invenção da favela. Do mito de origem a favela.com* (Rio de Janeiro: Editorafgv, 2005), pp. 128–30; and Fischer, 'A century in the present tense'.

16 L. Wacquant, *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

17 T. Caldeira, 'Marginality, again?!', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 33 (3) (2009): 848–53.

18 Hauser (ed)., *Urbanization in Latin America*; see also Benmergui, 'The transnationalization of the "housing problem"', especially pp. 42–50.

19 J. Perlman, *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 158–60.

urban marginality by highlighting that favela residents have not been 'forcibly relegated'. However, as Hernández has noted, it should be borne in mind that Wacquant is elaborating his theory in order to account for US ghettoes, while Perlman focuses on Brazilian favelas.[20] Neither of the two cases should be considered paradigmatic, nor should theories produced from either specific study be expected to be universally applicable. Thus, the fact that social and spatial mobility in US ghettos has become particularly difficult cannot be contested by a consideration of such mobility in Brazilian favelas: both observations simply apply to different contexts, as they analyse differet spatio-cultural dynamics. Similarly, the fact that 'favelados' may not be secluded does not necessarily invalidate 'marginality' as an analytical tool in relation to US ghettos or other contexts. For example, while engaging in this discussion, Hernández points to the unquestionable emergence of marginal spaces within Colombia and Mexico where victims of drug, guerrilla or paramilitary violence have been concretely displaced.

In addition to Caldeira's and Perlman's concerns, and as previously intimated, there could potentially be one further reason to distrust a term such as 'marginality': it could be seen as perpetuating the centre-periphery model and thus inscribing the object of study in a necessarily dependent position. By extension, this could potentially undermine any claims to the term's importance or relevance as it could imply that 'marginal' issues are fundamentally of secondary importance to those related to the centre.[21] Contrary to these views, however, the essays contained in this volume will demonstrate that the transformations, tensions and cultures of the urban margins stand at the core of many dynamics which affect and alter the city.

Why then, if mid 20th-century theories of 'marginality' have been so fiercely and rightly questioned, and if there are grounds to distrust the concept, do we choose to embrace it again? The short answer is that we are reclaiming the term. As articulated at the beginning of this introduction, in the first instance we do not understand marginality as backwardness, nor as the negation of modernity but, on the contrary, we propose that it is a process through which spaces and groups remain (or become) excluded from decision-making, cultural recognition or economic opportunities by those sectors that concentrate power. This is to say that we contend that marginality is a necessary part of processes which are inherently modern. Moreover, many of the essays contained in the volume question the 'centre-margins' model itself and argue that urban spaces can be marginal or marginalised regardless of their geographical location, apparent wealth or, indeed, degree of legal informality. It is for this reason that

20 Hernández, 'Locating marginality', p. xvii.

21 N. Awan, J. Till and T. Schneider make this argument, for example, in relation to the concept of the 'alternative', in *Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013), pp. 26–7.

the conception of urban marginality deployed in the volume goes beyond, yet incorporates, the idea of urban 'informality'.

As several of the essays in the collection attest, there are many cases in contemporary Latin America which exist in an ambiguous, unclassifiable position between formal and informal positions (see, for example, Cristian Silva's discussion of the 'interstitial spaces' of contemporary Santiago). Therefore, an over-reliance on the concept of informality may conceal, rather than illuminate, the complexities of their qualities. By utilising the concept of 'marginality', however, the authors in the volume are able to address the relegated place that marginal spaces and individuals occupy in relation to predominant cultural, social and political structures, rather than exclusively discussing those under an irregular juridical condition ('in-formality' in its legal or planning sense). Indeed, this decision also allows the contributors to discuss other forms of *social* marginality even within the 'formal' city, thus challenging (if not overcoming) the centre-periphery model. Our concurrent focus on creativity, however, ensures that the conception of marginality that emerges from the book transcends our original Foucualdian definition of the term and denominates a far more dynamic process, as we shall later see. For these reasons we ultimately propose that a focus on marginality does not seek to turn the clock back, but addresses problems that are incredibly urgent at the present moment, and points to the future.

Creativity, capitalism and the paradoxes of participation

The concept of marginality as articulated above condenses two fundamental problems which the essays in the collection consistently examine: the changing role of the state in relation to urban problems in 20th-century Latin America, and the coterminous and complementary developments in the nature of capitalism within the region. To provide something of a crude overview of the historical developments in relation to these interlinked problems, the predominance of modernization theory in the academic literature of the 1950s and 1960s also witnessed the highpoint for state intervention in Latin America and its embrace of architectural modernism. As Latin American states later moved away from protectionist policies, models of import-substitution and the nationalisation of key industries, however, they instead instigated a gradual liberalisation of the market which, in turn, affected urban policies. This is to say that economic developments precipitated corresponding shifts in urban policy as the focus on large-scale state intervention was steadily replaced by market-based solutions based on the role of individual. This latter approach is arguably epitomised by the work of Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto. As in the present volume, de Soto views marginal spaces as rich in creative potential. However, for de Soto, this creativity consists of the individual's aptitude for *entrepreneurship*, and he advocates land titling and other forms of legal formalisation as a means

of allowing inhabitants of informal areas to access 'credit' as a panacea for all the problems encountered in peripheral urban spaces.[22] In this manner, de Soto's work unapologetically adopts a neoliberal outlook: the state's function is reduced to little more than providing a legal framework which will allow the market to function. Moreover, it is the efforts of the *individual* that shall liberate them from poverty once they have access to capital. For these and other reasons (for example, the fact that de Soto overlooks the limited nature of the markets that marginal entrepreneurs can access, that access to credit is not only determined by title holding or the fact that land-titling itself can lead to large-scale land appropriation by third parties), de Soto's work has been subject to particularly strong critique.[23]

Over the course of the present volume, the broad movement from state intervention to individual and market-based policies is subjected to rigorous critical analysis. Indeed, the question of the role of the state (and its relationship with its marginalised citizens) is continuously explored. As described above, the 1950s–60s was the era of active state intervention on a massive scale in Latin America: it witnessed extensive infrastructural projects, the construction of modernist housing complexes, and grand urban plans which sought to rationalise the entire city space and incorporate all its inhabitants' activities into an ordered and functional schema.[24] And it is precisely these types of projects which Lucy O'Sullivan explores within the Mexican context in Chapter 1. By analysing Juan Rulfo's photographs of the construction of a modern housing development designed by Mario Pani, O'Sullivan examines the 'interstitial' spaces and 'the elusiveness of their inhabitants' (O'Sullivan, p. 50) that stood as a persistent remainder, beyond the reach of large-scale redevelopment plans. Thus, O'Sullivan explores the failure of such modernisation plans to achieve their proposed totality, and she also introduces the subjects who gradually emerge over the course of the book and become active agents in other time-periods and different political and social contexts.

This emergence of a new political constituency in Latin America (and the concurrent rise of dependency theory) leads us to another crucial discussion for

22 See H. de Soto, E. Ghersi and M. Ghibellini, *El otro sendero: la revolución informal* (Bogotá: Editorial Oveja Negra, 1987), and H. de Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else* (London: Bantam, 2000).

23 See A. Gilbert, 'De Soto's *The Mystery of Capital*: reflections on the book's public impact', *International Development Planning Review*, 34 (2012): v–xviii; P. Wieland and T. Thornton, 'Escuchando ladrar a los perros: Hernando de Soto y su receta para la Amazonía', *Derecho PUCP: Revista de la Facultad de Derecho*, 0 (70) (2013): 325–44; and J. Michiel Otto, 'Rule of law promotion, land tenure and poverty alleviation: questioning the assumptions of Hernando de Soto', *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 1 (2009): 173–94.

24 V. Fraser, *Building the New World: Studies in the Modern Architecture of Latin America, 1930–1960* (London: Verso, 2000); J.-F. Lejeune (ed.), *Cruelty and Utopia: Cities and Landscapes of Latin America* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005); L. Carranza and F.L. Lara, *Modern Architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology, and Utopia* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2014).

the present volume, which focused on self-construction and the creativity of the urban poor, and was centred on the figure and work of John F.C. Turner. Building on a set of principles based on the idea of self-help which had been promoted by multilateral international organisations (mainly the Organization of American States) a decade earlier, Turner opened a new line of discussion which celebrated self-built and bottom-up urbanisation in Peruvian *barriadas* as effective responses to the housing needs of the urban poor.[25] As he argued, self-construction put control back in the hands of users, and it represented a process which led not only to personal fulfilment but also to dwellings better tailored to the users' needs. While Turner set out to redefine the role of the state in its urban interventions, it is no surprise that, following the neoliberal turn of the 1980s and 1990s, scholarship in urban studies witnessed a resurgence of interest in his work and a new-found enthusiasm for 'participation' in urban design and planning. In the present moment, it appears that different state programmes promote different degrees (and methods) of involving the individual or the community which arguably reflect the different economic programmes advocated by distinct governments. Nonetheless, the idea of participation remains at the core of these debates.

Turner's writings represented a turning point regarding the incorporation of users' participation in the decision-making process and the construction of their own housing within the architectural imagination and planning common sense. Not only this, but his ideas were also readily adopted by international agencies. Turner's position, however, led to significant controversy. From a Marxist position, authors such as Emilio Pradilla and Rod Burgess argued that self-built housing was not a materialisation of users' control nor a liberating process, but rather an extreme manifestation of labour over-exploitation which relied on (and invaded) the free time of the urban poor.[26] These authors were also frustrated with Turner's lack of attention to the commodification processes evident in self-built housing and the use of urban land.[27] However, due to Turner's clarity of expression and the suitability of his approach to both the late Cold War and the early neoliberal contexts, his celebration of self-help construction reached international standing. The 1976 United Nations Habitat conference held in Vancouver, in particular, marked the moment at which the idea of self-construction gained the prominent role it still enjoys

25 *Dwelling Resources in South America*, special issue, *Architectural Design*, 8, ed. J.F.C. Turner (1963); J.F.C. Turner, *Housing by People: Towards Autonomy in Building Environments* (London: Marion Boyars, 1976).

26 E. Pradilla, 'Autoconstrucción, explotación de la fuerza de trabajo y políticas de Estado en América Latina', in E. Pradilla (ed.), *Ensayos sobre el problema de la vivienda en América Latina* (Xochimilco: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, 1982).

27 R. Burgess, 'Petty commodity housing or dweller control? A critique of John Turner's views on housing policy', *World Development*, 6 (1978): 1105–33.

for multilateral agencies such as the World Bank.[28] In fact, the World Bank's interest in promoting private property amongst the working classes as a strategy to curb the spread of communism in the context of the Cold War meant that it enthusiastically embraced Turner's ideas. This is despite the fact that Turner's analysis was originally derived from a romanticised communitarian ideal, and was not intended to promote the private sphere. In addition, his arguments spread rapidly in the field of architecture due to the way in which his position inscribed itself within a wider critique of mainstream modernist architecture.[29]

It is interesting, in this context, to revisit the debates surrounding Aravena's recent awards, as they cut to the centre of contemporary critiques of participation. As Daniel Kozak has convincingly argued, the celebration of Aravena's work and, indeed, discussions of its merits, reflect the continuity of controversies surrounding self-built housing. Simultaneously, they also reveal a certain fracture in the ways in which issues such as housing shortages are conceptualised in different global contexts.[30] For example, Aravena's role as curator for the 2016 Biennale received high praise in architectural criticism written in the English language as it 'set a theme of social responsibility ... devising schemes of affordable, expandable housing working on a local level' leading to the conclusion that the Biennale became 'the anti-starchitect, anti-corporate, bottom-up show'.[31] The choice of Aravena as curator, furthermore, implied not only that the 'temperature of world architecture'[32] was shifting towards social responsibility, but that the Biennale also took issues such as participation and creativity into account: 'The lady who has climbed the ladder [in reference to the Biennale's cover photo and leitmotif] sees signs of creativity and hope, and she sees them in the here-and-now' declared Paolo Baratta, Venice Biennale president.[33]

It is, in fact, difficult to find critical discussion of Aravena's work written in the English language, the main exception arguably being 'Half Happy Architecture' (2016) by Camillo Boano and Francisco Vergara Perucich.[34] Nonetheless, it is important to note that, even during the Biennale itself, the exhibition was subject to pointed criticism: anonymous graffiti appeared

28 D. Kozak, 'John F.C. Turner y el debate sobre la participación popular en la producción de hábitat en América Latina en la cultura arquitectónico-urbanística, 1961–1976', *Urbana: Revista do Centro Interdisciplinar de Estudos sobre a Cidade* 8 (3) (2016): 49–68, at p. 51.

29 A.L. Massidda, 'Grassroots agency: participation and conflict in Buenos Aires shantytowns seen through the Pilot Plan for Villa 7 (1971–75)'. *AMPS: Architecture_MPS (Architecture, Media, Politics, Society)*, 12 (4) (2017): 1–20

30 Kozak, 'John F.C. Turner'.

31 H, Pearman, 'Not half bad', *RibaJ* (July 2016), 62–6, at p. 62.

32 Ibid.

33 P. Baratta, 'Front', *Biennale Architettura Guide. The BAG 2016.15 Mostra internazionale di architettura*, p. 9.

34 C. Boano and F. Vergara Perucich, 'Half happy architecture', *Viceversa*, 4 (2016): 58–81.

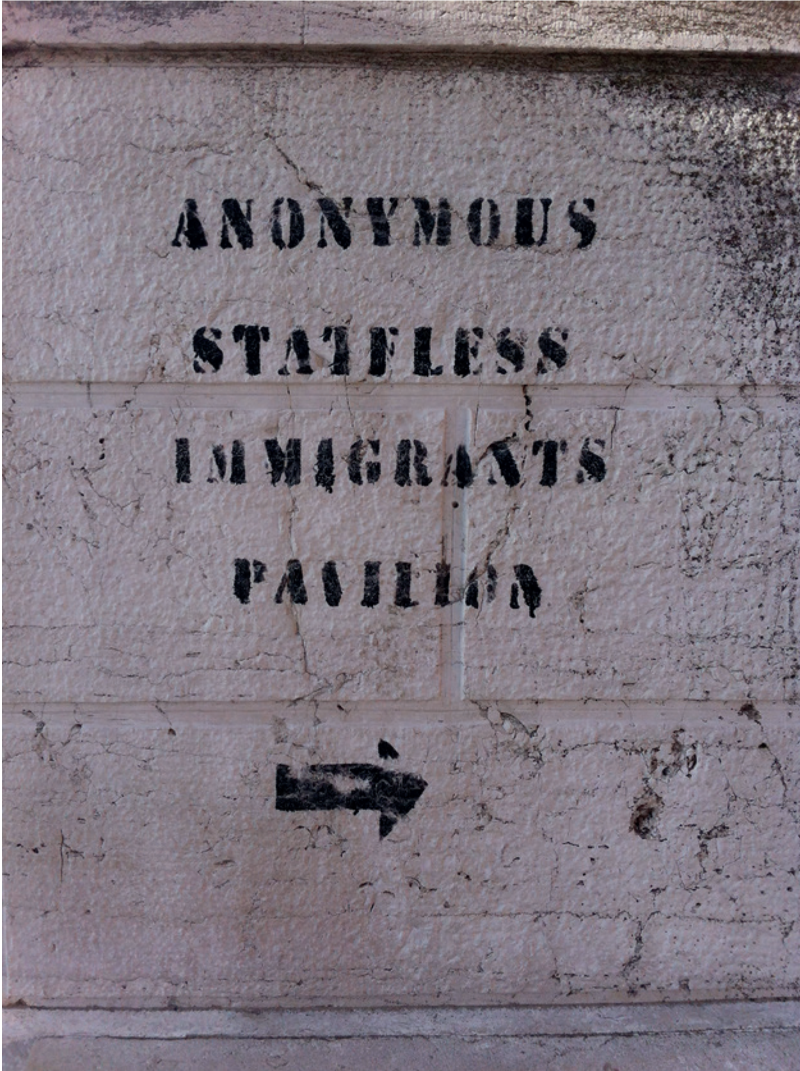

Figure 0.1. Anonymous graffiti on a bridge on the approach to the exhibition grounds for the Venice Architecture Biennale 2016. Source: Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda.

on several bridges on the approach to the main exhibition grounds claiming these spaces as the 'Anonymous Stateless Immigrants Pavilion' (see figure 0.1). Despite the organisers' attempts to create a more inclusive and participatory agenda for the festival, these markers (much like Rulfo's photos of Mexico's grand modernisation plans of the 1950s) served not only to inscribe those that remained excluded, outside and marginalised from the numerous projects presented at the Biennale within the city space, but they also became a reminder of a context where refugees and illegal immigrants remain continuously stigmatised and harassed. The graffiti forced attendees to recognise that the margins are continually moving, yet ever present, and thus that 'participation' may also prove to be an illusory utopia. And it is in a similar way that Aravena's work has been criticised in Spanish language publications.

Many writers in the Spanish-speaking world have questioned Aravena's lack of reference to Latin America's long history of participatory and bottom-up architecture; have expressed their scepticism towards the structural change that Aravena's approach can (and aspires to) actually make; and have once again pointed to the fact that participation initiatives 'hace[n] responsable al desamparado de su propio desamparo'[35] [make the vulnerable responsible for their own vulnerability]. In the present volume, too, Paul Merchant engages with the discussion surrounding Aravena's practice through his contrast of the filmic works *Mitómana* (José Luis Sepúlveda and Carolina Adriazola, 2009) and *74m²* (Paola Castillo, 2011), the latter film being a documentary about the construction of one of Aravena's housing complexes. Merchant's analysis ties Aravena's work to the very issues we have been discussing thus far. For him, Aravena's architecture stands as testament to the state's withdrawal from housing provision. Moreover, Merchant utilises this argument to discuss the social role of private power and entrepreneurialism in present-day Chile more generally. In a similar vein, Simone Kalkman explores the limitations of participatory art initiatives within the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, and their implications for artists, curators and the general public, exploring how these initiatives contribute to, or contest, broader processes which produce inequality and stigmatisation in the city. Thus Kalkman questions the very state policies implemented in order to promote participation and provide 'recognition and visibility to non-dominant and/or marginalised groups' (Kalkman, p. 188). It is at this point that something of a divide separates certain essays within the collection.

In her contribution, Anabella Roitman analyses creative solutions to contemporary planning problems in Buenos Aires in order to address widespread social inequalities in the city. This is to say that Roitman views

35 F. Barros, 'La desigualdad es elemental. Conjeturas ideológicas para una crítica a Quinta Monroy', *ARKRIT* (28 Nov. 2015); see also J.M. Echarte, 'Impostura social', *n+1* (13 Jan. 2016); and F. Massad, 'Alejandro Aravena, Premio Pritzker 2016' (13 Jan. 2016), http://abcblogs.abc.es/fredy-massad/2016/01/15/alejandro-aravena-premio-pritzker-2016/#.Vpl2MQI0VyE.facebook (accessed 25 Apr. 2017).

politics *from the perspective of the state*, yet critically analyses the scope and the effectiveness of their action. Implicit in Roitman's analysis is the suggestion that further creativity should be used in the rearrangement of actors and their responsibilities in order to produce solutions best able to address the needs of historically marginalised residents and *integrate them into the city*. In a similar way, Orlando Deavila Pertuz examines the ways in which marginalised residents in late 20th-century Cartagena organised themselves and engaged with traditional institutions of state and supra-state power (such as trade unions and the Alliance for Progress-funded Peace Corps) in order to effectuate specific works to improve their neighbourhoods. Deavila Pertuz suggests that residents were nonetheless able to maintain 'subversive' (Deavila Pertuz, p. 125) ideological and political positions which these programmes were intended to dilute. Thus he essentially argues that marginalised citizens in Cartagena *made strategic use of state institutions* while retaining beliefs which ran contrary to official state ideology. In contrast, Lucy McMahon proposes that in contemporary Brazil, state employees (in this case teachers) have at times *made strategic use of marginal (and illegal) protest tactics and social movements* in order to have their legitimate demands addressed. Across the collection, therefore, interactions between marginalised citizens and the state are analysed, revealing that separation from the state and incorporation within the state have both been utilised to meet immediate needs.

The studies of cultural products and programmes, however, add a further degree of complication to the picture. For example, Merchant draws on Paolo Virno's 'theorisation of post-Fordist labour and the multitude' (Merchant, p. 87) in order to demonstrate that, in contemporary neoliberal Chile, 'the sphere of life traditionally seen as not related to work, that of socialisation and the emotions, becomes subsumed into processes of production' (Merchant, p. 89). Similarly, Kalkman references the emergence of what can be denominated *favela-chic* (Kalkman, p. 186) as an essential element in the 'branding' of Rio de Janeiro. Thus processes of othering and fetishisation are shown to be essential for the extraction of new forms of 'capital' from the urban margins. In his examination of 'advanced urban marginality', Wacquant borrows Richard Sennett's earlier conception of the 'urban condom' in order to argue that new forms of urban segregation serve 'as both labor pool and prophylactic container of contaminating bodies'.[36] The work of Merchant and Kalkman also forces the reader to question whether contemporary programmes aimed at participation and inclusion fulfil their aims, or whether they merely allow for the extraction of cultural capital from the informal city, and the safe penetration of a dangerous, deviant and seductive 'other' into the wider cultural milieu. While it may thus appear that it is almost impossible to escape from the control and exploitation

36 L. Wacquant, 'Designing urban seclusion in the 21st century', *Perspecta: The Yale Architectural Journal*, 43 (2010): 165–78, at p.166. See also R. Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (London: Faber and Faber, 1994), pp. 236–7.

of both the state and contemporary capitalism, Geraghty and Massidda analyse Luis Ortega's *Dromómanos* (2012) in order to argue that it depicts a form of thought beyond that which can be conceptualised by the state, and which also breaks free from the strictures of capitalist commodification.

The becoming-marginal of knowledge production

The important differences in the ways in which users' participation has been interpreted within scholarly literature written in Spanish and English raise further concerns regarding the centre-periphery model. From the Spanish and Portuguese conquest of the Americas to the present day, Europe has often been regarded (not only by Europeans but also by Latin Americans themselves) as the centre with respect to which Latin America is a periphery.[37] Given that the present volume examines the Latin American urban margins, it is particularly pertinent to address this very issue. In his examination of African academia, Paulin Hountondji has discussed what he denominates the 'extraversion' of African Studies. According to this view, African researchers have often targeted their work to a western readership (its extent not being defined) rather than producing it for their fellow Africans. Hountondji argues that such work thus perpetuates the exoticisation of culture, and nurtures and advances external scholarly agendas rather than those indigenous to the continent.[38] While the situation in Latin America is arguably different – the region has a well-established (though mainly créole) intellectual tradition which has long been aware of, and has sought to challenge and resist, cultural domination – it is nonetheless revealing to observe the patterns that regulate the circulation of works, theories, ideas and endeavours within it. In this sense, it would appear that in Latin America as elsewhere, current global academic structures dictate that theory is predominantly elaborated in the north, while data is produced in the south. This situation would undoubtedly imply an act of intellectual subordination and an unequal distribution of labour in the international process of knowledge creation.[39]

Other views disagree, pointing to the intellectual specificity of research within Latin America. Interpreting the work of Walter Mignolo, Bill Ashcroft has read Latin American intellectuals' resistance to post-colonial studies as a rejection of what they considered as yet another wave of North Atlantic domination. However, this very resistance also reflected, for Ashcroft and Mignolo, Latin America's long tradition of questioning theoretical work

37 Lander (ed.), *La colonialidad del saber*.

38 P. Hountondji, 'Knowledge of Africa, knowledge by Africans: two perspectives on African studies', *RCCS Annual Review*, 1 (2009): 121–31.

39 J. Roth, 'Entangled inequalities as intersectionalities: towards an epistemic sensibilization', Working Paper No. 43, desiguALdades.net, 2013, available at www.desigualdades.net/Resources/Working_Paper/43_WP_Roth_Online.pdf (accessed 25 Apr. 2017), especially pp. 3–4 and 11–14.

coming from the north. Thus, if we are to understand 'post-coloniality' as the critique of colonial legacies, power structures and discourses, rather than the by-product of the development of post-structuralism in Europe, it can be considered to have emerged in the work of Latin American intellectuals decades before post-structuralism emerged in Europe.[40] Furthermore, other critics, such as Adrián Gorelik, have recently highlighted the fact that the scholarly field of 'Latin American studies' itself only exists outside Latin America, and that within the sub-continent researchers work by field in a context of intrinsically loose disciplinary boundaries where (perhaps unintended) interdisciplinarity has been the norm rather than the exception.[41]

We have tried to reflect this inherent interdisciplinarity in the present volume by bringing together authors from diverse backgrounds. Not only do they come from different disciplines, but they have also been educated in, and/or work from, Latin America, Europe and the United States. Moreover, two further trends readily identifiable in the volume question the assumption that theory is elaborated in the north. In the first instance, the essays in the volume make clear that marginal spaces within Latin America are best viewed as a privileged site for theoretical praxis. Rather than providing data, then, the cases examined within the volume reveal the ways in which theory is *actually* practised and embodied or, more accurately, *how theory is produced through action*. Given that several of the authors engage with European theory in their analysis, the difference may appear somewhat subtle. However, in line with the objectives of the collection as a whole, the key point is that the production of theoretical knowledge is displaced and shown to emerge directly from the urban margins in Latin America themselves.

In the second instance, it is important to note that theoreticians and philosophers within the European and Anglo-American academies are increasingly aware of the disparities of power involved in the very act of producing theory. In turn, there is an emerging strand of critical production which seeks to overturn this power dynamic. Indeed, as in the present volume, many of these theorists now contend that it is in marginal and relegated sites that the production of the new actually takes place. To provide just a few examples, Alain Badiou's set-theory-derived ontology argues that within any given 'situation', the new can only emerge from that part which cannot be named and accounted for within it. It is this unnameable remainder, implied in the creation of any given set, which becomes the exclusive grounds for the

40 B. Ashcroft, *On Post-Colonial Futures: Transformations of Colonial Culture* (London: Continuum, 2001), pp. 23–6.

41 A. Gorelik, 'De cerca y de lejos: paradojas del latinoamericanismo', keynote at the 50th Anniversary Symposium of the Centre of Latin American Studies, University of Cambridge, 1 Oct. 2016.

emergence of the new through his radical account of the 'truth-procedure'.[42] In a remarkably similar manner Jacques Rancière has proposed that every society executes a 'distribution of the sensible' which ultimately dictates all that is see-able, knowable, and permissible within that society.[43] As in Badiou's analysis, Rancière goes on to argue that politics can only truly take place when those '*sans-part*' enact 'some kind of visible or vocal rupture that asserts their presence and discredits, even momentarily, the legitimacy of a "police order", and the social divisions within it', as Lucy McMahon explains in the present volume (McMahon, p. 138). This is to say that, for Rancière, political and social change only take place when those who have been marginalised (or made invisible) enter a struggle to make themselves visible; indeed, for Rancière the contest for the aesthetic and political participation of those *sans-part* (without part) is the very definition of 'politics'.

Finally, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have described their own radical process of 'becoming-minor'. Within this analysis, Deleuze and Guattari first recognise that society is structured through a series of hierarchical binary oppositions such as man/woman, adult/child, human/animal (or, we would propose for the present volume, centre/periphery), and that 'becoming-minor' entails the metamorphic transition from the dominant to the minor position. Within Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of the world, such a transgressive movement disrupts and disturbs the power relations which maintain the original hierarchy and thus allow for the production of the new.[44] In each of these theoretical advances, then, creativity is inherently linked to difference, but decoupled from hierarchisation. And the essays within the present collection consistently adopt a similar perspective in their attempts to valorise and analyse the production of new art forms, political organisations and subjectivities emerging from within marginal spaces in Latin America.

Within these theoretical trends there has also been a concurrent progression away from the analysis of discrete and distinct entities to a persistent focus on those areas inbetween objects and bodies, on dynamic processes of becoming over stable being, and on movement over fixity. This development is perhaps

42 See A. Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. by Peter Hallward (London and New York: Verso, 2001), *Theoretical Writings* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), *Being and Event*, trans. by Oliver Feltham (London: Continuum, 2005). For an introduction to, and explanation of, Badiou's theory of the truth-procedure, see G. Riera, 'Introduction. Alain Badiou: the event of thinking', in G. Riera (ed.), *Alain Badiou: Philosophy and its Conditions* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), pp. 1–19.

43 J. Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics* (London: Continuum, 2009); J. Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. by G. Rockhill (London and New York: Continuum, 2006).

44 See G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. by D. Polan (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), and G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* trans. by B. Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 232–309.

most clearly grasped in Deleuze and Guattari's celebrated attempt to overcome the 'arborescent schema' of knowledge classification and production, and to replace it with the 'rhizome' which 'has no beginning or end' as 'it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*'.[45] While recent research in urban studies has focussed on the division, segregation and separation implicit in neoliberal policies which ensure that the city becomes fragmented and fractured,[46] it is rather this positive conception of the 'inbetween' which can be seen to emerge from the urban margins and contest this neoliberal division in the present volume. For example, Cristian Silva analyses those 'interstitial spaces' viewed as a wasteful remainder, caught between (and left behind by) legal and planning regimes. Lucy O'Sullivan employs precisely the same term to name those marginal spaces excluded from Mexico City's grand modernisation plans. Similarly, Anabella Roitman highlights the case of Comuna 8 in Buenos Aires and notes that it, too, falls between the administration of three different municipal and state bodies and is simultaneously subject to a series of overlapping policies, such that this marginal area also becomes a bureaucratic interstice.

In addition to his focus on interstitial space, Silva also proposes that 'urban sprawl is a continuous process of urban transformation which functions more like a verb than a noun' (Silva, p. 58); and Merchant, too, adopts Turner's assertion that 'housing is a verb'[47] and contends that the filmic work *Mitómana* (2009) 'presents itself as process, rather than finished product' (Merchant, p. 90). Furthermore, Merchant frequently notes the movement which occurs in the films he analyses, and this is also reflected in Kalkman's analysis of the exhibition 'Travessias', which forces participants to move through the city and visit peripheral spaces normally excluded from their conceptions of Rio de Janeiro, as it is found again in Geraghty and Massidda's analysis of the urban nomads of Buenos Aires in both *La multitud* and *Dromómanos*. How, then, should this focus on movement, wandering, displacement and the inbetween be accounted for? Perhaps an answer can be found in O'Sullivan's account of the disciplining of bodies instituted through modernist architecture. Following Foucault, O'Sullivan essentially proposes that these grand plans sought to create 'disciplinary enclosures' modelled on the logic of the factory whereby the individuals within them would be subjected to routine exercise and programming so that they become 'mechanized according to the general norms

45 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 25. The first chapter of the volume articulates their conception of the rhizome (and its difference from the arborescent schema) at length. See pp. 1–25.

46 For a summary of these writings, centred on Latin America and globally, see Scorer, *City in Common*, pp. 20–4 and D. Kozak, 'Urban fragmentation in Buenos Aires: the case of Abasto' (unpublished Oxford Brookes University PhD thesis, 2008).

47 J.F.C. Turner, 'Housing as a verb', in J.F.C. Turner and R.Fichter (eds.), *Freedom to Build: Dweller Control of the Housing Process* (New York and London: Collier Macmillan, 1972), pp. 151–2.

of an industrial society'.[48] Given that, as articulated above, these large-scale modernist plans were abandoned and replaced with small-scale participatory projects with the establishment of (neo)liberal economic policies within the region, perhaps the focus on movement and the inbetween reflects Deleuze's description of the neoliberal 'control society', which 'no longer operates by confining people but through continuous control' modelled on the fluctuations of the financial market.[49] It is arguably with this type of seemingly all-pervasive and inescapable control in mind that Merchant advocates the creation of 'formless politics' (Merchant, pp. 100–1), McMahon of 'unruly politics' (McMahon, p. 138), and that Geraghty and Massidda describe a powerful new form of what can only be described as 'anti-politics' enacted and created by the marginalised residents of Buenos Aires.

If we have suggested that, on the side of power, the essays in the collection attest to a shift from Foucauldian to Deleuzian relations, we can now subject our original definition of 'marginality' to a similar reappraisal. Previously, we suggested that 'marginality' refers to a relationship of power in a dialogical arrangement. This would appear to be reflected in Deleuze and Guattari's conception of 'becoming-minor' as it is also reflected in the work of Rancière and Badiou when their theories are applied to any given case study. Nonetheless, we have consistently stressed that marginality emerges from a complex network of interconnected processes, and that the essays in the collection echo Deleuze and Guattari's multiplicitous conception of the rhizome. Similarly, Badiou's maxim that 'the set of all sets does not exist' necessarily invokes a multiplicity,[50] as he inverts Foucault's process of 'normalisation', redefines the dualistic other as the uncountable yet persistent remainder, and ascribes a fundamentally creative role to that which is excluded. So, too, the present collection describes a shifting, unstable and mutable marginality which (re-)emerges and (re-)creates itself as a necessary part of any act of grouping. Moreover, as in the work of Badiou, this seemingly unwanted remainder consistently becomes the very motor of creativity. We opened this introduction by invoking Lefebvre's dynamic definition of space, and we close by proposing a similar tripartite definition of the marginal: it implies an act of grouping, defines the mutable power relations within that group, and names the persistent remainder situated outside the group, which becomes the motor for creativity. This is to say that marginality, like space, is the setting for a process, a dynamic part of that process, and its continually mutating outcome. While it may appear that such a mutable concept is inherently vague, we would instead suggest that, borrowing

48 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 242.

49 G. Deleuze, 'Control and becoming' and 'Postscript on control societies', in *Negotiations, 1972–1990*, trans. by M. Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 169–76, at pp. 174 and 177–82 respectively.

50 A. Badiou, *Briefings on Existence: A Short Treatise on Transitory Ontology*, trans. by N. Madarasz (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006.), p. 7.

another term derived from set theory, marginality is necessarily underpinned by an essentially 'fuzzy logic'.[51]

Sections and chapters

In order to facilitate dialogue between the contributors to the book, the essays within the collection are not organised by discipline, but are brought together within three broad conceptual categories, which constitute the book's three sections: 'Where are the margins?', 'The struggle for the streets', and 'Marginal art as spatial praxis'. The first section opens with Lucy O'Sullivan's analysis of Juan Rulfo's photographic examination of the modernisation of Mexico City's transport system in the mid 1950s. The piece questions the vision of a rational, organised city promoted by modernization theory and thus functions as an excellent historical introduction to the later essays. As the present collection constitutes a re-examination of the notion of creativity in the urban margins, O'Sullivan's essay provides a vivid depiction of the historical developments alluded to throughout this introduction. Moreover, the essay valorises the 'interstitial spaces' found in the 'cracks and crevices of the built environment' (O'Sullivan, p. 31–2) and thus leads to the second essay in this section: Cristian Silva's examination of the 'interstitial landscape' of present-day Santiago de Chile. From the perspective of contemporary urban planning, Silva also proposes a re-evaluation of the 'interstitial spaces' found within the urban sprawl, arguing that they contain significant unfulfilled potential which could provide an opportunity for further community development. The section closes with Paul Merchant's analysis of the Chilean film *Mitómana*, which comes to question the very notions of 'urban marginality' and 'creativity' themselves. Merchant's essay also provides a new perspective from which to consider the multitude 'often invoked in relation to radical politics in Latin America' (Merchant, p. 86) which is, in a certain sense, the focus of the book's second section.

'The struggle for the streets' again opens with a historically-focussed essay. In his contribution, Orlando Deavila Pertuz examines the interactions between state-led developmentalist programmes and community-organised initiatives in the urban margins of 1960s Cartagena. Deavila Pertuz's essay thus also allows the reader to historically contextualise the contemporary social protest movements, and reformed conceptions of urban planning, which are examined in the subsequent chapters. In the section's second chapter Lucy McMahon both highlights the potential for radical political change found in Brazil's urban margins, and describes the ways in which degrees of marginality can be (and have been) adopted at various times in Brazilian history in order to achieve positive

51 P. Cintula, C.G. Fermüller and C. Noguera, 'Fuzzy logic', in E.N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2017), available at https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/logic-fuzzy/.

results from radical social movements. In the following chapter, Anabella Roitman assesses the effectiveness of attempts to reorganise the administrative districts for urban planning in Buenos Aires. Focussing on the case study of Comuna 8, a traditionally marginalised area, Roitman questions whether these reformed notions of urban planning can account for the heterogeneity of the area and lead to efficient, effective and inclusive outcomes.

The final section contained in the collection, 'Marginal art as spatial praxis', explores the important role played by various cultural initiatives and forms of artistic production in stimulating debate, discussion and the continual reappraisal of notions of urban marginality. The section's first essay, written by Simone Kalkman, investigates the ways in which the boundaries of the divided city of Rio de Janeiro are continuously crossed through the exhibition of artworks related to the *favelas*. Nonetheless, Kalkman also argues that these cultural exchanges across formal-informal barriers frequently reproduce stereotypical images of those living in marginal areas. In the book's final essay, Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda provide a new framework for reconsidering the dynamics explored in the previous chapters. Through a critical analysis of the Argentine films *La multitud* (Martín Oesterheld 2012) and *Dromómanos* (Luis Ortega 2012) Geraghty and Massidda reconceptualise issues of urban marginality through Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's conception of 'desiring-production'. Not only does the focus on desire provide a new method of examining relations between formal and informal spaces within the wider city, but it also broadens the discussion and allows for the consideration of other forms of 'marginality' beyond an exclusive focus on urban poverty. In this essay, 'marginalities' such as drug addiction, mental illness and disability are shown to have a spatial dimension which contributes to the continual reconfiguration of the urban landscape.

A volume of this nature can never hope fully to account for the broad range of dynamics encountered within the urban margins in a region as vast and diverse as Latin America. Nor do we believe that the models and analytical tools utilised in the book should be considered universal and final. Nonetheless, we do maintain an unyielding faith in the creative potential of the urban margins in Latin America. It is for this reason we hope that, by offering a few precise analytical interventions, the present collection will produce debate, discussion and dialogue that can spread out and provide conceptual frameworks that will in turn be developed and challenged with reference to other areas and case studies.

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I. Where are the margins?

1. The politics of the in-between: the negotiation of urban space in Juan Rulfo's photographs of Mexico City

Lucy O'Sullivan

In a photograph taken by Juan Rulfo on the Nonoalco Bridge in 1956, four figures cross a derelict corridor in the Nonoalco rail yard to the north of Mexico City (fig. 1.1). Due to the photographer's elevated perspective and the low angle of the sun, their bodies are engulfed in shadow, transforming them into spectral silhouettes. As they flit across this transitional space at different points and in different directions, Rulfo's lens captures these figures as they momentarily linger between the individual rails of the track. Closer inspection of the photograph reveals other obscured bodies moving between the edges of the rail lines of the adjacent ruinous buildings, hinting at the presence of a larger migratory urban community inhabiting the indeterminate spaces of the rail yard. Taken at the height of mid century *desarrollismo* [developmentalism], Rulfo's photographs visually document the old railyards to the north of the capital shortly before they were demolished to make way for a functionalist housing unit designed by architect Mario Pani and replaced by the new Terminal del Valle de México in Tlalnepantla in 1958. Rulfo's photographs, a selection of which are compiled in the published collection *En los ferrocarriles* [On the Railroads] (2014), were the product of a collaborative project with director Roberto Gavaldón, who invited Rulfo to work as a photographer on a documentary commissioned by the state-owned railway company Ferrocarriles Nacionales de México [National Railways of Mexico].[1] This 25-minute long piece of government propaganda entitled 'Terminal del Valle de México' [Mexico Valley Terminal] aimed to illustrate the success of the urban renewal project by contrasting the pristine new installations in the suburbs with the degenerating old railway lines in the working-class districts of Nonoalco, Tlatelolco, Peralvillo, Tacuba and Tlatilco. While the purpose of the documentary was to convey Pani's utopian plan for a spatially totalised

1 J. Rulfo, *En los ferrocarriles: fotografías* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México: Fundación Juan Rulfo: Editorial RM, S.A. de C.V.; Barcelona: RM Verlag, S.L, 2014). All photographs discussed in this chapter are taken from this publication.

L. O'Sullivan, 'The politics of the in-between: the negotiation of urban space in Juan Rulfo's photographs of Mexico City', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 31–53. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

Figure 1.1. Corridor of the Nonoalco rail yard. (Photo: Juan Rulfo, reproduced with the kind permission of the Fundación Juan Rulfo, Mexico City.)

urban landscape, Rulfo's photographs challenge this vision by revealing an elusive mobile urban citizenry that slips between the cracks and crevices of the built environment. These ill-defined human subjects and their fluid negotiation of the urban landscape undermine the principles of visibility and socio-spatial discipline that defined Pani's modernisation project. Famed for his bleak literary portraits of post-revolutionary rural Mexico in his short story collection *El Llano en llamas* [*The Burning Plain*] (1953) and novel *Pedro Páramo* (1955), Juan Rulfo's photographic oeuvre and his aesthetic engagement with post-revolutionary urban realities have received limited critical attention. Although Rulfo's photographic works have attracted increasing interest since the 1980s, scholarship has largely focused on his representations of indigenous communities and rural landscapes. In an attempt to broaden the formal

and geographical scope of his corpus, this chapter will explore how Rulfo's photographs of Mexico City critically reflect on the urban dimensions of the post-revolutionary modernisation programme during a critical phase in the evolution of the modern authoritarian state. Diverging from the critical tendency to analyse Rulfo's photographs as mere visual extensions of his literary images, the chapter will highlight the powerful political dimensions of these works in the specific context of contemporary urban architectural and planning practices. Providing an urban counterpoint to his fictional works of the same period, which present a neglected post-revolutionary rural peasantry, these photographs undermine contemporary rhetoric of national progress by depicting an urban community on the margins of the state's modernisation project.

The post-revolutionary return to order in urban planning

The state's mid-century urban restructuring project had its roots in the broader impulse for order that defined the post-revolutionary reconstruction era of the 1920s. The toppling of the positivist dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1876–1910) in 1910 unleashed a protracted civil war that resulted in large-scale loss of life and infrastructural devastation. A utopian spirit characterised the decades following the conclusion of the armed phase of the Mexican revolution (1910–17) as nation-building intellectuals and politicians sought to transform a debilitated and internally fragmented Mexico into a unified modern nation shaped by the progressive social ideals of the revolution. Despite its rhetoric of egalitarianism and social progress, the Porfirian call for 'orden y progreso' [order and progress] haunted the post-revolutionary national reconstruction programme, which prioritised social order and economic development.

With the unfettered territorial and population growth of Mexico City after 1920, this post-revolutionary drive for order manifested itself in urban-planning practices. Following a decade of unsuccessful urban reforms, a systematic planning programme began in the 1930s in an effort to impose structure on the urban landscape and consolidate Mexico's international image as a socially and industrially advanced nation. Although intellectuals of the post-revolution period outwardly repudiated the Eurocentricism of the Porfiriato and its adoption of French cultural models in particular, the architectural theories of the Swiss-French artist and architect Le Corbusier proved the most formative for Mexico's urban visionaries after 1930. Le Corbusier was a founding member and most influential proponent of the Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM), a network of European architects and planners founded in 1928 that set out to define the aesthetic and social programme of what became known as the 'Modern Movement'. These urban theorists advocated the use of architecture as a device for social reform, calling for the destruction of the 'old' 19th-century city which fostered social disorder and disease among the

lower classes and the implementation of a scientific model of urban design that would promote a harmonious relationship between individual and society. Le Corbusier's architectural manifesto *Vers une architecture* [*Towards a New Architecture*] (1923) addressed 'the necessity for order' in post-war European society and posited a functionalist paradigm for the industrial age.[2] Articulating his architectural vision in anatomical terms, Le Corbusier conceptualised the functioning city as a disciplined living organism and asserted the need for a 'plan that arranges organs in order' according to their specific function.[3] Le Corbusier's rationalist style, which he applied to domestic architecture as well as large-scale housing projects, was rooted in the concepts of strict geometric logic, hygiene and spatial efficiency. Linking the formal austerity of his designs to their intended social function, Le Corbusier argued that the regulating line provided a 'guarantee against wilfulness'.[4] This capacity of built spaces to maintain social order, a notion Le Corbusier expressed through the dictum 'architecture or revolution',[5] paradoxically came to define post-revolutionary public architecture in Mexico from the 1930s into the 1960s, as the state continued to legitimise itself through its rhetorical commitment to the social ideals of the revolution.

Correcting the urban organism: disciplined bodies, disciplined spaces

The rationalist urban theories formulated by Le Corbusier harmonised with the progressivist ethos of post-revolutionary political and intellectual discourses in Mexico. Although the Mexican revolution was retrospectively portrayed as an ideological battle against the positivism of the Díaz regime in its immediate aftermath, a neo-Porfirian faith in scientific rationalism persisted throughout the 1920s and 30s, manifesting itself in the state's promotion of anticlericalism, rationalist educational reforms and technological progress. In the sphere of urban restructuring, this continuity with the positivist thought of the late 19th century was perhaps most evident in the biological metaphors that dominated planning discourses during the 1930s. During the late 19th century, the circle of technocrats associated with the Díaz regime known as the *científicos* [The Scientists] had posited an organicist conceptualisation of society, which envisioned Mexico as a collective organism in need of

2 Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture,* trans. F. Etchells (London: Rodker, 1931), p. 67.

3 Le Corbusier, *The Four Routes* (London: D. Dobson, 1947), p. 2. This biological model provided the basis for his design for the *Ville Radieuse* (1924), which rationalised space according to function, identifying the business centre as the brain, residential areas as the spine and industrial zones as the stomach. See R. Butler and H. Parr, *Mind and Body Spaces: Geographies of Illness, Impairment and Disability* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 36.

4 Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, p. 67.

5 Ibid., p. 280.

correction and improvement. Such physiological analogies were fundamental to the functionalist vision of Carlos Contreras, director of the Comisión Nacional de Planeación and editor of the magazine *Planificación* [*Planning*], who spearheaded efforts to impose spatial order on the capital in the 1930s. Contreras's *Plano Regulador del Distrito Federal* [Regulatory Plan for the Federal District] (1933) functionally divided urban space into specific industrial, commercial and residential zones, with specific areas designated as working-class districts. This calculated distribution of inhabitants reinforced the socio-spatial segregation established by zoning practices during the Díaz dictatorship, when lower-income citizens had been located in the industrial zones to the north and east of the city.[6] Replicating Le Corbusier's medicalising language, Contreras conceptualised the city as a sick and disproportioned body that could be corrected through careful spatial management:

> (La ciudad) no ha evolucionado como un organismo mediante la expansión correlativa de todas sus partes; de idéntica manera que el niño crece hasta la virilidad, no engordando simplemente, sino logrando que sus miembros, su cerebro y todos sus órganos se desarrollen en proporción para constituir un conjunto armonioso y racional.[7]
>
> [(The city) has not evolved as an organism through the correlative expansion of all of its parts; in the same way that a child grows into a man, not simply by gaining weight, but through the proportionate development of his limbs, brain and all of his organs to form a harmonious and rational whole.]

These corporeal metaphors conceptualising the city as a disciplined organism, reflected the distinctly physiological dimensions of the post-revolutionary 'return to order' in Mexico. Reconfiguring the hygienist discourses that had dominated the Díaz regime, the nascent state identified the creation of healthy and orderly individual citizens as a key step towards national modernisation in the 1920s.

The strategies of bodily discipline that developed in Mexico during this period constitute what in Foucauldian terms could be defined as the biopolitical agenda of the post-revolutionary state. In his lecture series entitled *Society Must Be Defended* at the Collège de France in 1975 and 1976, Foucault describes the emergence of disciplinary and regulatory strategies of power at the end of the 18th century that centred on the 'mass effects characteristic of a population, which tries to control the series of random events that can occur in a living mass'.[8] Foucault outlines how through various institutional measures, the

6 A. Valenzuela Ahuilera, 'Green and modern: planning Mexico City, 1900–1940', in D. Brantz and S. Dümpelmann (eds.), *Greening the City: Urban Landscapes in the Twentieth Century* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2011), pp. 37–54, at p. 43.

7 C. Contreras, 'Editorial', *Planificación*, 12 (Aug. 1928), p. 3.

8 M. Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–76*, trans. D. Macey (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 249.

state monitors the vital, biological characteristics of the populace in order to maximise its docility and productivity. During the 1920s and 1930s in Mexico, the state and its affiliated intellectuals sought to construct rational citizens who would embody the health and order of the post-revolutionary body politic. In racial terms, this drive for collective order manifested itself most prominently in José Vasconcelos's theories of *mestizaje* [miscegenation] which envisioned a homogenous population as the basis of a utopian post-revolutionary society.[9] Vasconcelos's ideas about racial uniformity were complemented by the state's social engineering campaign of the 1920s, which sought to rationalise Mexican bodies and minds through the promotion of hygiene, physical education and behavioural reform relating to alcoholism and fanaticism. Following the establishment of the Sociedad Mexicana de Eugenesia para el Mejoramiento de la Raza [Mexican Eugenics Society for the Betterment of the Race] in 1931, these public health and educational initiatives evolved into a more coherent eugenics programme in the 1930s.

The capacity of architecture to contribute to the post-revolutionary biopolitical programme was first explored by Juan O'Gorman, who executed a number of state-funded public architectural projects in the 1930s. Despite abandoning his medical studies at an early stage to pursue a career in architecture, O'Gorman devoted his early career to converting Mexico's built spaces into tools of physiological correction. His designs from the 1930s emphasised hygiene, natural light and ventilation for schools and high-rise housing complexes for working-class citizens. Fundamental to O'Gorman's rationalist architectural model was a parallel between spatial and bodily discipline. O'Gorman's health-giving spaces, which were meant to shape robust, productive citizens, were meticulously measured to ensure maximum spatial efficiency, allocating a precise number of metres per inhabitant. Alongside other functionalist practitioners of the 1930s such as Álvaro Aburto and Juan Legarreta, O'Gorman's economically efficient social housing projects appealed to a government seeking to minimise expenditure while maintaining a veneer of social progress.

During the more overtly repressive administration of Miguel Alemán (1946–52), functionalism was incorporated into state policy and the disciplinary dimensions of public architecture became increasingly pronounced. As the city's population continued to swell in the 1940s and 1950s, urban planning and architectural practices reflected the shifting priorities of a government that increasingly measured revolutionary progress in economic and industrial, rather than social terms. Following the consolidation of the developmentalist state under Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–40), the national campaign for economic and industrial modernisation gained significant momentum in the 1940s. Moving away from the country's traditionally agrarian-based economy,

9 Vasconcelos was a member of the intellectual circle known as the Ateneo de la Juventud and served as minister of education from 1920 to 1924.

the Camacho administration (1940–46) shifted to an industrial capitalist model that facilitated the centralisation of power and state intervention in the economy.[10] Aggressive capitalist economic policies resulted in a phase of unprecedented economic growth between 1940 and 1968 that was hailed as the 'Mexican miracle'.[11] Despite dramatic economic development, with gross domestic product tripling between 1940 and 1960 and dramatic infrastructural and technological development, Mexico's modernisation process was deeply contradictory and uneven, leading to widespread economic disparity.[12] As urbanisation and industrialisation accelerated, rural migrants and rail workers continued to flock to the peripheral working-class *vecindades* [tenements] that had evolved around the railroads during the Porfiriato, leading to chronic overcrowding and sanitation problems.

'Architecture or revolution': Mario Pani's disciplinary functionalism

During the Alemán era, these sprawling impoverished zones proved particularly problematic for a government striving to transform the federal district into an industrially efficient modern capital. Mario Pani, one of the most influential inheritors of O'Gorman's functionalist legacy in Mexico, looked to modernist urban models for a solution. In the 1940s, modernist forms and methodologies also reached Latin America via the United States, which experienced a fertile period of creative exchange with Europe towards the end of the previous decade. CIAM theories were imported to the United States by influential modernists such as Walter Gropius and Josep Lluís Sert, the last president of the CIAM between 1947 and 1956, who emigrated to New York in 1939 following the collapse of the Spanish Republic. Sert and other prominent urbanists such as Paul Lester Wiener received sponsorship from the Office of the Secretary of State and the Office of Inter-American Affairs to visit and lecture in Latin America, leading to a series of commissions in Brazil, Peru and Colombia over the following two decades, including collaborations with Le Corbusier. Although many of the projects were never realised, these trips succeeded in further disseminating modernist ideas amongst young Latin American architects who saw the potential social benefit of these methods in their respective countries.[13] In Mexico, these principles proved particularly

10 H. Aguilar Camín and L. Meyer, *In The Shadow of the Mexican Revolution: Contemporary Mexican History, 1910–1989* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1993), p. 163.

11 Ibid., p. 199.

12 D.E. Lorey, *The U.S.-Mexican Border in the Twentieth Century: A History of Economic and Social Transformation* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1999), p. 86.

13 F. Hernández, 'Architectural Latin American modernism: twentieth-century politics, historiography, and the academic debate', in S. and A.C. Lindgren (eds.), *The Modernist World* (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 385.

influential for Pani, who responded to the urban crisis by proposing large-scale residential units, known as *multifamiliares* [multifamily apartment complexes] as a hygienic and spatially efficient alternative to the slums and sprawling makeshift settlements that had developed to the north of the city. Pani considered these informal areas as sites of disease and moral corruption that posed a threat to both the social and spatial order of the capital. In an article published in 1950 in the magazine *Arquitectura/México* [*Architecture/Mexico*] entitled 'Penicilina para la ciudad' [Penicillin for the City], Pani states 'hacer patria es eso: hacerla purificando la podredumbre y construyendo sobre el terreno lavado y redimido nuevos hogares' [this is how one builds a nation: by purifying the putrefaction and constructing new homes on the clean and redeemed terrain].[14] In the article's closing lines, the architect describes this process of urban spatial cleansing in disturbingly violent terms, declaring 'el problema es tremendo, pero hay que proceder con energía. Meter dinamita, como ya dije, y regar petróleo' [the problem is enormous, but we must proceed with energy. Plant dynamite, as I have already said, and spray petrol].[15] The utilitarian concrete structures proposed by Pani to replace these unplanned dwellings again drew significantly from Le Corbusier's hygienic and spatially rationalised models for the *Ville radieuse* (1924) and the *Unité d'Habitation* (1945–52). With the support of government commissions, Pani carried out a number of functionalist social housing projects such as the Multifamiliar Miguel Alemán in 1949 and the Multifamiliar Presidente Juárez in 1952. These self-contained complexes followed a spatially restrictive cellular grid-based design that led inhabitants to compare the density of the 1949 complex to that of a concentration camp and, as O'Gorman later pointed out, also earned it the nickname of 'la penitenciaría' [the penitentiary].[16] The Conjunto Urbano Nonoalco Tlatelolco [Urban Complex of Nonoalco-Tlatelolco], which was to be constructed on the site of the old railway yards between 1958 and 1964, was Pani's most ambitious residential project to date, consisting of 101 apartment buildings as well as clinics, recreational areas and schools, all of which were to be located in specific functional zones within the complex. The unit's enclosed and highly claustrophobic layout, which retained the rigid grid design of Pani's previous *multis*, comprehensively regulated the daily lives and movements of its 100,000 residents. While Pani's monumental unit appeared to uphold the social ideals of the revolution by providing affordable housing for numerous families, its highly restrictive design was, like Le Corbusier's, rooted in fundamentally disciplinary principles. The spatial dimensions of the Conjunto

14 M. Pani, 'Penicilina para la ciudad', *Arquitectura/México*, 30 (1950): 309–12, at p. 312.

15 Ibid., p. 312.

16 A.A. Escobedo, 'La vida en el multifamiliar', *Arquitectura*, 33 (1952): 181–4, at p. 181. J. O'Gorman, 'Notas sobre arquitectura', in I. Rodríguez Prampolini (ed.), *La palabra de Juan O'Gorman: selección de textos* (Mexico City: UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 1983), p. 138.

Urbano exemplified the architectural qualities that Foucault attributes to the regulatory panopticon. In his discussion of Bentham's panoptic prison in *Discipline and Punish,* Foucault describes how 'discipline fixes; it arrests or regulates movements; it clears up confusion; it dissipates compact groupings of individuals wandering about the country in unpredictable ways; it establishes calculated distributions'.[17] In his lecture at the Collège de France in March 1976, Foucault turns to the orthogonal grid design as a pertinent architectural metaphor for disciplinary technology. Discussing working-class housing estates during the 19th century, Foucault states that:

> One can easily see how the very grid pattern, the very layout of the estate articulated, in a sort of perpendicular way, the disciplinary mechanisms that controlled the body, or bodies, by localizing families (one to a house) and individuals (one to a room). The layout, the fact that individuals were made visible, and the normalization of behavior meant that a sort of spontaneous policing or control was carried out by the spatial layout of the town itself.[18]

Pani's adoption of the grid design revealed the priorities of an urban regeneration programme that was equally concerned with the regulation of urban bodies and urban spaces.[19] The Conjunto Urbano project aimed to spatially contain large sections of the urban population by razing the sprawling tenements surrounding the old railway lines of Tlatelolco, and transferring working-class families to the '*células urbanas*' [urban cells] of his new concrete residential blocks.[20] As with his previous *multis,* Pani believed that this relocation process would not only contribute to the healthy development of the city but would also transform these '*individuos fracasados*' [failed individuals] into civilised citizens. Reaffirming his faith in architecture as a strategy of behavioural reform, Pani claimed that 'las nuevas casas, aireadas, gratas, serán escuelas para que sepan ser seres humanos' [the new houses, which are ventilated and pleasant, will be schools where they learn how to be human beings].[21] This socially disciplining function of the complex was underlined by president Adolfo López Mateos (1958–64) at its inauguration in 1964 when, echoing the Le Corbusien dictum

17 M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. A. Sheridan (London: Allen Lane, 1977), p. 219.

18 Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, p. 251.

19 The use of an urban grid to promote order amongst urban inhabitants is of course nothing new in Latin American city planning. As Valerie Fraser has noted, the Spanish coloniser had imposed an orthogonal grid system, the regularity of which functioned as a 'deliberate and explicit metaphor for the social order which the Europeans were importing and which they intended to impose on what they saw as the physical and social disorder of the subjugated Indians' (V. Fraser, *Building the New World: Studies in the Modern Architecture of Latin America, 1930–1960* (London: Verso, 2000), p. 214).

20 M. Larrosa, *Mario Pani, arquitecto de su época* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1985), p. 80.

21 Ibid, p. 312.

of 'architecture or revolution', he reminded the public that 'una revolución pacífica evita una revolución violenta' [a peaceful revolution prevents a violent revolution].[22]

Juan Rulfo in Mexico City

Juan Rulfo moved to Mexico City in 1935, just as the urban restructuring programme was taking shape under Contreras. Following a period in Guadalajara between 1941 and 1945, Rulfo settled in the capital in 1947, where he secured a job working as a travelling sales representative for the tyre manufacturer Goodrich-Euzkadi. The rise of *alemanismo* and the gradual collapse of the revolution's ideals during the mid 1940s and early 1950s provide the historical backdrop to this most formative period in Rulfo's intellectual and artistic development. The reincarnation of the Partido de la Revolución Mexicana [Party of the Mexican Revolution] as the Partido Revolucionario Institucional [Party of the Institutionalized Revolution] in 1946 heralded the 'institutional' phase of the revolution in which revolutionary social progress gave way to the inequalities of capitalist industrial production. Written at the peak of the 'Mexican Miracle', when rhetoric of revolutionary progress had grown deafening, Rulfo's literary portrayals of a paralytic post-revolutionary rural universe in *El Llano en llamas* and *Pedro Páramo* encapsulated his scepticism regarding a process of revolutionary transformation that he claimed he had yet to witness. In his typically evasive manner, Rulfo simultaneously hinted at and denied the existence of any political undercurrents in his work:

> La Revolución Mexicana es un arma, es un lema, es una argucia que se esgrime cada seis años para encauzar un país hacia nuevas metas. No es que yo no crea en ella, la Revolución existió, posiblemente aun exista, aun funcione; hay muchos logros que se previeron, que se convirtieron en realidad, pero a mí la obra me parece que no toca exactamente ese punto. Por principio de cuentas a mí la Revolución Mexicana no me interesa, ni me interesa en sí si fue buena o fue mala. Como no viví esa Revolución, no conocí sus consecuencias, ni las conozco todavía.[23]
>
> [The Mexican Revolution is a weapon, a slogan, a sophism, that is brandished every six years to direct a country towards new aims. It's not that I don't believe in it, the Revolution existed, it's posible that it still exists, that it still functions; many achievements were anticipated and became reality, but in my view I don't think that the work touches precisely on that point. In the first place, the Mexican Revolution doesn't interest me, nor does it interest me whether it was good or bad. As I didn't experience this Revolution, I never knew its consequences, I still don't.]

22 Cited in R.C. Chapa, *Tlatelolco: la autoadministración en unidades habitacionales: gestión urbana y planificación* (Mexico City: Plaza y Valdés, 2001), p. 124.

23 Cited in A. Vital Díaz, *Noticias sobre Juan Rulfo, 1784–2003* (Mexico City: Ediciones RM: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004), p. 206.

In the period spanning from the later 1940s to the mid 1950s Rulfo not only produced the two major works that would define his literary career, but also gained recognition as a photographer. While travelling across Mexico as a salesman in the late 1940s Rulfo extensively documented the nation's diverse landscapes with his Rolleiflex 6x6 camera, leading to the publication of his first photographs in the magazines *América* [America] in 1949 and *Mapa* [*Map*] in 1952. Rulfo accepted Gavaldón's invitation to collaborate on the documentary project shortly after he had finished working with the director as a historical supervisor on the set of his film *La escondida* [*The Hidden One*] (1955), a melodrama set during the Mexican revolution in which the railway features as a central motif. Filmed in 1956, Gavaldón's 'Terminal del Valle de México', upholds Pani's vision of urban renewal by visually articulating what Victoria Novelo and Sergio López Ramos describe as 'el propósito eje de la modernidad de acabar con todo lo viejo para hacer todo nuevo' [The core aim of modernity to do away with the old and make everything new].[24] Of the 140 photographs Rulfo produced over this six-month period, however, a distinction is discernible between those images which share the documentary's aesthetics of spatial erasure and reconstruction, such as his sweeping helicopter views of the city and the new railway terminal, and those more intimate scenes of urban life to which his lens appears to have been drawn. Drawing attention to the city's nomadic dwellers and the seemingly functionless informal spaces they inhabit, these photographs unsettle Pani's functionalist vision of a disciplined urban landscape and population.

By combining aerial and ground level shots, Rulfo's photographs juxtapose panoramic views of the city's modernising landscape with glimpses of its poorest inhabitants living precariously in the environs of the old railyards. The distinction between these alternative perspectives of urban reality is illuminated by Michel de Certeau in his essay 'Walking in the city' (1984). Using the dualistic framework of the 'concept' city and the 'textured' or '*migrational*' city, de Certeau contrasts the orderliness of the city when surveyed from a height, with the movements of city dwellers on the ground who complicate its legibility.[25] Viewing Manhattan from the top of the World Trade Centre, de Certeau describes how this elevated position establishes him as 'a solar Eye, looking down like a god'.[26] De Certeau's perception of this view 'from above' as a kind of detached all-controlling gaze, echoes Roland Barthes's observation that from the top of the Eiffel tower: 'one can feel oneself cut

24 V. Novelo and S. López Ramos, *Etnografía de la vida cotidiana* (Mexico City: M.A Porrúa, 2000), p. 123.

25 M. de Certeau, 'Walking in the city', in S. During (ed.), *The Cultural Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 126–33, at p. 128.

26 Ibid., p. 127.

off from the world and yet the owner of a world'.[27] Like Barthes, who claims that this vantage point allows one to 'transcend sensation and to see things *in their structure*', de Certeau's elevated perspective accentuates the structural definition of the territory below by reducing the city's streets and buildings to a rigid and highly legible 'text' or 'texturology'.[28] De Certeau describes how this meticulously ordered view of the city, which he identifies with the gaze of the all-seeing urban planner or architect, is challenged by spatial strategies of resistance enacted by the improvised movements of the everyday pedestrian on the ground.

For the purposes of the documentary project, Rulfo and Gavaldón were granted access to a helicopter in order to view the new installations from height. By integrating aerial perspectives, Gavaldón's film not only showcased the success of contemporary urban modernisation but also the technologically advanced forms of urban cartography available at the time. In the 1920s, aerial photography had revolutionised urban planning in Mexico by enabling urban planners to form 'una idea exacta y concreta de la clase de construcciones y del valor de éstas' [an exact and concrete idea of the type of constructions and their value].[29] Advances in aviation and cartographic technology resulting from Mexico's participation in World War II during the administration of Ávila Camacho (1940–6) enabled aerial photography companies to offer contemporary planners more precise and comprehensive methods of visualising urban territories. This totalising perception of the city is conveyed in Rulfo's photographs of the pristine new installations in the Terminal del Valle de México and other aerial shots of buildings such as the Lotería Nacional tower, one of the city's first skyscrapers, on the corner of Rosales and Ejido (today Avenida de la República), where his elevated perspective reduces these urban spaces to a legible design of interlocking geometric forms. Siegfried Kracauer's assertion that in aerial images 'all spatial configurations are incorporated into the central archive in unusual combinations which distance them from human proximity' is reflected in the reduction or total elimination of human presence from these photographs.[30]

Urban migrations

In Rulfo's ground-level shots, this muted geometric stability is unsettled by human agitation. Like de Certeau's 'spatial practitioners', whose 'moving,

27 R. Barthes, 'The Eiffel Tower', in *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*, trans. R. Howard (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 3–17, at p. 17.

28 R. Barthes, 'The Eiffel Tower', p. 3; De Certeau, 'Walking in the city', p. 127.

29 F. Atúnez Echegaray, 'La foto-topografía aérea y sus aplicaciones prácticas', *Planificación*, 5 (Jan. 1928): 13.

30 S. Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays,* trans. T.Y. Levin (London: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 62.

Figure 1.2. Intersection at Calle de la Santa Veracruz. (Photo: Juan Rulfo, reproduced with the kind permission of the Fundación Juan Rulfo, Mexico City.)

intersecting writings compose a manifold story . . . shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces', Rulfo's subjects on the ground trouble the structural integrity of the 'conceptual city' devised by post-revolutionary architects and planners through their constant and unregulated movement.[31] In most of these photographs, human activity is concentrated around the railway tracks, which constitute a point of confluence for the intersecting paths of local pedestrians. Indeed, in the 2014 published collection, an entire section entitled

31 De Certeau, 'Walking in the city', p. 128.

'*Crucero*-Crossing' is dedicated specifically to photographs documenting this ebb and flow of human movement at the intersection between the railway and the adjoining roads.[32] The range of angles used by Rulfo suggest that the photographer was as restless as the city-dwellers he photographed; constantly clambering onto static carriages or crouching on the ground by the rail lines. Technical aspects of these photographs accentuate the elusiveness of their subjects. In a number of these images, the rapid movement of the pedestrians produces a blurring effect that obscures certain body parts. This motion blur effect is most pronounced in a photograph taken at Calle de la Santa Veracruz in Colonia Guerrero, where the figure of a man who has just run across the junction is barely perceptible as he slips out of the visual field on the left hand side (fig. 1.2). Dramatically blurred by his rapid movement, his body resists both visual definition and containment within the frame of the photograph.

The vague and fleeting human forms captured in these photographs recall the manner in which spectral figures move through the village of Comala where a 'gentío de ánimas ... andan sueltas por la calle' [a crowd of souls ... roam loose in the street].[33] Like the phantasmal nomads of *Pedro Páramo* or the wandering peasants of the short stories 'Nos han dado la tierra' [They Gave Us the Land], 'Talpa' and 'Paso del Norte' [The Northern Pass], the shrouded figures of Rulfo's photographs are ever in transit, slipping between the tracks or other gaps in the built environment. This interstitial positioning of the body, which features as a recurring motif in the photographs of the published collection, is significant in the context of Pani's plans for a structurally totalised urban landscape.[34] Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow note that if the panoptic strategies of control outlined by Foucault are to function, space 'must be ordered; there should be no waste, no gaps, no free margins; nothing should escape'.[35] In Rulfo's photographs, however, it is precisely these gaps in the built environment that his subjects appear to seek out. In a photograph taken at Tacuba, a man and a woman move along the confined passageway between a line of tank cars and a dilapidated adjacent building. Hemmed in by the train barriers on one side and a crumbling wall on the other, they nimbly navigate their way between the

32 It is interesting to consider Rulfo's literary and photographic engagement with the theme of human migration in light of autobiographical details. He recalled a period in 1940 'cuando anduve en la vagancia recorriendo el país' [when I lazily travelled, traversing the country] and worked as a travelling salesman for Goodrich Euzkadi between 1947 and 1953. Rulfo also worked as a migration officer during the 1940s in Mexico City and Guadalajara between 1941 to 1946 (Rulfo cited in A. Vital Díaz, *Noticias sobre Juan Rulfo,* p. 59).

33 J. Rulfo, *El Llano en llamas, Pedro Páramo, Castillo de Teayo* (Barcelona: RM Verlag, 2011), p. 204.

34 Erica Segre also notes Rulfo's use of the 'interstice' in his photography of Mexico City in her book *Intersected Identities.* See E. Segre, *Intersected Identities: Strategies of Visualisation in 19th and 20th Century Mexican Culture* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007), p. 135.

35 P. Rabinow and H.L Dreyfus, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 154.

piles of rubble and wire obstructing their path. In another at Tacuba station, a man walks towards the camera between an illuminated box car and the wall of the station building, a compositional structure that is replicated in several other photographs of rail workers and children standing between halted carriages and derelict station buildings. Due to Rulfo's careful use of framing and manipulation of light in these photographs, his human subjects not only slip between built spaces but also between darkness and light, at times becoming almost entirely consumed by the shadows.

The politics of visibility

The thematic and formal qualities of Rulfo's photographs can be situated within a broader attempt by mid-century photographers and cinematographers to renegotiate state authorised strategies of visualisation in the capital. In their photographs of displaced rural emigrants and other marginalised city dwellers of the 1940s, photojournalists such as Héctor García and Nacho López built on the stylistic innovations of influential practitioners such as Manuel Álvarez Bravo to configure a more challenging photographic aesthetic founded on visual irony and ambiguity. Mid-century cinematographers cast an equally critical eye on Mexico's uneven modernisation process in films that attributed a symbolic function to the built landscape. In *Los olvidados* [*The Forgotten Ones*] (1950), Luis Buñuel's brutally realistic cinematic portrait of morally depraved children inhabiting the Nonoalco slums, the intended function of modernist architecture as a tool of social reform is undermined as scenes of depravity and violence unfold in the shadow of skeletal high rise tower blocks awaiting construction. Architectural backdrops again allude to the contradictions of urban modernity in other films of the same decade such as Bunuel's subsequent film *La ilusión viaja en tranvía* [*Dreams Travel by Tram*] (1953) and Ismael Rodríguez's *Maldita ciudad* [*Damned City*] (1954) where Pani's *multifamiliares* feature prominently.

In Rulfo's photographs, the tension between state-authorised and alternative modes of visuality is reflected in the juxtaposition of aerial and street photography. While his panoramic images of the new terminal and the city's skyline are bathed in a sterile white light that stresses the formal rigidity and cleanliness of the urban landscape, Rulfo's ground level shots dwell on those crepuscular spaces to the margins of the tracks.[36] In its preoccupation with the shadowy recesses of the rail yards, Rulfo's photographic aesthetic opposes the principles of luminosity and visibility that defined functionalist design. During the early part of the century, Le Corbusier's architectural paradigm sought to replace the morally depraved and unhygienic dank slums of the 19th-

36 Paulina Millán claims that Rulfo took his photographs of the new installations at noon to ensure maximum luminosity. P. Millán, 'Juan Rulfo entre vías y trenes', in J. Rulfo, *En los ferrocarriles: fotografías*, pp. 29–34, p. 32.

Figure 1.3. Courtyard of tenement basement in Colonia Guerrero. (Photo: Juan Rulfo, reproduced with the kind permission of the Fundación Juan Rulfo, Mexico City.)

century city with a transparent cityscape consisting of buildings that would be 'composed with light.'[37] As light deficiency and poor ventilation were among the main causes of health problems in Mexico City during the industrialising years of the 'Miracle', Pani stressed the importance of natural illumination as one of the basic requirements of public architecture. By replicating Le Corbusier's grid format for the Conjunto Urbano, Pani drew on the hygienic and morally cleansing connotations of natural light, but also used transparency as a strategy for behavioural reform by including expanses of window that enhanced the external visibility of its inhabitants. The architect's 1950 article, which is accompanied by several black and white photographs of indistinct figures inhabiting shanty huts and dank tenements, reveals a profound phobia

37 Le Corbusier, *La chapelle de Ronchamp: The Chapel at Ronchamp*, trans. D. Pauly (Paris: Fondation Le Corbusier; Boston: Birkhauser Verlag, 1997), p. 113.

of those bodies lurking in the unchartered corners of the capital. The architect refers to Plaza de Romita in Colonia Roma as a 'nidero de ladrones, de borrachines, de mujerones obesas y sucias' [a nest of thieves, drunkards and filthy obese women] and despairs of existing low-rent housing blocks, which he describes as 'oscuros, estrechos, reinos del chisme y del pleito' [dark, narrow, a kingdom of scandal and brawls].[38]

Several of Rulfo's photographs seem to intentionally play on this anxiety surrounding the visibility of urban bodies, by foregrounding human activity in the concealed enclaves of the rail yards and their environs. In a photograph taken in Colonia Guerrero, Rulfo captures two women standing at the foot of a stairway in a dimly lit courtyard of a tenament basement (figure 1.3). Clothes hanging loosely from an overhead washing line provide a phantasmal correlative to the photograph's human subjects. While our gaze is initially drawn to these two figures positioned to the centre of the patio, previously undetected bodies gradually materialise from the surrounding space as we continue to strain our eyes. A third female figure, partially obscured by the clothes, can be seen descending the stairs and the outline of a fourth can just be glimpsed behind the woman standing by the sink. In a similar manner, the nebulous figures of two other children can be discerned further along the corridor behind the two girls seated to the right of the stairway. The angle and timing in this photograph again accentuates the ambiguity of urban bodies and spaces that stubbornly resist total visualisation.

Urban indeterminacy: informal space in the anti-functional city

In photographs such as this, Rulfo directs our gaze to the everyday human narratives unfolding in the spaces that Pani deemed a threat to the spatial order of the city. A certain tenderness characterises his photographs of women and children huddled beside makeshift constructions at the margins of the Tlatelolco tracks and of children sitting amidst shanty huts constructed of parts of disused carriages and scrap metal in the Tacuba rail yard. For Pani, the erasure of these seemingly parasitic irregular settlements in favour of the spatially efficient *multis* was integral to the 'proceso general de regeneración' [general process of regeneration] in the capital.[39] By 1955 the Departamento del Distrito Federal [Department of the Federal District] had demanded the abolition of all *asentamientos irregulares* [irregular settlements] and the systematic eviction of squatters in an effort to maximise spatial efficiency. Commonly referred to as 'wastelands', 'dead zones' and 'urban voids', derelict urban interstices such as alleys, underpasses and abandoned railway yards have

38 M. Pani, 'Penicilina para la ciudad', pp. 311–12.

39 M. Pani, 'Conjunto Urbano Nonoalco-Tlatelolco. Regeneración urbanística de la ciudad de México', *Arquitectura/México*, 72 (1960): 185.

historically been considered evidence of the failure of urban development as they obstruct the structural totality and utility of the functional modern city.[40] More recently, however, urban theorists such as Andrea Mubi Brighenti have pointed to the politically active nature of these seemingly functionless non-spaces by suggesting that 'interstitial territorialities can only be appreciated by taking into account the dynamics of power and resistance, of fluidity and boundedness, of mobilities and moorings, of smoothness and striatedness that occur in the contemporary city'.[41] Brighenti's understanding of interstices as porous or 'loose' zones in the urban environment can be related to the medical term interstitium, which refers to the fluid-filled gaps located between the functional parts of a tissue or organ that facilitate the transit of proteins and nutrients. Considered in the context of the biological analogies popularised by urban theorists such as Le Corbusier, urban interstices can thus be read as unfixed zones connecting the city's 'functional' components. Brighenti identifies the interstice's unfixity as the source of its potentiality, asserting that 'understanding interstitiality as porosity – literally, "possibility of ways" – may therefore suggest an approach to the city that stresses the many spatial modes in which a plurality of social differences associate'.[42] In a similar vein, Ignasi de Solà-Morales has interpreted the city's ambiguous unused territories or *terrain vague* as a 'space of the possible, of expectation'.[43] By using the French phrase to define those spaces that 'exist outside the city's effective circuits and productive structures', Solà-Morales integrates the ideas of vacancy (derived from *vacuus*) and indeterminacy, blurring and oscillation (from *vagus*) that characterise these undefined territories.[44] This sense of urban vagueness, which for Solà-Morales is bound to 'expectations of mobility, vagrant-roving, free-time, liberty', pervades Rulfo's photographs which dwell on the interstitial and informal spaces of the city and their errant ill-defined inhabitants.[45] In accentuating these amorphous aspects of the urban landscape, Rulfo's urban vision deconstructs the functionalist anatomical analogy of the tightly regulated organism and instead evokes the biological concept of the interstitium as a flexible space of movement and fluid exchange within the urban body.

40 G. M. Doron, 'The dead zone and the architecture of transgression', *City*, 4 (2) (2000): 247–63, 247.

41 A.M. Brighenti, Introduction to *Urban Interstices: The Aesthetics and the Politics of the In-Between,* ed. A. Mubi Brighenti (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. xv–xxiv, at p. xvi.

42 Ibid., p. xix.

43 I. de Solà-Morales, 'Terrain vague', in M. Mariani and P. Barron (eds.), *Terrain Vague: Interstices at the Edge of the Pale* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 24–30, at p. 26.

44 Ibid., p. 26.

45 Ibid, p. 26.

Architecture and historical reflexivity in Rulfo's photography

Rulfo's visual documentation of the capital during this phase of urban restructuring in the 1950s is reflective of his broader fascination with Mexico's built landscape. According to Víctor Jiménez, Rulfo wrote approximately 400 texts of varying length on Mexican buildings and archaeological sites and photographically traced the evolution of the country's architecture from its Mayan pyramids and 16th-century buildings to the skyscrapers of the Paseo de la Reforma.[46] Jiménez claims that these architectural structures provided Rulfo with a means of comprehending Mexico's historical experience, noting that:

> Hay en sus fotos sobre la arquitectura mexicana una relación, igualmente, con la que fue una de sus pasiones: la historia de México; es decir el conocimiento de su gente, su territorio y aquellos testimonios que la actividad de los hombres ha dejado en nuestro suelo a lo largo de los siglos.[47]
>
> [His photographs of Mexican architecture similarly relate to what was one of his passions: Mexican history; that is the knowledge of his people, his region and those testimonies which have been left by human activity on our land over the centuries.]

As suggested by the recurring focus on pre-colonial and colonial ruins in his texts and photographs, Rulfo viewed this history as an ongoing cycle of oppression:

> Yo creo que si hay un constante en la historia de México, esa constante, a partir de la Conquista, está caracterizada por una lucha de los pocos contra los muchos, por una guerra contra el pueblo. De aquí la espantosa desigualdad que no ha podido ser resuelta.[48]
>
> [I think that if is there is a constant feature in Mexican history, from the Conquest onwards, it is characterised by the struggle of the few against the many, a war against the people. This is the root of the terrible inequality which has not yet been resolved.]

In his photographs of the soon-to-be demolished rail yards, Rulfo again looks to the ruin in order to reflect on Mexico's more recent historical trajectory during a phase of increasing state authoritarianism. The industrial aesthetic of Pani's Conjunto Urbano and its spatially restrictive design encapsulated the shifting values of the post-revolutionary state as it resurrected the Porfirian ideals of 'order and progress'. The derelict railway yards it was to replace had once functioned

46 V. Jiménez, 'Juan Rulfo: literatura, fotografía e historia' in *Juan Rulfo. Letras e imágenes* (Mexico City: Editorial RM, 2002), pp. 17–27, at p. 22. Although Rulfo's descriptions of architecture were not published at the time, a selection is included in *Juan Rulfo. Letras e imágenes*.

47 V. Jiménez, Introduction to *Arquitectura de México: fotografías de Juan Rulfo* (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994), p. 1.

48 'Juan Rulfo y Fernando Benítez hablan sobre los indios', *México Indígena*, special anniversary edition (Dec. 1978): 259–60, at p. 260.

as key industrial centres during the Díaz dictatorship when the locomotive was established as the symbol *par excellence* of material progress.[49] In the late 19th century, the new railway lines concentrated around the northern areas of Buenavista, Nonoalco and Santiago Tlatelolco brought cohesion and industrial connectivity to the modernising city. Rather than foreground the terminal and the capital's other new concrete monuments to progress, Rulfo's lens lingers on these remnants of Porfirian modernity in a way that also provokes critical reflection on Mexico's relentless quest for national renovation.

Rulfo's interest in architectural decay as a tool for historical reflection recalls Walter Benjamin's theorisation of the ruin in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. 'In the ruin,' Benjamin writes, 'history has physically merged into the setting. And in this guise history does not assume the form of the process of an eternal life so much as that of irresistible decay'.[50] Like the urban interstices discussed by Brighenti and Solà-Morales, Benjamin identifies the anti-utilitarian and structurally indeterminate ruin as a politicised and active space that can stimulate critical thought. As decomposing matter exposes history as a process of ongoing decay rather than uninterrupted progress, ruins facilitate a productive critique of modernity. In a similar way, Rulfo presents the city's crumbling rail yards as politically charged spaces that invite reassessment of the concept of revolutionary progress in 1950s Mexico. Elaborating on Benjamin's observations, Svetlana Boym highlights the reflexive nature of the 'critical ruin gaze' that points at 'imperfections, gaps and eccentricities that disturb architectural and teleological designs'.[51] Positioned between presence and absence, past and present, the ruin itself embodies a spatio-temporal interstitiality. Boym's assertion that this unfixity of the ruin prompts us to reflect on a 'past that could have been and a future that never took place', highlights a prospective aspect to the ruin gaze that is captured in Rulfo's photographs of the capital's derelict rail yards.[52] By accentuating the structural indeterminacy of these urban territories and the elusiveness of their inhabitants, these images formally unsettle Pani's spatially rationalised architectural design and its panoptic strategies of control. While the forms of urban navigation they explore serve little purpose as real political strategies for their ultimately disenfranchised subjects, these photographs open up spaces in the functionalist landscape where a productive critique of these disciplinary urban practices can take place.

49 See M. Matthews, *The Civilizing Machine: A Cultural History of Mexican Railroads, 1876–1910* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013).

50 W. Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (London and New York: Verso, 1985), pp. 177–8.

51 S. Boym, 'Ruins of the avant-garde: from Tatlin's tower to paper architecture', in J. Hell and A. Schönle (eds.), *Ruins of Modernity* (London: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 58–85, 79–80.

52 Ibid., p. 58.

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2. The interstitial spaces of urban sprawl: unpacking the marginal suburban geography of Santiago de Chile

Cristian Silva

The existing literature on urban sprawl has mainly focused on its built-up dimension. This is to say that it has generally overlooked the emergence of a marginal, undefined, undeveloped and apparently inert geography composed of 'interstitial spaces' that play a less visible but crucial role in suburban transformations. Planners' sustained concern with housing shortages has focused attention on built-up space leading to less attention being paid to the interstices.[1]

In this context, interstitial spaces destabilise institutional orthodoxies as they emerge as outcomes of less controlled processes in planning with unregulated (alternative) modes of social appropriation and unexplored environmental values. Although somehow invisible, socio-spatially marginalised, delinked from the urban fabric, apparently inert, abandoned, undeveloped, and physically deteriorated, they ultimately offer an alternative point of entry into the study of (sub)urbanisation.[2] This is particularly relevant considering the quantitative significance of these spaces, and their socio-environmental dimensions, which emerge when they are occupied by marginalised groups (such as the homeless).[3]

Suburban interstitial spaces can take the form of abandoned industrial zones, areas of countryside, agricultural plots, landfills, brownfield sites, security buffers, abandoned buildings, closed military facilities, derelict public spaces and underused land, geographically restricted spaces, and others. While fundamentally different, then, they are all significant as elements that increase the spatial complexity of suburban areas and therefore demand new political,

1 A. Piorr, J. Ravetz and I. Tosics (eds.), *Peri-Urbanisation in Europe. Towards European Policies to Sustain Urban-Rural Futures* (Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, 2011).

2 N. Phelps and C. Silva, 'Mind the gaps! A research agenda for urban interstices', *Urban Studies*, 55 (2017): 1203–22. ,

3 A. Mubi Brighenti, *Urban Interstices: The Aesthetics and The Politics of The In-between* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

C. Silva, 'The interstitial spaces of urban sprawl: unpacking the marginal suburban geography of Santiago de Chile', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 55–84.
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economic and socio-environmental investigations into what these spaces are, and what they could be.

Although the presence of 'interstitial spaces' is clear, their definition is conceptually ambiguous as the debate on suburbanisation is still controversial in terms of values and impacts.[4] This is partly because of difficulties in delimiting an urban area, but mainly due to the tension between differing ideological interpretations which situate urban sprawl either within wider narratives of economic growth or of socio-environmental sustainability. While these spaces are inherently uncertain or ambiguous, it has nevertheless been proposed that they offer alternatives for changing residential trends and the promotion of more multifunctional landscapes.[5] Additionally, urban sprawl is recognised as a dynamic process of urban development where different expressions of suburbanisation can take place even within the same geographical area.[6] With this in mind, interstitial spaces can also be marginalised for a period of time until they become attractive for further (sub)urbanisation, or simply formalised as controlled spaces in formal plans and regulations.

Despite the differences to which I previously referred, the consensus raised from morphological studies describes urban sprawl as characterised by land fragmentation and environmental discontinuity,[7] precisely because of the interstitial spaces that lie between developments that indirectly (and almost undetectably) influence suburbanisation at different levels.[8] This paradoxical situation has previously been described by Rodrigo Vidal, who stated that cities are composed of urbanised fragments and an inevitable set of inter-fragmentary (and divergent) spaces.[9] Such an understanding broadens the agenda of urban studies, as that which we understand as the *built environment* is not only defined by what is done (or built) but also that which necessarily remains following apparently well-controlled processes for the 'production of

4 P. Gunnar Roe and I.-L. Saglie, 'Minicities in suburbia – a model for urban sustainability?', *Form Akademisk-Research Journal of Design and Design Education*, 4 (2) (2011): 38–58; E. Charmes and R. Keil, 'The politics of post-suburban densification in Canada and France', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 39 (3) (2015): 581–602.

5 N. Phelps, *Sequel to Suburbia: Glimpses of America's Post-suburban Future* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015); R. Bruegmann, *Sprawl: A Compact History* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2006).

6 N. Phelps, *An Anatomy of Sprawl. Planning and Politics in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2012).

7 L. Inostroza et al., 'Urban sprawl and fragmentation in Latin America: a dynamic quantification and characterization of spatial patterns', *Journal of Environmental Management*, 115 (2013): 87–97; H. Romero and F. Ordenes, 'Emerging urbanization in the Southern Andes: environmental impacts of urban sprawl in Santiago de Chile on the Andean Piedmont', *Mountain Research and Development*, 3 (2004): 197–201.

8 R. Sousa Matos, 'Urban landscape: interstitial spaces', *Landscape Review*, 1 (2009): 61–71.

9 R. Vidal, 'Fragmentos en tensión: elementos para una teoría de la fragmentación urbana', *Revista Geográfica de Valparaíso*, 30 (1999): 149–80.

the space'.[10] This is to say that formal planning processes which aim to define concrete spaces for specific functions (commercial, residential, infrastructural, and so on) are inevitably accompanied by a residual dimension in which alternative processes of production, appropriation and significance can flourish. On this basis, it is possible to assert that urban sprawl is unconsciously defined (or created) by that which is apparently marginal to it: *interstitial spaces*. By extension, I would also suggest that 'interstitial spaces' can also become sites of creativity through their ability to host alternative modes of occupation, due to their still unexplored ecological contents, and their diverse spatial configurations. It should be noted that this argument neatly coincides with the description of 'marginality' provided in the Introduction to this volume (pp. 21–2), and many of the subsequent chapters explore the 'creative' processes I have just described. Within this chapter, however, it is space itself which is foregrounded, and therefore the central questions which I seek to answer are: what are these interstitial spaces and how do they emerge? Are interstitial spaces mere marginal outcomes of less controlled processes in planning? Or do they have an influence on suburban transformations?

By highlighting the significance of the built environment from its interstitial condition, and the production of non-urbanised space through planning regimes of control, my argument is that interstitial spaces provide an alternative entrance into the study of urban sprawl from its specifically marginal dimension. Therefore, in this chapter, I first revise the debate on urban sprawl to confirm the lack of attention – including different conceptual approaches – to what I call 'interstitial space' in order more fully to account for the whole spectrum of suburban residues. Secondly, I discuss the relative marginal character of the interstices considering such spaces from different planning and socio-environmental perspectives. Finally, I empirically illustrate the interstitiality of Santiago de Chile in order to unpack the series of determinants that explain their presence and demonstrate that, although marginalised, they are fundamental to formal planning rationalities as active elements of Santiago's suburban transformation. I conclude that suburban sprawl is equally composed of both built-up areas and suburban interstices, and that interstitial spaces only become marginal in the light of hegemonic orthodoxies in planning, mainly driven by the housing debate.

The interstitial dimension of urban sprawl

Urban sprawl has been largely discussed as a multifaceted phenomenon closely related to issues of suburbanisation, (post)suburbanisation, peri-urbanisation

10 N. Brenner and S. Elden, 'Henri Lefebvre on state, space, territory', *International Political Sociology*, 3 (2009): 353–77.

and fragmentation of fringe/belt areas.[11] Although there is still an open debate in terms of the origins, impacts and ideological meanings of urban sprawl,[12] current scales of suburbanisation describe new patterns of regional fragmentation, socio-spatial diversification, dispersion of workplaces, functional self-sufficiency, and the emergence of more polycentric landscapes.[13] What is clear is that urban sprawl is a continuous process of urban transformation which functions more like a verb than a noun. This has been reinforced by several scholars who resist the idea that sprawl is a 'static' phenomenon, arguing that one of the main constraints in our understanding and analysis is that sprawl is frequently viewed as an endless and unchanging landscape of low-density residential neighbourhoods which experience pollution, environmental fragmentation, car dependency and a lack of services.[14] Such theorists now attempt to focus contemporary debates on the transformation of metropolitan areas by considering urban sprawl as a continually changing process – which can even illustrate different dynamics within the same region – that shapes an independent geographical unit that deserves its own planning approach.[15] On this basis, urban sprawl emerges as a permanent scenario for innovations in land-use governance, infrastructure and socio-environmental sustainability that reconceptualises the urban–rural interface beyond traditional dichotomous divisions between suburbia and the countryside, and planning orthodoxies based on bi-dimensional conceptions of land-use that include land fragmentation as a value.[16]

This degree of fragmentation is highly defined by different empty and undeveloped spaces between built-up areas, that which I have referred to here as 'interstices'. Although these spaces determine the physical discontinuity of sprawl, they are nevertheless insufficient to classify a sprawling area as the

11 G. Galster et al., 'Wrestling sprawl to the ground: defining and measuring an elusive concept', *Housing Policy Debate*, 4 (2001): 681–717.

12 Phelps, *An Anatomy of Sprawl*; M. Polidoro et al., 'Environmental impacts of urban sprawl in Londrina, Paraná, Brazil', *Journal of Urban and Environmental Engineering*, 2 (2011): 73–83; Romero and Ordenes, 'Emerging urbanization in the Southern Andes'.

13 N. Phelps and F. Wu, *International Perspectives on Suburbanization. A Postsuburban World?* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); M. Burger and E. Meijers, 'Form follows function? Linking morphological and functional polycentricity', *Urban Studies*, 5 (2012): 1127–49.

14 M.E. Ducci and M. Gonzalez, 'Anatomía de la expansión de Santiago, 1991–2000', in A. Galetovic and P. Jordán (eds.), *Santiago. Dónde estamos y hacia dónde vamos* (Santiago: Centro de Estudios Públicos), pp. 125–46.

15 A. Wandl et al., 'Understanding the planning of open-spaces in territories in-between: Dupuy's network urbanism approach applied to areas in-between urban and rural', *RSA European Conference: 'Networked Regions and Cities in Times of Fragmentation: Developing Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Places', Delft, The Netherlands, 13–16 May, 2012* (Regional Studies Association, 2012).

16 N. Gallent and D. Shaw, 'Spatial planning, area action plans and the rural-urban fringe', *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 5 (2007): 617–38.

latter also depends on other factors related to land fragmentation.[17] Empirical studies suggest that the 'sprawl index'[18] is influenced by interstitial spaces but also territorial boundaries, the scale of analysis and historical patterns of urban growth,[19] which means that an area currently labelled as 'sprawl' may not be so in coming years, or conversely, compact suburban villages can become sprawling in the future. In this context, the series of interstitial spaces are also a matter of uncertainty as what is currently seen as 'undeveloped' may not be so over time.

Beyond its instrumental relevance, the literature on urban sprawl hardly acknowledges the presence of these supposedly marginal spaces, the interstices. If considered at all, they appear as conceptually ambiguous, functionally useless, or as spatial leftovers, simple political residues of uncontrolled processes of urban expansion with unknown values. Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, for instance, argue that many of these spaces are outcomes of 'splintering urbanism', by-products of heavy infrastructures of connectivity that create marginal interstices with unexplored potentials to reconfigure the urban fabric. These are the cases of the spaces between (or under) motorways, railways, electric lines, or security buffers around industrial and military facilities, for instance (fig. 2.1).[20] Somehow, they lie behind planning priorities or are simply difficult to integrate considering their property regimes, infrastructural conditions, scale, location, physical restrictions and the multiple political forces involved in their reconversion.[21]

Within fringe/belts areas, interstices appear as part of a complex patchwork of built-up and unbuilt lands that coexist with countryside and agricultural functions.[22] Beyond acknowledging their presence, the literature on these spaces is fragmentary and somewhat erratic. It refers to differing sorts of undeveloped/vacant lands but their definitions appear to be contradictory or only useful for

17 A. Nelson, 'Comparing states with and without growth management analysis based on indicators with policy implications', *Land Use Policy*, 16 (2) (1999): 121–7; R. Bruegmann, *Sprawl: A Compact History* (Chicago, IL:University of Chicago Press, 2006).

18 The 'Sprawl Index' is an indicator for measuring the degree of physical, spatial and functional dispersion of a suburban area. It helps to distinguish 'urban sprawl' from 'urban growth' (and other patterns of urban expansion), including at least eight variables: *Density, Continuity, Concentration, Clustering, Centrality, Nuclearity, Mixed Uses and Proximity.* Other empirical studies consider land consumption, travel miles and environmental fragmentation that determine different levels of 'compactness' or 'dispersion'. See Galster et al., 'Wrestling sprawl to the ground'.

19 G. Hess et al., 'Just what is sprawl, anyway', *Carolina Planning,* 26 (2) (2001): 11–26; L. Inostroza et al., 'Urban sprawl and fragmentation in Latin America'.

20 S. Graham and S. Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition* (London: Routledge, 2001).

21 C. Silva, 'The infrastructural lands of urban sprawl: planning potentials and political perils', *Town Planning Review*, 88 (2017): 233–56.

22 M. Hebbert, 'Urban sprawl and urban planning in Japan', *Town Planning Review*, 57 (2) (1986): 141.

Figure 2.1. An infrastructural interstice between Cerrillos and Pedro Aguirre Cerda communes. This is a boundary area composed of high-speed motorways, a railway line, derelict spaces, a canal and electric lines (author's photo, May 2014).

a narrow array that does not recognise the varied geographical spectrum of the interstices. This conceptual constraint determines that pieces of countryside, farmlands, brownfields, landfills, geographical restrictions, speculation lands, security buffers, infrastructural areas, industrial facilities and others, cannot be elements of a coherent geography, methodologically simplified for further analysis.

One approach to this suburban interstitiality is proposed by Thomas Sievert with his conception of 'in-between space'. Although etymologically speaking 'in-between' suggests empty or underused spaces between urbanised areas, Sievert actually uses the term to describe the entire suburban landscape as a territory located between the consolidated city and the open countryside – which is indeed the urban sprawl itself. Understood in this way, the term becomes ambiguous and redundant, unable precisely to describe suburban interstitiality.[23] Another approach is the idea of the 'undeveloped space'. Although highly debatable, 'undeveloped' – or 'undevelopable' – space, refers to physical handicaps that impede urbanisation. Some farmlands, hills and industrial plots fit into this category.[24] The term 'vacant lands' describes

23 T. Sieverts, *Cities without Cities: An Interpretation of the Zwischenstadt* (Routledge, 2003); Wandl et al., 'Understanding the planning of open-spaces in territories-in-between'.

24 H. Wolman et al., 'The fundamental challenge in measuring sprawl: which land should be considered?', *The Professional Geographer*, 1 (2005): 94–105; D. Theobald, 'Land-use

industrial obsolescence and spaces often reclaimed for regeneration or infilling policies. It illustrates infrastructural decay, 'brownfields' or simply abandoned industrial facilities.[25] 'Open spaces' are also discussed as gaps in the urban fabric, both those which are integrated and those which are marginalised. Nevertheless, the term generally has positive connotations related to the socio-environmental benefits they provide as social venues, and the positive function they serve in reducing the impacts of natural disasters.[26]

The notion of 'wildscape' also appears in the literature as a term which describes undeveloped areas that host some kind of wildlife. The term is employed in a broad sense and refers to abandoned spaces which contain very different expressions of flora and fauna; even those found in abandoned buildings, ruins or unattended facilities where the city's forces of control are absent and spontaneous natural activities can flourish.[27] Despite the seemingly negative connotations invoked by the term, 'wastelands' similarly refers to abandoned, marginalised and forgotten spaces characterised by exuberant flora and fauna with aesthetic and ecological benefits. Referring to these spaces, Matthew Gandy coined the term 'marginalia' to describe wastelands that offer strong sensorial stimulation, define their own aesthetic character, and which feature spatial flexibility and retain some material fragments of the past.[28] 'Non-urbanised-areas' (NUAs) is another term which refers to the ecological attributes of marginal and undeveloped spaces. It highlights their ecological contents, biochemical and socio-economic properties that support narratives of sustainable development and ecological modernisation. It includes farmlands and any possible expression of green infrastructure.[29]

From a morphological viewpoint, 'inter-fragmentary space' refers to any undeveloped space between urbanised areas. It is derived from Vidal's definition of cities as agglomerations of 'fragments' that presuppose the presence of 'inter-

dynamics beyond the American urban fringe', *Geographical Review*, 3 (2001): 544–64.

25 K. Foo et al., 'Reprint of the production of urban vacant land: relational placemaking in Boston, MA neighborhoods', *Cities*, 40 (2014): 175–82; J.O. Ige and T.A. Atanda, 'Urban vacant land and spatial chaos in Ogbomoso North local government, Oyo State, Nigeria', *Global Journal of Human-Social Science Research*, 2 (2013): 28–36.

26 A. M. Barkasi et al., 'Urban soils and vacant land as stormwater resources' *World Environmental and Water Resources Congress 2012: Crossing Boundaries* (2012): 569–79; T. Kurz and C. Baudains, 'Biodiversity in the front yard: an investigation of landscape preference in a domestic urban context', *Environment and Behavior*, 2 (2012): 166–96.

27 A. Jorgensen and R. Keenan, *Urban Wildscapes* (London: Routledge, 2012); J. Kitha and A. Lyth, 'Urban wildscapes and green spaces in Mombasa and their potential contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation' *Environment and Urbanization*, 1 (2011): 251–65.

28 M. Gandy, 'Marginalia: aesthetics, ecology, and urban wastelands', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 6 (2013): 1301–16.

29 P. La Greca et al., 'Agricultural and green infrastructures: the role of non-urbanised areas for eco-sustainable planning in a metropolitan region', *Environmental Pollution*, 8 (2011): 2193–2202.

fragmentary spaces'.[30] On the one hand, these spaces are not necessarily marginal as they can be fully connected to the urban fabric. On the other hand, they become marginal if these connections are spatially and functionally weak. In this sense, the marginal condition of inter-fragmentary space is highly dependent on the characteristics of its relationship with its surroundings. For Vidal, these spaces are illustrated by the backyards of commercial buildings where rubbish bins are located, for instance, or parking areas for trucks and other heavy vehicles. Within the larger urban scale, the idea of 'drosscape' coined by Alan Berger connects with Graham and Marvin's idea of 'splintering urbanism' as it, too, describes residual landscapes created by heavy infrastructure – such as the spaces below motorways or bridges – all by-products of transport infrastructure. The difference between them, however, is that Graham and Marvin explain these residual spaces as outcomes of institutional asymmetries and power, while Berger argues that residual landscapes emerge inevitably from the lack of spatial sensitivity in infrastructural design. These infrastructural spaces are therefore institutional leftovers that remain outside regulations and norms and thus, become not only spatially but also institutionally marginalised.[31] Ignasi de Solá-Morales' *terrain vague* is similarly used to describe marginal spaces defined by industrial obsolescence, abandoned facilities or industrial areas without activities or functions, characterised by a strong sense of 'emptiness'. They are also undefined (a 'form of absence') without fixed limits or predictable destinations.[32] In this vein, the urban marginality described by Solá-Morales is not only a present condition but also refers to the future.

Although the aforementioned approaches to urban sprawl acknowledge the presence of undeveloped, less-developed, empty or inert urban spaces, they are too specific, partial or they simply do not fully explain the condition of urban sprawl as an area composed of a whole landscape of marginal spaces. It is for this reason that a wider conceptualisation is proposed through the idea of the 'interstitial space', as it more generically refers to a space, a physical entity or an interval of time, between two or more elements or events. This condition is intrinsically 'in-between' and thus presupposes surroundings – or at least boundaries – that confine its unitary nature.[33] Moreover, the marginal condition of interstices remains part of their intrinsic nature and discloses

30 R. Vidal, 'Fragmentos en tensión', in R. Vidal, *Fragmentation de la ville et nouveaux modes de composition urbaine* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002) pp. 5–7.

31 A. Berger, *Drosscape: Wasting Land in Urban America* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007).

32 I. de Solà-Morales, *Territorios* (Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2002).

33 The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines an 'interstice' as '*An intervening space (usually, empty); esp. a relatively small or narrow space, between things or the parts of a body (frequently in pl., the minute spaces between the ultimate parts of matter); a narrow opening, chink, or crevice*' (www.oed.com/view/Entry/98353?redirectedFrom=interstice#eid).

unexplored socio-environmental potentials for a wider comprehension of the suburban landscape as a whole.

The relative social marginality of the (sub)urban interstices

As discussed, interstitial spaces are intrinsically part of the urban sprawl phenomenon and although marginal, they are spatially and environmentally diverse. As varied as the city itself, the interstices differ in their origins, spatial and physical characteristics, functional performance, levels of occupation and socio-environmental potentials. They also vary regarding their relation to their surroundings. For example, some interstices are spatially stable but their surroundings change over time and, thus, their relative marginality varies concomitantly with their degree of integration. On the other hand, it can be the suburban context which can be particularly standardised while the interstitial spaces it contains can be spatially and functionally different. While some interstices in this example are physically well-defined (such as fenced-in, undeveloped private properties, former industrial areas or military facilities) others are characterised by blurred boundaries where the city penetrates them in different ways (abandoned lands, unfenced farmlands or natural reserves, for example). From this dual conception of interstitial space we can see that it contains a latent and relative marginality which is malleable and plastic, inherently unstable, and which depends not only on their own characteristics but also on the wider dynamics of the suburban process.

In planning, the idea of 'interstitial space' has occasionally been invoked to describe the marginal by-products of urban sprawl which are oftentimes reclaimed for further urbanisation. Jamal Mohammadi, for instance, asserts that suburban sprawl describes several 'interstices' which can be utilised for alternative functions such as agricultural or infilling policies.[34] Similarly, Nick Gallent and Dave Shaw explain how rural–urban fringes attract the attention of policy makers and provide opportunities to manage the inherent complexities of urban 'interstitial landscapes'.[35] Rute Sousa Matos argues that 'interstitial spaces' should be reclaimed for new developments, functions and activities and, thus, integrated into the urban fabric.[36] Gandy uses the term 'interstitial place' for unregulated spaces full of valuable information about local nature which is transferable among citizens.[37] Anna Jorgensen and Marian Tylecote coined the term 'interstitial wilderness' to refer to sites where humans can develop relationships with nature, such as woodlands, abandoned

34 J. Mohammadi et al., 'Urban sprawl pattern and effective factors on them: the case of Urmia City, Iran', *Journal of Urban & Regional Analysis*, 1 (2012): 77–89.

35 N. Gallent and D. Shaw, 'Spatial planning'.

36 R. Sousa Matos, 'Urban landscape: interstitial spaces'.

37 M. Gandy, 'Interstitial landscapes: reflections on a Berlin corner', in M. Gandy (ed.), *Urban Constellation* (Jovis, 2011), pp. 149–52; Gandy, 'Unintentional landscapes'.

allotments, river corridors, brownfield sites and any space where vegetation grows spontaneously.[38] In these approaches, it is implicitly suggested that the interstices should be integrated into planning regimes by considering their present condition of marginalisation in one way or another.

Despite these attempts to address the marginal condition of interstitial spaces, it normally prevents them from assuming a more visible position in planning agendas. That is, unless they become socially active, politically urgent, or economically attractive. Thus, many interstices are overlooked, undervalued or entirely ignored (within formal institutional representations and by private developers alike), precisely because the groups that occupy them are marginal or simply not a factor within land market appraisals. Ali Madanipour, for instance, states that public spaces in marginal areas of the city 'are not in the list of priorities to be dealt with by local authorities, whether in terms of political legitimacy, the economic competitiveness and social cohesion of the city or its image of marketability'.[39] Similarly, Andrea Mubi Brighenti highlights the relevance of interstitial spaces as trenches from which marginal groups can express critical views of the societal establishment. He also argues that interstices are shelters that provide protection from institutional repression and provide a certain stability to families and groups that cannot afford formal housing, for instance. This is to say that interstices are gaps within formal regimes where marginal but strong reactions against formal and mainstream society can take place. These interstices are also characterised by the new relationships between their occupants and the built environment that they produce. Considering that the spatial configuration of these spaces do not follow formal planning criteria, urban design or architectural stereotypes, these relations are manifested differently, and therefore trigger the emergence of new forms of socialisation and understandings of nature, social interaction and urban space.[40] This is what happens, for instance, in places where abandoned land becomes a playground, a space of exploration or intimacy, a shortcut between neighbourhoods or an improvised social venue.

Considered together, what these arguments make clear is that interstices are sometimes spaces of 'no interest' to planning regimes and are not considered to participate in the urban dynamic. In sharp contrast, however, when they are occupied by marginal groups they become visible and operational as counteractions against suppressive forms of urbanisation determined by formal planning. This is to say that, precisely because the interstices are initially invisible and ignored spaces, they attract marginal groups outwith the view

38 A. Jorgensen and M. Tylecote, 'Ambivalent landscapes – wilderness in the urban interstices', *Landscape Research*, 4 (2007): 443–62.

39 A. Madanipour, 'Marginal public spaces in European cities', *Journal of Urban Design*, 9 (3) (2010): 269.

40 A. Mubi Brighenti, *Urban Interstices: The Aesthetics and the Politics of the In-Between* (London: Routledge, 2016).

of planning regimes, whose actions paradoxically make them visible sites of resistance.

Expanding on this social dimension, Forrest Stuart argues that cities across the globe increasingly concentrate homeless populations in marginal interstices. These operate at smaller scales in peripheral areas – where they take the form of hidden spaces between buildings – or at the neighbourhood scale where larger groups extend their survival networks against marginalisation. At a similar scale, the term 'interstitial space' has been used in architecture to describe any marginal space where alternative functions can take place. This usage of the term normally focusses on artistic interventions, installations and manifestations against political orthodoxies such as segregation or the invisibility of minorities.[41] Ajay Garde expands on this use of the term, arguing that temporary uses of marginal suburban spaces provide secure stages for political claims, for the vindication of community values, but also for expressions of identity that lie beyond marketable views of urban life. For these reasons, Garde argues that interstitial spaces are important in shaping a more complete representation of the urban landscape.[42]

As they develop, larger interstices can become restricted environments which only local residents and their supportive network can access. In such cases, formal and informal actors exert considerable influence on how these spaces (in terms of spatial character but also with regard to policies and social regulation) can be reintegrated to formal planning regimes of control.[43] In other cases, these 'interstices' – although formally produced – operate as an instance of informal practices exercised by new users, which alter their morphology from formal to informal with the addition of physical structures and materials that support these new uses of the space. After a while, these interstices describe their own unique morphology that alters the image of the formal urban space.[44] They are similarly described as 'zones of transition' for immigrants where they can learn about local culture and undergo processes of adaptation better to prepare for integration into a different society. Such 'zones' take the form of peripheral slums where people receive economic and social support, information and shelter from local inhabitants while waiting for the approval of formal housing applications. Simultaneously, the new residents can enrol their children in schools, access public services and are protected from

41 P. Shaw and J. Hudson, 'The qualities of informal space: (re)appropriation within the informal, interstitial spaces of the city', *Proceedings of the Conference Occupation: Negotiations with Constructed Space* (Brighton: University of Brighton, 2009).

42 A.M. Garde, 'Marginal spaces in the urban landscape: regulated margins or incidental open spaces?', *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 18 (1999) : 200–10.

43 F. Stuart, 'From "rabble management" to "recovery management": policing homelessness in marginal urban space', *Urban Studies*, 9 (2014): 1909–25.

44 K. Dovey, 'Informal urbanism and complex adaptive assemblage', *International Development Planning Review*, 4 (2012): 349–68.

discrimination. This is the case of several slums in the city of Antofagasta, Chile, for instance, where immigrants from Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Venezuela live in informal interstices as they wait for formal inclusion of different kinds.[45] These frequently assume the form of residual spaces between industrial facilities, roads, canals and informal shelters typically found in peripheral areas.[46]

From these multiple social references to the term, it is clear that the 'interstice' emerges as a marginal space that provides shelter for alternative societal relations, or becomes a space of and for creativity, or simply contains the potential to become something else. As they are invisible to formal regimes, they attract marginalised groups and are configured as flexible trenches for alternative mechanisms of survival and social expression. In Abaleron's words, 'this marginality – social, economic, political, and ecological – leads them to locate in areas where there is little or no resistance to an informal appropriation of land'.[47] Although it does not mean that interstices are physically invisible, they become economically and politically unattractive unless societal reactions turn them into a focus point of conflict that can eventually destabilise societal inertias. Yet once interstices are socially constructed, their occupants have shown diverse abilities to survive in ways that defy regulatory frameworks of control and planning expectations.[48]

From an environmental perspective, what is defined as a marginal, ambiguous or simply 'undeveloped' space that does not participate in formal regimes of urban development can be a well-defined 'ecotone', that is, a clear zone of transition between two or more ecological communities.[49] This suggests that the character of interstitiality can be distilled from its social character but also from its contribution to political ecology, ecosystem services, green-infrastructure, urban agriculture, natural capital and regional policy inter alia, in which their marginal condition is relative to their ecological contents.

By focussing on these environmental qualities, it becomes clear that one way to reverse the marginality of the interstices is to view them as sites which house alternative forms of nature and expressions of wildlife.[50] From this perspective, the interstices serve a crucial function in reducing the effects of natural disasters, above all in highly densified areas lacking natural surfaces for facing

45 P. Flores, 'Migración y vivienda: apuntes para la política pública', *Revista CIS, Centro de Investigación Social de Techo Chile*, 22 (2017): 7–9.

46 S. Tonnelat, '"Out of frame" the (in)visible life of urban interstices – a case study in Charenton-Le-Pont, Paris, France', *Ethnography*, 3 (2008): 291–324.

47 C.A. Abaleron, 'Marginal urban space and unsatisfied basic needs: the case of San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina', *Environment and Urbanization*, 1 (1995): 98.

48 M.P. Smith, *Marginal Spaces* (London: Transaction, 2004).

49 E. Pleasants Odum and G. Barrett, *Fundamentals of Ecology*, vol. 3 (Philadelphia, PA: Saunders, 1971).

50 R. Lafortezza et al., 'Green infrastructure as a tool to support spatial planning in European urban regions', *iForest-Biogeosciences and Forestry*, 3 (2013): 102–8.

storm events, or for the evacuation of the population during earthquakes or similar disasters.[51] Thus, it is possible to combine the marginal character of the interstices – socially and politically defined by mechanisms of exclusion – with their environmental aspects and thus to define them socio-environmentally as an alternative infrastructure that deserves its own place in planning agendas. In this vein, it is worth investigating the extent to which planning rationales encompass the formation of interstitial spaces by considering their social and environmental characteristics.

Determinants of Santiago's interstitial spaces

The capital city of Chile – Santiago – shares common patterns of urban growth with many Latin American cities.[52] Although 'urban sprawl' as a term belongs to the Anglo-Saxon literature, it constitutes a comparable process to that which in Santiago is often invoked as 'urban dispersion',[53] 'urban fragmentation',[54] 'metropolitan expansion',[55] 'suburbanisation',[56] or simply 'dispersed urban expansion'.[57] More specifically, Santiago's growth is clearly characterised by a fragmented suburban morphology, permanent expansion to outer zones, and the presence of different interstitial spaces between built-up areas.[58] Empirical studies critically characterise Santiago's sprawl as the main driver of socio-environmental and residential segregation, poverty concentration, territorial disparities, increases of travel times and inefficient land uses.[59] Considering these impacts, in the last thirty years planning policies have focused on restraining

51 D.La Rosa and R. Privitera, 'Characterization of non-urbanized areas for land-use planning of agricultural and green infrastructure in urban contexts', *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 1 (2013): 94–106; Barkasi et al., 'Urban soils and vacant land'.

52 Inostroza et al., 'Urban sprawl and fragmentation'.

53 D. Heinrichs et al., 'Dispersión urbana y nuevos desafíos para la gobernanza (metropolitana) en América Latina: el caso de Santiago de Chile', *EURE*, 104 (2009): 29–46.

54 F. Link, 'From polycentricity to fragmentation in Santiago de Chile' *Centro-h, Revista de la Organización Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Centros Históricos,* 2 (2008): 13–24.

55 C. De Mattos, 'Santiago de Chile, globalización y expansión metropolitana: lo que existía sigue existiendo', *EURE*, 76 (1999): 29–56.

56 C. De Mattos, 'Metropolización y suburbanización', *EURE*, 27 (2001): 5–8.

57 M.E. Ducci and M. González, 'Anatomía de la expansión de Santiago, 1991–2000', in A. Galetovic and P. Jordán (eds.), *Santiago. Dónde estamos y hacia dónde vamos* (Santiago de Chile: Centro de Estudios Públicos), pp. 125–46.

58 C. Rojas et al., 'Understanding the urban sprawl in the mid-size Latin American cities through the urban form: analysis of the Concepción metropolitan area (Chile)', *Journal of Geographic Information System,* 3 (2013): 222–34; Heinrichs et al., 'Dispersión urbana'; Inostroza et al., 'Urban sprawl and fragmentation in Latin America'.

59 X. Gainza and F. Livert, 'Urban form and the environmental impact of commuting in a segregated city, Santiago de Chile', *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 3 (2013): 507–22; F. Sabatini et al., 'Segregación residencial en las principales ciudades chilenas: tendencias de las tres últimas décadas y posibles cursos de acción', *EURE,* 82 (2001): 21–42.

Santiago's sprawl by establishing different instruments of control – such as the 'urban limit' and the recently incorporated 'Urban Zones of Conditioned Development' (ZODUC) – and infilling policies for the series of marginal interstices that offer good location and land capacity for further urbanisation. However, interstices have always been present as they are generated as inevitable incidental by-products of urban development.[60] These large (though marginal) interstitial areas now occupy a substantial proportion of urban land.

As will be argued in this chapter, while 'interstitial spaces' are an unintended consequence of the planning process, they are now expected as the inevitable outcome of the same process. This means that, while they have historically failed in controlling undesirable urban sprawl, planning mechanisms simultaneously create distortions that lead to further land fragmentation and thus, the emergence of more interstitiality. This contradictory nature is understood as the failure of 'command and control' rationales upon market-driven planning regimes (fig. 2.2).[61]

Santiago's sprawl describes a range of interstitial spaces recognised by planners, policy-makers, developers, politicians, residents and the specialised literature as both marginal and also valuable. On the one hand, they are marginal as they are still found outside planning regimes or simply undeveloped. On the other hand, they are synonyms for spatial diversity and land capability for changing suburban inertias of low-quality urbanisation and socio-residential segregation. The nature of the interstices found in Santiago closely resemble those already described and include agricultural and industrial lands, brownfields, landfills, public spaces, geographical restrictions, conurbation zones, former airports, military facilities, small-scale farming areas, research centres, infrastructural spaces and security buffers. Some of them are currently well located near

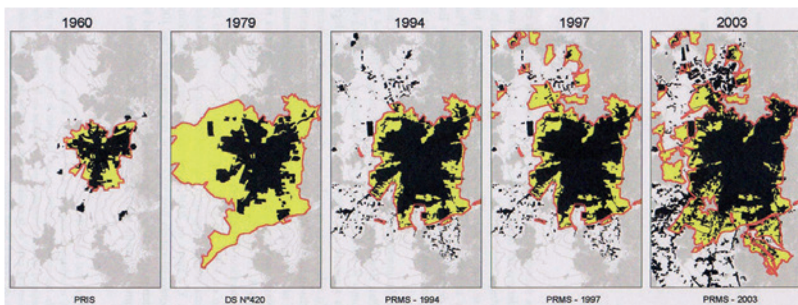

Figure 2.2. Historical expansion of Santiago (Galetovic, 2006).

60 Garde, 'Marginal spaces in the urban landscape'.

61 P. Gross, 'Santiago de Chile (1925–1990): planificación urbana y modelos políticos', *EURE,* 52 (1991): 27–52; Phelps, *An Anatomy of Sprawl.*

transport, energy supply, services and populated surroundings, making them attractive for both public and private investments.[62]

The determinants of Santiago's interstices are varied and interlinked, and are mainly tied to growth regulations or the absence of urban regeneration policies. These determinants are mainly placed in a planning system that operates upon individual initiatives on outer lands which are separated from the peri-urban fringes. Regarding inner interstices, reconversions are still embryonic, partially successful, considered to be expensive, inefficient or socially unaffordable and thus, not viable without a well-defined regeneration policy.[63] Furthermore, land liberalisation, the inclusion of outer rural villages and the absence of taxation instruments for empty lands contribute to land fragmentation and dispersed growth that leave interstices outwith the remit of planning agendas and thus not considered within mainstream policy debates over housing or infrastructural provision. Excluded in this manner, interstitial spaces come to define their own dynamics while becoming marginalised, or are considered in contested narratives of integration that emphasise market trends or the reinforcement of public benefits.[64] This is the case at the site called 'La Platina' within the La Pintana commune, for instance, where the large empty site (c. 300 hectares) emerges as an opportunity to create more services, public spaces and recreational areas that integrate local residents. However, at the same time, the private sector views this area as full of potential to create more private and social housing developments. A similar situation is described for the area in front of La Platina called 'Campus Antumapu', which is a property belonging to the Universidad de Chile intended for educational purposes. The land capacity and lack of physical restrictions are perceived as suitable for housing developments by both the private sector and central authorities. However, the university describes the place as suitable for hosting parks and sport facilities. Simultaneously, the municipality see the place as an opportunity to *stop* social housing developments with the associated concentration of poverty and would prefer instead to dedicate the area to private development that would attract more middle-class people to the communal boundary. Finally, local residents see the place as a 'piece of countryside' that provides beauty, peace and green areas useful for their leisure and social encounters.[65]

62 M.E. Ducci, 'Área urbana de Santiago 1991–2000: expansión de la industria y la vivienda', *EURE*, 85 (2002) pp. 187–207.

63 Interview with the Director of Environmental Management, Municipality of La Pintana, 25 June 2014.

64 Interview with General Director, Ministry of Public Works – MOP, Former Director of Urban Project 'Ciudad Parque Bicentenario – CPB', MINVU, 14 May 2014; Siavelis, 2008; Roberts, 1994; Fernández and Vera, 2012.

65 Interview with Director of the Department of Regional Planning, Metropolitan Regional Government of Santiago (GORE), 6 May 2014; interview with Director of Research and Development at La Platina, National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIA), Ministry of Agriculture, La Pintana commune, 12 May 2014; interview with architect in charge

The first condition that determines Santiago's interstitiality pertains to the understanding of 'undeveloped' land. For instance, developers contend that an 'interstitial space' does not necessarily mean 'empty', 'disintegrated' or 'undeveloped'. It could be fully urbanised but still lacking in density in comparison with its surroundings. Thus, it can be a 'built-up space' but still perceived as a 'gap' when the land capacity is taken into account. Similarly, land that can be formally labelled in plans as 'urban' is not necessarily 'urbanised' and thus can remain literally empty or undeveloped for years. In fact, for developers there are no clear (or absolute) distinctions between 'empty', 'undeveloped', 'underused' or 'interstitial' as they could all be marginalised areas from the planning perspective – regardless of their degree of emptiness – with a clear need of infrastructural improvements. These are the cases of low-density areas located near railway services or motorways.[66] By extension we can deduce that the first determinant of interstitiality is not the physical or spatial condition of a place, but the way in which the place is perceived within the context of its surrounding urban fabric.

The so-called 'atomisation of properties' also triggers interstitiality in Santiago. Increasing land subdivision leads to the creation of clusters of small properties that affect large-scale interventions. Differing interests among landowners also impede the implementation of services such as supermarkets, schools, health services or any other infrastructure that requires larger parcels of land. This is a scenario where some landowners agree to develop their land but others do not, creating landscapes interspersed with interstices and pseudo-developed areas.[67]

Increasing land privatisation also occasions legal disputes related to heritage and future land uses. While in litigation, plots remain in stalemate for years and effectively become 'interstitial'. These situations trigger more land-marginalisation, and after a while, uncompleted buildings or abandoned lands become common elements of the suburban landscape of Santiago. In some cases, temporary parking areas emerge as a 'meanwhile profit' that somewhat restores the visibility of these interstices and provides a certain degree of activity. The scarcity of larger unified plots, however, and the negotiation capacities among private owners make the reconversion of large interstitial spaces almost impossible. Again, outer lands become 'easy lands' considering plot sizes, lack

of Infrastructural Development, Campus Antumapu, Faculty of Veterinarian Sciences, Universidad de Chile, La Pintana commune, 16 May 2014; interview with the Secretary of the Committee of Neighbours, Villa San Ambrosio III, commune of La Pintana, 13 June 2014.

66 Interview with Honorary Advisor and real estate developer, Chilean Chamber of Construction – C.Ch.C. 27 May 2014.

67 Interview with Honorary Advisor and real estate developer, Chilean Chamber of Construction – C.Ch.C., 27 May 2014; interview with Director of Irrigation and member of the Agricultural Cooperative 'José Maza' at 'Huertos Obreros y Familiares' [Worker and Familial Orchards], La Pintana, 10 June 2014.

of restrictions, and the unified interests of landowners for real estate projects, which overcome arguments in favour of keeping agricultural activities near the city.[68] This is particularly relevant in Chile given that around 80 per cent of the population have become private home-owners, a direct outcome of the strong promotion of private property as a socially transversal commodity.

At a regional scale, Santiago's suburban interstitiality is defined by conurbation zones. These link main urban areas with outer villages and towns. Within this context, partial regulations from different institutional frameworks coexist – without equal attributions on land management – and are often defined by differing interests at technical and political levels.[69] These interstitial zones are mainly driven by transport infrastructure and alternations between planned and *de facto* developments that describe a pseudo-urbanised landscape where different uses are interspersed with undeveloped lands. The rural area between Santiago and Padre Hurtado, for instance, is a recognised conurbation where agricultural activities coexist with railway services, industrial facilities and housing developments that mutually undermine both agricultural production and further suburbanisation.[70]

For the Ministry of Agriculture, rural suburban spaces – such as farmlands and small scale agricultural plots – appear as a result of a 'gap of governance' that are administratively outside the urban scope but progressively urbanised.[71] A case in point is the previously mentioned area of 'La Platina' within La Pintana commune – still labelled as 'rural' – which has been earmarked for agricultural research under the regulation of the Ministry of Agriculture. However, the area is already surrounded by social housing developments and included within the communal urban area. As 'urban', then, it is subject to regulations which govern street maintenance, security and future destinations and this triggers tensions with the Ministry of Housing. Simultaneously, the municipality also has some influence on the maintenance and future destination of this area, and its plans focus on the area's socio-environmental values as 'empty' or simply open space for local residents. Finally, local residents organise a series of activities in the place – sometimes with the authorisation of the municipality – to use it for sport and temporary celebrations such as Independence Day,

68 Interview with Secretary of the 'Ciudad Parque Bicentenario – CPB' Project, SERVIU, MINVU, 14 May 2014; interview with Honorary Advisor and real estate developer, Chilean Chamber of Construction – C.Ch.C., 27 May 2014.

69 R.Krzysztofik et al., 'Is the suburbanisation stage always important in the transformation of large urban agglomerations? The case of the Katowice conurbation', *Geographia Polonica,* 2 (2017): 1–15.

70 D. Boccardo, 'Tensiones de una triple vocación urbana: San Bernardo en su proceso de absorción por Santiago de Chile' *Territorios en formación*, 2 (2012) pp. 7–20; Ducci and Gonzalez, 'Anatomía de la expansión de Santiago'.

71 Interview with National Secretary of Agriculture (SEREMI 2010–2014), 13 May 2014; Jirón and Pazderka, 1999.

Christmas or school visits. In this sense, local communities also have a tension with institutional representations both local and central.[72]

Other cases are some suburban vineyards – mainly located to the south of the city – where wine production is constrained by the surrounding urbanisation. This ambiguity also extends to industrial land outside the jurisprudence of the Ministry of Housing and Urbanisation (MINVU). This is the case at the gravel pits of La Florida-Puente Alto – a series of extraction wells located in the communal boundary of La Pintana and Puente Alto – under the jurisprudence of the Ministry of Mining. However, as the pits are also immersed in the urban area they are also regulated by the Ministry of Housing and local plans defined by the two municipalities. Similarly, and as previously noted, the 'Campus Antumapu' describes a trapped interstitial space that still hosts educational land uses related to agricultural research. Another case that deserves closer attention is the so-called *Huertos Obreros y Familiares* [Workers and Familial Orchards] – also located within La Pintana – created in the 1940s to provide food for local families that remains as a farming space (figure 2.3). These interstices are still undeveloped lands, but they are entirely surrounded by urbanised areas despite their agricultural and industrial remit, and are therefore constrained by a series of ambiguities in governance, functionality and urbanisation pressures. In the case of the gravel pits, for instance, their industrial performance is based on the extraction of raw material that is then used in the construction industry (mainly sand and stones). However, due to their residential surroundings, the industrial functionality is a cause of tension with neighbours who constantly make claims to the authorities regarding road maintenance, air pollution, dust, rubbish, noise, and other offences of different kinds (the area is dark at night and lacks electricity), accidents (people have fallen down the wells), the presence of heavy trucks and missing people inter alia.[73]

Santiago's interstitial spaces are also outcomes of a lack of political will that derive from a lack of cross-sector coordination to develop large-scale areas at different levels, above all municipal interactions related to shared communal boundaries. Boundary areas between municipalities are critical spaces as they appear as territories of interaction between populations that live in one municipality but work in the other, for instance. In functional terms, it means that, if services belonging to a specific municipality are placed in the boundary area, they also serve the neighbouring population. This defines municipal boundaries as politically ambiguous territories, as local mayors prefer to target their interventions at their own constituency, which is to say the population already enrolled as taxpayers and voters within the communal boundary. Thus,

72 Interview with the Director of the Department of Environmental Operations. Municipality of La Pintana, 10 June 2014; interview with Director of Community Organizations at Municipality of La Pintana, 10 June 2014.

73 Interview with National Director of Urban Development, MINVU, 05 May 2014; interview with the Urban Planner and Advisor of Puente Alto Municipality, 30 May 2014.

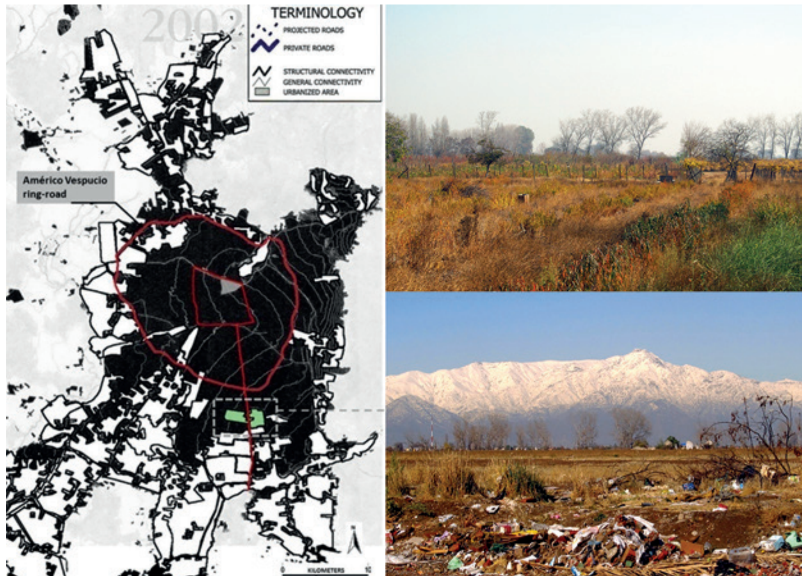

Figure 2.3. Map of Santiago and the location of La Platina and Campus Antumapu sites, La Pintana commune (left). View of Campus Antumapu (top right). View of La Platina site (bottom right) (Author's map based on Echeñique, 2006; Author's photos, May 2014).

they tend to place new services in central areas to be sure that local residents perceive the benefits of their political leadership at the next election. For this reason, boundary areas become politically abandoned territories, only of interest to central government that use them for regional infrastructure (motorways and railway services) or metropolitan land uses such as shopping malls, industry or large-scale public spaces that rely on centralised maintenance. This is the case, for instance, of the motorways placed in the boundary area between the communes of Pedro Aguire Cerda and Lo Espejo.[74] This is more critical in cases where the local authorities of different municipalities are politically misaligned, which is to say that they belong to different parties.[75]

Santiago's interstices are also outcomes of the lack of maintenance of open spaces. This affects private and public lands equally such that, eventually, they become derelict, marginal and occupied by informal groups.[76] One of the factors that influence the maintenance of these areas is the annual

74 L.E. Bresciani, 'Chile 27F 2010: la catástrofe de la falta de planificación', *EURE*, 108 (2010): 151–3; T. Chuaqui and P. Valdivieso, 'Una ciudad en busca de un gobierno: una propuesta para Santiago', *Revista de ciencia política (Santiago)*, 1 (2004): 104–27.

75 Interview with architect and consultant in charge of the urban design of 'Parque Bicentenario' in CPB project, Montealegre-Beach Architects, 9 May 2014.

76 Interview with funder member and partner of URBE Consultants, 12 May 2014.

evaluation of public expenses that define the base for next year's expenditure. If empty spaces are not part of a politically meaningful project – designed to accomplish political goals before the conclusion of the four-year presidential period – they will not be included within the annual budget and thus, their reconversion and maintenance becomes difficult.[77] Such spaces include squares and parks that after certain periods become abandoned. There are also larger agricultural sites – such as vineyards or research centres – that are not subject to infrastructural maintenance, security, rubbish removals, street cleaning and other services. This is particularly ambiguous in large-scale private properties surrounded by low-income neighbourhoods, as landowners argue that the surrounding residents informally occupy their sites, throw rubbish, misuse the space for illegal activities, and thus, that the land should be maintained using the public budget. However, local authorities argue that cleaning, security and other services cannot be provided as this is a private property.[78] Ultimately, the land enters into an increasingly deteriorating condition that affects the overall quality of the suburban space.

For some scholars and policy-makers, the set of technical instruments and regulations that configure the Chilean planning system are key factors in determining suburban interstitiality. One of these instruments is the so-called 'urban limit' that circumscribes lands for future developments. Although designed to control dispersed suburbanisation, the urban limit affects the price of included lands (as they become automatically 'urban') and stimulates urbanisations on cheaper outer properties that leave empty spaces in between. Marco López argues that the 'urban limit' is a disturbing tool as the division of land into 'urban' and 'rural' by an arbitrary line increases its value without any input from, or extra cost for, the owner. This in turn encourages landowners to change the function of those portions of land outside the urban limit as their profitability increases with real estate development. In these operations, several areas of land are left empty as elements of financial speculation and, thus, in an interstitial condition that remains for years.[79] This fragmentation is also encouraged by developers as current regulations do not include any impact fees for keeping in-between lands undeveloped while they accrue value over time.[80]

'Restriction zones' also define the presence of suburban interstices in Santiago. The term 'restriction' identifies an area with restricted accessibility. Important examples in Santiago are military bases or industrial lands,

77 J. Barton and J. Kopfmüller, 'Sustainable urban development in Santiago de Chile: background–concept–challenges', in D. Heinrichs, K. Krellenberg, B. Hansjürgens and F. Martínez (eds.), *Risk Habitat Megacity* (Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer, 2012), pp. 65–86.

78 Interview with consultant at the National Service of Environmental Evaluation, Ministry of Environment, 14 May 2014.

79 Interview with consultant at the National Service of Environmental Evaluation, Ministry of Environment, 14 May 2014.

80 M. López, 'Expansión de las ciudades', *EURE*, 8 (1981): 31–42

ecological reservoirs and geographical handicaps considered as dangerous for permanent or temporary activities (for example, areas that are water-flooded or contain unstable slopes). This nomenclature is also used to protect private properties under risk of informal occupation.[81] However, the understanding of a 'restriction area' can change over time based on technical assessments or changes in geographical conditions. In the case of Puente Alto commune, for example, most of the restriction zones are slopes with 20 per cent inclines, which are considered to be inappropriate for urban developments. However, this situation is under revision because the area is physically suitable for urbanisation if certain mitigations are considered.[82] In this vein, the condition of an area as 'restricted' is debatable, particularly so for construction firms based on technical improvements and the financial support for basic facilities that allow further development. Despite this, areas that are 'restricted for exclusive uses' can still be considered as interstitial due to the fact that land use changes can take around six years to complete.[83]

Another factor that determines the presence of interstitial spaces is their financial performance as undeveloped land. This is to say that this land can be used for speculation as it will accrue value over time, especially with the arrival of services and infrastructure.[84] It is important to note that in Chile there are no tax restrictions for empty land. This clearly reflects a neoliberal nation state where land is one of the most valuable commodities. However, although the benefits of land speculation are considered to be automatic, these operations perform differently in poor areas as the acquisition of land for services, housing or infrastructure depends upon the consumption power of the area. Interstitial spaces in poor areas are only attractive for public investments, and it is difficult to keep them well maintained.[85] Nevertheless, central authorities perceive the absence of impact fees as a perverse incentive, while developers see them as a financial stimulus to encourage urban regeneration schemes.[86] Overall, land speculation in Chile is a matter of debate as it historically elicits contradictory discussion of the right to private property and the way in which this right leads to different forms of corruption and political interference.[87] This was clarified

81 Interview with resident of Villa San Gabriel, La Pintana commune, 13 June 2014; Melo, 1996.

82 Interview with urban planner and advisor, Puente Alto Municipality, 30 May 2014.

83 Interview with Minister of Housing, Urbanization and Public Lands, 2001–2004, 03 June 2014; interview with general manager of Urban Studies at Chilean Chamber of Construction, 22 May 2014.

84 L.A. Vergara, 'El Estado subsidiario y sus políticas urbanas: la expulsión de los estratos bajos de la ciudad', *GeoGraphos*, 5 (2014): 146–66.

85 Interview with National Director of Urban Development, MINVU, 5 May 2014.

86 Interview with urban planner and advisor, Municipality of El Bosque, 28 May 2014; interview with Senator for the VIII Circunscription de Santiago Oriente, 22 May 2014.

87 Interview with National Director of Urban Development, MINVU, 5 May 2014.

by different studies which examined how policy frameworks were reshaped to stimulate investments and the acquisition of well-located land, resulting in the expulsion of local communities from their areas of origin. This phenomenon is closely examined by Ernesto Lopez in his studies of 'gentrification' that evince how the entire political and financial machinery created the conditions for land-speculation on empty plots in Santiago de Chile, principally because land was explicitly understood as a financial commodity:

> Land plots are generally acquired in advance by developers seeking to fully capitalize the ground rent increased by the externalities generated by public investments or rezoning. In Santiago's inner city, the number of properties awaiting redevelopment largely exceeds the number of properties actually developed. A report in 2006 counted a total of around 8,000 hectares of empty or underused lots within the urban parameter of Greater Santiago (this is only 500 hectares less than the entire main URSA [Urban Renewal Subsidy Area]) and a total of 1,000 hectares of abandoned or sub-utilized plots in the inner-city area (Trivelli, 2006) that produce further devaluation in their surrounding areas. This phenomenon is possible in Chile because the law against land speculation was removed by the military dictatorship (1973–1990), and regulations to control these practices have been left extremely soft by the more recent democratic governments.[88]

Several suburban interstices in Santiago are also remnants of infrastructural services. Motorways, airports, research centres, railway services, military and industrial facilities, farmlands, water treatment plants and others with decreased levels of functionality still keep their security buffers, which thus express different degrees of interstitiality. These areas cannot be expanded – and thus fall into drabness and disrepair – and are difficult to recover due to the presence of heavy facilities and pollution.[89] The communes of Lo Espejo and Pedro Aguirre Cerda, for instance, have inner railway lines and motorways that define large infrastructural spaces immersed within the suburban fabric. In Pedro Aguirre Cerda, the regional motorways Autopista Central and Autopista del Sol in the north, and Lo Ovalle Avenue in the south, define large interstitial spaces placed within communal boundaries that reinforce spatial segregation at local and metropolitan levels (figure 2.4). These interstices have a strong impact on residents' daily lives; therefore, they demand physical barriers to improve safety and pedestrian connectivity. However, security reasons and high costs leave them undeveloped and restricted to temporary uses.[90]

88 E. López-Morales, 'Real estate market, state-entrepreneurialism and urban policy in the "gentrification by ground rent dispossession" of Santiago de Chile', *Journal of Latin American Geography*, 1 (2010): 156.

89 Interview with Director of Ciudad Parque Bicentenario, CPB, 2001–2004, 15 May 2014.

90 Interview with urban planner and advisor, Municipality of Lo Espejo, 28 May 2014; interview with urban planner and advisor, Municipality of Pedro Aguirre Cerda, 4 June 2014.

Figure 2.4. The interstitial boundary space between Lo Espejo and Pedro Aguirre Cerda communes (author's photo, May 2014)

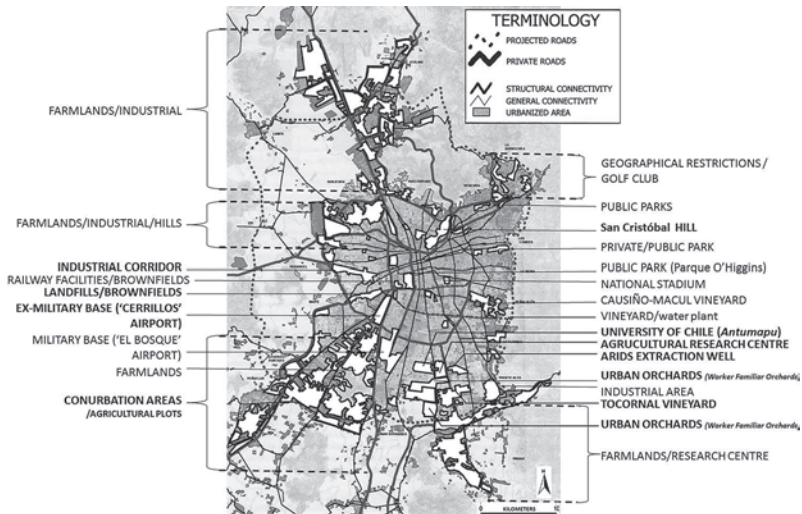

Figure 2.5. Map of Santiago and its suburban interstitial spaces (author's map based on Echeñique, 2006).

As seen, interstitial spaces within Santiago are triggered by various determinants and lead to different degrees of marginality at spatial and political levels. Although apparently inert, they show different degrees of activity linked to planning regimes of control and production within the urbanised space of the city. They illustrate the coexistence of different institutions, which have various impacts on surroundings that question their marginal condition as invisible or inert spaces excluded from suburban transformations. Although they share a general condition as 'gaps' – in physical and political terms – they resist socio-spatial standardisation as they differ in terms of origins, spatial characteristics, functions and surrounding population. Indeed, for policy-makers, scholars, residents and practitioners almost every interstitial space has its own identity, challenges and potentials that should be addressed case-by-case (fig. 2.5).[91]

Conclusions

Both built-up land and interstitial spaces define Santiago's suburban sprawl. However, while the built-up landscape tends to be homogenously characterised, interstitial spaces are varied and show different levels of marginalisation, integration, spatial consolidation, emptiness or activity that contrast with its residential counterpart. The marginalisation of interstitial spaces is always relative, dependent upon predominant orthodoxies in planning that define them as under-developed, underused or simply inert and thus suitable for land-use reconversion. However, socio-environmental approaches show that interstitial spaces can host alternative social practices performed by excluded populations and marginal groups, and potential ecologies defined by their still unexplored environmental contents.

We should be mindful of the quantitative significance of the interstices, their implications and the ways in which they are produced, as they clearly influence suburban performance. They are produced within the very core of the planning system as most of their determinants rely on absences or contradictions within formal regulations and norms. Based on the case of Santiago de Chile, it is clear that interstitial spaces are dynamically produced, and triggered by a range of interlinked determinants embedded within regulations of control. They are contained within narratives on housing shortage, land commodification, standardisation of planning instruments, ideological and political misalignments, absences of regeneration policies and the weaknesses of planning policy at local levels.

Despite the undeniable potential contained within 'interstitial spaces', their marginal condition – both spatial and institutional – illustrates the paradox of standard planning regimes: while they try to control the production of space, they simultaneously produce marginal interstices which are then assumed to be

91 Interview with Director of the School of Construction and Researcher, Universidad de la Américas, 23 June 2014.

anomalies that should be corrected. This paradox is reinforced by the fact that interstices are the expression of the inorganic character of suburban sprawl, where land-capitalisation appears as the main driver upon regulation and norms. Or rather, the very term 'inorganic character' leads to a further paradox yet to be explored in the existing literature. While some interstitial spaces are disconnected, many others are interlinked, articulated or simply close to each other. In this way, they could be considered a relational network that connects different elements of the city and articulates the entire urban fabric. Such a conception of 'interstitial space' is, of course, far closer to its anatomical, or organic, definition. Moreover, viewed in this way, the relational potential of this connective tissue would re-establish the importance of interstitiality as an essential structure for the functioning of the whole urban system, thus overcoming its marginalisation. In this light, interstitial spaces should be given far greater importance as an alternative entrance into urban studies, as they provide a more comprehensive framework for understanding urban sprawl and (sub)urbanisation processes, not only from the production of the formalised built-up space but also its more invisible and marginalised components, namely, the interstices.

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3. Cynicism and the denial of marginality in contemporary Chile: *Mitómana* (José Luis Sepúlveda and Carolina Adriazola, 2009)

Paul Merchant

The multitude is inside and outside as well as at the border.1

The history of Chilean documentary cinema demonstrates a deep and continuing concern with the possibility of linking social identity to physical forms of construction. Rafael Sánchez, a director often seen to have had a foundational role in the growth of the documentary tradition in the country,[2] offers a prime example of such an approach in *Las callampas* (1958). Sánchez's film presents the movement of people from informal settlements on the edge of Santiago (the *callampas* of the title) to the new *población* (formalised suburb) of La Victoria as a correlate to the development of 'stronger' social forms (given that Sánchez was a Jesuit priest, it is unsurprising that principal among these is the family). In *Las callampas*, the building of new, more durable dwellings (assisted by the Catholic charity Hogar de Cristo) allows the film to offer an image of society defined by notions of familial order, health and private ownership.

More recently, Ignacio Agüero's *Aquí se construye* (2000) takes the demolition of detached family houses and their replacement by towering blocks of apartments in the neighbourhood of Ñuñoa as indicative of the changing configuration of social relations within the urban fabric. Here, the movement appears to be the inverse of that described in *Las callampas*: Santiago at the end of the 20th century is a city in which the house as a reserved symbol of individual or familial identity is under threat. Agüero's camera follows the journeys of construction workers from their homes in the urban periphery to their places of work, suggesting the formation of new, more mobile social

1 J. Beasley-Murray, *Posthegemony: Political Theory and Latin America* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minneapolis Press, 2010), p. 240.

2 For instance in J. Mouesca, *El documental chileno* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2005), p. 60.

P. Merchant, 'Cynicism and the denial of marginality in contemporary Chile: *Mitómana* (José Luis Sepúlveda and Carolina Adriazola, 2009)', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: urban culture and marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 85–103. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

collectives, and, as Valeria de los Ríos argues,[3] offering the viewer a tentative cognitive map of the city.

In both cases, albeit with notably different emphases, documentary film-making is endowed with a capacity to reveal social truth via its exploration of urban space. Both films therefore engage in what Chilean critic Carolina Urrutia has termed (with reference to a narrower corpus of early 21st-century film) a poetics of construction.[4] These are works which envisage cinema as a practice of world-making, able to recreate the (spatial) experience of urban life.[5] They moreover posit the urban periphery as a privileged site for the undertaking of such projects: new identities are formed in and through this space, which is presented as both geographically and socially marginalised. The film analysed in this chapter, José Luis Sepúlveda and Carolina Adriazola's *Mitómana* (2009), fundamentally challenges this presentation of the urban periphery as 'marginal' space. My reading of *Mitómana* highlights its unstable position between documentary and fiction, and its mobilisation of a profound cynicism regarding cinema's ability to escape neoliberal logics of social production. In this case, creativity is, as we will see, deceptive rather than constructive, and this approach calls into question the terms, or even the possibility, of political film-making. In the final analysis, then, I will attempt to discern what, if any, positive suggestions might be inferred from this abrasive 100-minute film, and in doing so, will suggest a new perspective on a theoretical figure often invoked in relation to radical politics in Latin America: the multitude.

Laboured performances

Mitómana, as its title suggests, is fundamentally concerned with the difficulty of distinguishing truth from falsehood. Providing a summary of the film's events is far from straightforward: it appears to be a documentary tracking the shooting of a fiction film in Santiago's southern periphery, but around twenty minutes into the running time, the lead actress (Yanny Escobar) is ejected from the production, apparently because she refuses to shave her head. Her replacement (Paola Lattus) confusingly assumes the name 'Yanny', and proceeds to impersonate a care worker in the working-class Santiago suburb of Puente Alto (or La Pintana – the exact location is unclear), entering people's houses and engaging in a series of confrontations with the municipal authorities.

This précis may in fact give an impression of greater coherence than is the spectator's experience. The indeterminate and seemingly non-sequential nature of the film's events follows a vision of the world outlined in a voiceover by

3 V. de los Ríos, 'Mapas cognitivos de Santiago del nuevo siglo. *Aquí se construye* de Ignacio Agüero y *Play* de Alicia Scherson', *Revista Chilena de Literatura*, 77 (2010): 1–15.

4 C. Urrutia, *Un cine centrífugo: ficciones chilenas 2005–2010* (Santiago, 2013), pp. 38–41.

5 The work of Giuliana Bruno (*Atlas of Emotion* [London: Verso, 2002]) offers a critical parallel to this mode of thought.

Escobar in the opening minutes, in which she suggests that there is no clear distinction between truth and lying in acting, and that it is a form of belonging and not belonging at the same time. Escobar rejects a singular reality, stating that 'son muchas las realidades por las que hemos pasado' [we have passed through many realities], and claims that anyone can end up becoming a mythomaniac, including actresses. This voiceover can be interpreted as a parodic re-writing of the 'voice of God' narration that accompanies films like *Las callampas,* acting as a guarantor of the truth of the images presented. This is not the only convention that *Mitómana* unsettles. In what follows I will trace, in stages, a triangular relationship between labour, housing and film-making, with the intention of demonstrating how Sepúlveda and Adriazola's work upsets each of the terms in that equation. This outline will allow me, in the final part of my argument, to offer a rethinking of the concept of marginality (contesting, in particular, Vania Barraza's assertion that *Mitómana* 'produce una marginalidad' [produces a sense of marginality]).[6]

Taking in the first instance the interrelation of labour and film-making, *Mitómana*'s foregrounding of the *performance* of work (and, in particular, of service provision) means that there are no easy 'lessons' to be drawn from it. The observation that film frequently offers itself as a disguised product of occluded or 'immaterial' labour functions as a useful starting point for this discussion. Elena Gorfinkel asserts that 'all of cinema is in some sense the spectacularized product of a labor that remains consistently off-scene'.[7] Gorfinkel also cites Jonathan Beller's influential book *The Cinematic Mode of Production*,[8] which argues that cinema models a 'capitalist "attention economy", in which the spectator labors to produce cinema's value'.[9] The haunting presence of Adorno and Horkheimer's thinking of the culture industry is hard to avoid in this formulation.

The approach I propose here is somewhat different, drawing principally on Paolo Virno's theorisation of post-Fordist labour and the multitude, as well as on the rethinking of work and 'the social' in a Latin American context offered by Martín Hopenhayn. Hopenhayn in fact takes specific issue with the Frankfurt School model of the culture industry, suggesting that it is inadequate for describing recent transformations in culture and knowledge.[10] The 'multitude', a term adapted from the philosophy of Benedict de Spinoza, was taken up by 20th-century Italian autonomist Marxism as a collective subject that refuses to cohere into a singular unit or to form any pacts, 'a form of subjectivity that

6 V. Barraza, 'De cine, lucha y representación en José Luis Sepúlveda y Carolina Adriazola', *Cinémas d'Amérique latine*, 21 (2013): 130–8.

7 E. Gorfinkel, 'Introduction', *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, 53 (1) (2012): 43.

8 Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2006.

9 Ibid.

10 M. Hopenhayn, *Ni apocalípticos ni integrados: aventuras de la modernidad en América Latina* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994), p. 105.

presses revolutionary demands on all fronts, presaging capitalism's terminal crisis'.[11]

Jon Beasley-Murray has noted the multitude's relevance for studies of Latin American culture, claiming that it 'runs like a red thread through the history of Latin America, but its ambivalence is visible at every turn'.[12] Beasley-Murray thus questions the possibility and indeed desirability of the multitude as a crucial step towards Marxist revolution, as it is conceived by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri.[13] In Beasley-Murray's view, multitude subjectivity in Latin America has been as often a tool of oppressors as of the oppressed: in modern Chile, it is as much the result of Pinochet era neoliberal reforms as a mode of resistance to them. This critical conception of the term is much closer to the tone of *Mitómana*, which suggests that emergent subjectivities in contemporary urban Chile are not easily disposed towards coherent political action. Virno makes a similar point when he argues that that multitude is 'amphibian', in that 'on one hand it speaks to us of social production based on knowledge and language; on the other hand, it speaks of the crisis of the form-of-State'. He moreover denies that it has an 'interstitial' or 'marginal' character, an argument that resonates with *Mitómana*'s refusal to construct the urban margins as a clearly defined space for political or creative action, as I will argue below.[14]

Virno centres his analysis on an opposition of the multitude to the people, suggesting that the former is irreducibly plural, while the latter, historically the prevailing term, denotes a converging movement towards a 'One'.[15] In his account, the multitude demonstrates the obsolescence of the boundaries between public and private spheres which classical political thought has rigorously developed. Virno offers a definition in the following terms:

> The contemporary multitude is composed neither of 'citizens' nor of 'producers'; it occupies a middle region between 'individual' and 'collective'; for the multitude, then, the distinction between 'public' and 'private' is in no way validated.[16]

This refusal of binary constructions resonates with *Mitómana*'s vertiginous transitions between interiors and exteriors, and the merging of the categories of 'citizen' and 'producer' echoes the equivocations which Paola and Yanny voice about their role as actresses, to be discussed below. On the latter point, Virno is drawing on a series of ideas developed in his essay 'The Ambivalence of Disenchantment', which claims that in post-Fordist capitalism, the sphere

11 Beasley-Murray, *Posthegemony*, p. 229.

12 Ibid., p. 230.

13 M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004), p. 219.

14 P. Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life* (Los Angeles: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 43–4.

15 Ibid., p. 21.

16 Ibid., p. 25.

of life traditionally seen as not related to work, that of socialisation and the emotions, becomes subsumed into processes of production. In his words, the production of commodities 'subsumes and valorizes the emotional situation typical of nonwork', such that contingency, alienation and possibility are themselves professionalised, and work can no longer provide 'an objective ethical framework'.[17] As will become clear, this diagnosis is in some ways even more obviously applicable to early 21st-century Chile's neoliberal system than to capitalism in general: Beasley-Murray argues that in post-dictatorship Chile, a shift to Foucauldian biopower erases the frontier between work and play.[18] This approach may also seem fundamentally pessimistic. Yet Virno insists on the opportunities offered by this situation, even if his account of the multitude lacks the fundamental, messianic sense of *telos* present in that of Hardt and Negri (as Sylvère Lotringer argues).[19] The dissolution of ties to place and communal identity once offered by work affords a somewhat ambivalent 'abandonment to finitude and a *belonging to uprooting*, by resignation, servitude and eager acquiescence'.[20] This state of pure belonging can, in this view, 'become an omnilateral and simultaneous adhesion to every present order, to all rules, to all "games"'.[21]

One of the most unusual characteristics of *Mitómana*, aside from the near-total lack of narrative cohesion and the deliberately unrefined aesthetics, is the fact that at least part of the work involved in film-making, the emotional labour of the actors, is foregrounded. Work, therefore, appears in two registers, both of which, importantly, pertain to the realm of fiction: that of film acting, and that of impersonating a nurse, an employee of the state. Both of these activities belong to the realm of what Virno terms 'virtuosic' labour, work without a defined end product, which requires the presence of others for its completion.[22] Virno's thesis is that the post-Fordist era sees the subsumption of this sort of labour into the systems of production which are themselves now diffuse, and incorporate traits usually ascribed to political action.[23] Virno turns to a concern articulated by Marx in order to suggest that there is a

> strong resemblance between the activity of the performing artist and the *servile* duties which, thankless and frustrating as they are, do not produce surplus value, and thus return to the realm of non-productive labor.[24]

17 P. Virno, 'The ambivalence of disenchantment', in P. Virno and M. Hardt (eds.), *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics* (Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 26–7.

18 Beasley-Murray, *Posthegemony*, p. 210.

19 Virno, *Grammar*, pp. 15–6.

20 Virno, 'Ambivalence', p. 33.

21 Ibid, p. 32.

22 Virno, *Grammar*, p. 52.

23 Ibid., pp. 55–8.

24 Ibid., p. 54.

This is so, in Marx's terms, when the 'product is not separable from the act of producing'.[25] This point provides the crux of an analogy which *Mitómana*, in fits and starts, develops between the work of film acting and that of domestic service. Yanny, the first actress in the film, attempts to assert her importance to the production around 20 minutes in, when she films her own naked body with a handheld camera, in close-up and explicit detail. This sequence, filmed in a much tighter aspect ratio than the rest of the film, then cuts to a wider shot of Yanny having her make-up applied, in which a digital camera, itself being positioned to film her, appears. Yanny's voice then provides a sonic bridge to a shot in which, fully made up, she proclaims 'Yo estoy en la película. Yo *soy* la película, yo' [I'm in the film. I mean, I *am* the film]. The actress here asserts her identity with the product of her labour (the film). Yet the changes in aspect ratio and perspective that precede this moment, not to mention the generalised lack of a discernible 'style' in *Mitómana*'s erratic camerawork, leave the spectator far from certain that the film he or she is watching is the putative product to which Yanny refers. *Mitómana* presents itself as process, rather than finished product (the reflexive intrusion of the digital camera mentioned above neatly exemplifies this tendency).[26] This emphasis on process is somewhat reminiscent of Julio García Espinosa's plea for an 'imperfect cinema', '[que] lo mismo se puede hacer con una Mitchell que con una cámara 8mm' [[which] can be made just as well with a Mitchell as with an 8mm camera], and which is interested in 'mostrar el proceso de los problemas' [showing the process of problems] rather than in 'celebrar los resultados' [celebrating results].[27] What is conspicuously absent from *Mitómana*, however, is any trace of the optimism which García Espinosa's manifesto, written in 1969 Cuba, displays in the revolutionary potential of this gesture.

Labour and housing

It is clear from the start of Sepúlveda and Adriazola's film that classical divisions between work, the public sphere and politics on the one hand and leisure, privacy and domesticity on the other no longer hold: we might think here of Virno's association of the exhaustion of the public/private division with the advent of the multitude and the 'general intellect' (a term I will return to below).[28] No one in the houses and streets the directors film appears to have stable employment, and Paola's performance of work frequently leads her

25 K. Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1 (London, 1990), p. 1048, qtd. in Virno, *Grammar*, p. 53.

26 Iván Pinto claims, along similar lines, that the film's key formal procedure is 'evidenciar procesos' [to demonstrate processes]. See '*Mitómana*: un puente sin barandas', *laFuga* (2012), www.lafuga.cl/mitomana/608/ (accessed 1 Feb. 2016).

27 J. García Espinosa, 'Por un cine imperfecto', *Programa Ibermedia* (2016), www.programaibermedia.com/es/nuestras-cronicas/julio-garcia-espinosa-por-un-cine-imperfecto/ (accessed 27 Sept. 2016).

28 Virno, *Grammar*, pp. 23–4.

across thresholds between inside and outside. It is notable that she is never seen, however, in her own house: indeed, Virno's multitude is characterised by a state of 'not feeling at home'.[29] As we will see, Paola's lack of determined spatial belonging acts as a correlate for her lack of the clear social identification provided by work.

Houses nonetheless occupy a key position in *Mitómana*'s strange sequence of events, offering brief points of stability in the film's frenetic shuttling between interiors and exteriors. At the moment of transition between the two lead actresses, the sequence opens with the camera, handheld, following Paola down a nondescript residential street, and then doubling back on herself, apparently unable to find the house she is looking for. She goes through a gate, knocks on a front door, and asks the lady who answers for Nora (this, it seems, is another name for Yanny). The lady points her to a house across the street, where she finds Nora/Yanny. After a confrontation at the threshold, the two return to the first house. After giving her a bag of clothes, Yanny then throws Paola out, and as she does so a third woman, unknown to the spectator, appears in the doorway, shouting '¡Váyase de mi casa!' [Get out of my house!]. The domestic interior here, however briefly glimpsed, is figured as the holding-pen of the putative film project's fictional protagonist, and Paola's unwanted intrusion (she reaches inside to unlock the door) allows her to occupy that position from this point onwards. The inside of the house could be seen to function as a kind of reserve for (performed) personal identity, but without a stable frame, merely as a short temporal fragment of the sequence's long, unsteady handheld takes.

This unsteadiness recurs later in the film, as Paola (now calling herself Yanny) takes on the role of a nurse, and visits elderly residents in their houses.[30] The first time she does so, the old woman (Carmen) whose house she enters claims that she doesn't need looking after, and asserts her right to make Paola/Yanny leave due to her status as 'dueña de la casa' [owner of the house]. She moreover claims that clinics don't really send nurses to care for people in their homes: 'esta no es la realidad' [this isn't the truth]. Another notable aspect of this moment is Paola's choice of dress: her decision to wear a nurse's white overall demonstrates her desire for immediate personal identification with institutional employment (it is notable that shortly after this sequence, she is confronted by a woman at the clinic who demands that she stop wearing this overall: 'estás usufructuando un cargo que no lo tienes' [you're usurping a position that you don't have]). The fact that this identification is never entirely successful means, I argue, that work cannot produce or map the spatial distinctions between inside and outside, or between home and city, which it might traditionally have facilitated.

Mitómana's emphasis on performance and pretence contrasts with other Chilean films which adopt an apparently more straightforward focus on

29 Ibid., p. 35.

30 Care work is cited by Hardt and Negri (*Multitude*, p. 109) as a paradigmatic example of immaterial labour, involving 'affective, cognitive and linguistic tasks'.

the issue of housing at the margins. Emblematic of the recent productions addressing this issue is Tiziana Panizza and Paola Castillo's *74m²* (2011), a largely conventional documentary which follows the construction and development of a social housing neighbourhood in Valparaíso (designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Alejandro Aravena). Aravena's houses, situated on a site close to a middle-class neighbourhood of the city, are only partially completed, the exterior shell concealing an interior which gives space for the inhabitants to adapt it to their particular needs. Panizza and Castillo's film makes use of a conventional documentary aesthetic to present a largely affirmative view of this material creativity.

What remains implicit in *74m²* is the fact that this is a model of social housing that responds in large part to market-driven imperatives: the houses are not finished in part because the level of government subsidies available would not permit the construction of completed dwellings in the site chosen. Justin McGuirk, writing on a similar project (Quinta Monroy) undertaken by Aravena in the city of Iquique, notes that the ideas behind the construction are similar to those articulated by the British architect John F.C. Turner in relation to the *barriadas* (shantytowns) of Lima in the 1960s and 70s, namely the proposal that creativity in the urban margins should be encouraged in opposition to standardised government housing.[31] Turner argued that in order to take account of what material environments '*do* in people's lives', housing was best conceived of 'as a verb'.[32] McGuirk also notes, however, that while in Turner's day the creativity of the *barriadas* was typically viewed as a symptom of underdevelopment, now it is optimistically construed as 'participation'. McGuirk poses the provocative question, 'is this notion taking over from consumption in defining our state of being?', and suggests that this development represents the triumph of entrepreneurialism and the cult of private power over what were once supposed to be the responsibilities of the state.[33]

The notion that marginal creativity simultaneously results from and occludes the derelictions of the state finds an echo in Hopenhayn's work on modernity and postmodernity in Chile. Hopenhayn argues that the cultural internalisation of privatisation in late 20th-century Chile has markedly different effects across social sectors, and that

> El desdibujamento del Estado asistencial y de algunos mecanismos consagrados de movilidad social, fuesen efectivos o simbólicos, genera tendencias contradictorias en la órbita de los excluidos.[34]

31 J.F.C. Turner, 'Dwelling resources in South America', *Architectural Design*, 8 (1963): 393.

32 J.F.C. Turner, 'Housing as a verb', in J.F.C. Turner and R. Fichter (eds.), *Freedom to Build: Dweller Control of the Housing Process* (New York and London: Collier Macmillan, 1972), pp. 151–2.

33 J. McGuirk, *Radical Cities: Across Latin America in Search of a New Architecture* (London: Verso, 2014), pp. 87–8.

34 Hopenhayn, *Ni apocalípticos*, p. 43.

[The undoing of the welfare state, and of some of the established mechanisms of social mobility, whether they were actual or symbolic, generates contradictory tendencies among the excluded.]

These contradictory tendencies, he suggests, are creativity and fear: 'la incertidumbre respecto del futuro tiene más que ver con el temor que con la creatividad, pero obliga a la creatividad para conjurar el temor' [uncertainty about the future has more to do with fear than with creativity, but it requires creativity in order to provoke fear].[35] The intertwining of these two emotions is somewhat glossed over by the affirmative aesthetics of Panizza and Castillo's production (although the film does show, in detail, the tensions generated by the housing project within the community of *pobladores* who move into it). In *Mitómana*, by contrast, creativity (as performance, or simply as lying) and uncertainty (if not always exactly fear) go hand in hand, for the spectator as well as for the film's participants (many of whom, it is worth restating, are not actors, or do not appear to be). The creativity on display in Sepúlveda and Adriazola's film is not material (at least in the architectural sense), but is rather located in the realm of performance and of film form. Questions therefore arise about the relationship of the filmmakers to the subjects and environments which they film. Are Sepúlveda and Adriazola criticising the state's retreat from public life, or its attempt to intrude into people's homes in the first place? If, moreover, their interest lies more in challenging the typical boundaries of the documentary film form, rather than in understanding the realities of lived experience in the locations they film, then what is the ethical position of their own intrusion into private houses with a film camera? The directors might reasonably be accused of a certain bad faith in their enterprise, or at least of a palpable cynicism in filming the offering, and rejection, of a non-existent service.

In assessing the validity of this accusation, it is helpful to turn once more to the vision of the post-Fordist multitude offered by Virno. In his account, cynicism appears as a result of 'the chronic instability of forms of life and linguistic games' which arises after the dissolution of traditional labour ties.[36] One might conceivably add film to Virno's list of unstable forms, particularly if we accept Hopenhayn's assertion that the production of home videos is one of the 'efectos especiales' [special effects] offered by capitalism to daily life.[37] Images of houses, following this argument, can offer no social truth outside the forces of production. This is precisely Virno's point when he argues that the 'general intellect', a term he takes from the 'Fragment on Machines' in Marx's *Grundrisse*, becomes the principal driver of production. The 'general intellect', in Virno's terms, denotes the exteriorisation of social knowledge and

35 Ibid.

36 Virno, *Grammar*, p. 87.

37 Hopenhayn, *Ni apocalípticos*, p. 43.

its conversion into an economic force.[38] There are striking parallels between this diagnosis and those offered in the Chilean post-dictatorial context both by Hopenhayn, who writes of the conversion of knowledge and information into 'el principal insumo de producción'[39] [the principal material of production], and by Norbert Lechner, who discerns a 'des-subjetivación de la reflexión' [de-subjectification of reflection] in the political culture of the post-dictatorial period.[40] These points of contact with Virno's thought are important, as they point to the relevance of a theoretical model developed with reference to late 20th-century Italy for the Chilean situation. This is not to deny any difference between the two countries, and the extent and nature of urban marginality, where *Mitómana* situates itself, provides one such point of contrast. The film nonetheless provides fertile ground for an interrogation of the spatial aspects of the 'general intellect' thesis, which for Virno is nominally 'public' but without a 'public sphere' or political community:[41] homeless, in other words, or pertaining to the unstable realm stitched together from public and private spaces that *Mitómana* explores, and that is conjured up by the title of Lechner's book *Los patios interiores de la democracia*.[42]

This context does something to provide an explanation for *Mitómana*'s cynicism, if not a justification. The strongest answer to a charge of bad faith, however, is provided by the film's final third, which appears to undermine the residual structure of the rest of the narrative (that of the film in production), and leads many critics to appeal to notions of the limitless and the unfinished.[43] In this last section, a third character, a girl named Rocío, comes to occupy a crucial (if unsettling) role, acting as a kind of guide to her neighbourhood for Paola. Not long before the film's end, the two discuss the morality of lying (Rocío thinks it is a sin, Paola doesn't), and Paola claims that the residents of the neighbourhood lied in order to obtain their houses, by claiming that there were people signed up to a government plan when this was not the case. Rocío seems to reject the suggestion that her community has manipulated the government plan when she states that 'a la gente pobre no se le puede mentir' [you can't lie to poor people], but Paola notes the gap left in Rocío's logic when she counters that 'los pobres sí pueden mentir' [the poor can lie].

This statement endows verbal creativity or duplicity in the margins with the power to gain housing for a community, although the benefits or nature of that housing, and the notion that the presence or absence of social housing might provide a measure by which the state of a society can be judged, are thrown

38 Virno, *Grammar*, p. 38.

39 Hopenhayn, *Ni apocalípticos*, p. 108.

40 N. Lechner, *Obras escogidas*, vol. 1 (Santiago: LOM, 2006), pp. 484–5.

41 Virno, *Grammar*, pp. 40–1.

42 Lechner, *Obras escogidas*.

43 See M. Morales, 'En BAFICI 2011: *Mitómana*, una película sin límites', *Cinechile*, www.cinechile.cl/crit&estud-153 (accessed 1 Feb. 2016), and Pinto, '*Mitómana*'.

into doubt by Paola and Rocío's conversation. As if to reinforce this point, during that sequence, which takes place in Rocío's house, the camera reveals to the spectator nothing but the dimly-lit corners and surfaces of a room, the edge of a window, and a partial view of next door's kitchen. Once again, access to the 'truth' or reality of marginal conditions is conspicuously refused, and housing is presented as an opaque, almost illusory good. Paola's oblique mention of a government initiative is striking, given the lack of services and of a sense of community to which *Mitómana* alludes. Paola Jirón has argued that the major weakness of the social housing initiatives undertaken by democratic governments in Chile after 1990 was a failure to understand the importance of 'the relation between inhabitants and their habitat' and of social interaction, and the woefully inadequate provision of communal facilities and services, especially in areas such as La Pintana and Puente Alto, which were among the largest recipients of those relocated after Pinochet's eradication of Santiago's *campamentos*.[44] Jirón moreover suggests that the predominance of informal employment led many living in such projects to feel worse off than they had been in informal settlements.[45] As we have seen, *Mitomána* articulates some of these concerns, albeit in an indirect fashion, while simultaneously questioning film's ability to provide access to knowledge of social conditions in the areas filmed.

Film and housing

Mitómana's apparent unwillingness to disclose the spaces and dimensions of Rocío's house leads me to a discussion of the final link in the triangular relationship I have thus far been tracing, that between the act of film-making and 'housing' itself. I would like here to return to Turner's observation that 'housing is a verb', which he uses to argue for individual agency and creativity in dwelling, even in circumstances of severe material poverty. Susan Bernstein states the objective of her book *Housing Problems*, a study of the use of architectural terms in literary and philosophical writing, in strikingly similar terms. Drawing an analogy between interior space and the practice of photography, she writes that

> The house and, even more forcefully, the room function by way of a quadrangle, the four walls that stake out and secure an interior. Yet the quadrangle is never secure; like the house it is haunted, it reverses itself, it opens outward. The frame of the quadrant opens up onto an endless and undefined field, a field of rubble where no identity is stable. In the house or room we take refuge and deny the unravelling at our edges. *Housing*

44 The population of La Pintana grew by 90% between 1982 and 1984. See P. Jirón, 'The evolution of informal settlements in Chile: improving housing conditions in cities', in F. Hernández, P. Kellett and L. Allen (eds.), *Rethinking the Informal City: Critical Perspectives from Latin America* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), pp. 77, 81–4.

45 Ibid., p. 85.

> *Problems* undertakes to mobilize the house into the gerund 'housing' to open up this denial.[46]

Bernstein does not explicitly mention cinema, but it seems reasonable to associate the shifting frames of a film (particularly one like *Mitómana*) with the mobilisation she advocates. Bernstein further suggests that in great swathes of western philosophy, from Descartes onwards, 'the facticity of the house points to a limit of thinking, an undercurrent of the untheorized and excluded materiality that is a condition of possibility of architecture, or writing'.[47] Can the same be said of houses in cinema? This is an impossibly broad question, but Sepúlveda and Adriazola's film certainly affords an opportunity to think about potential answers from the urban periphery in Chile. It also, as we have seen, suggests that labour, like the house, might function as an unthought limit to film-making. *Mitómana*'s refusal to construct a stable or clear relationship between personal identity and dwelling-place certainly chimes with Bernstein's assertion that 'the idea that the house stands in for a self and tells us its secret story, holding on to its owner as origin and spirit, is a myth'.[48] In this section, I want to explore whether film can offer alternative understandings of housing, as process, practice or performance.

My analysis of *Mitómana* has thus far suggested that the film reveals some of the labour usually denied by cinematic production, and that it questions the ability of work to map or 'produce' defined spaces, whether domestic or public. It does so via an emphasis on incomplete or failed pretences or performances (those of its actresses, and arguably those of the filmic narrative itself, which is disrupted by the appearance of Rocío). This privileging of process and (dis)-continuity seems to offer itself as a way out of the pervasive logics of production which, in Virno's and Hopenhayn's accounts, now exert control over all spheres of life. The question which then arises is whether *Mitomána*'s unfinished and unsteady processes manage to extract its images from this production, and, consequently, whether the film can provide a figure or trace of the multitude (as opposed to a unified or stagnant 'popular') endowed with political valency.

One view of the driving force behind *Mitomána*'s constant and apparently frivolous transgression of boundaries might identify a desire to unsettle the assumption that images of the margins constitute a ground for political action. In order to understand why this might be the case, it is helpful to contrast Sepúlveda and Adriazola's film with others, notably documentary productions from the middle of the 20th century, which aim to use the presentation of housing crises on the urban periphery in Chile as an explicit call to political action. One example of this trend is Sánchez's *Las callampas*, mentioned in the introduction. Sánchez's film deals with the emergence of informal settlements

46 S. Bernstein, *Housing Problems* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), p. 13.

47 Ibid., p. 14.

48 Ibid.

on the edges of Santiago as a result of mass migration from rural areas, and adopts a social-realist, and somewhat didactic, aesthetic in doing so. For Pablo Corro, *Las callampas* 'desata en el cine chileno las relaciones entre el afuera y el adentro de la representación de lo social' [undoes the bonds between the outside and the inside in the representation of the social in Chilean cinema], and as a result exhibits important ideological and aesthetic contradictions, mixing the perspective of the reporter with an 'exposición didáctica del educador'[49] [educator's didactic exposition]. This didactic streak is most evident in the film's periodic use of a child's toy house to introduce and model the deconstruction of the informal settlement and the move to more permanent dwellings in La Victoria ('una vida estable y definitiva' [a stable and definitive life], as the voice-of-God narration has it). The emphasis placed on a reliable physical shelter or enclosure is coupled with a form of narrative closure: even as the narrator states that 'ésta es una historia verídica, inconclusa' [this is a true, unfinished story], the spectator's gaze is returned to the model house and a boy standing next to it.

This narrative strategy, in addition to the bird's-eye view of La Victoria with which the film closes, and the emphasis it places on the importance of the assistance provided by the Catholic Church (via the charity Hogar de Cristo), means that Sánchez's film arguably fails fully to escape the institutional or enclosed realist aesthetic which Corro identifies as dominating the history of cinema. Corro's vision of the inherent tensions in this approach is worth quoting at length:

> La imagen cierra. Como apropiación discursiva de lo circundante próximo y lejano, constituye un micro mundo, una cifra doméstica, ideal de la existencia … Sin embargo, todo dispositivo visual, cámara de tiempo-espacio, cámara como habitación y ojo, es un escaparate de exposición y riesgo del sentido, de consideración crítica de las relaciones entre signo y referente. El entusiasmo ante la posibilidad de multiplicar los hábitat apareja el deber de la normalización constructiva que asegure la estabilidad de cada sitio y su visibilidad.[50]
>
> [The image closes. As a discursive appropriation of both nearby and distant surroundings, it constitutes a micro-world, a domestic figure, an ideal of existence … However, every visual *dispositif*, or space-time camera, a camera as both room and eye, is a shop-window and a risk to the senses, a mechanism for critical consideration of the relations between sign and referent. Its enthusiasm when faced with the possibility of multiplying habitats comes hand in hand with the duty of constructive normalisation that ensures the stability and visibility of each site.]

Many of the shots in *Las callampas* could be said to participate in the 'constructive normalisation' that Corro identifies. It would be wrong to assume

49 P. Corro, *Retóricas del cine chileno* (Santiago: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 2012), p. 27.

50 Ibid., p. 19.

that the inclusion of images of the *pobladores* and their lives automatically signify an aesthetic or political rupture: Corro notes that the *pobladores* have no voice in the film, and considers that 'la intención de romper la esfera de la intimidad controlada de la figuración cinematográfica chilena de la pobreza abriendo múltiples fisuras hacia el afuera' [the intention of breaking the sphere of controlled intimacy inherent in the figurative strategies of Chilean cinema by opening multiple fissures towards the outside], apparent in the camera's unsparing gaze, is ultimately undermined by a sense of didactic inertia (exemplified by the toy house).[51]

This appeal to an idealised, wholly visible figure of a house suggests that while *Las callampas* may at points work against the kinds of aesthetic enclosure Corro refers to, it nonetheless takes them as a starting point, as a residual ground. Insofar as *Mitómana* refuses even to engage with this domestication of the cinematic image, it marks itself as appreciably different not just to Sánchez's work, but also to more recent productions set in the periphery of Santiago. One such film is Elisa Eliash's *Mami te amo* (2008), a fiction production which is in some respects similar to *Mitómana*, as it demonstrates a comparable interest in formal experimentation, and in the difficulty of distinguishing between truth and fiction. A crucial difference can be discerned between the two films, however, when it comes to housing and construction. The girl, called Raquel, and her mother (played by Catalina Saavedra) live in the Unidad Vecinal Portales, a modernist housing block built between 1954 and 1966 (around the time of the *callampas* pictured in Sánchez's film). This location functions as a reference point for the film's narrative – Raquel's mother is going blind, and often loses her daughter, who then has to make her own way back home. The housing block frequently appears in the background of shots taken from a walkway above a motorway, where Raquel meets an older girl who seems to have a nomadic existence on Santiago's streets.

The recurrent presence of a housing block which can be taken to signify the remnants of a community-centred project means that while *Mami te amo* questions the 'transparency' or objectivity of the cinematic gaze as explicitly, or even more so, than *Mitómana*, there is nonetheless a fixed point of return, a kind of material grounding for the narrative which is, moreover, a reminder of a desired common space. For Pinto, the film 'devuelve, retorna Santiago' [returns Santiago, hands it back], as a city 'en la que en algún momento existió un espacio en común' [in which there was, at one point, a common space].[52] Here again is the tension between 'the possibility of multiplying habitats' and 'the duty of constructive normalisation' that Corro identifies in all cinema.[53] It is surely not coincidental that a construction site and its workers are another

51 Ibid., p. 29.

52 I. Pinto, 'Mami te amo: la franja', *laFuga* (2008), www.lafuga.cl/mami-te-amo/95/ (accessed 27 Feb. 2016).

53 Corro, *Retóricas*, p. 19.

recurrent presence in Eliash's film. The protagonists' home may be chaotic, but it is nonetheless a space that Raquel, and the spectator, consistently return to; it occupies a key position in the film's narrative construction (and not only in a metaphorical sense).

The image of the walkway mentioned above is in fact used by Catalina Donoso to draw a comparison between *Mami te amo* and *Mitómana*, suggesting that both complicate distinctions between permanence and movement, as in both cases spaces of transit, pedestrian walkways, are occupied at length by the films' protagonists.[54] In a sequence in the final third of *Mitómana*, women from Puente Alto are seen affixing banners to a bridge which spans an empty canal. The spectator is unable to see any of the slogans on the banners, and the only hint provided about their nature or their intended addressee comes from Rocío, who says that a doll hanging from the bridge with the banners represents 'la Bachelet' (the then President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet). Donoso suggests that Rocío here acts as a guide for Paola (and for the viewer), 'un lazarillo que la traslada por los vericuetos espaciales de la población' [a guide who moves her through the narrow spaces of the *población*],[55] and who helps explain the 'lógica de la infancia' [logic of infancy] which, for Donoso, underlies both this film and *Mami te amo*.[56] It is an attractive argument, but one which is more clearly relevant to Eliash's film, where, as Pinto suggests, the child's perspective works to provide at least a partial vision of a collective experience. In *Mitómana*, as we have seen, Rocío does not really provide Paola or the viewer with privileged access to information, and in the sequence just mentioned the political claim articulated by the banners remains unclear. One might think here of Beasley-Murray's claim that 'the multitude is the key to Chile's underlying continuities': the content of protests becomes irrelevant, as the performance of 'constituent power [transforms] the social order, forcing creative adjustment from the state'.[57] *Mitómana*, like Beasley-Murray and Virno, is ultimately ambivalent about the value of this dynamic, and indeed about whether it can successfully be represented.

The film's doubtful attitude towards collective political action is also articulated with reference to work, in a voiceover where Yanny (in the film's opening minutes, before the 'switch' of actresses) complains that a trade unionist rally she attended offered 'un discurso ochentero, añejo' [an old-fashioned, eighties-style discourse], unchanged since the days of President Patricio Aylwin. Here, as in Virno's account, work is unable to provide any sort of grounding, and so both the protagonist and the film itself refuse to adhere to any set of rules, flitting between roles, perspectives and ideas, modelling the kind

54 C. Donoso, 'Detención en movimiento / Arrêt en mouvement', *Cinémas d'Amérique Latine*, 23 (2015): 141.

55 Ibid., p. 140.

56 Ibid., p. 137.

57 Beasley-Murray, *Posthegemony*, p. 280.

of opportunism which Virno sees as a defining characteristic of contemporary modes of production. The 'old-fashioned, eighties-style discourse' of which Yanny complains includes, significantly, the lament that '¡hoy en día nadie está trabajando!' [no one is working these days]. In the world of *Mitómana*, this is a given, not a polemical statement or call to action.

Formless politics

The dissolution of labour suggested by the film is also a dissolution of any coherent vision of the social. Sepúlveda has stated that *Mitómana* is 'una metáfora del cine chileno actual, donde hay una cierta reivindicación de lo social, pero desde una perspectiva del consumo, de no tocar en profundidad el tema'[58] [a metaphor for contemporary Chilean cinema, where there is a certain appeal to the social, but from a consumerist perspective, without really tackling the issues in depth]. *Mitómana* is certainly not packaged for easy consumption, but nor does it purport to offer an in-depth perspective on social problems; quite the opposite, in fact, as we have seen. So while Sepúlveda sets the film's objectives as 'tocar temas como el arribismo social, el asistencialismo' [addressing topics such as social climbing and welfare dependency],[59] it does so only in an elliptical, almost off-hand manner. *Mitómana*'s directors are, perhaps, trying to avoid any association with the exercise of institutional (bio)power which might be seen to accompany a more conventionally explanatory discussion of these issues, or a clearer image of a definable sector of society. An aversion to institutions and hierarchies is certainly apparent in the description given of the film school Sepúlveda and Adriazola run, the 'Escuela Popular de Cine' (People's Film School), as 'la primera escuela de carácter popular, horizontal y gratuita desarrollada en Chile' [the first Chilean film school that is popular in character, horizontally structured, and free].[60] This scepticism is also latent in the title of the film festival founded by *Mitómana*'s directors: the *Festival de Cine Social y Antisocial* (Festival of Social and Antisocial Cinema). One might think here of Hopenhayn's assertion that coherent social imaginaries have found themselves progressively replaced with 'una telaraña de sensibilidades, lenguajes, especialidades y estrategias de vida' [a web of sensibilities, languages, specialities and life strategies] which only ever achieve a 'visibilidad segmentada' [segmented visibility] via the media.[61] This complexity disrupts

58 M. Morales, 'José Luis Sepúlveda, el rebelde del cine chileno, estrena *Mitómana*', *La Tercera* (21 Aug. 2013), www.latercera.com/noticia/jose-luis-sepulveda-el-rebelde-del-cine-chileno-estrena-mitomana/ (accessed 15 Jan. 2017).

59 Ibid.

60 Escuela Popular de Cine, 'Quienes somos | Escuela Popular de Cine', http://escuelapopulardecine.cl/quienes-somos/ (accessed 27 Sept. 2016).

61 Hopenhayn, *Ni apocalípticos*, p. 54.

any straightforward spatial metaphors for the social, and leads Hopenhayn to describe present experience itself as a periphery.[62]

If the periphery is everything, then any distinction between margin and centre is difficult to uphold. Indeed, Beasley-Murray criticises Nelly Richard's appeal to the margins in her work on cultural memory in contemporary Chile for ignoring the 'generalization, and so banalization or habituation' of marginality in the country. 'We are all marginal now', he provocatively claims.[63] In this vein, *Mitómana*, as we have seen, refuses to construct stable, framed spaces for the viewer, and refuses in fact to permit an understanding of the work of cinema as *constructive* at all: it does not map or produce space, and cannot in any straightforward sense 'reveal' marginal housing conditions. Work, in the film, is either non-existent or servile, 'virtuosic' in the sense in which Virno uses the term (contrast this with the proliferation of construction sites described above). This refusal to construct might be read as an attempt to avoid co-option into conservative political discourses: as noted above in relation to *Las callampas*, the appeal to a figure of enclosure, even in an attempt to denounce inequality and injustice, can be seen as the (re)instatement of hierarchies and institutions, or of a new set of exclusions. Readings of Sepúlveda and Adriazola's film which appeal to the interstice or the margin as the characteristic space of *Mitómana* risk falling into this trap, and overlook the emphasis it places on process and labour.[64]

It is difficult, therefore, to envisage an appropriate spatial metaphor for the vision of life in the urban periphery that *Mitómana* offers. Perhaps Virno's conceptualisation of the multitude as 'amphibian' comes close to an answer. In addition to denying an 'interstitial' or 'marginal' character for the multitude, Virno suggests that it will naturally seek the 'collapse of political representation': of politics, that is, which is understandable as a visible figure or form.[65] Is this, then, what *Mitómana* offers the viewer: a formless politics? If so, it is not a worthless contribution. The fundamental instability of the film's form might be seen as a reiteration of the continued spread of neoliberal modes of thought and government in 21st-century Chile, whose consequence is that neither employment, nor public services, nor the urban margins themselves can offer a secure source of identity. *Mitómana*'s method of resistance is, paradoxically, a formal repetition of this insecurity, which also serves as a reminder that the claims of political theory risk over-determining or instrumentalising their subjects. Construction in the margins is not necessarily a noble project.

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62 Ibid, p. 67.

63 Beasley-Murray, *Posthegemony*, p. 186.

64 E.g. Urrutia, *Un cine centrífugo*, p. 64, and Barraza, 'De cine'.

65 Ibid., p. 43.

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II. The struggle for the streets

4. Community action, the informal city and popular politics in Cartagena (Colombia) during the National Front, 1958–74*

Orlando Deavila Pertuz

To the seventy-seven Colombian community leaders killed during the most recent cycle of political violence

On 17 January 1969, a community action council – a state-sponsored neighbours' association – located in the *barrio* San Francisco in Cartagena organised a demonstration against the plans developed by the Instituto de Crédito Territorial (the national housing authority) for the construction of a housing project for hundreds of squatters that had settled there six years previously. The residents claimed that the units were unaffordable and thus they demanded that the costs were lowered for the sake of the poor families' well-being. The demonstration – led by a joint leadership made up of members of the council, trade union leaders and several priests from a nearby parish – proved fruitful. Having met with the leaders of the demonstration, the local government agreed to work on the dwellers' behalf to find a definitive and plausible solution for the families.[1] Between 1951 and 1964, Cartagena's population almost doubled (from 128,877 to 247,085 inhabitants), and so did the housing deficit. Unlike the residents of San Francisco, however, most of the new population could not find places in the city's handful of state-funded housing projects. Thousands of people therefore came to live in self-built shantytowns without access to municipal services or public facilities. In the midst of this rapid urbanisation, experienced not only in Cartagena but throughout Colombia, some political leaders feared that the failure to meet popular needs could plant the seed of communism, turning the

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1 'Manifestación pública encabezaron sacerdotes. Protesta contra la Oficina de Rehabilitación de Tugurios elevaron ante el Concejo', *El Universal*, 18 Jan. 1969.

O. Deavila Pertuz, 'Community action, the informal city and popular politics in Cartagena (Colombia) during the National Front, 1958–74', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 107–32. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

cities' peripheries into fertile ground for another round of the political violence that had devastated the countryside since the 1940s.[2] When the bi-partisan coalition government called the National Front took power in 1958, it sought to end this violence and rebuild a stable polity by rotating power between the Liberal and Conservative parties for a period of four presidential terms. It also made community development a priority in both the countryside and the cities.[3] More specifically, it created 'community action councils' to bridge the gap between citizens and state institutions by empowering the former to take a leading role in the development of their communities. In order to overcome the strident partisanship which had fuelled the recent political violence, these organisms were meant to be apolitical and non-partisan. Nonetheless, from the outset they were also designed to prevent the expansion of communist influence.

Existing scholarship on community development in Colombia has generally held that the community action councils proved a successful mechanism to demobilise and co-opt the urban masses, contributing to the National Front's efforts to prevent social upheaval. For example, US scholars Bruce Bagley and Matthew Edel argue that the councils helped to preserve the power and status of the ruling classes, while accommodating the demands from the lower and middle classes in a way that defused any campaign for 'basic societal reforms'.[4] Developing this thesis, Jonathan Hartlyn – an expert on democratisation and state–society relations in Latin America – proposed that the supposedly non-partisan councils became highly dependent on patron–client relationships and were easily seized by local officials and political brokers who used them to construct bases of electoral support. According to this argument, dwellers became passive agents who remained demobilised and divided, and rarely 'became vocal anti-regime proponents'.[5] Similarly, Colombian scholars Francisco Leal, Andrés Dávila, and Alfonso Torres argue that the National Front implemented community development to modernise the institutional structure of the state while also guaranteeing the political subordination of the urban

2 'Investigación necesaria sobre la marcha de los machetes', *Diario de la Costa*, 24 February 1963.

3 For new perspectives on the National Front see C. Caballero, M. Pachón and E. Posada, *Cincuenta años de regreso a la democracia. Nuevas miradas a la relevancia histórica del Frente Nacional* (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 2012); E. Posada, *La nación soñada. Violencia, liberalismo y democracia en Colombia* (Bogotá: Editorial Norma, 2006).

4 B. Bagley and M. Edel, 'Popular mobilization programs of the National Front: cooptation and radicalization', in R.A. Berry, R.G. Hellman and M. Solaún (eds.), *Politics of Compromise. Coalition Government in Colombia* (New Brunswick: Transaction Inc, 1980), p. 280.

5 J. Hartlyn, *The Politics of Coalition in Rule in Colombia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 168.

masses through clientelism.[6] The 1969 demonstration in San Francisco could easily be read in this way, that is, as a desperate plea for state intervention in the form of top-down paternalistic aid. This chapter, however, will instead propose that there was far more at play within this type of community demonstration. Questioning these earlier approaches, I will go on to demonstrate that the community action councils in fact became a pivotal instrument for members of the popular classes actively to participate in the remaking of their communities. Indeed, I will argue that this type of community development amplified the creative capacity of thousands of *Cartageneros,* who lived in the city's margins and lacked the basic means to achieve a decent way of life, to improve their situation. As we have already seen in the case of San Francisco, these marginalised residents utilised the very councils designed to depoliticise their demands to confront the state institutions that failed to attend to their needs. Furthermore, they used the community action councils to engage with multiple political actors, ranging from brokers and mainstream politicians to radical agents who sought to capture the residents' hearts and minds. As I will go on to argue, the priests and union leaders who joined the San Francisco demonstration in 1969 fall into this latter category. All of this is to say, as I will ultimately demonstrate, that patron–client relationships do not fully explain the political experience within the councils.

Previous analyses of the community action councils have focussed on situating them within the larger context of the National Front regime, and have largely looked at how they matched the state's efforts to control popular discontent. However, in doing so, these approaches have overlooked the citizens' perspective, their aspirations and their own experiences working with the councils. While the councils may have not aimed to propel 'basic societal reforms' or to become 'anti-regime proponents', they still struggled to make their neighbourhoods habitable living spaces, and that struggle could prove politically mobilising. My work proposes a grounded analysis of the outcomes of community development. It focuses on what brings these *barrios* 'into existence and allows them to survive,' placing the emphasis on the nature of the informal cities themselves, 'their relationship to the larger urban form, their political roles, their transformations over time, and their nature as sites for the reproduction or transcendence of poverty and subcitizenship'.[7] My work thus centres on how *Cartageneros*, through the strategic and creative use of the means provided by community action, asserted their rights to the benefits of citizenship, and managed to obtain services such as housing, water, and

6 F. Leal and A. Dávila, *Clientelismo: el sistema político y su expresión regional* (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 2010); A. Torres Carrillo, *La ciudad en la sombra: barrios y luchas populares en Bogotá, 1950–1977* (Bogotá: Universidad Piloto de Colombia, 2013).

7 B. Fischer, 'Introduction', in B. Fischer, B. McCann and J. Auyero (eds.), *Cities from Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 2, 6.

sanitation, which the local authorities would not have provided otherwise. This is to say that residents were able to utilise community development in order to turn shantytowns into functional neighbourhoods fully integrated into the urban grid. Evoking Alejandro Aravena's architectural philosophy, in Cartagena the informal city was not 'the problem but actually the only possible solution'.[8] The Colombian state created the framework, but thereafter, families living at the city's margins took over. The material improvements that residents achieved over time thus embodied the transformative potential of the community action councils as much as the citizens' capacities to act collectively for the sake of their own communities.

The era of community development

On 8 December 1971, a high government official waxed poetic about the community development programme's achievements over the previous decade:

> No sólo están a la vista de los colombianos los muros que su pueblo unido ha levantado … sino también y es esta la más hermosa de sus realizaciones, el limpio esfuerzo por la paz y la concordia. En las veredas de la Nación, sangrantes por las cruentas luchas entre hermanos, objetivos comunes de mejoramiento restañaron los enfrentamientos pasados, olvidaron los rencores y unieron a un pueblo para buscar un mejor destino. Por eso hay que darle a la Acción Comunal el crédito de la paz, la reconstrucción de la concordia, el progreso que presentan las comunidades de Colombia.[9]
>
> [It is not only the walls [of the houses] built by the united people that are visible to Colombians … but also the most beautiful of their attainments, the pure effort for peace and concord. In the Nation's streets, long bloodied and still bleeding due to struggles among brothers, the pursuit of common goals of improvement defused previous conflicts. Colombians forgot past resentments and came together as a people to pursue a better fate. That is why we have to credit the programme of Community Action for the peace, for the reconstruction of concord, and for the progress exhibited by the communities of Colombia.]

As the speaker suggests, community development policies emerged in the aftermath of brutal political violence. Beginning in the late 1940s, the countryside areas in Colombia witnessed violent clashes between partisans of the Liberal and Conservative parties, which are estimated to have cost the lives of 193,603 people.[10] When General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla seized power

8 A. Aravena, *My Architectural Philosophy? Bring the Community into the Process*, video, 15:53 minutes, 6 Nov. 2010, www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0I0Poe3qlg.

9 Speech by the General Director of Integration and Community Development, Guillermo Alberto González, during the Second National Congress of Community Action held in Cali on 8 Dec. 1971. Archivo General de la Nación. Ministerio de Gobierno. Caja 46, Carpeta 3, pp. 82–3.

10 P. Oquist, *Violence, Conflict, and Politics in Colombia* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), p. 62.

in a bloodless coup in 1953 – widely supported by moderate factions within both parties – he traced the roots of violence to poverty and inequality among peasants and argued that to prevent another escalation of violence, the gap between social classes must be bridged. In 1954, the Colombian government hired French social scientist and Dominican priest Louis-Joseph Lebret to identify the country's most critical problems and the proper means to solve them. At a time when many Latin American states thought of development as synonymous with rapid industrialisation,[11] Lebret proposed a progressive alteration to the economy more attentive to the large rural population. He recommended modernising public rural infrastructure, optimising agricultural production, and educating the masses.[12] Nonetheless, his recommendations were left behind when Rojas Pinilla was forced to resign in 1957.

While Lebret's plans faded away following the fall of Rojas Pinilla, some of his ideas regarding rural development and community organisation inspired the programmes established by Alberto Lleras Camargo, the first president of the National Front regime, who ascended to power in 1958. Nonetheless, Lleras Camargo's developmentalist ideals went further than those of Lebret. Heavily influenced by the post-war transnational imaginaries about development and new forms of governance, Lleras Camargo – who had previously served as the first secretary of the Organization of American States between 1948 and 1954 – favoured new trends which promoted sustainable economic growth and a more even distribution of wealth through social welfare and the incorporation of marginal segments into society.[13] As the Cold War escalated, these ideals developed into proposals for social change that defended liberal democratic methods of achieving equality and opposed communism. Accordingly, the United States' foreign policies in Latin America shifted toward a new strategy of subtle intervention that promoted autonomy, self-governance, democracy, and the strengthening of popular participation. Indeed, John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress not only aimed to establish economic cooperation between the US and Latin America but also to discourage the influence of communism. Within Colombia, for example, the Alliance provided substantial aid to strengthen the programme of Community Action.[14]

As A. Ricardo López argues, the programme of community action in Colombia emerged from these new development paradigms. It 'activated a

11 P. Drinot, *The Allure of Labor: Workers, Race, and the Making of the Peruvian State* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), pp. 1–3.

12 J. Gómez Delgado, 'El trabajo de la misión de economía y humanismo en Colombia, 1954–1958' (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana master's thesis, 2015).

13 A. Ricardo López, 'Conscripts of democracy: the formation of a professional middle class in Bogotá during the early 1960s', in A.R. López and B. Weinstein (eds.), *The Making of a Middle Class: Toward a Transnational History* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2013).

14 Leal and Dávila, *Clientelismo*, p. 220.

political rationality that usually was oriented toward several interrelated projects of economic development, human welfare, and proper political participation for what policymakers and experts both in Colombia and the United States constantly referred to as modern democracies'. Community development was thus 'shaped by a political rationality – mediated by the production of knowledge in the social science disciplines of cultural anthropology, psychology, and rural sociology – that promoted rule through the capacities and productivities of the human body'.[15] The latter was another objective of community development at the national scale. In order to propel economic growth and spread social welfare, the state needed the close collaboration of the citizens. The idea was to involve residents in the material improvement of their own communities through self-help practices or co-funding. In so doing, the theory goes, they would become closer to the state and engage with the principles of democratic rule. A Bogotá city council member said in 1959:

> Las necesidades apremiantes de nuestra ciudad, ponen de presente la urgencia de organizar nuestras comunidades locales, para lo cual debemos movilizar e informar a las gentes, de modo que cada individuo sea capaz de contribuir inteligentemente en este gran esfuerzo que no es otra cosa que el empeño por implantar entre nosotros la verdadera democracia y la justicia.[16]
>
> [The pressing needs of our city reveal the urgency of organising our local communities. In order to do so, we must mobilise and educate the people, so that each individual becomes capable of intelligently contributing to this great effort, which is none other than the resolve to instil among us true democracy and justice.]

Created by Law 19 in 1958, the community action councils, materialised these endeavours. Neighbours would form councils to coordinate funds and labour for local infrastructure projects, such as the construction of roads, schools, and clinics. In turn, the state would provide funding as well as technical assistance. The programme started slowly under the Ministry of Education, with only thirty-three councils established in the first two years but, after it was transferred to the Ministry of Government in 1960, it rapidly expanded. Funding increased dramatically and the ministry trained professionals to work alongside citizens in the formation of the councils. Residents could now make requests for funding directly to the ministry to support specific infrastructure projects they envisioned and designed.[17] This enabled ordinary citizens to participate actively in making decisions about their communities, and to access alternate sources of funding beyond the limited budgets of local governments.

15 López, 'Conscripts of democracy', p. 168.

16 J. Gaitán, *Democracia y acción comunal. Programas de ayuda mutua* (Bogotá: Fundación Universidad de América, 1959), p. 34.

17 R.A. Karl, *Forgotten Peace: Reform, Violence, and the Making of Contemporary Colombia* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017).

A community leader from Cartagena explained how community development propelled citizens' participation in the following manner:

> El principio básico de la Acción Comunal es la participación de todos. Un programa cualquiera que sea, en donde sólo participen las minorías es un programa mediocre. Lograr cambiar la mentalidad de nuestro pueblo por la participación de todos en los diversos programas de la comunidad es un fenómeno de tan alta significación económica, que allí donde esto se logre, el progreso es incontenible … la Acción Comunal, escuela de estructuración de líderes que saben guiar, despertar entusiasmo, sentir y hacer sentir hondamente los problemas que ellos saben convertir en soluciones.[18]
>
> [The basic principle of Community Action is the participation of everyone. Any programme in which only a minority can participate is mediocre. To change our people's mindset through the participation of everyone in different community programmes is of such economic significance, that the progress becomes unstoppable wherever that is achieved … Community Action is a school for shaping leaders who know how to guide, to raise enthusiasm, to feel and to make others feel deep inside the problems they turn into solutions.]

Community development invigorated people's creative capacities to overcome deprivation by strengthening practices of collective action and by creating new scenarios for participative decision-making. The Colombian state's efforts to integrate marginal segments of the population mirrored those undertaken elsewhere in Latin America during the mid 20th century. Earlier critical analyses viewed such development projects as endeavours to co-opt the masses and incorporate them into society by supressing clientelistic structures.[19] More recent investigations into contemporary experiences in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Venezuela have instead argued that development programmes opened new avenues for political participation that changed the relationship between the citizens and the state at ground level, leading, in turn, to the formation of new forms of political bargaining.[20] Such studies have reinterpreted clientelism to propose that it is not merely a transaction or exchange of resources for services,

18 'Entrevista con el R.P. Pedro Salazar, S.J.' *Diario de la Costa*, 23 June 1963.

19 T. Di Tella, 'Populismo y reforma en América Latina', *Desarrollo Económico*, 4 (16) (1965): 91–425; Gino Germani, 'El surgimiento del peronismo: el rol de los obreros y de los migrantes internos', *Desarrollo Económico*, 13 (51) (Oct–Dec 1973): 435–88.

20 E. Murphy, *For a Proper Home*: *Housing Rights in the Margins of Urban Chile, 1960–2010* (Pittsburgh, PA: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015); B. Fischer, *A Poverty of Rights. Citizenship and Inequality in Twentieth-Century Rio de Janeiro* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008); B. Fischer, B. McCann and J. Auyero (eds.), *Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2014); B. McCann, *Hard Times in the Marvelous City: From Dictatorship to Democracy in the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2014); A. Velasco, *Barrio Rising: Urban Popular Politics and the Making of Modern Venezuela* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2015).

or a simple vertical interaction that only serves to enforce the dominance of political elites, but a relationship that is embedded in a set of shared cultural practices that enables the formation of a political identity.[21] They have also demonstrated that ordinary citizens, including those living in marginal urban areas, created radical forms of citizenship that contested those proposed by the state, and fought to expand the state's efforts to cover their needs.[22] In Cartagena, state-sponsored community development helped *Cartageneros* living in the informal city to cope with the rapid and troubled urbanisation experienced from the 1950s onwards.

The rise of the informal city

By the late 1960s, almost 50 per cent of *Cartageneros* lacked a dwelling or lived in substandard units without basic municipal services. As the urban grid expanded, the distribution of services failed to reach the newer *barrios*. In 1951, 80 per cent of dwellings had running water. By 1964 this has fallen to 54 per cent, and during the same period the rate of overcrowding rose from 3 to 43 per cent.[23] As a consequence, according to Rafael Obregón and Jorge Uzcategui – two architects and graduate students from MIT – Cartagena had the highest percentage of slums among the largest cities in Colombia – with 17,000 slum dwellings out of a total of 32,000 housing units – in the early 1970s. This meant that at least 82,000 *Cartageneros* lived in the informal city at this time.[24] At the same time, the city was estimated to suffer from an unemployment rate of 19 per cent, and two-thirds of that employment which did exist in the city was informal, which is to say that it consisted of activities that were not registered with the Social Security Institute (the national welfare institution).[25] Most *Cartageneros* were low-paid unskilled labourers who were self-employed as vendors, fishermen, or artisans, or employed in low prestige occupations such as domestic service and construction work. In both cases these workers usually lacked any benefits from welfare or social security policies. Moreover, whether employed or not, most were excluded from the very few public housing projects built in Cartagena between the 1950s and 1970s, which were intended for formally employed workers or middle-class professionals.

Newcomers from the countryside accounted for much of the demographic growth experienced in Cartagena. In 1973, for instance, gross birth rate was:

21 J. Auyero, *Poor People's Politics. Peronist Survival Networks and the Legacy of Evita* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2000).

22 J. Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (Oxford and Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

23 R. Obregón and J. Uzcategui, 'The viability of low cost housing programs in developing countries' (Massachusetts Institute of Technology master's thesis, 1972), pp. 60–2.

24 Obregón and Uzcategui, 'The viability of low cost', p. 46

25 W.P. Strassmann, *The Transformation of Urban Housing* (Baltimore, MD and London: The World Bank/The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp. 12–7.

urban, 3 per cent; semi-urban, 3.8 per cent; and rural, 4.9 per cent. Women of rural origin in particular were more likely to have families with 9.9 children, which greatly contributed to the demographic expansion the city experienced in these years. Rural migrants moved to Cartagena for better opportunities in the thriving local economy. The city was the second largest industrial complex on the northern coast of the country, and had also been the tourist capital of Colombia since 1942. Tourism and industry were the primary source of income in the city, but none of these sectors had expanded sufficiently to absorb the growing workforce. Migrants – as well as many of the locals – were also under-qualified to apply for the available jobs. In addition, tourism not only provided few well-paying jobs, but also put pressure on low-income families seeking a place to live. During the 1960s, tourism development progressively pushed popular commerce and low-income housing out of the city centre areas. Urban planning endeavours in these years – such as the Plan of Urban Development of 1965 – sought to transform the centre into a historical district primarily devoted to the tourist industry. These policies led to the clearing of the shantytown of Chambacú near the city centre in 1971 and the demolition of the public market seven years later.[26]

The pressure generated by the spatial politics of tourism development, coupled with the relatively small housing stock available, limited residents' chances of finding decent and affordable places to live. The city's morphology only exacerbated the problem. Half of the city's jurisdiction was under water in channels, bays, lagoons, and marshes. Thousands of families occupied the shores of these bodies of water seeking land for squatting.[27] This practice was largely tolerated as long it did not compromise the development of the tourism industry, which is to say whenever it took place in areas far from the city centre. In 1960, during a debate regarding the legal status of an informal settlement, a city council member declared that:

> … el Municipio no llevó a cabo la urbanización … la ciudadanía procedió a hacer rellenos, trazar calles, etc., a su costa. Ante tal situación de hecho y de derecho vuestra comisión considera que debe propiciarse una solución tendiente a regularizar la situación jurídica de aquellos poseedores … están contribuyendo en cierta forma a la solución del problema de la vivienda.[28]
>
> [the city administration did not carry out the urbanisation, so the citizens began to fill the ground, trace the streets, etc., at their own expense. Faced with this legal and material situation, your council commission considers

26 O. Deavila, 'Los desterrados del paraíso: turismo, desarrollo, y patrimonialización en Cartagena a mediados del siglo XX', in A. Abello and F. Flórez (eds.), *Los desterrados del paraíso. Raza, pobreza, y cultura en Cartagena de Indias* (Cartagena: ICULTUR – Maremagnum, 2015), pp. 123–46.

27 Strassmann, *The Transformation of Urban Housing*, pp. 24–5.

28 'El Concejo dispuso a adjudicar a los habitantes del barrio Sta. María los lotes que ocupan', *Diario de la Costa*, 20 Jan. 1960.

> that it must foster a solution aimed at regularizing the legal status of the occupants … they are contributing in a certain way to the resolution of the housing problem.]

Several years before the United Nations adopted John F.C. Turner's celebrated thesis on the self-managing home,[29] local leaders from Cartagena knew that residents' autonomous endeavours to meet their own housing needs were critical given the city's meagre resources to cope with the growing demand. Given this context, squatting and collective self-help seemed to be a reasonable alternative. Those who lived on occupied land shared the same feeling. As one contemporaneous author argued, when residents talked about their housing needs, 'no piden techo como en otros lugares del país. Piden suelo y el esfuerzo comunal y privado se canaliza al relleno de los lotes y los lugares de tránsito'[30] [they do not ask for a house as in other parts of the country. They ask for land, and communitarian and private efforts guides the filling of plots and places for transport].

During the 1960s, most of the squatting took place along the shores of the Ciénaga de la Virgen (Spanish for *Swamp of the Virgin*). The land around the swamp was public property and featured no major roads or facilities, 'this guaranteed – to a certain extent – the success of the invasion. The city had more pressing problems closer to its core, as some of its best land five minutes away from the downtown area had been invaded'.[31] In these years, populous *barrios* such as La Esperanza, San Francisco, La Candelaria, Olaya Herrera, or Fredonia formed along the swamp. By 1971, the area contained 7,593 housing units – mostly slum dwellings – inhabited by 71,745 people. Only five years previously, the population had been 48,783. The soil of the swamp was made of sand and clay and was thus barely able to support single-storey dwellings. Most of the houses – 58 per cent of the total – were built from wood and scrap materials, with zinc sheets or clay tiles for roofs. Only 42 per cent of the houses were made of brick or concrete blocks.[32] The homes lacked the most basic municipal services, and had no easy access to public facilities such as schools or hospitals. Living conditions, then, were certainly far from ideal. In the midst of these hardships, community action became a pivotal tool to overcome such problems and meet residents' needs.

29 M.K. Rose, 'Towards an autonomy of housing – the legacy of John F.C. Turner in Latin America and beyond: event review', *The Barlett Development Planning Unit* (blog), 13 March 2017, http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/dpublog/2017/03/13/towards-autonomy-housing-legacy-john-f-c-turner-latin-america-beyond-event-review/

30 H. Triana y Antorveza, *Cultural del tugurio en Cartagena* (Bogotá: Italgraf, 1974), p. 89.

31 Obregón and Uzcategui, 'The viability of low cost', pp. 77–9.

32 Ibid., p. 60.

The transformative impact of community action

In 1965, a leader from the *barrio* Camino del Medio, one of the new neighbourhoods formed near to the Ciénaga, made a public plea to the local authorities to consider the severe situation in which they all lived:

> No hay en ese sector calles, alumbrado público, escuelas de los dos sexos, higiene, aseo, teléfonos, alcantarillado, etc, etc. Por caridad señores representantes de la autoridad municipal tengan un poco de conciencia para con sus gobernados que gracias a ellos han sido ustedes ungidos con el voto popular para llegar a ocupar puestos como los que desempeñan … Las cantidades de niños que deambulan por las calles es debido a la falta de escuelas … Yo les pido a los padres de familia que no pierdan la esperanza que algún día llegará hacia ellos la mano bondadosa y generosa de la Divina Providencia.[33]
>
> [In that sector there are no roads, public street lighting, schools for both sexes, sanitation, phones, or sewerage, etc. For charity, dear representatives of the municipal government, have some awareness of your constituents, because it is due to them that you have been anointed by the popular vote in order to occupy positions such as those that you currently hold … The number of children who wander in the streets is due to the lack of schools … I beg the heads of the households not to lose hope that the kind and generous hand of Divine Providence may one day reach them.]

Nonetheless, some neighbours decided they could no longer wait for either the municipality's mercy or the intervention of Divine Providence. A year later, the recently created community action council from the *barrio* made a formal request to the Ministry of Government and the congressional representatives for the department of Bolívar for funding to cover some critical infrastructure projects. The leaders maintained that:

> Durante los seis meses de funcionamiento de esta Junta de Acción Comunal, hemos solicitado colaboración de la Alcaldía del Distrito, de las Empresas Públicas Municipales, a la Base Naval, y hasta el momento, nada hemos obtenido de ésas entidades por lo que no hemos utilizado la voluntad de trabajo en su mano de obra del vecindario de la comunidad por la falta de recursos económicos y equipos.[34]
>
> [For the six months during which this Community Action Council has functioned, we have requested support from the City Mayoralty, from the Municipal Service Companies, from the Navy Base, and thus far, we have received nothing from these entities such that we have not been able to utilise the community's voluntary labour due to the lack of economic resources and equipment.]

33 'El Camino del Medio, otro barrio olvidado de la ciudad', *Diario de la Costa*, 18 June 1965.

34 'Letter from the Community Action Council of Camino del Medio to congregational representatives of Bolívar', 5 Aug. 1965, Archivo General de la Nación, Ministry of Government, Office of the Minister, Box 74, Folder 560.

After citing community action legislation, specifically Law 19 of 1958, the council solicited funding from the national budget to promote 'las campañas de higiene, educación, cultura y bienestar social, beneficio que recibirán un conglomerado de compatriotas, que en su mayoría se alojan en tugurios próximos a la Ciénaga' [hygiene, education, culture, and social well-being campaigns, a benefit which will be received by a group of compatriots who mostly live in the shantytowns surrounding the Ciénaga]. They included within their needs those that came up a year before in the public plea to the city government: schools, street lighting, sanitation, and so on. The council included a detailed budget, and maps of the *barrio* indicating the location of the infrastructure works they hoped to carry out.[35]

The case of Camino del Medio demonstrates the empowering effects of community action, and how it could be utilised for the material improvement of the informal city. Like many other *barrios* found in the area, Camino del Medio resulted from squatting on the muddy shores of the Ciénaga, which prevented the provision of municipal services and public works by the local government. Community action allowed the citizens to request funding directly from the national authorities, without depending on the limited city budget. Moreover, the councils had the freedom to determine which specific projects were most important for the benefit of their communities, and they were directly involved in their management. Residents contributed with voluntary labour as well as additional funding. Furthermore, they became active participants in decision-making processes which affected their communities.

Fredonia, another shantytown located on the shores of the Ciénaga, further demonstrates the positive impact of the community development programmes. In the mid 1960s, it was similar to Camino del Medio or any other nearby *barrio*: it lacked running water, electricity, telephones or decent roads. However, the community worked to meet these needs by themselves. By 1967, they had made some efforts to create a clinic and a school for the illiterate children, had paved the roads to allow vehicles to reach the settlement, had filled some lagoons that impeded the circulation of people and had built a long channel to drain surplus water into the Ciénaga. A community leader commented that 'Si nosotros contáramos con la colaboración de las autoridades, tal vez no estaríamos como estamos, pero creemos que lograremos subsanar todos los males que nos aquejan'[36] [if we could count on the authorities' support, perhaps we would not be as we are, but we believe that we will be able to overcome all the problems that afflict us].

That was to prove the case later on. Residents continued to pursue collective efforts as time passed, but centred their endeavours on applying for the funding offered through community action. In 1970, the general secretary of the

35 Ibid.

36 'Fredonia barrio que se yergue', *Diario de la Costa*, 25 Feb. 1967.

Ministry of Government congratulated Fredonia's community action council stating that:

> Ustedes han contraído una gran responsabilidad con la comunidad en general pues han logrado auxilios por valor de $100.000 en un corto lapso de tiempo … Para mí ha sido placentero haber podido colaborarles como una nueva muestra más de que el Gobierno apoya todas aquellas iniciativas de los ciudadanos que lo merezcan.[37]
>
> [You have assumed a great responsibility for the community in general, as you have managed to obtain support to the amount of $100,000 in a very short period of time. … For me, it has been a pleasure to have been able to cooperate with you, a further sign that the Government supports all those initiatives which come from their deserving citizens.]

These words of congratulations came with the approval for a further $25,000 in aid to introduce electricity to Fredonia. By 1971, at least 87 per cent of the families in Fredonia had a member working in community projects. Despite their tight economic situation – most were unemployed or lacked steady incomes – 92 per cent of the five hundred families made a regular payment to the community action council. Regarding the case of Fredonia, Obregón and Uzcategui argued that the residents' involvement in community development was instrumental in producing the outstanding progress witnessed in the *barrio*. In order to reach this conclusion, Obregón and Uzcategui contrasted the experience of Fredonia with that of La Candelaria, a shantytown created much earlier which nonetheless still did not show the signs of progress that Fredonia had achieved in less time. In the latter settlement, only 32 per cent of the families worked on community projects, 23 per cent were unaware of the projects and 75 per cent had never contributed financially to the council.[38]

Local observers also praised community development for forging a sense of solidarity among residents, even when they went through hard times. That was the case of the *barrio* San Francisco, whose story dated back to February 1963 when hundreds of men and women seized a plot of land a few miles from the city centre. Less than twenty-four hours later, the police forced the would-be settlers out. This was indeed an exceptional case: they had seized the area of land designated for the planned expansion of the airport which made their occupation a threat to future tourism.[39] They were sheltered in the soccer stadium for some weeks until the city authorities determined what to do next. In this very stadium, the people decided to organise their own community action council. A journalist who visited the squatters in those days commented that:

37 'Letter from Carlos del Castillo, General Secretary of the Ministry of Government to the Community Action Council of Fredonia', 10 Aug. 1970, Archivo General de la Nación, Ministry of Government, Box 260, folder 2464, ff.58.

38 Obregón and Uzcategui, 'The viability of low cost'.

39 'Nueva invasión de colonos hubo en tierras de la nación', *Diario de la Costa*, 13 Feb. 1963.

> Logramos descubrir también un espíritu de organización, de protección comunal y de responsabilidad. Hay allí una sociedad perfecta entre los asilados. Esta sociedad ha impuesto el orden más estricto en todas y cada una de las familias. Los dirigentes han establecido sus reglas internas de convivencia para poder asegurar sus relaciones entre sí.[40]
>
> [We managed to encounter a spirit of organisation, of communal protection, and of responsibility. There among the refugees, there is a perfect society. This society has imposed the strictest order in each and every one of the families. The leaders have established their own internal rules for coexistence to guarantee relationships among all of them.]

Despite this praise for the councils, the everyday reality of community action was far from ideal. It did not take long for local politicians to note the council's electoral potential and, as they gained strength, they sought to integrate them into their political networks. As Obregon and Uzcategui argued, it was not surprising to find dynamic communities willing to exchange their votes with politicians supposedly eager to join their cause:

> through this power intrusion, they weaken the grass roots organisation of the community. After the elections, the promises are usually not kept, but the internal organisation has also collapsed with the consequent feelings of frustration, apathy and sense of futility.[41]

However, as I argued above, patron-client relationships do not fully explain the political world encountered around and through community action. Politicians were just one of the several forces that made the councils a ground of political contention.

Community action and popular politics

In 1972, 18 representatives of different councils – who participated in the organisation of the Second Departmental Convention of Communal Action – accused Francisco Robledo, the head of the Division of Community Action in Bolívar, of promoting political favouritism in order to secure his position. In doing so, he had allegedly contravened the community action constitution, which specifically stated that it was a 'movimiento libre y democrático, encauzado por caminos de paz, progreso y positiva integración comunal' [free and democratic movement, channelled by roads of peace, progress, and positive communal integration]. Accordingly, they petitioned the minister of government and the president, Misael Pastrana Borrero, to remove Robledo from his position.[42] Robledo defended himself saying that the organisers of the

40 'Los asilados del Estadio "Pedro de Heredia"' , *Diario de la Costa*, 25 May 1963.

41 Obregón and Uzcategui, 'The viability of low cost', p. 67.

42 'Resolution of the Central Committee of Community Action of Cartagena', 28 July 1972, Archivo General de la Nación, Ministry of Government, Office of the Minister, Box 47, ff. 223.

convention violated the regular proceedings of the Division of Community Action, as some of them were not affiliated to registered councils. He added that the main organisers were politicians sympathetic to the current governor, who also worked with community leaders expelled from their councils. Robledo said the governor was a declared enemy of the Division of Community Action in the department, and harassed leaders who refused to become his allies.[43]

Three years later, Robledo was again the target of denunciations. Members from the community action council of the *barrio* Las Delicias accused Robledo before the department's governor of endorsing a local broker from the Liberal Party who allegedly blocked the work of the council. They said Robledo 'es militante destacado de uno de los grupos políticos del Departamento de Bolívar. A nosotros no nos interesa sino la suerte y el mejor estar de nuestra comunidad' [is a prominent activist for one of the political groups in the Department of Bolívar. We only care about the good fortune and improvement of our community].[44] The general secretary of the Ministry of Government questioned Robledo about these accusations, and reminded him of the apolitical character of community action:

> Como usted conoce una de las tesis fundamentales del Mandato Claro en lo que respecta al desarrollo de la comunidad ha sido como lo expresado en distintas oportunidades el Señor Ministro, la imparcialidad política y la máxima atención a los problemas de la comunidad y en especial al 50% más desprotegido de la nacionalidad colombiana.[45]
>
> [As you know, one of the fundamental theses of the "Clear Mandate" for Community Development has been, as the Minister has expressed it several times, political impartiality, and the utmost attention to the communities' problems, especially to those of the most defenceless 50% of the Colombian nation.]

In a letter to the general secretary, Robledo argued that the accusation from Las Delicias was promoted by a local activist and associate of a Conservative politician who ran for the Congress. By extension, he argued, '… no es cosa diferente a una organizada campaña de un grupo de orientación politiquera y se encubre con algunos dirigentes del mismo género, enquistado hábilmente en las Juntas de Acción Comunal y en especial en la del Barrio Las Delicias' [this is nothing but a campaign led by a political group that includes some leaders

43 'Letter from Francisco Robledo to General Secretary of the Ministry of Government Benjamin López', 10 July 1973, Archivo General de la Nación, Ministry of Government. General Secretary, Box 59, folder 2, ff. 92–4.

44 'Letter from the Community Action Council of Las Delicias to Governor Nicolás del Castillo', Archivo General de la Nación, Ministry of Government, General Secretary, Box 75, ff. 104.

45 'Letter from the General Secretary of the Ministry of Government Hernan Villamarin to Francisco Robledo. Archivo General de la Nación', Ministry of Government. General Secretary, Box 75, ff. 118. *Mandato claro* is Spanish for 'transparent mandate'.

of the same kind, and which is deeply embedded in the community action councils, particularly in that of Las Delicias].[46]

The troubled relationship between Robledo and some community action councils in the early 1970s reveals how the programme could not remain entirely separate from the political tensions inherent to the National Front government. Community leaders found themselves caught in the complex political networks that persisted despite the supposedly apolitical character of the councils. Ironically, the very structure of the programme forced leaders to negotiate with politicians. Funding, while provided by the Ministry of Government, was allocated by congressmen from each department. This pork-barrel funding system allowed congressmen to use aid to gain visibility in the local communities. For Hartlyn, this helped to relegate politicians 'to the role of brokers competing with alternative politician-brokers or with government bureaucracies themselves, which could be approached directly. Individual politicians could serve as intermediaries, helping with land title legalisation, provision of utilities or public transportation'.[47] Residents usually had to engage in political bargaining to get funding for their projects, which contradicted the fundamental mandate for community action.

In addition to these problems, councils were also closely tied to labour unions, which played a critical role in Colombian politics during the 20th century. Unions actively participated in community development assisting the councils' specific projects, representing them and taking their pleas before state institutions, or even training members in the basics of community organising.[48] Overall, the unions' struggles went far beyond mediating the relations between capital and labour. They were advocates for the citizenry, regardless of their class identity and occupational status. Unions historically sided with squatters, non-unionised workers, the unemployed and homemakers, and embraced their causes as their own.[49] They led broad social causes that did not always entail labour-related matters. Unions worked as a sort of mediator between the Colombian masses and the state. However, unions were also instruments of the partisan forces within the National Front, and responded to the party leadership. A perfect example of each of these characteristics is found in the Workers' Union of Bolívar. Not only did the Union have strong ties with community action councils in Cartagena, they worked alongside the squatters from San Francisco in 1963, served as their representatives before the city

46 'Letter from Francisco Robledo to the General Secretary of the Ministry of Government Hernan Villamarin', Archivo General de la Nación. Ministry of Government. General Secretary. Box 75, ff. 126.

47 Hartlyn, *The Politics of Coalition in Rule in Colombia*, p. 175

48 'Desalojan a familias que habitan lomas de Santa Rita', *Diario de la Costa*, 12 Apr. 1966.

49 J. Sará, 'Identidades, actores sociales y acción colectiva en Cartagena, 1909–1930' (Universidad de Cartagena undergraduate dissertation, 2009).

government and helped to secure them a permanent housing solution.[50] The union also created a community affairs unit to assist the councils in their work,[51] and even allowed the participants to join the union.[52] The union's commitment to community development had to do with much more than just working class solidarity, however. In Cartagena, as at the national level, unions were key players in partisan politics and the Workers' Union of Bolívar had close ties with the Conservative Party. The politicised character of the unions' intervention in community action matters troubled some leaders who defended the programme's original apolitical philosophy. A community leader from the *barrio* Blas de Lezo said in 1967:

> … el actual régimen de transformación nacional reviste la cooperación de este gran instrumento cívico, siempre y cuando que los objetivos que le corresponde llenar no pretendan ser desvirtuados por falsos apóstoles que quieran inducirlo a servir de trampolín para fines electorales … esas normas deben rechazar de plano la infiltración de elementos disociadores o de agentes de organizaciones sindicales que estando garantizadas por la ley tiene orientaciones distintas. No hay que confundir. Una cosa es la Acción Comunal y otra el Sindicalismo, aunque tengan cierto punto de vista dentro del denominador común del mejoramiento social y económico.[53]
>
> [The current regime of national transformation implies the cooperation of this outstanding civic instrument, provided that the objectives that it aims to fulfil are not distorted by false apostles who want to induce it to serve as a trampoline for electoral purposes … the norms [of community development] should completely reject any infiltration from disruptive elements or agents from labour unions which are legally guaranteed yet have a different orientation. We must not confuse things. Community Action is one thing, Syndicalism is another, even though they share the common cause of social and economic improvement.]

As Hartlyn notes, not all the councils became dependent on patron–client relationships with local politicians. Some were capable, as the case of Fredonia suggests, of dialogue with the appropriate bureaucracy without party mediation.[54] Certain others engaged with alternative agents that also contributed to their efforts. The Peace Corps, for example, became key allies for some councils. These were US volunteers that came to Colombia funded by the Alliance for Progress. They were called up to join community development efforts by assisting council projects, conducting technical training and community organising. After 1962 they had an active presence in several

50 'Speech of the City Mayor', *Anales del Municipio*, 15 May 1964.

51 'De Acción Comunal dictará Utrabol', *Diario de la Costa*, 28 Aug. 1969.

52 'Promotor regional se reúne con Juntas de Acción Comunal', *Diario de la Costa*, 23 March 1969.

53 'Columna de Blas de Lezo', *Diario de la Costa*, 1 Aug. 1967.

54 Hartlyn, *The Politics of Coalition in Rule in Colombia*.

neighbourhoods – especially those located on occupied land – and even worked with the Workers' Union of Bolívar in some instances.[55] The Peace Corps were also critical in Fredonia's successful experience of community development, and were regarded as key players in the remaking and improvement of the city's poorest communities.

In 1963, a leader from the *barrio* Santa Rita described the Peace Corps' support for the squatters from San Francisco, and how they conveyed the message of community action:

> Los miembros del Cuerpo de Paz, en sus intervenciones le explicaron los alcances de la Acción Comunal y trataron en todo momento de inspirar a todos, en el deseo de hacer de ese barrio, un barrio con todos los servicios indispensables para vivir bien … deseo felicitar a los moradores del Barrio San Francisco y desearle muchos éxitos en su campaña justa, y felicitar también a los Cuerpos de Paz por la ayuda instructiva que le están presentando colaborando así a su pronto desarrollo urbano.[56]
>
> [In their interventions, the members of the Peace Corps explained the scope of Communal Action and tried at all times to inspire everyone, in the desire to make of the *barrio* a neighbourhood with all the indispensable services needed to live well … I want to congratulate the residents of San Francisco, and wish the best to them in their fair cause, and also congratulate the Peace Corps for the instructive help they are offering, contributing in this way to its rapid urban development.]

In spite of this praise for the Peace Corps, however, they were not excluded from the political turmoil within the National Front. Although they emerged as a more subtle vehicle to curtail the advance of communism by gaining the hearts and minds of the masses in developing countries, some in Cartagena still saw them as a conventional tool of imperialist intervention. In those communities where they sought to spread the word of US solidarity, the Peace Corps encountered radical agents who thought otherwise. In 1968, a city councilman from the Liberal Revolutionary Movement accused the Peace Corps of being an imperialist front for the CIA. Some Peace Corps volunteers responded to his accusations:

> Somos hombres de los EE.UU. que estamos aquí voluntariamente. Creemos en la paz y en la justicia para todo [sic] y no estamos aquí para mantener la injusticia. Creemos en el intercambio de ideas y en el cambio y el mejoramiento del modo de vida, sin sangre. Creemos que la educación, el trabajo, y para todo [sic] y nosotros no estamos aquí como agentes de cualquier organización de imperialismo … Estamos viviendo en Chambacú Papayal, la Venecia, Olaya Herrera.[57]

55 'Contacto con Juntas de Mejoras pide el alcalde', *Diario de la Costa*, 1 Nov. 1963.

56 'Cartas al directo', *Diario de la Costa*, 1 Nov. 1963.

57 'Cartas al director', *Diario de la Costa*, 7 July 1968.

> [We are men from the USA who are here voluntarily. We believe in peace and justice for all, and we are not here to maintain injustice. We believe in the exchange of ideas and in the improvement of ways of life, without bloodletting. We believe ineducation and work for all, and we are not here as agents of any imperialist organisation … We are living in Chambacú, Papayal, La Venecia, Olaya Herrera.]

Radical agents also participated in community action in Cartagena, thus troubling the programme's objective of preventing the spread of subversive ideologies among the poor urban masses. In 1975 an intelligence report sent to the Ministry of Government highlighted the presence of several priests supposedly conducting subversive actions among poor communities across the country. One of these priests was Juan José Kratzer, an Argentine living in Fredonia. He was regarded as the leader of a so-called 'Popular Workers Movement' that had its meeting in the neighbourhood church. He was also believed to be part of another organisation – The Popular Committee of Workers, Peasant, and Students – intended to promote non-conformity among *barrio* residents.[58] A pamphlet produced by the organisation in 1973 seemed to reveal the origins of the committee. The anonymous document states that:

> Nosotros vendemos nuestra fuerza de trabajo con miras a satisfacer las necesidades de nuestros hogares, pero tenemos que desesperarnos ante la realidad, porque cada vez nos convencemos aún más de que lo que ganamos no alcanza para satisfacer estas necesidades. Los precios suben escandalosamente mientras el salario permanece fijo.
>
> Y no solo los obreros estamos sometidos a esta explotación, sino también los campesinos y demás sectores populares. Antes estas consideraciones cabe preguntarnos: Qué Hacer?
>
> La respuesta que surge es la de que solamente el pueblo UNIDO puede entrar a resolver sus problemas y que es por esto que hemos organizado un ENCUENTRO OBRERO-CAMPESINO-POPULAR.[59]
>
> [We sell our labour looking to meet the needs of our homes, but we must despair before reality, because we are increasingly convinced that our incomes are insufficient to cover these needs. Prices rise outrageously while our salaries remained fixed.
>
> And not only workers are subjected to this exploitation, so are peasants, and other popular sectors. Confronted with these considerations, we must ask ourselves: what is to be done?
>
> The response that springs forth is that only the UNITED people can solve their problems, and that is why we have organised a WORKERS-PEASANTS-POPULAR CLASSES CONFERENCE.]

58 'Letter from the Administrative Department of Security to the Ministry of Government, Cornelio Reyes', 10 Dec. 1975, Archivo General de la Nación. Ministerio de Gobierno, Caja 80, Carpeta 3, ff. 46.

59 'First Meeting of the Popular Committee of Workers, Peasants, and Students', Oct. 1973. Archivo General de la Nación. Ministerio de Gobierno, Caja 48, Carpeta 1, ff. 143

Due to the presence of such radical movements, Fredonia – the very same neighbourhood that had once exemplified the success of community development – became a fertile ground for radical politics. Indeed, the collective efforts exhibited by community action inspired leftist activists to envision and seek alternatives which would achieve more rapid and far-reaching social change.

San Francisco also witnessed the intervention of radical agents. Following the demonstration on January 1969, the Administrative Department of Security called in Jesús García, a Spanish-born Guatemalan priest who taught in a Catholic school near the neighbourhood, for questioning. They suspected that García was spreading 'socialist ideas' among the students, and of being sympathetic to Camilo Torres, a well-known priest and guerrilla militant who had died in action a few years previously. García admitted his involvement in the demonstration, although he declared that the protest had been organised by the members of the community action council. He said he was moved by the unfair deal offered to the residents 'Esas gentes, en un 80% sin trabajo, el cabo de 2 ó 3 meses no podrían pagar la cuota correspondiente' [who may not to be able to pay the monthly quotas in about 2 or 3 months, as 80% are unemployed]. The authorities questioned García about the involvement of three Spanish priests who worked in the *barrio* Olaya Herrera, and who were also suspected of being sympathetic to socialist causes.[60] These priests, Manuel Pérez, Domingo Laín, and José Antonio Jiménez, had arrived from Spain in 1968 to do pastoral work in the city's poorest *barrios*. They moved to Olaya Herrera and combined their pastoral work with community organising helping to advance some public works through self-help practices similar to those promoted by community action. When the priests became aware of the case of San Francisco, and the possible eviction of the residents, they decided to join the community action council, and mobilised the residents to march towards the city council. Pérez himself remembered these events years later:

> Nosotros acompañamos la manifestación pero con nuestras sotanas. Considerábamos que ahí era una forma y oportunidad de decir la misa, de celebrar el amor y la solidaridad con los pobres. Eso evitó que hubiera muertos en la manifestación, pues el ejército y la policía, si bien aporrearon un poco a la población, no había tanta decisión de matar. Desembocamos en la plaza de Cartagena, y la gente exigió que hubiera un cabildo abierto para tratar el problema. Que la población tuviera la oportunidad de discutir con las autoridades el problema del barrio San José. Ahí todos los políticos sí salieron a decir que eso era un error, que iban a modificar, que no iban a tumbar el barrio.[61]

60 'Statement of Jesus García, Spanish-born Guatemalan national to the Administrative Department of Security', Archivo General de la Nación. Migración Colombia. No. 130637. Box 1723. ff. 3.

61 C. Arango, *Crucifijos, sotanas, y fusiles: la participación de la Iglesia en las luchas armadas de los pueblos latinoamericanos, desde el mejicano Miguel Hidalgo, hasta el colombiano Camilo*

> [We joined the demonstration, but wearing our cassocks. We considered that there was a way to celebrate mass while also celebrating love and solidarity with the poor. That avoided there being any deaths during the protest because the police and the army – despite beating the people a little bit – did not have the determination to kill. We flowed into Cartagena's main square, and the people demanded a town meeting to discuss the problem; that the population would have the opportunity to discuss the problem of *barrio* San José [San Francisco] with the authorities. Then all the politicians came out to say that it was an error, that they would change the plans, and that they were not going to knock down the *barrio*.]

The Spanish priests were arrested immediately after the protest. Three days later, the Administrative Department of Security sent a request to the Ministry of Foreign Relations asking that they not extend the tourist visa for Pérez and Jiménez 'por dedicarse actividades agitación, incitación de la clase obrera [sic]' [for dedicating themselves to the agitation and incitation of the working-class].[62] They were suspected of organising 'socialist' meetings in several neighbourhoods in the city – including Fredonia – as well as leading the squatters' demonstration. The Ministry ultimately deported them days later.

Despite these setbacks, Pérez, Laín, and Jiménez did not give up their revolutionary aspirations. After reuniting in Spain for a few months, they secretly returned to Colombia and joined the ranks of the National Liberation Army, a guerrilla organisation that advocated a composite ideology which fused traditional Marxism and liberation theology. They took their struggles from the muddy streets of Cartagena's shantytowns to the mountains of Santander in eastern Colombia. The experience of living and working among the poorest communities of Cartagena informed the priests' final decision to join the guerrilla. Having been questioned at length by the Administrative Department of Security and deported back to Spain, Laín told his peers: '… no hay otra solución para la justicia social en Colombia que la lucha armada, me voy a la guerrilla [there is no way to achieve social justice in Colombia other than the armed struggle, I am joining the guerrilla'].[63] For Pérez:

> Las circunstancias o decisión de vincularnos al ELN fue a raíz de nuestra expulsión de Cartagena. Nosotros vivíamos en esa ciudad las mismas condiciones de vida y de lucha que vivía toda la gente. Por eso cuando se produce nuestra expulsión, nosotros decidimos nuestra vinculación a la guerrilla como el paso siguiente, como lo haría cualquier pobre (con conciencia claro está) al cual no se le permitiera más estar legalmente

Torres y el español Manuel Pérez (Bogotá: Editorial Colombia Nueva, 1991), p. 241.

62 'Telegram from the Administrative Department of Security indicating political activities of José Antonio Jiménez', 20 Jan. 1969. Archivo General de la Nación. Migración Colombia. No. 130635, Box 1723, f 4

63 T. Calvo Buezas, 'Un extremeño en América: mis encuentros con los curas guerrilleros', *Boletín de la Real Academia de Extremadura de las Letras y las Artes*, 21 (2013): 98.

> trabajando y luchando.[64]
>
> [The circumstances or decision to align ourselves with the ELN had its roots in our expulsion from Cartagena. We lived in the city in the same conditions and having the same struggles as the rest of the people. That is why, when we were expelled, we decided that the next step was to join the guerrilla, just like any other poor person (with class consciousness) would when they are not allowed to work and struggle legally.]

Laín and Jiménez died in action just a few years later, while Pérez survived to become the commander of the organisation, until his death from natural causes in 1998. Some neighbours still remember the collaboration of the three priests in their collective endeavours to transform their communities along the shores of the Ciénaga.[65] Their actions demonstrate that community development, while intended to serve the National Front's efforts to subordinate the masses, ended up creating a scenario within which radical agents could challenge the regime's rule, and inspire residents to engage in a vastly different political theatre.

Conclusion

In 1977, the World Bank partially funded a $35 million urban development project for the southernmost zone of Cartagena that largely consisted of the *barrios* along the shore of the Ciénaga de la Virgen. The project aimed partially to improve the urban conditions for 12,000 households living on the 355 hectares in the zone. Land filling began that year, streets were given kerbs and gutters, six major drainage ditches were replaced by canals and drain pipes were introduced with communitarian efforts. The project promised the construction of community facilities that included primary schools, child welfare and health centres, and employment and productivity units. Only 7 per cent of the households were to be demolished in order to make room for the regularised streets and new facilities. Massive eradication was abandoned altogether, with housing upgrading proposed instead. The Instituto de Crédito Territorial had also renounced large-scale slum clearance years previously and instead created a programme that legalised land tenure and supplied basic public utilities to squatter settlements, as it also provided schools, playgrounds and other facilities. Loans were made available for rebuilding or expanding the worst dwellings.[66] Both this change in housing policy and the World Bank's housing upgrading project relied on the historical experience of self-made improvements carried out by residents themselves, and on the creative capacity

64 Arango, *Crucifijos, sotanas, y fusiles*, p. 248.

65 Y. Liesa, *Liberación o muerte. Tres curas aragoneses en la guerrilla*, video, 61 minutes, 29 Nov. 2014, www.vimeo.com/113143259.

66 Strassmann, *The Transformation of Urban Housing*.

that people demonstrated through their work within the community action councils.

Between 1973 and 1978, 'the average value of Cartagena housing, owned and rented combined, rose from $4,700 to $7,000, meaning a growth rate of 8.5%, perhaps three times that of household income'.[67] While new dwellings were smaller, rooms per dwelling had increased by 24 per cent. Surprisingly, additions and improvements had made housing nearly two times better than might have been predicted on the basis of incomes alone. Despite their deprivations, residents managed to improve their homes. Community action indirectly contributed to these individuals efforts. By introducing municipal services and public facilities, and providing residents with economic means to improve their places of living, it created functional neighbourhoods which then encouraged individual efforts to upgrade housing. US economist Paul Strassmann, who conducted research for the World Bank on the housing upgrading experience in Cartagena, argued that 'housing improvement should be organised in a way that mobilises and complements informal building by the occupants. Assistance to the housing sector should be limited to help with slum-upgrading, providing utility-serviced sites, and for semifinished, expandable core housing'.[68] Strassmann's approach echoed John F.C. Turner, Alejandro Aravena and Hernando de Soto's ideas on self-made housing, formalisation of the informal city, and bottom-up participatory development that became particularly appealing for transnational organisms during the 1970s and 1980s.[69] This model was far from being a novelty. Instead, it resembles that which the state and popular classes forged through community action in Colombia from the early 1960s onwards. Residents transformed their habitats through collaborative efforts and the state assistance provided through community development. For the *Cartageneros* community action was a key resource to boost the creative transformation of their communities.

The state was not the only ally the dwellers had in their cause, nor were patron–client relationships the sole mode of interaction they had with external agents. Residents engaged with multiple actors: local politicians, brokers, the Peace Corps and revolutionary agents. Some of them were sympathetic to the National Front regime, and committed to the ideal of eradicating subversive ideologies among the masses. Others approached the community action councils specifically to capture the residents' attention, and recruit them for larger causes. In the case of the Spanish priests, working with the councils radicalised the methods they were willing to deploy to achieve their goals, and directly led to their choice to join the guerrilla. This proves the contradictory

67 W.P. Strassmann, 'Housing improvement in an opportune setting: Cartagena, Colombia' *Land Economics*, 56 (2) (1980):165.

68 Strassmann, 'Housing improvement', p. 155.

69 For a critical approach to De Soto's thesis on housing and informality, see Murphy, *For a Proper Home*.

outcome of community development: while intended to control the masses, and to strengthen the link between citizens and the state, it also created a ground of contention that exhibited the conflicting forces operational during the National Front regime.

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5. On ‘real revolution’ and ‘killing the lion’: challenges for creative marginality in Brazilian labour struggles

Lucy McMahon

‘Yesterday was a terrible day to imagine utopia. Today I woke up convinced that the real revolution (actual change) will come from the peripheries, directed by the marginalised. And it will not be televised. Let’s continue.’[1]

(Silva, 15th March 2016)

This is a Facebook post written by an activist working in the Maré favela in Rio de Janeiro after a million protesters took to the streets calling for the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff in March 2016.[2] The post reflects a bleak perspective on the existing political situation, but also asserts three convictions – that change happens far from the manoeuvres of institutionalised politics; that it is unlikely to be represented in conventional forms; and that even so, it is worth working for. Following this direction, this chapter engages with the idea proposed in the introduction to this collection that the ‘outsider’ location of marginal spaces allows for creativity and the ‘production of the new’ (pp. 1, 5, 18–19). The chapter critically examines three popular mobilisations in Brazil – two historical and one contemporary – to examine the role of ‘marginality’ in activist practice. The chapter considers the insights that these struggles provide for the work of making ‘actual change’ in today’s political context.

In the first section, I introduce some of the ways in which a selection of key theorists have placed hope in marginal groups and marginal spaces to produce new forms of politics. I follow the assertions made by these authors that there

1 A. Silva, Facebook page, 15 March 2016, www.facebook.com/alexandre.silva.7547031?ref=br_rs.

2 A study from the University of São Paulo and the Federal University of São Paulo showed that the campaign for impeachment came largely from a group of wealthy, right-wing protesters who were against the redistributive agenda of Rousseff’s Worker’s Party (BBC Brasil 2015, ‘Branco, Classe Média e leitor da Veja’ 2013). Despite the previous mobilisation against the Worker’s Party by more marginalised groups (see footnote below) a group of favela residents made a public assertion that the impeachment protests did not represent their interests (Favela 247 2015).

L. McMahon, ‘On ‘real revolution’ and ‘killing the lion’: challenges for creative marginality in Brazilian labour struggles’, in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 133–54. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

is a political imperative to look to marginal spaces as sites of political creativity. Dominant ideologies are most likely to be articulated and sustained by those whose interests they serve – hence the urgent need for a counter point from those whose interests they do not.[3]

I then narrate the events of the three labour struggles. The first is a porters' strike in 1857 in Salvador, Bahia.[4] The second is a riot in Rio de Janeiro, organised partly by new anarcho-syndicalist unions against compulsory vaccination in 1904. The third is a primary teachers' strike in 2013, also in Rio de Janeiro, which took place during the much wider 2013–14 protest movement.[5] I draw on historical sources, especially the work of Teresa Meade and João José Reis, for the first two cases, while for the third I draw from my own ethnographic research into the protest movements between 2013 and 2016.

I finally use these three labour struggles to identify and analyse two challenges in the theoretical appreciation of creative marginality. The first challenge is in the definition of what constitutes marginality. This challenge is to avoid essentialist ways of defining groups and to appreciate the multiple and sometimes contradictory elements of people's intersectional identities. Such identities might be used differently and strategically depending on the political context. I call for a shifting and complex understanding of the political power of marginality that appreciates the potential contribution of non-marginal strategies to 'marginal' struggles, and vice versa.

The second challenge is the risk of playing into a neoliberal discourse that celebrates the creativity of marginalised groups in order to justify cutting, or simply not providing, state funding for health, education and other resources.[6] Deprivation, violence and indignity all affect the ways in which people are free to act, create and mobilise, and this must be recognised alongside the startling

3 See L. Finlayson, *The Political is Political: Conformity and the Illusion of Dissent in Contemporary Political Philosophy* (London and New York: Rowman and Littlefield International, 2015), p. 139.

4 The strike was by the '*ganhadores*', literally 'earners'. As explained later, this was a catch-all term for a wide variety of work but I follow Reis' translation of the word as 'porters' since this strike was due to the specific targeting of water carriers, cargo carriers and sedan-chair bearers. See J. Reis João, 'Urban labour, ethnicity and the African strike of 1857 in Bahia, Brazil', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 29 (2) (1997): 355–93 at p. 456 and B.J.R. Durães, 'Trabalho de rua, perseguições e resistências: Salvador no final do século XIX', *Revista Brasileira de História & Ciências Sociais*, 4 (7) (2015): 74.

5 The 2013–4 protest movement was a series of mass street protests in at least a hundred cities. See C. Sweet, '¿Brasil despertó más fuerte?: Poder, protesta y política en 2013', *Revista de Ciencia Política* (Santiago), 34 (1) (2014): 59–78. Some trace the beginning to a series of bus fare rises in several cities (starting in Natal in August 2012) but by June 2013 the protests had become a multi-directional critique against inequality, corruption, privatization, over-spending on mega-events and the everyday violence of the military police.

6 See, for example, H. de Soto, *The Other Path: The Economic Answer to Terrorism* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), p. xvii; E. Kapaz and T. Kenyon, 'The informality trap: tax evasion, finance and productivity in Brazil', World Bank, Dec. 2005, p. 3.

ability of people to overcome such obstacles. The demands of marginalised groups for state resources, political inclusion and a *non-marginal* identity status must also be appreciated. I suggest that the practical consequence of this recognition might well be a pessimism about the potential for marginalised groups to fulfil their creative potential without the support or resources of more powerful allies.

Theories of creative marginality

Theoretical work on the creative potential of marginalised groups often begins by establishing the way in which a person's position affects their outlook and relationship to the world. In *The Wretched of the Earth,* Fanon conceives of the colonial world as a world 'cut in two', with barracks and police stations marking the frontiers. He describes the zone of the settlers as the zone of asphalt, stone and steel, the zone of 'being', and the zone of the colonised people as an abandoned 'zone of non-being', 'a hungry town, starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light'.[7] He then outlines the various ways in which one's position in this 'zone of non-being' constrains action, confidence and political consciousness. Boaventura de Sousa Santos' article 'Beyond abyssal thinking' explores a similar divide between 'two worlds'. He claims that 'modern Western thinking is abyssal thinking' in the way that it constructs a world of law, science and knowledge premised on ignoring anything that falls outside of the hegemonic principles on which this world is grounded.[8] Frank Wilderson's article: 'Gramsci's black Marx: whither the slave in civil society?' demonstrates the way in which this kind of 'abyssal' thinking serves to invisibilise people. He points out that Gramsci and Marx fail to acknowledge the extent to which capitalism was based not only on the exploitation of wage labour but also on slavery.[9] He writes that 'civil society's subaltern, the worker, is coded and waged, and wages are white', meaning that institutions associated with citizenship rights, such as the law or the welfare state, are premised on the fact that black Americans were 'never meant to be workers … we were meant to be accumulated and die'.[10] Wilderson argues that racial oppression cannot be solvable when the core economic and political roots of our imaginings take for granted the invisibility of black suffering. Applying similar ideas to an analysis of institutions, Nthabiseng Blessing Seroba draws from Fanon and Santos' work, together with the work of the South African theorist Tshepo Madlingozi, in order to argue that there is an 'abyssal line' that separates NGOs, who he sees as working in the 'formal' political world, from social movements that emerge

7 F. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (HarmondsworthPenguin, 2001), pp. 29–30.

8 B. de S. Santos, 'Beyond abyssal thinking', *Review*, 30 (1) (2007): 45–89, at p. 51.

9 F. Wilderson, 'Gramsci's black Marx: whither the slave in civil society?', *Social Identities*, 9 (2) (2003): 225–40, at p. 229.

10 Ibid., p. 239.

from the 'zone of non-beings'.[11] Seroba argues that radical political change can only emerge from those institutions that work in this informal 'zone of non-beings.' The idea is that voices that emerge from within dominant, included, 'formal' groups, such as labour unions and political parties – as exemplified in Wilderson's analysis of Marx – will tend to reproduce the logic that shores up the superiority of their group.

This idea has many historical echoes. In Marx's *Materialist Conception of History*, he claims that our understanding of history, our consciousness, our language and our relationships with each other arise from 'needs and modes of production'.[12] The famous line in the *Communist Manifesto* that the working class have 'nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win', suggests that it is the very dispossession of the working classes, their position *outside* the beneficiaries of the capitalist order that enables them to be the agents of political change.[13] Another famous example is Hannah Arendt's claim that refugees could use their status and experience of being 'conscious pariahs', and get 'in exchange for their unpopularity one priceless advantage: history is no longer a closed book to them and politics is no longer the privilege of the Gentiles'.[14] In other words, the marginalised status of refugees means that they are uniquely placed to construct new forms of politics and history. Fanon argues that those who occupy the 'zone of non-being' must throw off all or any affiliations to European colonisation in order to 'combine our muscles and brains in a new direction ... to create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth'.[15]

Contemporary work on this idea of the 'outsider' or 'pariah' as agent of political change has moved from an understanding of the marginalised as a defined, boundaried group to an idea of marginal *spaces*, which may be occupied by marginalised and non-marginalised groups.[16] A major provocation

11 N.B. Seroba, 'NGOs and social justice in Africa: the difference between NGOs and social movements', 21 May 2014, http://thinkingafricangos.blogspot.co.uk/2014/05/the-difference-between-ngos-and-social_21.html (accessed 28 Dec. 2018).

12 K. Marx, *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, edited by D. McLellan (2nd edn., Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 183.

13 K. Marx and F. Engels, 'Manifesto of the Communist Party', trans. by S. Moore and F. Engels (Marx/Engels Internet Archive, 1987 [1848], available at https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ (accessed 11 March 2019).

14 H. Arendt, 'We refugees', in M. Robinson (ed.), *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile* (Boston, MA: Faber and Faber, 1994), p. 119.

15 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 252

16 See J. Butler, *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence* (London and New York: Verso Books, 2006); J. Rancière, 'Introducing disagreement', trans. by S. Corcoran, *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanitis*, 9 (3) (2004); A. Khanna, P. Mani, Z. Patterson, M. Pantazidou and M. Shqerat, 'The changing faces of citizen action: a mapping study through an "unruly" lens', IDS Working Papers 2013, no. 423 (1 June 2013), pp. 1–70; E.F. Isin, *Being Political: Genealogies of Citizenship* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002) – and the discussion below.

for an understanding of the creative potential of marginality that goes beyond fixed identity categories came from the collective mobilisations that stole the international headlines from around 2010. These included the Egyptian revolution, Turkish protests, anti-austerity mobilisations in Europe and – most relevant to this chapter – the 2013–14 protests in Brazil. In academic analysis and in journalism, these mobilisations were notable for their apparent disaffection with such formal methods of political participation as parties, unions and established social movements.[17] The types of alliances and organisations involved made it very difficult to make clean divides between the work of 'NGOs' and 'social movements', as advocated above by Seroba. Another perceived commonality across the different country contexts is an increasing economic precarity suffered by both marginalised groups and the middle classes, alongside perceptions that the wealthiest were benefiting from regimes of austerity, security and privatisation.[18] A report by the workers' rights NGO, CAMTRA, on the Brazilian protests, commented that there was a notable absence of fixed identity categories or established groups, and demands were largely for such broad citizen rights as bus fares, public health and public education.[19]

This identification of a precarity shared between different economic groups has led theorists of recent anti-institutional uprisings to suggest that they create a politics that draws on the most common identifying characteristic: the body, or personhood.[20] The claim is that through finding a commonality between people of differing levels of privilege, new futures can be imagined outside the hierarchical constraints of the existing society. Santos writes about the possible coming together of a 'vast set of networks, initiatives, organizations and movements', as a way of producing 'post-abyssal thinking'. By this he means seeing beyond closed and categorised understandings of marginalised and non-

17 M. Abdelrahman, 'Social movements and the question of organisation: Egypt and everywhere', LSE Middle East Centre Paper Series, no. 8 (Sept. 2015), p. 7; R. Nunes, *The Organisation of the Organisationless: Collective Action after Networks* (London: Mute, 2014), p. 7; R. Mendonça and S.A. Ercan, 'Deliberation and protest: Turkey and Brazil', in F. Fischer, D. Torgerson, A. Durnová and M. Orsini (eds)., *Handbook of Critical Policy Studies* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015), p. 212; Sweet, '¿Brasil despertó más', p. 62.

18 F. Vinhaes, 'A democracia Frankenstein' in *E o povo reinventou as ruas: olhares diversos sobre as manifestações de 2013* (Rio de Janeiro: Multifoco, 2013), p. 54; Khanna et al., 'The changing faces of Citizen Action', p. 9; A. Alonso and A. Mische, 'June demonstrations in Brazil: repertoires of contention and government's response to protest', in *Contention to Social Change: Rethinking the Consequences of Social Movements and Cycles of Protests* (Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2015), p. 6.

19 I.A. dos Santos, J.P. Zanetti and L. Alves Maione, 'Olhares feministas sobre as mobilizações' (Rio de Janeiro: CAMTRA, 2014), p. 6.

20 Khanna et al.'The changing faces of Citizen Action', p. 14; M.B. Kuymulu, 'Reclaiming the right to the city: reflections on the urban uprisings in Turkey', *City*, 17 (3), (2013): 274–8, at p. 273; M. Tadros, 'Introduction: the pulse of the Arab Revolt', *IDS Bulletin*, 43 (1), (2012): 1–15, at p. 9.

marginalised, working instead around an emergent knowledge that develops as people from different backgrounds work to produce counterhegemonic alliances.[21]

The idea of reconstructing the various different divides between groups as a shifting binary between 'hegemony' and 'counterhegemony', rather than formal/informal, or marginalised/non-marginalised, is also shared by Rancière. He makes a distinction between the 'logic of the proper', or 'police order' and the logic of radical active equality, or democracy.[22] The police order is the existing state. Democracy is 'the specific power of those who have no common title to exercise power, except that of not being entitled to its exercise', a group he refers to as *les sans-part*.[23] This term does not refer to a particular bounded 'outsider' group such as the 'working class' or 'informal sector', because any identity given them inside the police order would only reproduce that order.[24] For Rancière this group is united only by a collective lack of power within existing political structures. In the case of the 2013–14 Brazilian protests, then, Rancière would see the plurality of groups and absence of structure as a precondition for political change. He writes that 'politics' only happens when *les sans-part* create some kind of visible or vocal rupture that asserts their presence and discredits, even momentarily, the legitimacy of a 'police order', and the social divisions within it.[25]

These ideas are shared and explored by others: Judith Butler suggests that a new politics can be built upon a recognition of mutual bodily vulnerability or precarity, through a realisation that 'my fate is not originally or finally separable from yours'.[26] Khanna et al.'s exploration of the Egyptian revolution, Turkish, Spanish, Greek and Brazilian protests draws from the work of Rancière to suggest that these mobilisations provide the opportunity for people from different social groups to share an 'unruly', marginal space outside the 'police order', and therefore produce new forms of politics.[27] While this contemporary work rejects fixed binaries between marginal and non-marginal groups, it still celebrates the idea of marginal *spaces* that can have some kind of claim to being 'outside' an existing political order. Many of the mass political mobilisations in the past five years pose challenges for this idea. What, for example, happens when the 'marginalised' becomes – or uses – the establishment? The next

21 Santos, 'Beyond abyssal thinking', pp. 65, 68.

22 J.J. Tanke, *Jacques Rancière: An Introduction* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011).

23 Rancière, 'Introducing disagreement', p. 5.

24 O. Davis, *Jacques Rancière* (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), p. vii.

25 J. Rancière and D. Panagia, 'Dissenting words: a conversation with Jacques Rancière', *Diacritics*, 30 (2) (2000): 113–26.

26 Butler, *Precarious Life*, p. 22.

27 Khanna et al., 'The changing faces of Citizen Action', p. 11.

section outlines the chronology of three labour struggles to prepare for a critical examination of these questions in the final section.

The porters' strike, 1857

Most historians of labour organising in Brazil claim that the 'labour movement' began with a wave of European immigration in the early 20th century.[28] Such accounts miss out on a number of important labour struggles (many initiated by slaves and former slaves) of previous centuries. This is an example of the kind of erasure identified by Wilderson, as introduced above. In 1835, a large number of slaves stormed the city of Salvador in the state of Bahia, killing government officials and destroying private and public buildings. The goal was to destroy or weaken the institution of slavery, but they failed partly due to the lack of support from free citizens.[29] However, the legacy of the rebellion influenced what Reis suggests should be seen as the 'first general strike by an important segment of Brazil's urban economy'.[30] In response to the rebellion, the provincial government authorised a series of ordinances which aimed to police both enslaved *and* free *ganhadores* in the city.[31] *Ganhadores* was a term used for anyone understood to be earning their living in the streets, including porters (those responsible for carrying water, cargo, documents and people across the city), builders, bakers, carpenters and street vendors.[32] Ganhadores were all perceived to be 'black', and the ordinances, according to Reis, were provoked by a desire by the authorities 'to control the work of blacks … to control the circulation of blacks in public places'.[33] Reis therefore conceptualises the porters' strike as an example of 'African' resistance, since the majority of slaves and former slaves in Bahia at that time had been born in Africa and many had been involved in a series of slave rebellions.[34] In 1857, new ordinances were brought in which included a 'stop and search' policy where black Bahians – men and women – were regularly asked for their registration details by a newly established sector of the police force and forced to pay a tax to cover the costs

28 See for example V. Giannotti, *Historía das lutas dos trabalhadores no Brasil* (Rio de Mauad Editora Ltd, 2007) p. 72; R.J. Alexander and E.M. Parker, *A History of Organized Labor in Brazil* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003); C. Everett, 'Organized labor in Brazil 1900–1937: from anarchist origins to government control', Libcom.org, Jan. 2011.

29 F. Dias, 'Racial articulation and labor in 19th century Brazil', *Comparative Sociology*, 13 (4) (2014): 445–81, at p. 462.

30 Reis João José, 'Urban labour, ethnicity and the African strike of 1857 in Bahia, Brazil', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 29 (2) (1997): 355–93, at p. 457.

31 Ibid., p. 473.

32 B.J.R. Durães, 'Trabalho de rua, perseguições e resistências: Salvador no final do século XIX', *Revista Brasileira de História & Ciências Sociais*, 4 (7) (2012): 72–93, at p. 74.

33 Reis, 'Urban labour', pp. 455–6.

34 Ibid., p. 458.

of the inspections.[35] Porters were then only allowed to earn their living through paying for a permit granted by the city council, providing details of guarantors (for freed workers) or owners (for slaves), and wearing a metal plaque engraved with their registration number around their neck.[36]

The male porters in Salvador went on strike against these laws, which were seen as an attempt to curb the independence both of free workers and slaves. Slaves no longer stayed in the house of their 'owners' but had to keep a portion of what they earned working as porters to spend on their living expenses, and lived alongside freed slaves in self-run communities known as *cantos.*[37] The porters managed to paralyse transportation for over a week. To begin with, the city tried to replace the workers with carts, but this did not prove sufficient. Then, a lowering of the registration fee was proposed, and rejected by the striking workers. All the registration fees were dropped by the second day. [38]

The movement had to manage the differential freedoms afforded to slaves and free workers; slave masters demanded their slaves return to work under threat of punishment, reduction of wages and bargaining with the possibility of future manumission. Free workers responded by stealing the identification from slaves – sometimes violently – that put the slaves' owners at risk of being fined.[39] An important part of the support given to the porters was from women and children, who discouraged desertions and sold food on credit to the striking workers.[40] In the end the porters returned to work slowly, despite only a limited number of their demands being met, according to Reis because of their inability to last without working for much longer. But they had succeeded in modifying and restricting the control of the government over their working lives.

The vaccination riots, 1904

In the early 20th century, European immigrant workers brought with them a strong tradition of anarchist labour organising, in part due to their rebellion against the hierarchies of their native countries in Southern Europe.[41] Militancy included mass strikes at the Aliaca Textile Mill in 1903 in Rio de Janeiro and the campaign for the eight hour working day.[42] The historian Carlos Augusto Addor argues that the anarchist current came to dominate labour politics in

35 Ibid., p. 474.

36 Ibid., p. 456.

37 Ibid., p. 456; Durães, 'Trabalho de rua', p. 78.

38 Reis, 'Urban labour', p. 484.

39 Ibid., p. 486.

40 Ibid., p.465.

41 Everett, 'Organized labor in Brazil'.

42 Everett, 'Organized labor in Brazil'; Alexander and Parker, *A History of Organized Labor in Brazil*, p. 10.

the first two decades of the 20th century, even for less marginalised workers, because of the total refusal of the state to see formal workers' movements as legitimate political actors.[43] Addor's analysis finds a contemporary parallel in the turn to more anarchist tactics in the teachers' strike, as will be explained below.

A key feature of anarchistic labour organising – largely because of its diverse support base – was the way in which it addressed society-wide demands, rather than occupation-specific concerns. A major campaign by the early labour movement was to oppose a new sanitary code which demanded compulsory vaccination against smallpox and yellow fever. This campaign brought together non-unionised and informal workers and the unemployed.[44] The compulsory vaccination was seen as 'sanitary policing', designed to increase state control over the poorer sections of the population, rather than addressing the structural causes of poor health such as the lack of sewerage or piped water.[45] Teresa Meade's study of the campaign describes a familiar context in which the urban elite of the time aimed to 'transform Rio de Janeiro ... into a showplace of cultural refinement and business enterprise' and popular opposition mounted against a sanitation plan designed around 'the needs of merchants, planters and British traders, at the expense of the city's laboring poor'.[46] There was also, as today, a justification of harsher policing using the rhetoric of criminality to depoliticise street protest and activism.[47] Pedro Antonio de Oliveira Ribeiro, the police chief of the city at the turn of the 20th century, saw the growth of the anarchosocialist labour movement in Brazil as the work of 'insolent vagabonds' and 'uncontrollable, idle youngsters'.[48] This led to calls for more policing, with a letter to one of Rio's daily newspapers claiming that 'to speak of a *policed* country is synonymous, is the same thing, as to speak of a *civilized* country'.[49]

The vaccination law became a symbol for this police state. Unions used it to campaign around the critical need for better housing for the working class, among whom were the newly unionised railroad workers, dockworkers, stonemasons and machinists, and began by using petitions and rallies, creating the 'League Against Obligatory Vaccination'. This worked with the newly created Centre of the Working Classes which was led by Dr Vicente de Sousa, a doctor who Needell argues was a 'jacobino' influenced by studying socialism

43 C.A. Addor, *A insurreição anarquista no Rio de Janeiro* (2nd edn., Rio de Janeiro: Achiamé, 2002) p. 73.

44 Alexander and Parker, *A History of Organized Labor in Brazil*, p. 11.

45 T. Meade, '"Civilizing Rio de Janeiro": the public health campaign and the riot of 1904', *Journal of Social History*, 20 (2) (1986): 301–22, at p. 306.

46 Ibid., p. 302.

47 Ibid., p. 309.

48 Ibid., p. 303.

49 Cited in Meade, 'Civilizing Rio' , p. 306.

and who campaigned for multi-class labour militancy.[50] The lack of response to their campaigns and violent policing of subsequent rallies led to riots. These riots destroyed streetcar lines, electric and gas utilities, construction sites, police and public health stations, engaged in gun battles with the army and ended with hundreds injured, hundreds jailed and many dead.[51] The burning of privately owned streetcars, according to Meade, was because of the presumed complicity of transport companies in the marginalisation of communities, benefiting financially from poorer workers who had been pushed out to the suburbs by city 'improvements' that had led half of the residents of the city to lose their homes that year.[52] The riots brought the city to a standstill, and indeed succeeded in one of their demands as on 15 November 1904, the government made vaccination non-mandatory.

The teachers' strike, 2013

On 8 August 2013, the Teachers' Union of the State of Rio de Janeiro, known as SEPE,[53] began what was initially a 'traditional' strike over pay, resources and what the union saw as neoliberal reform and privatisation by stealth.[54] Although the strike included 'traditional' union concerns between employees and their employer over pay, it also appealed to the broader political arena from the start. When their initial attempts at bargaining failed, teachers used similar tactics as were seen in the earlier June mobilisations, including occupations, street protests and popular education initiatives. They drew support from groups across the city including their own students, parents, unions, political parties, multiple NGOs, the Landless Workers' Movement, the Black Bloc and Mídia Ninja.[55]

I witnessed the strike first hand while on fieldwork, conducting participant observation with CAMTRA, the workers' rights NGO mentioned above. On the evening of 1 October 2013, I accompanied CAMTRA's staff to the centre of Rio where, like many other previous evenings, a group of teachers and solidarity groups had gathered around the municipal council building. Teachers were

50 T. Meade, '"Living worse and costing more": resistance and riot in Rio de Janeiro, 1890–1917', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 21 (2) (1989): 241–66, at p. 255.

51 Meade, 'Civilizing Rio', p. 301.

52 Ibid., pp. 311, 314; Meade, 'Living worse', p. 248.

53 Sindicato Estadual dos Profissionais da Educação.

54 J. Watts, 'Thousands join teachers' protest in Rio de Janeiro', *The Guardian*, 8 Oct. 2013.

55 The Black Bloc is an anarchist inspired protest tactic in which anyone on a protest who wants to join dresses in black and covers their face with a mask. In Brazil, the Black Bloc includes a very diverse group including street children, students and activists who are also part of other political organisations. Mídia NINJA stands for 'Independent Narratives, Journalism and Action' and is a group of horizontally organised DIY citizen journalists, who wear head cameras and gas masks in order to provide real-time coverage of protests (Zibechi, *Autonomy in Brazil*).

giving speeches in support of the strike and public education more generally, jumping off and on a car with a sound system. Local restaurants were allowing the protesters to use their toilets and their tables were crowded with unionists and representatives from political parties and the landless workers' movement. I turned down a side street and suddenly a shock troop of military police came running towards us and lined up around the building.[56] Teachers shouted for a peaceful demonstration but the police were instructed to advance on the crowd causing chaos and confusion. They would stop, at which point the teachers would continue with their speeches, and periodically the police would advance again.

This battle for street space between protesters and the police had been going on most evenings for the past week or so. The walls around were pasted with images of teachers who had ended up too close to police lines, or who had been evicted from occupied buildings, with blood running down their faces and bruises on their arms and legs. We overheard one teacher shouting at one of the military police officers, 'I didn't teach you to follow orders like this! Shame on you!' Another teacher explained to us that the woman had recognised the officer as one of the boys she had taught when he was in primary school. Although the policing was forceful that evening, it felt a lot less tense than previous street protests.[57] I remarked on the absence of tear gas and the same teacher told me that 'the police would be ashamed to use tear gas on the teachers'.

Since 8 August, SEPE had organised weekly demonstrations in the centre of the city and school visits to publicise their strike.[58] On 16 August the Secretary of Education Wilson Risolia threatened striking teachers on probation with dismissal, and the mayor of Rio Eduardo Paes threatened to make the strike illegal and cut pay.[59] In the September negotiations with the city council, 300 teachers occupied the public gallery to stage a protest, claiming the terms of the discussion to be undemocratic and unrepresentative. Over the next few days the protest grew bigger than ever, and other teachers staged an occupation of Guanabara Palace, the headquarters of Rio de Janeiro's state government. On 1 October, Paes released another plan for education, without consultation with the union, and it was immediately rejected. By 8 October the four-lane Rio Branco road had been temporarily closed down and this time the police used tear gas on those blocking the road. Later in the afternoon, tens of thousands

56 A shock troop, or Batalhão do Choque, is a batallion of police wearing helmets, visors and protected armour. They carry grenades, rubber bullets and tear gas.

57 This was in comparison in particular to the 7 September Independence Day protests a month earlier, where gas was used indiscriminately all day, on those in cafés and those attending the military parades as well as oppositional protesters.

58 Watts, 'Thousands join teachers' protest in Rio de Janeiro'.

59 SEPE RJ., 'Sepe responde aos ataques desmedidos do secretário de educação Wilson Risolia', SEPE RJ (blog), 16 Aug. 2013.

of people came out marching in support of the teachers.[60] Police took over the 507 bus to take arrested people to the police station, and people sat in the road to stop the bus from being able to move. Five other buses were taken by protesters.[61]

The union released a statement on 11 October claiming that the government were using methods against the teachers that went beyond even the tactics of the military dictatorship.[62] The unruly tactics used by the protesters were justified in terms of this 'unconstitutional' repression. The coordinator general of SEPE, Alex Trentino, claimed that the police were fully responsible for starting the conflict. The union also declared unconditional support to the Black Bloc, in a statement that thanked the Black Bloc for their assistance during the protests.[63] The Bloc formed barriers between protesters and the police and took the first hit of the tear gas. They also took care of the injured during the protests. Teachers posted all over the Black Bloc Facebook page with comments that included:

> I make here my sincere thanks to the Black Bloc that joined with the educational professionals in the protests … thank you very much Black Bloc. I was together with many of you this Tuesday and I felt supported in many moments when tear gas burned my face and eyes![64]

The union then called for another large demonstration on 15 October, Teachers' Day in Brazil. Twenty thousand people came to the streets, including several local communities who used the protest to oppose school closures. Noemia Magalhães, a member of the National Movement of Housing Vindication and a Duque de Caxias resident, said about the protests: 'It is not just about the "career plan", it is for quality education'.[65] The policing of this protest was even more extreme than before, and there were 190 arrests.[66]

60 M. Cabral, 'Manifestação de professores no Brasil acaba em batalha campal', *Expresso*, 8 Oct. 2013.

61 G. Carpes and H. de Andrade, 'Em noite de protestos, câmara do Rio é atacada e tem salão incendiado', Em noite de protestos, UOL Educação, 8 Oct. 2013.

62 SEPE RJ, 'Nota: governo cabral quer punir profissionais com medidas que nem a ditadura militar ousou aplicar', SEPE RJ (blog), 11 Oct. 2013.

63 G. Sabóia, 'Sindicato dos professores declara oficialmente apoio aos Black Blocs – Educação – O Dia', O Dia, 9 Oct. 2013. NB this support for the Black Bloc by a trade union is relatively unique; Black Bloc tactics have caused deep divides elsewhere, with journalist Chris Hedges referring to it as the 'cancer of Occupy' in C. Hedges, 'The cancer in Occupy', Truthdig (blog), 6 Feb. 2012.

64 Professores Mantêm Greve, Convocam Novo Ato e Declaram Apoio Aos Black Blocs, Brasil de Fato, 10 Oct. 2013.

65 C.A. Crumpler and K. Steiker-Ginzberg, 'Favela residents join teachers day protest', RioOnWatch (blog), 17 Oct. 2013.

66 L. Torres, 'Ato no rio tem 64 presos, diz polícia; 27 são autuados por crime organizado', Rio de Janeiro, 16 Oct. 2013.

Eventually there were long discussions in the union on 25 October, leading to a compromise agreement that ensured that no repressive measures would be taken against striking teachers. The vote was 1085 to 889 to end the strike with 14 abstentions. Although the head of the union, Gesa Corrêa, claimed that 'the strike has ended but the mobilization continues … we reject the plan presented by Paes and will continue to negotiate', those voting against released a statement claiming that the union 'had paid with betrayal those who had always given you a hand'.[67] The following day, the union website was hacked with a message left by one of the striking teachers that read:

> yesterday was one of the saddest days for me ... we lost the fight ... I am from the lowest rung of the social pyramid … for someone in this position, it's important to know how to survive defeats… [but] when I arrived at the assembly today, I noticed that many of those who were there had never been to assemblies before, nor participated in the strike movement ... to mobilize in order to vote against a movement that one was not a part of, this is the height of immorality ... I have rarely felt so defeated in my life. I think of my students and my school without the minimum infrastructure ... I thought that I would leave from this strike with some kind of guarantee of improvement for them. But I am leaving in the same way as I entered: a lone teacher, for whom it feels like killing a lion every class in order to stimulate students to live in an institution that does not represent them and does not give them anything.[68]

Challenges of 'creative marginality'

There is much to explore in each of these labour movements separately, and I do not wish to draw shallow parallels between very different contexts, actors and outcomes. There are some key common features, however, which I argue provide significant insights into the questions of creative marginality. As noted above, two key challenges that these mobilisations pose to theories of creative marginality can be identified as, firstly, the problem of defining marginality, and secondly, the very real impact of being treated as 'marginal' by the state.

1. Defining marginality

The first common feature is the way in which comparatively 'privileged' groups end up relying on the support, strategies and spaces created by more marginalised groups. For the porters' strike, Reis argues that the role of the broader African community, including women and children, was vital to the success of the struggle, and that people from various levels of local hierarchies

67 A. Nitahara, 'professores da rede municipal do Rio de Janeiro decidem terminar a greve', Agência Brasil, 25 Oct. 2013.

68 'Após fim da greve dos professores do Rio, site de sindicato sofre ataque hacker', Portal Fórum (blog), 26 Oct. 2013.

participated to the extent they were able.[69] For the vaccination riots, union leaders and community organisers relied on support from capoeira-trained street fighters, streetcar passengers and the homeless.[70] The teachers' strike saw a growing loss of faith by the teachers in traditional union action and a growth in their reliance on the Black Bloc and neighbourhood groups of students and parents.

A second common feature is the way in which each struggle, although ostensibly for a singular, short term goal (the removal of registration, the end of obligatory vaccinations and a pay rise, respectively) also included much broader demands, reflecting the interests of a diverse range of people. This helps to explain why so much popular support was generated, and why more formalised groups earned the support of more marginalised communities. In the porters' strike, the tags and registration were perceived as the culmination of a series of policies aimed at destroying the independence of the growing *cantos* community; as Reis argues 'subordinating it … to the territorial jurisdiction of white officialdom'.[71] The tag was seen as particularly humiliating against the legacy of slave shackles, the welded collars of habitual runaway slaves and the significance of bodily adornment in particularly Yoruba religious practices, and this symbolically united resistance between former slaves and slaves.[72] Unfortunately, testimonies of those involved are not available, but the strike was certainly perceived by the newspapers of the elites as a 'revolution' of people with a range of collective 'interests', provoking fears that the city had become 'governed by Africans'.[73] Durães sees the strike as a way in which a diverse group of people who had in common the shared use of the street as a space for survival, sought to resist the controlling influence of the white elite.[74] The porters utilised their specific leverage as free workers with an essential role in the running of the city to fight against the racism that affected a much wider group.

Similarly, the vaccination riot is perceived by Needell as the response of a very wide range of people 'riven by racism and beset by poor housing, constant illness and disease, precarious employment and vagaries in the amount and value of their wages'.[75] Meade documents how the riots had been preceded by a range of other struggles, including streetcar driver strikes, food riots, attacks on sanitation workers and campaigns also by 'propertied', 'literate' people

69 Reis, 'Urban labour', p. 485.

70 Meade, 'Living worse', p. 249; J.D. Needell, 'The *revolta contra vacina* of 1904: the revolt against "modernization" in belle-époque Rio de Janeiro', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 67 (2), (1987): 233–69, at p. 264.

71 Reis, 'Urban labour', p. 474.

72 Ibid., p. 484.

73 Ibid., p. 486.

74 Durães, 'Trabalho de rua', p. 82.

75 Meade, 'Civilizing Rio', p. 254.

concerned about water shortages and sewage.[76] She writes that the smallpox vaccination 'came to symbolise the last, the most feared and poorly explained as well as the most tangible aspect of a plan many had opposed for years'.[77]

I conducted a number of interviews with those supporting the teachers' strike, asking for perspectives on the strike as part of the wider 2013–14 protest movement. As Yasmim,[78] a street vendor, commented:

> the protesters were right because they were protesting not just about health but also education and transport … everything, it's all linked together. I went out to support the school teachers and the doctors and nurses were protesting too, I think it was good.

The teachers' strike demonstrates the possibility of alliances between individuals and groupings who do not share the specific pay and working conditions-related demands of the teachers themselves, but who understand them as part of a much wider campaign. The appropriation of buses, as with the vaccine revolt, linked the teachers' campaign with campaigns against bus fare rises and to the right to city space and public services more broadly, affecting both marginalised and less-marginalised groups.[79]

These examples show that for two hundred years (at least) workers have found ways to organise political actions that combine the leverage held by formal workers with the 'unruly' disruption of street protest, by marginal groups and in marginal spaces. This means that it is difficult to identify where precisely the line lies between the 'zone of beings' and 'non-beings', between the police order and the 'sans part', between 'unruly' and formal politics. Indeed, all three of these mobilisations began with the hope that there might be some formal institutional response to citizen demands. The very form of a strike presumes the potential for negotiation, even where, as in the case of the slaves against the municipal government, the power differential is very great. Apart from the hope that negotiation might be possible, another reason for retaining an engagement with the state is that it is not particularly possible to stay 'outside' it. The state is seen in all three cases as trying to intrude into – and

76 Meade, 'Living worse', pp. 243, 247, 249, 250.

77 Ibid., p. 248.

78 Yasmim is a pseudonym. As CAMTRA works particularly with street vendors, many of my interviews were with vendors who had supported the protests in their positions as mothers or former school students.

79 This reflects trends elsewhere. Both the 2011 Egyptian revolution and the 2001 Argentinian protests followed on from 'social movement' forms of unionism, where, for example, striking doctors were supported by their patients in Egypt, and unemployed workers were supported by teachers and social workers in Argentina – see M. Abdelrahman, *Egypt's Long Revolution: Protest Movements and Uprisings* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 62 and V. Manzano, 'Dilemmas of trade unionism and the movement of the unemployed under neoliberal and progressive regimes in Argentina', in S. Lazar (ed.), *Where Are the Unions? Mass Mobilisations and Trade Unions in Latin America, the Middle East, North Africa and Europe*, trans. L. McMahon (London: Zed Books, 2017).

deprive – the freedom of each group, but each case also shows cases of (albeit not always chosen) interdependence: of the porters with their clients, of the vaccination rioters on the maintenance of infrastructure in their interests, and of the teachers on their employers and on the educational infrastructure. An example of this ambiguous relationship between protesters and government was evidenced in Salvador in 1858, where there was a big protest against price controls initiated by the provincial government. The porters this time took part *alongside* the municipal government.[80]

The ambiguity of the marginalised/non-marginalised divide – or Fanon's 'two zones' – is particularly salient for the teachers' strike, which shows the difficulty in creating a space that is 'truly outside' Rancière's police order. Schools are institutions that regulate social relations and reproduce the class relations necessary for the labour market to function, as explored widely for the case of Brazil by Paulo Freire.[81] Yet they are also sites of rebellion; since the 2013 strike, Rio has seen a wave of school occupations where students have sought to teach their own classes, 'decolonising' their curricula and revolutionising a way of teaching seen as geared towards reproducing the social and political status quo.[82] One teacher I interviewed claimed that her participation in the strike and protest movement was part of her professional duty, to lead by example in her encouragement of her students to fight for and participate in a more democratic active politics. The initial reluctance of the police to use tear gas (rarely spared in other protests) suggests a conferral of a certain legitimacy on the teachers, in their status as formal public sector workers. The claim by the teacher that she did not teach the officer to follow orders recalls a previous, though recent, sharing of public space where the teachers rather than the officers held power. Teachers as a group can then be seen as legitimate and rogue; dominant and marginalised.

All three cases also provoked changes in the meaning of marginality, making small cracks in the political status quo. The slight changes in the ordinances demanded by the local government as a result of the porters' strike meant that the free porters could 'escape the cycle of dependence on their former masters and enter into a direct relationship with political authorities without intermediaries'.[83] Given the racist and highly concentrated power structures of the time, this was not a huge benefit, but Reis argues that the strike showed the ruling classes that the *ganhadores* were a significant political force, aware of their importance to the running of the city, and not a 'disorganised mass'.[84]

80 M.C. Dolci, 'Revoltas, motins e revoluções no Brasil novecentista', *Projeto História: Revista do Programa de Estudos Pós-Graduados de História*, 47 (2014): 453.

81 H. Giroux, 'Introduction', in P. Freire, *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power, and Liberation* (New York, Westport, London: Bergin & Garvey, 1985) p. xi.

82 F. Milanez, 'Ocupação escolar é momento de aprendizagem – CartaCapital', 9 Dec. 2015.

83 Reis, 'Urban labour', p. 489.

84 Ibid., p. 490.

Durães sees the strike as the emergence of a united 'subaltern' class of people who posed a real threat to the white elite, and which by the end of the 19th century had become an important collective of both men and women, fighting for the improvement of their social condition and against oppression, and claiming the city as a site for resistance as well as survival.[85]

Meade argues that 1904 helped to 'consolidate a tradition of resistance' in Rio, and was followed with public transport riots in 1908 and 1910, campaigns against the high cost of living in 1913 and massive city-wide strikes in 1917. Although none of these campaigns succeeded fully in their aims, Meade argues that together they showed the elite that 'beautification was not an antidote for profound urban problems', leading to the first ever debate in congress on social legislation.[86]

In 2013 the support from the Black Bloc did not serve to discredit the teachers' protest but rather elevate the profile of the Bloc. The harder the police cracked down on the teachers the more respect was gained by the Bloc. As a result, the goals that were uniting people were revealed to be more radical – more 'outside' the existing political imaginary than previously conceived. It created the seemingly incongruous situation where marginal anarchist tactics were seen as necessary in the defence of the welfare state. The trajectory of the officer from school to the police and the trajectory of the teacher from public servant to rioter can be seen as a metaphor for an overarching shift in the state towards increasing prioritisation (and funding) of security over education. But it can also be seen as the radicalisation of both the police and the teachers, towards state-sanctioned violence and civil disobedience respectively.

To some extent, these three labour struggles provide examples of spaces that have broken down Santos' abyssal line, that – as in Butler's formulation – build on shared precarity, and form alliances across differentially marginalised actors in order to create a space that refuses the divisions between people imposed by a political and economic structure. Each case evidences the ways in which marginal spaces and actors made significant creative contributions to political practice, perceptions of marginality and, to a certain degree, policy. However, rather than occurring as part of a uniquely marginal struggle, 'outside' existing structures of power, these shifts happened as a result of strategic alliances between marginalised and less-marginalised groups.

2. Dangers of marginality

Another problem with the idea of creative marginality, or creative shared precarity, is that there obviously really *is* an 'abyssal line' of sorts between the treatment and experiences of some citizens compared to others in Brazil. This line operates according to racist, patriarchal and classist hierarchies that

85 Durães, 'Trabalho de rua', p. 90.

86 Meade, 'Living worse', p. 266.

persist beyond – and within – any changes brought about by protest. All three struggles involve a coalition of people with different levels of institutional privilege, working towards demands that – if answered – would affect them differently and to varying extents. For the most vulnerable groups, unruly protest strategies risk further marginalising participants.

The oppression of *ganhadores* in Salvador only intensified by the end of the 19th century, when a series of rules limiting free movement were created. In 1888 there is a report of a *ganhador* being imprisoned simply 'for walking without a destination'.[87] Durães documents the rapid increase in black and mixed-race prisoners in Salvador, which he shows to be a racist strategy to make more 'space' in the city for the white elite.[88] After the riots in 1904, hundreds of people were arrested and sent to Ilha das Cobras or a new prison in Acre, where they were placed in inhuman conditions, piled and tied together on slavery-era style ships and beaten.[89] Although an account of the prison in Acre claims that prisoners were 'children and old people, blacks and whites, native-born and foreigners', the crushing of the riots disproportionately affected the most vulnerable: 'streetfighters, beggars, unemployed and prostitutes', while elite opponents of vaccination were courted by the leadership for their support.[90] The mass imprisonment happened after a series of major raids, which captured people living in the poorest areas of the cities with, of course, no trial.[91]

In 2013, the surprise at the threat of dismissal, and the surprise at the levels of violence used against the teachers – as opposed to other protesting groups that year – evidences the differential ways in which different citizens expect to be treated. The visibilisation of differential state violence was a common theme throughout the 2013–14 protests. In journalist Eliane Brum's reflections on the killing of nine people in the Complexo da Maré favelas in June 2013, she writes: 'Brazil will not change while the middle class feels more for the wounded of São Paulo than the dead of the Maré', and points out that while the police use rubber bullets to injure in the city centre, they use live ammunition to kill in the favelas.[92] Just as we recognise the critical contributions of marginalised groups and protest tactics, then, it is important to recognise that the dangers will inevitably be higher for more vulnerable groups.

Violent response to protest can also marginalise people who previously assumed an *aspirational* approach to the state, common to more dominant social groups, in the sense that the decision to strike is based on a belief that industrial action retains some political influence. The crushing of this

87 Durães, 'Trabalho de rua', p. 86.

88 Ibid., p. 89

89 Needell, 'The Revolta Contra Vacina of 1904', p. 268.

90 Ibid., p. 267.

91 Ibid., p. 267.

92 R. Zibechi, 'Autonomy in Brazil: below and behind the June uprising', OCCUPY WALL STREET, 2013.

'aspirational' belief and the subsequent undermining of political power is obvious in the hacker's statement. The emphasis on leaving as 'a lone teacher' reflects a growing understanding of the state as an institution that atomises people and reduces social problems to individual responsibility. I suggest that his use of the phrase 'killing a lion' might be interpreted in two ways. Firstly as simply an expression of how much energy it takes to teach under extreme resource scarcity and in an institution that appears fundamentally opposed to students' interests.[93] Secondly as an expression of what the teacher might feel like he is doing by continuing to operate in such a situation; killing the marginalised popular resistance (the 'lion') that he both represents and is paid to control. The hack is a last ditch, marginalised and anarchistic attempt to practise politics despite formal defeat. Just as marginality can be creative, innovative and powerful, then, the state's response can end up intensifying the exclusion and individuation to the extent that this creativity is silenced, the 'lion' is killed, or at least significantly weakened.

Concluding thoughts

There have been other movements in Brazil since 2013, which provide further examples of a strategic use of marginality in labour struggles. On 1 March 2014, the employees (known as *garis*) at the waste management company Conlurb went on strike, asking for better compensation due to poor health conditions, a readjustment of the food voucher sum and a base monthly salary. The timing during carnival meant that the strike made a huge impact on the city. The mayor disqualified the strikers as 'a rebellion' since the strike was not declared officially by the union. After the first round of negotiations, in which the union was about to accede, the strikers refused, and the city government eventually gave in. Mídia NINJA writes of the strike: 'had it been up to the labour union, the urban cleaning professionals would have had a meagre 9 per cent increase in wages. Had it been up to the City, they would never have stopped working. Had it been up to the mainstream media, the movement would have been criminalised and defamed'.[94] In other words, this is yet another example of a marginalised labour struggle that used traditional forms of leverage but succeeded despite the exclusions and constraints of formal union organising.

I suggest that given the insights provided by these three labour struggles, the best political strategy for creating 'actual change' might be to work with marginality, acknowledging both its structural potential and its limitations. It may be that 'actual change' may be best hoped for through the development of alliances between groups that hold some degree of institutional 'formality',

93 See P. Willis, *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).

94 Midia NINJA, 'Outros Carnavais – Midia NINJA', trans. by E. Platais, Medium, 10 March 2014.

and hence a degree of leverage, and more marginalised groups who may need a higher degree of protection, particularly in the context of street protest. Within such alliances, the likelihood of existing social divides only being sustained in the practice and outcomes of protest must be acknowledged. A flexible, intersectional and careful approach to marginal spaces, then, may facilitate the most creative ways of producing 'the new'.

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Vinhaes, F. (2013) 'A democracia Frankenstein', in *E O POVO REINVENTOU AS RUAS: Olhares diversos sobre as manifestações de 2013* – Vários autores | Livraria Antonio Gramsci (Rio de Janeiro: Multifoco), pp. 53–62.

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6. Urban policies, innovation and inclusion: Comuna 8 of the city of Buenos Aires

Anabella Roitman

Creative marginality and innovation in the management of the marginal

Creative solutions are constantly emerging from marginal spaces to address social inequalities in an attempt to achieve urban integration.[1] Within the orbit of public management, however, policies related to urban inclusion are often criticized as inefficient or rare – if they exist at all. Even when such policies are specifically produced, their lack of creativity is often critiqued, and they are frequently seen as returning to failed models of previous management strategies. Nonetheless, in Latin America, the design and implementation of these policies takes place in a context of multiple alternative and emerging experiences of urbanisation. Within these, the creative emphasis is placed on the challenge of overcoming or capturing market logic and obtaining social-urban integration with proposals that are also environmentally sustainable.[2] While Latin American cities suffer from acute levels of inequality,[3]

1 In the context of this chapter, it is interesting to consider the definition of the term 'creativity', associated with the ability, inherent to all people, to adapt to one's environment. See C.A. Valenzuela, 'Surizonte, una aproximación a la marginalidad creativa que no conoce academias', in C.I. Mora Forero (ed.), *Encuentros cardinales: acentos y matices del diseño. II Bienal Tadeísta de Diseño Industrial* (Bogotá: Universidad de Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano, 2016), pp. 231–42.

2 An example of the phenomenon of creativity in the management of urban marginality in Latin America can be seen in the city of Medellín, Colombia. See I. Duque Franco, 'Políticas públicas, urbanismo y fronteras invisibles. Las disputas por el control espacial en Medellín', paper presented at the *XIII Coloquio Internacional de Geocrítica*, Barcelona, 5–10 May 2014. Regarding creative policy initiatives in Argentina, see S. Jalfin, 'Innovar en políticas públicas. Cuando las buenas ideas ayudan a gobernar', *La Nación* (Buenos Aires), 12 Apr. 2014, available at www.lanacion.com.ar/1680083-innovar-en-politicas-publicas-cuando-las-buenas-ideas-ayudan-a-gobernarinnovar-en-politicas-publicas (accessed 22 May 2018).

3 According to the Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL), Latin America is the most unequal region in the world. See A. Bárcena, 'América Latina y el Caribe es la región más desigual del mundo. ¿Cómo solucionarlo?', 25 Jan. 2016, available at

A. Roitman, 'Urban policies, innovation and inclusion: Comuna 8 of the city of Buenos Aires', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 155–80. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

then, they simultaneously represent a hemispheric testing laboratory for new policy instruments.

This chapter aims to review some of the proposals made by the Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires (Government of the City of Buenos Aires, GCBA) to address these issues within the administrative area Comuna 8, which groups some of the city's poorest neighbourhoods together. Recognising the need for municipal policy to respond to the specific needs and demands of the vastly different neighbourhoods and local groups found in divergent areas of the city, in 2005 the GCBA sought to decentralise its administration by dividing Buenos Aires into 15 administrative areas known as 'comunas'.[4] Comunas are intended to promote participatory governance, local identity and a more equal distribution of resources between neighbourhoods. The divisions were primarily made by taking pre-existing neighbourhood limits and population densities within each sector into account. This is to say that some comunas encompass several pre-existing neighbourhoods while others contain only a single heavily populated neighbourhood. In the case of Comuna 8, this decision meant bringing together a compendium of complex urban problems under the auspices of a single political-administrative unit. This sector in the south of the city has historically suffered social stigmatisation, both in comparison with the centre of the city and internally, due to the fact that the neighbourhoods within the comuna suffer from different degrees of social, economic and urban marginality. This chapter analyses some of the different policies promoted by the various ministries that make up the local government structure and their strategies to drive urban processes in an innovative and inclusive way.[5] The chapter focuses on the state discourse advanced to justify the creation of the planning instruments analysed, exposing the contradictions within this rhetoric and the considerable overlapping of different agencies. It must be noted that access to primary information is extremely difficult as local government discourse is not transparent, publicly available data is scarce, and even when it is available it is often badly organised and/or not up to date. For these reasons (and due to the recent creation of the departments under

www.cepal.org/es/articulos/2016-america-latina-caribe-es-la-region-mas-desigual-mundo-como-solucionarlo (accessed 22 May 2018).

4 Law 1.777 – Ley Orgánica de Comunas (Legislatura de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Oficial de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires* N° 2292, 2005.

5 With regards to the term 'innovation', it is interesting to consider the definition provided by the Inter-American Development Bank: 'en esencia, la innovación es la transformación de nuevas ideas en soluciones económicas y sociales' [in essence, innovation is the transformation of new ideas into economic and social solutions]. This definition allows for the concept of 'innovation' to be linked to that of 'creativity', which is the unifying thread in the present volume. For more information regarding the link between these concepts and public policy, see J. Benavente and M. Grazzi, 'Políticas públicas para la creatividad y la innovación. Impulsando la Economía naranja en América Latina y el Caribe' (Washington DC: Banco Interamericano de desarrollo – BID, 2017).

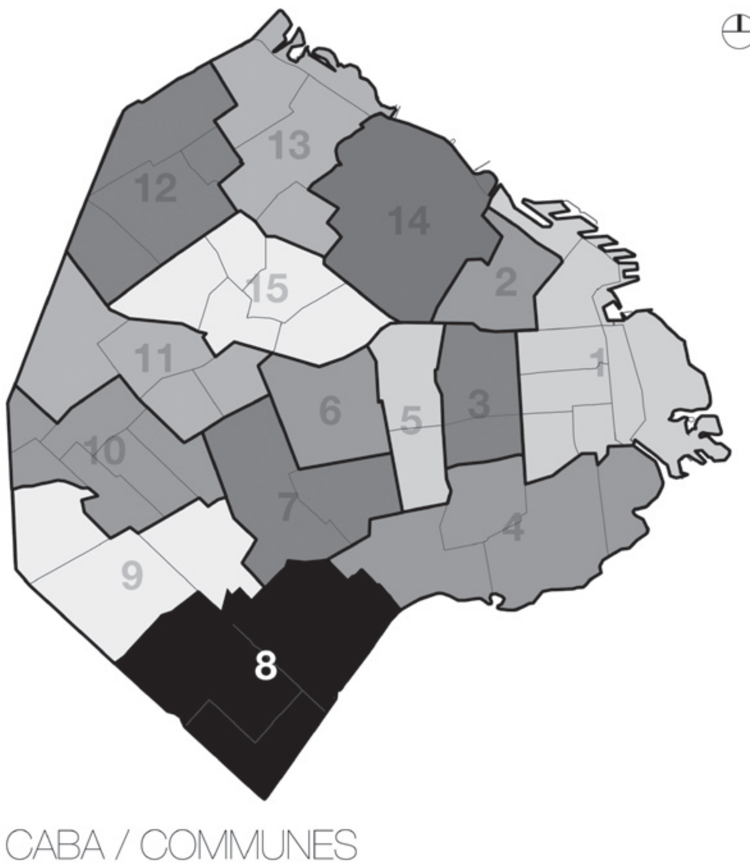

Figure 6.1. Buenos Aires – Comuna 8. All figures in this chapter have been drawn by Luciano Mengibar in collaboration with the author based on information from the website of the government of the city of Buenos Aires (http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar).

discussion) academic scholarship analysing these urban instruments is scarce. This chapter therefore offers a unique contribution to the existing literature.

The south of Buenos Aires as margin and opportunity

The city of Buenos Aires suffers from a high degree of inequality. While there are some notable exceptions, in very broad terms, the north is the site of residence for the middle and higher classes, while the south hosts the working classes

and the urban poor. Currently, for example, 'una familia de la zona norte de la ciudad de Buenos Aires tuvo, en promedio durante el primer trimestre, un ingreso per cápita 119,57% superior al de un hogar de la zona sur, de acuerdo con datos oficiales publicados hoy por la Dirección General de Estadística y Censos porteña' [a family in the northern zone of the city of Buenos Aires had, on average during the first fiscal quarter, a per capita income 119.57% greater than a home in the Southern zone, according to official data published today by the Buenos Aires Directorate for Statistics and Census].[6] This historical characteristic is linked to the pre-existing environmental conditions and the human activities found in each area, as will be explained below. Throughout the 20th century unsuccessful attempts have been made to correct this arrangement and mitigate the unfavourable conditions encountered in the south of the city.[7] Unfortunately, despite these efforts and the development of numerous proposals, this trend continues in the present day.

The Plan Urbano Ambiental [Urban Environmental Plan for Buenos Aires, PUA], is the current masterplan for Buenos Aires. It was developed by the especially created Consejo del Plan Urbano Ambiental [Council for the Urban Environmental Plan], under the auspices of the GCBA, and was approved through by-law 2930 in 2008.[8] The prescriptions set out in the document are legally binding. The PUA clearly identifies the relative marginality of the entire southern area as a specific problem to be addressed:

> En contraste con la excesiva concentración de actividades en el centro de la ciudad y con la alta concentración de población y equipamientos en la

6 'CABA: un hogar del norte gana per cápita 120% más que uno del sur', *El Economista*, Buenos Aires, 7 July 2017, available at www.eleconomista.com.ar/2017-07-caba-desigualdad-norte-sur/ (accessed 22 May 2018). Confronted with this situation, Javier Fernández Castro provides a concise and current definition of the southern zone of the city, which maintains this unequal socioeconomic relationship with the north: 'ya no estamos ante un Sur depósito natural de emprendimientos sociales, último refugio de las clases populares al interior de la Ciudad propiamente dicha. En esta nueva etapa, lejos de favorecer la mixidad social como garante de integración urbana, ha devenido en último coto de caza disponible, a sabiendas que los pobres tendrán su lugar en la lejana periferia' [we no longer face a South which is the natural deposit for social undertakings, the final refuge for the popular classes in the interior of the city in the strict sense. In this new stage, far from favouring social mixing as a guarantor for urban integration, it [the South] has become the last available hunting ground, in the full knowledge that the poor will find their place in the distant periphery]. J. Fernández Castro, 'Sur, prólogos y aperturas', in H. Herzer (ed.), *Barrios al Sur. Renovación y pobreza en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Cafe de las Ciudades, 2012), pp. 7–10.

7 For discussion of some of these policy initiatives, see A. Novick, 'La ciudad y los grandes proyectos', in D. Kullock and A. Novick (eds.), *Debates sobre ciudad y territorio: los aportes del CIHaM, Centro de Investigación Hábitat y Municipios* (Buenos Aires: Nobuko, 2010), pp. 41–68; A.L. Massidda, 'Design exchanges in mid-twentieth century Buenos Aires: the programme Parque Almirante Brown and its process of creative appropriation', *Journal of Design History*, early access view, 2017. See also G. Silvestri, *El color del río: historia cultural del paisaje del Riachuelo* (Bernal: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes/Prometeo, 2003).

8 Law 2.930 (Legislatura de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Oficial de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires* N° 3091, 2008.

> franja norte, se registran áreas de marginalidad y de vacancia en toda la franja sur paralela al Riachuelo, que se materializa en forma de segregación y exclusión urbana.[9]
>
> [In contrast to the excessive concentration of activities in the centre of the city and to the high concentration of population and equipment in the northern part of the city, areas of marginality and of vacant land are registered throughout the southern part parallel to the Riachuelo river. This materialises itself in the form of segregation and urban exclusion.]

According to the PUA, the causes of this relative marginality are the natural characteristics of the land (the south consists largely of low-lying areas that used to be floodplains for the river Riachuelo) and the historical installation of highly polluting industrial activities on the shores of the river. Without entering into detail, the document also explains that the population in the south has a lower level of income than that found in the north, which affects consumption on a local scale, the development of tertiary economic activities and the possibility of individuals improving, upgrading and renewing the urban area through their own actions.[10]

The PUA's diagnosis of the south briefly emphasises 'la alta contaminación del Riachuelo' [the high contamination of the Riachuelo River], its limited road connectivity to other areas of the city, and the fact that it hosts 'la casi totalidad de las villas miseria de la ciudad; … grandes conjuntos habitacionales con degradación de las condiciones estructurales y de habitabilidad; y un parque industrial abandonado en parte y devenido en actividades de menor productividad (depósitos, logística)' [almost all of the city's shantytowns; ... large-scale social housing complexes with deteriorated structures and low habitability; and a partly abandoned industrial park, which is now used for activities of lesser productivity (warehousing, logistics)].[11]

However, the PUA also explains that this sector has a number of important comparative advantages and significant potential that could be developed: the availability of undeveloped land at relatively low cost; the ready supply of large plots; and the continuing presence of manufacturing establishments, among others.[12] The PUA also emphasises the need to face the problems of

9 Consejo del Plan Urbano Ambiental, 'Documento Plan Urbano Ambiental de Buenos Aires' (Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Planeamiento y Obras Públicas, 2006), available at www.cedet.edu.ar/Archivos/Bibliotecas_Archivos/PUA%20CABA%2006.pdf (accessed 20 March 2018).

10 Consejo del Plan Urbano Ambiental, 'Documento Plan Urbano Ambiental de Buenos Aires', p. 8.

11 Ibid.

12 With reference to these potentialities, Javier Fernández Castro explains that the formerly 'forgotten' neglected south has become a 'remembered' south due to the expansion of property developments, which promise to incorporate the area into the rest of the city. The idea of the south as a 'forgotten' area is, however, recurrent and persistent. Nonetheless, according to Fernández Castro, this idea does not stem from a lack of policies targeting the

the south by integrating the region into the wider metropolitan area. That the plan contemplates both sides of the Riachuelo simultaneously is important due to the fact that the river serves as the administrative boundary between the area governed by the GCBA and that governed by the Province of Buenos Aires (which includes the wider metropolitan area of Greater Buenos Aires). In addition, the PUA has a chapter outlining four types of policy instruments (planning, management, participation, and monitoring). Among these it is possible to find programmes already implemented that need to be improved (for example plans referring to specific areas such as education, health, culture, and so on), and others which are more innovative (for example, the PUA proposes the generation of a land bank, the development of specific plans for each individual comuna, and so on).[13]

Despite the integrated metropolitan vision of the PUA, it only applies within the administrative region of the City of Buenos Aires, as does the division into the city's fifteen distinct comunas. In fact, both developments follow the 1994 reform of the national constitution which determined that the city district of Buenos Aires should have its own local constitution (sanctioned in 1996) and thereafter elect its own executive. This is the aforementioned GCBA, led by the Jefe de Gobierno (head of government, or mayor). The city district, in turn, was renamed as the 'Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires' [Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, CABA]. The surrounding metropolitan districts of Greater Buenos Aires are instead governed by the Province of Buenos Aires.

The decentralisation process referred to above also took place within this context. The CABA was sub-divided into comunas, which are units of political and administrative management, with exclusive and concurrent competencies with the GCBA. As intimated, each comuna grouped different numbers of pre-existing neighbourhoods together based on their respective population densities. In the case of Comuna 8, this meant that the neighbourhoods of Villa Lugano, Villa Soldati and Villa Riachuelo were consolidated under the same administration. From 1996 to the present day, the citizens of CABA have elected four mayors,[14] and since 2011 they have also elected representatives responsible for responding to neighbourhood problems and presenting claims to the central authority within its comuna. These representatives are denominated 'comuneros' (comuna leaders).[15]

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area, but rather from those past policies being misguided or insufficient. See J. Fernández Castro, 'Sur, prólogos y aperturas'.

13 Consejo del Plan Urbano Ambiental, 'Documento Plan Urbano Ambiental de Buenos Aires'.

14 A total of six individuals have held the post of mayor since 1996, two of whom were deputy mayors who assumed the office.

15 Law 1.777 – Ley Orgánica de Comunas; Law 3.233 (Legislatura de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Oficial de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires* N° 3300, 2009; Law 3.719 (Legislatura de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Oficial de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires* N° 3593, 2010.

Regarding the degree of autonomy and decentralisation, the CABA (in relation to its role as the country's capital and as an administrative unit with its own identity) together with the comunas form an unusual hybrid structure of governance which is also trapped between official rhetoric and the actual will to redistribute political power.[16] Although the comunas are legal entities and have their own elected representatives, they do not have real power to make the territorial improvements that their inhabitants claim and demand. This is largely due to the restrictive budgets granted to each comuna and to disputes with the GCBA. Moreover, certain departments within the GCBA itself frequently create and operate projects which would infringe upon the specific administrative competencies reserved for the comuna*s* (examples of these are the maintenance of urban spaces and the management of their assets) or competencies that are meant to be developed by both the GCBA and the respective comunas in collaboration (for instance the design and execution of comuna plans).[17]

Following the formulation of the PUA and the decentralisation of governance through the creation of the comunas, between 2010 and 2012 the public administration decided to perform a series of in-depth assessments collecting qualitative and quantitative information on each of the fifteen comunas.[18] Following this process, it was felt necessary to design Planes de Comuna (comuna plans) for two (Comunas 4 and 8) which held a high concentration of environmental and social problems.[19] Both are located in the south of the city. These comuna plans replicate the methodology used in the elaboration of the PUA.[20] The technical-political decision to implement urban plans for

16 For more information concerning the hybrid structure of governance, see D. Szajnberg and A. Roitman, 'Contradicciones y tensiones socio-espaciales entre las intervenciones urbanísticas en la comuna 8 de la ciudad de Buenos Aires', in J.L. Karol (ed.), *UPE 11 – Conducir las transformaciones urbanas: un debate sobre direcciones, orientaciones, estrategias y políticas que modelan la ciudad futura* (La Plata: Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 2014), pp. 348–60.

17 Law 1.777 – Ley Orgánica de Comunas.

18 The fifteeen territorial reports aimed to show 'la distribución en el área de los diferentes usos del suelo con el fin de comprender los patrones que hacen a la dinámica económica, social y territorial de la Comuna' [the distribution of different land usages in the area with the goal of understanding the patterns which constitute the economic, social and territorial dynamics for the Comuna]. See 'Informes Comunas' (Buenos Aires: Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), available at www.buenosaires.gob.ar/planeamiento/publicaciones/informes-territoriales/comunas (accessed 22 May 2018).

19 'Planeamiento y normativa urbana' (Buenos Aires: Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), available at www.buenosaires.gob.ar/planeamiento/publicaciones/planeamiento-y-normativa-urbana (accessed 22 May 2018).

20 Concerning this methodology see *Modelo territorial Buenos Aires 2010 – 2060* (Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Desarrollo Urbano, 2009), available at http://cdn2.buenosaires.gob.ar/planeamiento/modelo%20territorial%202010%202060.pdf (accessed 22 May 2018). See also G. Jajamovich, 'Apuntes para una crítica al Modelo Territorial de Buenos Aires.

these comunas can be considered an innovative step designed to counteract the relative marginality of these two areas. Indeed, the simple fact of having created these plans served as an initial strategy to install these deprived sectors of the city into the political agenda.

Comuna 8: marginality as an opportunity for inclusive innovation

Of the two comunas found in the south of the city, Comuna 8 has particular characteristics which make the analysis of the creative potential of its urban integration policies particularly interesting. This comuna currently covers a total area of 2,180 hectares within which some 187,000 inhabitants live. According to the GCBA, Comuna 8 faces significant problems today, which explain the area's condition of marginality. In particular, Comuna 8 features:

- the highest level of informal employment within the CABA, affecting more than 27,000 people;
- the lowest per capita income within the CABA;
- the highest rate of female unemployment (11.1 per cent) in the CABA;.
- high rates of infant mortality (10.9 per 1,000 live births);
- the lowest life expectancy found within the CABA (almost seven years lower than the average for the city);
- the second highest rate of offences for carrying illegal weapons;
- a high level of educational vulnerability in public primary schools;
- a rate of teenage pregnancy more than double that of the rest of the city.[21]

With regard to the historic implementation of public policies for this comuna, state involvement (understood in a broad sense) in the development of the area was crucial in defining its current socio-economic and spatial configuration. The private sector and neighbourhood associations also played an important role consolidating the area during the first half of the century.[22] Regarding state action, it can be observed that 'las contradicciones en la orientación de

Lo que plantea y lo que excluye', *Café de las Ciudades* 118 (2012), available at www.cafedelasciudades.com.ar/planes_118.htm (accessed 22 May 2018).

21 Information taken directly from 'Proyecto Urbano Integral – Comuna 8' (Buenos Aires: Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), available at www.buenosaires.gob.ar/planeamiento/plan-urbano-ambiental-comuna-8 (accessed 20 March 2018). Spanish original: 'el nivel más alto de informalidad laboral, el cual alcanza a más de 27 mil personas./El promedio del ingreso per cápita más bajo de la CABA./La mayor tasa de desocupación femenina de la CABA, con 11,1%./Altas tasas de mortalidad infantil (10,9/1000)./La menor esperanza de vida de la CABA, casi 7 años menor al promedio de la Ciudad./El 2º lugar en el ranking de delitos por portación ilegal de armas./Un alto índice de vulnerabilidad educativa (IVE) en el sector estatal de nivel primario./La tasa de embarazo adolescente duplica la del resto social.'

22 D. Szajnberg and A. Roitman, 'Evolución e impronta territorial de la planificación y gestión urbanística estatal en la Comuna 8 de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires en el siglo XXI', paper at the *Seminario Internacional de Investigación en Urbanismo*, Barcelona, 2015.

las intervenciones generaron impactos negativos, resultando en un territorio segregado en relación con el resto de la ciudad' [the contradictions in the orientation of the interventions generated negative impacts, resulting in a segregated territory in relation to the rest of the city].[23] Among state policies, the programme Parque Almirante Brown can be considered a key antecedent to the current plan for Comuna 8 as it aimed to recover the floodplains in the area in order to build social housing complexes and to set up urban equipment and leisure spaces destined to serve the whole of the city.[24] At present, this comuna is also affected by the simultaneous deployment of numerous policies under the auspices of diverse bodies that are theoretically designed to curb problems related to marginality. Five of these instruments are described in the following sections.

The South Buenos Aires State Society Corporation

Of all the urban land owned by the state, some land is of protected public ownership and cannot be sold (such as streets, squares, parks, and so on), while other land is owned by the state in a private capacity. There are presently three state bodies that manage the stock of land belonging to the GCBA under private ownership. The three entities are: 1. Corporación Antiguo Puerto Madero Sociedad Anónima (Antiguo Puerto Madero Corporation, CAPMSA) operational since 1989; 2. Corporación Buenos Aires Sur Sociedad del Estado (South Buenos Aires State Society Corporation, CBASSE) operational since 2000;[25] and 3. Agencia de Bienes (State Property Agency, ABSE) which was approved in 2016 but is (puzzlingly) in the process of being dissolved, barely a year after its creation.[26] The phrase 'land under private ownership' applies to land which is not intended for public use. It is this land which is managed by the aforementioned bodies. The entire City of Buenos Aires is thus divided into three distinct areas allocated to each of these bodies. These three public–private partnership corporations are intended to instigate the development of large urban sectors identified as both vacant and as areas of opportunity. In addition, the CBASSE claims to sustain the simultaneous goal of socially integrating vulnerable groups who live in the south – even though there is little clarity

23 N. Cosacov et al., 'Documento de Trabajo N 56 – Barrios al sur: Villa Lugano, Villa Riachuelo, Mataderos, Parque Patricios y Villa Soldati a través del tiempo' (Buenos Aires: Instituto de Investigaciones Gino Germani, 2011).

24 A. Massidda, 'Design exchanges'; D. Szajnberg and A. Roitman, 'Evolución e impronta territorial'.

25 Law 470 (Legislatura de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Oficial de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires* N° 1025, 2000.

26 G. Prado, 'La historia detrás de la disolución de la Agencia de Bienes de la ciudad', *La Nación* (Buenos Aires), 8 Jan. 2018, available at www.lanacion.com.ar/2098679-la-historia-detras-de-la-disolucion-de-la-agencia-de-bienes-de-la-ciudad (accessed 20 March 2018).

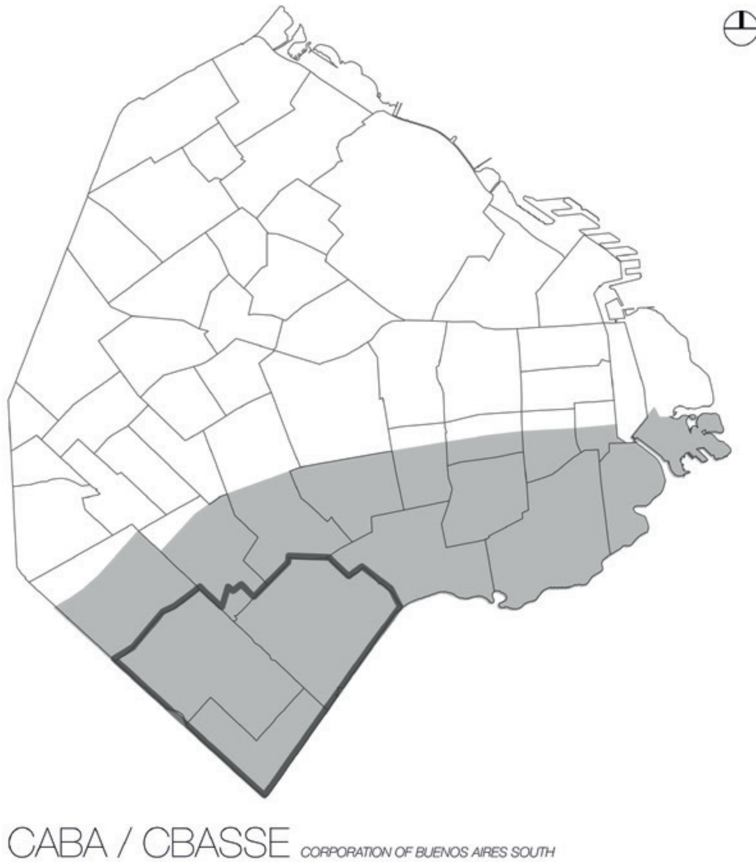

Figure 6.2. South Buenos Aires State Society Corporation and Comuna 8.

about how this would be achieved.[27] The region of operation for the CAPMSA and the ABSE occupies the central and northern areas of the city, coinciding with the richest comunas. In contrast, the CBASSE operates in the south of the city, which includes Comunas 4 and 8.

Despite their specific economic contexts and their very different performances, the implementation of these urban instruments meant the territorialisation of multiple competing and contradictory social and economic aims and objectives. Moreover, these conflicting ideas originated with

27 'Inclusión Social' (Buenos Aires: Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), available at www.buenosaires.gob.ar/corporacionsur/inclusion-social (accessed 20 March 2018).

stakeholders involved at the national, city and local levels, and also within offices that form part of the institutional structure of the CABA. (The debate regarding the deployed practices and achievements obtained by CAPMSA and CBASSE through the years, and their relationships with the newly created ABSE Agency, remains open.)

The logic underpinning the creation of the kind of agencies associated with large urban projects, as part of a global trend which ran approximately from 1980 until 2000, was that capital and profits produced from these public–private partnerships would be reinvested to the benefit of other city areas. Indeed, during the latter decades of the 20th century, it was considered that the construction of small-scale development projects in specific locations would generate spill effects and economic benefits for the entire city. In the case of Buenos Aires, this approach was partly epitomised by the creation of the CAPMSA, which initially assumed responsibility for the financing and management of a large-scale urban project designed to renovate an abandoned port area located on the eastern coast of the city.

Simultaneously with the developments described above, during the late 1990s and continuing into the 21st century, there was an interesting shift in the approach to urban planning which was epitomised by ongoing Latin American projects like Favela Bairro in Brazil. This was reflected in laws for shantytown upgrade in Buenos Aires enacted in 1991, among others.[28] This new trend in city planning was inspired by contemporary conceptions of spatial justice, and sought specifically to develop urban sectors that had previously been overlooked.

It was within this context that CBASSE was created in 1999,[29] with a view to re-empowering the state to take the lead as a fundamental actor in the process of developing urban land. CBASSE had the specific objective of generating urban development in sectors of the southern zone of the CABA, which had been underutilised, or were in a state of decline, or had been historically neglected. What is particularly innovative and creative about the establishment of the CBASSE is that it specifically sought to appropriate the structures and practices of neoliberal development instruments (such as the CAPMSA) but to use them to obtain different objectives. For example, projects such as CAPMSA functioned in areas which already encountered high degrees of economic opportunity and explicitly endeavoured to generate financial capital. This in turn led to the emergence of élite enclaves within a generally low-income area. In contrast, the CBASSE adapted tools taken from the business management sector but claimed that it would utilise them to integrate marginal areas of the city, such as the neighbourhoods of the south of Buenos Aires within Comuna

28 By-law 44.873 (Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Municipal* 19.006, 1991.

29 While the corporation is still currently active, it now has a different remit and alternative objectives.

8. However, from the moment of its inception until the present day, detailed information about the specific aims, activities and performance of the CBASSE has been extremely rare.

Territorial Units of Urban Inclusion (UTIUs)

These six territorial units were created in 2012 under the auspices of the Secretaría de Hábitat e Inclusión of the GCBA (Secretariat for Habitat and Inclusion, SSHI), which has a specific mandate to work 'por la construcción de una ciudad inclusiva donde todas y todos sus habitantes puedan ejercer plenamente su derecho a la ciudad'[30] [for the construction of an inclusive city where all inhabitants can fully exercise their right to the city]. These report directly to the government of the CABA, and not the comunas.

The creative aspect of this instrument lies in the attempt to overcome the limits that public policies and bodies usually set themselves regarding territorial action and on-site engagement. Specifically, the UTIUs installed technical offices within the neighbourhoods themselves where teams of architects, sociologists and social workers, among other professionals, would work. These teams designed an agenda of educational and recreational activities, spaces for community assistance for residents, and undertook public works to improve public spaces in sectors of deprived neighbourhoods and shantytowns. In this way they created a visible and functional state presence that did not previously exist in these marginal areas. These practices brought together overarching policies and site implementation in a novel way, moving beyond the vision of the villas as self-contained communities and overcoming strict divisions between the formal and the informal city.

This new territorial division carried out by the SSHI was executed in consultation with the planning secretariat and considered both physical and social aspects in order to propose areas of opportunity to be strengthened and areas of conflict to be improved. The idea was to produce a shared vision and thus overcome 'la ciudad fragmentada' [the fragmented city] by seriously considering 'la dimensión física, social, institucional y comunitaria de cada uno de los territorios' [the physical, social, institutional and community dimension of each of the territories].[31] In this way the GCBA expects to integrate the different fragments which compose Comuna 8, including shantytowns and the areas surrounding them. The simple fact that both secretariats, Habitat and Inclusion and Planning, worked together to produce these policy instruments could in itself be considered creative given that government offices very seldom

30 Secretaria de Hábitat e Inclusión, 'De villa a barrio 2012 – 2015' (Buenos Aires: Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, 2016). Previously available at www.buenosaires.gob.ar/habitat/documentos/de-villa-a-barrio (last accessed 22 May 2017).

31 'Unidades Territoriales de Inclusión Urbana' (Buenos Aires: Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), available at www.buenosaires.gob.ar/habitat/unidadesterritoriales (accessed 20 March 2018).

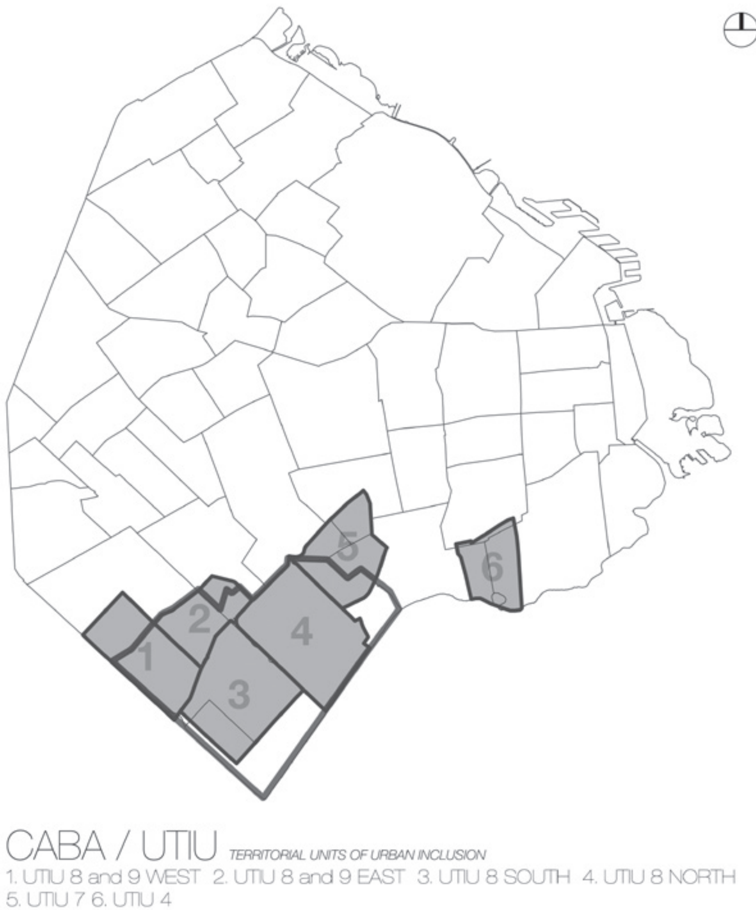

Figure 6.3. Territorial Units of Urban Inclusion and Comuna 8.

coordinate their activities.[32] From the perspective of the GCBA, the UTIUs are considered a 'forma innovadora de entender el territorio y las estrategias de inclusión social' [innovative way of understanding the territory and the strategies of social inclusion], that function 'dentro de una unidad territorial que excede los límites de las villas, para así fortalecer los vínculos de integración

32 'UTIU, el proyecto del gobierno porteño para urbanizar las villas', *Clarín* (Buenos Aires), 23 (June 2014), available at www.clarin.com/urbano/plan-gobierno-porteno-urbanizar villas_0_SJErBZnqDQx.html (accessed 20 March 2018).

con la ciudad formal [within a territorial unit that exceeds the limits of the shantytowns, in order to strengthen the ties of integration with the formal city]. Of the six existing UTIUs, five overlap with the limits of Comuna 8.

Economic districts: the sports district

The economic districts created by the GCBA provide a plan for the productive revitalisation of sectors of the city that have historically been overlooked by state policies. The economic districts promote different competitive advantages for each designated area by encouraging the private sector to make investments in one specific industry which has been selected by the state at the local level.

There are currently five economic districts in the CABA, each focused on one the following sectors of the economy: audio-visual, design, arts, technology, and sports. Of these five districts, four are located in the historically underdeveloped and poor southern zone of the city. The main instruments proposed as part of the economic districts development policy are loans and tax exemptions. Moreover, the implementation of the economic districts meant that local government offices were moved to the south of the city and several public works (such as improving pavements, streets and parks and extending the rapid public transport 'Metrobus' system) were carried out. All of these measures were designed to give the designated areas a competitive advantage by creating agglomerations of specific economic activities within underdeveloped areas. Each district was created by different by-laws, with the sports district, set up in 2014, being that which affects Comuna 8.[33]

According to the information published by the GCBA, the economic districts:

> contemplan la delimitación de un espacio territorial determinado, en el cual se establecen incentivos para la promoción de una industria estratégica específica, concentrando en un lugar a empresas del mismo sector, y a la vez desarrollando un barrio previamente olvidado.[34]
>
> [propose marking out a determined territorial space, in which incentives are established for the promotion of a specific strategic industry, concentrating companies in the same sector in one place, while at the same time developing a previously forgotten neighbourhood.]

With specific reference to Comuna 8, the implementation of a corresponding economic district sought to use pre-existing infrastructure to promote future

33 Law 5.235 – Promoción de las Actividades de la Producción e Industria Deportiva (Legislatura de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Oficial de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* N° 4628, 2014.

34 Previously available at www.buenosaires.gob.ar/cooperaciontecnica/innovadora-creativa-y-moderna/polos-y-distritos. Quoted from R. Cortina, 'Proyecto de Ley. Expediente 1263-D-2017. Comisión de Seguimiento de Polos Económicos', available at http://roycortina.com.ar/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Exp.-1263-D-2017-Comisión-de-seguimiento-de-Polos.pdf (accessed 22 May 2018).

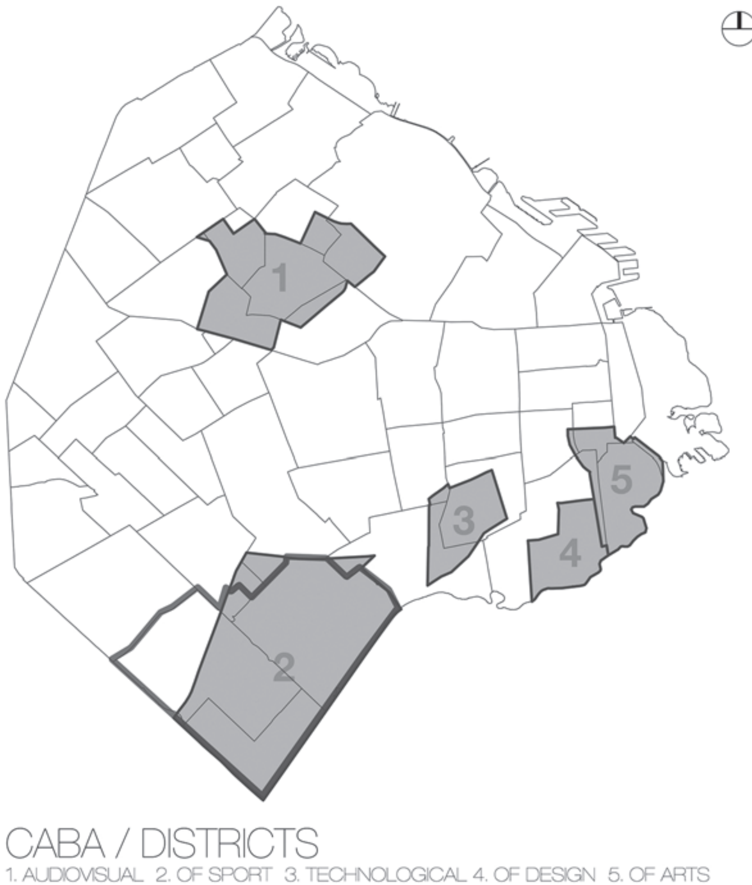

Figure 6.4. Economic districts and Comuna 8.

growth in a specific productive area. Given that Comuna 8 already contained significant municipal infrastructure for sport – including a racing circuit, golf course, tennis stadium, sports park, and numerous social and sports clubs largely built on public land – it was decided that the sports industry should be promoted and further developed within the comuna. The plan sought to use these metropolitan-scale facilities (meaning that the facilities were intended to be used by the population of the whole CABA) as the starting point for the economic revitalisation of the local area by first renovating them for the residents of the comuna. Subsequently the plan proposed to make bank loans

available for the purchase of houses within the district and for investment in productive undertakings linked to the sports sector.

For Comuna 8, the Law 5.235/2014 'Promoción de las Actividades de la Producción e Industria Deportiva' stipulates which economic activities are to be promoted, and outlines plans for the creation of a Youth Olympic Games Area, and for the development of new housing in line with the requirements for the urbanisation of existing shantytowns (as will be discussed in the next section).[35] In this case, the tax exemptions and other incentives were specifically focused on the creation of activities linked to the manufacture of sports products. It was argued that these plans would necessarily include and benefit residents of Comuna 8 as they would be the primary recipients of the new employment opportunities (residents were to be given priority when applying for these jobs), and they would have priority access to the new housing units to be built within the comuna.

The 2018 Youth Olympics and the construction of the Olympic Village in Villa Lugano

Concurrently with the development of an economic district specifically designed to promote sport-related industries, and in keeping with Law 5235/2014, the GCBA is also pursuing the construction of an urban project focused on the creation of a massive housing programme in the area of Comuna 8: the Olympic Village. This project includes the urbanisation of 34 hectares of land and the construction of 1,300 apartments to house the athletes who will participate in the 2018 Youth Olympic Games, which will be hosted by the City of Buenos Aires.

The proposal is particularly innovative in that this urban project aims to enhance the economic value of the southern area by undertaking the construction of buildings in a series of progressive stages. In the first stage, from 2014 to 2018, the state financed the installation of service networks (such as water, electricity and sewerage), and the laying of streets. The GCBA will also provide the necessary street furniture (street lighting and waste receptacles for example). While the project involves the development of large plots of undeveloped land, the Olympic Village will only occupy some of the plots in this region, while others will be integrated into the urban network but left vacant. This is of primary importance because in the second stage of the project these connected but empty plots will be sold to private developers at market value. In this way the municipality creates the possibility of recovering a surplus from the initial local government investment. After the conclusion of the Youth Olympics, the houses built by the GCBA will be transferred to the Instituto de Vivienda de la Ciudad (the City Housing Institute, IVC) to be allocated, in the first instance, to inhabitants of Comuna 8 as single-family,

35 Law 5.235 – Promoción de las Actividades de la Producción e Industria Deportiva.

permanent dwellings. Indeed, half of the total number of units have been

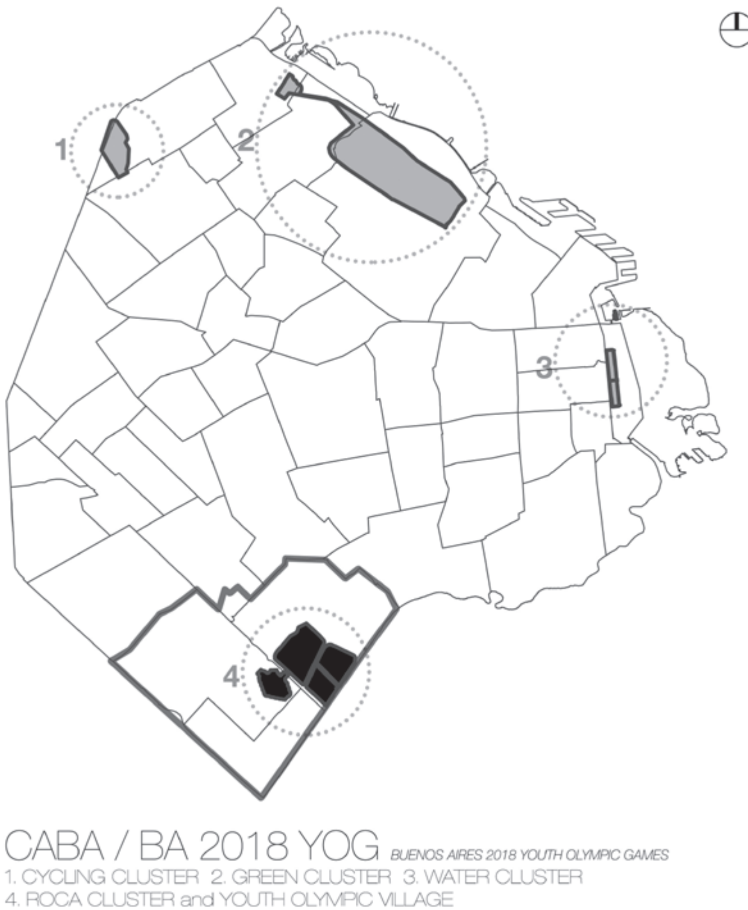

Figure 6.5. Youth Olympics Games (YOG) venues and Comuna 8.

reserved for beneficiaries who can prove at least five years' effective residence in Comuna 8. The Villa Olímpica housing being built at present was designed via a series of competitions in stages, which aimed to provide variation in the landscape. A similar strategy was adopted for another case in Comuna 8, Villa 20, as will be explained below.

The Villa 20 shantytown upgrade project

The innovation of this new project is found in the management model designed for the upgrading of Villa 20 (a shantytown located in Villa Lugano) denominated 'Gestión y planificación por Proceso–Proyecto' (Project-Process Management and Planning). This approach implies considering the creation of housing in a twofold manner. First, it involves recognising that the project will change over time as different processes are introduced. Second, and in a reciprocal manner, the approach recognises that the process will also change in line with the adjustments made to the project: 'la planificación Proceso-Proyecto implica considerar al resultado de la misma como un "producto meta" que surge de un proceso territorial y no como un producto predefinido'[36] [Process-Project Planning implies considering the result of the process as a "goal product" that arises from a territorial process and not as a predefined product]. This is to say that this policy considers the project *as* process. It establishes a broad goal (the connection of Villa 20 to formal utility networks and the integration of the informal neighbourhood into the surrounding area) and a series of sub-objectives (outlined below), and then initiates a process to resolve these problems. Thereafter, the objectives can be continuously revised in line with new outcomes and challenges that emerge from that same process. This open system means that the project can continually adapt to the particular needs of Villa 20 through a consensual and participatory process. Moreover, the process in its entirety integrates urban, socio-residential and economic factors, while simultaneously considering the residents' cultural identity. In other words, this process assumes that the model of development *already experienced* in the *villa* is a legitimate (though not fully legal) method of urbanizing the territory. Rather than decry such processes, or seek a policy of eviction and relocation, then, this approach simply seeks to harness and optimise developments already occurring in the *villa.* This idea is a truly innovative vision of how to improve housing in marginal areas.

Villa 20 came to prominence in recent years due to the phenomena of organised land invasions. The *villa* was originally established around the mid 20th century and continued to grow in later decades due to the lack of adequate formal housing solutions. This situation, coupled with a sustained period of non-compliance with Law 1.770/2005, which prescribed the upgrade of Villa 20, meant that organised land invasions took place in 2010, and later again in February 2014 on plots of land adjacent to the *villa*.[37] The latter included parcelling out the land, creating an informal housing market and constructing

36 M. Motta and F. Almansi, 'Gestión y planificación por proceso-proyecto para el mejoramiento de villas y asentamientos de gran escala. El caso de la Re-Urbanización de Villa 20 en la CABA', *Medio Ambiente y Urbanización*, 86 (1) (2017), pp. 145–68, at p. 151.

37 Law 1.770 (Legislatura de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Oficial de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* N° 2281, 2005.

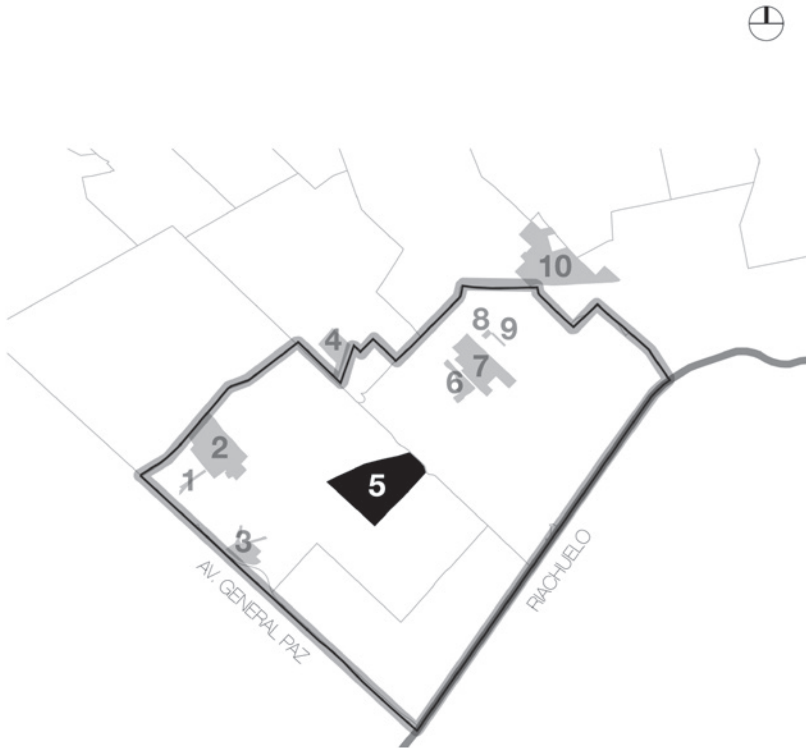

Figure 6.6. Comuna 8 slums (Villa 20 highlighted).

new housing (about 1,800 people were recorded as living in the new invasion).[38] These houses were demolished by court order in August 2014.

Currently, the GCBA is working within the framework of the 'Mesa por la urbanización de la Villa 20' (Villa 20 Upgrade Board) within which different social actors such as residents, university groups, technicians and government officials were brought together. Recently, the upgrade project for Villa 20 was

38 'Las claves y los resultados del censo en la Villa 20 de Lugano', *DiarioVeloz.com 24/7*, 3 (June 2014), available at www.diarioveloz.com/notas/125298-las-claves-y-los-resultados-del-censo-la-villa-20-lugano (accessed 22 May 2017).

approved, and the project for the construction of new housing within the boundary area is in process. The project has set itself seven specific objectives: the sanitation of the sector to guarantee the health of the population; the opening of new streets to connect the community with the surrounding areas; the provision of water and sewer networks; the creation and recovery of public spaces; the construction of new dwellings; the construction of facilities such as schools and health centres; and the formalisation of the housing stock such that the current inhabitants become the legal owners of their homes. In addition to the proposals for the shantytown area, the plan also contemplates the construction of new housing blocks beside the shantytown. The plan proposed to build all new roads and arteries in such a way that the layout displays morphological continuity with the rest of the city's urban fabric. This development will also allow the neighbourhood to be directly connected to the pre-existing main avenue, to the public transport system, and to health, education and sports infrastructure. The project organised open competitions in order to seek new urban designs for the construction of the dwellings to be contained in the area. Although these were cancelled in 2016,[39] the IVC has recently presented an updated version of the project that includes different building typologies, which are nonetheless an evolution of those designs submitted during the previous architectural competitions.

Evaluation of the policy instruments under discussion

In this review of five recent state interventions that specifically affect the urban integration of Comuna 8 (an agglomeration of economically deprived neighbourhoods found in southern Buenos Aires), it is immediately possible to perceive the complexity involved in applying policy instruments designed by numerous distinct public planning and management agencies to a specific marginal area. The territory of Comuna 8 has been systematically and repeatedly identified within various plans for Buenos Aires as a problematic area due to the environmental and social conditions that it contains: areas of low land and flood plains with multiple environmental liabilities; populations living in informal settlements and employed within the informal economy; and a lack of infrastructure networks and services, among other factors. As the rest of the city progressed in its urbanisation, the area within Comuna 8 has gradually gained prominence as an area of opportunity. Viewed as a public urban land bank, it has been the preferred site for the testing of new public policies. In the past, these have focussed on zoning, the construction of large social housing complexes and metropolitan facilities. While these remain areas of particular concern, more recent policy initiatives also seek to make the area economically productive and creatively to re-imagine the methods of state management

39 It must be noted that in the case of Villa 20 the competition results were eventually overlooked and housing design was left in the hands of the IVC.

deployed in their execution. Nonetheless, as numerous agencies and entities have sought to develop Comuna 8, it has also become the testing ground for numerous simultaneous projects driven by divergent and competing political agendas.

The diversity of government offices operating within the same sectors results in rising competition for power over these same spaces. As we have seen, the interactions between these multiple stakeholders – ranging from central and local government offices, to neighbourhood organisations; from collectives of retailers and private landowners, to popular movements demanding affordable housing – make it difficult to implement specific policies.

As each of these factions vies for power, they attempt to impose *their* vision of how urban land should be managed, and *their* understanding of the purposes and goals of this management. This dynamic usually occurs within the framework of a constant redefinition of the limits of action, which fluctuate sporadically according to the political logic of the day and their new policy devices. Nonetheless, these efforts do not replace the proposals which precede them, and they usually coexist. This leads to significant overlaps in the competencies of each agency which, in turn, limit the scope of action for each individual intervention.

	A) Management: South Buenos Aires State Society Corporation	**B) Social work: Territorial Units of Urban Inclusion (UTIUs)**	**C) Economic promotion: The Sports District**	**D) Urban project: The Olympic Village**	**E) Public works: The Villa 20 shantytown upgrade project**
Positive	Potential action in the whole territory.	Limits that exceed slums and settlements. Territorial presence.	Economic revitalisation. Considers the local population.	Response to a given housing demand.	Response to historic neighbour-hood complaint. Urban reintegration with the rest of the city.
Negative	Undefined role. Multiple intervening areas.	Limited capacity for action, requires articulation with other areas and funding.	Dependent on the dynamics of the market, and therefore cannot guarantee outcomes.	It lacks instruments for the recovery of urban capital gains for the state.	Conflicts in the management of the project. Bid between stakeholders that dilates execution times.

Table 6.1. Synthesis of the evaluation of the policy instruments under examination.

With regard to the specific cases analysed in this chapter, both the CBASSE and the UTIUs were created to promote both the integration of the south of the city as a space, and of the vulnerable groups who live there. However, they are implemented by different areas of the local executive in parallel rather than in collaboration. The UTIUs have a strong territorial presence, and their action areas aim to include and merge neighbourhoods and shantytowns with the rest of the city. Information about the concrete functions of the CBASSE, meanwhile, is extremely scarce, although in general terms its purpose is to encourage the development of business across the southern area. Both these offices have limited capacity for action: they cannot act inside homes or in the private sphere, but can only operate in public space and require constant interaction with other areas of management to implement their projects.

In relation to housing policies, the project to construct the Villa Olímpica aims to generate a new stock of social housing, while also producing an entirely new neighbourhood within the city with the necessary characteristics for assimilation into the existing urban fabric. In addition, operating within the marginal space of existing shantytowns, the upgrade project for Villa 20 and its architectural design competitions represented a creative response to a historic and persistent claim from shantytown dwellers – that of affordable housing. In contrast to other competitions where the totality of a housing complex area is designed all at once, those for Villa 20 and the Villa Olímpica were launched in stages in order to incorporate spatial diversity. This meant that different sectors of the area to be developed were allocated to different architectural projects and practices. In addition, each competition worked as a pilot for the next, and improvements in the competition brief were incorporated from one stage to the next. However, the housing competitions were cancelled mid-way in the case of Villa 20, with the Housing Institute being left in charge of the direct provision of housing design and construction. In addition, persistent political conflicts between different departments have led to a delay in defining a specific urban project, and by extension, a delay in the execution times. The project does, nevertheless, seek to guarantee housing provision within the urban fabric. Finally, the sports district is, for its part, an interesting instrument designed to promote economic dynamism, which in turn should lead to the establishment of new business ventures. Nonetheless, it is, of course, still subject to the dynamics (and whims) of the market. It aims to generate balance but gives no guarantees.

From the review of several creative state proposals in marginal contexts, we can see that, although many innovative initiatives are underway, these have only a relative capacity to reverse trends. It is necessary to promote the generation of creative synergies in the interior of the public management of the CABA and its metropolitan area in order to drive urban growth, with the specific objective of achieving effective urban-environmental management

that rearticulates the different GCBA departments through policy instruments based on sustainability, equality and the common good of all inhabitants.

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III. Marginal art as spatial praxis

7. Exhibitions in a 'divided' city: socio-spatial inequality and the display of contemporary art in Rio de Janeiro

Simone Kalkman

Over the last decades, scholars and activists have emphasised that Rio de Janeiro's favelas are an essential part of the city's economic, political and social structures.[1] In addition, these neighbourhoods have become central to representations and imaginaries of Rio, both within and outside of academia.[2] Nevertheless, Rio de Janeiro remains a highly unequal city, and favela residents continue to suffer from important disadvantages and forms of discrimination. In this chapter, I reflect on how this particular combination of celebration and stigma, fascination and fear manifests itself in the field of contemporary visual art, where favelas have recently been shown in a variety of museum exhibitions, art festivals and galleries both in Rio de Janeiro and abroad. As their motivation, these projects often mention challenging the negative stereotypes surrounding favelas, in which these neighbourhoods are imagined as spaces of violence, crime, poverty and misery. Instead, many exhibitions aim to highlight the creativity, vitality and daily life in favelas, thereby engendering a more critical gaze at the (symbolic) position of these neighbourhoods within the city at large. In addition, art projects often try to facilitate encounters between people from different backgrounds, literally

1 E.g. J. Perlman, *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976); J. Perlman, *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); J. de Souza e Silva and J.L. Barbosa, *Favela: alegrie e dor na cidade* (Rio de Janeiro: SENAC Rio, 2005).

2 E.g. L. Valladares, *A invenção da favela. Do mito da origem a favela.com* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV, 2005); M.M. da Cruz, 'Vozes da favela: representação, identidade e disputas discurtivas no ciberespaço', *Stockholm Review of Latin American Studies*, 2 (2007): 77–91; M. Peixoto, 'Rio's favelas in recent fiction and film: commonplaces of urban segregation', *PMLA*, 122 (1) (2007): 170–8; C. Williams, 'Ghettourism and voyeurism, or challenging stereotypes and raising consciousness? Literary and non-literary forays into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 27 (4) (2008): 483–500; J. de Souza e Silva, 'Um espaço em busca de seu lugar: as favelas para além dos estereótipos', in J. de Souza e Silva, J.L. Barbosa and M.V. Faustini (eds.), *O novo carioca* (Rio de Janeiro: Mórula Editorial, 2012), pp. 43–61.

S. Kalkman, 'Exhibitions in a 'divided' city: socio-spatial inequality and the display of contemporary art in Rio de Janeiro', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 183–200. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

crossing the geographical and ideological borders of Rio as a so-called divided city.

This chapter analyses these two goals – challenging stereotypes and facilitating encounters – through a focus on two recent exhibitions. My aim here is to study not so much the artworks shown, but rather their socio-spatial contexts of display and the way in which they are framed institutionally and in the media. To do so, my analysis builds on a close reading of exhibition and catalogue texts as well as informal conversations with several of the artists and organisers. Based on this, the chapter presents a twofold argument. First, I aim to show that challenging negative stereotypes is often more difficult than exhibitions make it out to be, as favela imaginaries are shaped and experienced in complex and often contradictory ways. Second, I argue that for artistic practices to truly challenge inequalities and social divisions in Rio de Janeiro, nuanced representations of favelas are not enough. Unequal structures and territorial divisions should be broken down not only in theory but also in practice, namely in the socio-spatial context of production, display and consumption. This implies not only including artists from favelas, but also questioning the geographical location and organisational embedding of art institutions, and challenging common assumptions about who the art audience is and where they are located.

I start by briefly outlining how Rio de Janeiro's favelas have been imagined and represented in different media and how artistic representations are seen to have an impact on these imaginaries. After this, I analyse two recent exhibitions in Rio de Janeiro where favelas played a central role: *Favelagrafia* at Rio's Museu de Arte Moderna, and *Travessias* at the Galpão Bela Maré. Both shows aim to engage with Rio's favelas and periphery in a nuanced and inclusive manner, actively trying to show the cultural richness of favelas and to demystify these spaces for the people that do not live there. In addition, in both projects favela residents play a central role. Despite these similarities, however, the approach of the two exhibitions is rather different, which has a strong impact on how they relate to stereotypical imaginaries and socio-spatial relations of inequality. Because of this, I argue that comparing these two examples highlights some of the main difficulties and contradictions that come to the fore when exhibiting contemporary art in and about Rio de Janeiro's favelas.

Imagining Rio's favelas

Much has been written about stereotypical imaginaries and representations of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, which have a profound impact on everyday life in the city.[3] As many authors note, we can see two broad tendencies here. The first is a

3 E.g. Valladares, *A invenção da favela*; Peixoto, 'Rio's favelas', pp. 170–8; Williams, 'Ghettourism and voyeurism', pp. 483–500; J.L. Barbosa, 'Paisagens da natureza, lugares da sociedade: a construção imaginária do Rio de Janeiro', in J. de Souza e Silva, J.L. Luiz

negative imaginary, in which favelas are imagined as spaces of crime, violence, poverty and deficiency. We see this for example in the mainstream news media, where Rio is often presented as a divided city or even a city at war.[4] Despite this widespread stigma, however, favelas have long spoken to the imagination of artists and intellectuals in Brazil and abroad. This second imaginary is often seen as idealising or romanticising life in favelas, presenting them as close-knit, colourful, samba-dancing communities. These two imaginaries are crucial to keep in mind within the context of this chapter, but it is important to realise that while they might seem contradictory, they are often not as easily separated as this brief overview suggests. As Beatriz Jaguaribe notes, in the everyday imaginaries of urban life, favela stereotypes do not function as straightforward and fixed narratives, but rather as overlapping 'urban repertoires … engendered by tradition, the media, the artistic imagination, the unfolding of history, and the daily experiences of city dwellers'.[5]

To illustrate this important point, it is useful to have a closer look at representations in the mainstream media, which have a strong impact on dominant imaginaries of the city. Several authors describe how Brazil's main media outlets tend to portray favelas in a negative manner, silencing their positive characteristics.[6] Two things are important to keep in mind here, however. First, this negative imagery – just as the positive one – is layered and encompasses different ideas and assumptions. Da Cruz, for example, distinguishes three overlapping, negative discourses: (1) those in which 'favelas are presented as war zones … where non-residents are not welcome', (2) those that present favelas as a 'social problem' to be eliminated, and (3) those that present favelas as spaces of deficiency that lack basic services and security.[7] Second, a quick search on the keyword 'favela' on the websites of large newspapers such as *O Globo*, *Jornal do Brasil*, and *O Dia* shows that these media also report on more positive aspects of life in favelas, for example describing various cultural projects and the work of NGOs. As de Souza e Silva notes, this is often part of paternalistic narratives that only seem progressive and inclusionary, but my point here is to emphasise, in the words of Penglase, that 'the discourse of crime

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Barbosa and M.V. Faustini (eds.), *O novo carioca* (Rio de Janeiro: Mórula Editorial, 2012), pp. 23–41.

4 B. Penglase, 'Barbarians on the beach: media narratives of violence in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil', *Crime, Media, Culture*, 3 (3) (2007): 305–25; D.S. Lacerda, 'Rio de Janeiro and the divided state: analysing the political discourse on favelas', *Discourse & Society* (2014): 1–21.

5 B. Jaguaribe, *Rio de Janeiro: Urban Life through the Eyes of the City* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 7.

6 da Cruz, 'Vozes da favela', pp. 77–91; Penglase, 'Barbarians', pp. 305–25; D. Guedes Rocha, 'Da batalha à guerra do Rio: uma abordagem espaço-temporal da representação das favelas na imprensa carioca', (paper presented at XVII Encontro Nacional de Estudos Populacionais, ABEP, Caxambú, Minas Gerais, 20–24 Sept. 2010).

7 da Cruz, 'Vozes da favela', pp. 77–91 (my translation); see also de Souza e Silva, 'Um espaço em busca', pp. 43–61; Valladares, *A invenção da favela*.

is not monolithic nor does it go uncontested. Other discourses – especially ones that call for greater involvement of civil society in a transformative project that could create peace in the city – are available and often used'.[8]

This mixing of positive and negative imaginaries becomes even more apparent when considering the recent commercialisation of favela representations in, for example, cinema, tourism and advertising. As is often recited, many commercially successful depictions of favelas combine aestheticisation (or glamorisation) with a focus on violence and crime (for example the films *Cidade de Deus* and *Tropa de Elite*, but also documentaries such as *Favela Rising*). Similarly, favela tourism depends on positive sentiments around favela realities, but also on feeling excited about entering a 'dangerous' territory without actually being at risk.[9] Finally, some of Rio's favelas have in recent years been incorporated into a neoliberal, government project of city-branding, focused, on the one hand, on highlighting those elements that especially foreigners seem to enjoy and, on the other hand, silencing, transforming or 'symbolically taming' the real and imaginary problems found in favelas.[10] In other words, we might say that the city aims to transform the negative aspects of its reputation (inequality, violence) into positive ones: a city of aesthetically interesting contrasts and (supposedly) effective inclusionary policies such as the favela pacification.[11]

This representational context raises crucial questions around the 'marginality' of favela territories, which are particularly relevant within the context of this book. It is useful here to consider a term frequently used to describe Rio de Janeiro, namely that of a 'divided city'. As noted, from the 1970s onwards scholars have shown that favelas are integral and contributing parts of Rio de Janeiro's economic, political and social structures.[12] In many ways, the formal city depends on favela inhabitants, for example in the labour market or government elections. In this sense, the marginality of favelas is a 'myth', and to describe them as such can 'could be seen as perpetuating the centre-periphery model'.[13] Therefore, as Jailson de Souza e Silva and Jorge Luiz Barbosa write, to talk about favelas 'requires, first and foremost, not dissociating their

8 de Souze e Silva, 'Um espaço em busca', pp. 43–61; Penglase, 'Barbarians', pp. 305–25.

9 B. Freire-Medeiros, '"I went to the city of God": gringos, guns and the touristic favela', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 20 (1) (2011): 21–34; E. Robb Larkins, *The Spectacular Favela: Violence in Modern Brazil* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015).

10 M. Steinbrink, 'Festi*favel*isation: mega-events, slums and strategic city-staging – the example of Rio de Janeiro', *Journal of the Geographical Society of Berlin*, 144 (2) (2013): 129–45; Jaguaribe, *Rio de Janeiro*; J. Freeman, 'Neoliberal accumulation strategies and the visible hand of police pacification in Rio de Janeiro', *Revista de Estudos Universitários*, 38 (1) (2012): 95–126.

11 Steinbrink, 'Festi*favel*ization'; Freeman, 'Neoliberal accumulation'.

12 Perlman, *The Myth of Marginality*.

13 N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda, 'Introduction', this volume, p. 9.

development with that of the city as a whole … The city, before anything else, is *only one*'.[14] Nevertheless, as Perlman and others have argued, the myth of marginality has become 'a self-fulfilling prophecy', keeping in place persistent *processes of marginalisation* that reproduce an unequal system in which favelas occupy a disadvantaged position.[15] In other words, more than the architectural or social differences between favelas and the formal city, what 'divides' the city of Rio are structural inequalities such as unequal access to housing, basic services, education, healthcare, and police protection. This is crucial to keep in mind when considering the stereotypes, imaginaries and representations at the heart of this chapter, as both the negative and the positive stereotypes that surround favelas tend to think of these neighbourhoods as spaces of 'otherness', separated and radically different from the city at large, which obscure the social and political processes of differentiation that keep the city's very real inequalities in place. In other words, to truly challenge stereotypical imaginaries of favelas would require a more nuanced approach to *how* the city of Rio is divided, namely through structural violence and continuous, relational processes of marginalisation.

As noted, the transformative potential of contemporary art is often ascribed to its capacity to visualise and display critical and reflective imaginaries, which is based on the broader argument that representations, perceptions and imaginaries have an active impact on the production and daily experience of (urban) spaces.[16] Historically, various artistic fields in Rio have permitted and facilitated collaboration and movement across the city's socio-spatial divisions, as 'the paradigm of the artist who circulates from centre to periphery [reappears] throughout the history of Rio's culture'.[17] Naturally, here too inequalities, prejudices and privilege have always been present, but as Carvalho argues, both elite and popular art forms have been 'porous' endeavours, showing 'the connections implicit in the city's socio-spatial segregation'.[18] Building on this tradition, many in the field of contemporary art and cultural production argue that artistic projects have the capacity to challenge the stereotypes

14 J. de Souza e Silva and J.L. Barbosa, *Favela: alegrie e dor na cidade* (Rio de Janeiro: SENAC Rio, 2005), p. 90 (my translation, emphasis in original).

15 Perlman, *Favela*. See also N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda, 'Introduction', this volume, pp. 7–9.

16 E.g. H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); A. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996); S. Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995); A. Huyssen, 'Introduction: world cultures, world cities', in A. Huyssen (ed.), *Other Cities, Other Worlds: Urban Imaginaries in a Globalizing Age* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 1–26; A. Silva, *Imaginários: estranhamentos urbanos* (São Paulo: Edições Sesc São Paulo, 2014).

17 B. Carvalho, *Porous City: A Cultural History of Rio de Janeiro* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), p. 29.

18 Ibid., p. 13.

and prejudices surrounding the city's favelas, both through more nuanced and informed representations and by physically crossing the city's various divisions. This resonates with broader debates around the societal relevance of contemporary art, where art's socio-political potential is often linked to 'the ability of aesthetic experience to transform our perceptions of difference and to open space for forms of knowledge that challenge cognitive, social, or political conventions'.[19]

In this chapter, my aim is to shift the focus from the production of these artistic representations to the socio-spatial context of display and reception, in which art institutions play a crucial role. In Brazil, the *Plano nacional setorial de museus 2010/2020* describes the functions and goals for museums in the country, emphasising (among other things) the country's 'cultural diversity', which necessitates 'promoting social inclusion' and 'attracting different social groups to museums'.[20] The plan also recognises the role of museums in establishing a more inclusive citizenship, particularly in cities, in which museums can contribute on a symbolic level to the 'affirmation of identities, valorising memory and forms of knowledge, [and] promoting the integration of local communities'.[21] In other words, the cultural authority of museums is seen as capable of providing recognition and visibility to non-dominant and/or marginalised groups. Of course, these socio-political functions are by no means uncontested or easy to achieve. Museums and art institutions – as well as contemporary art in general – are more often thought of as elitist and inaccessible than as open and democratic.[22] Within the context of this chapter, three interrelated points are crucial to keep in mind here. First, as the above account of favela imaginaries illustrates, stereotypes around marginalised groups are lived and imagined in complex and contradictory ways, which significantly complicates the practice of challenging these imaginaries. Second, in practice there often exists a fine line between the recognition of non-dominant groups in museum exhibits, and putting exoticised 'others' on display in a spectacular manner – which is highly relevant considering the commercial potential of favela representations.[23] Third, there often exists a gap between what the art audience consciously knows or says about the injustices of inequality and how

19 G. Kester, *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), p. 11.

20 Instituto Brasileiro de Museus, *Plano nacional setorial de museus 2010/2020* (Brasília, 2010) www.museus.gov.br/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/PSNM-Versao-Web.pdf (accessed 14 Jan. 2017).

21 Ibid.

22 E.g. P. Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (London: Routledge, 1984); J. Drucker, *Sweet Dreams: Contemporary Art and Complicity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

23 See for example H. Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996); N. García Canclini, *Art Beyond Itself: Anthropology for a Society without a Story Line* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

those same inequalities are reproduced in daily lives and practices. In other words, well-meant practices of inclusion and empowerment often reproduce the unequal power relations they try to challenge – particularly in elite art institutions.

This reproduction of social relations of inequality within practices of inclusion is perhaps most obvious when considering the (lack of) participation of marginalised or non-dominant groups in creating artistic representations. In Rio de Janeiro, middle- and upper-class Brazilians have historically dominated the representation of the city’s favelas, meaning that the right of favela residents to describe and depict their city remains crucial from both an ethical and a representational viewpoint. That being said, it is important to highlight that from a very early date favela residents have participated in this process of knowledge and value production around their neighbourhoods – even if their voices remained a minority. We can think, for example, of the journal *A Voz do Morro*, first published in 1935 in the favela Mangueira, or of samba songs composed by the many samba legends from favelas.[24] Also, in contemporary Rio de Janeiro and Brazil there exists a wide variety of local initiatives aimed at the self-representation of favelas in various media.[25] In myriad ways, as Ivana Bentes notes, these initiatives ‘point towards a transition from being objects to being subjects of discourse, a social mobility that means more than just moving through codes, languages and aesthetics of power, but which produces alternative languages, aesthetics and values, affirming their place in contemporary urban culture’.[26] This is not to say that favela residents now have equal say in their representation in broader circuits and discourses (as this is unfortunately still not the case), but rather to emphasise that many of their voices can and are being heard in a variety of contexts. As we will see in the following sections, this project of emancipation, self-representation and (visual) inclusion is at the heart of the two case studies of this chapter.

Complexities of self-representation: Favelagrafia

One of Rio de Janeiro’s most prestigious art institutions is the Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM), situated in a popular park and recreation area in the city’s south zone. The museum building – constructed in the 1950s – is designed to interact with the surrounding park through a large and freely accessible open space underneath the main gallery spaces on the first floor. This extramural site housed the exhibition *Favelagrafia* from 5 November until 4 December

24 da Cruz, ‘Vozes da favela’, pp. 77–91.

25 Examples in Rio are the newspaper and website *Voz das Comunidades*, media collective *Papo Reto*, image bank and photography agency *Imagens do Povo*, photography collective *Favela em Foco*, research institute *Observatório de Favelas*, newspaper *Maré de Noticias* (by NGO *Redes da Maré*), photography agency *Olhares do Morro* and many others.

26 I. Bentes, ‘Subjective displacements and the “reserves of life”’, *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 20 (1) (2011): 5–19.

2016. The exhibition showed the work of nine young photographers, who live in different favelas in the city, and formed part of a broader programme of the same name initiated by *Rio+Rio*, a social organisation that is part of the Rio-based advertising firm NBS (Nobullshit). With around 200 photographs, the aim was to react against the negative stereotypes surrounding favelas. Instead, so the website writes, 'here, the favelas are shown in a truthful way, by those who understand them best: their residents'.[27] Through a selection process, nine young photographers from different pacified favelas (Santa Marta, Providência, Borel, Complexo do Alemão, Rocinha, Cantagalo, Babilônia, Prazeres and Mineira) were chosen to participate. They each received an iPhone SE and a one-day course about cell phone photography, after which they set out to document their respective communities.[28] From the photographs selected by the photographers for the Facebook and Instagram pages of Favelagrafia, André Havt from Rio+Rio curated the exhibition.

Both the online project and the exhibition generated a lot of media attention in Rio de Janeiro and beyond, with several televised items and newspaper articles. Important in this respect was one specific photograph that went viral on social media, being reposted by celebrities such as Maria Rita and Swizz Beatz. This image, by Andersom Valentim from the Borel, shows five young men in a favela alleyway with t-shirts wrapped around their faces in the way drug dealers often do in photographs. In their hands, holding them as if they were guns, they have brass instruments. The caption on Facebook reads: '*Nem todo mundo usa as mesmas armas*' [not everybody uses the same weapons]. The image thus inventively plays with common stereotypes of favelas as territories of drug traffic and violence, and highlights the presence of cultural initiatives, talent and resistance. In the other images on display, we see everyday life in favelas in portraits, landscapes and street scenes. Several photographs show inspiring characters, such as a ballet dancer, a voluntary mailman, a fashion designer and community activists. Elana Paulino, one of the photographers, mentions in this respect that she wants to show that people in favelas also study and have professional careers.[29] More broadly, we might thus say that the exhibition shows the talent and potential of Rio's favela residents, which is of course also embodied in the photographers themselves.

Based on this, the most important issue addressed by this exhibition is the right to self-representation, focusing on agency and possibility instead of victimhood. As noted, there clearly is a need for increasing the number of favela voices in Rio de Janeiro's main art institutions, and the right to self-representation remains a pressing concern in the broader representation of favelas. However, building on Beatriz Jaguaribe's insightful text on this topic,

27 'O que é o Favelagrafia', copyright 2016, http://favelagrafia.com.br/o-projeto (accessed 14 Jan. 2017) (my translation).

28 E. Paulino (Favelagrafia photographer) in conversation with the author, November 2016.

29 Ibid.

it is necessary to pose some critical questions here. As she writes: 'these forms of [favela] authorship are empowering because they give voice and visibility to the periphery and the favela through self-representation, but they can also be limiting to the extent that authorship becomes conditioned by cultural traits, territorial belonging, and symbolic identities'.[30] In the words of Freire-Medeiros and Rocha (2011), when framed within a narrative of self-representation, favela residents can never be 'just artists'; they necessarily remain 'artists-favelados'.[31] This becomes especially problematic, so Jaguaribe continues, when 'the author of the favela is called upon to represent his/her reality according to the expectations of authenticity and testimonial experience espoused by tenets of mainstream realism'.[32] In this exhibition, for example, despite the diversity of images shown, most photographs remain highly recognisable as 'favela spaces' – through architecture, streetscapes, city views and so on – meaning that we can ask to what extent our expectations are really challenged by this display.

This is especially relevant considering that both the framing of the project in the exhibition and its media reception strongly focus on challenging media clichés around Rio de Janeiro's favelas. As Havt says in a CNN article: 'we invite everyone to enter these slums and let their art transform you. In Favelagrafia, photography swaps guns for musical instruments and transforms chaos and stereotypes into beauty'.[33] In other words, the idea is that seeing these images will 'transform' the opinions of prejudiced, non-favela audiences through the unique local perspective provided here. To elaborate on this, it is useful briefly to look at the academic debate around so-called participatory or community-based art practices, which have gained popularity since the 1990s. In their most traditional form, such practices encompass an outside artist conducting a participatory project with a certain 'community' of participants (often defined by their marginalised or non-dominant status), which is subsequently exhibited in a more conventional art institute. As Claire Bishop notes, projects like these thus tend to employ a conceptual and practical distinction between 'first-hand participants' and a 'secondary audience' between which the artist mediates.[34] Frequently, this secondary public is assumed to change its preconceived ideas about the community in question based on the staged and usually indirect

30 Jaguaribe, *Rio de Janeiro*, p. 197.

31 B. Freire Medeiros and L. de Mattos Rocha, 'Uma pequena revolução: arte, mobilidade e segregação em uma favela carioca' (paper presented at XV Congresso Brasileiro de Sociologia, Curitiba, Paraná, 26–29 July, 2011) (no pagination, my translation).

32 Jaguaribe, *Rio de Janeiro*, p. 12.

33 K. Pequenino, 'Favelagrafia: photos reveal truth beyond stereotypes', *CNN Style*, 21 Nov. 2016, http://edition.cnn.com/2016/11/20/arts/favelagrafia/ (accessed 14 Jan. 2017).

34 C. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012), p. 19.

encounter in the exhibition, either through shock or discomfort, or through dialogue and inspiration.[35]

By giving the camera directly to favela residents, without an intermediating artist, Favelagrafia alters this dominant formula in a significant manner (although we might argue that Rio+Rio occupies the mediating role here). However, many of the same underlying assumptions apply, especially the stark juxtaposition between the 'stereotypical' outside gaze and the supposedly 'truthful' and 'genuine' look of the community participants. As powerfully summarised by Hal Foster: 'here is your community, the institution says in effect, embodied in your artist, now on display'.[36] In addition to the limitations for the artists that Jaguaribe noted, Kester highlights that this problematically assumes that museum visitors are 'blithely ignorant of their own privilege' and of social inequality more generally.[37] As we have seen in the case of Rio, favela imaginaries are layered and complex, often combining conservative and 'progressive' ideas, positive and negative imaginaries. As such, we must consider the possibility that this encounter with favela 'others' within the safe space of the exhibition is 'as likely to *consolidate* a particular sense of identity among art world viewers (as tolerant, enlightened, willing to accept risk and challenge) as it is to effect any lasting ontic dislocation'.[38]

Recognising that favelas now occupy a central place within Rio's broader imagery, this critique is all the more poignant considering the broader tendency of aestheticising and staging favelas within Rio's broader efforts of city branding.[39] Important in this respect is that Favelagrafia only works in communities that are part of Rio's controversial pacification policy, frequently criticised because the municipality clearly prioritises favelas that lie in close proximity to Rio's richer, touristic areas. This has a direct impact on the nine communities selected by Favelagrafia, five of which are hillside communities located in the city's touristic south zone. Importantly, this is not to say that these communities do not suffer from prejudice and discrimination, or that they do not deserve to be seen, but rather to highlight that despite the focus on challenging media clichés many of the images we see in this exhibition can be readily incorporated into familiar and easily marketable imaginaries of the touristic and/or aestheticised favelas.

Importantly, these critiques are not aimed at the realism or aesthetic quality of the photographs on display, nor do I wish to deny that they challenge many dominant imaginaries and stereotypes around Rio de Janeiro's favelas. Rather, my aim is to pose some critical questions regarding the concept and framing

35 Bishop, *Artificial Hells*; Kester, *The One and the Many*.

36 H. Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 198.

37 Kester, *The One and the Many*, p. 63.

38 Ibid., p. 63, emphasis added.

39 Steinbrink, 'Festi*favel*isation', pp. 129–45; Jaguaribe, *Rio de Janeiro*.

of the overall project. Following Jaguaribe, we might argue that the approach of Favelagrafia prevents these artists from depicting anything else than the favelas in which they live, which is reflected in the images on display. Moreover, perhaps in search of a straightforward, positive and marketable message, the project does not seem to take into account the diversity and contradictions of the favela stereotypes it is so keen on challenging. As such, in the broad media reception of the project, we see uncomplicated, celebratory accounts rather than – to return to Kester – 'lasting ontic dislocation'. Finally, we must question the geographical and institutional context of the exhibition itself, which implies that formal city audiences can once again gaze at the favela from a comfortable, non-favela, south zone location (or from behind their computer screens), meaning that Havt's invitation to 'enter these slums' remains purely symbolic.

Artistic urban crossings: Travessias

The exhibition Travessias has been organised five times (in 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2017) in the Galpão Bela Maré, a spacious venue located just off Rio's important thoroughfare Avenida Brasil, in the Maré favela complex. The Galpão was renovated and converted into a cultural centre especially for the first edition of Travessias in 2011. The five exhibitions were organised by Observatório de Favelas, a civil organisation aimed at research, consultancy and public action based in the Maré, and Zona Sul-based cultural producer Automática. Several of its stated goals are similar to those of Favelagrafia: to challenge favela stereotypes and demystify favela spaces for an outside audience. The organisation prides itself on showing internationally successful Brazilian artists such as Vik Muniz, Ernesto Neto, Marcos Chaves, and Regina Silveira, as well as local artists such as photographers of the Imagens do Povo collective. Importantly, not all works shown here are necessarily *about* favelas, although many artists do engage with the surrounding territory in some way (for example through workshops, representations or artistic interventions). Each exhibition lasted for several months and was open daily and free of charge.

As the organisers note, Travessias' goal is twofold: (1) to introduce favela residents to contemporary art in their own neighbourhood, showing how art can function as a medium to question societal structures and inequalities and (2) to bring Rio's 'art-world-audience' to the Maré, thereby acknowledging favelas as 'territories of artistic and cultural production with the greatest relevance to the city as a whole'.[40] In the words of geographer and founder of Observatório de Favelas Jailson Souza e Silva, the exhibition aims to facilitate 'an encounter between improbable beings, people that would probably not

40 Observatório de Favelas, 'Apresentação', in *Travessias 3: Arte Contemporânea na Maré* (Catalogue booklet, Rio de Janeiro, 2014).

Figure 7.1. Travessias 2015 opening event, exhibition overview, photograph by the author.

meet under normal circumstances'.[41] Rather than bringing favela residents to a centrally located museum or putting favela representations on display, the idea is to challenge the geographical divisions of Rio de Janeiro's art world, thereby '[causing] ruptures in the naturalised elitism of the production and consumption of the visual arts'.[42] A crucial point to emphasise here is that encounters between people inhabiting Rio de Janeiro's favelas and formal neighbourhoods are by no means rare. The intricate connections between these areas imply frequent contact between various citizens in a broad range of urban sites (for example public space, shops, offices, public transport and even in upper-class homes). Crucially, however, these encounters usually follow specific patterns that reproduce unequal power relations and structural inequality. Accordingly, what distinguishes this artistic encounter is, first, the attempt to *disrupt* these power relations and, second, its reflective and highly visible nature, consciously 'performing' the equality of those involved.

To illustrate this, it is useful to briefly look at the participatory workshops organised during and before the 2015 exhibition. As noted, in more traditional forms of participatory art, active 'first-hand participants' are frequently selected on the basis of some form of 'otherness', such as poverty, marginality or race.

41 Bela Maré, 'TRAVESSIAS 3 | Documentário', YouTube video, posted on 26 Jan. 2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KKz3mDNKyo (accessed 14 Jan. 2017) (my translation).

42 Observatório de Favelas, 'Apresentação'.

Accordingly, so Miwon Kwon writes, such 'benevolent and well-intentioned gestures of democratization' may 'inadvertently aid in the colonization of difference,' especially when the works created are subsequently displayed for a secondary audience.[43] At Travessias, the workshops have a different approach. They might be organised *in* a favela, but are not exclusively aimed at a favela audience (although residents are certainly very welcome). As such, prefixed notions about audiences as related to urban territories are called into question, both in theory and in practice. In other words, in addition to bringing the 'favela audience' and the 'art world audience' into contact with each other, the idea here is to deconstruct pre-established notions of who the art audience is and where they are located.

Important in this respect is that the Maré is a favela complex in the north zone of the city, relatively far away from Rio's centre and south zone and home to 130,000 people. The exhibition is aimed, firstly, at the museum-going audience already present in this area, for example artists and cultural producers that live there. As noted, however, the organisation also explicitly aims to attract people who have not been to museums or exhibitions before, introducing them to a different form of cultural expression. Because of this, the curators mention they aim for works that are accessible and understandable for people who are not familiar with contemporary or modern art, not as 'dumbing down' but as a way of rethinking how contemporary art can and should attract new audiences.[44] Keeping in mind contemporary art's elitist reputation, however, we might question this idea of importing or even imposing contemporary art in popular territories. To a certain extent, the aim to produce a high quality exhibition with internationally successful artists seems at odds with the goal of emphasising that favelas are relevant as cultural territories in themselves. Of course, what Travessias tries to do is break with these very categories of high versus popular art, but this is easier said than done. The very goal of democratising Rio's elitist art world implies adhering – at least to a certain extent – to this world's dominant (and exclusionary) systems of value and quality. It is noteworthy here, for example, that the majority of artists included in the various editions of Travessias are white, university educated and not from a favela (with the notable exception of Maré resident Ratão Diniz and other photographers of the Imagens do Povo collective).

Turning to Travessias' second goal, we encounter another set of difficulties. As often noted, prejudices and fears around favela spaces run deep among Rio's formal city dwellers, and organiser Luiza Mello notes that it has proved very difficult to get residents of the south zone, art elite to the exhibition because they are worried for their safety.[45] To accommodate these visitors, organised

43 M. Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2004), p. 139; see also Kester, *The One and the Many*.

44 L. Mello (director of Automática) in conversation with the author, November 2015.

45 Ibid.

vans were provided for the opening and closing events, departing from different locations in the south zone, for ten reais per person. This undoubtedly increased the accessibility, but it unfortunately also means that these visitors experience a minimal amount of interaction with the surrounding favela, especially because the Galpão itself also looks very much like a 'traditional' artistic institution. With this in mind, online reviews have called the exhibition a 'bunker for art in a favela' or 'a little interval of exoticism in the routines of those integrated into the artistic circuits of the Zona Sul'.[46] Especially in relation to the long-lived art world fascination with favelas, we might therefore wonder whether such an excursion becomes just another form of favela tourism.

However, comparing Travessias to Favelagrafia at MAM, this very act of traversing the city to a north zone favela remains highly significant. Rather than yet another virtual journey through Rio's favelas, Travessias asks audiences from across the city to physically visit a peripheral territory, forcing the elite audience out of their geographical (if not their cultural) comfort zones. As such, Travessias highlights two important points regarding imaginaries of the 'divided' city. First, in the words of Jailson de Souza e Silva, it performatively shows that '[the city] might be divided for some, maybe even for many, but not for all [cariocas]', as residents of favelas and the periphery 'always had to circulate the city in search of work, leisure and cultural activities'.[47] Second, by asking outside audiences to face their fears of entering the favela, the organisers force us to reflect on how fearful and prejudiced imaginaries impact the ways in which we circulate the city. Returning to Kester, rather than '[consolidating] a particular sense of identity among art world viewers (as tolerant, enlightened, willing to accept risk and challenge)', this event lets us reflect on how tolerant and open to risk we really are in our everyday lives.[48]

Travessias' goals and approach are closely related to the broader research and mission of Observatório de Favelas, which focus on urban mobility, equality and everyday practices of exclusion. At the closing debate of the 2015 edition of Travessias, Jorge Luis Barbosa asserted that the event tries to transform art into a powerful form of mediating what the Observatório calls 'o direito à convivência [the right of coexistence].[49] It is worthwhile quoting the Observatorio's text about this at length:

46 Rodrigo Fonseca, 'Um bunker para a arte no coração da favela da Maré, *O Globo*, 26 Nov. 2011, http://oglobo.globo.com/cultura/um-bunker-para-arte-no-coracao-da-favela-da-mare-3324405 (accessed 14 Jan. 2017); R. Fonseca, 'Complexo/simples', *Gabinete de Jerônimo: textos sobre arte e cultura visual*, 12 Dec. 2013, http://gabinetedejeronimo.blogspot.nl/2013_12_01_archive.html (accessed 14 Jan. 2017).

47 J. de Souza e Silva, 'Carta para Zuenir Ventura', in J. de Souza e Silva, J.L. Luiz Barbosa and M.V. Faustini (eds.), *O novo carioca* (Rio de Janeiro: Mórula Editorial, 2012), pp. 19–21.

48 Kester, *The One and the Many*, p. 63.

49 Bela Maré, 'Encerramento Travessias 4', YouTube video, posted on 12 December 2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0atmh6YDoc&t=59s (accessed 14 Jan. 2017).

> The growing individualisation of urban life, especially in formal neighbourhoods, causes many people to live dominated by a differentiated logic of life, relating only to those that are the same and with a hostile attitude towards others. [But] a city cannot construct itself based on a rift between us and them. We need to fully live the right to mobility. We must create conditions for everyone to have the means to circulate among [the city’s] different territories and services, to feel as if they belong to the city as a whole and not only to a determined social, cultural or economic place.[50]

Unfortunately – and despite the many genuine efforts to change this reality – these critiques remain very relevant in the world of contemporary art. And while these goals may seem utopian if we think of the deeply engrained divisions in Rio’s geographical and socio-cultural landscape, they plainly show that coexistence must be achieved not only in theory, but also in practice, meaning that people have to not only *look*, but also *move* beyond their cultural and geographical comfort zones.

Conclusion

The idea that art exhibitions can have an active, socio-political impact in relation to inequality or difference is often recited – if also contested – and usually based on two interrelated claims: (1) the idea that the conscious and reflective imaginings of contemporary art can change the way we experience and imagine our surroundings, and (2) the idea that art might facilitate encounters between different groups of people, especially in cities where such different groups tend to live in close physical proximity. Both are inextricably related to broader debates surrounding the mutually influential relation between imaginaries of difference and everyday realities of inequality. In Rio de Janeiro, for example, it is widely recognised that a set of prejudiced ideas and assumptions about the city’s favelas has a major impact on how the city is imagined, portrayed and experienced. The narrative of a ‘divided’ city, in which the favela functions as the ultimate ‘other’ despite the close physical proximity, remains strong – even if social scientists have for decades tried to challenge this imaginary. Within this context, the role of artistic imaginings is often described as providing original and nuanced representations that challenge this narrative, as well as actively and visibly crossing the city’s geographical and ideological divisions.

In order to achieve these ambitious goals, however, I have argued that two things are crucial to keep in mind. First, favela stereotypes are layered and often contradictory, which significantly complicates the practice of challenging them. In artistic practice, the close mutual relation between positive and negative stereotypes often leads to paradoxical situations. For example, artists from

50 J. de Souza e Silva and E. Sousa Silva, ‘O direito de conviver’, *Folha de São Paulo*, 31 July 2015, www.folha.uol.com.br/opiniao/2015/07/1662559-o-direito-de-conviver.shtml (accessed 14 Jan. 2017) (my translation).

favelas who claim their right to self-representation are often forced into the role of spokespersons, which means they have to meet both in- and outsiders' expectations of a (positive) representation. In addition, considering this widespread variety of favela representations (ranging from nuanced to highly sensationalist), we can no longer assume that non-favela audiences are 'blithely ignorant' of the injustices of inequality, meaning that positive representations might consolidate rather than challenge their viewpoints – especially among the progressive, educated people that tend to make up the audience for contemporary art. Second, regardless of the originality and nuance of artistic favela representations, the practice of displaying these works frequently remains situated in Rio's dominant art institutions (which are mainly located in the city's centre and south zone). Travessias is one of the few exceptions to this rule, which crucially addresses how the city's real and imaginary divisions impact the production, display and consumption of contemporary art. As such, without denying the potential impact of artistic representations on dominant imaginaries of inequality and difference, this exhibition highlights that the dominant mobility patterns through which artworks, artists and audiences traverse Rio's geographical and ideological divisions are equally if not more important to challenge.

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8. The spatiality of desire in Martín Oesterheld's *La multitud* (2012) and Luis Ortega's *Dromómanos* (2012)

Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda

Martín Oesterheld's *La multitud* and Luis Ortega's *Dromómanos*, each produced in Argentina in 2012, are divergent in style and technique. Nonetheless, the spatial characteristics of each film are such that a comparison between them allows one to reconceptualise notions of marginality and creativity in contemporary Buenos Aires. *La multitud* is an observational documentary that depicts various urban typologies found in the east and south of the city. More specifically, the film focusses on the remains of two ambitious, unfinished, and abandoned amusement parks, the *Ciudad Deportiva de la Boca* and *Interama*, latterly known as the *Parque de la Ciudad*. The film then utilises these architectural ruins as a focal point to explore the surrounding areas. While the south of the city has historically developed as a peripheral area,[1] the spaces depicted in *La multitud* represent particularly sharp instances of urban marginalisation. *Dromómanos*, in contrast, follows a range of *socially* marginalised characters in Buenos Aires as they enter and cross areas such as the northern corridor (Plaza Francia, Plaza Italia and Palermo), an area close to the city centre which is more typically a site of residence for the middle and higher middle class; Barrio Compal, a deprived settlement in the extreme outer edge of the urban fabric of greater Buenos Aires; and others including the city centre proper and a psychiatric hospital. The contrast between Barrio Compal and the central areas depicted in *Dromómanos* (especially the northern corridor) is sufficiently sharp to underline the geographical and socio-economic marginalisation of the former area. Nonetheless, it is the film's unapologetic, if not confrontational, depiction of diverse forms of social marginalisation which most captures the viewer's attention. The film unflinchingly records the

1 G. Silvestri and A. Gorelik, 'San Cristóbal Sur entre el Matadero y el Parque: acción municipal, conformación barrial y crecimiento urbano en Buenos Aires; 1895–1915', *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana "Dr. E. Ravignani"*, III (3) (1991): 81–107; H.M. Herzer, ed., *Barrios al sur: renovación y pobreza en la ciudad de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Café de las Ciudades, 2012). See also Anabella Roitman's chapter in this volume, pp. 155–80.

N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda, 'The spatiality of desire in Martín Oesterheld's *La multitud* (2012) and Luis Ortega's *Dromómanos* (2012)', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 201–39. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

lived experience of an alcoholic, a psychiatric patient and a disabled man as they traverse the city seemingly without aim or purpose. In order to reconcile this representation of the fringes of Argentine society with the more overtly spatial analysis found in *La multitud*, this chapter will argue that the two films reconceptualise the idea of urban marginality itself through their depiction of movement, desire and, ultimately, of power.

In the introduction to a special edition of the journal *BLOCK* exploring the relationship between power and architecture, Anahi Ballent and Adrián Gorelik propose that the three fundamental clients, or forces, which shape contemporary architecture are 'la política – política en sentido estricto de poder, en relación al control de un aparato estatal –, las instituciones sociales – política en sentido amplio, referido a la "gobernabilidad" de las sociedades modernas –, y el capital' [politics (in the strict sense of power, in relation to the control of a given state apparatus); social institutions (politics in a wider sense, referring to the 'governability' of modern societies); and capital].[2] By drawing on historical analysis of the spaces depicted in Oesterheld's *La multitud*, it will be shown that this conception is insufficient to account for the spatial dynamics of wider Buenos Aires, just as traditionally authored architecture cannot be taken as synecdoche for the whole built environment. While it will be recognised that landmarks within the city are the physical manifestations of interactions between capital and the state, it will be shown that 'politics', as defined by Ballent and Gorelik for example, cannot fully explain the development of marginal spaces shown in the film, nor the movement of characters through these spaces. It will instead be proposed that Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's conception of desire – understood as a positive affirmation of productive energy[3] – can more thoroughly account for the dynamics witnessed in the film.

Unlike psychoanalytic (or other) models which propose that desire is the result of a fundamental *lack*, for Deleuze and Guattari desire is the basic unit of productive energy. They also contend that society's fundamental task is to constrain this desire.[4] Thus, by connecting this concept of desiring-production with their later discussion of smooth and striated spaces,[5] we first seek to spatialise the concept through our analysis of Oesterheld's *La multitud*. Drawing on historical analysis of the spaces depicted in the film, it will be argued that landmarks within Buenos Aires are the physical manifestations of interactions

2 A. Ballent and A. Gorelik, 'El Príncipe', *Block*, 5 (2000): 6–11, at p. 7.

3 G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by R. Hurley, S. Mark and H. Lane (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1983); A. Ross, 'Desire,' in A. Parr (ed.), *The Deleuze Dictionary* (rev. ed., Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), pp. 65–7; E.Holland, 'Desire + Social Production', in Parr (ed.), *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp. 67–9.

4 J. Roffe, 'Capitalism', in Parr (ed.), *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp. 40–2.

5 G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by B. Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 474–500.

between capital and the state which strive to either constrain or release desire. It will subsequently be posited that the urban margins are a repository for a form of desire that is liberated by the economic policies instigated by the state, yet potentially beyond its control. It is this form of desire that will receive closer critical analysis through our interpretation of *Dromómanos*. By bringing Deleuze and Guattari into dialogue with the conception of psychogeography elaborated by Guy Debord and the situationists, it will be argued that *Dromómanos* shows how the pursuit of liberated desire can radically alter our conception of city space. Thereafter, by focusing more specifically on the rituals enacted by the characters within the film, it will be shown that desire is creatively utilised to overcome marginalisation or, rather, constitutes the power proper to the margins when it becomes an affective war-machine directed against the very forms of thought which sustain the state.

La multitud

In his analysis of the various conflicting imaginaries that have moulded the city space of Buenos Aires throughout its history, James Scorer briefly comments on *La multitud*, arguing that 'the film is a study, both aesthetic and social, of urban decay and decline'.[6] Drawing on the traditions of *cinema vérite* and direct cinema, *La multitud* certainly deploys exquisite cinematography in order to record the slow ruination of the abandoned theme parks to particularly poignant effect. Moreover, Oesterheld records the spaces which surround each park utilising the same techniques in such a manner that they, too, appear to share in the parks' elegant deterioration. The *Ciudad Deportiva* is located in the *Costanera Sur* and the film records each of the distinct spaces which surround it: the shantytown *Barrio Rodrigo Bueno*, the coastal park *Reserva Ecológica*, a dump for abandoned cars, the massive fuel burning power plant *Central Térmica Costanera Sur*, and towering over all the locations and becoming the gravitational centre of the first half of the film, the new skyscrapers under construction as an extension of the upmarket area of Puerto Madero (see figures 8.1–8.2). Equally dominant in the film's second half is the *Torre Espacial* found at the centre of the abandoned amusement park *Interama* (see figure 8.3). The tower, the tallest building in Buenos Aires, is 176 metres high and dominates the cityscape in the south-west of the city. Within *La multitud*, it becomes the organising point for a conglomerate of heterogeneous living spaces, including the social housing complexes Lugano I–II and Soldati, and *Villa 20*, an informal settlement established several decades before *Barrio Rodrigo Bueno*. As in the *Costanera*, this space also included a dump for abandoned cars

6 J. Scorer, *City in Common: Culture and Community in Buenos Aires* (New York: SUNY Press, 2016), p. 187.

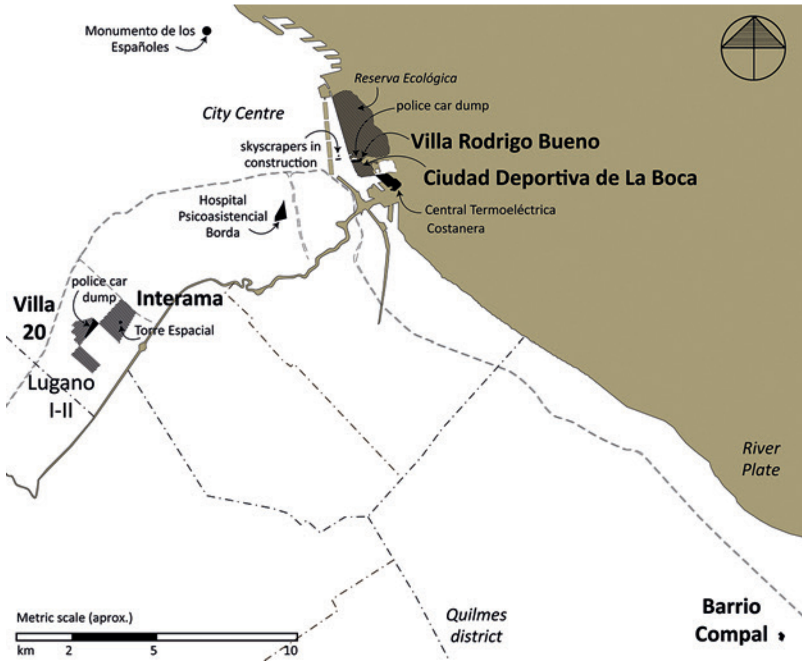

Figure 8.1. Map of relevant locations. Source: drawn by Adriana Laura Massidda.

Figure 8.2. Ciudad Deportiva de La Boca in the foreground, with Puerto Madero skyscrapers in the background. Source: La multitud.

at the time of filming, although this was subsequently removed.[7] As outlined in the Introduction, a concern with urban fragmentation has been central to analyses of Latin American cities (Introduction, p. 20), and this list of diverse geographical locations would seem to emphasise this same phenomenon. Crucially, however, *La multitud* also records a number of other typologies – wasteland, wetlands, railways and motorway embankments, for example – which connect each of the distinct spaces depicted. These are readily identified as 'interstitial spaces' as defined by Cristian Silva in the present volume (pp. 55–84), and in something of an echo of Silva's advocacy of a creative use of such urban interstices, the film quietly captures life unfolding within all of the spaces that it contains.

While we draw much from Scorer's wider analysis, in contrast to his central hypothesis regarding *La multitud*, we propose that striking images of vegetation bursting through the rusting hulks of abandoned cars (cover image) testify to the creative potential found in areas seemingly defined by perpetual decline. Furthermore, we contend that this creativity is primarily expressed through movement, which effectively works to smooth out space and liberate desire. Thus, where Scorer suggests that Oesterheld's 'panoramic shots of abandoned spaces highlight how the city is failing the multitudes that inhabit it',[8] we propose that it simultaneously records 'the fluidity of the masses, the

Figure 8.3. Interama in the foreground, including the Torre Espacial in the background. Source: La multitud.

7 N. Pizzi, 'Denuncia por contaminación en los cementerios de autos', *Clarín* (18 July 2009); Ministerio de Seguridad, Presidencia de la Nación (República Argentina), 'Saneamiento de los predios donde funcionan los depósitos de autos', 20 Aug. 2016, www.minseg.gob.ar/saneamiento-de-los-predios-donde-funcionan-los-depósitos-de-autos (accessed 2 Apr. 2017).

8 Scorer, *City in Common*, p. 187.

penetrating power of the migrating hordes'[9] as they attempt to overcome what Paul Virilio characterises as the 'police repression intended to control their wanderings'.[10] For what unites each of the spaces depicted in *La multitud* is that they represent diverse political attempts to mould and control both the city of Buenos Aires and society.

The press published for the release of *La multitud* focusses on the abandoned amusement parks and suggests that these peripheral city spaces 'were both locations for entertainment built by different dictatorships: the Sport City of La Boca was built during Onganía's de facto government, and the Interama amusement park opened near the end of the [last] military regime'.[11] While this description certainly places power and control at the centre of the film's thematic concerns, and these dictatorships were certainly important actors in the development of each location, this is nonetheless an excessive simplification of their rich histories and the complexity of Oesterheld's film. Regarding *La Ciudad Deportiva*, while it is true that the majority of the construction took place during the *Revolución Argentina* (1966–1973), which is to say the dictatorship led by Juan Carlos Onganía from 1966 to 1970, the two events can only be linked by association. The project had been conceptualised and executed by the not-for-profit Boca Juniors Civil Association (the organisation that is the owner and operator of the famous football club) a few years prior to the advent of the dictatorship, and government approval for the plan had been provided by congress during the democratically elected administration of Arturo Illia in 1965.[12] The plan was incredible in its ambition and its scope: the government granted the association an area of the Río de la Plata which had to be reclaimed for construction, and the amusement park was meant to contain various sporting facilities and a massive stadium with a capacity of 140,000. Had it been completed, Boca Juniors' new home would have been one of the largest in the world at the time. However, while parts of the park were built and opened to the public, only the foundations for the stadium were ever laid.[13] Thus, the only possible direct connection with the dictatorship was through a later leader of the *Revolución Argentina*, Alejandro Agustín Lanusse (head of

9 P. Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology,* trans. by M. Polizzotti (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2006), p. 33.

10 Ibid., p. 29.

11 'BAFICI [14] Buenos Aires Festival Internacional de Cine Independiente. Del 11 al 12 de Abril / 2012' (Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 2012), 264. Also reproduced in the back cover of the film DVD.

12 Ley 16.575 (República Argentina), *Boletín Oficial* 20.610 (1964); Sub-comisión de Historia, "Armando la historia," *Sitio Oficial Club Atlético Boca Juniors*, 27 Dec. 2013, www.bocajuniors.com.ar/el-club/boca-armando-futbol (accessed 2 Apr. 2017).

13 Lucas Taskar et al., *Ciudad Deportiva – El documental*, 2016, www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgENhsJMZHU&feature=youtu.be (accessed 2 Apr. 2017); A. Galarza, 'The ciudad deportiva', http://futbol.matrix.msu.edu/chapters/4E-1F8–1/ (accessed 11 May 2016).

government between 1971 and 1973), who was said to be sympathetic to the project and who attended the ceremony to lay the keystone for construction of the (never to be completed) stadium.[14]

In sharp contrast, the project to construct the *Interama* amusement park *was* directly conceptualised and implemented by the mayor of Buenos Aires, Osvaldo Cacciatore, who had been appointed directly by the national executive of the last Argentine dictatorship, the *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional* (1976–1983). Nonetheless, the idea of constructing an amusement park in this location was first proposed in 1965, again during Illia's government, as part of the partially realised Parque Almirante Brown project.[15] This ambitious municipal initiative for urban development represented the culmination of years of local government debates concerning the use of the marshlands found in south-west Buenos Aires. Moreover, the Parque Almirante Brown project conformed to a long history of 20th-century urban planning in Buenos Aires which sought to regularise, formulise and incorporate informal and natural areas of the city. In other words, this planning tradition sought to expand the city through the creation of public parks that were to be recreational and educational.[16] Crucially for our present argument, both the Parque Almirante Brown, and other similar plans, contained or ran parallel to projects designed to eradicate pre-existing shantytowns in the area.[17] What was new in *Interama*, however, was the role of private enterprise, as the management of the park was not retained by the local or national governments but awarded to a private company.[18]

The press release is somewhat misleading once more when it suggests that the spaces surrounding the amusement parks 'harbor settlements and shantytowns where thousands of families live, many of them migrants and

14 'El primer pilote del futuro estadio de Boca', *La Nación*. 25 May 1972, reproduced in P.C. de Rosa Barlaro, 'El Super Estadio de la ciudad deportiva de Boca', *El archivoscopio. Donde los hechos del pasado reviven en imágenes* (La Nación) (blog), 1 June 2016, http://blogs.lanacion.com.ar/archivoscopio/lo-que-no-fue-los-proyectos-que-se-quedaron-en-la-nada/el-super-estadio-de-la-ciudad-deportiva-de-boca/ (accessed 16 March 2018).

15 *Centro Urbano Integrado Parque Almirante Brown. Solicitud de préstamo al Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo* (2 vols., Buenos Aires: Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 1965).

16 A. Gorelik, *La grilla y el parque: espacio público y cultura urbana en Buenos Aires, 1887–1936* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 1998); M.-N. Carré and L. Fernández, '"La muralla verde": áreas verdes como dispositivo para disciplinar la población, Gran Buenos Aires (1976–1983)', *Provincia – Revista Venezolana de Estudios Territoriales*, 25 (2011): 115–42.

17 A.L. Massidda, 'Shantytowns and the modern city: examining urban poverty in south-western Buenos Aires (1958–1967)' (unpublished University of Cambridge PhD thesis, 2016).

18 As a matter of fact, this process has been subject to numerous complaints of corruption which unfortunately lie beyond the scope of the present article. A summary can be found in *La gran estafa*, 2016, Students of Year 4, EEM Nº5 DE 19, Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBx4UL6syy0 (accessed 2 Apr. 2017).

in extreme poverty'.[19] While it is certainly true that both sites contain *villas miseria* (the local name for shantytowns in Buenos Aires) which are in a continual state of development, such a comment overlooks the significant and fundamental differences between *Barrio Rodrigo Bueno* and *Villa 20*. The former is a relatively new settlement constructed on invaded land, which emerged at some point between the mid 1970s and the early 1990s.[20] In contrast, the latter *villa* developed around a housing complex constructed in 1948 by the *Fundación Eva Perón*.[21] This historical difference is clearly visible in the film due to the relative differences in the quality and density of the buildings, and the degree of economic and construction activity in each *villa*. Finally, the press release overlooks the other prominent urban typologies contained within the film which, again, pertain to varied political programmes. The social housing complex Lugano I and II was constructed by the city government in the early 1970s as part of the Parque Almirante Brown project; [22] that of Soldati was constructed by the national government in the same decade as part of the *Plan de Erradicación de Villas de Emergencia*;[23] the *Reserva Ecológica* is contained within land reclaimed from the river by the *Proceso*; and the *Central Térmica Costanera* was conceived by the *Revolución Libertadora* in 1956, was opened in 1966 during Illia's presidency, and remained in public hands until president Carlos Saúl Menem's neoliberal structural adjustment and privatisation programmes of the 1990s.[24] Similarly, the new skyscrapers under construction in the wealthy neighbourhood of Puerto Madero form part of a development closely linked with Menem's neoliberal economic policies.

During Menem's presidency (1989–1999) the national executive and the city government collaborated to create the *Corporación Antiguo Puerto Madero*, a public–private partnership initiative whose explicit purpose was to attract national and international capital in order to develop the area of land donated

19 'BAFICI [14]', p. 264.

20 M. Carman, *Las trampas de la naturaleza* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2011).

21 D.E. Bordegaray, 'Historia y memoria en la construcción de una historia barrial: el caso de Villa Lugano', in N. Rebetez Motta and N. Ganduglia (eds.), *El descubrimiento pendiente de América Latina: diversidad de saberes en diálogo hacia un proyecto integrador* (Montevideo: Signo Latinoamérica, 2005), pp. 237–44; 'La población residente en villas en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires. Su magnitud, localización y características. Transformaciones en el período 1960–1991' (Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, 1991).

22 Comisión Municipal de la Vivienda, 'Lugano I–II, Parque Almirante Brown, Buenos Aires, 1967/68', *Summa*, 18 (1969): 53–62.

23 O. Wainstein-Krasuk, T. Bielus and J. Goldemberg, 'Conjunto Habitacional "Soldati"', *Summa*, 64–5 (1973): 120–7.

24 Ley 23.696 (República Argentina) (also known as Ley de Reforma del Estado), *Boletín Oficial* 26.702 (1989); Ley 24.065 (República Argentina), *Boletín Oficial*, 27.306 (1991).

to the corporation.[25] As Daniel Kozak noted in 2008, the project was 'one of the preferred destinations of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the city'[26] and, despite the economic collapse of 2001 and subsequent changes in both city and national governments, the development continues in much the same manner at present. With this in mind, the incorporation of private capital into the public construction of *Interama* previously mentioned testifies to an important shift in urban planning in Buenos Aires, which continued through the 1980s following the return to democracy. This new approach originated in architectural post-modernism and was gradually adopted as a key tenet of neoliberal urban policy, arguing that a 'city by parts' would promote public space, democracy and trade.[27] A similar process was also witnessed in the 1990s as planners sought to integrate urban fragments directly into the market by creating 'ventajas diferenciales para el desarrollo de negocios privados' [differential advantages for the development of private businesses], a theme which has continued to some extent in the present day, where planners 'han incorporado los discursos más radicalizados del nuevo pensamiento empresarial' [have incorporated the most radicalised discourses of new corporate thought] into their designs for the city.[28] Interestingly, however, the present owners of the former *Ciudad Deportiva* are a development company who intended to construct similar luxury buildings on the site but who found the implementation of the project hindered by lack of government approval.[29]

Striating desire in *La multitud*

Such is the variety and complexity of the historical circumstances giving rise to the creation of the various spaces featured in Oesterheld's work that the film could provide the perfect basis for an exploration of 20th-century conceptions of modernity and modernisation, the relationship between the city and nature implied in such discourses, and their correlative attitudes towards informal settlements and urban development. For our present argument, however, the elusive and shifting dynamics which underpin such developments are rather more important. Moreover, it is the focus on the theme parks themselves, at least one of which can be directly connected to the most recent Argentine dictatorship, which most clearly uncovers these illusory drives. By focussing on these spaces, Oesterheld expands the limits for spatial analysis of the

25 Ley 1279 (República Argentina), *Boletín Oficial* 26.767 (1989); Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 'Corporación Antiguo Puerto Madero S.A.', www.buenosaires.gob.ar/gobierno/corporacion-antiguo-puerto-madero-sa (accessed 2 Apr. 2017).

26 D. Kozak, 'Urban fragmentation in Buenos Aires: the case of Abasto' (unpublished Oxford Brookes University PhD thesis, 2008), p. 170.

27 Ibid.; Ballent and Gorelik, 'El Príncipe', p. 7.

28 Ballent and Gorelik, 'El Príncipe', p. 10.

29 F. Spinetta, 'Sí a la urbanización de la Rodrigo Bueno, no al barrio de Irsa', *Página*, 12 (15 Dec. 2016).

dictatorship beyond those studies centred on repression and control. Where, in a spatial sense, this dictatorship is now frequently remembered through the *hidden* topography of the Clandestine Centres for Torture and Extermination which have been made public in recent years,[30] and through brutal policies of shantytown eradication,[31] Oesterheld creates a film focussed on the dictatorships' most *visible* attempts to create spaces for leisure and recreation for the repressed population. And it is through this apparent contradiction that the fundamental impulses that underpin Oesterheld's film can be uncovered.

As was the case with Onganía's military government, the most recent dictatorship upheld a narrow conception of western values closely linked to ideas of Christian civilization and anti-communism which necessarily restricted individual and collective freedoms. Drawing on the work of Judith Filc, Scorer notes that the last dictatorship posited 'the family as the basic unit of the nation and the principle site of moral education', and that 'the regime presented itself as the upstanding father to a wayward, childlike citizenship'.[32] While this depiction of society precedes the advent of these dictatorships, what is unique is that the last military government imposed this vision by creating 'an urban network of detention centers and military substations' which both systematised and spatialised the practice of 'disappearance' – the kidnapping, torture and murder of civilians – and through 'other, less brutal but nonetheless militaristic transformations of the city' designed to discipline society, as both Scorer and Graciela Silvestri note.[33] Indeed, Silvestri's analysis of the relationship between architecture and the dictatorship is particularly important in that she highlights that the regime also created a number of green spaces designed with other principles in mind, which is to say that they were created in order to produce 'una cierta imagen de orden y limpieza' [a certain image of order and cleanliness], the essential elements of the vision of 'la *ciudad blanca* de Cacciatore' [Cacciatore's *white city*].[34] Scorer is particularly effective in unifying these seemingly contradictory urban visions. As he notes, the '*ciudad blanca* was a *white* city not only in an aesthetic sense, but also in religious (whiteness = Christian purity), racial, and moral terms', and both architectural visions, 'albeit in different ways, were designed to create a "healthy" citizenship, enhancing the physical well-being of a body politic threatened by the cancer

30 As Scorer notes, 'in Capital Federal alone there were over 50 sites directly connected to detention and/or torture, a little over one per barrio, illustrative of how the city had become saturated with such spaces' (Scorer, *City in Common*, p. 34).

31 V. Snitcofsky, 'Clase, territorio e historia en las villas de Buenos Aires (1976–1983)', *Quid*, 16 (2) (2012): 46–62; E. Blaustein, *Prohibido vivir aquí: una historia de los planes de erradicación de villas de la última dictadura* (Buenos Aires: Comisión Municipal de la Vivienda, 2001).

32 Scorer, *City in Common*, p. 35.

33 Ibid., p. 36, both quotations; G. Silvestri, 'Apariencia y verdad', *Block*, 5 (2000): 38–50, at p. 39.

34 Silvestri, 'Apariencia y verdad', p. 40.

of subversion'.[35] Thus he argues that the dictatorship's plan of shantytown eradication can be understood as an instance of the 'institutionalization of disappearance' necessary for the production of a healthy, clean living space.[36] The same logic applies to Cacciatore's project to dismantle a massive garbage dump in south-west Buenos Aires and then use the vast quantities of domestic waste to create new recreational areas at the edge of the city.[37] With this in mind, it is important to note that this dump was located within land previously designated for redevelopment as a leisure space within the Parque Almirante Brown project designed by the freely elected government of Arturo Illia in 1965. Once more the crucial point is that plans for large-scale excavation and the creation of new parkland in this area preceded the dictatorship itself. In an inverse manner, it has also been noted that the incorporation of private capital into the construction of *Interama* by the dictatorship, became the *lingua franca* of urban planners in Buenos Aires utilised to promote democracy after the military regime's demise.

While Scorer is effective in demonstrating that the dictatorship maintained a unified and consistent urban vision, then, it is also clear that the regime (and subsequent democratic governments) appropriated planning ideas based on other discursive principles in order to fulfil that same vision. Moreover, this vision is also inevitably aligned with political power, and cannot account for the spatial dynamics evolving within those marginal spaces which Oesterheld also includes in his film. In her analysis of the dictatorship's seemingly contradictory urban vision, Silvestri argues that one should not be led 'a pensar que no existe ninguna relación concreta entre forma arquitectónica y poder' [to think that there exists no concrete relation between architectural form and power] but rather that 'las relaciones son más ambiguas y tangenciales, aunque no por ello inexistentes' [the relations are ambiguous and tangential, although that does not mean that they do not exist].[38] In a similar manner, we propose that the very process of capturing and repurposing discursive and spatial practices is, in and of itself, demonstrative of the underlying drives that we argue unite the urban dynamics witnessed throughout *La multitud*, namely, Deleuze and Guattari's notions of 'desiring production' and of 'striated space'. Crucially, framing the analysis in this manner will later enable us more fully to account for the creativity inherent to the peripheral locations depicted in the film.

35 Scorer, *City in Common*, pp. 170 and 37 respectively.

36 Ibid., p. 170.

37 O. Oszlak, *Merecer la ciudad: los pobres y el derecho al espacio urbano* (2nd edn, Buenos Aires: Editorial Universidad Tres de Febrero, 2017); N. Cosacov, M. Perelman, J. Ramos and M.F. Rodríguez, 'De "la Quema" al parque: notas sobre las políticas urbanas en la dictadura y la producción de pequeños consensos cotidianos en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires (1976–1983)', *Sociohistórica*, 29 (2012): 71–85; Carré and Fernández, '"La muralla verde"'.

38 Silvestri, 'Apariencia y verdad', p. 39.

What we want to propose is that by focussing on those urban plans which the *Revolución Argentina* and *Proceso* dictatorships developed in order to present themselves in a positive light, Oesterheld's film not only records the regimes' appropriations of previous discursive structures, but also their attempts to capture, channel and striate 'desire' in order to maintain their power. For Deleuze and Guattari, both 'desiring production' and 'striated space' are developed first and foremost through their radical materialist metaphysics which contends that all of existence is 'a matter of flows, and that any society must structure these flows in order to subsist'.[39] Within this conception, the fundamental, or primary, human drive is that of 'desire'. However, unlike psychoanalytic models, for Deleuze and Guattari, 'desire is … first and foremost the psychical and corporeal production of what we want'.[40] Crucially, Deleuze and Guattari also contend that each society attempts to channel these flows of productive energy in order to control the population and centralise power.[41] What the theme parks in *La multitud* represent, then, is this appropriation of *positive* desire utilised to sustain the dictatorships and which becomes a counterpoint to the dictatorships' most brutal repression.[42] We would also contend that it is this same process which has governed the creation of the various typologies that we observe in the film. Thus, the plans to create the social housing complexes Lugano I and II and Soldati sought to provide some habitation and reinforce the power of the state, yet were simultaneously coupled with projects to eradicate neighbouring shantytowns; the *Central Térmica Costanera* was conceived of and built to provide the energy to drive early industrial expansion and provide the population with employment; and the development of *Puerto Madero* was one of a raft of measures designed to integrate the city into the global market and create new opportunities for work and wealth creation, a project which would also radically alter social relations within Argentina. What this makes clear is that the politics and ideology of those who were in power at any given moment cannot fully explain the processes enacted. As we have seen, each of these plans overlap such that they form a continuum of attempts to capture 'flows of all kinds, populations, commodities or commerce, money or capital',[43] and Oesterheld ultimately records those locations which serve as the physical expression of projects designed to incorporate numerous fluxes into the political programme of any given government, democratic and authoritarian

39 Roffe, 'Capitalism', p. 40.

40 Holland, 'Desire + social production', p. 68.

41 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 139.

42 Deleuze and Guattari interpret the works of Franz Kafka in a similar manner by arguing that part of Kafka's genius was to depict the incorporation of people's leisure, loves and even indignations, as part of the same desiring machine designed to control them. See G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. by Dana Polan (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 81.

43 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 386.

alike. This formal organisation of space which both manifests and maintains state power is what Deleuze and Guattari term 'striation'.[44] By focussing on the theme parks, however, Oesterheld effectively allows the viewer to conceive of the striated space of the city as the spatial manifestation of the channelling of desire, a discussion absent from (although we would suggest heavily implied in) the work of Deleuze and Guattari.[45] Nonetheless, the presence of *Barrio Rodrigo Bueno* and *Villa 20* within *La multitud* serves as a permanent reminder of that which is beyond these attempts to striate desire and control society. Indeed, they necessarily imply a different conception of space, as we shall now see.

Wandering and the production of smooth space

La multitud progresses through a subtle process of visual counterpoint designed to highlight the morphological differences between the spaces it depicts. Most acutely, frequent shots of *Barrio Rodrigo Bueno* and *Villa 20* are presented in stark contrast to those shots of the various other urban typologies the film contains: the housing complexes Lugano and Soldati, the regular urban fabric of the city, and the gleaming towers of the new skyscrapers under construction in Puerto Madero. The regular, ordered and controlled enviroments that contain public and private construction projects are noted more readily, precisely because they stand in contradistiction to the haphazard, freeform and rather more improvisational structures found in their neighbouring *villas*. It is immediately possible to compare these latter typologies with the 'variability', 'polyvocality' and essentially rhizomatic qualities that Deleuze and Guattari argue are the defining features of 'smooth space' which evolves in the absence of centralised organisation and is the antithesis of 'striation'. Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari identify 'shantytown-urbanization' as a primary example of the 'untamed evolutions' they advocate,[46] and directly state that 'sprawling, temporary, shifting shantytowns' could provide an example of a smooth space developing within the striated city.[47] Building on this point, Felipe Hernández and Peter Kellett argue that there is 'a direct link between cities as forces of striation … and shanty towns, or informal settlements, as examples of smooth space which emerges within the striated space of the city but refuses to conform to the rules it attempts to enforce'.[48]

44 Ibid., p. 385.

45 Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of striated space is found in the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, *A Thousand Plateaus*. Published several years after *Anti-Oedipus*, it largely abandons their conception of desiring-production altogether.

46 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 462.

47 Ibid., p. 481.

48 F. Hernández and P. Kellett, 'Introduction: reimagining the informal in Latin America', in F. Hernández, P. Kellett and L. Allen (eds.), *Rethinking the Informal City: Critical Perspectives from Latin America* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), p. 9.

Given that *La multitud* also contrasts informal shantytowns with spaces striated with political desire, Hernández and Kellett's description certainly appears to correspond succinctly with Oesterheld's film. Yet the very structure of the film leads us to question this assertion, or perhaps even to invert the argument, for it actually appears to reveal the slow process of striation which develops over time. Within the film, informal smooth spaces, which seemingly appear beyond government attempts to channel desire, appear to be gradually organised, formalised and striated. This is clearly seen in the varying degrees of formality within the construction processes depicted in the film. The ordered and efficient construction within Puerto Madero, where every worker has a uniform, a yellow hard hat and proper boots, and where massive cranes move imposing blocks of prefabricated construction materials, finds its counterpoint in the patchwork of *Rodrigo Bueno* where a resident in flip-flops and a yellow cap utilises recycled waste materials to add an additional structure to a house. What appears first as an acute juxtaposition between two forms of space resolves into a temporal sequence when we witness construction in the far longer established *Villa 20* and find a process somewhere between these two extremes. A mobile crane mounted on a truck unloads construction materials, echoing the sophisticated, enormous and fixed cranes found at Puerto Madero (see figure 8.2). The simple fact that *La multitud* incorporates these delicate symbolic echoes – from yellow hard-hat to yellow cap; from fixed to mobile crane – seems to suggest that the informal becomes less so over time. Just as the large-scale construction projects included in the film represent complex historical and political processes which have gradually reconfigured the city, so, too, the contrast between *Villa 20* and *Barrio Rodrigo Bueno* is demonstrative not only of government interventions in informal spaces, as described by Anabella Roitman in the present volume (pp. 155–80), but also of the innumerable interactions between state and non-state actors which have combined to transform and striate these urban spaces. Indeed, we would argue that these complex relations – as analysed by Orlando Deavila Pertuz in Cartagena (pp. 107–32), or Adriana Laura Massidda in South West Buenos Aires[49] – which are ever present, yet unseen in the film, essentially function as the genetic code which produces the *villa* morphology. In contrast to Deleuze and Guattari's (and Hernández and Kellett's) suggestion, then, it appears that the shantytowns in *La multitud* represent the fact that 'smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space', rather than the process by which 'striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space'.[50] This is not to suggest, however, that the latter process is entirely absent from the film. Rather, the injection of smooth space into the

49 A.L. Massidda, 'Shantytowns and the modern city'.

50 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 474–5.

striated city assumes a different form: the seemingly random wandering of the urban nomad.

La multitud is a film in continual movement. As in Lucy O'Sullivan's analysis of Juan Rulfo's photos (pp. 31–53), where Rulfo's lens captures furtive glimpses of people moving through the interstitial spaces of Mexico City, *La multitud* progresses with an ethereal lethargy as it follows various residents in the east and south of Buenos Aires wandering through each of the locations depicted. Where Rulfo's still photos lend themselves to O'Sullivan's Foucauldian analysis of modernist Mexico, however, Oesterheld's images of mobility instead suggest that he records 'a problem less of enclosure or exclusion than of traffic'.[51] This is to say that, as in Paul Virilio's analysis of Paris, in *La multitud*, Buenos Aires becomes 'a tapestry of trajectories, a series of streets and avenues in which they [the people] roam, for the most part, with neither goal nor destination',[52] the basis for Virilio's corresponding conception of '*habitable circulation*'.[53] In place of a traditional narrative, the film advances in a seemingly aimless manner by following various characters for a short period of time as they move through the city. In this way, and as the very title of Oesterheld's film suggests, *La multitud* presents the audience with a particularly muted image of the multitude – invoked equally by Paul Merchant (pp. 85–103) in the present volume, as by Scorer in the work previously cited[54] – in motion. Moreover, even seemingly static objects and spaces are recorded in motion: the skyscrapers and *villas* are filmed while under construction; the *Central Térmica* continually billows steam from its cooling towers; and the camera follows an engineer as he enters and ascends the *Torre Espacial* to then work on the telecommunications equipment situated on the exterior of its uppermost platform. In addition, the film includes shots of cars travelling at great speed along motorways, as it records a character moving through the city on a train in order to visit an acquaintance in the Lugano housing complex; a sequence which serves to connect the two halves of the film and the east and south-west of the city. In this instance, the journey is evocative of Deleuze and Guattari's argument that 'in striated space, lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points' as people travel 'from one point to another',[55] and that, in its attempts to striate the space over which it rules, 'the State never ceases to decompose, recompose, and transform movement, or to regulate speed',[56] an idea derived from Virilio's argument that the contemporary city is an extension of the architecture of the

51 Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, p. 33.

52 Ibid., p. 29.

53 Ibid., p. 31.

54 Scorer, *City in Common*, pp. 12–20.

55 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 478 and 380.

56 Ibid., p. 386.

fortress specifically designed to regulate and control speed.[57] With this in mind, it is also important to remember that the vast extension of highways within Buenos Aires was one of the most emblematic urban interventions carried out by the last dictatorship. In this instance, the project quite literally constitutes a channelling of flows, and therefore represents another striation of space, a device utilised to control movement and constrain desire.[58]

In sharp contrast to these depictions, however, the film features numerous other journeys which refuse to subordinate the trajectory to the point, as Oesterheld similarly refuses to provide a complete narrative for the movements in question. Moreover, the characters embarking on these journeys frequently ignore the rules that normally govern movement within the striated city, as they utilise other means of locomotion. Powered by his own strength in a flimsy rowing-boat, we witness a resident of Barrio Rodrigo Bueno move slowly through wetlands strewn with rubbish and then enter the vast expanse of the Río de la Plata and fish in the shadow of the *Central Térmica* and the turbulent waste water it discharges into the river. More frequently, however, we witness numerous characters as they walk through the city space, paying no heed to the rules which should govern circulation. These characters cut through the abandoned theme parks, sprint across highways and make only halting progress. In one instance, for example, a female character strolls through the abandoned land of the *Reserva Ecológica*, sets up a deck chair and makes a phonecall. As the film drifts from each of these urban wanderers to the next, one is reminded that Deleuze and Guattari also define 'smooth space' as 'nomad space' precisely because the continual movement of the nomad subordinates specific points 'to the paths they determine'.[59] Crucially, Deleuze and Guattari's description of nomadic smooth space is also derived from the work of Virilio.[60] For Virilio, contemporary politics and urban design are characterised by attempts to unleash, yet control, ever increasing speeds.[61] Within this analysis, however, he also proposes that 'shantytowns and favelas … are situated between two speeds of transit'[62] and that the 'masses are

57 As Virilio writes: 'highways or railways, the toll systems that the government insists so strongly on instituting at the very entrances to a capital … this whole apparatus is only the reconstitution of the various parts of the fortress motor, with its flankings, its gorges, its shafts, its trenches, admission to and escape from its portals, the whole primordial control of the masses by the organisms of urban defense' (*Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, p. 40). See also Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 212.

58 Oszlak, *Merecer la ciudad*, pp. 257–308; Silvestri, 'Apariencia y verdad', p. 44; G. Jajamovich and L. Menazzi, 'Políticas urbanas en un contexto de dictadura militar', *Bitácora Urbano Territorial*, 20 (1) (2012): 11–20.

59 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 478 and 380.

60 Ibid., p. 387.

61 See Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, p. 29.

62 Ibid., p. 33.

not a population, a society, but the multitude of passersby'.[63] It appears that in *La multitud* these two positions converge and coalesce: the shantytowns function within an alternative temporality, just as the nomadic trajectories are characterised by their relative slowness when compared to those other, formal and rapid journeys. And we would suggest that it is in this way that the titular multitude re-imparts a certain smoothness into the heart of the striated city.

As the unnamed lady sits and makes her phone call in the *Reserva Ecológica*, the land surrounding her is difficult to distinguish from a patch of waste ground. This is not entirely surprising given that the park is an unusual hybrid space. As previously noted, the land was formed from the rubble excavated during the construction of new highways during the last dictatorship. Nonetheless, once relocated to form a landmass in the river, the variety of indigenous species that settled there led the Municipality of Buenos Aires to declare the area an ecological reserve and public park in 1986.[64] The space is simultaneously by-product and source, caught between the forces of striation and an emergent and natural smoothness. Oesterheld further emphasises this natural comparison when he includes a sequence of shots of a pack of stray dogs wandering through this same space. A subtle visual parallel is established between the animals and our nomadic guides who Oesterheld, too, has grouped as a pack. For Deleuze and Guattari it is packs and bands that populate smooth, nomadic space, and thus they link the duality smooth/striated to the dyad rhizomatic/arborescent, which is central to *A Thousand Plateaus* and one of the best-known features of their work: 'Packs, bands, are groups of the rhizome type, as opposed to the arborescent type that centers around organs of power'.[65] So, too, the contemporary conception of the multitude is defined by its 'heterogeneous makeup, its animalistic, biological characteristics and its nature as an antagonistic force of protest'.[66] Yet, in Oesterheld's film, the multitude's antagonism is muted, constrained and performed through the most perfunctory of embodied activities: walking. In this regard, Scorer's analysis of the everyday practices and politics of *cartoneros* [informal rubbish collectors] in Buenos Aires is instructive.[67] Drawing on the work of Henri Lefebvre, Michel

63 Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, p. 29.

64 Ordenanza 41.247 (Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Municipal* 17.843 (1986); later modified by Ordenanza 42.859 (Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Municipal* 18.361 (1988).

65 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 358.

66 Scorer, *City in Common*, p. 12.

67 It is interesting to note that in Scorer's exceptional analysis of the historical and conceptual development of the 'commons' in Buenos Aires, movement has only a minor or secondary role. Nonetheless, this discussion comes to the fore when he contrasts the *tren blanco* (the special train services, using dilapidated rolling stock, that bring the *cartoneros* to the city centre to work) and the way in which the *cartoneros* enact political change by walking through the city. Although framed in a different manner, this comparison shares a great deal in common with the present analysis. See Scorer, *City in Common*, pp. 149–59.

De Certeau and others, Scorer argues that for the *cartoneros*, 'the simple joining together of multiple and contiguous trajectories enacted by walking has an impact on the city … precisely because it enables bodies to mobilize against structures of power without the need for any other form of mediation'.[68] So, too, in *La multitud* the wanderings of the urban nomads repurpose the seemingly useless interstitial spaces of the city, move against structures of power designed to constrain them, and actively work against the pursuit of limitless velocity. As in Scorer's analysis of the *cartoneros* walking through Buenos Aires, the film thus reminds the viewer that 'the multitude itself can be everyday, a "mode of being"' as in Virno's analysis.[69] More than this, however, the film makes it clear that the multitudes both inhabit smooth space and re-impart it into the heart of the striated city through their perennial nomadic wandering. Nonetheless, neither Oesterheld nor Deleuze and Guattari allow for an unequivocal and easy association between smooth space and a moral good. Indeed, in both cases the ambivalence proper to the term becomes particularly apparent through their treatment of capitalism, as we shall now see.

Dictatorship, capitalism and schizophrenia

While *La multitud* explores the spaces arranged around two abandoned amusement parks, the two halves of the film are visually dominated by vertical structures which literally tower over and impose upon almost every shot: the skyscrapers of Puerto Madero and the *Central Térmica Costanera* in the first half of the film, and the *Torre Espacial* in the second. In each case they are urban expressions of the channelling of desire through social policy, and the gradual implementation of an industrial and capitalist economy by governments of various stripes. The *Central Térmica* stands as a monument to the mid 20th-century industrialisation of the Argentine economy, the very motor for the rapid expansion of the informal *villas*, while its privatisation under Menem's government is testament to the implementation of neoliberal economic policies. Similarly, the skyscrapers under construction in Puerto Madero both reflect these same policies and, as the construction continued unabated during the presidency of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner at the time the film was made, are suggestive of a certain continuity of neoliberal development during her tenure (2007–2015), despite the vastly different nature of her political programme when compared to that of Menem. In this regard, the transition to the *Torre Espacial* within the film is particularly important.

As previously intimated, the tower was built by the most recent Argentine dictatorship, but control of the park was granted to a private enterprise. Nonetheless, at the time the film was made (2012), the management of the tower and surrounding park had returned to the city government, by then

68 Scorer, *City in Common*, p. 159.

69 Ibid., at p. 157.

controlled by the decidedly neoliberal mayor (and current president of Argentina) Mauricio Macri. Given this historical coincidence, it is tempting to read the transition from the skyscrapers to the tower as a symbolic 'return of the state' or 'a simple return to populism'[70] following the collapse of Menem's neoliberal regime and the Kirchners' ascension to power. Such a reading, however, oversimplifies the complexity of the political reality that the tower comes to represent. In the first instance, it is important to note that – in a remarkable instance of the privatisation of profits and the socialisation of losses – the 1978 by-laws which regulated the creation of *Interama* established that any loss made by the private corporation running the park would be underwritten by the local government. In addition, the park only returned to public control upon the financial failure of the enterprise.[71] Thus, the state did not become an agent empowered to control decisions but merely a guarantor for private financial profit. The municipality has since attempted to renovate the park, again incorporating a significant level of private enterprise in their plan. Given this complex history it appears that the tower actually represents the shift in the Kirchner era to *neodesarrollismo* or 'post-neoliberalism' described as 'an evolving attempt to develop political economies that are attuned to the social responsibilities of the state whilst remaining responsive to the demands of "positioning" national economies in a rapidly changing global political economy'.[72] This is to say that, at a national level, the governments of Néstor and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner represented 'a developmental regime that is sufficiently distinct, yet simultaneously a development within and from the neoliberal state'[73] insofar as they sought 'a redemption and renewal of the original Peronist program now termed "serious capitalism"' which included 'social programs' which 'conform[ed] to the neoliberal "safety net" models'.[74]

Given this historical context, it appears that these towering structures represent the continuing development of a form of neoliberal capitalism that ultimately lies beyond state control. Nonetheless, they also seem to testify

70 J. Grugel and P. Riggirozzi, 'Post-neoliberalism in Latin America: rebuilding and reclaiming the state after crisis', *Development and Change*, 43 (1) (2012): 1–21, at pp. 3–4.

71 *La gran estafa*, 3; Ordenanza 33.615 (Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Municipal* 15.554 (1977); Ordenanza 34.278 (Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Municipal* 15.848 (1978), Ordenanza 34.376 (Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires), *Boletín Municipal* 15.840 (1978).

72 Grugel and Riggirozzi, 'Post-neoliberalism in Latin America', p. 4.

73 C. Wylde, 'Post-neoliberal developmental regimes in Latin America: Argentina under Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner', *New Political Economy*, 21 (3) (2016): 322–41, at p. 324. In addition, for a detailed discussion of *neodesarrollismo* under Néstor Kirchner, see C. Wylde, 'State, society and markets in Argentina: the political economy of neodesarrollismo under Néstor Kirchner, 2003–2007', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 30 (4) (2011): 436–52.

74 N. Reddy, 'Argentina: the end of Kirchnerism?', *New Politics*, 15 (1) (2014), http://newpol.org/content/argentina-end-kirchnerism (accessed 30 March 2017).

to an antagonism between two conflicting speeds. In his analysis, Virilio is undoubtedly correct when he stresses that contemporary capitalism 'has become one of jet-sets and instant-information banks'.[75] Nonetheless, Doreen Massey is equally correct when she asserts that 'neoliberalism in practice is *not* simply about mobility: it too requires some spatial fixes',[76] a point further developed by David Harvey when he notes that, while contemporary capitalism is 'focussed on speed-up and acceleration of turnover times',[77] these developments frequently rely on 'long term and often high cost fixed capital investments of slow turnover time'.[78] It seems, then, that these monuments to contemporary capitalism, like the *villas miseria* before them, are also 'situated between two speeds of transit' but are designed to facilitate rather than act 'as brakes against the acceleration of penetration'.[79] This seemingly contradictory manipulation of relative speeds to implement the structures on which neoliberal capitalism depends is also demonstrative of a further paradox: while the forces of capitalism lead to the physical striation of space, the result of this process is 'circulating capital … a sort of smooth space in which the destiny of human beings is recast'.[80] Given their devastating critique of contemporary capitalism, this point makes the ambivalence of Deleuze and Guattari's conception of smooth and striated space particularly clear.[81] The manipulation of relative speeds, and the striation of space to produce the smooth space of capital, finds a further horrifying correlate within the specifically Argentine context. The most recent military dictatorship implemented an extremely violent state control of bodies and psyches (including the murder of thousands of Argentines) in order to impose neoliberalism, primarily through the actions of Minister of Finance José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz. Accordingly, critics such as Pilar Calveiro have subjected the dictatorship's extermination plan to

75 Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, p.136.

76 D.B. Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), p. 86.

77 D. Harvey, 'Between space and time: reflections on the geographical imagination', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 80 (3) (1990): 418–34, at p. 426.

78 Harvey, 'Between Space and Time', p. 425.

79 Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, p. 33.

80 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 492.

81 This ambivalence is not at all surprising given that Deleuze and Guattari develop their conceptions of both smooth and striated space from the work of Virilio. As previously noted, Virilio's analysis of the fortress underpins Deleuze and Guattari's conception of striated space. So, too, Virilio's study of the 17th-century naval strategy of 'the fleet in being' is fundamental to their conception of smooth space. See P. Virilio, 'The suicidal state', in *The Virilio Reader* ed. by Der Derian J (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 29–45, at pp. 30–1; Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, pp. 62–4, 171; Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 387. The militaristic origins of Deleuze and Guattari's conception of space are also reflected in the fact that General Aviv Kokhavi of the Israeli Defense Force specifically utilises their work while planning his operations. See B.H. Bratton, 'Logistics of habitable circulation' in Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, pp. 7–25, at pp. 21, 25.

rigorous Foucauldian analysis, arguing that the military government sought the disciplining of Argentine society,[82] while others, such as León Rozitchner, have argued that it was Menemism which ultimately established 'by peaceful and democratic means the same political economy that the dictatorship implanted through cruelty and terror',[83] important elements of which were subsequently retained by the Kirchners.

In the first half of *La multitud*, the *Central Térmica* and the new skyscrapers of Puerto Madero bear witness to the forces of capital which begin the process of industrialisation and seek to connect the city to transnational markets. In the second half, however, the *Torre Espacial* testifies to the attempts to control capital and constrain desire in a re-emerging state following the financial collapse of 2001. While the film's press release was too quick to connect the amusement parks to 20th-century Argentine dictatorships, it is nonetheless clear that the three vertical structures which dominate the film are tainted by association, through the gradual imposition of a neoliberal economic order, with the *Revolución Libertadora* and the dictatorship of 1976–1983. And at the film's conclusion this association becomes particularly clear as the *Torre Espacial* appears as a phallic panopticon towering over the residents of the Lugano social housing complex, who are shot from outside the building, backlit and illuminated from the electric lights in their own homes. Perfectly reflecting Foucault's description of Bentham's panopticon, the residents can always be seen, can never know if they are being observed at any given moment, and can never view the guards watching over them.[84] Nonetheless, as Scorer notes, the film is also a study 'of urban decay and decline',[85] and it is essential to recognise that *La multitud* primarily features shots of the *deteriorating* remains of *Interama* and the *Ciudad Deportiva* following the ultimate failure of these projects. What we now want to propose is that these spaces, and the informal settlements *Villa 20* and *Barrio Rodrigo Bueno*, ultimately become repositories for alternative forms of productive desire.

Oesterheld's delicate use of counterpoint throughout *La multitud* is an effective technique deployed to render the connections between informal and formal spaces visible. Moreover, informal and formal economies are linked visually in the film by a street vendor peddling coffee to workers in the city while living in precarious conditions. In this way, the film highlights the continual intertwining of marginal spaces and extra-legal activities with their legally sanctioned counterparts. Moreover, the film reminds the viewer that the *villas* provide housing for the labour necessary in an industrialised capitalist economy,

82 P. Calveiro, *Poder y desaparición* (Buenos Aires: Colihue, 1998).

83 L. Rozitchner, 'Terror and grace', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 21 (1) (2012): 147–57, at p. 150.

84 See M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. A. Sheridan (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), pp. 200–9.

85 Scorer, *City in Common*, p. 187.

while necessarily questioning the fundamental logic of private property which underpins that same system. Thus it appears that in *La multitud*, as in the work of Deleuze and Guattari, capitalism functions by breaking the rules and norms previously created to channel desire and maintain power,[86] and that 'the decoding of flows and the deterritorialization of the socius' are its most characteristic and most important tendency.[87] Importantly, for Deleuze and Guattari this capitalist decoding (the removal of rules and norms in order to integrate flows of desire under relations of exchange to promote the pursuit of capital) can generate 'a spontaneous or unpredictable form of desire freed from social coding',[88] which also resists and disrupts the very capitalist system that produced it, a phenomenon that they name schizophrenia. The deployment of counterpoint, the careful blending of formal and informal typologies and the depiction of state sanctioned and extra-legal journeys and activities in *La multitud* all serve to demonstrate that the *villas* depicted in Oesterheld's film are, in and of themselves, a spatial expression of this form of schizo-desire: a physical manifestation of the product and limit of the capitalist system in which they are inscribed.

In the final reckoning, then, *La multitud* depicts the spatial eruptions made manifest by the interconnection between three co-dependent, yet contradictory, forces. The forces of the state (regardless of the government responsible) are shown to striate space and attempt to capture and channel flows of desire. The forces of capital, meanwhile, rely on the striated space produced by the state, but produce a smooth form of capital which, in its functioning, liberates the desire the state attempts to capture. And finally, there are the forces of informality, providing the labour power for the striation of space but simultaneously injecting new smooth spaces within the striated city, creating subjectivities beyond state control who reconfigure the city space through their nomadic wandering across the city. Nonetheless, while the very existence of the shantytowns may violate the laws of private property, within the film, residents' actions only ever represent rather minor infractions of the law. The multitude is in motion, yet muted. Their actions are perhaps best characterised through Asaf Bayat's conception of 'quiet encroachment', that is, the 'noncollective but prolonged actions of dispersed individuals and families to acquire the basic necessities of their lives (land for shelter, urban collective consumption or urban services, informal work, business opportunities and public space) in a quiet and unassuming illegal fashion'.[89] What the film only depicts in a rather

86 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 139.

87 Ibid., p. 34.

88 Holland, 'Desire + social production', pp. 65–6.

89 A. Bayat, *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East* (2nd edn., Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), p. 35. For detailed discussion of the *villas miseria* in south-west Buenos Aires in relation to Bayat's conception of 'quiet encroachment' and the

minor manner, therefore, is Deleuze and Guattari's assertion that 'when a State does not succeed in striating its interior or neighbouring space, the flows traversing that State necessarily adopt the stance of a war machine directed against it, deployed in a hostile or rebellious smooth space'.[90] A depiction of this 'schizonomadic'[91] war machine is, however, the central focus of the second film we will discuss in this chapter: Luis Ortega's *Dromómanos*.

Dromómanos: a study of social marginalisation?

Dromómanos is sharply different in style and aesthetics to *La multitud.* The film is a particularly uncomfortable hybrid. All but one of the characters appears as themselves, and it is difficult to separate truth from fiction. *Dromómanos* is stylistically close to a form of *art brut*: the aesthetics are intentionally ugly, and Ortega has even suggested that they shot the film on the cheapest and worst cameras they could find.[92] In contrast to the beautiful cinematography and carefully constructed counterpoint of *La multitud*, the hand-held camera work is shaky and poor quality, and the scenes come together in an apparently random sequence. The title itself refers to those suffering from the condition of 'dromomania', an uncontrollable psychological urge to wander, which establishes an immediate connection with the work of Virilio. Not only does Virilio name the study of the pursuit of perpetual speed 'dromology', but he also pays particular attention to 'dromomaniacs', a term which refers both to those suffering from the psychological condition and to deserters under the *ancien régime*.[93] The title also connects the film to our previous discussion of Deleuze and Guattari who proffer radical alternative visions both of psychological illness and nomadism, as we have seen. Internally, the film's title seems to refer most precisely to the character of Fermín, a psychiatric patient who appears as himself and wanders through Buenos Aires in a seemingly aimless manner.[94] Given that the film also features key scenes in which Fermín consumes large quantities of alcohol and cocaine, one is particularly reminded of Virilio's comment that 'at the beginning of the Classical Age, the spectacle of the insane or possessed was fashionable, as is that of drug addicts today. We spy on the kinetic disorder of their inexplicable attitudes and their discourses'.[95] Fermín is resident in the psychiatric Hospital Interdisciplinario Psicoasistencial José

corresponding idea of the 'non-movement', see Massidda, 'Shantytowns and the modern city', pp. 175–8.

90 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 386.

91 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 105.

92 Luis Ortega, comments made during a Q&A session at the Buenos Aires Festival Internacional de Cine Independiente, 2012.

93 Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, p. 169 n3.

94 Ortega, Q&A session.

95 Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, p. 108.

Figure 8.4. Brasil arriving to Barrio Compal. Source: Dromómanos.

Tiburcio Borda (*Borda* hereinafter) and, unlike *La multitud*, most of the action takes place in central Buenos Aires and the *corredor norte*, more traditionally middle-class and wealthy areas of the city. In contrast to Simone Kalkman's analysis in the present volume (pp. 183–200), then, the film seems to focus, in a spatial sense, on a mobile marginality which demands to be understood on its own terms, and which directly injects spatial marginalisation into the centre of the city. Not only is the *Borda* hospital a marginal space walled-off and separated from the regular urban fabric which surrounds it, but the film features other marginal spaces incongruously located in wealthy and established areas. For example, Fermín frequently visits his friend, identified only as Dr Pink Floyd, a previously well-established psychiatrist turned alcoholic, whose deteriorating apartment within a middle-class building features predominantly in the film. While *Dromómanos* does also feature Barrio Compal, a peripheral settlement located in the district of Berazategui at the extreme edge of the urban fabric of greater Buenos Aires, this settlement too is linked to the city centre through the character of Pedro who appears in both spaces, visits Fermín and Pink Floyd in the latter's apartment, and occasionally sleeps rough in the city centre (see figures 8.1 and 8.4). Unlike *La multitud* which features a train journey between different settlements, Pedro's journeys between these spaces are never depicted.

Despite these clear spatial contrasts, however, it at first appears that the film is more concerned with forms of *social* marginalisation that are not primarily economic. Not only is Fermín marginalised due to his mental illness, but Pink Floyd seems to be equally excluded from society due to his dependence on alcohol. The point is proven when he attempts to visit his ex-wife and daughter and is denied entry to their apartment. Indeed, each of the characters that feature in the film appears to suffer from some form of marginalisation, stigmatisation,

or exclusion. Pedro suffers from dwarfism and, in one scene, is chased from the home of his girlfriend by children throwing stones. His girlfriend Camila, spatially and economically marginalised in Barrio Compal, is also severely disabled. The closest that the film comes to introducing a narrative or plot also introduces two more seemingly marginalised characters. It is learned that Pedro has had an off-screen affair with Brasil, a character who (as her name suggests) is stigmatised due to her condition as an immigrant from Brazil, and the film follows a rivalry between the two girls vying for Pedro's affections. Finally, *Dromómanos* also features the burgeoning relationship between Fermín and Phium, another resident within the *Borda*. Crucially, however, the film refuses to cast any moral judgement, critique or comment on these characters' apparent marginalisation; it does not present them in opposition to any norm or standard, and it does not seek to elicit any sympathy (nor antipathy) for their condition. Rather, it is through the intervention of the viewer's own preconceived notions of normality that they come to be marginalised. The film follows its own internal logic, which becomes increasingly shocking and disturbing for the viewer. While the film is deeply unsettling, we argue that, for this very reason, it is designed to expose the interiority of thought that gives the state form a seeming universality.

The exterior of thought and war machine nomadism

As *Dromómanos* progresses the viewer is confronted with a series of scenes which reveal the various characters' extreme behaviours, as they are also forced to listen to a sequence of unusual speeches that are disturbingly strange and seem to verge on madness. Indeed, it is precisely because of this radical difference that the viewer perceives the characters to be marginal in the first place. Viewed in this manner, it is immediately possible to connect the characters' actions with such statements by Deleuze and Guattari that 'from the standpoint of the State, the originality of the man of war, his eccentricity, necessarily appears in a negative form: stupidity, deformity, madness, illegitimacy, usurpation, [and] sin' each of which are readily identifiable in the film. We would also argue that the film confirms that the man of war represents 'a pure form of exteriority' opposed to our usual 'habits of thinking'.[96] Importantly, Deleuze and Guattari conceive of the war machine as having both a psychical and a spatial component. Indeed, through their conception of the war machine, they link their critique of Kantian subjectivity and common sense to their description of smooth and striated space. As they argue, as opposed to the psychical and philosophical 'striated space of the *cogitatio universalis*' the 'form of exteriority situates thought in a smooth space' within which there are 'only relays, intermezzos, [and] resurgences'.[97] Given that Deleuze and Guattari

96 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 353–4.

97 Ibid., p. 377.

have suggested that in contemporary society 'psychoanalysis lays claim to the role of *Cogitatio universalis* as the thought of the Law',[98] it is arguably Pink Floyd who most succinctly encapsulates Deleuze and Guattari's man of war. In renouncing his career as a psychiatrist Pink Floyd has, much like Deleuze and Guattari, rejected oedipal interpretations of reality and his preference for bizarre pop surrealism gradually precipitates the 'spiritual voyages effected without relative movement, but in intensity', which are an essential 'part of nomadism'.[99] Indeed, as we shall go on to argue, the film represents a struggle between interior and exterior forms of thought and space, and ultimately focusses on spiritual voyages which become 'direct symbols of power' directed at the audience as a weapon.[100]

The struggle over models of thought is most clearly perceived, in the first instance, through scenes depicting Fermín's interactions in the *Borda* hospital and an adult education institution which he attends. During these sessions, Fermín is medicated and encouraged to learn the basic tenants of economics and history. Such scenes are, of course, reminiscent of Foucauldian disciplinary institutions within which bodies are restrained and subjected to regular timetabling and repetitive exercise so that they may become 'docile' and 'may be subjected, used, transformed and improved' in order that they become 'individuals mechanized according to the general norms of an industrial society'.[101] Such scenes stand in sharp contrast to those in which Fermín wanders out of the hospital, explores the city and seeks out Pink Floyd to enact their own strange, quasi-religious, therapeutic sessions and rituals. And it is during one of these sessions that this psychical conflict assumes spatial characteristics. While visiting Pink Floyd and Pedro in the former's apartment, Fermín asks him for advice in preparing for a history exam. Not only is this a task which Pink Floyd is largely incapable of executing, but when Fermín rhymes off a list of historical figures from Argentina's past, it is Pedro who alludes to the spatial striation of such thought by reminding Fermín that these are merely the names of the streets of Buenos Aires. Moreover, it is first through Fermín and Pink Floyd's spatial experimentation with the city of Buenos Aires itself, which closely resembles the creation of psychogeographical situations as theorised and practiced by Guy Debord and the situationists, that the film comes to echo Deleuze and Guattari's suggestion that 'the war machine's form of exteriority is such that it exists only in its own metamorphoses'.[102]

In one of several scenes in which Pink Floyd ventures out of his apartment, he appears in a park near Avenida Libertador, a busy road in the *corredor norte*,

98 Ibid., p. 376.

99 Ibid., p. 381.

100 F. Guattari, *Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics*, trans. D. Cooper and R. Sheed (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), p. 127.

101 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 136, 242.

102 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 360.

and reconfigures the space by converting it into a golf course. The scene is initially funny as Pink Floyd loses his ball and searches for it in a pond, dunking his head under the water in a vain attempt to locate it. Such experimentation is particularly evocative of the work of Debord and the Situationist International, for whom the field of psychogeography represented 'the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals'. As in Pink Floyd's experimental game of golf, the situationists advocated 'the systematic provocative dissemination of a host of proposals tending to turn the whole of life into an exciting game',[103] through the 'construction of situations' based on the principles of the '*dérive*', or drifting, 'which is the practice of a passionate uprooting through the hurried change of environments',[104] and *détournement*, 'a deliberate reusing of different elements – like images or text – to form something new out of the existing parts'.[105] Nonetheless, Pink Floyd's *détournement* takes a decidedly darker and more dangerous turn when the alcoholic, off balance and stumbling former doctor practices his chip shot over a busy street full of fast moving traffic. In this case Pink Floyd reclaims a particularly wealthy area of the city, takes the most bourgeois of leisure activities, and turns it into a dangerous and transgressive practice. While this new situation may not be readily identified as 'an exciting game', it undoubtedly evokes 'the concrete construction of temporary settings of life and their transformation into a higher, passional nature'.[106] The episode also serves to emphasise that, unlike the situationists who employed these techniques as a deliberate artistic strategy, Pink Floyd (and later Fermín) acts in an improvisational manner for no clear purpose other than the satisfaction of his own desires. It is rather for the audience that these deliberately recorded situations become psychogeographical, much in keeping with Debord's original conception. While the improvisational repurposing of the city shares some characteristics with the reconfiguration of Buenos Aires through walking witnessed in *La multitud*, the specific setting of one of Fermín's *dérives* allows us more fully to perceive what *Dromómanos* adds to this analysis.

On one particular occasion, Fermín takes Phium to swim in a fountain. In a perfect example of situationist *détournment* the couple appropriate and transform the city by creating something new out of the existing structure:

103 G. Debord, 'Introduction to a critique of urban geography', *Les Lèvres nues*, 6 (1955), paragraphs 2 and 7 respectively.

104 G. Debord, 'Report on the construction of situations and on the terms of organization and action of the international situationist tendency', in T. McDonough (ed.), *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), p. 46.

105 A.E. Souzis, 'Momentary ambiances: psychogeography in action', *Cultural Geographies*, 22 (1) (2015): 2.

106 Debord, 'Report on the construction of situations', p. 44.

not so much 'under the paving stones, the beach' as 'within the fountain, the swimming pool'.[107] There is an additional irony in that the fountain in question is a monument nicknamed *Monumento de los Españoles* (the official name being *Monumento a La Carta Magna y las Cuatro Regiones Argentinas*), donated by the Spanish community to the city in commemoration of its first hundred years of independence and located in the northern area. While the monument was donated by a community of immigrants in the créole capital, its colloquial title creates a linguistic link to the initial Spanish settlers in the region who first affected the striation of the territory. The very foundation of cities like Buenos Aires were established by following the strict guidelines set out in the *Leyes de Indias*, and by oppressing and killing the nomadic indigenous populations. With this in mind, it appears that, once more, Fermín and Phium inject a degree of smoothness into the heart of striated Buenos Aires. More than this, however, the very act of swimming in the fountain represents a visual echo of earlier insurrectionary moments in the history of the city. Both on the 17 October 1945, when a multitude of supporters descended on the centre of the city to demand (then Minister of Labour) Perón's release from prison, and in December 2001 during protests against politicians of all stripes following the financial crash, fountains in the central city were used by the participants to bathe and refresh themselves. On both occasions these behaviours were considered particularly shocking as they ultimately 'violated expectations about who had the right to do what in Buenos Aires'.[108] While Fermín and Phium's actions undoubtedly raise similar questions, what is entirely lacking from *Dromómanos* is the accompanying political context. In both previous instances, the use of the fountain accompanied a specific insurgent action to obtain a definite political outcome. By including this visual reference, Ortega instead accentuates the *absence* of traditional political objectives in Pink Floyd and Fermín's actions. And this is precisely the point. Unlike the work of Lucy McMahon, where a range of marginalised and formal actors combine a variety of legal and illegal practices to construct a form of 'unruly politics' (p. 138), *Dromómanos* presents the viewer with a particularly confrontational form of 'unruly anti-politics'. Moreover, this anti-politics is designed to work on the viewer. While Debord argued that the *dérive* should 'involve playful-constructive behavior',[109] it is inescapable that the situations presented in *Dromómanos* are particularly uncomfortable for the viewer, and become increasingly violent over the course of the film. There is a certain shock witnessing Pink Floyd chip a golf ball over

107 As per the famous situationist slogan from May 1968: '*Sous les pavés, la plage*!'.

108 L. Podalsky, *Specular City: Transforming Culture, Consumption, and Space in Buenos Aires, 1955–1973* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2004), pp. 3–47; Scorer, *City in Common*, p. 19.

109 G. Debord, 'Theory of the Dérive', *Les Lèvres nues*, 9 (Nov. 1956), trans. by K. Knabb, paragraph 1 (Situationist International Online Archive), www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/theory.html (accessed 2 Apr. 2017); Scorer, *City in Common*, p. 19.

traffic, but this transforms into acute distress during one of Fermín and Pink Floyd's strange reunions. In this instance, the audience witnesses a psychiatric patient and an alcoholic take cocaine and, in the absence of a corkscrew, break a wine bottle and drink from it. The sense of disquiet only continues as the film progresses. The viewer observes Brasil develop a relationship with a baby pig which is her only real friend. Later, she becomes increasingly distressed when she cannot locate the animal and she stumbles upon a scene which transmits extreme anguish to the audience. Together with Brasil they watch a fully grown pig being killed by being repeatedly struck on the head with a mallet in a makeshift slaughterhouse in *Barrio Compal*. In these situations, the film unleashes a 'passional' element which is not playful, but rather deeply disquieting. As we will go on to argue, such elements are incorporated into the film in order to unleash creative power from positions of marginality by producing an affective war-machine.

Affect as a weapon of war

Throughout *Dromómanos*, each of the characters continually seeks to unlock the transformational potential in all that surrounds them as they consistently refuse to accept the actual state of things as they are. Given that, for Deleuze and Guattari, the production of the new, the process of creation, is always associated with metamorphosis, this is the first indication that the characters' actions produce 'affect' understood as 'a transitory thought that occurs prior to an idea or perception' necessarily linked to the transformative process of becoming.[110] Thus, for Fermín and Pink Floyd, scissors and door handles become bottle openers, just as we see them transform the function of city landmarks. For her part, Brasil demonstrates a particular affinity for the natural world: she utilises a watering-can to transform her mattress into a flower bed, and the film records numerous scenes within which she attempts to train her pet pig to be a fish. In each case, the characters produce 'affects' understood as the momentary sensations which immediately precede the emergence of something new that has hitherto lain beyond our actual state of existence. In a minor way, this point is proven when Brasil and Camila finally confront each other over Pedro's affair; the scene becomes entirely surreal as they face off as in a western gun-fight before hailing each other with cheap plastic birdcalls and performing a bizarre dance of aggression, affecting a kitsch becoming-animal. While these scenes are at turns comic and disquieting, they merely establish the primacy of metamorphosis for other more powerful scenes. As we will go on to discuss, it is these scenes which produce 'weapons of war' as 'feelings become uprooted from the interiority of a "subject," to be projected

110 F. Colman, 'Affect', in A. Parr (ed.), *The Deleuze Dictionary* (rev. edn., Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), p. 11.

Figure 8.5. Pedro renouncing his delinquent past as part of a religious ceremony, immediately followed by Camila's process of divine healing. Source: Dromómanos.

violently outward'.[111] As we will go on to argue, these scenes, in the words of Guattari, ultimately 'produce power signs, sign-points capable of playing the part of particles in the arena of de-territorialization',[112] which is to say that they engender further transformation and become a source of marginal creative empowerment for the characters in the film.

The first two of the aforementioned scenes of power are intercut early in the film, while the third appears towards its conclusion. Nonetheless, it is imperative to consider all three together in order to understand their full significance. In the earlier scenes, Pedro, Camila and Brasil travel to a local Pentecostal church and participate in the service while, simultaneously, Fermín and Pink Floyd engage in a drug and alcohol binge. In the first scene, Pedro delivers his testimony before the congregation, renouncing his past delinquency and accepting Jesus in his life (see figure 8.5). Thereafter, Camila undergoes a process of divine healing, whereby the pastor lays his hands on her, reciting prayers loudly through a microphone, supplicating on her behalf while the congregation become increasingly agitated, joining in the prayers in a vociferous and haphazard manner. Subsequently, the scene moves into something of a frenzy as Pedro, Camila, Brasil and others receive the Holy Spirit, enter into a trance and are lain prone on the floor while the congregation convulse around them. In the scene's counterpoint, Fermín and Pink Floyd travel to the latter's apartment and consume copious amounts of alcohol and cocaine. As the scene progresses, however, it too assumes spiritual significance. Fermín, shirtless, consumes a line of cocaine before lighting numerous candles and placing

111 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 392–3.

112 Guattari, *Molecular Revolution,* p. 127.

them around the apartment. Under the soft candlelight, Pink Floyd is shown lying in bed, also shirtless, as he reads aloud from the Alcoholics Anonymous' twelve-step programme. This reading is interspersed with shots of Fermín laughing maniacally beside a wall splattered with what appears to be blood. The ritual's spiritual overtones are heightened by the fact it is intersected by the former scenes of Pentecostal observance, by the accoutrements of religious service, by the fact that the twelve-step programme also requires a belief in a higher power,[113] and ultimately by a strange speech delivered by Fermín at the conclusion of the improvised liturgy. During this discourse, Fermín explains that, while not a Christian, he is not an atheist and he articulates a conception of the world as a struggle between God and the Devil, between good and evil. He concludes by earnestly stating that he knows his life has a purpose and that if it not be for good, that he die immediately. In the final scene in this triad, Pedro, who Pink Floyd has earlier claimed is the '*llave al cielo*' [key to heaven], assists his local pastor in performing an exorcism. Pedro is shown washing the body of another man in a semi-conscious trance and laying his hands on him as the pastor urges the spirits Umbanda and Macumba (the names of two animist and syncretist belief systems from Brazil) to relinquish control of the man's body and soul.

The depiction of Pentecostalism in *Dromómanos* is both reflective of Argentine society and apposite for our discussion of transformative marginal empowerment for four specific reasons. First, as David Lehmann has argued, Pentecostalism is culturally dissident in relation to hegemonic spiritual powers in Latin America and appeals to the popular classes.[114] Indeed, as Pablo Semán has demonstrated, in the peripheral *barrios* surrounding greater Buenos Aires (economically and geographically similar to *Barrio Compal*), Pentecostalism is 'la opción de los más pobres' [the option of the poorest people].[115] Second, traditionally 'Pentecostals in Argentina had the perception that politics were a "thing of the world" (in the world of sin) in which they should not become involved,'[116] which is to say that it, too, represents a form of thought exterior to that which sustains the state.[117] Third, and in a related manner, Pentecostalism

113 See 'About the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) 12–Step recovery program', www.recovery.org/topics/alcoholics-anonymous-12–step/#spiritual (accessed 2 Apr. 2017).

114 See D. Lehmann, 'Dissidence and conformism in religious movements: what differences separates the Catholic charismatic renewal and Pentecostal churches?', *Concilium,* 3 (2003): 122–38.

115 P. Semán, 'De a poco mucho: las pequeñas iglesias Pentecostales y el crecimiento pentecostal. Conclusiones de un estudio de caso', *Revista Cultura y Religión*, 4 (2010): 16–35, at p. 24.

116 D. Míguez, 'Why are Pentecostals politically ambiguous? Pentecostalism and politics in Argentina, 1983–1995', *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe / European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* (1999): 57–74, at p. 60.

117 More recently, attempts have been made to engage Pentecostals in the political process. For detailed analysis of these trends (and their relative failure or success) see Míguez, 'Why are Pentecostals politically ambiguous?' and H.G. Aasmundsen, 'Pentecostals and politics in

in Latin America instead 'aims to address two tensions exacerbated by underdevelopment: the need for physical healing and the struggle against evil forces'[118] through practices 'such as divine healing or exorcism of demons'.[119] While these practices are more commonly associated with the large-scale Neo-Pentecostal churches that have emerged in recent years, Semán has also demonstrated that small-scale, local churches in the periphery of Buenos Aires adapt and borrow such practices.[120] Finally, Pentecostals engage in 'pervasive borrowing of practices, rituals and symbols across inherited religious boundaries',[121] including from Brazilian possession cults. As several scholars have noted, in doing so, the Pentecostals in question retain an animist and syncretist worldview but invert their significance 'by branding them agents of the devil and campaigning vociferously and occasionally even violently against them'.[122] The point is that, as a set of religious practices, Pentecostalism engages in processes of adaptation and appropriation which create a parallel worldview to animist cosmologies that postulate that the world is populated with spirits who can take possession of people. By retaining this worldview, an immediate connection can be drawn to the late work of Guattari who argued that 'animist cosmologies in Brazil present forms of resistance against capitalist subjectification'.[123] Moreover, as Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro argues, 'animism is an ontology of societies without a state and against the state',[124] which creates an immediate correlation with the work of Deleuze and Guattari previously discussed. Guattari has also proposed that 'art and religion' could form 'arrangements for producing signs which will eventually produce power signs'[125] which, as Isabelle Stengers notes, are any sign that

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Argentina: a question of compatibility?', *Iberoamericana. Nordic Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 42 (2012): 85–109.

118 A. Corten and A. Voeks, 'Latin American Pentecostalism as a new form of popular religion', in P. Freston, S.C. Dove and V. Garrard-Burnett (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Religions in Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 414–29, at p. 417.

119 Corten and Voeks, 'Latin American Pentecostalism', p. 416.

120 See D. Lehmann, 'The religious field in Latin America', in P. Freston, S.C. Dove and V. Garrard-Burnett (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Religions in Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 729–38, at p. 756; and Semán, 'De a poco mucho', p. 25.

121 D. Lehmann, 'Charisma and possession in Africa and Brazil', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 18 (2001): 45–74, at p. 45.

122 Ibid., p. 66. See also P. Freston, 'History, current reality, and prospects of Pentecostalism in Latin America', in P. Freston, S.C. Dove and V. Garrard-Burnett (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Religions in Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 414–29, at p. 441.

123 J. Hetrick, 'Video assemblages: "machinic animism" and "asignifying semiotics" in the work of Melitopoulos and Lazzarato', *FOOTPRINT*, 8 (2014): 53–68, at p. 56.

124 A. Melitopoulos and M. Lazzarato, 'Assemblages: Félix Guattari and machinic animism', *e-flux*, 36 (2012): 44–57, at p. 45.

125 Guattari, *Molecular Revolution*, p. 127.

'produces or enhances metamorphic transformation in our capacity to affect and be affected'.[126] As we will go on to argue, these crucial scenes consolidate into Guattarian power-signs and unleash the psychical and spiritual powers of the exteriority of thought, empowering the characters and disturbing the audience.

That Pentecostalism becomes a form of transformative empowerment within *Dromómanos* is most clearly seen in Pedro's case. In early scenes, Pedro is shown participating in mindless delinquent behaviour. However, having provided his testimony, renounced his past and received the Holy Spirit, he becomes the very agent of deliverance. Pedro obtains an alternative form of spiritual power and the ability to transform the lives of others by assisting in the casting out of demons. For the others, however, the process is somewhat different and can be grasped by more carefully considering the cases of Camila and Fermín. In the former case, Camila receives the Holy Spirit and undergoes a process of divine healing. Yet, it is clear that she does not undergo a physical transformation. Her metamorphosis is, rather, spiritual. As André Corten and Ashely Voeks explain, the efficacy of divine healing is not found in a material alteration in the world, but is a spiritual process which 'inverts misfortune from social suffering to empowerment'. As they describe the process in rational terms, 'an individual is healed because of a shift in attitude toward personal miseries, choosing to see them as relative and thus giving life a new meaning' as they can adopt 'a new stance vis-à-vis all that comprises' their 'misfortune and suffering'.[127] We contend that it is this process that we witness in the lives of both Camila and Fermín. While the latter engages in improvisational and invented rituals rather than Pentecostal practices, it is important to remember that the drive for divine healing is also grounded in the 'struggle against evil forces',[128] to which Fermín also attests. Once more, as Corten and Voeks explain, within this struggle, practitioners 'confer a quasi-ontological status on occult forces, which are often associated with mental illness in urban or working-class areas' and thus liberate the sufferer from their infliction 'by making them believe that their agony is not caused by mental illness, but rather by an attack from a force that is perfectly real'.[129] In each case in the film, what the audience perceives to be a source of marginalisation, then, becomes the expression of a world in perpetual transformation and struggle, and the gateway to liberation for the characters. For the audience, however, the rituals enacted in the film remain disturbing, disorienting and disquieting. The naturalistic, agitated camera work ensures that each observance is imbued with a visceral immediacy and intimacy that is deeply uncomfortable. This discomfort emerges from the simple fact

126 Cited in Hetrick, 'Video assemblages', p. 61.

127 Corten and Voeks, 'Latin American Pentecostalism', pp. 416–17.

128 Ibid., p. 417.

129 Ibid., pp. 422–3.

that the rituals represent a logic beyond the comprehension of the audience. They are disturbing and challenging precisely because they unleash the forces of affect and confront the viewer with their own psychical striations and their adherence to the interiority of thought. The film reveals the full creative power of marginality by refusing to present the rituals in a form that the viewer can recognise and understand. Such scenes obey their own logic and thus challenge and overturn our perception of the city, as they do our perception of marginality itself and of the world around us. The characters are empowered as they transform the world, while the audience is disturbed by the realisation that their own reality may undergo the same transformation. Confronted with such radical alterity in such a visceral manner, the viewer is forced to question the very foundations of their own perceptions, and the emotions of disquiet and discomfort rapidly turn to terrifying affect. Unlike psychogeography, the film is not a game but a confrontation; it is a war machine directed towards the viewer that unleashes the affect immediately prior to the act of creation. It is simply that it presents such a radical challenge that creation itself is a terrifying experience.

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9. Afterword
Creative spaces: uninhabiting the urban

Geoffrey Kantaris

The great cities have transformed the disease of the social body, which appears in chronic form in the country, into an acute one, and so made manifest its real nature and the means of curing it. Without the great cities and their forcing influence upon the popular intelligence, the working-class would be far less advanced than it is. Moreover, they have destroyed the last remnant of the patriarchal relation between working-men and employers, a result to which manufacture on a large scale has contributed by multiplying the employees dependent upon a single employer.

Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*[1]

Engels wrote his penetrating analysis of the English working class between 1842 and 1844, during his stay in Manchester. It is one of the few texts from those written by Engels and his friend Karl Marx to focus specifically on the social and economic effects of 'the great cities', but it makes up for this paucity by setting urban processes at the very heart of the wider transformations in social and economic conditions that the pair would later elaborate in terms of political economy. Or, in Engels' own words, 'as the human embryo, in its early stages, still reproduces the gill-arches of our fish-ancestors, so this book exhibits everywhere the traces of the descent of Modern Socialism'.[2] In its powerful exposé of the abject conditions of the slums engendered by the Industrial Revolution, Engels' work exposed one mode of the *spatial* disposition of class power, for, while 'poverty often dwells in hidden alleys close to the palaces of the rich … in general, a separate territory has been assigned to it, where, removed from the sight of the happier classes, it may struggle along as it can'.[3] Yet what is perhaps even more striking about the longer passage cited above, as Andy Merrifield points out in *Metromarxism*, is that it contains, in far from embryonic form, what we would now call

1 F. Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844. With preface written in 1892*, trans. by F.K. Wischnewetzky (London: Allen and Unwin, 1892), p. 122.

2 Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class*, p. x.

3 Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class*, p. 26.

G. Kantaris, 'Afterword: Creative spaces: uninhabiting the urban', in N.H.D. Geraghty and A.L. Massidda (eds.), *Creative Spaces: Urban Culture and Marginality in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2019), pp. 241–52. CC-BY-NC-ND license.

the *urban dialectic*.[4] For while the great cities have created unbearable social conditions for the urban poor, they are also the spatial cauldrons not only of a whole mode of production, but of a completely new form of creativity and potentiality: that of the industrialised proletariat, with its new culture, habits and way of thinking. For:

> all the workers employed in manufacture are won for one form or the other of resistance to capital and bourgeoisie; and all are united upon this point, that they … form a separate class, with separate interests and principles, with a separate way of looking at things in contrast with that of all property-owners; and that in this class reposes the strength and the capacity of development of the nation.[5]

In the preface to the English-language publication, in 1887, Engels admitted that his optimism concerning the inevitable revolution, 'in comparison with which the French Revolution, and the year 1794, will prove to have been child's play',[6] had been premature. Today we might say that he underestimated the power of capital to re-absorb, or 'reterritorialise', the very revolutionary tendencies it sets in motion, something which Deleuze and Guattari's re-readings of Marx (in, for example, *Anti-Oedipus*) have taught us to watch out for, even as they emphasise, along with Marx, the profound dissolvent effects of capitalism's unleashing of the productive forces. But while the term 'dialectic' has fallen out of fashion – and was one that even the great Marxist urbanist Henri Lefebvre was keen to distance himself from in his insistence on the *trialectics* of space – Engels' resolve to bring to the fore the core of human resourcefulness and creativity of the proletariat, snatched from the predatory jaws of bourgeois cruelty and the squalor of slum living, is not so distant from the proposal of the present volume, with its emphasis on the forms of *creativity* that both emerge from marginal urban spaces in Latin America and, in turn, transform those spaces.

Creativity as a term encompasses a range of more specific, and sometimes contradictory, concepts designed to locate agency not in the systems of socio-economic power and those who wield its levers, but in those populations whose relationship to power is conventionally understood in terms of exclusion, exploitation, alterity or dispossession, with 'power' representing the domain of various top-down economic agents which, more often than not in Latin America, hold the state to ransom, when they have not completely captured it. Terms (not necessarily all addressed in this volume) such as community, autonomy, self-help, empowerment, grass-roots, resourcefulness, *bricolage*, becoming-minor, nomadism, multitude, and even, somewhat mischievously, 'politics' (versus 'the police', in Bruno Bosteels' Rancièrian critique of Rancière),

4 A. Merrifield, *Metromarxism: A Marxist Tale of the City* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 41.

5 Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class*, p. 240.

6 Ibid., p. 18.

might be understood as different ways of grappling (albeit from sometimes opposed political angles) with the dilemma of the confrontation between what Jacques Rancière himself calls the 'discourse of proletarian power' and the 'discourse of its non-power'.[7] The editors, Niall H.D. Geraghty and Adriana Laura Massidda, skilfully skirt the potential dangers here by historicising the capture, in Latin America, of such discourses by state and supra-state agencies precisely as a way for the political classes to exempt themselves from the need to address social inequality in any systematic way. The resurgence of interest in John F.C. Turner's writings on self-built, bottom-up urbanisation in Peru, during the neoliberal economic climate of the 1990s, is a case in point, as the editors signal in their Introduction, and is a cautionary tale that discourses of creative autonomy and self-help can play directly into an ideological agenda that seeks to dismantle state controls in order to clear the terrain for intensified, deregulated capitalist expansion. Yet because a discourse can be captured by one or other political current does not mean that we should throw the baby out with the bathwater, and one of the real achievements of the essays in this volume is the interweaving of sociological, historical and cultural readings which seek to bring a multi-dimensional and historically informed approach to understanding the ways in which people are continually remaking the urban environment.

The urban is a complex, overlapping set of processes that involve the thorough interpenetration of material and symbolic forces, or in Lefebvre's terms, between the perceived space of spatial practice and the conceived space of spatial representation ('the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers').[8] Yet, for Lefebvre, there was always a third term, and it is in some ways the most enigmatic member of his famed triad, or as Ed Soja has it, 'trialectics' of space.[9] This was what he variously termed 'representational space', '(popular) spaces of representation' or 'lived space', and in the present context it is perhaps worth reminding ourselves of the initial gloss he gives of this in *The Production of Space*:

> *Representational spaces*: space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users', but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who describe and aspire to do no more than describe. This is the dominated – and hence passively experienced – space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects … Representational spaces … need

7 B. Bosteels, 'Rancière's leftism, or, politics and its discontents', in G. Rockhill and P. Watts (eds.), *Jacques Rancière: History, Politics, Aesthetics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 158–75, at p. 169.

8 H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by D. Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 38.

9 E.W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

> obey no rules of consistency or cohesiveness. Redolent with imaginary and symbolic elements, they have their source in history – in the history of a people as well as in the history of each individual belonging to that people … Representational space is alive: it speaks. It has an affective kernel or centre.[10]

It is no less than this domain – in its messy interpenetration with the perceived and the conceived – that forms the nucleus and challenge of the present volume, and a major dimension of what is designated by the unfolding and expanding concept of 'creative spaces' addressed across the different essays. Of course, the difficulty and danger in approaching these spaces, as Lefebvre hints, is precisely that our description of them can so easily flip over into an appropriation, a representation and hence an instrumentalisation. And this danger is only exacerbated in the context of Latin America's class-ridden cities, where a multitude of socio-cultural, economic, ethnic and racial differences form the dense topography and spatial disposition of postcolonial power and privilege. This, incidentally, is why 'representation' became such an ideological battleground in the 1980s and 1990s in Latin American cultural and 'subaltern' studies, albeit generally in a non-urban context. Lefebvre's earlier exploding and multiplication of different modalities of representation perhaps points, as do the creative spaces of this volume, to a way out of the impasse of the perceived and the conceived.

Creativity has a profoundly imaginary dimension, whether in terms of the ability to imagine another way of living, other spatial forms, or to bring forth potentialities. The Colombian urban theorist Armando Silva has done more than perhaps any other thinker from the region to open up the concept of urban 'imaginaries' across a wide range of books and research projects on the topic, starting with *Imaginarios urbanos, cultura y comunicación urbana* (*Urban Imaginaries, Culture and Urban Communication*, 1992) and most recently in *Imaginarios: el asombro social* (*Imaginaries: Social Astonishment*, 2016).[11] At the same time, Argentine anthropologist Néstor García Canclini, extending the 'imagined communities' of Benedict Anderson, was rethinking globalisation in terms of its imaginary dimensions in *La globalización imaginada* (*Imagined Globalization*, 1999), arguing that just as the citizen's relationship to the nation is profoundly imaginary (since we can never have unmediated access to all the members of a nation), so some of the most profound effects of globalisation occur in an imagined and imaginary dimension, and that some of the arenas in which it is reworked and appropriated, or resisted, occur in aesthetic practices

10 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp. 38, 39 and 41–2.

11 A. Silva Téllez, *Imaginarios urbanos: cultura y comunicación urbana en América Latina* (Santa Fe de Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores, 1992), and *Imaginarios: el asombro social* (2nd edn., Mexico City, D.F.: Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa, 2016 [2014]).

understood in the broadest sense.[12] Silva argues similarly that our relationship to urban space is mediated by imaginary *and aesthetic* processes:

> En América Latina viene tomando cuerpo una fuerte dimensión imaginaria en la manera de confrontar el poder y esto no sólo es parte del ingrediente humorístico de sus ciudadanos, sino también portador de elementos subversivos en la manera de confrontar añejas élites gobernantes … Crecen en este continente movimientos urbanos, de arte, literatura, cine, fotografía o video, junto con movimientos sociales, ecológicos, femeninos, *gay* y otras tercerías, incluso pandilleros, raperos y juveniles, que proclaman de entrada el derecho a ser ciudadanos y buscan distintas maneras de significarse como seres de ciudad. Tales movimientos y reflexiones urbanas constituyen también otra de las fuentes para que estudios sobre bases estéticas puedan tener algún eco en los mismos gestores culturales de la ciudad.[13]
>
> [In Latin America, a powerful imaginary dimension is taking shape in terms of the ways of confronting power, and this not only pertains to the citizens' sense of humour, but also carries with it subversive elements in the way in which it confronts the old governing élites … There are growing on the continent urban movements, in the realms of art, literature, cinema, photography or video, alongside social movements such as the ecological, women's, gay movements, and other forms of *thirdness*, including urban gangs, rappers and youth movements, which proclaim from the outset their right to the city/citizenship, and are looking for different ways of producing meaning as city dwellers. Such movements and urban reflections constitute also another of the sources of relevance and influence that studies that engage with aesthetics can have on the cultural administration of a city.]

The study of modern cities cannot be complete if we do not pay attention to the imaginary and aesthetic dimensions of urban life, which for Silva occur in the three broad realms of the psychic, the social and the technological.[14] They comprise such phenomena as urban phantasmagoria, including ghosts, graffiti, cognitive maps, photograph albums, informal architecture, virtual mediations, the irrationality of consumption, but also the affective flows of fear and astonishment, all of which are forms of the mental spatialisation of the city, which is to say, in Lefebvrian terms, forms of representational intervention in the dominant, bureaucratic and technocratic representations of space. Interestingly, as a fundamental dimension of the creative, the imaginary is not divorced from materiality; rather, the material world can be understood as the very form or expression of individual and collective imaginaries, for the making of the urban fabric is perhaps the very process by which the imaginary takes on the material form of the city. Silva perhaps stops short of a fully political interpretation

12 N. García Canclini, *La globalización imaginada* (Buenos Aires and Mexico City: Paidós, 1999).

13 Silva Téllez, *Imaginarios urbanos*, pp. 14–16.

14 Silva Téllez, *Imaginarios: el asombro social*, pp. 45–8.

of these 'imaginaries' along the lines of Rancière's thinking on the politics of aesthetics, or of the sensorium, as outlined by Geraghty and Massidda, and Lucy McMahon in the present volume. For Rancière, the aesthetic – what is considered beautiful or ugly, what is visible or invisible, what counts or is not counted in a given economic order or *ratio* – is a fundamentally political matter in the *polis*, given that it either confirms or disturbs a police order which aims to keep everything and everyone in its socially assigned (non-)place.[15]

And it is specifically in the *polis*, which is to say the centre of *political* power, that the contradictions of democracy – of the claims of the demos for participation, the clamour for the right to the city – are brought into sharp relief as much in the original Greek attempts to understand what might constitute 'good' and 'bad' democracy,[16] as for Latin American lettered élites enduring the gradual erosion of their traditional hold on political power in the face of the onslaught of impoverished peasant migrants who have transformed the *polis* into *megalopolis*, from Mexico City to Buenos Aires, from Bogotá to São Paulo,[17] and have thus engendered a fundamentally new spatial form. And this is perhaps one of the most crucial aspects for understanding the political import of cities as crucibles of dissensus and sites of concentration of the contradictions of a given political and economic order. If, for Aristotle, 'the best democracy is a peasant democracy, for it is precisely the one in which the demos is missing from its place', one where 'the dispersal of peasants … in distant fields and the constraint of labor prevent them from going and occupying *their* place of power',[18] then, as Engels noted, 'the great cities' do the opposite, concentrating populations, forcing rich and poor up against each other, fundamentally destabilizing the appearance (aesthetics) of power, pushing its very form towards paroxysm. Throughout the 20th century in Latin America these paroxysms led at several points, as we know, to the complete suspension of the appearance and formalities of democracy, rendering literal Rancière's non-innocent choice of a term that collapses classical etymology and modern apparatuses of discipline and power, in other words, the 'police order'.

Urban space – especially that produced in the cauldrons of the megalopolis – is thus constitutionally political and fundamentally contradictory. There is a long tradition of Marxist thought that understands urban space in terms of an accumulation of contradictions, or more precisely, in terms of the contradictions of accumulation. It starts, of course, with Marx himself, who, in the *Grundrisse* posits that capitalism's expansionary characteristics derive from its need to overcome spatial barriers that contradict its character:

15 J. Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. by J. Rose (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), pp. 72ff.

16 Aristotle as cited by Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 75.

17 See Á. Rama, *La ciudad letrada* (Montevideo: Comisión Uruguaya pro Fundación Internacional, 1984).

18 Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 75.

> From the fact that capital posits every [spatial] limit as a barrier and hence gets ideally beyond it, it does not by any means follow that it has really overcome it, and, since every such barrier contradicts its character, its production moves in contradictions which are constantly overcome but just as constantly posited. Furthermore, the universality towards which it irresistibly strives encounters barriers in its own nature.[19]

The need to maximise profit by minimising turnover and transportation time, as David Harvey explains in *The Condition of Postmodernity*, leads to twin processes of agglomeration and expansion.[20] Agglomeration occurs to bring the places of production, and the labour needed for it, into closer proximity with the places of consumption, while expansion occurs, as Marx explains, in an attempt to overcome the internal contradictions that arise from this very process of agglomeration, which present very real spatial barriers to the drive to find new sources for raw materials, and new markets to maintain demand. These processes are clearly not uniquely capitalist, but they reach an intensity and express their internal contradictions through bouts of crisis-ridden expansion and periodic destruction of accumulated surplus value materialised in the urban fabric much more powerfully under technology-driven capitalism than under any previous economic system. While in great metropolitan centres, the contradictions can be masked by the inflow of profits, 'peripheral' cities lie at the crossroads of these processes, magnifying the spatial contradictions.

For urban theorist AbdouMaliq Simone, the problems and contradictions of capitalist accumulation are almost always 'displaced onto the poor', and the poor, in every society, constitute the marginal, even when they are the majority.[21] Margins and peripheries are of course entirely relative terms that depend on overlapping spatial distributions of power relations on a multitude of different scales, for example, city, nation, region or globe, and therefore pose theoretical problems of definition. Yet the periphery is often a space where the contradictions of a given system, concealed beneath powerful representational forces in the symbolic centres of geopolitical power, bubble up to the surface and can no longer be disavowed. As in the Manchester of the 1840s, where the slums come to reveal the ferocious contradictions of an entire economic system, and, *at the same time*, point to the possibilities for its transcendence, so in the peripheral spaces of Latin America's burgeoning mega-cities today (São Paulo, Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Rio, Lima, Bogotá) may be found, as in many cities of the global south, both the extreme contradictions of a global economic system still deeply embedded in empire, and the creative spaces from

19 K. Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (rough draft)*, trans. by M. Nicolaus (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993 [1858]), p. 410.

20 D. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), pp. 229ff.

21 A.M. Simone, *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar: Movements at the Crossroads* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), p. 26.

which alternatives are being imagined, in practical and material terms, every day out of need, improvisation, hybridisation and regeneration:

> the periphery is never really brought fully under the auspices of the logic and development trajectories that characterize a center, and therefore embodies an instability that is always potentially destabilizing of that center. This negative potentiality then requires supplemental forms of engagement that would never be applied to non-peripheral parts of the nation or metropolis … It forces the state to admit to the necessity of exceeding its own 'core' values and technologies in order to rein it in, as perhaps the periphery's only concrete indication of its relevance. The periphery is also a buffer, a space in-between the nation or city and something else that is formally more foreign, more divergent than the city or nation for which it acts as a periphery … Thus the periphery can become a hybrid space – a space where different ways of doing things, of thinking about and living urban life, can come together. [22]

It may be the case that Lefebvre's representational spaces, and the creative spaces of the present volume, are always to some extent marginal or peripheral to the politico-economic nexus that constitutes the contemporary capitalist city in Latin America, itself constituted as a periphery in relation to the more powerful northern economies. Yet this does not mean that we should fall into the trap of romanticising popular creativity, assigning it an *a priori* subversive content.

This is a point that Paul Merchant raises in the present volume, with the cinematic approaches to construction in the marginal urban spaces of Santiago that he analyses seeming to force an antinomy, or non-productive opposition between, on the one hand, the vitalist interpretation of the 'multitude' romanced in Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt's famed trilogy, and endowed somewhat more cautiously with amphibian political agency by Paulo Virno, and the political impotence of an avant-garde negativity that can only clutch at the straws of critique, denouncing the inevitable complicity of all aesthetic modes with the demands of a protean capitalism that co-opts and commodifies performance art as easily as it did Dadaist shock or surrealist evasion tactics. Like all antinomies, both propositions are true at the same time, but for them both to be true, they must both be false. As Rancière suggests, 'multitude' presupposes the *a priori* existence of the very commons that it wants to bring into being, expressing the same awe at the 'revolutionary' productive forces unleashed by capital/empire as did Marx and Engels in the famous passage form the *Communist Manifesto* that proclaims, 'all that is solid melts into air'. For the multitudes *already* control the power of empire, they just do not know it yet:

> 'Multitudes' is the name for [a] power of superabundant being identified with the essence of the community, one which, by virtue of its superabundance, is endowed with the burden of blowing apart all barriers

22 Simone, *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar*, pp. 40–1.

> and of accomplishing itself in the form of a perceptible community. Dismissing the negativity of political subjects means that the power of affirmation must become a power of disruption or, in other words, the ultimate content lodged inside every state of domination charged with overcoming all separation … Exulting nomadic movements that, allegedly, 'overflow and break the limits of measure' and create 'new spaces', spaces described 'by inhabitual topologies, by rhizomes that are subterranean and impossible to contain' [Hardt and Negri, *Empire*], enacts, in an enthusiastic mode, the same operation that was performed in a compassionate mode by a style of photography, exhibited under the title of *Exiles*, which placed Brazilian peasants looking for work in the city alongside inhabitants of refugee camps fleeing the genocide in Rwanda. The nomadic movements invoked as evidence of the explosive power of the multitudes are in essence the movements of populations that have been forced to flee the violence of nation-states and the dire misery into which these failed states had dragged them.[23]

Perhaps a different tack can save us from the fruitless antinomy. Maybe we do not need to assign teleological or redemptive political force to the creative spaces of the margins, no matter how tempting it is for intellectuals to appeal to an agent that might atone for the primary schism between intellectual and manual labour on which all intellectual activity (whether 'organic' or not) is predicated. AbdouMaliq Simone has been patiently elaborating a series of 'complex' urban concepts which resist easy, or Messianic, political inscriptions, but which nevertheless attend in detail to the ways in which people can construct partial, improvised, sometimes transformative, worlds from the ruins of cities plundered by the neoliberal storm. By way of conclusion I want to look briefly at two of his concepts, since they seem to me to speak to some of the debates gathered in the present volume. The first is his concept of 'people as infrastructure', elaborated in an article on urban life in Johannesburg, published in 2004. And the second is the notion of the 'uninhabitable' which is the subject of a forthcoming book on which Simone gave a series of lectures in Cambridge in late 2017 entitled 'The Uninhabitable: Afterlives of the Global South'.[24]

'People as Infrastructure', in the words of Simone, 'extends the notion of infrastructure directly to people's activities in the city'. He continues:

> African cities are characterized by incessantly flexible, mobile, and provisional intersections of residents that operate without clearly delineated notions of how the city is to be inhabited and used. These intersections, particularly in the last two decades, have depended on the

23 J. Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, trans. and ed. by S. Corcoran (London: Continuum, 2010), pp. 95 & 89.

24 A.M. Simone, 'The uninhabitable: afterlives of the urban south' (four lectures), Smuts Memorial Lecture Series, October–November 2017, University of Cambridge, available at www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/gallery/video/abdoumaliq-simone-ensembles-of-the-uninhabitable (accessed 14 June 2018).

> ability of residents to engage complex combinations of objects, spaces, persons, and practices. These conjunctions become an infrastructure – a platform providing for and reproducing life in the city.[25]

In somewhat Lefebvrian fashion, this concept abolishes a distinction between the material and human scenes of the production of urban space. What happens when the material, infrastructural support for life-in-common is subtracted, degraded or deprecated, either as the result of war, or the withdrawal of national or global capital from spaces that are, for the time being, deemed non-productive? In urban spaces reduced to the bare minimum of material support, what remains, not as the 'superstructure' nor as the 'base structure', but as the very fleshy 'infrastructure' of a form of bare life, are, ultimately, the forms and gestures of human interdependency and collaboration, the processes of caring, making and remaking, which are the ultimate material, creative resources underpinning urban space, or rather, which *are* urban space. This concept is not a romantic one, nor one that can be turned into a figure of a political ontology. But:

> although they bring little to the table of prospective collaboration and participate in few of the mediating structures that deter or determine how individuals interact with others, this seemingly minimalist offering – bare life – is somehow redeemed. It is allowed innumerable possibilities of combination and interchange that preclude any definitive judgment of efficacy or impossibility. [26]

The concept, or anti-concept, of the 'uninhabitable' which I have shamelessly plundered for my title, albeit rendered as a verb, takes to an even more radical level this de-ontologizing of marginal urban space and of the activities of its inhabitants, this refusal to construct a proxy agent for *our* political dreams (if there is a 'we' at all). In the 'long night of sociality', in the uninhabitable spaces of poverty on which humanity has constructed its world, there is, pointedly, 'a community with nothing in common'.[27] For the world that has constructed its humanity by stripping others of theirs, 'can neither be redeemed by the practices of those who have endured without [humanity], for they offer only the hastening of the end they have already experienced, nor can it remake itself without those very practices'. What remains, what emerges from this political conundrum – the conundrum of 'not being able to turn to those who have been the subjects of abjection', but also of not being able 'to disavow their possibility of 'inheriting the earth'' – are 'amalgamations of rogue caring, that cacophony of attentions, generosity and discipline willing to assume responsibility without

25 A. M. Simone, 'People as infrastructure: intersecting fragments in Johannesburg', *Public* Culture, 16 (3) (2004): 407–29, at pp. 407–8.

26 Simone, 'People as infrastructure', p. 428.

27 Simone, 'The uninhabitable'.

reason, sidestepping both the reproduction and inversions of the weak and the strong'.[28]

Maybe, then, we can only hope to approach the creativity of the marginal spaces of the urban south, of the lives that move and combine and persist within those spaces, if we refuse to inscribe them in our political dreams of the redeemable community. For that may be the only basis on which we can honestly engage in, or campaign for, 'a *refusal of inhabitation* in its present terms'.

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28 Ibid.

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Index

74m2 (film), *see* Castillo, Paola, and Tiziana Panizza

Aburto, Álvaro, 36; *see also* architecture
Adorno, Theodor, 87
Adriazola, Carolina, and José Luis Sepúlveda, *Mitómana*, 15, 20, 22, 85–103
affect, 91n30, 229, 244, 245
  and war machine (Deleuze and Guattari), 203, 229–34
  see also Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Félix
Agencia de Bienes (State Property Agency, ABSE), 163–5
Agüero, Ignacio, *Aquí se construye*, 85–6
Alcoholics Anonymous, 230–1
Alemán, Miguel, 36–8, 40
Alemanismo, *see* Alemán, Miguel
Alliance for Progress, 16, 111, 123–4; *see also* Cold War; Peace Corps
Álvarez Bravo, Manuel, 45
anarchism, 140–1, 142n55, 149, 151
  anarchosocialism, 141
  anarcho-syndicalism, 134
  see also Black Bloc; Landless Workers' Movement (MST); Mídia NINJA
Anderson, Benedict, 244
animism, 231–2
  see also affect; becoming-minor; Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Félix; Pentecostalism; smooth and striated space
Aquí se construye (film), *see* Agüero, Ignacio
Aravena, Alejandro, 3, 13–15, 92, 110, 129
architecture
  and Argentine dictatorship, 210–11
  and creativity, 1, 93
  and development, 166, 174, 176
  as discipline 3–4, 114
  functionalism, 31, 34–8, 41, 45, 48, 50
  and history, 49–50
  informal, 4, 12, 110, 187, 191, 245
  and interstices, 64, 65
  in literature and cinema, 92, 95–6
  modernism, 10, 13, 20, 33–4, 37–9, 45–8, 98
  and participation 3, 12–15, 92, 110
  and photography, 33, 43, 45–7, 49–50, 191
  postmodern, 209
  and power, 202, 210–11
  and ruins, 49–50, 201
  and social reform/control in post-revolutionary Mexico, 34, 36, 37–40, 43, 45–7, 50, 215
  and striated space, 215–16
  vision of, 42

see also art and architecture exhibitions; Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM); housing; Pritzker Prize
Arguedas, José María, *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo*, 4–5
Aristotle, 246; *see also* Democracy
art brut, 223
art and architecture exhibitions, 3, 13–15, 20, 23, 183–200; *see also* Aravena, Alejandro; Favelagrafia; Venice Architecture Biennale; Travessias
A Voz do Morro (journal), 189

Badiou, Alain, 18–19, 21; *see also* set theory
barriadas, 12, 92; *see also* informal settlements; informality (concept); shantytowns
Barthes, Roland, 41–2
Beasley-Murray, Jon, 85, 88–9, 99, 101; *see also* multitude
becoming-minor (Deleuze and Guattari), 17–22, 229, 242; *see also* Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Félix
Beller, Jonathan, 87
Benjamin, Walter, 50
Berni, Antonio, *Juanito Laguna*, 4
biopolitics, 35–6; *see also* Foucault, Michel
Black Bloc, 142, 144, 146, 149; *see also* anarchism
BLOCK (journal), 202
Brighenti, Andrea Mubi, 48, 50, 64
Buenos Aires (film), *see* Kohon, David
Buñuel, Luis, *La ilusión viaja en tranvía*, 45
    Los olvidados, 4, 45
Burgess, Rod, 12
Butler, Judith, 138
Cacciatore, Osvaldo, 207, 210–11
Caldeira, Teresa, 8–9; *see also* marginality; Perlman, Janice; Wacquant, Loïc
callampas, 85, 98; *see also* informal settlements; informality (concept); Sánchez, Rafael; Shantytowns
Las callampas (film), *see* Sánchez, Rafael
Camacho, Manuel Ávila, 36–7, 42
CAMTRA (NGO), 137, 142, 147n78
capitalism, and animism, 232
    and architecture, 202
    capture and co-optation by, 12–13, 242–3, 248
    and desire, 203, 212, 221–2
    and fetishisation, 16–17
    and industrialisation, 37, 40, 218, 221, 242
    and land speculation, 76
    and marginalisation 7, 135–6, 246–8
    and multitude, 87–9, 93, 248–9
    natural capital, 66
    and slavery, 135–6
    and smooth and striated space, 220, 222
    spatial limits of, 246
    and trade unions, 122
    and urban policy, 10–11, 79, 165, 208–9, 211, 218–19
    see also credit (finance); dependency theory; economic development; Engels, Friedrich; globalisation; Marx, Karl; Marxism; neoliberalism; post-neoliberalism
Cárdenas, Lázaro, 36
Cardoso, Fernando, 7; *see also* dependency theory

cartoneros, 217–18
Castillo, Paola, and Tiziana Panizza, *74m2*, 15, 92–3
Castells, Manuel, 7; *see also* dependency theory
centre-periphery, and global capitalism, 247–8
    and knowledge production, 17, 19
    and marginality, 2, 9–10, 156, 158n6, 159, 186–7
    and Pentecostalism, 231–2
    questioning of, 2–3, 9–10, 19, 101, 184, 187, 196, 224
    and stigmatisation, 191
    urban periphery, 96, 98, 115, 159, 201, 224
    and urban projects, 206
    and violence, 108
    and work, 6, 85–6
    see also marginality
Chaves, Marcos, 193
Chicago School of Sociology, 6; *see also* Lewis, Oscar; marginality; marginality theory; Park, Robert; Redfield, Robert
Cidade de Deus (Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund), 186
Ciudad Deportiva de la Boca (Sport City of La Boca), 201, 204, 206
clientelism, 108, 113–14
Cold War, 12–13, 111; *see also* Alliance for Progress; Peace Corps
colonialism, 2, 6, 18, 49, 135; *see also* decolonialism; post-colonialism
Comuna 8 (Buenos Aires), 20, 23, 155–80
community, immigrant, 228
    lack of, 94–5
    marginal urban, 31, 33
    and multitude, 94, 248–51
    and participation, 12, 93
    and power, 242
    projects and development, 4, 22, 65, 98, 166, 172–4, 190–2
    and social struggle, 145–6
    see also Community Action Council; multitude; participation
Community Action Council, 107–32; *see also* community; politics
Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM), 33–4, 37; *see also* architecture
Contreras, Carlos, 35, 40
Corporación Antiguo Puerto Madero Sociedad Anónima (Antiguo Puerto Madero Corporation, CAPMSA), 163–6, 208–9, 212, 218, 221
Corporación Buenos Aires Sur Sociedad del Estado (South Buenos Aires State Society Corporation, CBASSE), 163–6
crime, 141, 151, 183, 185–6
criminality, *see* crime
criminalisation, *see* crime
creativity, and activism, 133–5, 137, 149, 152
    and affective power signs, 229–30, 234
    and capitalism, 10, 134, 165, 247–8
    and community development, 109, 113, 128–9
    and deception, 86, 94
    and desire, 203, 211
    and imaginaries, 244–5
    in informal settlements, 183
    and international knowledge exchange, 17, 37
    and interstices, 57, 66, 205
    and marginality, 2, 4–5, 10, 22, 23, 88, 145, 151

and multitude, 99
and participation, 12, 13, 15, 92–3, 95, 128–9, 243
and people as infrastructure, 249–50
and planning, 15–16, 155, 162, 165, 166, 174–6
theoretical conceptions of, 1, 19, 21, 135–7, 155n1, 156n5, 201, 242
and the uninhabitable, 250–1
see also marginality
credit (finance), 10–11, 128, 140, 168, 169–70; *see also* capitalism; economic development; World Bank

Debord, Guy, and the Situationists, 203, 226–8
decentralisation, 156–7, 160–1
De Certeau, Michel, 41–3, 218; *see also* walking
decolonialism, 17–18, 148; *see also* colonialism; Mignolo, Walter; post-colonialism
Deleuze, Gilles, 21
and Félix Guattari, 19–20, 21, 23, 202–3, 211–42
see also affect; becoming-minor; desiring-production; Guattari, Félix; nomads; schizophrenia; smooth and striated space; war machine
Demare, Lucas, *Detrás de un largo muro*, 4
democracy, 111–12, 138, 209, 211, 246; *see also* Aristotle; dictatorship; Cold War
dependency theory, 7, 11; *see also* Cardoso, Fernando; Castells, Manuel; Dussel, Enrique; Faletto, Enzo; Gutiérrez, Gustavo
dérive, *see* Debord, Guy, and the Situationists
Descartes, René, 96
desiring-production (Deleuze and Guattari), 23, 202–3, 205, 211–14, 216, 218, 221–2; *see also* Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Félix
De Soto, Hernando, 10–11, 129, 134n6
détournement, *see* Debord, Guy, and the Situationists
Detrás de un largo muro (film), *see* Demare, Lucas
dictatorship
in Argentina 206–7, 209–13, 216, 217, 218, 220–2
in Brazil, 144
in Chile, 76
in Mexico, 33, 35, 50
see also democracy; post-dictatorship
Díaz, Porfirio, 33–5, 50; *see also* dictatorship
Diniz, Ratão, *see* Imagens do Povo
disability, 23, 202, 225; *see also* divine healing
disciplinary society (Foucault), 20–1, 34–9, 210, 220–1, 226, 246
critique of, 32, 41, 50
see also biopolitics; Foucault, Michel
divine healing, 230–3
drugs, 9, 23, 190, 223, 230
Dussel, Enrique, 7; *see also* dependency theory

economic development
and Alliance for Progress, 111–12
comparison of policy instruments, 174–7

Economic Districts (Buenos Aires), 168–70, 175–6
and industrialisation, 33, 36–7, 111, 218
and Inter-American Development Bank, 156n5
and participation, 129, 159
(post)neoliberal, 218–19
and public-private partnership, 163–6, 175, 208–9
see also capitalism; credit (finance); World Bank
economics and urban policy, 10–12, 21, 64, 243
ecology
and interstice, 57, 61, 66, 78
ecological movement, 245
ecological reserve, 74–5, 203, 208, 216–17
see also ecotone
ecotone, 66
Egyptian Revolution, 137, 138, 147n79
Eliash, Elisa, *Mami te amo*, 98–9
El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo (novel), *see* Arguedas, José María
empowerment
and community development, 108, 118
limits of, 189, 191, 219, 242
popular, 4
and power signs, 230, 231, 233–4
of the state, 165, 219
see also marginality; power
Engels, Friedrich, 241–2, 246
and Karl Marx, 136, 248
see also capitalism; Marx, Karl; Marxism
Escuela Popular de Cine (People's Film School), *see* Adriazola, Carolina
eugenics, 36; *see also* race; slavery
exorcism, 231–2

Faletto, Enzo, 7; *see also* dependency theory
Fanon, Frantz, 5, 135–6, 148
favelas, 2
and activism, 133
and art, 4, 15, 23, 189–98
commercialisation of, 16, 186
Favela Bairro, 165
favela chic, 16, 186
favela pacification, 186, 190, 192
idealised, 185
and marginality, 8–9, 186–7
and speed, 216
and stigmatisation, 6, 183, 185–9
and violence, 150, 183, 185–6
see also informal settlements; informality (concept); shantytowns
Favelagrafia, 184, 189–93, 196
Favela Rising (Jeff Zimbalist and Matt Mochary), 186
Fernández de Kirchner, Cristina, 218–19, 221
Ferrocarriles Nacionales de México, 31
Festival de Cine Social y Antisocial (Festival of Social and Antisocial Cinema), *see* Adriazola, Carolina, and José Luis Sepúlveda
formless politics, 21, 100–1; *see also* politics; unruly politics
Foucault, Michel, 1–2, 20–1, 35–6, 39, 44, 221, 226; *see also* biopolitics; disciplinary society
Fragmentation (urban), 20, 205
and inbetween, 20, 56, 61–2, 74
and movement (De Certeau), 42–3
overcoming, 166
positively utilising, 209

and sprawl, 56, 58–9, 67–9
see also interstitial space
functionalism, *see* architecture

Galpão Bela Maré (Rio de Janeiro), 184, 193
Gandy, Mathew, 61, 63
ganhadores (porters), 134n4, 139–40, 145, 146, 148, 150
García Canclini, Néstor, 244–5
García, Héctor, 45
Gavaldón, Roberto, 31, 41, 42
Germani, Gino, 6–7; *see also* marginality theory
globalisation, 7, 165, 212, 219, 244–5, 247, 250; *see also* capitalism; neoliberalism; post-neoliberalism
Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires (GCBA), 156, 158, 160–3, 166–8, 170, 173, 177
Gorelik, Adrián, 18, 202
graffiti, 13–15, 245
Gramsci, Antonio, 135
Gropius, Walter, 37; *see also* architecture; Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM)
Guattari, Félix, 226, 229–30, 232–3
and Gilles Deleuze, 19–20, 21, 23, 202–3, 211–42
see also affect; animism; becoming-minor; Deleuze, Gilles; desiring-production; nomads; schizophrenia; smooth and striated space; war machine
Gutiérrez, Gustavo, 7; *see also* dependency theory

Habitat Conference (United Nations), 3n5, 12–13
Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri, 88–9, 91n30, 248–9; *see also* multitude
Harvey, David, 220, 247
Hernández, Felipe, 2, 9, 213–14
Hopenhayn, Martín, 87, 92–4, 96, 100–1
Horkheimer, Max, 87
Hountondji, Paulin, 17
housing
in 19th century, 39
campaigns for, 109, 122–3, 141, 146, 175
as division, 187
informal, 2–3, 5–6, 47, 64, 65, 101, 114, 208
and labour in film, 85, 87, 90–5, 95–8
modernist, 11, 31, 34–9, 203, 212–13, 215, 219
and participation, 12–13, 15
and planning, 57, 69, 71, 75, 176
projects, 107, 114, 159, 163, 170–1, 174–6
self-built, 12–13, 116, 128
shortages, 3, 13, 55, 78, 107, 115
upgrade, 128–9, 172–6
as verb, 20
see also architecture; Habitat Conference; informal settlements; shantytowns; slums

ideology, 16, 127, 212
Illia, Arturo, 206, 207, 208, 211
La ilusión viaja en tranvía (film), *see* Buñuel, Luis
Imagens do Povo (photography collective), 189n25, 193, 195
imaginaries, 100, 111, 149, 183–8, 192, 196–8, 203, 244–6

imagined communities (Anderson), 244–5
in-between, 19–21, 60, 62, 74, 248; *see also* interstitial space
industrialisation
in Argentina, 212, 218, 221
and dependency theory, 7
and development, 111
and disciplinary society, 20–1, 226
in Mexico, 33, 36–7, 40, 46, 50
and modernisation theory, 6
and modernist architecture, 33–4
see also capitalism; Industrial Revolution
Industrial Revolution, 241–2
informal employment, 95, 141, 162, 174, 217
informal settlements, 203
and architecture, 245
and danger, 16, 38
and desire, 214, 221, 222
compared with formal, 10, 23, 109, 166, 222
and formalisation, 10–11, 129, 207
rehousing of, 85, 97
historic expansion of, 5–6, 97, 114–16, 218
improvements to, 118, 129, 172, 174
and interstitial space, 47–8, 65–6, 73–5
and marginality, 2–3, 9–10
and nomads, 41
and planning, 207, 209, 214
as solution, 110, 129
see also barriadas; callampas; favelas; pueblos jóvenes; shantytowns; slums; villas miseria
informality (concept), 2–3, 10, 16, 136, 138, 213–14
infrastructure
and community action councils, 117, 118
destruction of, 33
green, 61, 66, 67
and interstices, 59–62, 67, 68, 71, 75–6
lack of, 145, 148
maintenance of, 74, 148
and planning, 57, 58, 69, 70, 73, 168–9, 174
projects, 11, 37, 112, 117
rural, 111
see also people as infrastructure
Instituto de Crédito Territorial, 107, 128
Instituto de Vivienda de la Ciudad (the City Housing Institute, IVC), 170, 174
Interama (Parque de la Ciudad), 201, 203, 205–7, 209, 211, 219, 221
interstitial space
corporeal definition, 48, 79
and ecology, 57, 61, 66, 75, 78
between informal and formal positions, 10, 47–8, 205
inhabited, 11, 44, 48, 55, 64–6, 69, 215, 218
and modernist housing, 11, 22, 47–8
and planning, 20, 22, 55–79
and ruins, 50
see also in-between; space
interstice, *see* interstitial space

Juanito Laguna (artworks), *see* Berni, Antonio

Kellett, Peter, 213–14
Kennedy, John F., 111; *see also* Alliance for Progress; Cold War; Peace Corps

Kirchner, Néstor, 219, 221
Kohon, David, *Buenos Aires*, 6, 7

Lamborghini, Leónidas, 'Villas', 4
Landless Workers' Movement (MST), 142, 143; *see also* anarchism
Lanusse, General Alejandro Agustín, 206–7
Lebret, Louis-Joseph, 111
Le Corbusier, 33–5, 37, 38, 45, 46, 48 *see also* architecture; Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM)
Lefebvre, Henri, 1, 21, 217–18, 242, 243, 244, 248
Legarreta, Juan, 36; *see also* architecture
Lewis, Oscar, 6; *see also* Chicago School of Sociology
Lleras Camargo, Alberto, 111
Leyes de Indias, 228
López, Nacho, 45
López Mateos, Adolfo, 39–40

Macri, Mauricio, 219
Macumba, *see* possession cults
Madlingozi, Tshepo, 135
Maldita ciudad (film), *see* Rodríguez, Ismael
Mami te amo (film), *see* Eliash, Elisa
marginality
  and capitalism, 10–11, 64, 69–71, 135–6, 142, 155, 165–6, 211, 221–2, 248
  and community organisation, 22, 107–30
  and creativity, 2, 4–5, 10–11, 22, 23, 66, 88, 92, 145, 151, 155, 229, 230, 234, 242, 247–51
  critique and questioning of, 7–9, 22, 86–8, 101, 145–52, 186–7
  in cultural history, 4
  definition of, 1–2, 15, 21–2, 57, 157–9, 162–3
  and desire, 23, 203
  and disability, 23, 201–3, 224–5
  and duplicity, 94–5
  and ecology, 61, 66–7
  and empowerment, 189, 191, 229, 230, 231, 233–4
  and inbetween, 10, 19–20, 22, 55–79
  and integration, 155–6, 157–60, 165–6
  and interdisciplinarity, 3–4
  and international knowledge production, 17–22
  and labour, 87, 93–4, 141, 249
  in Latin American history, 2, 5, 22–3
  and movement, 85, 224
  and modernisation, 6–7, 9–11, 13, 15, 20, 22, 31–50
  and multitude, 101
  and participation, 10–11, 15–16, 21, 92, 109–11, 189, 191, 194–5
  and photography, 31–50
  and planning, 15–16, 20, 22–3, 55–79, 155–77
  and political action, 88, 96, 133–52, 228, 249–51
  and power, 1–2, 6, 9, 18, 21, 134–5, 138, 147–51, 202, 211, 229, 230, 231, 233–4, 247
  and race, 5–6, 135, 139–40, 146, 148, 149–50, 194
  and the state, 15–17, 22–3, 31–50, 55–79, 92, 107–30,

133–52, 155–77, 202–3, 211, 222–3, 225
and stigmatisation, 4, 5, 15, 156, 186–7, 188, 224–5
theoretical discussions of, 1–2, 5–10, 17–22, 133–9, 145–52, 242, 247–51
and visibility, 32, 45–7, 188–9
see also Caldeira, Teresa; centre-periphery; Chicago School of Sociology; marginality theory; Perlman, Janice; Wacquant, Loïc
marginality theory, 6–8; *see also* Germani, Gino; Matos Mar, José; Pearse, Andrew
Martínez de Hoz, José Alfredo, 220
Marx, Karl, 89–90, 93–4, 135–6, 241–2, 246–7
and Friedrich Engels, 136, 248
see also capitalism; Engels, Friedrich; Marxism
Marxism, 7, 12, 87–90, 93–4, 127, 135–6, 241–2, 246–8; *see also* capitalism; Engels, Friedrich; Marx, Karl
Massey, Doreen, 220
Matos Mar, José, 6; *see also* marginality theory
McGuirk, Justin, 92
megalopolis, 246
Menem, Carlos Saúl, 208, 218–19, 221
Merrifield, Andy, 241–2
Mexican Revolution, 33–4, 38, 40–1
Mídia NINJA, 142, 142n55, 151; *see also* anarchism
Mignolo, Walter, 17–18
Mitómana (film), *see* Adriazola, Carolina; José Luis Sepúlveda
modernisation theory, *see* marginality theory
La multitud (film), *see* Oesterheld, Martín
multitude
and contemporary Chile, 99
and cynicism, 93
interstitial character, 88, 101
in movement/and smooth space, 215, 216–18, 222
and power, 242
and processes of production, 16, 96
and radical politics, 22, 86
theoretical discussion of, 85–91, 101, 217, 248–9
see also Beasley-Murray, Jon; Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri; Virno, Paolo
Muniz, Vik, 193
Museu de Arte Moderna (Rio de Janeiro), 184, 189
The Myth of Marginality (book), *see* Perlman, Janice

National Front (Colombia), 108–9, 111, 122, 124, 128–30
Negri, Antonio, *see* Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri
neodesarrollismo, *see* post-neoliberalism
neoliberalism
and cinema, 86, 101
and marginality, 8, 249
and multitude, 16, 88–9
and participation, 11–12, 21, 134, 243
and space, 20, 75, 165, 209, 220–1
and state policy, 142, 186, 208–9, 218–21
see also capitalism; globalisation; post-neoliberalism
neo-Pentecostalism, 232; *see also* Pentecostalism

Neto, Ernesto, 193
nomads, 20, 41, 44, 223, 228, 242
249
and smooth space 215–18, 222
and war machine, 223, 225–6
normalisation, 21, 97–8, 99

Observatório de Favelas (research institute), 189n25, 193–4, 196
Oesterheld, Martín, *La multitud*, 23, 201–23, 224, 227
O'Gorman, Juan, 36–8; *see also* architecture
Oiticica, Hélio, 4
Los olvidados, *see* Buñuel, Luis
Onganía, General Juan Carlos, 206, 210
Organization of American States, 12, 111
Ortega, Luis, *Dromómanos*, 17, 20, 23, 201, 203, 223–34

Pani, Mario
and architecture, 37–40, 46, 49
documented by Juan Rulfo, 11, 31–2, 44, 46, 47, 49, 50
documented by Roberto Gavaldón, 31, 41
and Ismael Rodríguez, 45
see also architecture
Panizza, Tiziana, *see* Castillo, Paola, and Tiziana Panizza
panopticon, 39, 44, 50, 221
Park, Robert, 6; *see also* Chicago School of Sociology
Parque Almirante Brown project, 163, 207, 208, 211
participation
in architecture and planning, 10, 12–15, 16, 17, 92, 160
in art, 189
in community development, 113
in politics, 19, 111–12, 113, 137, 148, 246
see also community
Partido Revolucionario Institucional, 40
Peace Corps, 16, 123–5, 129; *see also* Alliance for Progress; Cold War
Pearse, Andrew, 6; *see also* marginality theory
Pentecostalism, 231–3
people as infrastructure (Simone), 249–50; *see also* Simone, AbdouMaliq
periphery, *see* centre-periphery
Perlman, Janice, 8–9, 187; *see also* marginality
Perón, Juan Domingo, 228
photography
and artistic inclusion, 190–2, 193, 195
and interior space, 95–6
and Juan Rulfo, 11, 15, 22, 31–3, 41–50, 215
and multitude, 249
and relation to urban space, 245
and Venice Biennale, 13
see also Favelagrafia; Imaginaries; Imagens do Povo; Travessias
planning, 15, 20, 22, 23, 55–84, 155–80
and aerial photography, 42
agencies and policy instruments, 160, 166, 172, 174–7
in Cartagena under the National Front, 115
in the colonial era, 39n19, 228
and other disciplines, 3–4
discursive justifications for, 156, 174–7, 211
history in Buenos Aires, 207, 209, 211
and informality, 10, 165
and interstitial space, 63–7

and interstitial space in Santiago de Chile, 67–78
and participation, 12
in post-revolutionary Mexico, 33–5, 36, 42
Process-Project Management, 172
unintended outcomes of, 55, 57
and urban sprawl, 57–63
see also state
Plan Urbano Ambiental (Urban Environmental Plan for Buenos Aires, PUA), 158–60, 161
Plano nacional setorial de museus 2010/2020, 188
Politics
and Alliance for Progress/Peace Corps, 16, 111, 123–4, 129
of architecture and urban projects, 34–5, 202, 208, 211, 212, 214, 218–19
and art, 188, 197
clientelism, political brokers and bargaining, 108–9, 113–14, 122
Colombian political history, 108–9, 110–11
and Community Action Councils, 107–32
decentralisation, 156, 160–1
and dependency theory, 7
depoliticisation, 109
and desire, 206, 214
and filmmaking, 86, 88–90, 96–9
and informality, 2, 5–6, 10, 109, 115, 183, 186
and interstitial space, 48, 55, 59, 64–7, 71–8
in Juan Rulfo, 33, 40–1, 45–7, 50
and marginality, 5–6, 7, 10, 133–8, 145–52, 187
and multitude, 22, 86, 88–90, 94, 96, 99–100, 217–18
party politics, 40, 108–11, 120–3, 136–7, 142–3, 228
and Pentecostalism, 231
political administration and management, 15–16, 155–77
political struggles in Brazil (activism), 133–4, 139–52
political subjects and subjectivities, 1, 11, 87–8, 114
politicians, 33, 68, 109, 120–3, 127, 129, 228
and postdictatorship, 94, 218–19, 220–1
in post-revolutionary Mexico, 33–6
and protest, 4, 16, 22, 99, 107–9, 126–7, 133–52, 228
revolutionary, 87–8, 90, 124–8, 129, 133, 146, 242, 248
and ruins, 50
theoretical discussion of, 19, 21, 100–1, 135–8, 216, 241–3, 245–51
and violence, 108, 110, 142, 149, 150
see also biopolitics; clientelism; democracy; dictatorship; Egyptian Revolution; formless politics; Mexican Revolution; multitude; post-neoliberalism; power; protest movements; social movements; state; unruly politics
Porfiriato, *see* Díaz, Porfirio
possession cults (Brazil), 231, 232
post-colonialism, 2, 17–18, 244; *see also* colonialism; decolonialism
post-neoliberalism, 219

post-dictatorship, 89, 211–13; *see also* dictatorship
poverty
  and accelerated urbanisation, 3
  and creativity, 11, 95
  and dependency theory, 7
  in informal areas, 3, 183, 185, 208
  and marginality, 23, 194, 241, 250
  and neoliberalism, 11
  origins in Colombia, 111
  overcoming, 109
  and urban sprawl, 67, 69
power
  and affect, 229
  and alliances, 134–5
  and architecture, 202, 211
  biopower, 89, 100
  contesting, 151
  colonial, 18, 248
  consumption, 75
  and desire, 203, 205–6, 212, 222
  and difference, 5, 19
  differentials of, 147
  and disciplinary society, 35, 246
  and duplicity, 94
  and interstitial space, 48, 62
  in knowledge production, 18–19
  and party politics, 108, 110, 120, 222
  private, 15, 92
  and race, 148
  relations, 1–2, 9, 18–19, 21, 189, 194, 247
  and rhizomes, 217
  spiritual power, 231, 233
  state and supra-state, 16, 37, 92, 99, 108, 161, 175, 211–13
  structures of, 148, 149, 218
  theoretical conceptions of, 1–2, 18–19, 21, 138, 212–13, 241–9
  see also affect; biopolitics; desiring-production; Foucault, Michel; Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Félix; politics; state
power signs (Guattari), 6, 230, 232–3; *see also* Guattari, Félix
Pradilla, Emilio, 12
Pritzker Prize, 3, 92
Proceso de Reorganización Nacional (1976–83), 207, 208, 212
Process-Project Management, 172
protest movements, 4, 16, 22, 126–7, 133–52, 228; *see also* social movements
psychoanalysis, 225–6
psychogeography, 203, 227, 234; *see also* Debord, Guy, and the Situationists
pueblos jóvenes, 2; *see also* informal settlements; informality (concept); shantytowns

Quijano, Aníbal, 7

race, 36, 135, 139–40, 145–6, 148–50, 194; *see also* eugenics; slavery
Rancière, Jacques, 19, 21, 138, 148, 242–3, 246, 248–9; *see also* politics
Redfield, Robert, 6; *see also* Chicago School of Sociology
Revolución Argentina (1966–73), 206, 212
Richard, Nelly, 101
Rio+Rio, 190, 192
Rodríguez, Ismael, *Maldita ciudad*, 45
Rojas Pinilla, General Gustavo, 110–11
Rulfo, Juan, 11, 15, 22, 31–50, 215

samba, 4, 185, 189
Sánchez, Rafael, *Las callampas*, 85, 97, 98
Santos, Boaventura de Sousa, 5, 135, 137–8, 149
schizophrenia (Deleuze and Guattari), 222
Schteingart, Marta, 7
Sennett, Richard, 16; *see also* Wacquant, Loïc
SEPE (Teachers Union of the State of Rio de Janeiro), 142, 143, 144
Sepúlveda, José Luis, *see* Adriazola, Carolina, and José Luis Sepúlveda
Seroba, Nthabiseng Blessing, 135–6, 137
Sert, Josep Lluís, 37; *see also* architecture; Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM)
set theory, 18, 22; *see also* Badiou, Alain
shantytowns
  clearance of, 95, 115, 119, 128, 207, 210, 211, 212
  in dependency theory, 7
  development in Colombia, 107
  difficulty in organising, 119
  as essential to cities, 6–7, 186–7, 220–1
  as housing solution, 12, 92, 110
  in Juan Rulfo, 46, 47
  location and qualities of, 159, 203, 207–8
  as political manifestation, 222–3
  positive depictions of, 4
  related to revolutionary struggles, 127
  and smooth space, 213, 214
  and temporality, 216–217, 220
  upgrade and integration of, 16, 110, 112, 118, 124, 128–9, 166–8, 172–6
  see also barriadas; callampas; favelas; informal settlements; informality (concept); pueblos jóvenes; slums; villas miseria
Silva, Armando, 244–6
Silveira, Regina, 193
Simone, AbdouMaliq, 247–51
Singer, Paul, 7
Situationists, *see* Debord, Guy, and the Situationists
slavery, 135, 139–40, 146–7, 150; *see also* eugenics; race
slums
  in Buenos Aires, 173, 175
  in Cartagena, 114, 116, 128–9
  in Industrial Revolution, 241–2, 247
  in Mexico City, 38, 45
  in Rio de Janeiro, 191, 193
  as transitory spaces, 65–6
  see also barriadas; callampas; favelas; informal settlements; informality (concept); pueblos jóvenes; slums; villas miseria
smooth and striated space (Deleuze and Guattari), 48, 202, 205, 213–18, 220, 222–3, 225–6, 228; *see also* Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Félix
social movements, 6, 16, 23, 135, 137, 147n79, 245; *see also* protest movements
Solà-Morales, Ignasi de, 48, 50, 62
space
  and capitalism, 7, 10–11, 20, 163–6, 168–70, 211, 220, 242, 246, 248, 250

and colonialism, 2, 5–6
and construction, 99, 214
and desire, 23, 202–3, 205, 211–13, 221–2
and dictatorship, 206–7, 209–10, 212
and disciplinary society, 44
interior, 47, 92, 94–5
management of, 20, 22–3, 55–79, 155–79, 202
and modernism, 11, 20, 33–50
and movement, 3, 20, 31, 43, 48, 101, 193–7, 202, 206, 215–18
and political action, 88, 109, 133–52, 228
public, 64, 69, 94, 96, 98, 143, 147–9, 166, 174, 194, 209, 222
and race, 5, 150, 228
reclaimed, 15, 226–8
representation of, 4–5, 20, 42, 86, 95–9, 101, 183–93, 203, 243–5
theoretical conceptions of, 1, 9, 18–21, 50, 136–8, 148, 242–51
and thought, 226
and violence, 4, 9, 183, 185, 195, 210–11, 220–1
see also imaginaries; interstitial space; marginality; nomads; smooth and striated space; trialectics of space
Spinoza, Benedict de, 87
state
and authoritarianism, 33, 49–50, 212–13, 220–1
and biopolitics, 35–6
and capitalism, 10–12, 16–17, 75–6, 134, 155, 163–6, 168–70, 202–3, 212, 219–22, 242–3
challenges to, 107, 109, 133–52, 203, 213, 219, 222–3, 225, 231–2, 248, 249
competing state institutions, 20, 71–3, 156, 160, 174–7
control of movement, 215–16, 222
employment, 89
foreign influence on, 34, 37–8, 111–12
history of urban policies, 10–12
and housing provision, 15, 36–40, 69, 92–3, 107, 170–1, 176, 212
and inclusion, 15–16, 65–6, 156, 166–8, 176
and infrastructure, 31, 50, 58, 73
marginal interactions with, 16, 22, 64, 107–10, 112–14, 122, 129–30, 134–52, 214
and multitude, 88, 99
owned industry, 10, 31
and positivism, 34
and race, 36, 135
reorganisation, 111, 156, 160–1
state-led development, 10, 31–6, 163–6
supra-state bodies, 12–13, 16, 111, 116, 128–9, 243
and visuality, 45; *see also* biopolitics; desiring-production; democracy; dictatorship; formless politics; politics; power; smooth and striated space; unruly politics
stateless, 15
strikes, 134, 139–40, 141, 142–9, 150, 151

Territorial Units of Urban Inclusion (UTIUs), 166–8, 175, 176
trade unions

in 20th-century Colombia, 122–4
disaffection with, 99, 137, 146
in labour struggles in Brazil, 134, 141, 142–5, 151
theoretical critique of, 136
working with the marginalised, 16, 107, 109, 122–4, 141, 146, 147n79
Travessias, 20, 184, 193–7, 198
trialectics of space (Lefebvre), 242–3
Tropa de Elite (José Padilha), 186
Turner, John F.C., 12–13, 20, 92, 95, 116, 129, 243
twelve-step programme, *see* Alcoholics Anonymous

Umbanda, *see* possession cults
unemployment, 8, 114, 119, 126, 162
and trade unions, 122
and protest, 141, 147n79, 150
uninhabitable (Simone), 249–51; *see also* Simone, AbdouMaliq
unruly politics, 21, 138, 144, 147, 150, 228; *see also* formless politics
urban dialectic, 242
urban policy, *see* planning
urban sprawl, 20, 22, 55–63, 67–8, 78–9
utopia, 15, 31, 33, 36, 133, 197

Vargas Llosa, Mario, 5n7
Venice Architecture Biennale, 3, 13–15
Verbitsky, Bernardo, *Villa miseria también es América*, 4
Villa 20 Upgrade Project, 172–4, 175, 176
villas miseria
and capitalism and desire, 220, 221–3
contrast with modern city, 6–7
expansion of, 218
interventions in, 166–8, 170–4, 175–6
location of, 159, 203, 208
and marginality, 2
positive depictions of, 4
and smooth space, 213–15
see also informal settlements; informality (concept); shantytowns; Villa 20 Upgrade Project
Villa miseria también es América (novel), *see* Verbitsky, Bernardo
'Villas' (poem), *see* Lamborghini, Leónidas
violence
and cleansing, 38
and dictatorship, 220
in images, 228
and marginality, 4, 45, 134, 183, 185, 186, 190
political, 9, 107–8, 110–11
against protest, 140, 142, 149, 150
and revolution, 40
of the state, 249
structural, 187
see also dictatorship
Virilio, Paul, 206, 215–17, 220, 220n81, 223
Virno, Paolo, 16, 87, 88–9, 90–1, 93–4, 96, 99–101; *see also* multitude

Wacquant, Loïc, 8–9, 16; *see also* marginality
walking, 45, 150, 216, 217–18, 227; *see also* De Certeau, Michel
war machine (Deleuze and Guattari), 203, 223, 225–6, 229, 234; *see also* affect; Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Félix

Wiener, Paul Lester, 37; *see also* architecture; Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM)
wildscape, 61
World Bank, 13, 128–9

Youth Olympic Village (Buenos Aires), 170–1, 175

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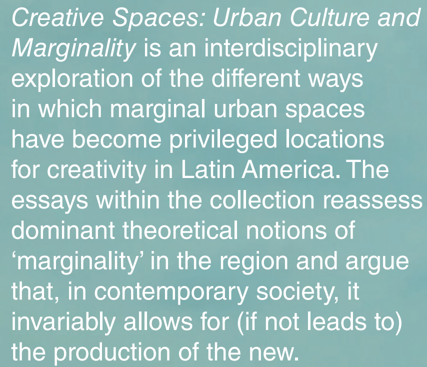

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