Counter-Practice: Design and Prefigurative Politics in Housing Struggles Beyond the Imaginary of Development

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I propose a practice of spatial design and documentation which runs counter to the standard working methodologies of international development institutions. I propose this practice in response to the restrictions faced by design practitioners and social movements when it comes to evidencing claims, funding projects and sharing knowledge. I call this '*counter-practice*'.

Counter-practice is proposed as a method with which to challenge the universal imaginary of development, which I argue marginalises non-scientific epistemologies, expelling the poor from direct negotiations over the production of their own futures. The thesis explores how political agency is restricted by the knowledge biases which structure development, and how spatialised approaches to the study of urban politics and struggles for a dignified life might inform alternatives to techno-centric, financialised paradigms of urban planning, which fail to recognise their own role in reproducing and reinforcing marginalities. Counter-practice is intended as a guide for design practitioners who wish to embed their work in social struggle, to expand the possibilities for equitable urban futures. It is a practice focused on forging non-extractive relationships between design and research professionals on the one hand, and social movements or people's organisations on the other.

As such, in this work I ask the following questions:

What principles of architectural design should be mobilised in collaboration with the urban poor, to expand inclusive and reciprocal processes of urban production? How can the methods and aesthetics of design be mobilised in support of knowledge exchange between social movements, as a way of proliferating the knowledge practices being built around housing struggles in the Global South?

PREFACE

I THE INTENTION OF THIS WORK

As a designer engaged in research, I sit at a junction between two worlds and the ethical, methodological frameworks that those two worlds ascribe to. And as both designer and researcher, I am perplexed by the fundamental holes that I see in both worlds of knowledge production – holes that are not being filled by overlapping the findings of one approach with those of the other. These are not actually holes in knowledge per se, but in the communication of knowledge. Because disciplinary perspectives are expressed as different languages in reports documenting their contributions, communicative gaps appear that make knowledge being produced over different phases of struggle appear incomplete, unintelligible, or ungraspable as a whole. The order of events which would contextualise each moment in relation to another is lost. What is required to recover this contextual grounding is a narrational aesthetic – an aesthetic that gives spatial form and character to processes unfolding in and around the experience of urban space and claims over it.

It seems obvious now but identifying this missing component in narratives of struggle - from both the perspective of design practices allied with the urban poor and research focused on the actions, identities and ideologies of social movements - was foundational to this thesis and the methodological approach. At first, I sought to bring cross-reference different fields and disciplines in the hope of finding overlaps that I assumed would contextualise knowledge contributions on precise aspects of struggle within the complete narrative arcs of those struggles, as experienced on the ground. However, as I spent time sifting through accounts from different disciplinary perspectives, I was frustrated in my search for direct overlaps.

Ultimately, this was a search for accounts that would guide my future positionality in a reciprocal design/research practice by revealing what agency I have at certain junctures, under what conditions. Though I was mindful that I was afforded a level of agency by my circumstances which those I had previously worked with were not, in my work I also had at times felt a palpable lack of agency to such an extent as to bring me closer with those same collaborators. In this way, I could feel a tension between the understanding of very definite limits upon my own agency on the one hand, and ethical concerns over exercising the agency I did have on the other. This was something I struggled to make material sense of. As such, this thesis was a search for a more material sense of the opportunities provided by - and limitations to agency for designers and researchers like me, who seek guidance on ways in which to leverage their skills in struggles to better this world.

In this search I ask the following questions:

What principles of architectural design should be mobilised in collaboration with the urban poor, to expand inclusive and reciprocal processes of urban production?

How can the methods and aesthetics of design be mobilised to support knowledge exchange between social movements, as a way of proliferating the knowledge practices being built around housing struggles in the Global South?

II BACKGROUND CONTEXT

This work originally emerged out of previous practice experience, in a project I pursued autonomously in Manila, Philippines, where I had been living and working in an architecture and interior design practice. It was ostensibly an upgrading project, designed in collaboration with residents on a single lot, in a large block of squatted settlements. In my time spent on the lot with residents, surveying the area and existing homes and collecting stories and documents of their past experiences, a number of issues with local planning policy and politics emerged. I came to understand that the community had faced eviction more than once, each time receiving stays of eviction but no legal rights to remain. There had also been a significant fire which was common to the area and suspected by residents as arson. Stories emerged that landowners and government agencies used fire as a method of expediting eviction, claiming that fires evidence a lack of safety in such settlements due to electrical tapping. The citation of safety issues allows interested parties to bypass laws that protect squatters from eviction without provision of alternative shelter.

I kept the project to the small site for several reasons. Legally, it was largely contained within the lines of a distinct lot as defined on the municipal land registry, though with some small overlaps. The lot was privately owned by an individual who had tried to have the residents evicted twice. Despite this official ownership, the land had been occupied for three generations by the current residents and their families. More importantly to me, due to the history of occupation on the site, this lot was very clearly a community ‘unit’, with many families living together in multi-generational dwellings or neighbouring dwellings.

Before I discovered the lot boundaries as defined by the municipal maps, I defined the boundaries architecturally and socially as

Image 1. Initial Photos taken of LOT-17 during tour given by resident and Barangay leader (images by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

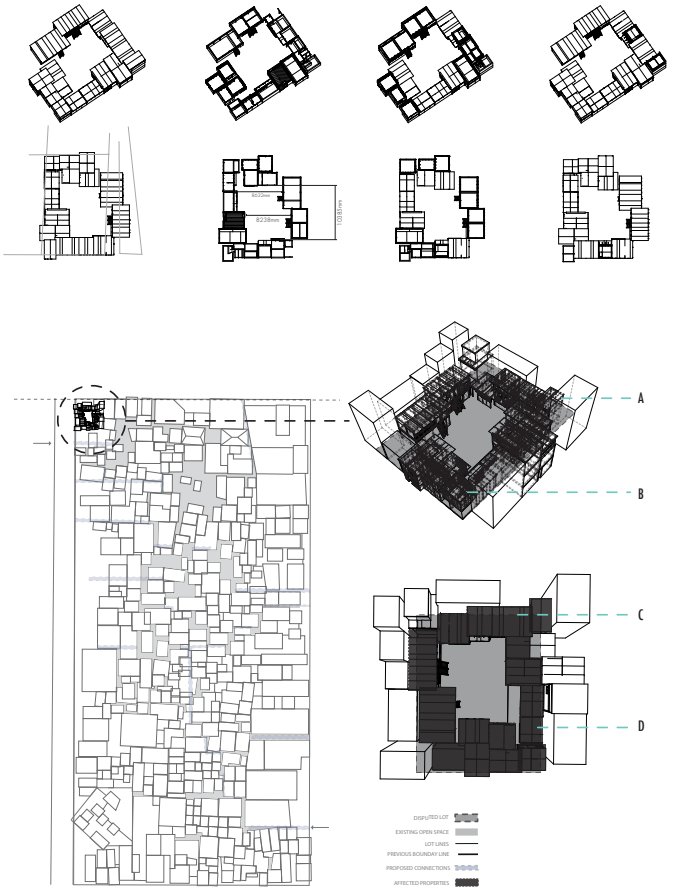


Image 2. Block map and model of LOT-17 created by cross-referencing photographs and architectural surveys guided by residents, (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

according to residents. This definition was reached through a series of resident meetings, to which I initially brought printed satellite imagery of the area as well as maps. We used the first meeting to review the satellite images and indicate important border markers such as local sari sari stores where water and household basics could be purchased or taps where laundry could be washed.

These markers and the meaning behind them were embellished and contextualised with reflective stories about the site history and daily life within. This process of producing maps based on perceptual narratives is commonly referred to as 'cognitive mapping' (Goonewardena 2005) and is identified in the thesis as an important practice utilised by multiple spatial practitioners and organisations interviewed, including AlterPlan, SDI, Ateliermob and Espacio Expresión. (In chapter five, I discuss the utility of this practice as an ethnographic research tool and also reflect on the capacity for the products of these processes to be leveraged as evidence.)[1] In the second meeting, the community leader then led me around the site and bordering areas, introducing me to other residents at certain points and allowing me to mark further points of interest on the satellite image and map. At these points, many residents also brought me into their homes, allowing me to take photos and make sketch plans, indicating the sizes of their families living under the same roof. I used this tour and survey period to note which of the dwellings within the lot had bathrooms and any shared facilities such as the kitchen and wash area that had been set up in the centre of the site as a kind of public square (this area had been left open after a recent fire had consumed at least one dwelling that

1 Once formalised, cognitive mapping products can form counter-maps (Mesquita 2018) (Anker 2018)) that challenge the narratives offered by other cartographic representations of localities and borders. By expanding the capacities of cartographic representation to include more experiential aspects of space, ownership, identity, and the passage of time, counter-mapping can give form to concepts offered by Barassi, Arenas and Appadurai respectively as 'Ethnographic Cartographies' (Barassi 2013), 'emotional geographies' (Arenas 2015), or 'process geographies'. (A. Appadurai 1999)

Image 3. Model of LOT-17 with Photo catalogue indicating location of infrastructure and other features highlighted by residents in cognitive mapping activities (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 4. Top > Official map of block on which Lot-17 is located. Bottom> Overlay of 'reality' mapped through combination of boundary waling, photographic surveys and satellite imagery. Overlayed on official map to highlight discrepancies.(Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 5. Occupying the streets and intermediate spaces with games and social activities, San Andres Bukid. (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

previously stood there). What I understood in Manila through the process of cognitive mapping, was the subtle porosity between spaces of domestic, commercial and public nature, giving life to social ties expressed in the ways the women on site organised and shared resources, and the ways in which people gathered in the in-between spaces for games or socialising.

The importance of these nuanced understandings of space, occupation and the ways in which those reflect and facilitate social life was echoed consistently in my interviews for this project. (Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado 30/10/2019, Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva 15/07/2019,
Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico 22/01/2020, Cristián Robertson De Ferrari 20/05/2020, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel 30/11/2021). The materials I gathered through the process of surveying and mapping in situ allowed me to gather a qualitative understanding of the site, the inhabitants, the available infrastructure and the social, infrastructural boundaries defined by access to all these things. As a result, I was able to generate a structurally indicative model of the existing site, at an accurate scale and use this to uncover what was not visible from above (the first-floor dwellings overhung the ground floor, obscuring passageways and the footprints and materials of ground floor structures, which often did not align with the dwellings above and also fell under different ownership).

Most importantly, it was apparent that this was a distinct community, who didn't actually know or have ties to their neighbours in adjacent lots and therefore, had very distinct desires that were built upon their experiences of this lot. Social ties, desires and knowledge had evolved in relation to place and their experiences and motivation were also built around the threats of eviction which were particular to this lot and negotiation with its owner. For this reason, it was abundantly apparent to me that attempting to expand the project focus to other lots on the block would create numerous

issues. Firstly, it would be harder for residents to work together without pre-existing bonds built on shared experience. Secondly, negotiations around design and finance would become infinitely more complicated because each lot constituted of individual community units that had different dynamics and aspirations. Thirdly, if each community was to achieve the individual results and work through processes that suited them, the workload for the designer would be too much to manage at once. The alternative to this would be to create a homogenous design solution that would likely embed serious drawbacks or harms for certain inhabitants and the future of the area.

Having begun by defining the site according to resident accounts, cognitive mapping (marking resident accounts of their routes and sites of importance on the satellite imagery and walking those routes) and architectural surveys, I proceeded to gather materials that defined the site in the eyes of law and governance.

A review of planning law revealed that minimum spatial standards prevented the site from being retained as built and renovated by the current residents. Common approaches to community mortgages required that the land and cost be split equally by residents which would result in evictions due to the variable means of residents and the spatial standards. This also required that residents be organised in definitive legal terms that would tie them together financially. The months of research spent with residents on site (hearing stories and experiences in and outside of homes) and off-site (gathering information on the roles of different government departments and planning policies along with legal documents related to the site and wider block) led to a design proposition which rested on a legal and political strategy. The legal strategy required restructuring the approach to community mortgage programmes to allow for heterogeneous parcelling, and the political one required lobbying government to allow for upgraded sites to include shared facilities and spaces in the calculation of the domestic floor areas. The latter

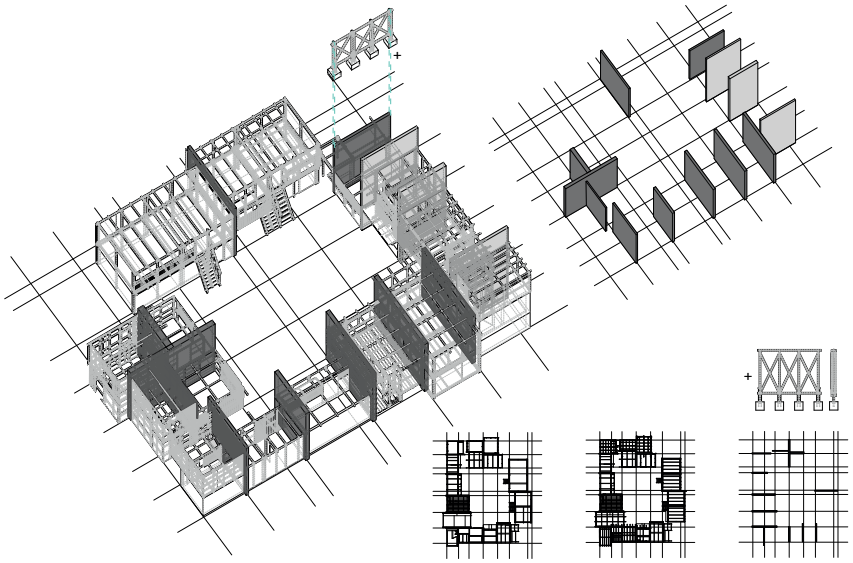


Image 6. Initial strategy to stabilise existing structures on site. (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

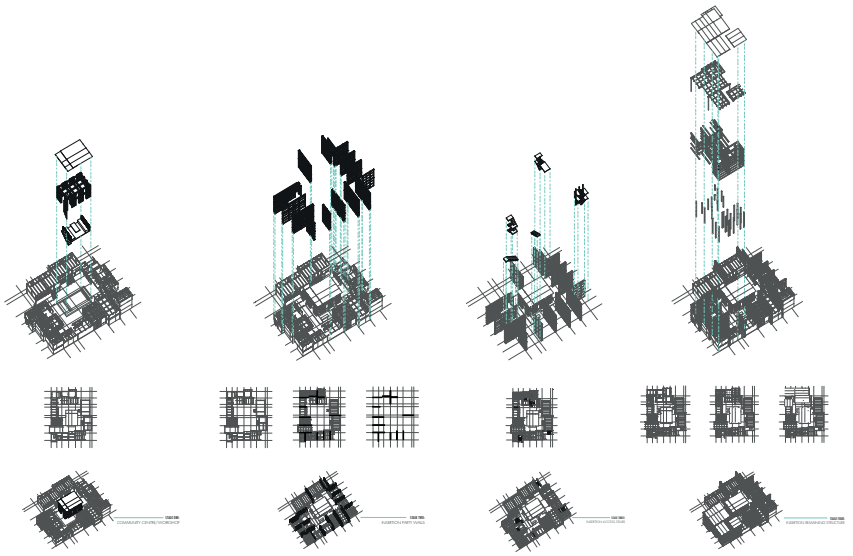


Image 7. Phased interventional strategy to insert collective infrastructure and create structural stability for expansion (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

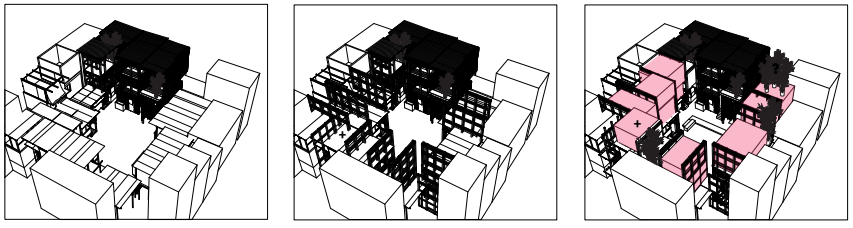
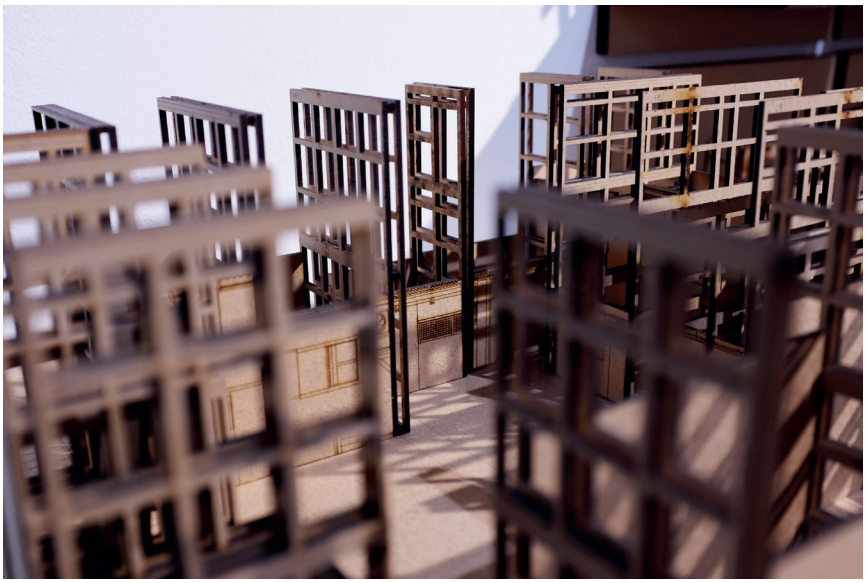


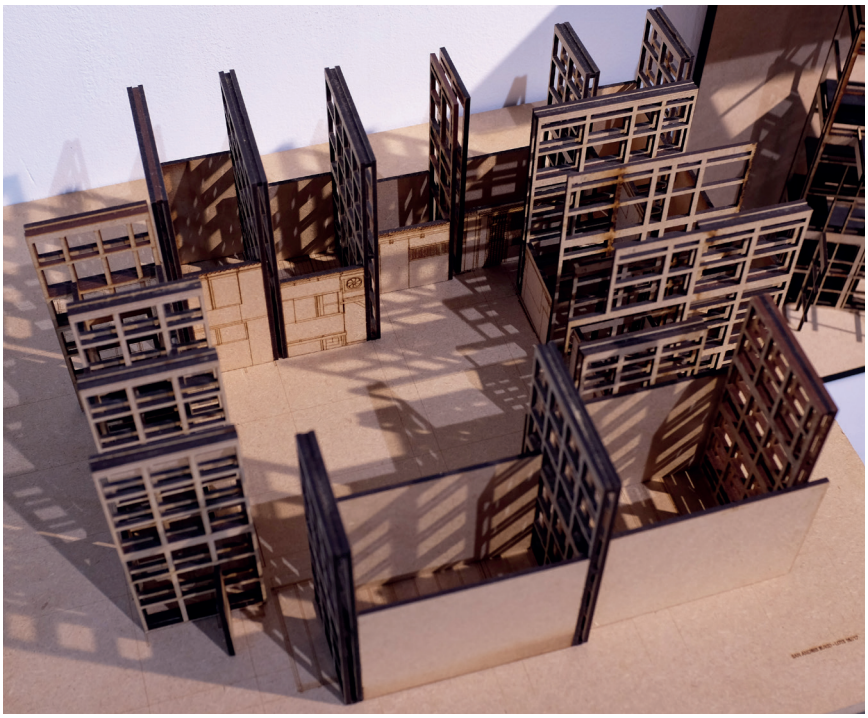
Image 8. Speculative expansion potential on site to be determined by residents (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

would create flexibility around minimal spatial standards for the urban poor who are fighting eviction and who wish to remain in existing sites, even if doing so means sacrificing space in the home.

It was at this point that I became aware of my total impotence in moving the project forward. I was not a community organiser, nor was I from the community. I could not get funding for a lobbying project or a build project that was not compliant with existing processes and regulations of the Philippines' institutions for housing and planning. Regardless of these legal hurdles, it was clear that with only 25 families on a very limited piece of land, the project was too small to meet the impact standards of any of the funding streams I had been able to find. Indeed, most funding opportunities called for projects closer to the scale of the block that this site sat on. I had already determined that approaching scalability in material terms was inappropriate for such a heterogenous area.

What was scalable in my eyes was the political dimension of the project, which also celebrated difference among groups involved. I felt that if I could show that all these lots have different community identities and desires but all had a shared need to challenge this application of spatial standards to community-led upgrade projects then they could be brought together around that common claim (Laclau 2005). This common claim was essentially a challenge to a restriction that they all shared, and I saw no reason why articulating that shared challenge should require that any claimant also commit to sharing other ideologies, aspirations, or identities. In other words, they all shared the same problem but that didn't mean that they all needed or wanted to share a solution! I felt that difference could and should be the strength of the claim insofar as it demonstrated the extent to which the problem impacted people – it did not only prevent one group from achieving their goals in a particular way, it prevented multiple groups from achieving their goals, in myriad ways. However, I thought that the strength of difference would only become apparent if demonstrated or proven through design.





Images 8 & 9. Models of structural insertions created for interactive use by residents on site. The models provide the framework upon which different kinds of additions can be placed and party walls moved around. (model by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

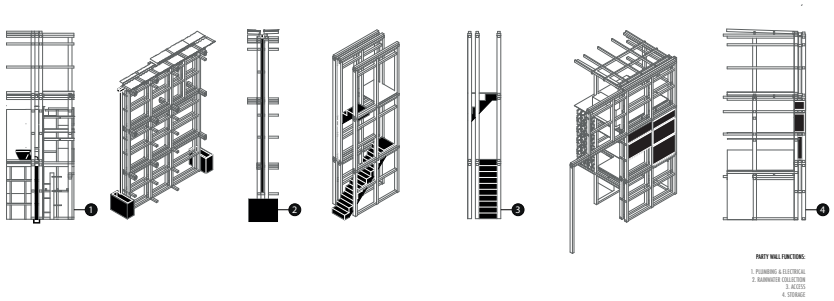


Image 10. Drawing indicating the insertion of different services in party walls (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

By this I mean that it seemed that if a different project could be designed with each community or lot that celebrated their particular identities, experiences, and desires, then it could be said that all these futures become possible by the removal of one shared barrier. And by that logic, it would demonstrate how extensively restrictive that barrier was (Laclau 2005, 69-70). This logic could be used to recruit other groups to participate in the political lobbying needed to challenge this clause of planning law. Used for this purpose, design projects need not be built to have dramatic impact.

The problem with this hypothesis was that all the funding sources I could uncover were dependent on establishing shared solutions – not shared problems. Impact needed to be proven in advance and be materially (not politically or socially) quantifiable. As such, I could not find a mechanism through which to fund the outreach and design processes for other lots because I could not guarantee that any of the projects would be built, let alone all of them. Nor could I guarantee the success of the lobbying. Further, if the lobbying was successful and designs were carried forward into the detailed phase in preparation for construction, the projects would revert to being small, bespoke projects developed with small community or neighbourhood groups. Initially, what was being asked of funders was that they commission design projects as social political research, to produce materials for use in political lobbying and with no guarantee of success.[2] After which, development funding would need to be sought for small, bespoke projects which could not be argued as impactful or scalable on the terms that funders stipulate.[3]

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2 It was here that the mandate for development organisations to be apolitical became crucial

3 This is because research and political lobbying is not considered part of the same agenda, or area of expertise as construction projects. As such, funding for such activities will not come from the same streams or even the same organisations. Indeed, political lobbying is cited by most funders as an unsupported activity but most pointedly by development funders who are bound by their own foundational charters to political neutrality.

This raised fundamental questions about agency and positionality.

I found myself at an impasse at which my need was not to probe the potential for me to overstep and disempower others with my privilege, but to understand the way in which I was confronted with my own powerlessness to move meaningfully within the structures that privilege me in such a way that would allow me to confront such asymmetries in practice (A. Escobar 2012) (B. d. Santos, The End of the Cognitive Empire 2018). That is not to say that privilege was not something which concerned me in my practice and engagement with others. Rather, I was beginning to understand that the systems which provided my privilege also confined me in my ability to share it, leverage it or step outside it. This thesis was a project aimed at discovering exactly how and to what extent I and others were being constrained in different areas of practice and supporting the reproduction of knowledges which reveal these constraints and ways to address them. I hoped that this journey would help me to establish where the loopholes might exist that could be exploited to generate greater social and political freedom for all sorts of actors, and to determine how knowledge of those loopholes and methods of evasion could be proliferated for use in other socio-cultural/situational/institutional/lingual collaborations.

0. METHOD

0.1 DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

I began in my attempts to understand the positionality of designers and social movements in relation to policy development and project implementation, with literature from the perspectives of development anthropology and ethnography. Coming from a design background with a good deal of familiarity with both practice-based publications and urban architectural theory, I began with third party policy reviews and critique, under the logic that this would provide a solid foundational understanding of institutional structures and ideologies, in relation to geopolitical histories.

It was important to situate the research concerning institutional structures and the roles of different individuals in the geopolitical critique of development in the Global South. As this project was born out of my previous experience in the Philippines, I was acutely aware of the heightened levels of complexity that apply to the process of building a network of contributors around a project in lower income countries, where state programmes are either lacking or contested for their flaws. This meant that a project needed to comply with the frameworks and laws that had been set by the state, while also appealing to foreign entities for support, each with their own priorities and working methodologies – entities which are themselves accountable to other funders and international guidelines or goals. Further, given the proclamations of strict apoliticality among many such international organisations, one cannot easily premise an alliance with these international support systems on goals that clearly challenge the policies or protocols of sovereign governments. This makes building international relationships around local struggles that are embedded in social and political tensions, a very complex, political dance and requires knowledge of project timelines, national law and funding conditions that goes beyond the confines of any one specialist discipline.

While the polemic evaluations are extensive and varied, what is made abundantly clear across the field of development studies is that development, as a discourse and analytical structure with which to value the world, changes relationships and the terms on which they are structured. What is less clear, is how both social movements and practitioners in different positions navigate and record the terms and processes of building such relationships, in order to inform future methodologies of practice, organisation and mobilisation around specific claims.

While development studies provided valuable insight into the institutional structures that world the imaginary of development and the key rhetorical evolutions that have shaped contemporary international development policy (this was supported by reviews of current goals and the indices though which their progress is measured), I found little literature which clearly articulated the role of the design process in project implementation or the position of the designer in these networks of actors and institutions.

I found that authors such as Arturo Escobar and Boaventura de Sousa Santos were helpful in identifying the process through which the development imaginary had become dominant and the ways in which experiential knowledges produced by social movements were blocked from reinforming policy agendas. In this respect, Escobar is more explicit in tracing particular policy agendas (A. Escobar 2012) (A. Escobar 1995), which I cross-referenced with works by others such as David Mosse (Mosse 2008), David Williams (Williams 2013), Ronaldo Munck (Munck 2007), Cedric Pugh (Pugh 1994), James Petras (Petras 2017), and Marcus Power (Power 2010). Santos was more explicit in identifying the ways in which scale comes into knowledge politics to condition understandings of generality and difference, leading to the denigration of local perspectives as too particular to be globally applicable (B. d. Santos 2018) (B. d. Santos 2012) (Meneses 2019).
I compared Santos' works with those from authors such as Arjun Appadurai (A. Appadurai 1999) (A. Appadurai 2006) (A. Appadurai

2000), James Holston (Holston 1991) (Holston 2009), Arturo Escobar (A. Escobar 2008), Frantz Fanon (Fanon 1961), Paolo Freire (Freire 2018) and many others.

It was through this phase of investigation that I began to compare Arturo Escobar's calls for a 'counter-development' (A. Escobar 1995), with Asher's and Wainwright's theories of 'counter-work' (Asher, Kiran and Joel Wainwright 2019); a framework for anthropological research that Escobar references directly. Both definitions emerge out of critical accounts of the universal nature of development ideology but whereas Escobar calls for a counter-development to be launched by social movements, Asher and Wainwright attempt to identify the ways in which certain social movement practices that they observe could already be classified as such. In both cases, these accounts stop short at suggesting what the role of different practitioners, collaborators or even protagonists *within* such movements might be in expanding or proliferating this work. Neither approach the problem of building these actions into a knowledge base that can be shared and expanded through solidarity networks to grow a counter-work or counter-development as a social phenomenon. Kiran Asher and Joel Wainwright (Asher, Kiran and Joel Wainwright 2019), suggest that before propositions can emerge for alternative futures, there is first a need to articulate the ways in which forms of hegemony and the development imaginary are actually encountered by particular peoples.

Those such as Mosse and Lewis (Lewis, David, and Mosse, David eds. 2006), and Boas and McNeil (Bøas, Morton and McNeill, Desmond. 2007) point us to the many connective nodes in the networks of organisations through which policy passes in its development and implementation, pointing to the importance of translation and transformation which allows people with different experiences, expertise and worldviews to work with and understand each other at specific times. Bøas and McNeil argue that 'the creation and transformation of knowledge [...] can only effectively be studied and

analysed through an appreciation of how people – whether peasants, bureaucrats or scientists – build bridges and manage critical knowledge interfaces that constitute the points of intersection between their diverse lifeworlds' (Bøas, Morton and McNeill, Desmond. 2007, 33).

The majority of researchers examining the development and implementation of international development policy recognise that to different extents, institutional practices reshape the workings of development in many ways - socially, culturally, organisationally and economically - and this is not easy to unpack in relation to any one institution or practice. Identifying the ways in which development discourse is continually reproduced and reinforced around the conditions that it itself produces in the world (A. Escobar 2012, 105),[1] requires detailed analysis of the ways in which labour and disciplinary divisions structure projects and the responsibilities and work practices of different individuals within them (Mosse 2008).

Mosse contends that rhetoric which places development actors and disenfranchised local groups in binary opposition is too simplistic and argues for an extensive ethnographic investigation into the roles and experiences of actors who sit at different nodes in a deeply complex network. He argues that 'it is not policy models that make practice unintelligible, but rather the political logic and culture of specific organisations. Projects are sites of social and institutional reproduction. Policy models [...] do not and cannot share actual practice in the way that they claim. They are ignored, resisted, "consumed" or tactically used in ways that make them irrelevant in the face of more urgent relational demands' (Mosse 2008, 16).

1 'It requires that we investigate the production of discourses about the problem in question; that we show the articulation of these discourses with socioeconomic and technological conditions that they, in turn, help produce; and, finally and more importantly, that we examine the actual work practices of institutions involved with these problems. Discourse, political economy, and institutional ethnography should be woven in order to provide an adequate understanding of how development works' (A. Escobar 2012, 105).

Most particularly, he and others (Lewis, David, and Mosse, David eds. 2006)(Rosendo, Sergio and Bending, Tim 2006) point to the uptake and tactical use of development rhetoric by social movements for leverage in battles with state institutions. This means that agency is neither an individual, nor a static condition but shifts constantly in accordance with goals, allyships and gains (Laclau 2005) (Latour 1996).

I used development ethnography and anthropology [later reinforced by interviews] to consider the agency of individuals positioned in different roles or institutions and to reflect on my own experiences. What I uncovered in development studies could be thought of as critical reflections on the power of development rhetoric and the geopolitical structures which shape it, alongside observations on how best to understand the agency of individuals and institutions in different contexts. This secondary research helped me to frame my approach to primary research, which comprised of site visits, interviews and practice.

0.2 SITE VISITS

As part of my endeavour to understand how different processes of community engagement and design impact the socio-political and physical longevity of affordable housing projects, I began by organising a number of site visits. I sought to use site visits for two purposes: firstly, to assess how the designs of projects were being experienced by their inhabitants after their completion and how they had been maintained over time. Secondly, I had hoped to use such visits to make contact with inhabitants who could speak about their experiences of the projects as they were developed and implemented. As I detail later in this section, I also included some participant observation in my site visits, attending community meetings and accompanying members of the NGO, Techo on a survey visit to witness their methods of data collection and community relationship-building.

There have been many critiques of the ways in which contemporary architectural thinking centres itself on products and aesthetics and concurrently, many pleas for the discipline to expand into politics in recognition of its own politically embedded nature. Whereas theory on this matter is abundant, I am repeatedly struck by the lack of visual material being produced on the side of architectural politics. If visual media is the language of architecture and design, it seems strange that one should argue against aesthetics in favour of politics, rather than attempt to build an alternative, aesthetic *of* politics or political aesthetic. In their commentary on the theoretical and historical work of Sérgio Ferro, Silke Kapp, Katie Lloyd Thomas and João Marcos de Almeida Lopes suggest that the value of Ferro's work lies in his challenge to architectural thinking which sought to '"discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell." The mystical shell, in this case, is the discipline's upholding of a notion of architectural design as a (relatively) autonomous field, whose role in the real world lies mainly in the reception of its built products, and not in their material production. And the rational kernel is this very production' (Silke Kapp, Katie Lloyd Thomas, and João Marcos de Almeida Lopes 2018, 3). Ferro's work speaks about the practices involved in the processes of design as mechanisms which enable the co-optation of construction into cycles of capital accumulation[2] (Silke Kapp, Katie Lloyd Thomas, and João Marcos de Almeida Lopes 2018, 4) (Ferro 2018). Whereas Ferro concentrated his historical analysis on labour structures, conditions and circumstances in the production of architecture in the capitalist sphere, we can take lessons from this work and apply such an approach to a project of unpacking the processes of production within the sphere of

2 Ferro's work 'shows that well-meaning concepts are secondary to what design actually achieves. The processes of design—the prescription of building through practices such as drawing, specification, and the production of building information—are, in Ferro's analysis, what enable the subordination of labor at the building site and transform construction into a branch of capitalist production.' (Silke Kapp, Katie Lloyd Thomas, and João Marcos de Almeida Lopes 2018, 4)

international development and non-profit work. The labour of production is equally important in this space, but I suggest that the way in which a certain type of aspirational aesthetic is propagated and confirmed though non-profit projects is more appropriate as a conceptual frame for these investigations than the co-optation of productive processes by capital accumulation (though the two are intertwined). This universal aspirational aesthetic is referred to in this thesis, as part of what Mirzoeff terms 'hegemonic visuality' (Mirzoeff 2011). Despite the value of work such as Ferro's, which seeks to expose the processes and practices of production that lie behind the celebrational aesthetics which dominate the visual space of architectural discourse, this work too appears to shun visuality as a means of investigation and narration of alternative perspectives.

In my wider search for third party project analysis that I hoped would allow me to trace out their actor networks and map them to timelines of events and experiences, I remained frustrated. Whereas I had found many studies that recounted the impacts of resettlement or displacement as a result of development projects (A. A. Ortega 2016), and housing projects in particular (Arcilla 2018), these accounts were all almost exclusively textual which prevented a parallel assessment of the design quality or of the processes through which it was developed.

I wanted to use site visits as a way to visually assess the conditions of a project, after completion. This would require that I be able to establish contacts with residents and practitioners involved in the project, to be able to undertake the kind of ethnographic mapping tasks I had undertaken in Manila in past projects. However, in my past project, my intention was to visualise a possible narrative for the future built upon shared constructions of the present and past experiences. In this research, my objective was to assess the reality of the project after completion by comparing present conditions with the aspirations and strategic approach of the project at its conception. This latter objective could only be achieved if I could use

the visits to gather material with which to reconstruct narratives of the project's development.

For this reason, I sought first to undertake a number of site visits in a context I was familiar with, so that I could use my understanding of government bodies and their agendas to contextualise their structural state and design approach. That context was Manila, Philippines, where I knew of a several projects executed by different organisational partnerships of different scales.

In order to build a wide scope for comparison on the basis of project actors and their positions in partnership structures, I deemed it important to look at housing projects by a range of agency types and sizes. I considered projects produced through local NGO and social movement collaborations, International NGOs, the World Bank and PPPs (Public Private Partnerships).

0.2.a) Choice of housing projects and approach

I first chose to look at housing projects based on the kinds of agencies that had produced them and the amount of information that I could gather to corroborate my findings. The Tondo Foreshore area of Manila was chosen for my initial fieldwork because it is an area of the city that has been the focus of multiple housing projects from multiple different agencies. Particularly, it was the site of a massive, experimental upgrading project funded by the World Bank in the 1980s. Since then, the government has produced tenement housing in the area through public private partnership programmes and the site has also had input from International NGOs such as Habitat for Humanity. More recently, developments had been undertaken by community organisations. For this reason, I determined that the area could provide for a comparative analysis between design approaches and organisational processes while reducing political and economic variables that need to be considered when comparing sites in different districts or regions.

Vitas tenements, produced in partnership between the government housing institution and private enterprise was the most challenging site to access in Tondo Foreshore due to the political complexities of the project. Having been produced as a relocation project for the urban poor approximately fifty years prior to my visit in 2017, the site was later condemned for demolition and the inhabitants were under notice of eviction. The blocks had been poorly maintained but had also been altered significantly by inhabitants and had been deemed unsafe. The eviction was being challenged by the inhabitants and there had been violent clashes with security services and government appointed personnel visiting to assess the structures. I had been unable to make contact with anyone connected with the site or any of the resident groups that I later understood existed there and so reached out to the local Barangay (village) leaders and organised a site visit. Whereas such an approach had served me well in previous work undertaken in much smaller Barangays, in this case the tension between residents and the local government meant that I was unable to develop any honest and open relationships with the community once I was perceived to be associated with the Barangay officials, and the officials ensured that this remained the case. I was prevented from surveying the site with residents and only allowed access to specifically selected areas, making the visit unsuccessful as a method of assessing the longer life of the design approach. However, considering the significant changes that residents had made to the structure and the political turmoil that was ongoing as a result of the poor conditions on site, I was able to determine on very simple terms that the project was unsuccessful in multiple ways (see following page).

I was able to access the other sites of interest in the area with help from Urban Poor Associates, a local NGO with whom I had made contact that was active in the area. The team at Urban Poor Associates showed me the area produced by Habitat for Humanity and explained what they knew of the approach before introducing

me to members of Kabalikat – a local community organisation that had partnered with Urban Poor Associates to produce their own housing. I was given a full tour of the Kabalikat site by community leaders who also introduced me to some of the residents and was able to follow the tour with an interview in the community office.

The intention of the site visits had been to develop a more detailed understanding of the ways in which the design of these sites, as well as ownership over the *process* of their design, impacted life in and around them following their construction. The impact of the overall design was immediately apparent in all three initial site visits, but I was not able to gather a comparable amount of information on the processes of design and the ways in which the design approach related to particular policy agendas or funding conditions for all three from a site visit alone.

I had also hoped to use site visits to connect with inhabitants and understand their experiences of the projects as they were developed. This is why the method of approach was so important. I achieved this with the Kabalikat project but not with the others, leaving no scope for direct comparison. This demonstrated to me the importance of networks and information sharing between social movements or people's organisations so that collaborations can be initiated on the basis of shared experiences and goals. The political sensitivity of the Vitas Tenements situation demonstrated the potential for collaborations to be thwarted simply by the way in which a researcher or designer chooses to approach the project, and the powerful role of brokers at those moments. In this case, the local government leaders chose to make themselves gatekeepers to the site and the inhabitants, allowing them to control the information gained by the outsider and with it, the external narrative of the situation. If I had been able to make contact with a community leader of any kind, this would have changed the narrative I was able to perceive significantly. I did later learn from my conversations with Urban Poor Associates that there were organised social movements

Image 11. Exterior of the Vitas Tenements in Tondo. The image clearly shows the extent to which the units have been extended by inhabitants which is part of the claim by the authorities that they are now unsafe and require demolition. (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 12. Housing produced by Kenyan government with support from UN-Habitat and private partnership. The site is adjacent to the densely populated settlement of Mathare and yet exhibits a counter-intuitive planning approach, encompassing very wide unpaved roads and unplanned spacing between units. The site is under-inhabited and in a state of disrepair. (Image by author, 2018 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 15. The Kabalikat offices are located close to the housing project but service a wider area. This acts as a community organisation hub. (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 13. Housing In Tondo, Manila produced by Kabalikat with support from Urban Poor Associates. The row housing has been planned around new paved roads and is single storey due to budgeting. (Image by author, 2018 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 14. To the rear of the Kabalikat row housing, services are supplied with small spaces for growing plants and hanging laundry. (There is also a public garden in which vegetables are grown) with support from Urban Poor Associates (Image by author, 2016 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

in Vitas Tenements concerned with women's safety and the right to remain in the face of the new eviction order. However, I was only able to learn this through collaboration with another NGO which had established a network within the area. This placed the responsibility of communications brokerage on the NGO, and required significant work to establish permissions to share contacts on both sides, and to negotiate any applicable conditions of contact. Whereas this might seem less than ideal as an alternative to having social movements represent and speak for themselves at all times, there are clearly strategic advantages to this type of relationship. In such scenarios in which groups are under significant political pressure or actual physical threat, rendering themselves fully visible, along with their goals and tactics of struggle can be genuinely dangerous or at least, put them at a political disadvantage. In such cases, having NGO partners share their struggles selectively with potential allies that are appropriately vetted could constitute a valuable service.

0.2.b) Site Visits Combined with Participant Observation

I later undertook site visits with Techo Para Chile as an extension of my interviews into embedded research. In two visits to different sites on the outskirts of Santiago de Chile I observed resident surveys and a resident community meeting which took part in a temporary community hall constructed by Techo (Techo sometimes provides community infrastructure such as gathering centres and water towers but does not organise the community themselves, instead providing the spaces for affiliate organisations to use).

I was also shown how data from surveys was collated at the permanent offices of the NGO and provided with drawings of a water tower and a standardised temporary residential structure. In one of the site visits I was able to view an example structure that had been completed and compare the near-finished product with the drawings (See pages 18-19). As the site comprised a mix of shelters

provided by Techo alongside auto-constructed dwellings this also made some level of structural, spatial comparison possible. In that comparison, the structure provided by Techo seemed rational and environmentally secure but extremely bare and without basic comforts, whereas the auto-constructed dwellings were far more personal, though limited and, in some cases, poorly constructed – yet no less basic in their overall construction. The process of undertaking questionnaires inside resident homes seemed potentially intimate, yet rigid. Inhabitants were hospitable and open yet reserved and communication was not always fluid in Castellano as many of the occupants were Haitian immigrants.

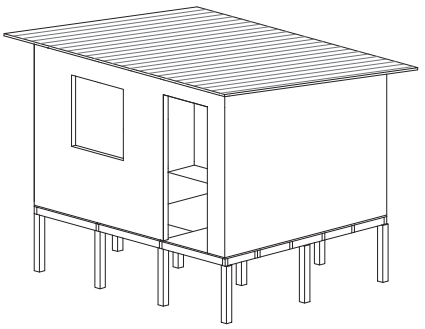
As the surveys were not organised in advance with established community groups, the team made several visits in order to catch different people while at home, marking surveyed dwellings with stickers on doors to prevent different volunteers from repeating work. While this approach made sense when working with a community that is not yet organised and potentially fragmented, I observed that it would prevent an intimate acquaintance from being built between residents, the site and the NGO team. With different volunteers collecting data on survey sheets, it is difficult for any of them to build qualitative relationships with residents and the different dwelling areas as they relate to the whole. I assessed that this approach could not be used to uncover the social-political groupings on the site, or how they might have evolved over time. However, the purpose of the survey was served by the approach: to understand first, which dwellings might be physically unsafe in the event of any environmental catastrophe in the earthquake prone region so that they may be temporarily replaced, and second, to understand the urgency and validity of claims for government provided housing. For this reason, basic dwellings such as those I was able to view, were only provided in cases wherein the existing dwellings posed a physical danger to their inhabitants while they awaited housing aid from government – which Techo was established to assist with.

MANUAL DE CONSTRUCCIÓN

TRABAJOS DE VERANO 2019

TECHO
UN TECHO PARA CHILE

VIVIENDA TRANSITORIA DE 11 m²



CONTACTOS :

JEFES DE ESCUELA:

CAMIONETAS:

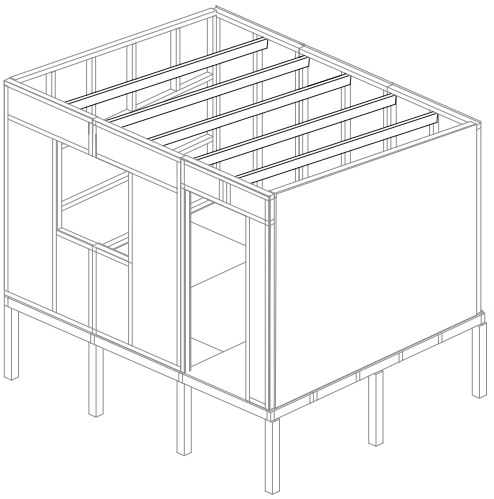
JEFE DE CUADRILLA:

APOYO DE OFICINA:

PLAN CUADRANTE:

ESTRUCTURA

VIGAS 2X4"



VIGAS

La estructura corresponde a 5 vigas de **2x4"** cepillado (el color naranja) clavadas con **clavos de 4"** a los pies derechos de los paneles de fachada (puerta y ventana y contrario).

Las vigas van **cortadas** según el ancho de la vivienda, a **305cm**.

Image 16. Pages from a construction manual for a temporary housing unit produced by Techo Para Chile (2019). Such designs are purely structural and do not specify basic services such as bathrooms or kitchens. (donated by Techo for this project 2019
© Techo Para Chile, all rights reserved)

Image 17. An example of the temporary house design above, as built. (Image by author, 2019
© Georgia White, all rights reserved)

I also undertook site visits to Mathare, Nairobi wherein I was given a tour of some small public space projects created by the Mathare Green Movement. The Mathare Green Movement is largely a youth movement initiated to bring environmental goals to the area alongside public pride in common spaces. I was introduced to the projects by members of the Mathare Social Justice Centre who act as an organisational hub for the wider site.

I later returned to Mathare, upon invitation by the leaders of the Mathare Social Justice Centre to attend a community meeting convened at the centre to celebrate 100 years of the UN charter of Human Rights and the community work that was ongoing at the site. The meeting was extremely well attended and well organised, demonstrating the broad capacities of the many active social movements in the area and their ability to independently fundraise and communicate. Movements from other sites such as the Githurai Human Rights Network were invited to share information and stories, making this an important networking and showcase event in which achievements were demonstrated and ongoing struggles outlined in appeals for support and collaboration. The quality and size of buildings utilised in this event (in comparison to those produced by Tehco used in Santiago de Chile), was significant. In addition to providing a stage for the street art that was being celebrated, the existence of well-constructed, masonry buildings amongst the more delicate structures provided a sense of established, formality to some of the street network and public centres which was clearly practically important but also commanded a certain level of attention and recognition for the act of gathering. This also demonstrated the importance of setting social political exchanges in the sites in question, where problems could be pointed to, and the capabilities possessed by the movements could be exhibited in the form of past achievements.

Image 18. Techo para Chile volunteers on site, approaching residents for housing surveys (Image by author, 2019 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 19. Techo para Chile volunteers place stickers on surveyed houses to prevent repetition of work when the site is re-visited by new teems. (Image by author, 2019 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 20. An example of a survey undertaken by Techo para Chile volunteers on site. This is page 1 of 2, enumerating basic services. The second page lists the materials of roofs, floors and walls. (Image provided by Techo Para Chile, 2019 © Techo Para Chile, all rights reserved)

CASO N°.... //

Nombre :
Ubicación :

TECHO
UN TECHO PARA CHILE

Descripción general (contexto) :.....

A RELLENAR
del - al + crítico

HACINAMIENTO

Indice de hacinamiento : *Razón entre el número de personas residentes en la vivienda y el número de dormitorios de la misma.*

Personas por dormitorio de la vivienda :	Tipo de hacinamiento :	
2,4 y menos	Sin hacinamiento	0
2,5 a 4,9	Hacinamiento medio	1-2
5 y más	Hacinamiento critico	3

Personas por dormitorio de la vivienda : 0 1 2 3

Allegamiento : *Estrategia utilizada por los hogares y núcleos familiares para solucionar la falta de vivienda, compartiendo una vivienda con otro hogar o núcleo.*

Con allegamiento 1
Sin allegamiento 0

0 1

Observaciones :

TOTAL /4

SERVICIOS BÁSICOS

Agua potable	Con llave dentro de la vivienda	ACEPTABLE	0	0 1 2 3
	Con llave dentro del sitio pero fuera de la vivienda	MEDIO	1	
	Con camión aljibe	GRAVE	2	
	Sin acceso a agua potable	CRÍTICO	3	
Servicio higiénico	WC conectado al alcantarillado	ACEPTABLE	0	0 1 2 3
	WC conectado a fosa séptica	ACEPTABLE	1	
	Letrina sanitaria conectada a pozo negro	DEFICITARIO	2	
	Saneamiento por red a quebrada No tiene servicio higiénico (WC)	CRÍTICO	3	
Electricidad	Conexión segura y formal (medidor propio)	ACEPTABLE	0	0 2
	Conexiones inseguras / Sin acceso a la electricidad / Conexión informal (sin medidor, colgado del alumbrado público)	DEFICITARIO	2	

Observaciones :

TOTAL /8

*Indicadores del CASEN (Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional), Ministerio de Desarrollo Social

0.3 INTERVIEWS

Given the extensive network of actors at play in any given project and the fluid nature of their positionality and working methods observed in other studies, rather than studying the ways in which individual actors or organisations are able to exercise authority over the practices of development and under what circumstances, I concluded that it would be more pertinent to begin by analysing the ways in which their agency is constrained by these networks. As such, interviews were used to identify shared problems, in the same way as I had attempted to prove in my project work on Manila, referring to minimal spatial standards for existing settlements.

Mosse and Lewis propose an approach to policy analysis through the exchanges that happen between scales, organisations and jurisdictions as a way of establishing the agency of individual workers or organisations in accordance with their roles as 'brokers'; connecting discourse with particular institutional practices. Development ethnography situates the development expert as an agent with their own culture and power of influence, though within strict limits. Understanding experts as 'brokers' (Lewis, David, and Mosse, David eds. 2006, 13) positioned at interfaces between knowledges and life-worlds and looking in two directions can provide a dual viewpoint regarding the structural reinforcement of intellectual hegemony, (though it is important to recognise that brokers are not neutral agents operating independently from the major asymmetries of power enforced through the systems they engage with or represent on the ground). By establishing the extents and types of agency which are prevalent in structures that otherwise lack clearly defined boundaries, we can examine how development 'becomes real' through processes of 'mutual enrolment and the interlocking of interests', 'creating context by tying in supporters and so sustaining interpretations' (Lewis, David, and Mosse, David eds. 2006, 13). For this reason, I sought to speak with practitioners

Image 21. A public space project by the Mathare Green Movement (Image by Author, 2018 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 22. The Mathare Social Justice Centre where community organisation activities are undertaken (Image by author, 2019 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 23. An event celebrating 100 years on the UN charter of Human rights, gathering at the Mathare Green Movement's mural. (Image by author, 2019 © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

or organisations who were primarily focused on housing or at least specialised in the field of design as I felt that the language of design development was palpably absent from discourse on development, as well as project reports from the perspective of practice. It was the discourse (and language) of the designer as broker between systems and working methods which seemed to be lacking from studies seeking to account for the influence of policies on people and practices.

In preparation for interviews and to clarify whom I should approach, I began by searching for practices with a visible public profile, either created through physical publishing or through online activity – social media posts or websites. I chose first to undertake an independent search in this way because I wanted to understand to what extent there was a culture of publishing process-based information and whether publicly visible networks were being constructed for knowledge exchange on these procedural aspects of organisation and claim-making. In non-profit architecture, as in other areas of practice, it is surprisingly rare for practices to publish profiles that detail their working methodologies in direct relation to the issues they encounter as opposed to their completed projects. Instead, there is a larger culture of researchers compiling compendium reports, providing an overview of the work of others (Hyde 2013.) (Awan 2011) (Hamdi 2013) (Sinha 2013) (Bruno Mau and the Institute without Borundaries 2004) (Bryan Bell and Katie Wakeford eds. 2008) (Feireiss, Lukas, and Tatjana Schneider. 2020).

I also looked to local actors in Manila, including those involved in the housing projects I had visited such as Urban Poor Associates and Kadamay. I attempted to locate records on those projects which would reveal the roles and responsibilities of different actors at different times. My findings were very limited. I then chose to expand the search beyond specific projects in pursuit of any documentation outlining processes and method. I attempted to restrict my search to movements and practitioners involved with

or concerned with social housing projects or civic organisation around housing claims. I did not include organisations concerned with disaster relief, as I felt that this constituted a substantially different area of policy and politics. Between social movements and design practitioners, the latter were much more likely to publish and maintain websites, making them much easier to find. I began to taxonomize these based on the types of projects that they were involved with and their organisational size or reach. I did this using their published information concerning their focus, funding and past projects. The level of clarity concerning their politics and methodologies was generally patchy, in most cases presented in vague terms through governing documents but this did allow for some tentative initial comparison.

After being frustrated by my attempts to gather materials from websites and publications that would demonstrate a complete or near-complete organisational arc of activities and actors for any one project, I confirmed that interviews would be the most effective way to unravel why that was and to gather more detailed information on the reasoning for different ways of organising, from various perspectives and based on ground experience. However, my initial search did allow me to focus my interviews, enabling me to speak to participants about their approach to publishing and the ways in which they reflect on their work.

In the same way that I had sought to use site visits to gather some insights into the ways in which project 'recipients' experience development ideology as it plays out on the ground, I also planned to use interviews to deepen my understanding of the experiences of practitioners. Expanding on what I was able to uncover from their own public-facing declarations of their methods and positionality, I sought to unravel how they confronted constraints and how this impacted their ethical stance on practice. I also hoped that they would reflect on specific limits to their own agency and how certain limitations impacted their abilities to work with specific types of

movements or in certain ways.

0.3.a) Choice of Interviewees:

I sought interviews with a range of different organisations and practitioners, based on the taxonomy I had built during the prior search for project documentation. I wanted to ensure that I could compare different organisational compositions, scales, scopes and methods with funding sources in order to determine how the tactics behind organisational and methodological decisions related to policy restrictions on the one hand, and how they shaped relationships and working practices on the other.

Whereas I initially sought to speak with as many social movements as design organisations, it was of course, much more difficult to identify and independently initiate contact with the latter. Instead, I relied largely on referrals from other interviewees.

0.3.b) Interview Format

Initially, I had planned to use questionnaires to structure my interviews and request access to internal documents used to structure organisational agreements, partnerships and funding such as governing documents and Memoranda of Understanding. However, this quickly proved to be a barrier to more fluid conversations and the comfort of participants. Many participants were simply unable to produce appropriate documents or did not have the time to locate and share them and I quickly determined that I would not be able to gather enough during this particular project to make any meaningful comparisons. As I noted the desire among participants to elaborate on initial questions and to drive the conversation towards experiences that they felt were important, I very quickly came to change the interview format to that of semi-structured, with very few set questions through which to enter into conversation about the politics of partnership at different phases

of work. Interviews were recorded as sound only. This decision was made to ensure participant comfort and encourage fluid conversation.

Where set questions remained, I made a conscious effort to ensure that they were open, to avoid confirmation bias. Often, interviewees volunteered all desired information when allowed to speak as they chose on the topic but occasionally, I used questions as prompts. Those that remained were as follows:

How is your organisation registered?
Was there a particular reason for which you chose to register in that way?
How many people work in your organisation?
What do you do?
How do you structure project timelines?
How is your work funded?
Do you find that your relationships with funders influence your work?
Are there funders that you choose not to associate with? Why?
How do you come to be involved in new projects?
Are there particular ways in which you approach the people you work with in a new project?
How do you communicate what you do?
Have you adapted your approaches or working methods over the course of your experience?
How do you document those lessons?
What records do you produce in the course of a project?
Where do you store materials produced for a project after the project concludes?
Do you publish reflections on your work and working practices?

Ethically, there were risks in asking people to discuss their funders, their organisations or their governments and for this reason, all interviewees were given the opportunity of anonymity. Many of them took that opportunity and I have not included any information that would betray their identities. My ethics statement, release forms and information sheets also stipulated that interviewees would not be quoted directly without further permission specific to each quote. Instead, all paperwork explained that information would be brought together for comparison and the overall messaging

would be commented upon as part of that comparison. For this reason, I have not included direct quotes in this thesis. This was to ease the interview processes and to allow all contributors to speak freely without additional concern over their exact wording or non-fluency features of speech, something that I felt was especially important for the majority of interviewees who were engaging me in a second language. It also guarded against the possibility that their actual words could be taken out of context in a way that reflected poorly on them – instead, if their interviews were only used to draw comparisons between lessons, any misrepresentation of their input would be entirely my responsibility and assumed as a reflection of my misunderstanding.

0.3.c) Referencing Interviews and mapping findings back onto policy

Not all of the interviews are referenced directly in the final text of this thesis, but they were all illuminating and influential on the thinking behind this piece of work. The reason for that is that over the course of this work, the scenarios on which I became focused narrowed, and some of the earlier interviews were not specifically orientated towards that focus. For example, I spoke to social movements and NGOs who were situated very much in disaster response and I felt that these interviews contributed less to unravelling slower narratives of struggle, especially those struggles for access to stable and affordable housing, as this is an area of international development that receives comparatively little attention and funding (UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office 2022) (Sarah Harcourt and Jorge Rivera 2024). Despite the comparative lack of funding, these slower narratives of struggle anchored in housing claims are also more clearly affected and confined by the schema of data-based progress indicators which are utilised by the United Nations and governments to assess urban conditions against goals.

A further reason for which the text relies heavily on third party policy analysis, reports and theory, in addition to the interview findings, is that it became quickly apparent that for a level of comparison to be drawn that did not seek to homogenise or theorise the approaches of practitioners and social movements on the ground, the comparison needed to be based on the challenges they shared. To do this, the diverse experiences conveyed to me through interviews needed to be triangulated or mapped back onto the policy protocols which were creating different kinds of blocks to practice at different points. As Escobar suggests, Drawing out the 'radical practical implications' (A. Escobar 2012, xvii) of embedded knowledge practices also means reflecting back on the nature of development from such local perspectives, in order to unpack the different impacts of its protocols according to specific project types and geopolitical contexts.

For this critique to be practically meaningful, it follows that those questions of agency, which are so important to the proposition of alternative or counter-methods of production, needed to be examined in relation to the conditions imposed on project processes and outputs by development institutions. Escobar elaborates that, 'as long as institutions and professionals are successfully reproducing themselves materially, culturally and ideologically, certain relations of domination will prevail; and to the extent that this is the case, development will continue to be greatly conceptualized by those in power' (A. Escobar 2012, 106). Redressing this requires engagement with these institutions and professionals, seeking understanding of how and why these narratives and dynamics of ideological domination are reproduced, in order to construct alternatives. As previously stated, the alternatives do not need to be constructed by the researcher or engaged professional; any attempt to create a universal framework of action risks engendering the hegemony which it sets out to critique (B. d. Santos 2005, 16). Yet linking these experiences and methods to the policy sets or ideologies which generate similar problems (experienced

differently in accordance with the ways in which they play out on the ground), gives a mutual contextual basis through which to compare and understand the diverse knowledge practices that push against those blocks in locally specific ways. This is not something that was being identified in my interviews, which were narrower in scope, demonstrating only how the entanglements of different actors and institutional systems locally, come to shape experiences in scenario-specific ways. In these cases, brokers revealed their conceptual visibility to extend only as far as the institutions and regulatory frameworks that they had direct contact with or influence from. It is this level of local, scenario-specific complexity, without a clear relation to any common cause or process which appears to make mutual intelligibility and comparison among struggles so difficult. This realisation led me to the decision that locally specific processes needed to be traced back to aspects of the universal framework in which specific restrictions or challenges originate as a method with which to reveal commonalities between distinct and situationally nuanced struggles.

As stated at the beginning of this section, the goal of this work was not to suggest a universal or shared solution but to demonstrate the possibility of building solidarity around a shared problem. The extent to which a problem is shared among otherwise diverse groups with equally diverse aspirations and organisational dynamics, I argue in accordance with Laclau, should strengthen claims by demonstrating the apparent gravity of the shared problem (Laclau 2005). However, to say that all share a unifying problem while maintaining different identities and aspirations does not suggest that there must be any unifying, single solution. Instead, it suggests that by removing a shared barrier, a variety of possibilities are opened up, to be acted upon by the diverse claimants, who are free to configure their ideological alliances in accordance with their different approaches to the realisation of those possibilities (Laclau 2005).

What became clear in the interviews was the ways in which barriers

to certain modes of collaboration or communication of lessons learned were experienced in different contexts. And so, in chapter four I discuss the ways in which those blocks or barriers appear to be heavily derived from the depoliticised and highly fragmentary structures of funding. This is due to the division of funding streams between separate phases, each defined by precise areas of expertise with distinct outputs. I use this analysis to discuss the fragmentary impact on narratives of struggle insofar as both practitioners and social movements are pushed to focus on single issues or aspects of struggle.

0.4 COLLATING FINDINGS WITH OTHER PERSPECTIVES

During interviews and site visits, I had asked about documentation from project processes and had received some images from AlterPlan. However, these were taken from a range of projects, making it difficult to illustrate the complete process behind any singular output. Kadamay indicated the maps they were using to plan their upgrading projects, which were kept on public display in their offices alongside responsibility charts that helped the community organise collective tasks concerned with maintenance of shared facilities. Yet, they did not have records available of their legal claims or funding agreements. Most interviewees said that they learned lessons from each project but that they did not keep records of the processes through which those lessons were learned or they had not had time and finances to collate and aggregate records in such a way as to make them intelligible to others. Ateliermob suggested that they had a book upcoming on their 5-year project in Terras Da Costa, wherein they designed a community kitchen which is referenced in this thesis. Despite having since been completed, unfortunately, this book is not currently available in English. Ateliermob do not have an extensive overview of lessons from their projects available publicly on their website though they have a 'news' section which provides brief updates (Ateliermob

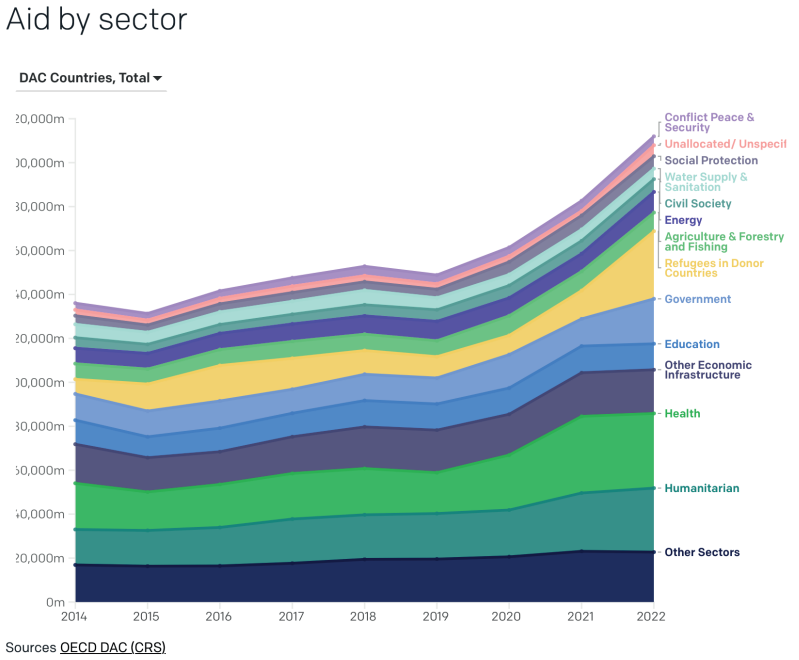


Image 24. OECD aid allocations by sector, graph on One Data 2024, research provided by Sarah Harcourt and Jorge Rivera, accessed 03/09/2024 (url, https://data.one.org/topics/official-development-assistance/ © data.one.org, all rights reserved)

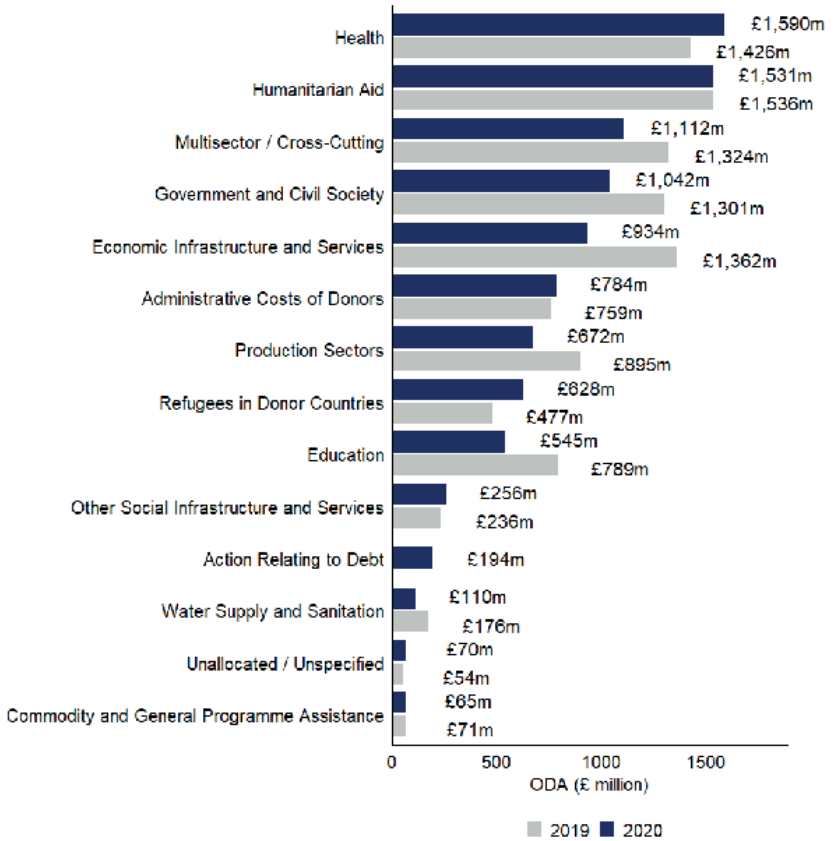


Image 25. UK aid and development funding allocations by sector. Source: UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Accredited Official Statistics on International Development: final UK aid spend 2020, published 2022 © UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, all rights reserved

2024). AlterPlan also have a news and blogs section on their website but Sarah Redoblado informed me in interviews that this was not updated regularly due to time constraints. Alterplan also had intentions to publish online and printed resources on their website but this area remains under construction at the time of completing this thesis (AlterPlan 2021).

I continued in my search for other organisations who were producing materials of this kind and found additional partial material from organisations such as C-MAP, Iconoclasistas and Data-Labe which are reviewed together with the materials provided by interviewees in Chapter five. Further insights on social movements and collaborating NGOs including MST, MTST, the Piqueteres, Red Compass Movement and Túpac Amaru were drawn together from third party research. I also utilised third party literature to gain an understanding of the legal and political landscape in which social movements and NGOs operate; to provide further context for the information I was able to gather from public facing media produced by the organisations themselves, and to comment on information that I found to be lacking. I utilised a series of very detailed third party legal, political and financial evaluations of NGO organisation and practice. I reached out to authors who had produced legal reports for the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes for interview but did not receive a response. As such, I continued to draw parallels between the literature and my interviews with practitioners, academics and social movements.

After reading many articles concerned with the results of housing projects in general, I went in search of documents produced by key multilateral agencies involved in funding and policy development at the international scale to understand how those projects were being reported on and how the processes of design and implementation were being considered in post-completion project documentation.

The world bank archive (World Bank Group n.d.) contains the most

comprehensive amount of project documentation however, the reports do not outline how processes were developed according to the claims or level of social organisation on site or, what the impacts of design approach might be (World Bank 2024). I reviewed project report documents for significant housing projects, beginning with the Tondo Foreshore project that I had conducted site visits to (The World Bank 1977) (The World Bank 1986). However, I found very little pertaining to process and that which I did find was extremely general rather than attached to any one project, site, or recipient. Such reports were more detailed in terms of financing and project timelines and gave an assessment of how successful the projects were or weren't on very technical terms (The World Bank 1977)(The World Bank 1986).

I was unable to find any project-specific information from UN-Habitat departments such as the Participatory Slum-Upgrading Programme (UN-Habitat 2024) but I did locate 'guidance' documents for conducting city-wide upgrading programmes (UN-Habitat 2014) (UN-Habitat 2011), and a 'global action plan' (UN-Habitat 2022) (UN-Habitat 2021). I also found numerous reports on the status of progress towards the SDGs (UN-Habitat 2019) (UN-Habitat 2022) (UN-Habitat 2018) and the impacts of UN-Habitat protocols (UN-Habitat 2018) (UN-Habitat 2022) but all these reports remained frustratingly general, collating and comparing numerical data on the global scale rather than using specific projects to interrogate methods and processes. It was for this reason that I endeavoured to take on a professional position in UN-Habitat so that I might become acquainted with the structures and protocols of the agency.

I also undertook searches for development project funding opportunities more widely - from governments, development banks, and private trusts. I began by running basic google searches and later, expanded this by creating a database of funders I had found listed on the websites of NGOs. The language utilised by the majority of funders I found to be vague but following very clear patterns,

Image 26. Map showing transformation strategy of Kadamay district in Tondo Foreshore displayed in Kadamay offices, Manila. Map plan by Kadamay with support from Urban Poor Associates, Photograph by Author 2017
© Kadamay, all rights reserved

Image 27. Livelihood chart tracking savings and resource pooling by teams across Kadamay communities, Kadamay offices, Tondo, Manila. Photograph by author, 2017
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most prominently sharing in a concern over 'scalability', which was consistently associated with 'impact'. A very significant majority of those referenced the Sustainable Millenium Goals directly, indicating the political interrelation between multilateral agendas and funding at all scales. It is for this reason that I reference the Sustainable Development Goals and New Urban Agenda consistently throughout the thesis and offer some analysis of the ways in which the vagueness of these universal goals translates into specific data matrices and methods for measuring their progress. I argue that these methods of measuring constitute a block to other types of measurement, analysis and narrative building, preventing them from contributing to knowledge and informing policy on urban planning.

0.5 EMBEDDED RESEARCH: PROFESSIONAL POSITION IN THE UNITED NATIONS

Having been unable to find concrete reports on specific implementation processes from development agencies or clear outlines indicating the way in which supranational organisations such as development banks or the United Nations structure their involvement in projects, I sought a position in the United Nations Human Settlements Agency (UN-Habitat). I was transparent about my desire to understand the internal organisation and productive processes of the agency and the purpose of my enquiries. I spent three months initially, working in the Nairobi headquarters in the Research and Capacity Development Department, on the City Prosperity Initiative (CPI). This was a department and space that was shared with the Global Urban Observatory and the Best Practices unit. After leaving, I was then employed for research and policy editing work by the Urban Planning and Design Lab in collaboration with the Urban Economy unit. I worked on urban and regional research and planning projects across Asia, North Africa and Eastern Europe.

When working for the United Nations in the Research and Capacity Development branch, I was focused on urban analysis and policy writing. During my three months in Nairobi with the CPI, I worked on several urban assessments using the City Prosperity Index (UN-Habitat n.d.) and co-authored the implementation methodology for the Citizen Perception Index (UN-Habitat n.d.). I attempted to collate information on donor frameworks in accordance with different areas of interest and geographic distribution. This was a project that I had to restrict to certain policy frameworks in accordance with what was available to me. I also had access to the database of *Best Practices*, a UN-Habitat project which seeks to reward NGOs and peoples' organisations for particular projects and methodologies. I was able to review this database in depth, however, the data is also focused on outputs, providing very little background or procedural information. My work at the CPI required that I familiarise myself thoroughly with the Sustainable Development Goals and their progress indicators, as well as the New Urban Agenda, which had only recently been finalised under the authorship of colleagues in the Research and Capacity Development department. The CPI utilised selective SDG indicators from SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and added dimensions with their own data collection tools in order to brand itself as a more qualitative method with which to track progress and generate comparisons between participating cities. The most notable of the additional dimensions was the street connectivity index, which used random sample areas to establish a mean connectivity value generated by cross referencing the total lengths, width and number of intersections in a street network (averaged by square kilometre sample areas) (UN-Habitat City Prosperity Initiative 2015). Working in this department required that I review extensive literature on policy, and numerous past reports from all related departments in UN-Habitat. I also conducted independent research on which to base new, targeted project proposals that would be used to garner interest from municipal governments.

During my time in UN Habitat, I reached out to colleagues in the

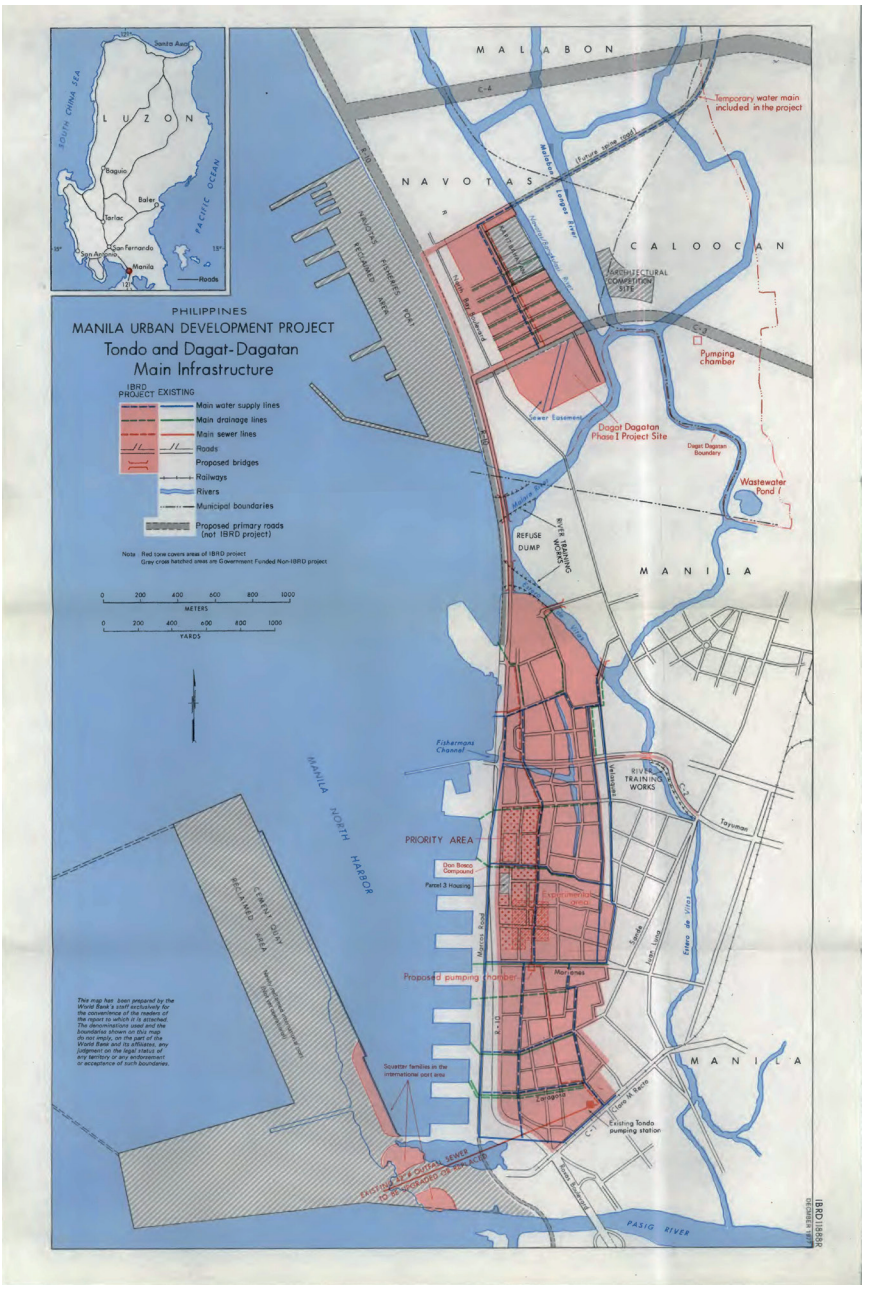
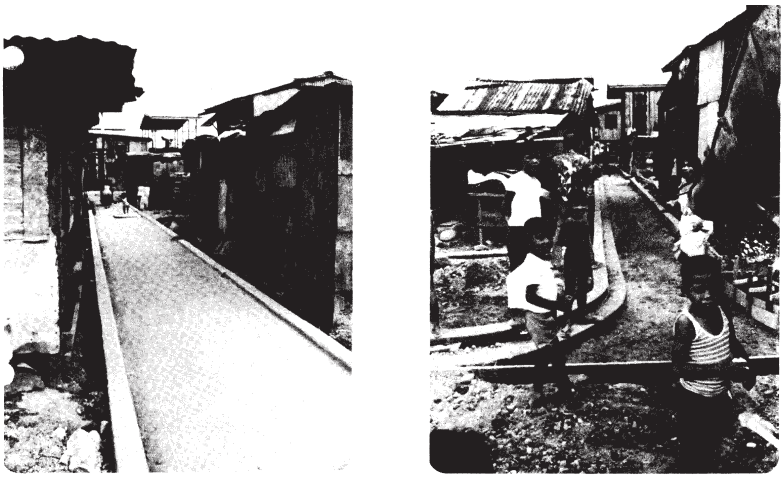


Image 28. map from The World Bank Report on the Status of the Tondo Foreshore Development Project, 1977 (© The World Bank 1977, all rights reserved)

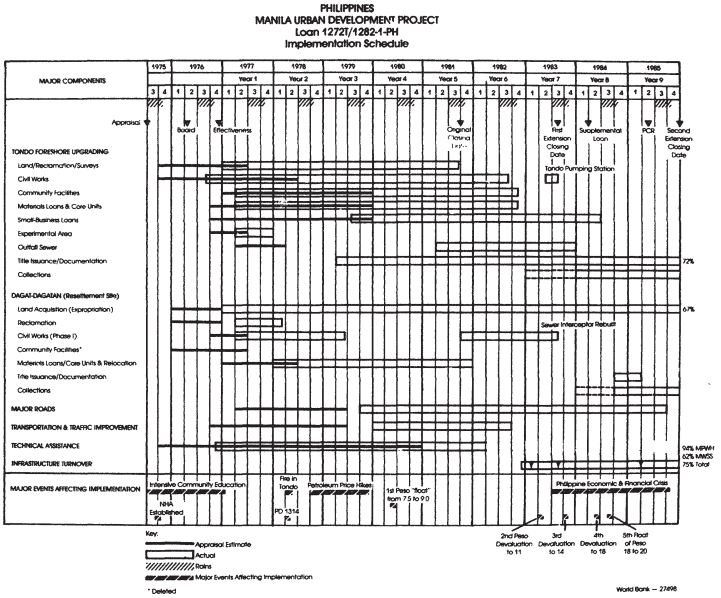
Image 29. Photographic documentation of actions taken on Tondo Foreshore upgrading project from World Bank: Manila Urban Development Project (Loan 1272T/1282-1-PH) Project Completion Report, 1986 (© The World Bank 1986, all rights reserved)



Street and Footpath Construction

Bottom photograph shows substantial upgrading of buildings already underway

Image 30. Image of disbursements schedule from World Bank: Manila Urban Development Project (Loan 1272T/1282-1-PH) Project Completion Report, 1986 (© The World Bank 1986, all rights reserved)



Housing and Participatory Slum-Upgrading units seeking any materials which outlined their engagement with design processes, including drawings or even photographs of any projects that they had completed but they were unable to produce any such material. This was not because they did not have access to certain types of materials but because the records simply did not exist or at least were not retained. This demonstrated to me, the sincere lack of importance attributed to actual design and the process of designing in such projects. In the one branch of the UN concerned exclusively with the built environment, I was one of a small number of actual architects or spatial designers. The department was instead, overwhelmingly occupied and run by economists, communications graduates and political scientists.

During my time in Nairobi in 2018, UN-Habitat underwent significant changes under the direction of new executive-director Maimunah Mohd Sharif. I was fortunate to be part of a taskforce charged with assessing the stakeholder participation groups that Habitat engaged, the methods through which they were categorised and the projects that each group was affiliated with. Unfortunately, I was unable to remain in Nairobi to complete the project, but it was nevertheless useful to the hypothesis of this thesis. The categorisation of stakeholders was extremely technical and difficult to unravel in relation to the ways the categories intersected with engagement frameworks. Simply locating, accessing, and collating past documents which dealt in different ways with stakeholder groups was extremely time-consuming.

The complexity of stakeholder categorisation in accordance with the engagement frameworks, was reflective of the highly technocratic siloing which occurred all over UN-Habitat. While I had been working on a CPI project in Wuhan for example and was beginning to put together analysis of the city's connectivity in terms of access to open public space, I found that the department of 'urban public space' had already conducted a project in Wuhan. As such, I sought

Image 31. example of knowledge-documentation from UN-Habitat, A Practical Guide for Conducting: Housing Profiles, 2011 p26
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FIGURE 5: **Housing Sector Reform Cycle**

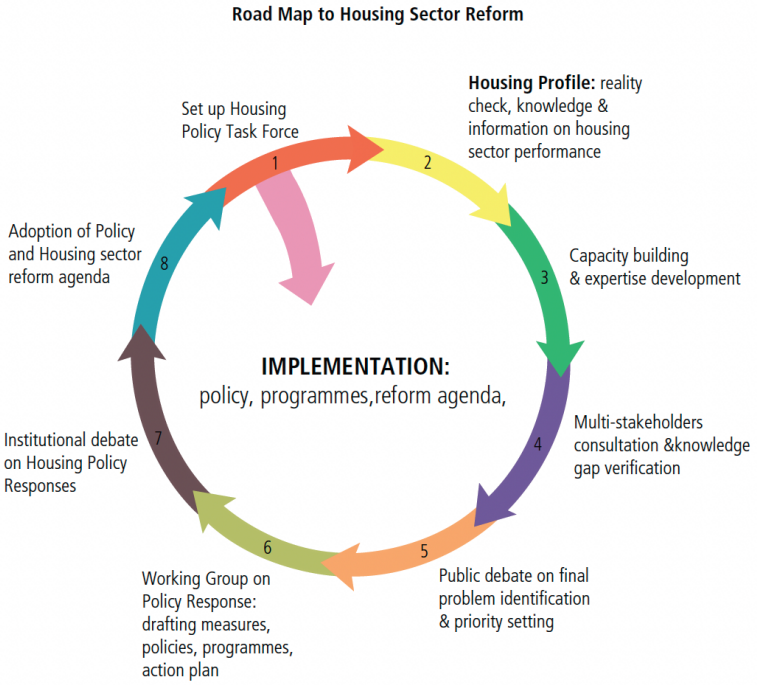

Image 32. example of knowledge-documentation from UN-Habitat, A Practical Guide for Conducting: Housing Profiles, 2011 p29
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FIGURE 6: **The Housing Profile Knowledge Sourcing Process**

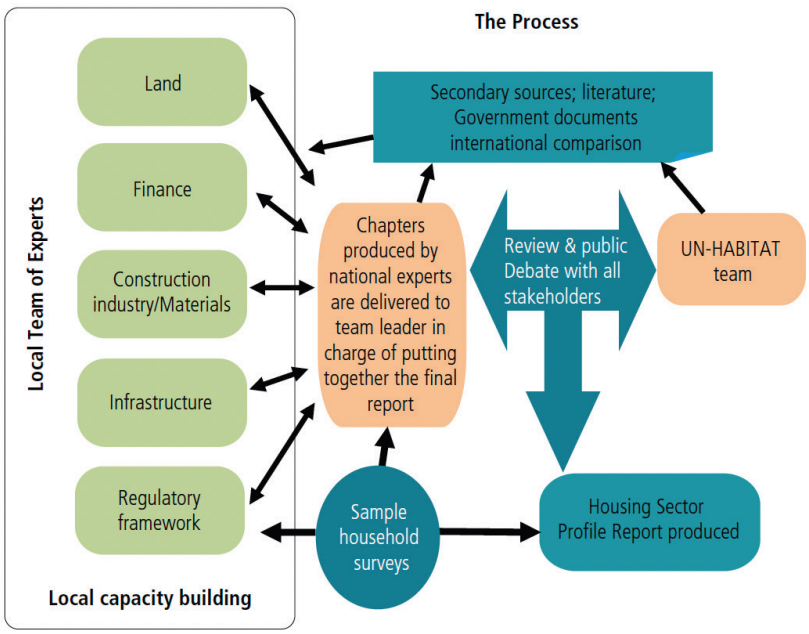

FIGURE 7: **The Housing Profile Process in Sequence**

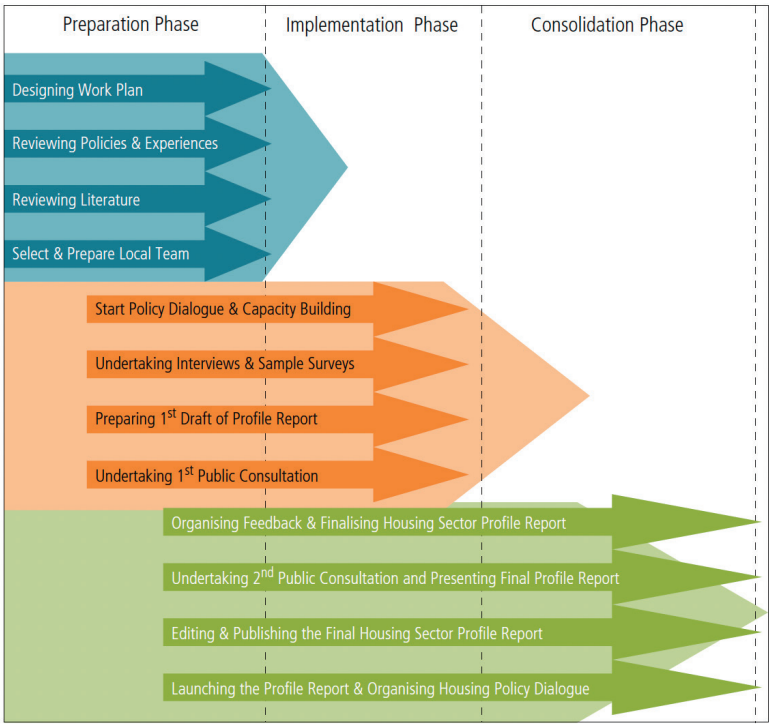

Image 33. example of knowledge-documentation from UN-Habitat, A Practical Guide for Conducting: Housing Profiles, 2011 p37
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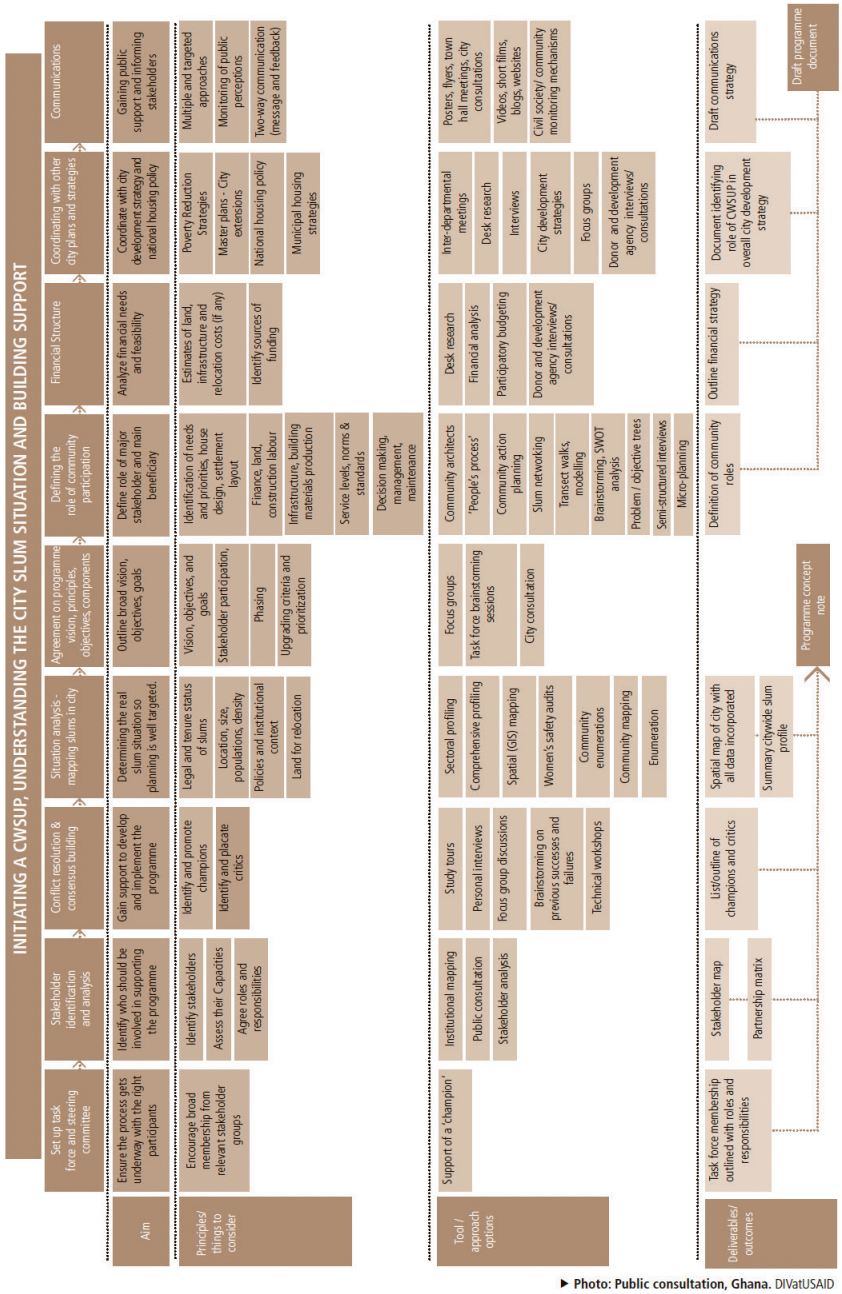

▶ **Photo: Public consultation, Ghana.** DIVatUSAID

Image 34. example of attempt to comprehensively convey processes for slum-upgrading programmes. Not the vagueness of language and lack of indication on what should result from each phase. from UN-Habitat, A Practical Guide to Designing, Planning, and Executing Citywide Slum Upgrading Programmes 2014, p66. © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved

out colleagues who had worked on the project expecting to be able to collaborate and avoid unnecessary repetition of work. However, I was unable ultimately to obtain any files from the unit and this became a common theme when attempting to share knowledge and collaborate across units and departments in general. This is because multiple units and departments have been created with ever narrower fields of focus, whose work overlaps in many ways, but which are funded separately. This means that departments and units within departments are often working in the same cities or areas, producing overlapping work but refusing to share it because they are forced to compete for funding. At other times, the siloing of information into different units and across specific individuals was so intense that one might not even be able to trace which colleague was working on what, or in what capacity their contributions were supporting projects.

After my time spent in the CPI, I undertook several urban planning and design consultancies in which I revised research and policy recommendations, as well as accompanying design-based strategic outlines for the Urban Planning and Design Lab and the Urban Economy branches. These projects ranged in scale from city-wide to national and were undertaken between 2018 and 2022. I edited and contributed to numerous project documents which provided detailed analysis of local political structures and mechanisms of taxation but remained very unspecific in relation to consultation with the public or social movements. My experience on these projects strengthened my understanding of the extent to which practice is separated from theory in policy and project strategy development.

I treated my own position in the UN as an observer coming from a position of what Michel Fehr refers to as "non-governmental politics" which refrains from attempting to occupy the realm of governance, either in order to reform or dismantle it. I continued to see myself as philosophically aligned with the 'extrainstitutional' practices of social movements (Goldstone 2004, 335-336), even

while diligently executing my duties as an agent of a supranational institution. As Fehr says of nongovernmental activists, their reluctance to occupy and control institutional politics 'does not mean that the border between institutional and extrainstitutional politics cannot be crossed - individuals may move between work in NGOs, governments, and private entities - but despite the potential fluidity of individuals, the distinction between the two political systems remains clear. (Feher 2007, 12) This is because nongovernmental activism is not specifically concerned with who a governing body is led by, or for whom, 'but how government is exercised' (Feher 2007, 14).

0.6 CHANGING FROM 'BY PRACTICE' TO 'BY THESIS'

This thesis was originally designed to be produced *by practice,* to be tested through two pilot projects which were designed in collaboration with partners from Manila, Philippines and Lima, Perú. When during the conclusion of the project, the coronavirus pandemic made the pilot projects impossible, it was finished by thesis. Despite the inability to complete the pilot projects during the course of this writing, the process through which they were devised provided important insights for the future of this work. It provided me with insights into the processes of establishing partnerships and the difficulties of planning clear timelines when coordinating projects internationally. Given the time constraints, those pilot projects could not realistically have provided a complete picture of the counter-practice that I propose in this thesis. Instead, they would have been used to build more personal reflections on the kinds of methods I already examine in the thesis from the perspectives of my interviewees and third-party sources. However, I was also able to draw parallels with my experiences in past practice. While I had also hoped that the pilot projects could be an opportunity to explore ideas of counter-visuality (Mirzoeff 2011) that I speak about in the work, those explorations will be better undertaken in

future work, with sufficient time to engage in longer processes of embedded knowledge-exchange on the ground. To strategise that future undertaking effectively, I felt that the framework of reference needed to be developed first, which would also provide grounding for a much more heterogeneous set of contributions from lots of different actors to be brought into conversation with each other.

I later added to the methodological discussions I had undertaken through interviews and site visits with studies presented in third party literature that further illustrated processes of prefigurative organisation and production. These allowed me to draw together the different potential uses or outcomes of otherwise similar methods such as mapping and surveying, depending on when they are employed, to whom they are targeted, and how they are represented. This is the focus of chapter five. This also allowed for speculation on how these methods can be represented as knowledge products which render them mutually intelligible for sharing and proliferating. I do not suggest that any of these methods should be considered prescriptive, but that a thoughtful combination of these *types* of methods or practices can be used in any configuration to constitute a counter-practice, defined by its adherence to the principles I define in chapter six to guard against inadvertent co-optation or recruitment into the value systems which it seeks to challenge and expand.

When I took the decision to deliver the project by thesis, I felt that I was able to make use of the significant research I had initially conducted on policy and development politics to recontextualise the findings of the interviews, my experience working within the United Nations, and my own past practice, in an original way. It became clear that building a network for knowledge-sharing as counter-practice was a life-long project that would depend on multiple field collaborations with practitioners and social movements, and which would need to be structured as research projects in themselves. Instead, establishing the need and potential for this

to be undertaken by and in diffuse networks, while clarifying the traps and blocks which require addressing as part of the alternative knowledges being shared, seemed urgent and practical. Defining a set of basic principles that promote the use of spatial aesthetics as a way of creating mutual intelligibility became the conclusive framing for that long-term future project. Creating this framing for future work was a much more suitable aspiration for the PhD format and timeline, and that reformulation allowed me time and space to clarify my future goals and ethics as a researcher practitioner.

0.7 MY AGENCY THROUGHOUT THE WORK

During my research into social movement knowledge-sharing, development ethnography and policy, spatial politics, and NGO structures and methods, I consistently encountered problems with the *aggregation* of knowledges or experiences. My inability to locate clear records narrating the processes of establishing claims among groups of individuals, navigating differences, choosing organisational structures, strategising funding applications and evidencing both the bases of claims and the feasibility of proposals demonstrated to me that there are two problems: Firstly, any records of those processes are produced by different individuals, in the language of their particular contributing expertise, fragmenting the narratives of struggle into disciplinary silos. Secondly, that there is a consistent reticence to claim agency over materials and commentary which relates to the experiences or knowledge of others. This is something that I intuit from the basic lack of public facing records on such processes but is also touched upon with varying degrees of specificity in interviews. For example, Sheela Patel expressed sincere concern over sharing data with researchers, because past collaborations had not led to any material benefit for the communities to whom the data belonged. Indeed, there was concern that because enumerative community data is used tactically by SDI in private negotiations with government agencies, parties outside

of that negotiation process could publicise data at inopportune moments and allow for it to be used in ways that undermine social claims. This is clearly a very practical and reasonable concern, and I do not argue in this work for greater circulation of raw data but instead, speak extensively about the values of more qualitative informational representation as a way of sharing knowledge while guarding against co-optation. However, this left another, more heavily theorised concern over acting as a representative for the experiences of others. This is something which I tackle at various points, in different ways in the thesis and can be a slippery concept. In chapter two, section 2.5, I speak about the potential for external representation to create and uphold an illusion of participation which can prevent progress towards genuine inclusion of social movement voices in policy development and project strategy. In chapter three, I speak about the ways in which technical categories and numerical indices used to measure urban, social life enforce the requirements for and legitimacy of intermediaries who act as representatives. In chapter four, I discuss the impacts of these universalised constructs on the ability to build, share and grow social movement knowledges – both on the part of social movements themselves and on those researchers and designers who seek to support such a project. Here, I acknowledge that though the dangers of representation remain for any well-intentioned collaborating practitioner, fundamentally, a supportive communicative practice is required to aid in translation between and exchange of experiential knowledges. This should not be a controversial claim, I simply build on something that Santos has already outlined as much needed, to overcome the 'fragmentation and atomization that are the dark side of diversity and multiplicity' (B. d. Santos 2005, 16). As Santos stated in 2005, 'This dark side has lately been pointedly acknowledged by the movements and NGOs. The truth is, however, that none of them individually has had the capacity or credibility to confront it, for, in attempting it, it runs the risk of falling prey to the situation it wishes to remedy.' (B. d. Santos 2005, 16)

I recognise the delicacy of this problem, and I do not believe that it is possible to suggest any single type of methodological framework without producing the same issues that I set out to counter in this thesis. But I do not believe that this is what is required, nor is it the same as claiming agency over experiences or events that we do become witness to as part of our engagements with social movements and struggle.

In his paper from 2000, Asef Bayat asked a very important question; if we recognise that the poor are 'able to resist in many ways (by discourse or actions, individual or collective, overt or covert) the systems of domination, then what is the need to assist them? If they are already politically able citizens, why should we expect the state or any other agency to empower them?' (Bayat, 2000). I see the answer to this as both realistic, and human: Realistically, there are barriers which prevent all from engaging equally in the systems that govern us, and those barriers might more likely be meaningfully breached through collaboration with those with access to the tools of privilege, who speak the languages of governance. Humanistically, it is human to seek connections with others and through connection, understanding of the experiences that shape other human lives and social structures.

I argue that to speak about interactions in terms of empowerment and disempowerment betrays the mutual benefit that can be offered through collaboration, instead suggesting that there are only two states of being – with power or without.[3] For redress of this

3 'It goes without saying that social movements are not free of contradictions; they operate inside heteronomous societies, that is, in the middle of a more or less hostile environment, and in terms of political culture and political practices one can find quite often problems such as imitation of statecraft and state-like structures at the microlevel (or to remember Foucault [1984], at the level of the 'microphysics of power') on the part of personalized and authoritarian leaders, ambiguities, and so on. However, civil society and even the poor are not only or entirely 'powerless' people who need to be 'empowered'; 'empowerment' can of course mean revolutionary changes sometimes, but it is also a process. A process of conquering autonomy and overcoming heteronomy.' (De Souza, 2006, p. 329)

imbalance to be achieved, a choice of scenarios is implied: either those with power must choose to benevolently bestow a share on those without, or else those without must seize it for themselves. A further implication is that those with any level of access to systems of power are automatically in an elevated position over those with less and must choose either to assume that benevolent authority by sharing their power with others, or step aside so that those others might seize it. This encourages practitioners and researchers to step back from the experiential aspects of narratives of struggle, for fear of laying claim to something which is not theirs or risk disempowering others with naïve applications of 'expertise' (Freire 2018).

While I acknowledge these risks, I suggest that one does not need to claim an experience as their own in order to describe it (Latour 1996, 374-377).[4] Ownership of an experience need not be conferred automatically to the person charged with constructing the account of the event to which it pertains (Latour 1996).

In this research, I was not attempting to weave together a narrative directly from the perspective of practitioners and social movements in the global south in order to displace myself from the authorship of the work. Instead, my approach was to seek different perspectives from multiple sides of complex interpersonal and interorganisational relationships, to build a picture of how different people experience those relational structures. The intention was not to recount these

4 'ANT: it is a method to describe the deployment of associations like semiotics; it is a method to describe the generative path of any narration. It does not say anything about the shape of entities and actions, but only what the recording device should be that would allow entities to be described in all their details. ANT places the burden of theory on the recording, not on the specific shape that is recorded. […] Instead of constantly predicting how an actor should behave and which associations are allowed a priori, ANT makes no assumption at all, and in order to re- main uncommitted it needs to set its instrument by insisting on infinite pliability and absolute freedom. In itself ANT is not a theory of action, no more than cartography is a theory on the shape of coast lines and deep sea ridges; it just qualifies what the observer should suppose in order for the coast lines to be recorded in their fine fractal patterns. Any shape is possible provided it is obsessively coded' (Latour 1996, 374)

stories directly but to build a sense of positioning for myself around a knowledge of and sensitivity to the way certain practices impact the experiences of others and ourselves, what they allow us to do with others, and on what terms we are able to build relationships around those practices. I hoped also that this contribution could assist others in their conscious decision-making around positioning, agency and collaborative production.

In the project I often talk about allied researchers and allied designers. This is to recognise that these two types and areas of practice often become separated into what is considered theory or practice. They are often differently positioned, with different requirements for demonstrating impact, and they therefore adhere to different ethical and methodological frameworks. However, I have approached this project identifying as both designer and researcher and do not believe that the separation between these two disciplines is genuine in practice. It is an illusion, but an illusion with some tangible consequences. Those consequences lie in the ability to apply for funding and the documentary aesthetics that convey those practices to others. I discuss this in more detail and consider the challenges posed both to researchers and designers in chapter four.

According to the findings of this thesis, how a researcher/practitioner situates themselves in a project is impactful on the collaborative processes they are able to pursue in terms of; a) How one builds relationships and b) how one represents and shares the knowledge produced from those relationships. These two stages of collaboration require separate conversations.

Firstly, from my own experience and drawing from literature and interviews, I found that the premise for and framing of first interactions with communities or individuals, is far more important than how later interactions are structured. The timing of these initial approaches in relation to the events in which the other is embroiled is part of this (Interview, Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado 30/10/2019)

(Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva15/07/2019) (Racelis 2003) (Interview, Mary Racelis 02/02/2018) (Arcilla 2018)(Interview, Chester Arcilla 22/01/18) (Arenas 2015) (Ataöv 2007) (Holston 2009) (Bayat 2000). Whether or not a community is organised, whether they have had experiences working with other professionals on their claims and how positive any past experiences may or may not have been, all change the tone and openness of communities and individuals in struggle. Additionally, who a professional choses to ally themselves with or on what basis can be determinate, not only of perceptions external to those alliances but also of what other relationships can be built around those ties, and what funding can be sought to support them (Arcilla 2018)(Interview, Techo Para Chile: Vincente Stiepovich 22/12/2019)(Interview, Mary Racelis 02/02/2018) (C. A. Arcilla 2019)

In this way, I found that my position as a researcher practitioner from the global north, while presenting some challenges to translation and cultural understanding, was largely of positive benefit to my ability to build relationships, as long as I did not overthink the meaning of that positioning in relation to that of those I engaged. By this I mean that over-structuring interactions and initial contact on the assumption of one's own position of privilege over those they seek contact with can cause more problems than it seeks to address. As De Souza points out, 'civil society and even the poor are not only or entirely 'powerless' people who need to be 'empowered'' (De Souza 2006, 329). As above, over-formalised approaches to communities can become alienating to some individuals, due to language divides, differing interests or unknown cultural divides and hierarchies in groups (this is discussed more fully in chapters four and five). Where this question of pre-determined structures and agendas came to bear most critically in my own work has been in my interactions with groups. I felt that shyness or distance was created not only by people's suspicion of me as an outsider but often by group dynamics that I had not understood before interacting with the group as a whole. As I discuss

in chapter four, it can also be created by the languages used and the extent to which the interaction is framed around a particular topic or goal. Predetermined frameworks for meetings or clearly defined agendas for the findings can lead to disaffection among those who feel that their views may not be directly relevant or who may not agree with the terms in which their situations are presented or described.[5]

However, I found that declaring one's own personal interests and political orientation is not the same as using those facts to pre-structure interactions. Further, claiming one's political orientation in a project does not entail denying one's privilege but understanding how privilege can transform perception of behaviours and norms in both directions (Dadusc 2013) (C. A. Arcilla 2019) (Galdas 2017) (Shrestha 2006) (Mirzoeff 2011) (Strathern 2017). Once declared, privilege can also be leveraged openly (C. A. Arcilla 2019). Both Dadusc and Arcilla outline the process of 'unlearning' as an element of the research process that transforms both the relationship to the collective involved, and to types of production that stem from the engagement. Again, this does not mean denying or relinquishing one's own privileges in order to subvert power imbalances but instead, giving thoughtful consideration to the ways in which the scientific, 'objective' dialectics of academia, can be directly constrictive of the way in which relationships are formed and articulated. Arcilla explains that 'the process of unlearning privilege—including a constant struggle against the traditional hierarchical dichotomy between the researched and researcher—is critical to generating liberative knowledge based on subaltern

5 In a further example, members of MTD de Solano stated in conversation with situaciones colectivas stated that "What we never do is to come out when a super-structural power tries to convene us, when an organization with a pre-determined political agenda tries to mobilize us; we analyze and decide upon a situation according to our own agenda (MTD de Solano, Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados (MTD) de Solano, and Colectivo Situaciones, 2002) (https://libcom.org/library/piquetes-argentinas-unemployed-build-direct-democracy-basic-needs)

political practices *and the scholars' symbolic capital'*[6] (C. A. Arcilla 2019, 62 - emphasis mine).

As Dadusc points out, requirements for funding push academics to produce scientifically structured projects that develop innovative theoretical knowledge and contribute to their discipline, at the same time as generating insights that can be practically applicable for policy-makers (Dadusc, 2013, p. 48).[7] This means generating clear objectives for the findings of research, *prior* to its undertaking, which can be shown to be applicable to other fields, practices and areas of knowledge-production. This is something which Kim Tallbear also cites directly, stating that to build a more democratic model of knowledge production 'that serves not only those who inquire and their institutions but also those who are inquired upon', [...] 'Research must then be conceived in less linear ways without necessarily knowable goals at the outset.' (Tallbear 2014, 2). Tallbear clarifies that this does not mean that we should not 'articulate specific goals' but that those goals should only be considered as

6 Rather than hiding or disowning academic privilege, Arcilla explains that leveraging privilege can be an important part of generating productive alliances. He describes a project of his in which he was able to leverage his social capital as an academic working at a foreign university to build connections with state agencies and gain access to project information and key policies. In projects such as this, in which there is conflict between communities being faced with eviction on one side, and government agencies and private enterprise on the other, access to information is not often not guaranteed for the communities in struggle. Presenting oneself as an outsider and utilising the social capital that often comes with the status of academic can prove valuable in these instances. Of course, this entails taking on a certain amount of personal risk since sharing that privileged information with communities can cause backlash from the providing institutions, which can have actual impact on one's ability to approach future work (C. A. Arcilla 2019). When working nationally, this risk can be elevated by the extension of government power into the workings of academic institutions. This shared risk however, Arcilla describes as a powerful catalyst for solidarity across differences of experience and agency. (C. A. Arcilla 2019, 64)

7 The attention of funders on science and policy utility means, according to Dadusc, that 'academics often research and write with one eye on academia and the other one on governments, but there seem to be little awareness on how these requirements embody politics of truth that confine research practices to specific modes of knowledge.' (Dadusc, 2013, p. 48) The emphasis on audiences of research in institutions of power means that the work produced can often unwittingly dismiss or avoid confronting the power that 'academic modes of knowing' can exercise over the social conditions that are analysed. (Dadusc, 2013, p. 48)

'guideposts' (Tallbear 2014, 80).

This returns us to the second conversation on collaborative practices, regarding how knowledge is represented and shared. Rethinking the goals of knowledge, also means rethinking the outputs in terms not only of the audiences we seek to reach but how such knowledge can be tangibly performed in the world and who is likely to be moved to act with it, to what ends. The presumption of the researcher-researched divide is also deeply impactful on the ways in which researchers determine the kinds of outputs that will be produced from research and how or where they will be disseminated (A. Appadurai 1999). Here too, the problem of 'impact', not only in academia or the professional subject area but more widely, in terms of policy, society and culture, nationally and internationally, is central (Galdas 2017). There is also what Appadurai describes as a problem of 'shelf life', which he suggests constitutes deep methodological challenges: 'For most researchers, the trick is how to choose theories, define frameworks, ask questions, and design methods that are most likely to produce research with a plausible shelf life. Too grand a framework or too large a set of questions and the research is likely not be funded, much less to produce the ideal shelf life. Too myopic a framework, too detailed a set of questions, and the research is likely to be dismissed by funders as trivial, and even when it is funded, to sink without a bubble in the ocean of professional citations.' (A. Appadurai 1999, 12)

This also creates a burden, especially in qualitative research, of appearing unbiased or distant, to create work that is detached from questions of 'morality and political interest' (A. Appadurai 1999, 14) or personal opinion (Galdas 2017). However, to remain entirely detached from personal political interest and opinion or personal ethics and moral understanding means to remain detached relationally from others, and from their experiences of struggle. To a certain extent, it can prevent a researcher from building genuine solidarity with others, which requires an extension of 'care'

(Tallbear 2014) or to 'risk[s] an act of love' (Freire 2018, 50).[8] As Tallbear suggests, personal investment can be definitive of whether a researcher is able to truly "care" for their subjects and as such whether they are able to 'stand' with them. It is this "care" that Tallbear suggests is essential to her practice which she describes as moving 'towards faithful knowledges, towards co-constituting my own knowledge in concert with the acts and claims of those who I inquire among' (Tallbear 2014, 83).

During this work, I was consistently guided by the problem that I had begun to unravel, of creating a framework for coordinated knowledge-production among social movements and allied professionals – a culture or network of production which was contextually complete to the extent that it would be mutually intelligible and thus, actionable in different contexts. This required a knowledge ecology consisting of practical depth rather than abstract overviews or stories, yet comprehensive enough in its outward or upward view, as well as inward, that it would be adaptable outside of the very specific places and scenarios that it reflects upon. I am not the first to call for such a knowledge ecology or network (B. d. Santos 2018) (B. d. Santos 2005) (Nunes 2021) (A. Appadurai 1999) and yet, it was not graspable to me during this journey. From my interviews, it appeared that it was not graspable to others working on the ground either. And so, I deduced that it is not sufficient to call for this ecology, one needs to provide tangible suggestions as to its potential form and procedures of production. Yet, I was aware of the problem of knowledge 'co-optation', of misrepresentation, and of speaking on behalf of others (Nunes 2021) (Dadusc 2013). I was conscious of the dichotomy which Santos speaks of as the need for

8 'The oppressor is solidary with the oppressed only when he stops regarding the oppressed as an abstract category and sees them as persons who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voice, cheated in the sale of their labor—when he stops making pious, sentimental, and individualistic gestures and risks an act of love. True solidarity is found only in the plenitude of this act of love, in its existentiality, in its praxis.' (Freire 2018, 49-50)

a mutually recognisable framework for translation which actively opposes any unifying theory. Santos' calls for such a framework is accompanied by the claim that this is necessary if we are to address fragmentation and atomization of social movement knowledges through aggregation and comparison. I argue that this kind of system is also what is required to address Appadurai's parallel claim that 'The single greatest obstacle to grassroots globalization—in relation to the global power of capital—is the lack of a clear picture among their key actors of the political, economic, and pedagogic advantages of counterglobalization.' (A. Appadurai 1999, 17).

And so, although I agree with Santos' suggestion that a precise methodology cannot be prescribed directly without becoming hegemonic and restrictive, I suggest that we can study and faithfully record existing methodologies, not as a way to taxonomise or codify them as objects in themselves, but as a vantage point within the local (Lefevre's 'near order'), from which to unpack the problematic impositions of the global (Lefevre's 'far order') (Lefebvre 1996). As Dadusc suggests from her experience engaging with squatters' movements, rather than focus on the acts or characteristics of individuals, we might consider mechanisms of governance from the vantage of their experiences of resistance (Dadusc, 2013, p. 49). This approach draws together Santos' own concept of 'committed witnessing' (B. d. Santos 2012, 50-51) with Latour's explanation of Actor Network Theory as an 'infralanguage' with which to create explanation out of description, allowing for the abandonment of theory as 'metalanguage' (Latour 1996, 377).[9]

9 'ANT suggests that the way in which scalar transitions can be managed is essentially through the abandonment of explanatory theories, in favour of description. If description is complete and mutually intelligible then the explanation appears from the facts being described, through reference to their connection. There need be no transferrable metalanguage with which to understand these shifts in scale, instead – Latour proposes – an 'infralanguage which has to be poor, limited, short and simple'. (Latour 1996, 377)

My own approach to practice and research for this thesis and elsewhere resonates most strongly with that which Tallbear proposes as 'as a relationship-building process, as a professional networking process with colleagues (not "subjects"), as an opportunity for conversation and sharing of knowledge, *not simply data gathering*.' (Tallbear 2014, 80 - emphasis mine) Indeed, as a spatial designer, I am not predisposed towards the collection of quantifiable data but as a researcher, I experience the pressures to produce it. I also have been confounded, especially during my experience in the UN, by the huge questions left unanswered and worlds left unseen by quantitative data. And so, this is not how I framed my research, nor is it proposed as a guiding principle of counter-practice in the concluding chapter. In both my time spent in conversation with others, either on site or in offices and online, I approached this research as a project of relationship-building. I wanted to understand how to build relationships in ways which are mutually beneficial, but which also do not presuppose the experiences and agency of the other. In this way, I felt that it was important to be honest, open, receptive and adaptive. I was very clear about my initial ideas and what I wanted to gain from this piece of research and allowed others not only to answer questions in their own ways but to determine whether they felt I was asking the right questions in the first place (Maginn 2006) (Galdas 2017). This led to some interesting conversations which I remain extremely grateful for.

In this thesis, I did not directly share raw data or knowledges which were not my own. As this was a personal search for understanding of position and agency, I have used cross-referencing to make my own interpretations of the experiences of others, rather than presenting their thoughts faithfully back to the reader and institution I came from. I have not reproduced findings which are currently strategically valuable to any particular struggle, for any purpose other than that which I have laid out clearly to all my collaborating colleagues.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT – STRUGGLES FOR THE GLOBAL CITY OF THE SOUTH

Economic development policy has played a core role in the evolution of the city and its relationship to public housing since the post-World War II period. Specifically, since the fall of the Soviet Union, an increasingly unified spatial trend has crystallised, in which global markets shape city hubs that function as outward facing regional zoning apparatus (Ortega, 2016) (Harvey, 2007) and centres of accumulation. Here, agglomerations of international businesses form to bring further concentrations of specialist workers, luxury housing, service economies and concentrate essential infrastructures. The model of urbanism built around these socio-spatial market centres is referred to by Saskia Sassen as the 'Global City', and is now widely recognised terminology. As reduced restrictions lent a new intensity to the global spread of neoliberalism after the 1980s, new Global Cities began to appear across the more recently diversified economies of the world (Sassen, 2001) (Sassen, 2005) (Harvey, 2007) (Harvey, 2007) (Harvey, 2012) (A.T Kearney, 2018).

The emergence of the Global City Index (A.T Kearney, 2018) as a measurement of simultaneous urban and economic success exemplifies the way in which neoliberalism has become irrevocably intertwined with urban topology. Such market-based concentrations, whilst generating business and employment, also result in the poor being priced out of housing in areas where employment is concentrated. Around the world, as housing and social status have become so closely intertwined, and as the poor are ejected from life in the cosmopolitan centres of the city, so too are they ejected from the socialities that those centres maintain. Urban-scale segregation of labour forces across distinct areas of the city with widely differentiated access to essential infrastructures and amenities is a continued cause of social conflict, essentially downgrading the citizenship status of the poor.

The conflict between urban 'success', measured on a macroeconomic scale, and the disparity in urban wealth and land distribution is demonstrative of a paradoxical condition in which development theory operates. Though development frameworks promote equal access to social and physical infrastructures, they promote such provisions through neoliberal mechanisms that have, consistently, demonstrated trends in the opposite direction. Socio-spatial inequality is typified in both Global North and South by exclusionary housing markets and the expulsion of the poor from city centres, separating domestic from working life by greater and greater distances. According to Savills research (Tostevin 2021), in 2020 the total global value of residential real estate was 258.5tn USD, more than three times the value of global GDP at 84.8tr USD. The importance of the housing market to international speculation and accumulation has made housing (and thus domestic security) the most important commodity in the world. As a result, housing status has been intimately linked with class status and differentiated experiences of citizenship.

Dependencies created by violent colonial conquest remain a rhetorical characteristic articulated in the terms of Global South or 'Third World' where the post-World War II institutional consolidation of development did not so much serve to redress histories of colonial intervention as rebrand them. Indeed, well after the apparent end of colonisation, development as both an ideology and a productive industry – with enormous power in both respects – has done a great deal to entrench these dependencies (A. Escobar 2012) (Long 2000) (Williams 2013) (B. d. Santos 2018). In many cases, the history of economic liberalisation as engineered through development interventions in land and resource management have led to rapid urbanisation across the South, well outpacing planning efforts and stretching limited infrastructures.

This thesis is set within an established field of critique which identifies the ways in which the development industry has been able

to universalise the imaginary for the future around techno-scientific, Western-centric principles of progress, modernity and democracy. This universal imaginary is imposed under a global knowledge politics which actively marginalises non-scientific epistemologies, expelling the poor from direct negotiations over the production of their own futures. I refer to this imaginary here as development's 'pre-determined ends'.

Understanding the continued influence of colonial histories on landscapes, peoples, politics, imaginations and the ways in which the development industry restructures old hierarchies around neoliberal globalisation is essential to any activist design practice in the South. This also means recognising that the majority of non-profit projects embarked upon in the Global South either directly constitute or require engagement with international development as both a concept and a political structure which exercises authority over funding criteria, governments and both national and local urban and economic planning policies.

However, there is little evidence of acknowledgement in the architectural design industry of the ways in which the development imaginary influences how design practitioners strategise projects and structure their organisations around specific interests and legal criteria. Instead, project reviews and practice catalogues remain heavily object-centric. Where methodologies are outlined, these are heavily focused around the evolution of the design object with little to suggest the ways in which the projects are approached in the first place or how they intervene in the politics of exclusion exercised by housing privatisation. These project accounts do not contextualise the role and agency of the designer in the political situation that they enter, or the timeline of events preceding their contributions which condition the approach to collaboration and expected results. By placing the emphasis on resultant objects, such accounts suggest the potential for 'good design' 'solutions' to provide heroic ends to struggles of complex social and political natures, which

may have been shaped through generations. By presenting design interventions (whether housing or infrastructural) as self-contained solutions to isolated struggles, the systemic nature of the original exclusion remains unexposed. As such, the design industry becomes complicit in presenting the struggles of the poor as isolated anomalies in the narrative of progress. I argue that these object-centric narratives do little to promote the agency and knowledges of the poor who are proving their abilities all across the South not only to organise around their own claims but also to realise them.

The lack of process documentation and project pre-conditioning in such accounts makes it impossible to derive practical lessons with which to situate new, more critical models of architectural, urban and design practice. By 'process', I refer not only to the design process as relating explicitly to the resultant object but include the events and processes that preceded the engagement of the designer, from the perspective of the inhabitants (past and/or future) and their histories in the city or relationship to the site. I also refer to the wider strategic choices that the practitioner makes, concerning forms of legal registration for the practice, types of funding pursued and the terms and conditions those funds place on a project or methodology. When I refer to documentation of the design process, I am also referring to documentation that is expansive in the spatial communication of existing conditions, experiences, organisation, coherence around collective values and desires. Whereas it is common to find images of workshops in which communities make or interact with models for example, or forums in which design ideas are presented for comment, these images simply signal that such a moment existed; that there was 'participation'. They do not signify and visually explain how and where such groups were brought together, on what terms, or what ideas came out of those meetings and how they were then reconstituted in the next design iteration. They do not explain which ideas are brought forward, why others are deemed insufficient or where disagreements may have come about. When we teach the practice of architecture in university, we ensure

Quinta Monroy, Iquique, Chile © Elemental, all rights reserved

Quinta Monroy, Iquique, Chile © Elemental, all rights reserved

Images 35/36. Reviewing resident construction infill process after core structure completion. Quinta Monroy in Iquique, Chile from Elemental. (Scan from Alenjandro Aravena and Andrés Iacobelli. 2016. Elemental: Incremental Housing and Participatory Design Manual. p145, Hatje Cantz Verlag.)

Image 37. Page 146 in 'Design Like You Give a Damn', book compiled by Habitat for Humanity, showing 10X10 housing project in Cape Town, South Africa designed by MMA architects

Image 38. 'Empower Shack' versions 1 & 2, affordable housing design for South Africa by Urban-Think Tank, published on Dezeen.com

that students articulate the rationale of their decision-making and the ways in which the outcomes evolve through testing. This is to ensure that they have understood how to optimise outcomes to respond to the particular scenario and to evidence the optimal nature of the final resolutions. This proves the validity and rigor of decision-making processes and serves as evidence of a certain type of knowledge which has informed the design process. Once one moves into professional practice, what seems to happen is that we assume that those processes have been undertaken and that the level of knowledge informing decisions is sound. We no longer map the design process to the situation that it responds to. This lack of process demonstration means that the outside observer is unable to assess exactly how the resolution is optimal for the given situation or even, what the nature of the situation is that the design is responding to. It is in the process documentation that knowledge – of both the designer and the groups that they engage - is contained and evidenced. Without this documentation, the resultant products are stripped of their social and political meaning and as such, cannot be accurately assessed as successful or not, nor replicated in situationally responses ways. Without this documentation, the knowledges built through everyday struggles goes unshared and the successful realisation of social movement claims through organisation, negotiation and execution goes unseen. Whereas this labour often precedes and lays the groundwork for the contribution of architects or designers, the fixation on resultant objects in project documentation obscures this from view, giving the impression that the object – not the processes of struggle which led to its design - should be the focus of replication.

As above, without complete information which situates a project in each precise context and illustrates the agency of different actors involved, it is impossible to make critical judgements about the meaning and value of a design. Moreover, this prevents the proliferation of important knowledges on the use of design to challenge social-political inequality and fails to critique the systemic

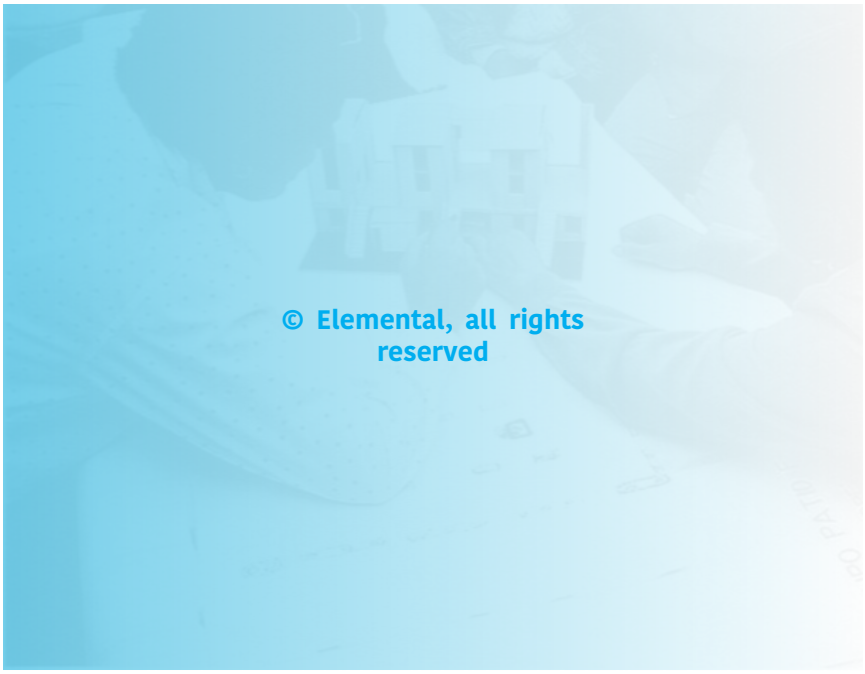

Image 39. Outline of design consltations using models, Quinta Monroy in Iquique, Chile from Elemental. (Scan from Alenjandro Aravena and Andrés Iacobelli. 2016. Elemental: Incremental Housing and Participatory Design Manual. p123, Hatje Cantz Verlag.)

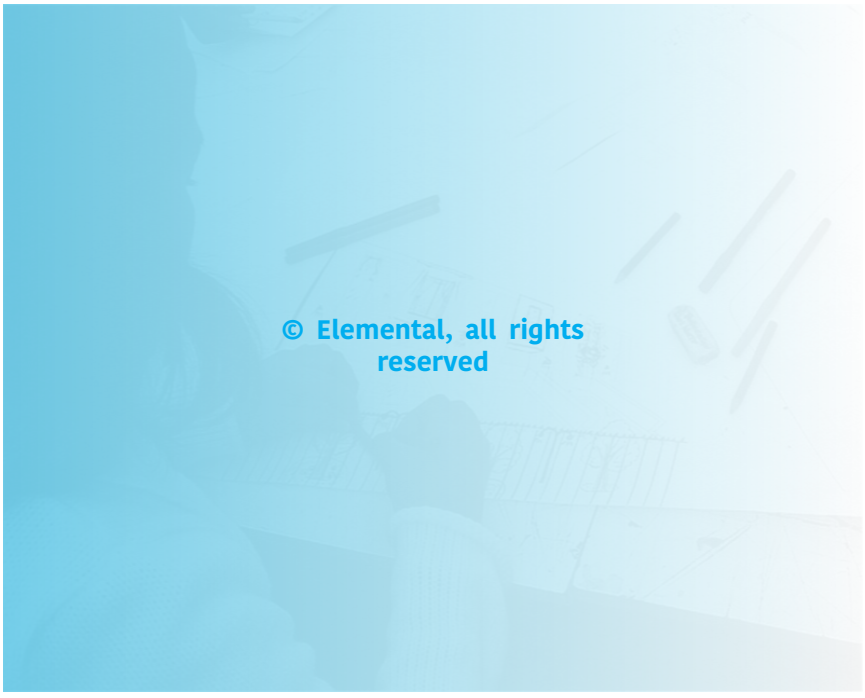

Image 40. Facade design workshops for resident infills on base strcture, Quinta Monroy in Iquique, Chile from Elemental. (Scan from Alenjandro Aravena and Andrés Iacobelli. 2016. Elemental: Incremental Housing and Participatory Design Manual. p129, Hatje Cantz Verlag.)

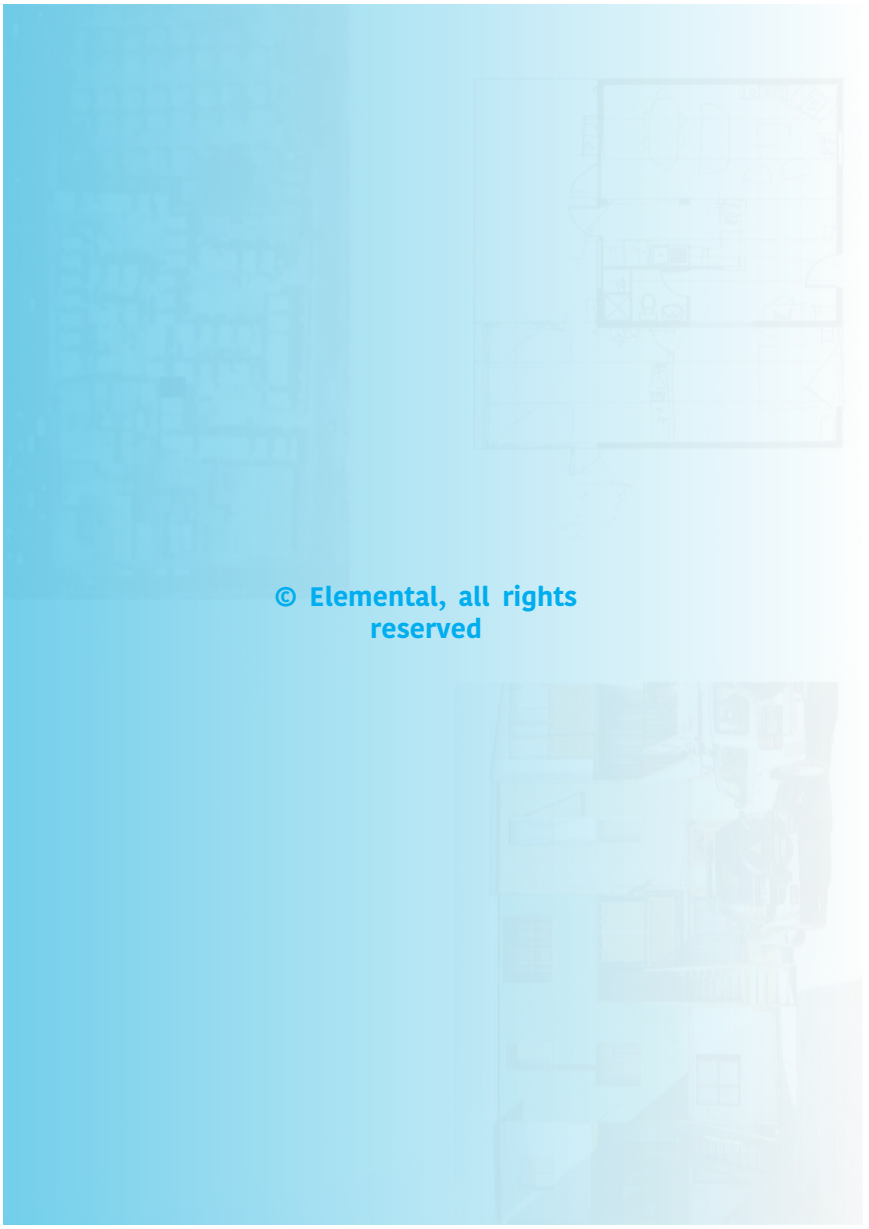

Image 41. Individual house profile, revisiting project after completion. Quinta Monroy in Iquique, Chile from Elemental. (Scan from Alenjandro Aravena and Andrés Iacobelli. 2016. Elemental: Incremental Housing and Participatory Design Manual. p177, Hatje Cantz Verlag.)

Image 42. Structural strategy, Quinta Monroy in Iquique, Chile from Elemental. (Scan from Alenjandro Aravena and Andrés Iacobelli. 2016. Elemental: Incremental Housing and Participatory Design Manual. p100, Hatje Cantz Verlag.)

causes of such inequality in the first place.

1.2 FRAGMENTED NARRATIVES, ABSENT KNOWLEDGES

Despite the consistent presence of different social movements across the world, Harvey and Santos both draw attention to the low visibility of social movement knowledge practices which contextualise shared aspirations in histories of oppression and exclusion (D. Harvey 2012, 22) (B. d. Santos 2020) (Meneses 2019).

This thesis focuses specifically on the ways in which social movement struggles focus claims to a dignified life in the city around the problem of housing and argues that the processes of organising around and exercising claims contain politically actionable knowledges which contextualise design in the prefigurative politics of imagination and production in the global city. Prefigurative politics refers to attempts to build actions in the present moment around aspirations for the future, creating a hopeful process of ongoing reconstruction as new possibilities are revealed (Kallis 2023, 58) (Nail 2012). I argue that the prefigurative politics of social movements' struggles are expressed not only in their organisational methods but in the spatial organisation and architectural aesthetics of their autonomous urban projects. However, when different outputs or achievements (both material and political) emerging from these processes are represented under the authorship of different professionals who become engaged at different points, the prefigurative politics which underpin the complete process of struggle are erased as narratives become fragmented into different disciplinary languages.

The ways in which spatial propositions embed different ontological values and structure social political relationships are central to this thesis because, as the world rapidly urbanises, marginalisation and exclusion is increasingly spatialised. Yet, despite historical

attempts in urban and architectural theory to codify styles, forms, and typology, the wildly varied levels of success demonstrated by affordable housing programmes in the Global South demonstrates the heterogeneity of socio-political realities in each local context and the importance of recognising that plurality in design processes. For this reason, I argue that if one is to engage in struggles concerned with urbanisation and equal citizenship, this can neither be approached without a qualitative consideration of housing and housing politics in the city, nor without recognising the politics of the production process.

The reason that this argument is posed in the context of the knowledge politics of international development is precisely because development knowledge politics dominate the global order of production and social aspiration, preventing both practitioners and social movements from imagining and creating architecture and settlements in ways which reflect radically different ontological, epistemological, and economic values. Development as an industry coalesces around a universal imaginary – or what Escobar calls the 'one-world ontology' – which presupposes what is 'good', 'sustainable', 'developed' or 'underdeveloped'. After the end of the Cold War, this imaginary was consolidated around neoliberal values and productive processes. I argue, in line with scholars such as Arturo Escobar (A. Escobar 2012) (A. Escobar 1995), Boaventura de Sousa Santos (B. d. Santos 2005) (B. d. Santos 2018), David Williams (D. Williams 2013) and others (D. Harvey 2007) (Saul 2004) (Petras 2017) (Mosse 2008) (Munck 2007) (Sassen 1998), that such singular discourse of a common good, predicated on neoliberal ideologies, has simultaneously created a corresponding global understanding of the opposite. Aspirations of 'development' and the data matrices through which 'progress' towards common goals are assessed, have played a large part in restructuring countries to understand themselves and react accordingly as 'underdeveloped', 'poor' or 'lacking'. This cultural and political conditioning has led to a largescale disbalance in experiences of citizenship, exhibited in

globally entrenched social and physical exclusion (Escobar A. , 2012) (Escobar A. , 1995) (Köhler, 2003) (Rajagopal, 2014). The western-centric categorisation of 'need' – or 'problems', according to this universal imaginary – often means that the ontological pluralities which exist outside the cosmopolitan ideal can be neglected, ignored or directly challenged in the pursuit of 'improvement'. Such ideologies of improvement are imposed not only over spatial management strategies, architecture, and industries, but also over actual social structures, histories and cultures (Harvey, 2007) (Escobar A. , 2012) (Escobar A. , 1995) (Rajagopal, 2014) (Santos, 2018).

I suggest that the promotion of this 'one-world ontology' in the development imaginary is visualised (N. Mirzoeff 2011) as a techno-centric, universal modernity, which serves to justify the analytical divorce of spatial management and architectural production from the experiential realities of struggles for social justice and ontological freedoms. Architectural production is depoliticised in urban assessments which monitor progress on global objectives such as the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations n.d.) (Parnell 2016), which enumerate the city on basic material and demographic categories. This has a number of damaging effects. Categorising socio-spatial scenarios by basic material attributes and quantities reduces conceptions of full citizenship and human dignity to a condition of base-level access to a fixed bundle of provisions. This denies the realities of ontological and epistemological exclusion, which are not necessarily remedied by the same tools. In other words, material categorisation excludes multiple ontologies from the construction of societies and the spaces that shape and support them.

I argue for a counter-practice to the production paradigms of international development in the form of an activist design research practice based on non-extractive collaborations with social movements. I argue that a counter-practice is necessary because, currently, the forceful absorption of multiple 'life-worlds',

humanities or realities into the universal imaginary has not provided equitably (even where what is to be provided can be agreed upon as universally 'good'), nor has it allowed for other concepts of dignity and society to be sought in the face of those failures. The pursuit of this imaginary, and its presentation as not only the *only* reality, but the only *possible* reality, fragments and erases the knowledges built in struggles against it.

The process of fragmentation and erasure which reduces the proliferation of knowledge practices built in struggle by the urban poor also impacts the ways in which counter-practitioners are able to embed their working practices in the prefigurative politics that those struggles embody. I see this process of fragmentation and erasure as built upon three principal problems, all of which are caused by and reinforce the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary. These three problems are as follows:

a) the homogenisation of complex and distinct realities;
b) the imposition of external intermediaries as both mediators between, and representatives of, conflicting knowledge worlds and realities; and
c) the separation of theory and practice.

In what follows, I will unpack what is at stake with each of these problems.

1.3 HOMOGENISATION OF COMPLEX AND DISTINCT REALITIES

When I speak of the 'homogenisation of complex and distinct realities', I am referring to something that occurs through the material categorisation of cities and rights discourse. This stems from the idea that reality and aspiration can be universally imagined and constructed in a model of globalised governance

(Hardt 2000). This universalism is (in the allied states forming the dominant powers of international development as an industry and institutional network) neoliberal, metropolitan and technocratic. In order to facilitate a globally coordinated approach to 'progress' across vastly different realities, those realities must be reduced to categorical conditions that are material and/or quantitative. Only by depoliticising relations between space and society can such levels of coordination be achieved and provisions standardised for the widest 'impact'.

The diversity of the social movements and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that respond to and often challenge these systems has made extensive studies difficult. Often, this has resulted in different forms of categorisation by wider ideology, tactics or location (A. Escobar 2020) (A. Escobar 2012) (Dadusc 2013). To an extent this is useful, but it depends to what end such studies or attempts to contain histories and aspirations in comparable categories are directed. The development industry categorises its own methods according to target subjects, paying less attention to the study of resistance than to the study of 'problems'. Political aspirations or processes and strategies of struggle are not considered in policy assessment (World Bank Group n.d.) (World Bank 2021) (United Nations 2016) (UN-Habitat 2019) (UN-Habitat 2022) (UN-Habitat 2018). Instead, goals and indicators are structured in such a way as to categorise need in materially quantifiable, politically neutral terms of deficit – what lacks should somehow be provided. In this way, delivery of provisions can be made uniform for the widest numerically accountable distribution. Categorisation is, therefore, another mode of homogenisation. Though this approach is often well-intentioned, it does nothing to address the nuance of each situation, the related political demands or the political space of demanding, analysis, agreement and delivery. Sometimes, the lacking 'product' is political and ontological and cannot be directly quantified or packaged in a way that can be 'scaled'.

This means that for social movements, there is a contradiction between the need to claim their material rights as a recognised part of the universal 'social contract' on the one hand (Rousseau, 1999), and to fight for their agency and ontological plurality on the other. In order to gain visibility or attention from governments, protest must be widespread, achieve concision in its goals and appear large in scale, often both numerically and geographically. This is because, in globally coordinated models of assistance, one must establish the legitimacy of an aid programme by outlining its predicted 'impact' in quantitative terms. This system prevents social movements or design practitioners from claiming assistance for prefigurative processes of struggle which are inherently non-determinate.

1.4 IMPOSITION OF EXTERNAL INTERMEDIARIES AS BOTH MEDIATORS BETWEEN, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF, CONFLICTING KNOWLEDGE WORLDS AND REALITIES

Intermediaries are professional conduits between opaque systems of policy development and funding politics on the one hand, and citizens on the ground on the other, whose lives are in some way being reconstructed by those systems. Intermediaries are required by the development machine to manage conflicts that can arise as plural realities are subsumed by the universal imaginary. As governance has become increasingly global, exercised in large part by institutions and corporate bodies without clear jurisdictional boundaries or geographic base, intermediaries are required to create, or more accurately *to be*, those spaces of exchange and facilitate some level of mediation. However, despite promotional rhetoric on participation, these intermediary actions rarely generate genuinely inclusive forums of knowledge exchange; instead, by facilitating the continued illusion that development is a democratic, inclusive process, they obscure the need for direct communication and exchange between the people experiencing reality and those shaping it (Lewis 2006) (Mosse 2008) (Naidoo 2005) (Clark 1993)

(Cooley 2002) (Kamat 2004) (Ferguson 1994).

I argue that 'participation' actually upholds the separation of people's organisations and social movements from policy discussions in the international development industry, working to retain them in a distant position from the politics of urban planning, project funding, organisation and strategy. It does this by falsely extending democratic debate into 'sanctioned' spaces of engagement (Miraftab 2009), commonly occupied by representatives rather than directly affected peoples, due to their restrictive inclusion criteria (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2018). These structures place intermediaries in the position of community liaison, most often at the final stages of project implementation, after the project type and its impact have been pre-determined, thereby blocking social input at more privileged points of strategy formulation. This is a fundamental expression of the knowledge politics of neoliberal governance, which legitimises only technical expertise, regulated by intellectual institutional frameworks, along siloed lines of disciplinary containment – each with strict methods of data collection and knowledge formalisation. This has led to a high level of professionalisation in the NGO world. In addition, access to technologies which support the development of disciplinary expertise is restrictive in its formats, languages and places of dissemination. This excludes the majority of the poor from accessing and producing technical knowledges and excludes their own knowledge, produced in experiences of struggle, from the bodies of research which inform strategies for change.

The exponential growth of NGOs in the 1980s and 1990s meant that civil society was able to place new pressure on multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, which were already facing resistance from the Non-Aligned Movement (Waters 2021) (Waterman 2004) (Herz, 2005) (Williams, 2013) (Mosse, 2008). These critiques were highly visible in campaigns such as 'Drop the Debt' (Justice n.d.), previously the Jubilee Dept Campaign (Pettifor 2000). These campaigns

have opened an important dialogue concerning the connection of international institutional power to people's organisations at a local urban policy level, where conflict can be specific to place-bound politics and histories (Sassen 2014) (D. Harvey 2008). However, the ability of NGOs and civil society groups to generate actionable responses to these issues relies on a complex set of relationships to both donor policy and management structures. Taking donations from foundations or corporations redirects a large portion of accountability away from communities, towards lenders (Kamat 2004) (Köhler 2003) (Hitoshi Mayer 2018) (Herz 2005). These financial accountability structures can place allied practitioners in the position of intermediary, mediating between social movements and external organisations. As external funding organisations or management partners often have a large role in determining the goals and parameters that shape project strategies, this intermediary positioning blocks direct consultation with people's organisations on these most influential processes, even while presenting the opportunity to consult on specific design questions (Mosse, 2008). In fact, the term 'participation' is misleading but apt for the system within which it operates: what it really indicates is that communities or people's organisations are allowed to 'participate' in projects that affect them but which are actually devised, planned and implemented by external forces.

It is the way in which knowledge is defined and credited as legitimate in this heavily technocratic ideal, and the power it exerts over non-profit governance and funding that can push an activist practitioner into an intermediary position. At the same time, this knowledge politics restricts direct access to political forums and financing by social movements and 'non-experts', dismissing the knowledges produced in struggle as local, particular, anomalous, circumstantial, anecdotal. As Escobar and Santos argue, this upholds the vision of the universal imaginary by discrediting and erasing the struggles for alternative futures (A. Escobar 2012) (A. Escobar 1995) (B. S. Santos 2019) (B. d. Santos 2019)

(B. d. Santos 2012).[1]

1.5 SEPARATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

Also embedded in the hegemony of development knowledge politics is a separation of theory from practice. Practice in the social domain can often be a way of living out a reality in a manner that asks what is possible. In development, practice is a way of acting out or confirming what has been predetermined as possible, and necessary, in theory. Santos describes a mutual blindness between approaches wherein theory seeks to contextualise events of the past that have emerged in spite of itself, and practice justifies itself by resorting to theoretical cherry-picking in relation to the concerns of the here and now. Theory rebukes practice as opportunist and rhetorical and practice rebukes theory as post-rationalist parasitism (B. d. Santos 2012, 49). I argue that in order to coordinate progress towards the universal imaginary, policy commitments are outlined only in highly technical and materially quantifiable terms (UN-Habitat 2022) (UN-Habitat 2015) (UN-Habitat 2019) (UN-Habitat n.d.) (United Nations 2016), which maintains a distance between policy objectives and political realities, the latter of which are dismissed on the basis of their particularity. Because global policy agendas are made globally applicable only by their *generality*, they are theorised separately from implementation strategies. This means that while lessons learned from the *practices* of implementation may reinform *implementation* of other projects in the same context and by the same agencies, they are inconsequential to the *theories* which structure the imaginary itself.

1 This is what Santos refers to as a 'sociology of absences', wherein 'Non-existence is produced whenever a certain entity is discredited and considered invisible, non-intelligible or discardable.' (B. d. Santos 2012, 52). The opposition to this, Santos proposes, is a 'sociology of emergences' which 'consists in replacing the emptiness of the future according to linear time (an emptiness that may be all or nothing) by a future of plural and concrete possibilities, utopian and realist at one time, and constructed in the present by means of activities of care' (B. d. Santos 2012, 54) (Ch3).

1.6 HEGEMONIC VISUALITY

The fragmentation and erasure of social movement knowledges and prefigurative narratives of struggle in the universal imaginary contribute to what Mirzoeff describes as hegemonic visuality (N. Mirzoeff 2011). Hegemonic visuality is an authoritative aesthetic,[2] which promotes the universal imaginary as a rational norm.[3] Much more than a totality of imagery and visual devices according to Mirzoeff, the concept of 'visuality' speaks to the holistic rendering of history perceptible to authority in relational compositions of information, ideas, imaginations in 'a rendition of physical and psychic space' (N. Mirzoeff 2011, 3).[4]

Despite the failures of neoliberalism to produce equality and dignity for all, this hegemonic visuality promotes its successes while

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2 'Authority is thus visibly able to set things in motion, and that is then felt to be right: it is aesthetic. Visuality supplemented the violence of authority and its separations, forming a complex that came to seem natural by virtue of its investment in "history." The autonomy claimed by the right to look is thus opposed by the authority of visuality' (N. Mirzoeff 2011, 3).

3 'Visuality is an old word for an old project. It is not a trendy theory word meaning the totality of all visual images and devices, but is in fact an early-nineteenth-century term meaning the visualization of history. This practice must be imaginary, rather than perceptual, because what is being visualized is too substantial for any one person to see and is created from information, images, and ideas. This ability to assemble a visualization manifests the authority of the visualizer. In turn, the authorizing of authority requires permanent renewal in order to win consent as the "normal," or everyday, because it is always already contested. The autonomy claimed by the right to look is thus opposed by the authority of visuality. But the right to look came first, and we should not forget it' (N. Mirzoeff 2011, 2).

4 Visuality, as explained by Mirzoeff, is not a term to describe 'the totality of all visual images and devices', but one 'meaning the visualization of history' (N. Mirzoeff 2011, 2). Visualising history in this way, is a method of sustaining autocratic authority. In Mirzoeff's words, 'Visualizing is the production of visuality, meaning the making of the processes of "history" perceptible to authority. Visuality sought to present authority as self-evident, that "division of the sensible whereby domination imposes the sensible evidence of its legitimacy." Despite its name, this process is not composed simply of visual perceptions in the physical sense, but is formed by a set of relations combining information, imagination, and insight into a rendition of physical and psychic space' (N. Mirzoeff 2011, 3).

presenting its failures as anomalies or simply as remaining pockets of primitive civilisation, yet to be 'modernised' by development. As a result, global urban development frameworks such as the United Nations New Urban Agenda (United Nations 2017) (United Nations 2016) (United Nations n.d.), continue to promote ideals of social inclusion through private markets as part of wider strategies for economic growth (Saul 2004) (A. Roy 2010) (Samara 2013) (Power 2010). These frameworks exclude the critiques leveraged by social movements and ignore the extent to which those critiques are often accompanied by the proven ability to realise their aspirations of alternatives autonomously (Miraftab 2009).

This system of erasure and dismissal of alternative modes of production in the city has led to increasingly precise levels of expert professionalisation in NGOs, in accordance with technical disciplinary divisions. This is because the knowledge politics that upholds universalism as hegemonic visuality does so by erasing politics from trajectories of progress, in order to facilitate the universalisation of standards and streamline methods of provision (Mosse 2008). Whereas politics differentiates and complexifies scenarios as particular, technology and science are considered neutral, general and divisible (B. d. Santos 2018) (B. S. Santos 2019) (A. Escobar 2020) (A. Escobar 1995).

I argue that the conceptual problem with development 'impact', as it is translated through quantifiable material provisions, is that it is based on the act of solving problems. Exposing the political aspect of social claims to dignified life in the city requires a process of reframing and layering problems rather than removing them. The questions posed to counter-practice therefore, concern how to engage these complexities in such a way as to support the proliferation of social movement knowledges which critique technical narratives and demonstrate the possibility of other ways of producing built space.

1.7 FOCUS

This thesis is focused on prefigurative processes of housing production in global cities of the South, where colonial histories are often carried forward through financial dependencies which constrain the political practices of social movements and allied practitioners. In particular, I focus on the ways in which the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary are reinforced, in and through the industry of international development. I centre my view on housing struggles, as I argue that housing status has become indelibly intertwined with social and political status and differentiated experiences of citizenship (Holston 2009). The right to the city has become inseparable from the right to stable and dignified housing and many case studies throughout the Global South – where circumstance has led to widespread autonomous construction – demonstrate that the production of housing, when organised around multiple rights-claims and collective experiences, can be the catalyst for all sorts of social and spatial transformations.

Within this context, I look to the ways in which hegemonic visuality reproduces and reinforces the universal imaginary of metropolitan modernity and consider the select narratives and evidentiary forms upon which it is constructed. I will further explore the possibilities for counter-practice to be orientated around the production of counter-visualities (Mirzoeff 2011), working collaboratively with social movements to articulate their knowledges as both propositional and critical in their reflections of the imaginary that has constrained and erased them.

I will consider how counter-practitioners can assist social movements in aggregating and proliferating knowledges through the processes of prefigurative design. In doing so, the thesis will demonstrate that urban spaces are more than a material reality: they are both the object and the stage of struggle. Struggle is a lens

through which to understand the systems that world the global city and the processes through which the means to contest it are built. According to Freire, it is only by understanding the structure of domination as it is reflected in struggle against it, that we can create the solidarity needed to engage that struggle for the liberation of humanity (Freire, 2018).

2. DEVELOPMENT AND PRE-DETERMINED ENDS

2.1 SITUATING DESIGN PRACTICE IN THE FIELD OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

The extensive history of international development as both an ideology and industry commands an expansive field of dedicated study to which this thesis makes connections through the lens of design. The practice of design, and more particularly of architectural and urban design in the Global South, deals with a number of complexities stemming from entanglements with development that simply do not compare with those encountered in practice in the Global North. The industry of development is outlined in extensive literature as a political, ideological, cognitive and productive infrastructure of power, with profound impacts on the ways in which life and society are imagined and produced. The global city of the South, as the icon of neoliberal globalisation given form and meaning via the place-bound logics of each context, is in many ways the most advanced and important expression of this power. It is both an expression of histories, seen and unseen[1] and a place of contestation and struggle for different futures. The global cities of the South, having expanded rapidly during a period of increasingly urban-focused political and economic intervention, constitute evidence of the ways in which post-colonial structures have created enduring dependencies as well as freedoms. Cities of the South demonstrate that the urban condition of Western modernity superimposed over diverse pre-conditions, is one of deep inequality, wherein different experiences of citizenship encounter each other and generate continued conflict at unmarked socio-political borders. Housing is a central part of this condition, having become enormously important to global capital, constituting by far the most dominant proportion of

1 By which I mean that the way in which history is told is not inclusive of the many different experiences or points of view which it encompasses.

global wealth and, as a result, becoming the main conditioner of social status. The interlinking of housing status with experiences of citizenship makes affordable housing a crucial urban right through which to access other rights to the city and to explore other potential socioeconomic constructions. Naturally, this raises questions about the potential role of urban and architectural design, but it is neither sufficient, nor acceptable, to assume that knowledge from design practice in the Global North can simply be applied to the intricacies of the Global South. Indeed, as this thesis will discuss, it is precisely this approach that is characteristic of the development industry and which has ultimately created the conditions of fragmentation and marginalisation with which we are now faced. Whereas activist design practitioners may recognise this, they lack the tools with which to situate themselves personally and professionally. As a result, I look to development studies as a way to draw out specific problems around which to situate a design practice for the Global South, and to address gaps in design discourse pertaining to these particular political, ontological conditions.

I argue that a counter-practice should be focused on the proliferation of marginalised knowledges, first and foremost among marginalised society for the purposes of struggle. Such a focus should embed research-based design practice in local contexts to address lower tiers of law and governance. This means practitioners taking up an embedded position within struggles to bring about a direct exchange between marginalised knowledge and the privileged specialisms of development, with a conscious approach to prioritising collective assent over the relationships through which production is actioned.

The core critique of development common across development studies, is focused around the predetermination of a universal imaginary of the future, constructed around United States–European ideologies and based on scientific post-enlightenment

knowledges, promoting capital growth and secular societies governed by representative democracy. This universal imaginary, otherwise referred to by Escobar as a 'one-world ontology', acts as a machine of erasure and constraint over ontologies and epistemologies which present contradictory or simply alternative realities of past, present and future. It constitutes a global knowledge politics which actively marginalises non-scientific understandings of the world, expelling the poor from direct negotiations over the production of their own futures.

Bøas and McNeil argue that 'the creation and transformation of knowledge [...] can only effectively be studied and analysed through an appreciation of how people – whether peasants, bureaucrats or scientists – build bridges and manage critical knowledge interfaces that constitute the points of intersection between their diverse lifeworlds' (Bøas, Morton and McNeill, Desmond. 2007, 33). The proposal for a counter-practice set out in this thesis is framed in this relational position, not as an objective outsider working as an intermediary mediating between relations that are other, but as an embedded witness to, and actor in, different knowledge worlds and realities. It should be a practice focused on bringing about what Escobar refers to as a 'post-development era'. This era, according to Escobar, will not be one of improved or different development, but one in which development critique should finally have cleared space for 'a more radical *collective imagining of alternative futures*' (A. Escobar 1995, 22 emphasis mine).

The idea of counter-practice is framed as a spatially situated counterpart to notions of 'counterdevelopment' (A. Escobar 2012, xvii citing Gow (2008)) and 'counterwork' (Long 2000), both of which are rooted in anthropological and ethnographic approaches to social movement studies in contexts of

international development intervention (A. Escobar 2012, xvii).[2] Social movements are central to the construction of collectivities through which new possibilities for the future are imagined and therefore, their non-extractive engagement forms the locus of propositions for post-development approaches to production.

The proposition for a post-development era comes from a 1995 paper of the same name in which Escobar claims that most epistemologically and culturally situated development critique has 'reached an impasse' (A. Escobar 1995, 21-22) and that the already apparent crisis called for a radical departure from any definition of development as a valid practice of the future. This proposition was built on the argument that the 'post-World War II discourse of development [... as] firmly entrenched in Western modernity and economy' is 'an instrument of economic control over the physical and social reality of much of Asia, Africa and Latin America', serving to produce the 'Third World' as an image of 'underdevelopment', both externally and internally (A. Escobar 1995, 22).[3]

This text, and others which followed (A. Escobar 2012) (A. Escobar 2018) (A. Escobar 2020), argues that the hegemonic constraints of reality and possibility within the Western imaginary of modernity and economy have fixed relations of epistemology and power around the forcible homogenisation of non-Western knowledges and realities into a singular 'other' to the cosmopolitan ideal: an 'other' that is characterised only by its lack of that which renders

2 'Counter-work may de-essentialize Western products of their superior power, or contribute to empowering a groups' self-definition, even as it changes. Counter-work and counterdevelopment can thus be seen as leading to forms of alternative development, but also as fostering postdevelopment outlooks' (A. Escobar, Encountering development : the making and unmaking of the third world 2012, xvii).

3 Recognition of development as a closely coordinated system of erasure and preclusion of other possible futures has only become more prevalent in the years following Escobar's proposition.

a society 'civilised' or 'developed'.[4] This view is widely shared, in particular by Boaventura de Sousa Santos, who calls this hegemonic duality the 'abyssal line', forming 'the radical division between forms of metropolitan sociability and forms of colonial sociability' (B. d. Santos 2020, 572), otherwise imagined as the worlds of the fully human and of the subhuman, or of 'us' and 'them' (B. d. Santos 2020, 572).

Boaventura de Sousa Santos frames a similar condition to Escobar's post-development era as one of 'cognitive justice'. Whereas Escobar focuses on the political-ideological structures of development and the ways in which specific policy frameworks and geopolitical events have framed this hegemonic constraint around reality and value, Santos looks more towards the ways in which knowledges are created and delegitimised in favour of dominant epistemological values. Santos asserts that hegemonic universalism (referred to by Escobar as a 'one-world ontology') is structured around a series of assumptions: 'the absolute priority of science as rigorous knowledge; rigor conceived of as determination; universalism conceived of as the representation of reality; a distinction between subject and object, the knower and the known; nature as res extensa; linear time; the progress of science via the disciplines of specialization; and social and political neutrality as a condition of objectivity' (B. d. Santos 2018, 6).

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4 'If at the level of social movement theory new social orders are clearly imaginable, in the arena of development – which to a great extent determines the economic and political practices necessary to bring about new orders – the picture is blurred, adumbrating a future society where only "basic needs" are met, that is, a "developed" or quasi-developed society. But to arrive at this society (assuming that it were possible) would entail that all the fuss about plurality, difference and autonomy – notions central to social movement discourse, […] would have been in vain. This crisis in developmentalist discourse can be seen in at least two ways: on the one hand, the inability of critical thought and most social forces to imagine a new domain which finally leaves behind the imaginary of development, and which transcends development's dependence on Western modernity and historicity; and, on the other, the emergence of a powerful social movement discourse which, although still unclear about its possible directions, has quickly become a privileged arena for intellectual inquiry and political action' (A. Escobar, Imagining a post-development era. 1995, 21).

These conditions enforce the 'abyssal line', ultimately separating the epistemologies of the South from those of the North, characterising the former as inferior, irrelevant, invisible and banal (B. d. Santos 2020, 573). Objectivity, in this scenario, consists of the dehumanised, scientific study of the colonial side as 'objects' of development from a superior, detached position on the metropolitan side.

Both Escobar and Santos have written extensively on the erasure enacted through this universalism of multiple ontologies, sociologies, epistemologies or 'life-worlds' (A. Escobar 2018, 4). In response, Escobar proposes a localised reconstruction of lost worlds or realities through an ethnographic practice based on deep engagement with emergent and existing social movements. He argues that the historical role of Third World social movements in developing anti-hegemonic political domains should become the focus for 'alternative visions of democracy, economy and society' (A. Escobar 1995, 22).[5] Social movement practices are posited as a lens through which to explore other ontologies that could pluralise an image of non-Western knowledges and reinstate values of 'difference and autonomy' (A. Escobar 1995, 21). The 'local' is not posited as an idealised antithesis to the universal imaginary of development, but instead as a critical point of entry from which to develop nuanced, alternative views and promote plurality. This is where the critical arguments around a counter-practice are situated. As I will discuss throughout this thesis, there is a critical paradox

5 'To think about "alternatives to development" thus requires a theoretico-practical transformation of the notions of development, modernity and the economy. This transformation can be best achieved by building upon the practices of social movements, especially those in the Third World that have emerged in response to post-World War II hegemonic social orders. These movements are essential for the creation of alternative visions of democracy, economy and society' (A. Escobar, Imagining a post-development era. 1995, 22).

to address in which plurality and local specificity become the obvious antidote to hegemonic universality and yet local specificity and plurality are precisely the qualities that lead to the dismissal and erasure of alternative life-worlds in the knowledge politics of the development imaginary: because the universal imaginary of development constitutes a predetermined future, contradictory proposals undermine recruitment to its coordinated production and are characterised as anomalies, particular to a certain place and time. Their embedded particularities to place and the socialities constructed in and through it are inherently non-generalisable and thus considered inconsequential to universal theory – which can only be universalised if rendered through globally applicable, technical generalities.

It is likely because of this paradox that Escobar points out that, despite the interest in post-development outlooks, there remains a conflict between network approaches to the study of social movements and more localised, collaborative work in which 'network approaches diversify questions of agency' but *fail 'to imagine radical practical implications'* (A. Escobar 2012, xvii, emphasis mine). Escobar proposes that embedded and collaborative research 'from the perspective of [...] 'particular constituencies' must be used to address this conflict, arguing that embedded studies provide greater depth and clarity on 'political positioning' (A. Escobar 2012, xvii). Gow (2008) is cited as an example of this, having studied the local redefinition of development projects by Indigenous groups in South-West Colombia through their redeployment within alternative cultural and political frames. Gow argues that the attempt to create an autonomous, 'indigenous modernity' bringing together respect for 'cultural difference', 'autonomy' and 'social justice' constitutes a type of 'counterdevelopment' (A. Escobar 2012, xvii).

Similarly, Arce and Long (2000)'s earlier description of counterwork was proposed as a way to conceptualise the

creation of multiple modernities, situated both against and within the hegemonic Western model, embedded in local processes of reorganisation around the 'new realities' of Western expansion (Long 2000, 8).[6] They credit Parkin (1995:144) with the introduction of the concept, as a practice embedded in the study of knowledges as relational constructs 'that are constructed and re-transposed or reaccentuated' in ways that blend together and relocate 'the origins of beliefs and behavior' (Long 2000, 8 (Parkin 1995:148)). They suggest that counterwork is clearly 'a feature of anthropological field-work since the ethnographer is part of the rebounding effects of knowledge and experience', suggesting that ethnography should provide the disciplinary space in which to ground more 'reflexive' works of development anthropology (Long 2000, 8). Similarly, Kiran Asher and Joel Wainwright (Asher, Kiran and Joel Wainwright 2019) claim that before propositions can emerge for alternative futures, there is first a need to articulate the ways in which forms of hegemony and the development imaginary are actually encountered by particular peoples.

Drawing out the 'radical practical implications' (A. Escobar 2012, xvii) of embedded knowledge practices also means reflecting back on the nature of development from such local perspectives, in order to unpack the different impacts of its protocols according to specific project types and geopolitical contexts.

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6 'Here, the concept of "counterwork" introduced by Parkin (1995:144) in his study of the intertwining of religious and medical knowledge and practice (Islamic and non-Islamic) acquires significance. He conceptualises "counterwork" "as the rebounding effects of knowledge in its diversity" which, he argues, sheds light on the complex ways in which specific knowledge practices (in this case relating to how to deal with particular "ailments") are constructed and re-transposed or reaccentuated, both within and outside the patient/doctor consultations that take place. Unlike structural models of knowledge construction which see this process as an outcome of the interaction of culturally distinct knowledge categories or systems, Parkin (1995:148) highlights the blending together and the "relocation of the origins of beliefs and behaviour", as people engage in counterwork that involves the interplay of "hegemonic" and "non-hegemonic" discourses and values – irrespective of whether they emanate from global or local scenarios' (Long 2000, 8).

For this critique to be practically meaningful, it follows that questions of agency, which are so important to the proposition of alternative or counter-methods of production, should be examined in relation to the conditions imposed on project processes and output requirements by development institutions. As Escobar states, 'as long as institutions and professionals are successfully reproducing themselves materially, culturally and ideologically, certain relations of domination will prevail; and to the extent that this is the case, development will continue to be greatly conceptualized by those in power' (A. Escobar 2012, 106). Redressing this requires engagement with these institutions and professionals, understanding how and why they are reproduced in these ways, in order to construct alternatives.

However, institutional practices support the function of development in many ways, socially, culturally, organisationally and economically, and this is not easy to unpack in relation to any one institution or practice. It requires an investigation into the ways in which discourse is continually reproduced and reinforced around the conditions that it itself produces in the world (A. Escobar 2012, 105),[7] and the ways in which labour and disciplinary divisions structure the projects, responsibilities and work practices of different individuals. Isolating individual agency in development is, however, made difficult by the mystery surrounding policy in terms of how it is formed, negotiated as it comes into contact with other policies across jurisdictions, actors and scales, and how it is implemented (and by whom).

7 'It requires that we investigate the production of discourses about the problem in question; that we show the articulation of these discourses with socioeconomic and technological conditions that they, in turn, help produce; and, finally and more importantly, that we examine the actual work practices of institutions involved with these problems. Discourse, political economy, and institutional ethnography should be woven in order to provide an adequate understanding of how development works' (A. Escobar 2012, 105).

According to David Mosse, there are two opposing views on development policy. The first is instrumental and sees policy as a rational structure of 'problem solving' that directly shapes the output of development. The second is critical, and proposes that the rational, technical approach to policy conceals the true political intentions of development and its enforcement through bureaucratic power (Mosse 2008, 2).

His description of the second view is important and should be considered in full:

The second, critical, view of policy [...] takes the failure of development interventions as self-evident. Here there is no surprise that management models which isolate interventions from the history and social and political realities of the 'third world', or bend these realities into the discipline bound logics of diagnosis and prescription (whether in health, agriculture or education), do not achieve their stated ends (Long 2001:32-4).'[...] A now extensive literature argues that, like those of colonial rule, development's rational models achieve cognitive control and regulation; they enhance state capacity and expand bureaucratic power (particularly over marginal areas and people); they reproduce hierarchies of knowledge (scientific over indigenous) and society (developer over the 'to be developed'), and they fragment, subjugate, silence or erase the local, all the while 'whisk[ing] these political effects out of sight' through the technical discourses that naturalise poverty, objectify the poor and depoliticise development' (Mosse 2008, 4).

Two points stand out from this description: firstly, that development policy not only erases or suppresses, but also fragments ideas and knowledges of 'the local', and that this actually leads to project failures. And secondly, that the apparent objective rationality of diagnosis and prescription, particularly as articulated through the advancement of technology, is a project of depoliticisation which serves to hide the colonial nature of development and naturalise

poverty, hierarchy and inequality. This project of depoliticisation is widely argued as being very much the genius of development. As Escobar argues, 'The daily practices of institutions are not just rational or neutral ways of doing. In fact, much of an institution's effectiveness in producing power relations is the result of practices that are often invisible, precisely because they are seen as rational' (A. Escobar 2012, 105). It is for this reason that Mosse and Lewis argue for a development ethnography to contribute detailed investigations into the individual agency of development experts and their relationships with both centres of power and the local or marginalised populations whom they engage. They argue that to understand the ways in which hierarchies and structural knowledge silos impact relationships and individual agency, it is necessary to combine ethnographic research on social movement practices with similar research from the perspective of development workers themselves (Lewis 2006, 3).

Mosse and Lewis propose an approach to policy analysis through the exchanges that happen between scales, organisations and jurisdictions as a way of establishing the agency of individual workers or organisations as 'brokers', connecting discourse with particular institutional practices. Development ethnography presents the development expert as an agent with their own culture and power of influence, though within strict limits. Understanding experts as 'brokers' (Lewis 2006, 13) positioned at interfaces between knowledges and life-worlds and looking in two directions can provide a dual viewpoint regarding the structural reinforcement of intellectual hegemony, though it is important to recognise that brokers are not neutral agents operating independently from the major asymmetries of power that are enforced through the systems they engage with or represent on the ground. By establishing the extents and types of agency exercised by individuals and organisations in structures that otherwise lack clearly defined boundaries, we can examine how development 'becomes real' through processes of 'mutual enrolment and the interlocking of

interests', 'creating context by tying in supporters and so sustaining interpretations' (Lewis 2006, 13).

Though the meta-framework for policy is dictated by the Western ideology of 'progress' and modernity, no 'ideological totality' (Quijano 1992) can be directly transposed into all legal and political contexts without considerable adaptation at different jurisdictional scales. Context-specific agendas and implementation tactics are also informed by an intricate web of relationships and interests where different kinds of policy intersect. For this reason, policy remains vague and abstract. It is in the many procedural phases of negotiation that the abstract principles of policy are made concrete for practice. It is this constant metamorphosis across different scales and points of use which makes it so difficult to generate a clear picture of the way policy is produced and, in turn, *produces* concrete conditions on the ground. Mosse tells us that 'it is not policy models that make practice unintelligible, but rather the political logic and culture of specific organisations. Projects are sites of social and institutional reproduction. Policy models [...] do not and cannot share actual practice in the way that they claim. They are ignored, resisted, "consumed" or tactically used in ways that make them irrelevant in the face of more urgent relational demands' (Mosse 2008, 16). This means that agency is neither an individual, nor a static condition. As a result, rather than studying the ways in which individual actors or organisations are able to exercise authority over the practices of development and under what circumstances, it may be more pertinent to begin by analysing the ways in which their agency is constrained by these networks.

2.2 ACTORS AND HISTORICAL POSITIONING

The main supranational powers which the majority of the literature outlines as key to the construction and propagation of the universal imaginary are those most clearly associated with

the imperialist states of the United States and Western Europe and their post-Second World War infrastructure, built upon financial governance. That infrastructure connects state-specific bilateral agencies with banks and multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations (established 1945), NATO (1949) and the World Trade Organization (1995, originally established under the name of the International Trade Organization in 1945).[8] These connections are enforced by common governmental and financial frameworks such as the Bretton Woods Agreement (1944) that structure lending, as well as common ideology. The most important multilateral financial institutions remain the World Bank (est. 1994) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (1944), though regional development banks are now prominent. The United States played a leading role in shaping these institutional relationships, having emerged from the Second World War in an economically stronger position than its allies, and these relationships have continued to favour United States international interests ever since (Williams 2013) (Mosse 2008) (A. Escobar 2012).

According to Escobar, by the late 1940s, development had already become 'the primary mechanism through which these parts of the world have been produced and have produced themselves, thus marginalizing or precluding other ways of seeing and doing' (A. Escobar, 1995, 22). In approaching the history of development from the post-Second World War era onwards, one should not forget that the ideological imposition of reality as a division between 'civilised' and 'uncivilised' ways of life spans back to the genocides of the colonial project. Some bilateral agencies

8 Originally known as the International Trade Organization (abolished in 1948, superseded in 1947 by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and again by the WTO in 1995).

(such as the British development machinery established as part of central government in 1929) preceded this post-war political structuring, having been established for the development of colonies. The colonial nature of aid, though officially abandoned with colonial independence, was implicitly extended through a world order structured around financial and military strength. Britain's Commonwealth Development Corporation[9] did not extend its first loan beyond the Commonwealth until 1971.[10] Despite the significance of pre-Second World War development histories, during the period immediately following the Second World War, international relations between richer and poorer countries were rapidly reconfigured into a new institutional infrastructure to support expanding and more complex agendas (A. Escobar 2012, 30). Under this new infrastructure, the image of the 'Third World' moved from one associated with natural resource abundance to one concerned with economic and political integration. Indeed, according to Escobar, the terms 'First World', 'Second World' and 'Third World' ('the free industrialized nations, the Communist industrialized nations, and the poor, nonindustrialized nations [...] respectively' (A. Escobar 2012, 31)) were an invention of this post-Second World War order, emerging 'as working principles within the process by which the West – and, in different ways, the East – redefined itself and the rest of the world' (A. Escobar 2012, 31). After emerging only in the mid-1940s, the rapidity of change during this period meant that these concepts were entrenched by the early 1950s and, despite

9 Previously named the Colonial Development Corporation.

10 Almost simultaneously with the emergence of the World Bank, the European Recovery Programme, otherwise known as the Marshall Plan, entered US law in 1948 under the terms of the Economic Cooperation Act (Payne 2012). The Marshall Plan – though a bilateral aid agreement put forward by the United States – forced European nations to cooperate as a single economic unit, which subsequently led to the formation of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation or OEEC (Payne 2012) (Williams 2013). Following from the European Recovery Programme, the 1950 Act for International Development expanded the bilateral development strategy of the United States government beyond European recovery (Williams 2013, 49).

the dissolution of the 'Second World' as a coherent concept, the conflation of the First World and Third World with notions of the Global North and Global South has continued 'to articulate a regime of geopolitical representation' (A. Escobar 2012, 31) that has become increasingly dualistic.

The World Bank remains the most prominent of the supranational institutions investing in this duality. After the Bretton Woods Agreement and the IMF set the economic framework for post-war development in the interest of the United States, the World Bank became, and remains, a leader in development strategy (and in more recent years, in data collection), with a dominant proportion of its board positions occupied by United States diplomats (Sanford 2019). This is because the share of board positions is determined by the size of contributions by lending states (Williams 2013). The strategies of development banks are, therefore, grounded in the neoliberal principles of the early industrialised West, as those countries remain the largest donors (Sanford 2019). While all development banks are able to exercise a certain amount of power over the management of their investments by recipient states, the World Bank is known for aggressive approaches that use loans to leverage wide-sweeping changes to economic policy and governmental structures (Sanford 2019) (Williams 2013) (A. Escobar 2012) (Marquette 2001). The colonial roots and political nature of such institutions cannot be understated, despite official discourse on political neutrality. Much of the world's debt governance can be attributed to relationships between these institutions and imperial governments. For example, the IMF bought the debt that France imposed on Haiti to recover economic losses that it attributed to the loss of slave colonies on the island after a bloody rebellion (Hallward 2007). To this day, an economically strangled Haiti loses a huge proportion of its GDP to the repayment of that debt to the IMF (Hallward 2007).

The United Nations stands slightly apart from other development organisations in that its direct lending practices are limited. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was founded in 1965 as an amalgamation of the Special Fund and of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (Williams 2013, 68). The Special Fund, rather than funding projects directly, funded activities to strategise projects for investment (Williams 2013, 68). This is suggestive of the role that the United Nations continues to play, guiding investment strategies for development at large and shaping core objectives and methodological principles. The United Nations system remains largely unchanged, shaping agendas in central headquarters and coordinating field activities through country offices. From the 1970s onwards,[11] the United Nations has become increasingly successful in its efforts to expand objectives beyond its own agencies to reach other multilaterals, national governments and the third sector, essentially setting a unified global agenda epitomised in the Millennium Development Goals and subsequently, in the more recent 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The United Nations is a centrally important institution in the post-war development policy landscape, as a leader in policy development and international mediation. Whereas the international financial institutions can be said to play the greatest role in strategising implementation through financial instrumentation (Chiodelli 2016) (Davis 2007) (Munck 2007) (Saul 2004), the United Nations are key in establishing the principles on which development is founded and thus, upon which coordination is established. UN-HABITAT, as the dedicated UN agency to all

11 This expansion came after an unstable period in the late 1960s into the 1970s, when support for UNDP wavered slightly. The United Nations worked on the basis of direct relationships to recipient states themselves rather than through other multilaterals (Williams 2013, 68), which dampened its appeal to lending states.

questions regarding urbanisation and urban development, is the first and only agency to seek to establish global coordination on a very precise set of principles for the transformation of cities, everywhere.

The United Nations system points to a gradual institutionalisation of global politics through development activities. Despite some early friction with other development institutions, it encompasses the Euro–American agenda to create an entity that can govern a global ethical ideology – as Hardt and Negri describe it, a 'World State' that could be organised as a 'universal community superior to the particular states, enveloping them all within itself' (Hardt 2000, 5).

2.3 UNIVERSALISATION AND COVERT POWER

Much of the critique of development as an institutional superstructure, ideology and set of practices concerns the ways in which international coordination is premised on a universal consensus concerning the image of 'progress'. Even setting aside the valid criticism of its Western-centric construction, the very idea that what constitutes a successful future can be universally predetermined, serves to dualise the ontological and material plurality of the world into two conditions; the developed and underdeveloped, the successful and the failing. (A. Escobar 1995) (A. Escobar 2012) (Quijano 1992) (Long 2000) (Petras 2003) (B. d. Santos 2018) (Ferguson 1994, 177). This value binary also infiltrates historical narratives, assuming a linear progression from a state of underdevelopment, to one of fully developed.

This rhetorical universalisation supports the consolidation of power in the supranational institutions, providing criteria by which to standardise methods of assessment (of need and success) and implementation. According to historical accounts

provided by Williams and Long, this unified approach was first given theoretical grounding in the emergence of development theory and development economics in the mid-1940s. Development economics in a way, formalised the rhetorical division between the underdeveloped world and the developed powers. Modelled on the early industrialised Western nations, development economics presented a universal framework with which to drive economic expansion by focusing on import relations and industrial advancement (Long 2000) (Williams 2013) (Power 2010) (A. Escobar 2012).

The post-Second World War invention of the Third World in the project of global economic integration, added an additional layer of complexity to the nature of domination, according to Santos. Whereas 'both colonialism and patriarchy existed before capitalism', Santos explains, the addition of capitalism as a mode of domination in itself reconfigured the other two as integral components of the same system. Ever since, these 'three main modes of domination have operated in close articulation on a global scale' (B. d. Santos 2020, 572).

In the 1960s, 'modernisation theory' emerged as an explicit framework for 'progress'. Though the notion of modernity was already a guiding principle in development economics, the focus and research base of 'modernisation theory', otherwise known as 'political development theory', was more expansive (Offiler 2015, 17). The economic basis was retained but new notions of 'modernity' used sociological theory to explore the 'political, social, and psychological aspects of development' (Williams 2013, 39). This meant industrialisation and trade frameworks were accompanied by political reorganisation, and technological

assistance was framed as promoting cultural and social 'norms' and ideas of 'morality' (Offiler 2015, 17), all cohering around an 'American, liberal, secular and rational modernity with a pluralist and democratic politics' (Williams 2013, 42) (A. Escobar 2012) (A. Escobar 1995) (Long 2000, 5). Many point to the ideological structuring of 'modernisation' as epitomising the ontological warfare waged by development rhetoric on less industrialised nations, the social and political implications of which were to pose the 'superiority' of the industrialised West in direct contrast with the 'technological inferiority' of 'underdeveloped' countries (Long 2000, 5) (A. Escobar 2012) (Quijano 1992). This reductive characterisation of the many ontologies of the Global South as common in their lack of the civility that accompanied economic and industrial development, mirrored the same dualistic world view that had characterised colonisation and slavery (A. Escobar 2012) (A. Escobar 1995) (B. d. Santos 2018) (B. S. Santos 2019).

Despite the political implications of concentrating the management of global futures within a handful of institutions (which are neither directly associated with any particular country nor independent), the World Bank (including both development arms - IDA and IRDB) and the United Nations are self-limiting in the area of domestic political intervention. The United Nations charter principles outlined in chapter 1 article 2(7), state that the United Nations will not intervene in matters that lie within the domestic jurisdiction of the state (while this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII- Action with respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression). Similarly, Section 10 in Article IV in the Terms of Agreement governing the conduct of the IBRD[12] states that 'The Bank and its officers shall not interfere in the political affairs of any member; nor shall they

12 (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development)

be influenced in their decisions by the political character of the member or members concerned'[13] This is mirrored in Section 6 of Article V in the IDA[14] terms of agreement.

Instead, policy focused on technical measures through which to direct economic growth and ensuring government structures were in place which would produce 'enabling environments' for foreign investments and trade ((D. Harvey 2007) (D. Williams 2013) (Mosse 2008) (Power 2010) (Sanford 2019) (Saul 2004) (Hallward 2007). However, as critics such as Williams, Mosse and Escobar point out, lending relationships were deeply politicised. Williams and Lorenzini outline for example, that during the Cold War, both the geographic concentration of aid and its strategies were clearly based less on the reduction of poverty than on the desire to erect strategic barriers between the United States, its Euro–Colonial allies, and the Communist threat (Williams 2013, 17) (Lorenzini 2019). This was demonstrated, according to Williams, by the fact that both the US–Euro alliance and the USSR gave aid to unlikely allies during that time, with the Soviets sometimes giving support to non-Communist states.

At this time, not only was the placement of aid highly politicised, but its nature was also militarised, often accompanied by armed support in both overt and sometimes covert operations, prominent examples of which include Vietnam, Angola and Mozambique (Lorenzini 2019, 52) (Williams 2013, 18) (Petras 2003). The United States also rolled out a large programme of non-military support in countries such as Iran, Chile, the

13 'SECTION 10. Political Activity Prohibited
The Bank and its officers shall not interfere in the political affairs of any member; nor shall they be influenced in their decisions by the political character of the member or members concerned. Only economic considerations shall be relevant to their decisions, and these considerations shall be weighed impartially in order to achieve the purposes stated in Article I.' Section 10, Article Iv: Operations, IBRD terms of agreement.

14 (International Development Association)

Philippines, Panama and Guatemala (Williams 2013, 18).

It is around the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union that most authors identify as a turning point in development policy, when consensus on the benefits of neoliberalism was consolidated and any remaining pluralism in approaches dropped (D. Williams 2013) (Mosse 2008) (Sassen 2014) (D. Harvey 2007). In the period immediately following the Cold War, the role of the state also began to diminish in economic policy, with increasing emphasis on the self-regulating potential of markets. Whereas in the pre-Cold War 'Sovereign Order' (Williams 2013) theory dictated that the market should be embedded in, or subordinate to, social and political ideologies and controlled by policy, the reduction of political competition induced by the fall of the Soviet Union increased the potential rate for neoliberal expansion. An ensuing process of 'disembedding' entailed the gradual subordination of social and political agendas to the market and the growing role of market relations in the structures of society (Williams 2013, 20) (Hallward 2007) (D. Harvey 2007).[15] It was at this time that structural adjustment grew in popularity, which used conditional lending to ensure that policies in recipient states would support new economic trajectories (A. Escobar 2012, 43) (Williams 2013, 116-117). This consolidated period of deregulation from the late 1980s through the 1990s had profound impacts on urbanisation in the Global South.

The implementation of 'modernisation' involved the mobilisation of labour and capital from traditional sectors to the newly emerging 'modern' ones (Long 2000, 6) (A. Escobar 2012). This

15 The technical consolidation of neoliberalism (or 'disembedded liberalism') into development policy entailed the reduction of price controls to encourage competition, the reduction of state expenditures and deficits by privatisation of state-owned businesses, the reduction of inflation and retracting the exchange rate and import controls (Williams 2013).

meant that labour would be siphoned from the abundant reserves in the subsistent agricultural sector to the newly industrialising 'capital' sector, securing profits through wage suppression generated by a consistent labour supply. The depletion of agricultural labour was then to be countered with technological modernisation, which would raise productivity with a diminished workforce (Williams 2013, 36). This technological modernisation led to a wave of dispossessions from rural lands, having disconnected much of the population from their traditional livelihoods (Kapoor 2017).[16]

Around the time of the 1960s, a number of political shifts had already taken place to catalyse a process of city re-population and expansion. The collapse of colonialism was the most prominent force in this process; previously, deep schisms between classes and between urban and rural cultures, combined with colonial racism, had excluded rural and indigenous populations from cities (Davis 2007). The collapse of colonies was also followed, in some cases, by the effects of international and civil war (Davis 2007), and of new agro-industrial competition and rural land-grabbing throughout the colonised world (Zoomers 2014, Kapoor 2017) (Ortega 2016). All these mechanisms incentivised movement towards and (at the same time) broke down barriers to the city, resulting in massive influx. In many cases that influx was too large to be moderated and led to vast self-built neighbourhoods, which expanded at a pace and with an intensity that far outstripped the extension of formal

16 Later agricultural reform placed new emphasis on cash crops for foreign export over food crops, to be produced in newly centralised systems that would improve efficiency while reducing decentralised, participatory methods of production and distribution (A. Escobar 2012) (Hallward 2007) (Mosse 2008). This meant mechanisation took precedence over traditional systems and labour distribution, and economic growth took privilege over internal market articulation (A. Escobar 2012).

infrastructures and services (Woods 1998).[17]

The 1980s were however, particularly significant not only to the fact of urban growth but to the types of urbanisation that began to emerge. The end of the decade bore witness to an economic reshuffle that proved brutally effective for incentivising rapid growth in cities in largely uncontrolled ways. The widespread privatisation of state-owned business and tariff reductions on imports (Sassen 2014, 18) (Williams 2013) coupled with infrastructural growth, industrialisation, and agrarian reform implemented through development assistance – framed a period of exponential growth in concentrated economic zones, dedicated to the types of capital production needed for a modern economy, from extractive to financial (Sassen 2014). The Global City is the most layered of these zones, as financial agglomerations integrate with other centres of knowledge production and governance, interlinking with cultural hubs and generating high concentrations of surplus wealth that new industries sprang up to absorb. Outsourcing sites were standardised for mass production, often huge, and contained less economic layering as the decreasing share of national and global wealth generated and held in the labour force produced fewer opportunities for surplus accumulation. However, the digital and physical infrastructures that connected these two spatial systems in a continuous network made both modes of spatial concentration key to the functioning of the globalised economy (Sassen 2014, 18-19).

17 In Manila, Philippines, where the primary sewage system was originally constructed at the beginning of the twentieth century to service a population of only 500,000 people, 35 percent of the National Capital Region population (now over 13 million) live outside the water distribution area and are forced to rely on ground water or private sales. The demand on ground water has dropped the water table to 200 metres below sea level, and saline levels are dangerously high for drinking. During the floods of the monsoon seasons, sewage and clean water intermix in the overloaded system. According to L. Shelton Woods, as a combined result of water and air pollution in Manila, 'Nine of the ten leading causes of death [there] are preventable diseases' (Woods 1998).

Of course, much of this economic change did not unfold naturally but was engineered by the core development institutions of the post-Second World War period and forcefully executed through debt governance. According to Davis, 'The 1980s – when the IMF and the World Bank used the leverage of debt to restructure the economies of most of the Third World – are the years when slums became an implacable future not just for poor and rural migrants, but also for millions of traditional urbanites displaced or immersed by the violence of "adjustment"' (Davis 2007, 152).

The arguments levelled against the institutional framework of development are largely centred around this covert exercise of power and the ways in which universalisation (of futures, value assessment and knowledge structures) leads to the erasure or condemnation of non-compliant lifeworlds (A. Escobar 2012). This thesis focuses on the scalar bias exhibited in these policy approaches, arguing that universalisation makes sense only at the global scale of generality.

I add to this argument that it is in Global Cities where the complexity of this scalar bias becomes most acute. The city is an integral part of a global economic arc that connects through multiple urban and 'non-urban' territories. As Saskia Sassen (Sassen 2014) and David Harvey (D. Harvey 2012) (D. Harvey n.d.) (D. Harvey 2007) (D. Harvey 2007) identify, the globalisation of capital is carried through the space-making economies of the city, shaping the city itself, concentrating new agglomerations, absorbing more migration (both forced and unforced) and increasingly, to disband industrial sites (D. Harvey 2007). New densities created around 'business-led centralities, [...] free trade blocs' (Sassen 2005), private borders in the form of gated estates (Sassen 2018) and social fissures created by new 'labour and wage separations' all contribute to new territorial distinctions (Sassen 2005).

The decoupling of Urbanisation from manufacturing and industrialisation that took place during the late 1980s and 1990s was facilitated by the rise of finance and speculative lending that drew on the production of the urban landscape to generate and realise new profits whilst also absorbing over-accumulation of both capital and labour (however cyclical and unstable) (D. Harvey 2012, 42-45) (Sassen 2014) (D. Harvey 2007). The 1990s and turn of the century saw an increasing tendency towards "fictitious capital" (D. Harvey 2012, 45-46) that has allowed finance to speculate on a broader scale than ever before, drawing almost all products and processes of daily (current and future) life into its remit, with increasingly complex instruments (Sassen 2014, 9) that shield it from widespread scrutiny (Sassen 2014, 9) (D. Harvey 2007) (D. Harvey 2012). The property market plays an intrinsic role in the credit system wherein "productive and fictitious capital combine" (D. Harvey 2012, 45).[18]

Whereas mobility and ephemerality are to an extent, implicit in the digitisation that has made the global networking of urban centres possible, Sassen calls attention in multiple works to the 'regulatory environments' that play an important role in facilitating exchange between national and international markets and the 'place-bound' nature of regulation (Sassen 2005) (Sassen 1998) (Sassen 2014). Managerial hubs require physical infrastructure, equipment, and workers, the placement of which is influenced by locally specific planning policy and taxation (Sassen 1998). The continued physical growth of global cities in nodal consolidations of national economy is also self-perpetuating, offering a vehicle for capital accumulation as real

18 The construction of infrastructure and property provides a particularly appealing way to absorb surplus, as the long production times of large-scale projects balance risk arising from fluctuations in material and labour costs in relation to future value estimations. (D. Harvey 2012, 42). Part of the capital involved in these cycles is fictitious - loaned to developers on the assumption of their ability to pay out and then capitalised as interest and realisation of sales values (D. Harvey 2012, 45-46).

estate demand increases for varied and integrated economic agglomerations, including homes for labour forces (D. Harvey 2012) (D. Harvey 2004). Harvey adds to Sassen's arguments on the materiality of economic space, stating that 'the logic of capitalism is not a space-less one in contrast to the fixed territorial logic of political power; rather it is a conflict between two different conceptions and logics of spatiality, one involved in capital accumulation and the other in the management of populations through territorial configurations known as the "state apparatus" (D. Harvey 2008, 2).

From the study of cities, we can see how development together with financial globalisation has created a model of neoliberal urbanism, which generates globally comparative spatial paradigms but with contextually different consequences. Micro-politics, social relations and frictions between inhabitants of different city areas vary according to different legal systems, planning guidelines and culture. In cities of the Global South, where international relations are heavily conditioned by aid, debt and colonial histories, this complexity is greatly compounded by frictions between international and national governance and finance. Clearly development policy – strategised most prominently between regional and international scales has played a significant role in shaping patterns of urbanisation in the Global South. Yet, I argue, as urbanisation has come to feature much more prominently in global development agendas since the first dedicated international UN conference on the subject in 1976, policy development has failed to close the feedback loop between globally coordinated strategy and locally specific impacts. This manifests in what Santos describes as a separation between theory and practice and, in the specific context of affordable housing projects in global cities of the South, I argue leads to a fundamental divide between research and design practice.

2.4 SEPARATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE BY THE PREDETERMINATION OF THE UNIVERSAL IMAGINARY

The separation of theory and practice, Santos points out, is exhibited in the 'huge discrepancy between what theory anticipates and the transformative practices going on in the world. For the last 30 years the most progressive struggles featured social groups (indigenous, peasant, women, afro-descendants, miners, unemployed) whose role in history was not foreseen by Eurocentric critical theory.' (B. d. Santos 2012, 48).[19] I argue that the very same can be said of the ways in which development theory failed to anticipate the impact of infrastructural policies and structural adjustment on urbanisation and the role of individuals and social movements in socialising alternative methods of living and producing in response. In my view, there remains a fundamental lack of meaningful reflection on practices of implementation and social responses to them, which demonstrates the separation between theory and practice.

The growing focus on urbanisation in development agencies from the late 1970s onwards, culminating in the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals and more recent Sustainable Development Goals, corresponds with a period under which urbanisation was expanding at a rapid rate. This rapid growth exacerbated conditions of financial and infrastructural strain, giving rise to massive amounts of autonomous-construction by the poor as a way by which to claim their place in urban society. However, while multiple urban theorists (Davis 2007) (D. Harvey 2007) (D. Harvey 2012) (Sassen 1998) (Sassen 2014) have traced the emergence of this form of urbanisation to development

19 'This discrepancy between theory and practice was highly visible in the World Social Forum (WSF) which took place for the first time in Porto Alegre in 2001. The WSF has shown that the gap between the practices of the left and the classical theories was wider than ever.' (B. d. Santos 2012, 48)

policies themselves and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in particular, these new urban focused policy pledges - despite their recognition of the important role of housing in articulating life in the city - do little to address the role of past policies in generating the 'problems' that they identify or to suggest how economic policies and universal objectives might require adjustment.

The aim of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) was to consolidate the global economy according to a series of established norms that would provide a path to growth for those countries 'left behind'. These norms included inflation control, slashed public spending - including on health, infrastructure, education etc - and the privatisation of most basic services (Sassen 2014, 84, Davis 2007, A. Escobar, 2012, Williams 2013, Bayat 2000). According to Bayat, 'The historic shift in the periphery from socialist and populist regimes to liberal economic policies, through the Structural Adjustment Program, has led to the erosion of much of the social contract, collective responsibility and welfare state structures.' (Bayat 2000, 534)

Predatory lending practices and interest rates have meant that many SAP recipients have seen their debt levels rise compared to rates before intervention[20] (Sassen 2014, 27) (Davis 2007). Many states now pay more in debt recovery to global institutions than they are able to invest in basic services such as health care and education (Sassen 2014, 27, Hallward 2007, Davis 2007). The UN's Human Development Report of 2004, cited by Davis, stated that in the 1990s, development aid had left 46 countries poorer that they

20 Despite the high repayment rates, Global South debt actually grew in the years between 1980 and 1992 from $507 billion to $1.4 trillion (Sassen 2014, 91). According to Sassen, 'from 1982 to 1998, indebted countries paid in interest four times the amount of their original debt, and at the same their indebtedness went up fourfold.' (Sassen 2014, 91).

had been in 1990 and 25 countries hungrier (Davis 2007, 163).[21],[22] According to data collected by Sassen, debt service in the key period of the 1980s and 1990s was collected from export earnings of "emerging economies" at rates set by the IMF as high as 20 to 25 per cent. Compared to the post-World War II period when lending structures were first established, Germany was expected to repay only 20% of its war debt at a rate of 3 to 5 percent of export earnings (80% of the debt was completely cancelled). In the 1990s, rates grew to only 8 percent of export earnings among central European countries (Sassen 2014, 90).

According to Davis, citing UN sources, SAPs were intended to address government development bias perceived in the higher rates of investment and welfare spending in urban areas. However, despite the increasing visibility of SAP impact in the city's decimated public sectors on increased unemployment, poverty, and homelessness, rural to urban migration has continued. This is largely due to the mechanisation of agriculture, food imports, removal of export controls and the elimination of subsidies which devastated rural smallholders by pushing them 'into global commodity markets [that were] dominated

21 As stated by Bayat, 'According to the World Bank, in the early 1990s, during the transition to market economies in post-socialist, adjusting Latin American and Middle Eastern countries, formal employment fell by 5–15 percent (World Bank, 1995). In Africa the number of unemployed grew by 10 percent more every year throughout the 1980s, while labor absorption in the formal wage sector kept declining (Vandemoortele, 1990). By the late 1990s, a staggering 1 billion workers, representing one-third of the world's labor force, most of them in the South, were either unemployed or underemployed (CIA, 1992). A large number of once educated well-to-do middle classes (government employees and students), public sector workers, as well as segments of the peasantry have been pushed to the ranks of the urban poor in labor and housing markets.' (Bayat 2000, 534)

22 'According to ILO research, urban poverty in Latin America rose by an extraordinary 50 percent just in the first half of the decade, 1980 to 1986. The average incomes of the working population fell by 40 percent in Venezuela, 30 percent in Argentina, and 21 percent in Brazil and Costa Rica. In Mexico informal employment almost doubled between 1980 and 1987, while social expenditure fell to half of its 1980 level. In Peru the 1980s ended in an SAP-induced "hyper-recession" that cut formal employment from 60 to 11 percent of the urban workforce in three years' (Davis 2007, 156-157)

by heavily subsidized First World Agribusiness.' (Davis 2007, 152-153) (Hallward 2007). The push towards industrialised agriculture led either to the disbanding or consolidation of small holdings (Davis 2007, 16), often for purchase by foreign firms or governments.[23] Drought throughout Africa and civil wars (Angola and Congo) 'often spurred by the economic dislocations of debt-imposed structural adjustment' (Davis 2007, 16), added to the dismantling of rural landscapes and the violent dispossession of the rural poor, creating surplus labour to service emerging urban industries. (A. Escobar 2012) (Davis 2007).[24]

The dispossession of the rural poor caused by agrarian reform meant that the "push" towards the city remained, even when worsening urban conditions reduced their "pull" (Davis 2007, 17). This explains why despite growing urban unemployment, diminishing wages and extortionate prices, urbanisation exploded at a rate of '3.8 percent per annum from 1960 to 1993' (Davis 2007, 14). The result was that in poorer, emerging cities especially, while immigration increased, wage levels continued to fall and restrictions on public spending meant social infrastructures were unable grow at a rate that could keep up with rapid population growth (Davis 2007, 155). This was an obvious recipe for self-built (later referred to here as auto-constructed) housing to proliferate in areas of the city that were as-yet un-serviced and therefore, less desirable. A lack of real estate speculation in such areas allowed people to build relatively unnoticed what they simply could not afford to formally

23 (between 2006 and 2011 approximately 200 million hectares of land were acquired by foreign governments and firms throughout Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe (Sassen 2014, 80)

24 According to Davis "Urban Africa and Latin America were the hardest hit" by "the economic impact of SAPs during the 1980s, in tandem with protracted drought, rising oil prices, soaring interest rates, and falling commodity prices," which led to an "artificial" crisis that "was more severe and long-lasting than the Great Depression." (Davis 2007, 155)

acquire, in areas that presented opportunities for employment, formal or otherwise.

Though exact policies have of course shifted and evolved from the 1960s to now, critics suggest that they can be grouped into two overarching phases beginning with very project based approaches and moving towards more systemic approaches (Pugh 1994, 159) (Chiodelli 2016, 793) (Mosse 2008). I suggest that both periods demonstrate that housing policies have essentially been layered over or inserted in and around economic policies and development principles, which remain rooted in deeply technocentric neoliberal ideals of progress, conditioned by the predetermined ends of a universal imaginary for the future.

The greatest example of this comes from the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, both formulated by UN-Habitat. In reference to SDG 11 (sustainable cities and towns) as Parnell suggests, 'SDG #11 unambiguously signals UN members' acceptance of some form of devolution in governance, the imperative of an integrated vision of sustainable urban development that does not exclude social, economic, or ecological imperatives and (implicitly) a collective acknowledgment that the spatial concentration of resources and flows that cities represent can act as a driver of sustainable development. But, while SDG #11 provides a place for cities at the UN-hosted global development policy-makers table, it does not flesh out the substance of that agenda beyond the designation of targets and some indicators.' (Parnell 2016)

It was for this reason that the New Urban Agenda (NUA) was created in the year following the ratification of the SDGs as a practical accompaniment to SDG 11, providing a detailed framework for implementation of projects which address the different indicator points that make up the goal. The NUA is the result of the third United Nations conference on housing and

sustainable urban development (otherwise known as habitat III) which took place in Quito, Ecuador in 2016. Housing is mentioned 42 times in the New Urban Agenda. Its prominence is promising in demonstrating a level of recognition within the United Nations of the role that housing plays in the social, political and economic construction of the city. However, the NUA makes no specific mention of implementation methodologies, nor for that matter does it problematise housing within a discussion on development history, privatisation and public spending reductions, or economic globalisation. It does make vague mentions of the economic opportunities opened up by creating more accessible housing markets and the importance of stakeholder engagement to ensuring 'urban economic development' happens in inclusive ways, while avoiding gentrification (though how this seemingly paradoxical condition can be achieved is not elaborated on) (United Nations 2017, 24 item 97).

More importantly, though stakeholder participation among vulnerable groups is mentioned consistently throughout the document, there is no mention of *how* vulnerable groups might be identified or the actual manner in which they should be invited to participate. In fact, aside from vague mentions of ideologies of social integration and growing government capacities to increase inclusion and 'leverage' cultural differences, there is no explicit mention of specific causes of socio-political segregation or the relationship between governments and their citizens.

Having poured through many tens of documents purporting to contain practical guidance to urban spatial assessment, design and planning for urban housing projects from the UN (UN-Habitat 2022) (UN-Habitat 2015) (UN-Habitat 2014) (UN-Habitat 2011) (UN-Habitat 2021), as well as policy evaluation reports (UN-Habitat 2018) (UN-Habitat 2022), and scouring the archive of

project reports from the World Bank[25] (World Bank Group n.d.) (World Bank Group n.d.), I was unable to find a methodological evaluation which actually reflected back on global theory and policy frameworks in order to suggest possible flaws or necessary adjustments to be made at the national or international scale.[26]

Based on my analysis of these documents and experience in policy writing within the United Nations, I argue that this demonstrates a disconnect between the way in which policy is shaped around a predetermined and fixed future imaginary, and the need to shape implementation methodologies around *current* realities – both material and political. While I am not arguing for a corresponding universalised set of methodologies, I do argue that the lack of analysis in policy papers on the ways in which implementation methodologies actually connect universal agendas with very different ground realities, essentially serves to shroud the network of power through which these agendas are enforced and makes accountabilities of different actors involved in processes of project design and implementation very difficult to trace. The NUA is indicative of the way that policy works as essentially, a layering of more and more detailed *objectives* rather than methodologies, clarifying the ends against which

25 (there is no category for housing projects in the search option)

26 Similarly, housing project reports and policy documents omit information relating to contextual research or the ways in which a particular social and political context or established relationships on a site should be taken into account or how such contextual research might (or should) constitute part of the process in which project strategies are established. Even in the UN-Habitat guide titled 'A Practical Guide for Conducting: Housing Profiles' produced in 2011 (UN-Habitat 2011) makes no mention of contextual social research in the sites in question or how different social groups should be identified and involved. The only clear example I have found which does address this clearly is 'Practical Guide to Designing, Planning and Implementing Citywide Slum Upgrading Programs' produced by UN-Habitat in 2014, which does discuss the formation of a task force to run the project and indicate what kinds of stakeholders should be included in the project. However, the section on assessing the existing settlements is formulaic and includes no mention of the ways in which social political divisions are spatialised in the city or how architectural choices reflect collective aspirations or cultures. (UN-Habitat 2014)

current and future conditions must be valued, irrespective of the *means* required to achieve them.

As I will discuss in more detail in the following chapter, because the UN and World Bank predicate the global policy agenda around a universal imaginary for the future, project strategies and value judgements can be post-rationalised in accordance with it. In this context, methodologies become of secondary importance because they cannot be universalised but are instead adjusted in each instance to bring a non-conforming condition closer to the aspired ends. As such, the ways in which the success of development projects is valued, is only by the extent to which they fulfil that predetermined objective.

In accordance with institutional declarations of political neutrality, development agencies have demonstrated a clear avoidance of political and social language in policy documents, instead framing objectives around vague ideologies of 'inclusion', inter-governmental coordination, and material commitments (United Nations 2016) (UN-Habitat 2022) (UN-Habitat 2003). In this way, the ideal of objectivity has become a vehicle for highly technical and specialised approaches to productive processes engendered in these material commitments. What this does, is preserve the scalar bias which maintains an objective distance between policy objectives and ground conditions, and to present scientific knowledges and empirical research as the only legitimate form of 'rigorous knowledge'. (B. d. Santos 2018, 6). In turn, the scalar bias I referred to at the end of the previous section means that knowledges or entities which can be generalised in a way that makes them universally applicable, 'regardless of specific contexts [...] take precedence over all other realities that depend on contexts and are therefore considered particular or vernacular.' (B. d. Santos 2012, 53) In this way, Santos asserts that Globalisation 'is the scale that grants privileges to entities or realities that widen their scope

to the whole globe, thus earning the prerogative to designate rival entities as local. According to this logic, non-existence is produced under the form of the particular and the local. The entities or realities defined as particular or local are captured in scales that render them incapable of being credible alternatives to what exists globally and universally.' (B. d. Santos 2012, 53)[27,28]

I argue that what this means for practice is that the imperative to ensure that policy is globally applicable, separates the actual theoretical basis of policy from any issues that might arise from contextual conditions at the point of implementation. This means that there is little scope to ensure that feedback received from the process of implementing policy as projects, has any bearing on global level policy, as the principal outline for an imaginary which has been predetermined. I argue, in agreement with Santos, that it is this scalar bias which allows for interventions to be exercised from a physical and political distance (B. d. Santos 2018) (B. S. Santos 2019) (B. d. Santos 2020) and that this distance is what enables the global coordination of a policy agenda without the need to recognise or be seen to be engaged in domestic politics.

27 As a result, local realities are blocked from informing international policy and production paradigms. According to development ethnographers such as Mosse and Williams, since the mid-1940s, development has always been a double-sided technical discourse that, while providing technical relief, executes and at the same time obscures the true political objectives of international power relations (Mosse 2008, 2) (Williams 2013). In this way, the project of political neutrality in development has become a tool to obscure its true identity as a powerful act of dominance – over thoughts, imaginations, aspirations and ways of life (A. Escobar 2012) (Ferguson 1994).

28 In Williams' words, 'international order is created and structured by three interrelated spheres or arenas: power-political agency, economic structures and processes, and structure of meaning – power, the economy and norms' (Williams 2013, 6). And in Escobar's: 'development can be described as an apparatus (dispositif) that links forms of knowledge about the Third World with the deployment of forms of power and intervention, resulting in the mapping and production of Third World societies. In other words, development is what constructs the contemporary Third World, silently, without our noticing it' (A. Escobar 1995, 23).

2.5 THE NGO COMMUNITY AND THE ILLUSION OF PARTICIPATION

NGOs play a fundamental role in bridging the general objectives of policy with actual realities on the ground where they are implemented.

A particular shift occurred during and after the Cold War, when the understanding of 'civil society' and its responsibilities shifted quite suddenly from being something associated with states or governments to being associated with non-governmental entities. Following from the end of the Second World War, the Non-Aligned Movement, led by heads of state throughout the colonised world, had fought for decolonisation and independence from imperialist interests.[29] As previously stated, this led to competition between the colonial West and Communist East, with many non-aligned states finding themselves courted by the USSR and the United States, allowing greater control over the conditions of association with either. During this time (somewhere between the 1950s and the 1980s, according to Kamat and Williams), the process of economic disembedding had not yet taken place and economic stability was still considered as dependent on governmental management. Additionally, according to Kamat, Third World 'civil society' was still 'seen as largely underdeveloped' by supranational institutions, requiring that the state should represent the 'public interest' in taking responsibility for directing economic and political interests towards 'broader public goals of national development and social welfare' (Kamat 2004, 157). During this time, 'civil society was used to refer to "private sectarian interests" that were represented through religious organizations, business associations, trade unions and so forth'

29 Over 60 per cent of heads of state associated with the Non-Aligned movement represented African countries (Waters 2021).

(Kamat 2004, 157). The near-reversal of these roles seemed to coincide with the transition to disembedded liberalism towards the end of, and following, the Cold War. It was at this time that neoliberalism was becoming entrenched in the universal imaginary and governments were playing a lesser role in market regulation (D. Harvey 2007) (Sassen 2014) (D. Williams 2013). At the same time, government corruption diminished trust among society groups and the world witnessed a period of exponential growth in the number and forms of non-governmental entities springing up to fill supply gaps in all manners of public services (Mosse 2008).

The diversification of grassroots organisations or community-based organisations (CBOs) and development NGOs incentivised more specific development agendas concentrated on the most vulnerable groups who were, in the 1970s, largely considered to be rural and agricultural populations (Mosse 2008). CBOs and NGOs were increasingly seen as being more ideal partners for international agencies than governments, providing a connection between citizens and supporting policy translation into more locally grounded implementation programmes (Keck 1999) (Reimann 2006). Such local translation was increasingly necessary in large development projects that were becoming more materially and strategically standardised in order to facilitate efficient roll-outs of a much-expanded ideological agenda (Williams 2013) (Mosse 2008). According to Williams, 'By the mid 1990s NGOs were involved with 50 per cent of World Bank-funded projects', and 'By 2000 the United States was channelling over 43 per cent of its aid budget through NGOs' (Williams 2013, 139-140). NGOs were not only linked to the multilateral consensus via finance; they increasingly came to play more collaborative roles in the design of projects strategised by international agencies. A World Bank report produced in 1995 claimed that, at that time, NGOs were involved in the actual project design of 25 percent of their initiatives (Williams 2013,

140). NGOs were seen as a way of promoting a public image of development as 'participatory', a concept which emerged in the 1980s and is now commonplace.

The rapid growth of alliances between the largest development agencies and NGOs was a necessary response to mounting public pressure both from NGOs and from civil society organisations of the preceding period, such as unions, religious groups and community or neighbourhood associations. In particular, the role of transnational advocacy groups became more apparent (Batliwala 2002, 393) (Boli 1999) (Ahmed 2006), and in the 1980s campaigns were launched against the World Bank, drawing attention to the environmental and human costs of the Bank's large-scale programmes, including the involuntary resettlement of Indigenous peoples, the politics of 'Third World' debt, spiralling costs of structural adjustment and loans to repressive government regimes (Almeida 2007, 2015) (Herz 2005) (Waterman 2004). The Jubilee Debt Campaign (originally launched in 1994 and renamed the Debt Justice Campaign in May 2022) is perhaps the most prominent of these. The campaign continues to challenge the neoliberal development paradigm on the basis of the increasing income gap between rich and poor and the long-term impact of high interest rates on weak economies, extending debt servitude well beyond the timeline of actual loan repayments (Herz 2005) (Sassen 2014). Such campaigns have opened a powerful dialogue concerning the distance between a unified policy ideology and social movement claims and practices operating at more local scales, where the impacts of highly generalised technical approaches to specific sociocultural contexts differ widely, in ways that are specific and nuanced (Herz 2005) (Williams 2013). The success of such campaigns has been lauded as evidence of the civic capacity of NGOs and their constitution as an organisational 'community' representing the interests of 'the people' and holding governments, development agencies and commercial enterprise to account (Kamat 2004, 158)

(Jordan 2000) (Keck 1999).

However, it was not only NGOs that were organising against the neoliberal policies of the West during the 1980s. An entire wave of protest was erupting internationally to contest neoliberal globalisation and the political power of agencies such as the World Bank and the IMF (Waterman 2004) (B. d. Santos 2005) (Almeida 2007) (Almeida 2015).[30]

However, the growth of the NGO 'community' (Williams 2013) (Mosse 2008) (Kanji 2020) during this time, and the diversification of types, interests, protocols and scales of operation, has at times led to some confusion over the differences between NGOs, CBOs and social movements. Batliwala explains that, in particular, 'an entirely new range of social movements, networks, and organizations has emerged at the transnational level' (Batliwala 2002, 393), but the temptation to treat all NGOs as synonymous with social movements carries certain dangers. The most important of these dangers, Batliwala argues, is that people will fail to note the very different levels of 'power and privilege' that different organisations enjoy 'in shaping the debate, speaking for the affected, and gaining entry into policy-making arenas' (Batliwala 2002, 395).

Both Batliwala and Kamat comment on the conceptual shift

30 Though these protests took many forms and particular ideological positions, they became known under the umbrella term of the 'anti-globalisation movement', a term associated with the World Social Forum (WSF), though Waterman clarifies that the WSF was 'promoted by an identifiable group of Brazilian, French and other non-governmental organisations, trade unions and individuals' (Waterman 2004, 55). Ties to social movements more generally were formalised between the second and third WSFs in 'an informal Forum event, known as the "Call of Social Movements"' (Waterman 2004, 55), which coined a new name for the preceding period of protest: the 'Global Justice and Solidarity Movement' (Waterman 2004, 55). The WSF has been hailed for its experimentalism, inclusivity and rejection of hierarchy as 'the first large international progressive movement following the neo-liberal backlash of the early 1980s' (B. d. Santos 2005, 15). It remains demonstrative of the power of social mobilisation and negotiation on a massive scale.

that has taken place through which the understanding of what and whom constitutes 'civil society' has changed. Despite the emergent global civic space, which NGOs have clearly played a part in constituting, Batliwala suggests that to conceive of these organisations as part of a 'global civil society' is inaccurate and misleading (Batliwala 2002, 393). While CBOs and NGOs may share many similarities in terms of funding types and alliances, their membership structures (CBOs are most often build upon a local membership structure), mean that their actual organisational and accountability structures can differ widely. Likewise, social movements and grassroots movements have entirely different organisational dynamics, political tactics, identities and structures from NGOs, though they may at times overlap. This caution is seconded by Reiman, who states that 'Rather than simply emerging as the result of bottom-up sociological and technological forces, INGOs and NGOs have also emerged and grown in large part because of top-down processes of political globalization, i.e., the globalization of political structures, institutions, and Western liberal democratic values.' (Reimann 2006, 46)

Batliwala suggests that the 'broadening of the term grassroots and grassroots movements disguises the very real differences in power, resources, visibility, access, structure, ideology, and strategies between movements of directly affected peoples and those of their champions, spokespeople, or advocates. These imbalances have a direct bearing on who can effectively access advocacy opportunities or participation spaces for civil society at the international public policy level' (Batliwala 2002, 396-397).

The imbalances between the levels of access to centres of power that NGOs and grassroots movements enjoy is exemplified by events such as the World Urban Forum (WUF). The WUF is a United Nations initiative that takes place every two years, each time in a different country, to promote inclusion. The Forum

is described by the United Nations as being a space for policy-makers, local government leaders, expert practitioners and NGOs to exchange knowledge on sustainable urban development and to encourage cooperation between 'stakeholders' (UN-Habitat 2014). The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) does not explicitly define 'civil society organisations', but specifically mentions NGOs and thematic advisory boards made up of elected representatives. The same UN stakeholder report excludes mention of smaller organisations or groups that are not officially organised on a larger scale, but considers these to be represented by other 'civil society organisations'. A UN-Habitat document from 2014 describing initiatives to expand 'civil society engagement' states that 'Civil society organizations may have that added advantage of being more closely linked with grassroots level organizations and individuals than the United Nations and as such, they can contribute to increasing the effectiveness of United Nations' interventions at local levels, while boosting the United Nations' visibility and reputation' (UN-Habitat 2014, 1). It is clear here that 'participation' is seen as a reputational necessity as much as an actual tool to mitigate the potentially negative impacts of policies and projects or to expand its own knowledge base. Such statements demonstrate the complete lack of interest in the actual forms, desires and purposes of different social organisations and movements if they do not directly support the trajectory of development.

For this reason, the WUF has faced criticism for its exclusivity. The travel costs associated with flights, visas and accommodation and the lack of sponsorship potential (World Urban Forum 2021) mean that it is largely unpopulated by the poor, but rather by wealthier civil society representatives of the poor, such as NGOs. The event remains hugely successful, and I have spoken to many small NGOs (including Alterplan 24.05.2019, and Urban Poor Associates 02/02/2018) working closely with social movements who find it immensely helpful as a way of learning from peers.

However, though this creates a space for non-governmental actors to exchange knowledge, even on behalf of others, it is not clear on what terms that knowledge is actually brought forward from grassroots organisations or social movements not attending, how true it remains to the situated experience of its original owners, and in what capacity or to what extent that knowledge actually informs the theories or practices of development in agencies such as the United Nations itself.[31] I joined the Research and Capacity Development branch of UN-Habitat at the headquarters in Nairobi in 2018, just after the 2018 WUF had taken place in Kuala Lumpur and just before a high level forum discussing the progress of the SDGs was due to take place in New York. During that time, conversations were heavily focused on competing for session windows in the programme for the high-level forum in New York and how those spots related to who had been able to contribute in Kuala Lumpur. The volume of these conversations concerning who would be granted the opportunity to present dwarfed any mentions of what was to be learned in New York, or what had been learned in Kuala Lumpur and by whom.

A review of the listed NGOs with consultative status in the United Nations (the latest available is from 2018) (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2018) brings into focus the scale of organisations which are likely to enjoy this privilege as either national or international. It also demonstrates the elite nature of consultative status, access to which is restricted to highly formalised organisations. In fact, the conditions for registry with any type of consultative status require official government recognition dating back at least two years, an 'established headquarters, a democratically-adopted

31 In my personal time at the UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi, there was a lot of discussion about what the various departments and agencies would present at the next WUF, but I never heard a single conversation concerning what they might learn.

constitution, authority to speak for its members, a representative structure, appropriate mechanisms of accountability and democratic and transparent decision-making processes' (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2018). Indeed, international organisations seem to be privileged over smaller NGOs: 'NGOs affiliated to an international organization already in status may be admitted provided that they can demonstrate that their programme of work has direct relevance to the aims and purposes of the United Nations' (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2018),[32] leaving very little room for dynamic political discussion even among the privileged organisations that enjoy this status. Batliwala suggests that these conditions are also reflected at the national level, where more 'elite' NGOs are more likely to find an audience with policy-makers, though they do not always have a direct relationship of accountability or open informational exchange with the affected constituents (Batliwala 2002, 398). My own interviews and informal discussions with social actors, activist academics and NGO workers in the Philippines, Kenya and Chile also suggest that academic or professional status is required as leverage, as it is seen by most politicians as proof of credibility and sensibility towards political and economic restrictions. The danger with this organisational dynamic, however, is twofold. Firstly, if NGOs do not collaborate directly with the constituent groups that they intend to represent, with a mandate for such representation, they are likely to form 'distinctly different perceptions of the nature of the problem' (Batliwala 2002, 398) and are in danger of misconstruing demands, ideals or identities, to negative ends.

32 'NGOs affiliated to an international organization already in status may be admitted provided that they can demonstrate that their programme of work has direct relevance to the aims and purposes of the United Nations. To be eligible for consultative status, an NGO must have been in existence (officially recognized by a government) for at least two years, must have an established headquarters, a democratically-adopted constitution, authority to speak for its members, a representative structure, appropriate mechanisms of accountability and democratic and transparent decision-making processes' (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2018).

Secondly, the assumption that all NGOs are directly embedded in, and accountable to, their constituencies also lends the impression that participation is a completely inclusive and integral practice of development, obscuring the exclusionary and oppressive nature of the reality.[33]

In fact, much like large development agencies, NGOs (as opposed to community organisations, housing associations, neighbourhood associations, etc.) do not necessarily have structures or constitutions which fix their accountability to particular citizen groups, and their personnel are not usually democratically elected (Kamat 2004, 159) (Batliwala 2002, 395) (Baur 2012, 14) (Schmitz 2012). Additionally, most NGOs are not simply internally self-funded entities, but require funding from external sources in order to operate (Hitoshi Mayer 2018) (Ebrahim 2003) (Guay 2004). Wherever funding comes from, it sets up a new dynamic of accountability in which, unless the funding comes directly from constituent member savings groups, accountability of the NGO providing the service will be redirected away from those most impacted by the project, towards the funder (Baur 2012) (Schmitz 2012) (Cornwall 2000). Different types of funding require different organisational structures (much like the aforementioned stipulations for recognition of consultant status by the United Nations), but also place much greater focus on the organisation's outputs and terms of assessing their 'impact'.

Despite the (growing) variety of funding sources, consensus over the development imaginary and its implementation has a great deal of influence over funding sources and the conditions under

33 'Global civil society is a microcosm, in many ways, of the imbalances of power, resources, and access that characterize the world at large. Northern groups and networks – even if they have "southern" organizations in their membership – occupy much of the space for citizen input at the multilateral institution level, and "elite" NGOs at the national level' (Batliwala 2002, 396-397).

which funds are dispersed. The very basis of the Sustainable Development Goals, are to provide a series of specific indicators through which progress towards the development agenda can be measured. For this system to be effective, it requires that all actors working towards the aims of SDG 11 do so in ways which can be efficiently measured in these terms. Naturally, these measures on achievement will need to be reflected in justifications for project spending. What these restrictions create is a change in the direction of accountability away from the 'beneficiaries' or constituent base of an NGO towards their funders. If the choice of funding strategy (according to terms of lending and the nature of accountability) is not opened to debate among informed constituents before establishing consent, the NGO becomes an external intermediary, a gatekeeper to information and resources mediating between conflicting knowledge worlds and upholding knowledge hierarchies.

Understanding the role of NGOs as 'civil society' actors, Kamat points out, is further complicated by the neoliberal nature of the development consensus. As Kamat suggests, 'Liberal democratic theory understands civil society as constituted by competing private interests and individual desires that are stabilized by free interactions in the market place' (Kamat 2004, 158). This highlights the somewhat dichotomous situation wherein organisations, which are idealised as serving the public interest in the broadest possible manner, should be expected to do so from within 'a framework which idealizes the pursuit of private interest' (Kamat 2004, 158). Another tendency which Kamat argues has become prominent among analysts is the designation of NGOs as neither market nor state actors, but as an entirely separate 'third sector'. Kamat argues that the designation of NGOs as entirely separate from both government and market systems, by ignoring the reality of global neoliberalism as a structural organiser of societies and governance, simply allows 'NGOs to make a moral claim to democracy and justice that is

disconnected from political economic relations of capitalist expansion' (Kamat 2004, 158-159). As Baur suggests, where 'upwards accountability' becomes a form of NGO governance, it compromises their ability to offer 'an alternative to markets and the state (hierarchy) as the dominant forms of social organizations' (Baur 2012, 15).

Baur notes that there has been an increasing tendency for NGOs to work with corporate sponsors as the resource base associated with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has grown. The nature of these partnerships can be extremely restricting for NGOs, and even more so for their constituents, whose voices Baur argues can easily become stifled in the corporate search for 'success stories' and general disinterest in long-term impacts, which actively prevents 'learning from failure' (Baur 2012, 14). Baur further notes that, as NGOs have faced growing scrutiny over their own transparency, dedicated watchdogs have emerged to ensure their public accountability, but the strict approach to efficiency and reliance on primary financial data often perpetuates the 'dominance of donor interests over those of beneficiaries' (Baur 2012, 15). Such strict financial assessment can be very limiting, as it is not engineered to recognise the importance of spending items that cannot be tied succinctly to a particular outcome or quantifiable 'impact' but may actually be the most important spending areas for an organisation's stability. Overhead costs (such as the need to maintain premises, to employ staff between projects and to ensure that projects are appropriately researched, embedded in a constituency and well assessed upon completion – and further into the future) can be difficult to link explicitly to any individual, quantifiable 'impact' or outcome (Baur 2012). Indeed, all the work that ensures an organisation stays accountable to the 'public interest' it serves is difficult to quantify and value in material terms.

As I will establish more clearly in the following chapter, the focus of CSR on short-term quantifiable or material 'impact' (Baur 2012, 15)

is not a market-driven corruption of a socially focused development agenda, but rather a clear execution of the development framework, and the application of its own targets in accordance with its indicators for success. Despite the uptake of 'participation' as an absolute necessity in any type of development work by any type of organisation, the concept and practice is drastically limited by designating NGOs and their funding agencies as service providers, substituting for the failings of national governments (Cornwall 2000, 53). That clientelist designation has a number of impacts, the first of which is to limit the capacities of NGOs and restrict the agency of constituents to basic choices between predefined products. Secondly, clientelist models of participation can lead to fragmented service provision, especially as funding obligates more precise levels of specialisation. Thirdly and most importantly, as Baur states, this system can leave NGOs in a position where they are providing limited, short-term supply solutions while potentially undermining 'the establishment of democratic accountability mechanisms between a government and its own population' (Baur 2012, 14).

As Cornwall points out, 'Participation', in project terms, is very much separate and distinct from 'political participation' (Cornwall 2000, 53). Whereas political participation might ensure widespread debate on the ideals shaping a society and driving its governance, project participation assumes an existing consensus on both what constitutes 'progress' and how it should take place. This kind of 'participation' happens at the end of the decision-making chain, where the project has long been conceptualised in terms of the 'needs' it addresses and the strategy through which implementation will occur. At this point, the project is presented to its 'participants' for debate on more material details. Introducing 'participatory' forums after a project has been strategised bypasses those most affected in determining their own needs.

Design, as a product-centric discipline, can be viewed very much as a fundamental part of technocratic urban governance, but the

aspirational quality of design can be rooted in processes as much as in material outcomes. Freeing design up to other imaginations, agents and realities first requires exposing the oppressive nature of its co-optation into techno-scientific dialogues of modernity. This will require conversations about the capacity of representative democracy to provide spaces of autonomous, collective negotiation and knowledge exchange. As Western representative democracy underpins the statecraft of the most influential nations in the development system, it also underpins the generative processes of its discourse. Even structurally, though positions in development institutions may not be assigned via electoral processes, there is a technocratic understanding of their overall representative value, upheld by what I would deem to be 'social auditing' (focus groups, forums, etc.) and the assumed value of technical expertise (in direct correspondence with the devaluation of other knowledges).

2.6 CONSENSUS AROUND PRE-DETERMINED ENDS SUPPORTS THE ERASURE OF POLITICS FROM DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE

Development plurality, maintained by political competition in the Cold War era, also diminished in the 1980s, consolidating approaches as a social neoliberal project. Though modernisation theory had been officially abandoned by this time, critics suggest that it had become rhetorically entrenched in the divide between the Global North and South, re-termed in a focus on governance, participation and the importance of civil society (Williams 2013, 43) (Mosse 2008) (A. Escobar 2012). At the same time, though the Cold War had at times militarised aid and deepened the covert political nature of development, Williams points out that competition between superpowers had also placed smaller nations in an advantageous position to negotiate conditions placed on lending, granting them a certain level of autonomy (Williams 2013, 70). With the reduction of competition from the

communist East, the policies and practices of donors came to converge around neoliberal Western strategies that merged ideas of democracy and good governance with global economic integration. This consensus was successful in enveloping new actors as they emerged (Mosse 2008), including the third sector, creating a 'development community' that drastically reduced the space of negotiation for recipient states (Williams 2013).

Since the 1990s, this institutional power has been increasingly intertwined with globalisation, signifying both internationalisation via a consolidated world order and a growing expression of that international consolidation in society (Munck 2007, 4). This current societal condition demonstrates the interweaving of social, cultural, political, and moral ideologies with economic and spatial norms. This exchange blurs the borders between global and local or international and national spheres of politics and daily life (Munck 2007) (Sassen 1998) (Sassen 2014), due in large part to the pursuit of information technologies that have condensed 'market transactions in space and time' (D. Harvey 2007, 4) and the accumulation of capital in real estate markets (D. Harvey 2004) (Sassen 2018) (Sassen 2014) (Sassen 1998) .

Since the turn of the millennium, the number and types of agencies and actors have grown and yet, the number of approaches to economic development policy has narrowed significantly (Williams 2013) (Mosse 2008). The 'third sector', or civil society sector, has been growing since the 1950s, and more rapidly since the 1980s while at the same time, the end of the cold war consolidated the neoliberal project which characterises the universal imaginary of development (A. Escobar 1995) (A. Escobar 2012) (D. Harvey 2004) (Munck 2007) (D. Harvey 2006) (Offiler 2015) (Power 2010) (Radicati 2022), which in turn dictates the means. The United Nations, as a central policy centred institution in the post-war development landscape, leads the

thematic emphasis in this meta project. Most recently, the introduction of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, has greatly impacted global approaches to urban development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) significantly widen the Millennium Development Goals, adding multiple further thematic categories. Additionally, these goals apply to all countries, including those in the highest income groups. (United Nations n.d.) (United Nations 2016) The core questions emerging from this more 'universal' approach, however, concern the implementation of multi-sectoral, largely social agendas, within the established frameworks of "disembedded liberalism" (Williams 2013) (D. Harvey 2007), specifically in economically weaker states. The SDGs promote social equality through the existing cannon of neoliberal advancement, framing their social values within traditional strategies for economic growth. Given their scope, it is clear that such changes could only be brought about by social programmes funded or supplemented by governments, placing economically weaker states at a disadvantage, with the political implications of reliance on foreign aid. Many of the poorer nations are fighting extreme inequality, instability, and climate induced vulnerability whilst attempting to strengthen positions in world markets via long-established mechanisms for rapid capital accumulation, technological advancement and efficient resource allocation that promotes private enterprise. (D. Harvey 2007) (Williams 2013) p168). Such strategies are proving inadequate, if not outright contradictory for the advancement of equality, all over the world (Sassen 2014) (Sassen 1998) (A. Escobar 2012).

I argue that the more recently urbanised centres in colonised states are fundamentally different from those of the earlier, post-industrial cities of the Global North. These differences can be traced to multiple different factors, but certainly some of the most obvious include the speed and nature of their formation. Many such rapid expansions have occurred during the post-

Cold War era under conditions of rapid economic globalisation and conditioned by financial and political ties to external superpowers. Escobar stated in 2012 that 'More than three-quarters of the population of the Third World lived in rural areas at the time of the inception of development' (A. Escobar 2012, 106). Following a period of exponential urban growth resulting from massive rural to urban migration since the inception of development, World Bank data from 2021 demonstrates a near-complete reversal of that trend, with many of the same countries that Escobar cited as heavily rural before the expansion of development, now estimated to have urban populations of 75 percent and above (World Bank 2021)[34]. With the majority of the global population now living in cities, it makes sense that urban planning should have taken up far more space in critical debates around international development, having first emerged with the establishment of UN-Habitat in the late 1970s. This focus has been made much more explicit since the relatively recent introduction of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) in 2016, intended as a 'roadmap' to accomplishing 2015 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11: 'Sustainable Cities and Communities' but this new era of policy has done little to address the fundamental differences between the cities of the Global North and South or the role of development aid and colonial legacies in shaping these differences.

The growth of global governance, which presupposes the functionality of a universal public sphere based on the spread of democratic statecraft, is rhetorically legitimised by the inclusion of public opinion. Such global governance requires a democratic, 'transnational political order that the public sphere is supposed

34 Davis also notes that "In 1970, Guevarist foco theories of rural insurgency still conformed to a continental reality where the poverty of the countryside (75 million poor) overshadowed that of the cities (44 million poor). By the end of the 1980s, however, the vast majority of the poor (115 million) were living in urban colonias, barriadas, and villa miserias rather than on farms or in rural villages (80 million)." (Davis 2007, 156)

to influence and legitimate' (A. Kavada 2021, 5). The first problem with this is that the very concept of the public sphere is built on the 'political practices of the European bourgeoisie at the beginning of the eighteenth century' (B. d. Santos 2012, 44), and the assumption that the concept can simply be transposed with equal effect on all sociocultural contexts is problematic to say the least.[35] Yet globalising such a notion blocks the very possibility of reimagining social, political processes in locally and culturally specific ways, which account for differentiated experiences of citizenship. Secondly, such a global meta structure necessarily assumes a great deal of consensus regarding overarching, systemic values, removing the need (or opportunity) for multi-scalar, inclusive debate that would otherwise prevent wide-scale coordination. However, as Chantal Mouffe argues, 'Too much emphasis on consensus, together with an aversion to confrontation, engenders apathy and disaffection with political participation' (Mouffe 2002, 88). While social struggle and protest has proven that apathy is not a universal phenomenon, the complex distribution of global governing power through a network of both governmental and non-governmental institutions also makes power centres more difficult to identify in order to curate specific challenges or appeals for debate.

The idea that confrontation and dissent can be eliminated in favour of consensus also, according to Mouffe, misses 'a crucial

35 'Accordingly, its theoretical and cultural presuppositions are entirely European: it is based on the individual bourgeois and life experience; it assumes the separation between the state and civil society; it sees the bourgeois citizen and his public sphere as external to the structure of power; it takes for granted its informal and equal inclusiveness (which, as Habermas himself later recognised, concealed flagrant exclusions, such as women, workers and non-proprietors in general)' (B. d. Santos 2012, 44).

point, not only on the primary reality of strife in social life and the impossibility of finding rational, impartial solutions to political issues, but also about the integrative role that conflict plays in modern democracy' (Mouffe 2002, 88). The further dangers relate to the conflation of politics, (or its replacement) with a monocultural assumption of technocentric, objective and rational sense of morality. While the cultural conventions and ideas which comprise "Western values" are based on abstract notions of universal human equality, such equality is assumed to be regulated by tools and systems which are inherently monocultural. As a result, this cultural consensus serves to articulate the divide between the "us" and the "them", the human and non-human, metropolitan and colonial, thus legitimating the political exclusion of the colonial "other" (B. d. Santos 2020, 574). This consensus has allowed for moral judgement to be separated from politics with morality assumed as a predetermined rationale, belonging to the domain of impartial, juridical processes (B. d. Santos 2020) (Mouffe 2002). Such political incapacity, which Mouffe claims lies at the core of liberalism, leads to the replacement of politics with 'economic, moral or juridical' discourses and greater reliance on the legal system to organise social relations and solve 'all types of conflict' (Mouffe 2002, 87-88). Of course, the issue with this is that these systems do not serve everyone equally, at once because of unequal access to them and because not everyone adheres to the monocultural model of society and morality that they assume. For these reasons, it is rightly argued that new visions for a public sphere are required in the global South (B. d. Santos 2012) (Patel 2014) (Samara 2013)

Despite such calls, the role that consensus has played in development, especially after the fall of the Soviet Union reduced competition between the superpowers of the communist East and the Liberal West, has been to depoliticise a form of global governance, enacted by unelected and sometime unidentifiable

experts and technocrats. The very assumption of consensus over the modern, metropolitan imaginary and acceptance of the impartial superiority of technocentric, scientific knowledge, implicitly suggests that these stable concepts of 'progress' have surpassed the need for multi-level political engagement and public facing debate. Indeed, they are so taken for granted that to contest them can be fiercely contentious. A further danger posited by Mouffe, is that when societies lack democratic forums for agonistic debate among diverse political identities, other outlets will be sought to voice passions and other forms of identity take centre stage, producing 'antagonisms which cannot be managed by the democratic process'. (Mouffe 2002, 87)

2.7 CONCLUSION: PREDETERMINED ENDS

I have attempted to show in this chapter that by basing development policy around the pre-determined ends of a universal imaginary, a series of effects take hold which include scalar bias as a method of maintaining objectivity and general applicability, a separation of theory from practice, and a materially focused, consumer emphasis on social participation.

After the intense period of global urban growth that has unfolded over the past half-century, United Nations and World Bank data shows that, today, neoliberal urbanism shapes the environment and logic of waking life for close to 84 per cent of the global population (United Nations 2016). The Global City has formed part of the iconography for this modern ideal, exemplifying individualistic notions of freedom and the triumphant subversion of nature and culture to the power of science and technology (A. Escobar 2012) (B. d. Santos 2012). Despite the apparently homogeneous characteristics of the Global City model, however, all cities contain nuanced 'place-bound logics' that are shaped by historical, social, cultural, legal and political contexts. These

logics expose the particularity with which broad-sweeping and vague global policies impact lives and imaginations in each place. Global Cities of the South, having expanded most rapidly, often under conditions of engineered international dependence and external intervention, contain multiple spatial logics and systems in which narratives of domination and struggle reside. These socio-spatial systems can be read to understand the realities at stake in the exercise of international power through the political, ideological, cognitive and productive infrastructure of development.

In this chapter I have attempted to establish that development policy separates areas of interest and retains a scalar bias at the general level of national and global ideology, eschewing the need to engage in the politics which become unavoidable at the scale of implementation. Conversely, despite the wealth of work exposing the nature of development as a covert exercise of colonial power, development studies often neglect to interrogate the importance of spatial logics as a way of uncovering the realities which are erased in the exercise of this power, as well as the process of erasure itself. I argue that spatial logics, giving form to capital, power and struggle, form a lens through which to view the true impacts of development ideologies as they are enforced over particular peoples and places. The city has been a primary focus of development since the late 1980s, and increasingly so since the turn of the last century. This is demonstrated by the growing prominence of UN-Habitat (initially created in 1970) and the introduction of its New Urban Agenda in 2016. While the city has become the focus of development, it remains a site of struggle for those excluded from, or rejecting, the universal imaginary of neoliberal modernity that development represents. Failure to recognise and understand these struggles in attempts to address poverty and inequality is a failure to recognise the poor as fully human and entitled to their own aspirations of humanity and a dignified life (Freire 2018) (B.

d. Santos 2012).

As stated in the opening of this chapter, the growth of global governance, which presupposes the functionality of a universal public sphere based on the spread of democratic statecraft, is rhetorically legitimised by the inclusion of public opinion. Such global governance requires a democratic, 'transnational political order that the public sphere is supposed to influence and legitimate' (A. a. Kavada 2021, 5). However, this unified political order can only function on the basis that all citizenship rights are assigned and upheld as equal, whereas reality shows that they are not experienced as such. The grounding of the public sphere in Euro-centric ideas of the latter half of the twentieth century, even in models of 'inclusive governance' (Miraftab 2009, 34) (A. Roy 2014) (B. d. Santos 2012), has led to a distinction between sanctioned and unsanctioned spaces of participation (Miraftab 2009, 34), the former of which are increasingly occupied by mediating or intermediary entities such as NGOs (Miraftab 2009, 34) (A. a. Kavada 2021, 356) (Waterman 2004) (Batliwala 2002). This means that a large part of political reality is rendered invisible by the historical Western conception of the public sphere (B. d. Santos 2012, 45) due to limited accessibility across its sanctioned spaces of engagement.

The universality of the development imaginary infiltrates society's understanding of history, as well as aspirations for the future. The predetermination of possibility envelops an assumption of events as successive and linear, wherein events can be distinguished as distinct but 'connected causally to the previous one under the condition of an underlying arrow of history itself' (Nail 2012, 39). In other words, this produces a history in which the understanding of current and past events is constrained within a lens which demonstrates repetitive transformation towards a goal that is predefined: 'the perfect state-form itself, state-liberalism, state-communism, state-

capitalism and so on' (Nail 2012, 39) – global neoliberal urbanism, in developmental terms. The problem with this supposition, as stated by Nail, is that, because 'this theory of universal historical succession [...] assumes a pre-given synthesis of identity to account for the passing of causally different instants, it ends up reproducing only repetitions of the same historico-political presupposition without the possibility of external change or contingency' (Nail 2012, 39). If past and future are seen only as points in the linear progression towards and from the present moment, this 'closes off the possibility that a contingent and revolutionary event might undermine this unity; that it might change the very presuppositions of history (and not simply repeat its underlying laws of relation)' (Nail 2012, 39). In simpler terms, the predetermination of the future infiltrates all chains of political, social and material production to limit imagination and agency among both citizens and professionals.

The impact that this has on design practice is comprehensive. This is because, simply put, international development, both as a moral technical ideology and as a political infrastructure, dictates a system of value that influences how funders structure accountability and justify spending. That value is material and quantitative. In other words, it is based on a number or mass of products, and the number of people 'serviced' by those products. These simple quantities are calculated as 'impact'.

As a result, in order to choose and apply for funding on non-profit projects, one must know exactly what is to be funded. Funding requirements must be clearly outlined and justified. Justifications are made by calculating the impact that the project is certain to have. What this means is that the project's end is predetermined. This erases the importance of process and politics from the act of design in the industry of development. Fundamentally, this separates a process of discovery and reciprocal creativity from the profession of design in non-profit contexts because, in order

to begin a project, what is to be discovered must already be known.

3. WORLDING A UNIVERSAL URBANITY

3.1 DISPOSSESSION IN THE UNIVERSAL IMAGINARY

In this chapter, I demonstrate that the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary, structure the ways in which current conditions in cities are assessed and understood. I argue that the ways in which cities are assessed leads to the erasure and dismissal of local realities and the knowledge practices of the poor. Expanding on the ways in which predetermination of a universal imaginary separates theory from practice, and creates bias towards the global scales of policy, (away from those of implementation), I argue that the technical, material emphasis of the indicators which world the universal imaginary in the Sustainable Development Goals and New Urban Agenda, reinforce a disconnection between the design of strategies with which to realise the imaginary and the socio political conditions onto which these strategies are unilaterally imposed.

Two aspects of the system of assessment are important in generating this disconnection. Firstly, because assessment is concerned with the extent to which present conditions match with the pre-determined imaginary in the SDGs, local conditions which do not meet expectations are characterised as lacking or resisting development. Secondly, the doctrine of political neutrality in development means that 'progress' is measured only in technical, material terms. I argue that ultimately, these two aspects of the assessment system construct an object-centric value system which separates products from processes. The implications of that value system include the dismissal and erasure of local politics, cultures, and histories of specific sites in the city, which are actually so important to the design of urban housing projects. I argue that the lack of feedback between local level conditions and the orientation of global policy means that the cycles of dispossession which have become so paradigmatic of neoliberal urbanisation are projected as anomalies to be corrected by the very same systems which have created them in the first place.

As Sassen claims, the 'spatial and socio-economic disparity' (Sassen 2014) which has become the norm in Global Cities is a measurable phenomenon in both the Global North and South. In the European context, the shrinkage of state housing programmes and the growing emphasis on the private sector to fill the holes in supply has led to a condition of pervasive inequality and homelessness. In much of the more recently urbanised centres of the Global South, the evidence clearly demonstrates how 'spatial and socio-economic disparity' (Sassen 2014) organises a cycle of eviction from formal economic systems and the physical centres of the city. With smaller means with which to implement public sector support programmes, this paradigm of dispossession contributes to the growth of entire shadow economies and build cultures (Sassen 2014) (Brickell 2017) (Davis 2007).

Despite the uncertainty of cyclical surplus absorption and over-accumulation, urbanisation has become increasingly central to global financial markets since the 1990s. The impacts of using economic instruments to organise urbanisation however, is not entirely predictable because those instruments are neither fully local nor international, public nor private. The local impacts of particular policies or build projects are difficult to assess individually, as they are co-dependent on the ways in which they build upon each other as they accumulate and change over long arcs of time. The rapidity of growth under these conditions of economic incentivisation has proven difficult to control. Uncontrolled growth has meant that cities are expanding at such a rate that they are engulfing and joining other cities and towns to form massive, unruly conurbations.[1] These trends can also mean that remaining rural populations on outlying coasts or agricultural peripheries are sometimes simply absorbed

1 For example, the Rio to São Paulo Extended Metropolitan Region has joined the medium sized cities and industrial area that lay between the two main centres along a 500-kilometer transport axis and was cited by Davis in 2006 as exceeding the area of Tokyo and Yokahama, boasting a population of 37 million (Davis 2007, 5).

by the city's sprawl if they haven't already been driven from their livelihoods and heritages by the expansive effects of urban pollution (Davis 2007). We are now witnessing growing numbers of mega cities and hyper cities with populations of over 10 million and 20 million respectively.[2] In 2020, UN habitat data showed that there were 34 cities in the world with a population of over 10 million and 51 with a population of between five and ten million (UN-Habitat 2020).[3]

Polycentric urbanism is encouraged in UN policy guidance (United Nations 2017) as a way to prevent monocentric expansion in patterns of sprawl (United Nations 2016) (United Nations 2016) (UN-Habitat 2015) and studies show that it is also becoming more common (Ortega 2016) (Davis 2007) (Arabindoo 2011) (Kanai 2019) (Van Noorloos 2018) (Benjamin 2008) (Berner 1995) (Pérez 2017) (Radicati 2022) (U. Rao 2010) (Samara 2013) (Brickell 2017). Polycentric urbanism refers to a condition of urban development in which the periphery does not only grow outwards from a single city centre but instead, a city or region will feature multiple centres. At times these centres are developed as complete master planning projects and at others they emerge through market driven densification concentrated in existing – often peripheral - nodes (Holston 2009) (Rao 2012) (Davis 2007). As new centres appear and densify, they create demand for infill development and infrastructure investments to connect them with others (Kanai 2019) (Ortega 2016) (Van Noorloos 2018). Polycentrism occurs at both urban and territorial scales, the latter of which proving far more common in the global South than the global North (Kanai 2019, 303), driven by speculative financial interests and strategised around national and international

2 the latter matching "the estimated urban population of the world at the time of the French Revolution." (Davis 2007, 5)

3 Initially, this was a phenomenon of rapid industrialisation in cities such as Manila, Shenzen and Delhi where Special Economic Zones concentrated enormous amounts of economic activity. Many of these saw their populations shoot into the millions while the activity also spread to outlying municipalities that could absorb extra surplus through expansion (D. Harvey 2012, 11).

connectivity. Based on case studies in Brazil and Tanzania, Kanai and Schindler assert that territorial reorganisation at this pace and scale and the 'infrastructure scramble' that it engenders can result in 'uneven and complex (rather than homogenous) urban configurations' which 'encompass peri-urban areas and corridors that exhibit diverging degrees of (dis)connectivity and access to infrastructure and services' (Kanai 2019, 303), a condition further highlighted by Davis as leading to the formation of mega-urban corridors (Davis 2007, 5) such as the Rio to São Paulo Extended Metropolitan Region. On the urban scale, these processes work in similar ways, incentivising rapid redevelopment in ways that generate identifiable enclaves, strategised around corresponding infrastructural investments which build them into connectivity corridors (Ortega 2016).

As polycentric hubs agglomerate and densify, they attract further commercial development mixes and invite the migration of specialist worker populations, increasing land value and subsequently expelling those in lower income brackets from central areas of the city. Though service-industry jobs are produced in these areas, the wage-gap between worker populations and exorbitant real estate markets inhibit equal access to the housing necessary to sustain livelihoods proximal to the centres of production. The 'new geography of centrality and marginality' (Sassen 1998, XXVI-XXVII) in global cities is enforced by sharp divisions in investment concentrations (in real estate, infrastructure and telecommunications). Investment is clearly visible in hubs such as business centres and their connecting neighbourhoods, supported by the rising incomes of highly educated workers, while interstitial spaces and urban outskirts remain severely under-serviced (Ortega 2016) (Pérez 2017) (Arabindoo 2011) (Arcilla 2018) (G. S. Williams 2022) (U. Rao 2010). These are trends that are comparable across the entire world, not merely in newer global cities. However, in the Global South the evidence clearly demonstrates how 'spatial and socio-economic disparity' (Sassen 2014) organises a cycle of eviction

from formal economic systems and the physical centres of the city, ultimately contributing to growing 'informal' economies and autonomous space-making (Sassen 2014).

Not only do these patterns illustrate the fragmentary nature of urban accumulation but as Ortega states, they 'also unravel context specific contingencies of gentrification and neoliberal urbanism and the enduring colonial legacies expressed through property relations, elite power, local politics and urban development.' (Ortega 2016, 36) This is especially clear in Manila, where a handful of rich families control the real estate market and own the majority of the country's land, having benefitted from the Philippines' history of colonial occupation (Ortega 2016) (Woods 1998). The same colonial legacies have benefitted the elite in many countries, where such power and wealth are used to exercise a tyrannical grip over real estate markets, formal and informal. For example, much of Nairobi's auto-constructed neighbourhoods are owned by elite members of the upper-social classes such as politicians, and make for the most profitable investments in terms of space to price ratio (Neuwirth 2006) (Dafe 2009).

On both urban and territorial scales, the rapid, polycentric urban development paradigm in the global South has displayed uneven impacts on connectivity, soft infrastructural dispersal and employment opportunity, at times strangling peri-urban or marginalised interstitial areas and often promoting active campaigns of removal alongside slower processes of displacement. Whereas the latter more commonly affects the middle classes as speculation raises land and property values, the former is often nationally strategised as a method for dealing with the poorest citizens occupying legally unrecognised, auto-constructed settlements. In many cities of the Global South state-sponsored construction of large-scale housing affordable housing projects have been strategised at such scales that they constitute a form of enclave urbanisation in themselves (G. S. Williams 2022). Examples of some

of the largest proposals include those built in accordance with national promises of homes for all extended by the post-apartheid South African Constitution[4] and a 2004 pledge by the Indian government to provide 20 million affordable homes by 2022 (G. S. Williams 2022, 912) (now extended to 31st December 2024 (Cabinet PIB Delhi 2022))[5]. In the case of South Africa, according to Williams et al., 'A persistent backlog of potential recipients has, however, meant continued tensions between quality, cost and location of the housing delivered. Increasing political pressure to tackle this backlog has resulted in calls from the national government to accelerate delivery, primarily through the construction of 'megaprojects' of over 15,000 units.' (G. S. Williams 2022, 912) (Ballard 2017) Due to affordability concerns, these projects are predominantly built on peripheral fringe lands where connectivity and economic opportunity is drastically reduced and delivery of infrastructural services is delayed, limited or permanently lacking (G. S. Williams 2022) (Auyero 2000) (Arabindoo 2011). The relocation of the urban poor to underserviced and poorly connected housing sites on the city periphery has long been commonplace in the cities of the South, despite the condemnation of these approaches in urban studies and recommendations in UN policy against them (United

4 'South Africa's post-apartheid Constitution promises to produce decent homes for all, and this has
driven delivery of over 3 million housing units to first-time owners since 1994. These have predominantly been detached houses on fully-serviced plots in new developments (supplemented by the transfer of some existing state housing stock), gifting freehold ownership to qualifying citizens2. Within a wider context of very high unemployment, this programme has assumed great practical and political importance with the legal and formal status of this housing also being tied in policy terms to the idea that housing can provide a pathway to secure urban living.' (G. S. Williams 2022, 912)

5 'The scheme is being implemented through four verticals: Beneficiary Led Construction/ Enhancement (BLC), Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP), In-situ Slum Redevelopment (ISSR) and Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS). While Govt of India provides financial assistance, State Govt/UTs implement the scheme including selection of beneficiaries.' (Cabinet PIB Delhi 2022)

Nations 2016).[6] Many case studies illustrate the failures of peripheral housing projects to address conditions of urban inequality, often actively impeding socioeconomic mobility further, catering more to the middle classes than the poorest urban residents and in some cases, remaining empty or falling into dereliction.[7] The implications of both forced relocation projects and social political dispossession via enclosure and fragmented infrastructural dispersal are the financialisation of the right to the city and the conditioning of citizenship on property status.[8]

3.2 ERASURE AND ASPIRATIONAL AESTHETICS

The cycles of displacement and marginalisation which have become paradigmatic in the Global City, are hidden by economic mechanisms

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6 Despite the fact that many resettlement projects have failed to actually accommodate the poor (either because they have been excluded from provisions or because they refuse them on the basis of their location, quality, lack of infrastructures and/or social and economic provisions, financial implications, or all of these), such programmes persist and those resettled in them either by force or through misrepresentation of offerings, are no longer considered in the assessment and address of poverty, despite the potential for ongoing vulnerabilities (Arabindoo 2011, 641).

7 Case studies abound, examples of which include the Indian cities of Ahmedabad (S. R. Patel 2015) (Desai 2018), Delhi (U. Rao 2010) (Dupont 2011), Mumbai (A. Appadurai 2000), Chennai (Diwakar 2021) (G. S. Williams 2022), South African cities of Johannesbourg and Cape Town (G. S. Williams 2022) (Van Noorloos 2018) (Dierwechter 2004), eThekwini and Msunduzi (Meth 2020), Other cities across the African continent including Addis Ababa Ethiopia (Yntiso 2008), Kigali Rwanda (Nikuze 2019), Bulawayo Zimbabwe (Hammar 2017) New Senchi Ghana (Yarrow 2017), Cairo Egypt (Elyachar 2005), cities across Morocco (Atia 2019), South East Asian cities such as Manila (Arcilla 2018) and Latin American Cities such as Santiago de Chile (Pérez 2017).

8 In Manila, Philippines, where the multiplication of agglomerations has raised property prices both in the centre and across the Metropolitan Region (Ortega 2016) and there is a strong history of relocation projects, the urban poor are continually displaced to further or more precarious sites. In my own field visits I have been witness to occupations in such places as the undersides of low vehicular bridges, providing heights of sometimes little more than a metre and which are frequently fully submerged by floodwaters, forcing residents to hurriedly gather their meagre belongings and wait out storms on roadsides. (2013/2015/2018). These spaces (approximately 2x2 metres per family) are occupied by poor families that are either fleeing evictions or searching for the few remaining spaces from which they may avoid violent upheaval, despite the desperate conditions that they proffer.

and supported by political discrediting campaigns, which together maintain the validity of the neoliberal imaginary, presenting further growth as the only remedy to the problems it has itself created. As Sassen explains, after the 1980s (Sassen 2014, 76), the tendency towards expulsion has become 'hardwired' into economic metrics in such a way that it serves to hide loss and dysfunction. Workers or business owners who experience losses (of jobs, property, insurance or even life), or who are forced to emigrate, 'fall off the edge of what is defined as "the economy" and counted as such' (Sassen 2014, 36), expelled from the actual calculation of economic existence. This extends to those forced out of their homes, lives and countries as a result of war or environmental catastrophe (vulnerability to which is often exacerbated by existing poverty) (Sassen 2014, 62). These metrics present an alternate reality of economic success and poverty reduction, which Sassen describes as 'more akin to [...] [an] economic version of ethnic cleansing in which elements considered troublesome are dealt with by simply eliminating them' (Sassen 2014, 36).

At times, more immediate campaigns of intervention are also required to corroborate this projection of success. Examples include the forced eviction and relocation of thousands of poor families from Rio de Janeiro in 2016 to make way for new infrastructure projects in support of the Olympic Games (Douglas 2015) or the police abductions and incarceration of street-dwelling children in Philippine cities during the Papal visit of 2012 (Campbell 2015), an act clearly designed to hide poverty from the global eye by concealing its victims. Such violent campaigns of erasure are not restricted to single occurrences, such as international events, but form a rhythmic accompaniment to processes of accumulation and gentrification in the form of the aforementioned resettlement projects, which remove the 'homeless' from the city to affordable housing projects on its outskirts, diverting attention from the problem of affordability in urban centres and the hegemonic politics of property privatisation at its root (Ortega 2016) (Arcilla 2018) (Arabindoo 2011). Despite

the common problems of connectivity, poor-quality construction and the lack of maintenance budgets associated with many of these projects, the pursuit of 'world-class' or Global City status is a powerful incentive to continue these cycles of violence, and removal is still a prominent phenomenon (G. S. Williams 2022, 913) (Ong 2011) (Arabindoo 2011, 641).[9] Aspiration is a powerful force, not only for governments but for individuals, too, even among those for whom the riches of gentrification appear permanently out of reach. As Pettit states in reference to Cairo, 'Current exclusion is legitimized, based on an elusive promise that inclusion will come' (Pettit 2018, 1051).

According to Diwakar, Indian urban policy strategises the 'ascendance of the middle class' around aspirational imagery of Global Cities, modelling future urban landscapes on 'a modernist, Western aesthetic' (Diwakar 2021, 97). Radicati speaks to similar aspirational aesthetics shaping the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo, forming 'an economy of appearances [...], in which the visual markers of success – new building sites, soaring skyscrapers and digital renderings of the future city – belie the more complex dynamics facing city residents, potential investors, real estate brokers and developers' (Radicati 2022, 119). Radicati explains that the buoyant real estate market of Columbo is almost entirely reliant on foreign investment, as the majority of residents cannot afford to purchase apartments in the city and monthly rents in new builds can surpass the value of annual salaries for many nationals (Radicati 2022, 119). Despite the fact that Global Cities are locally idealised and implemented through policy protocols formulated in national and

9 According to Arabindoo, 'In the context of Indian cities striving for "worldclass" status through their slum-free cities propaganda, it is obvious that slum evictions and resettlement are no longer about reducing poverty but about rendering the poor invisible' (Arabindoo 2011, 641).

regional level government institutions (Radicati 2022, 119),[10] often they share more aesthetic and economic features with other Global Cities than with other regions of their own country (Kong 2007, 384). Global Cities combine 'symbolic and material registers' (Radicati 2022, 120), which are locally informed but must be internationally recognisable. Global City status is not only awarded on the basis of financial capital, multi-scalar linkages and ease of product movement; it is equally associated with cultural capital (Kong 2007, 384). According to Kong, 'urban imaging strategies' often draw upon the use of 'cultural icons' and 'occur alongside the remaking of local places and identities through the (re)invention of place-based heritage' (Kong 2007, 384).

As Pettit outlines, this is not only a material conflict which excludes and imperils the very poorest of urban society but is a much more complex phenomenon which relies on the invocation of ''cruel' forms of aspiration and hope, producing the acquiescence of 'ordinary' urban dwellers.' (Pettit 2018, 1049) Aspiration is described as cruel in this context because it often presides over a condition of unfulfilled promise, wherein development plans fail to produce white collar jobs on scales that can support upward mobility. Instead, many educated groups are often pushed into under employment and priced out of new and evolving centres (Pettit 2018, 1050).

In the Philippines, Ortega explains that 'Within a neoliberal regime of public–private partnerships, violent evictions and displacement of informal settlers are legitimized by the allure of global and profitable developments, civil society sentiments regarding property rights, and promises of relocation to distant socialized housing projects.' (Ortega 2016, 36). This statement speaks to the

10 'Urban scholars [should] pay attention to the nuances of how this "provincialized" construct is deeply rooted in local histories, planning agendas and power relations […]. The term "world-class city" in the Sri Lankan context is a slogan used by the Sri Lankan state, corporations and elites' (Radicati 2022, 119).

ideological influence of neoliberal accumulation and the intellectual warfare against the marginal ontologies of the excluded. This exclusion happens as accumulation and gentrification builds new borders between social classes, in both the invisible forms of land pricing and anti-poor discourse, and in the visible landscape of gated residential estates, privatised public space and securitised, commercial complexes accompanied by heightened systems of surveillance (D. Harvey 2012, 15) (Sassen 2014). As Harvey states, the 'increasing polarization in the distribution of wealth and power', has become 'indelibly etched into the spatial forms of our cities' demonstrating how 'The neoliberal protection of private property rights and their values becomes a hegemonic form of politics, even for the lower middle class.' (D. Harvey 2012, 15)[11]

The implication for the urban poor is the complete dissolution of the home and domestic environment as 'collateral damage of corporate and governmental ambitions towards larger landscapes of "progress" (Brickell 2017, 9), while justifying the violent consequences in discourses of austerity and economic crisis (Sassen 2014) (Brickell 2017, 9)[12] **or even 'inclusive growth' (A. Roy 2014).**

11 'In expanding urban regions with enhanced or promised connectivity, the meaning of project-led polycentrism exceeds the fact that some initiatives locate outside consolidated city cores. It is paramount to recognize that the development of nodal enclaves in satellite cities, secondary cores and green fields triggers broader territorial transformations. This fact needs to be considered for peri-urban planning: the connectivity imperative may cause state-led initiatives to eschew locally integrative development programmes, if interventions and investments focus solely on nodal enclaves and land-value capture. While state actors are motivated by the economic gains and promise of enhanced connectivity, the resulting built environment may do little to redress inherited peri-urban peripherality and infrastructure deficits: in fact, these projects may exacerbate uneven geographical development and socio-spatial fragmentation, and also introduce new displacement pressures on vulnerable populations.' (Kanai 2019, 303-304)

12 'While the unravelling of home arises from discourses and practices of austerity and crisis, "the unravelling of home" and "domestic space" [occurs] as the collateral damage of corporate and governmental ambitions towards larger landscapes of 'progress'. Whether it be urban 'regeneration' and beautification in Colombo […]; the creation of prime real estate in Accra […]; infrastructure building for mega-events and transport in Rio de Janeiro […]; or the World Expo in Shanghai' (Brickell 2017, 9)

Aspirational aesthetics are an essential element in discourses of 'progress' and 'modernity' and are centrally important in generating investment interest and product demand. Architecturally, this will often mean ensuring that the buildings – or even larger expanses of the urban fabric – that promote these aesthetic value associations can be distanced from the surrounding environments that do not (Radicati 2022, 120). As aspirational developments spread, so too does the regularity of what Diwakar calls 'attacks on visual markers of urban poverty' (Diwakar 2021, 97). These attacks are both physical – launched through removal and relocation programmes – and conceptual/lingual. Conceptual attacks on urban poverty are supported by the use of material metrics to define more complex notions of poverty, and are associated with terminology such as 'slum', 'informal settlement' and 'sprawl area'. These terms are employed in conjunction with dehumanising rhetoric, which associates so-defined spaces and their inhabitants with 'squalor' and criminality (Diwakar 2021, 97) (A. Roy 2011).[13] As Appadurai puts it, 'as in all societies based on financial apartheid—one wants the poor near at hand as servants but far away as humans.' (A. Appadurai 2000, 637) The metrics associated with these terms serve to simplify and erase large parts of complex ontological realities, and the rhetoric associated with them serve to criminalise poverty – more specifically, a lack of legally recognised shelter – as deviant.

3.3 ERASURE CARRIED THROUGH REDUCTIVE MATERIAL CATEGORIES

Just as Sassen describes economic metrics as a system of erasure over events that challenge the projection of success (Sassen 2014),

13 'I use the concept of aesthetics in order to specifically draw attention to the ways ideology structures our perception. While reductionist conceptions of ideology collapse it into mental representations or discourse, I want to emphasize that its reality-producing effects shape our entire world of experience, including through the modelling of perceptions, feelings, habits, actions, memories, and desire, as well as through ideas and language.' (de León 2021, 5)

a series of related metrics are used to identify the target projects of 'development' in a way that can provide clear pathways to material outputs with an inbuilt prediction of 'impact'. 'Impact' is given consistent meaning by pre-determining the ends to which a project should ascribe and assigning a system of valuation that can measure progress towards those ends.

Categorisation allows the 'international development community' (Williams 2013), to assign separate disciplinary approaches to specific populations or 'problems', where groupings cut across both populations and spatial conditions.[14] In the city, space is carved into identifiable zones such as suburbs, fringe spaces, semi-urban space, 'informal extensions',[15] cores, hubs or nodes. Such separations not only simplify the urban form, its inhabitation and the processes of its construction but also misconstrue complex, multi-scalar economic and political relationships. Categorisation and selective assessment work in tandem and reinforce each other.

'Slum' terminology is the most prolific and problematic example of selective assessment build upon a material category. The emergence of 'slum' terminology marks the beginning of a turn towards the conflation of poverty with housing status. The term is still widely used and holds a prominent place in development reports and policy, often linked with other spatial categories such as 'informal settlement', 'urban sprawl', 'unplanned extension', all of which carry the same derogatory rhetorical connotations and are based around the same metrics and data sets (UN-Habitat 2003) (UN-Habitat 2018) (United Nations 2017) (United Nations 2016).

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14 As development theory evolved to take broader concepts of politics and civil society into its scope, it needed to categorise and define problems in ways that allowed for them to be sorted, separated or grouped according to various modes of engagement or jurisdiction (Williams 2013) (Mosse, Cultivating development : an ethnography of aid policy and practice 2008). This is led to greater proliferation of different kinds of organisations situated in different areas of specialisation.

15 UN Habitat- multiple publications, internal terminology

In his text titled 'Occupancy Urbanism', Solomon Benjamin outlines three transitions in the political, administrative history of 'slum' terminology, in accordance with the changing institutional norms that have shaped it. Beginning in the 1970s, he describes the way in which debates about land and civic management became heavily technocratic in a move away from the municipal arena. The emergence of Master Planning in parastatal development authorities then solidified the binary between planned development and 'slums'. This binary was reframed in the 1980s as planned development and 'encroachments' (despite the fact that the majority of city developments predated Master Planning) (Benjamin 2008, 724). 'Slum' terminology was not clearly defined until the creation of the millennium development goals. The static material emphasis of these terms points to the 'anti-politics' of development (Benjamin 2008, 724), in which complex and contentious political systems are reduced to their basic structural characteristics in order to strategise 'neutral' responses. However, in formalising such material reductions, many incongruous associations are fixed between social political groups and spatial conditions.

In a paper titled 'Slums: Disassembling the Concept', Mazarro posits that the biases instrumental to this definition were completely reductive; firstly, in basing the majority of the definition on material conditions and secondly, in simplifying diverse socio-political relationships into a single term. He states that 'Slums, as characterized by the UN, aim to represent the external reality of certain urban settlements, however, they greatly represent the system of values of its creators.' (Mazarro 2018).

For example, 'unplanned' or 'informal' development is not only the practice of the poor. Roy highlights how in Indian cities a distinction is made between elite and subaltern informality, one being no more or less legal than the other but treated very differently. Class power lends different levels of legitimacy to encroachments by the rich

and such sites are more likely to command connective infrastructure and services that distinguish them from poorer landscapes of auto-construction[16] (A. Roy 2014, 144). This is not a condition that is unique to India. Robert Neuwirth quotes a number of Kibera residents (a sprawling auto-constructed neighbourhood of Nairobi) who describe the way in which chiefs and elders of the Provincial Administration 'take payoffs from rich people in return for granting permission to build temporary structures' (Neuwirth 2006, 93). The same paradigm is highlighted in Brazil by Holston who describes holdings of 'legalized usurpations' by both the wealthy and the poor (Holston, 2007: 207). This begs the question why the language of 'slums' and their association with conditions of 'sprawl' is so obviously intertwined with narratives of criminality and degeneration, or what Roy and Holston cite respectively as 'apocalyptic and dystopian' narratives of poverty (A. Roy 2011, 224) and the 'catastrophe genre' (Holston 2009, 257).

The practical implications of this techno-linguistic divide are that the struggles for housing rights or the right to remain by many urban poor are brokered on legal terms that are inherently discriminatory towards different levels of social and financial privilege (Brickell 2017, 16). The power of such language is demonstrated by the fact that it has been adopted into law, providing varying levels and type of affordances in each country, despite backlash against the socio-cultural implications of the term (A. Roy 2011) (Arabindoo 2011).

In an example provided by Arabindoo, in 2011, at the height of protests against demolition for a group of tenement dwellers in Golibar, India, a priority demand emerged for the government to recognise 'and declare [19 of the protesting settlements]

16 I refer to auto-construction as simply a process of self-building, regardless of the social status of its proponents in order to challenge the dichotomous conditions of legitimacy that separates and denounces self-construction by the poor as "slums" or "informal sites", from other instances of self-construction which are granted permissions and recognition as a result of higher personal levels of social and political capital.

Image 43. SDG 11 Targets and indicators. Highlighting shows continued use of slum as indicator terminology. 11.3.2 also highlighted to demonstrate a positive move towards inclusion of democratic equity in indexical structures. However, note that this indicator is not listed in bold because it is a Tier 3 indicator. This means (as stated at page bottom) that there is 'no internationally established methodology or standards yet available for the indicator' (UN-Habitat, 'Tracking Progress Towards Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements SDG 11 SYNTHESIS REPORT HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM 2018, p.9 © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved)

Table 1. SDG 11 targets and indicators

Targets	Current Indicators
SDG Target 11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums	**11.1.1** Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing. [Tier I]
SDG Target 11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.	**11.2.1** Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities. [Tier II]
SDG Target 11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.	**11.3.1** Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate [Tier II] 11.3.2 Proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically [Tier III]
SDG Target 11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage	**11.4.1** Total expenditure (public and private) per capita spent on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by type of heritage (cultural, natural, mixed and World Heritage Centre designation), level of government (national, regional and local/municipal), type of expenditure (operating expenditure/investment) and type of private funding (donations in kind, private non-profit sector and sponsorship). [Tier III]
SDG Target 11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations	**11.5.1** Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population [Tier II] **11.5.2** Direct disaster economic loss in relation to global GDP, damage to critical infrastructure and number of disruptions to basic services, attributed to disasters [Tier I]
SDG Target 11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management	**11.6.1** Proportion of urban solid waste regularly collected and with adequate final discharge out of total urban solid waste generated, by cities. [Tier II] **11.6.2** Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted). [Tier I]
SDG Target 11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities	**11.7.1** Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities. [Tier III] **11.7.2** Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months. [Tier III]
SDG Target 11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.	**11.a.1** Proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs, by size of city [Tier III]
SDG Target 11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.	**11.b.1** Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030a. [Tier I] **11.b.2** Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies [Tier II]
SDG Target 11.c Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials.	**11. c.1** Proportion of financial support to the least developed countries that is allocated to the construction and retrofitting of sustainable, resilient and resource-efficient buildings utilizing local materials. [Tier III]

Tier 1: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, and data are regularly produced by countries for at least 50 per cent of countries and of the population in every region where the indicator is relevant.
Tier 2: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by countries.
Tier 3: No internationally established methodology or standards are yet available for the indicator, but methodology/standards are being (or will be) developed or tested.

Image 44. Basic differential criteria dor defining slums, informal settlements and inadequate housing. (ibid., p40 © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved)

Table 3. Criteria for defining slums, informal settlements and inadequate housing

Evaluation criteria	Slums	Informal Settlements	Inadequate Housing
Access to water	X	X	X
Access to sanitation	X	X	X
Sufficient living area, overcrowding	X		X
Structural quality, durability and location	X	X	X
Security of tenure	X	X	X
Affordability			X
Accessibility			X
Cultural adequacy			X

as "slums"', despite the negative social implications of the classification. This was because declaring the settlements as such would make them legally 'eligible for redevelopment' within the provisions of the 'Maharastra Slums Act, 1971' and would thereby, prevent 'arbitrary demolition' by the state (Arabindoo 2011, 642). This did not directly reduce the vulnerability of those inhabiting the settlement but drove them into another kind of negotiation in which they would be subject to redevelopment as guided by the state and private enterprise.

However, in this case, the use of 'slum' as legal declaration at the very least provided visibility and allowed the residents to resist a situation of immediate removal by force, in which they would have little recourse for resettlement. Despite the limited legal recourse, this did entail social and political sacrifice as the use of the term is widely resented in India due to the social stigma it carries (A. Roy 2011) (S. B. Patel 2001) (Arabindoo 2011). Where is does not carry the same legal affordances, it is often wholly rejected as rather than becoming a tool for negotiation, it can simply serve as social justification for violent practices of eviction (Brickell 2017, 16).[17]

This confluence between property, social status, poverty, and the isolated assessment of specific structural components of buildings and settlements provides the framework for a depoliticised strategy of worlding a universal urbanity, which ties the right to the city to neoliberal aspiration and economic growth. Arabindoo tells us that 'as the conceptualization of poverty continues to be dominated by the challenges of measuring it, slums have come to act as a

17 'At the heart of many of the struggles between those being evicted and those who wish to enforce the eviction is a struggle over legitimacy that often takes place at the intersection of discourse and the law. Language is a crucial source of power in the battle to define and challenge the symbolic and material dimension of bodies and places that 'belong' within the urban system. […] disparaging metaphors are used to present slum dwellers as an 'unauthorized' […] presence that must be removed, and to frame and demonize squatters as irresponsible and deviant 'rogue citizens' […] that deserve criminalization. The very language of official resettlement can serve as a justificatory euphemism for sanctioned practices of forced evictions.' (Brickell 2017, 16)

stand-in for analyzing and representing poverty. In a context where measuring poverty is increasingly relative, governments are opting to use the more easily quantifiable slum population as the key indicator of poverty. Thus, establishing a "slum line" has proven handier than the much-contested "poverty line"' (Arabindoo 2011, 637).

However, as Arabindoo also points out, using "slums" as a proxy measure for urban poverty is inaccurate in that 'while a considerable number of the urban poor live in slums, not all slum dwellers are poor, and more importantly, a significant proportion of the urban poor do not reside in the slums'. (Arabindoo 2011, 637) Within the heterogeneous settlements classified as 'slums', tenure arrangements can be diverse and include leasers with various sized property holdings, renters, and land holders who live in their own structures, all with significantly different social, political and financial capacity and standard of living (Neuwirth 2006) (Bayat 2000) (Benjamin 2008) (Bredenoord 2014) (Dafe 2009).

The epistemological inadequacy of "slum" as a stand-in for poverty calculation, can distort the decisions of policy-makers, leading to inadequate responses (Arabindoo 2011, 643). This is demonstrated in many cities by the continued prevalence of evictions and practices of relocation to distant, poorly serviced sites that too often epitomise an 'advanced marginality' of 'sociospatial isolation', (Arabindoo 2011, 641) (Auyero 2000) (Ortega 2016) due to their often peripheral or semi-rural locations at long distances from the labour markets and social opportunities of the city. As Arabindoo identifies, 'The reality is that these new resettlement sites located in the distant urban peripheries reproduce new spaces of deprivation, a sort of 'hyperghetto' (Wacquant, 2008) or 'hyper-shantytown' (Auyero 2000), marked by organisational depletions that contain neither an extended division of labour nor functioning duplicates of the central institutions of the broader urban society' (Arabindoo 2011, 641)

(Auyero 2000).[18]

Though it is not the case that peripheral locations cannot be made to work for both the city and inhabitants but the requirements for integrated planning and corresponding development of hard and soft infrastructure with adequate connective linkages to the city proper are significant. Peripheral and isolated locations are selected due to lower land costs in order to focus minimal budgets on construction and maximise unit numbers. This often means that integration with the city proper may either not happen, or can take many years after relocations take place. In the meantime, it is common for peripheral affordable housing projects to lack adequate access to essential services such as schools and hospitals and to suffer from social and economic isolation due to poor transport connectivity.

Findings of a report produced by Williams et. al., based on five housing relocation case studies in India and South Africa, demonstrated that distances impeded social mobility. This was due to inadequacies in construction, poor transport connectivity, low service availability as well as poor safety due to issues such as lack of lighting in public spaces. This resulted in high rates of abandonment in some locations and economic hardship in all cases due to the heightened cost of movement and lack of nearby economic opportunity. In all cases the strains on mobility disproportionately affected women and young people (G. S. Williams 2022).

Life at the urban fringe can bring new types of exclusion, even in legally registered properties. As land speculation extends outwards from the city centre, in time many can become vulnerable once again to the pressures of relocation. In the present, locations on urban peripheries and poor-quality structures and services generate new

18 See also (Ortega 2016) (Auyero 2000).

hardships as people are cut from kinship links in multigenerational family structures, social ties and established economic opportunities that form the lifeblood of auto-constructed settlements (Arabindoo 2011).

During fieldwork for the research project which preceded this thesis, I visited a number of tenement blocks in Manila for example, which have been earmarked for demolition after being deemed unsafe, leaving residents facing re-eviction. (Vitas Tenements, Tondo, Metro Manila, 2016). Official reasoning cites poor construction and a lack of maintenance, but the reality is also that as fringe land becomes absorbed into the city, its desirability for redevelopment increases. The area that these tenements occupy has become desirable for development due to proximity to the port. The same pattern of development cyclical threat is displayed in Santiago de Chile, where a research unit in Universidad Católica is studying the pressures being exerted over sites assigned to poor families in the 1980s by the World Bank's 'Sites and Services' programme. Such sites, once totally removed from the city, have now become prime land for real estate development, exposing inhabitants to the predatory tactics of property enterprise (Interview with Cristián Robertson de Ferrari, researcher in 9x18 project, 20.05.2020).

The border that these sites occupy between formal and informal status mean that those relegated to them, in Arabindoo's words, are neither upgraded from the status of 'population to citizen, nor are they able to invoke the rights of urban citizenship in any conceivable manner' (Arabindoo 2011, 641). Their new status is virtually invisible, no longer able to make a reasonable claim to rights that have officially been fulfilled. Their remaining vulnerability is thus discounted from the struggle for the city.

I share in Arabindoo's concern that there is at once a simplification of the epistemology of poverty when defined only through spatial characteristics and a simplification of the ways in which spatial

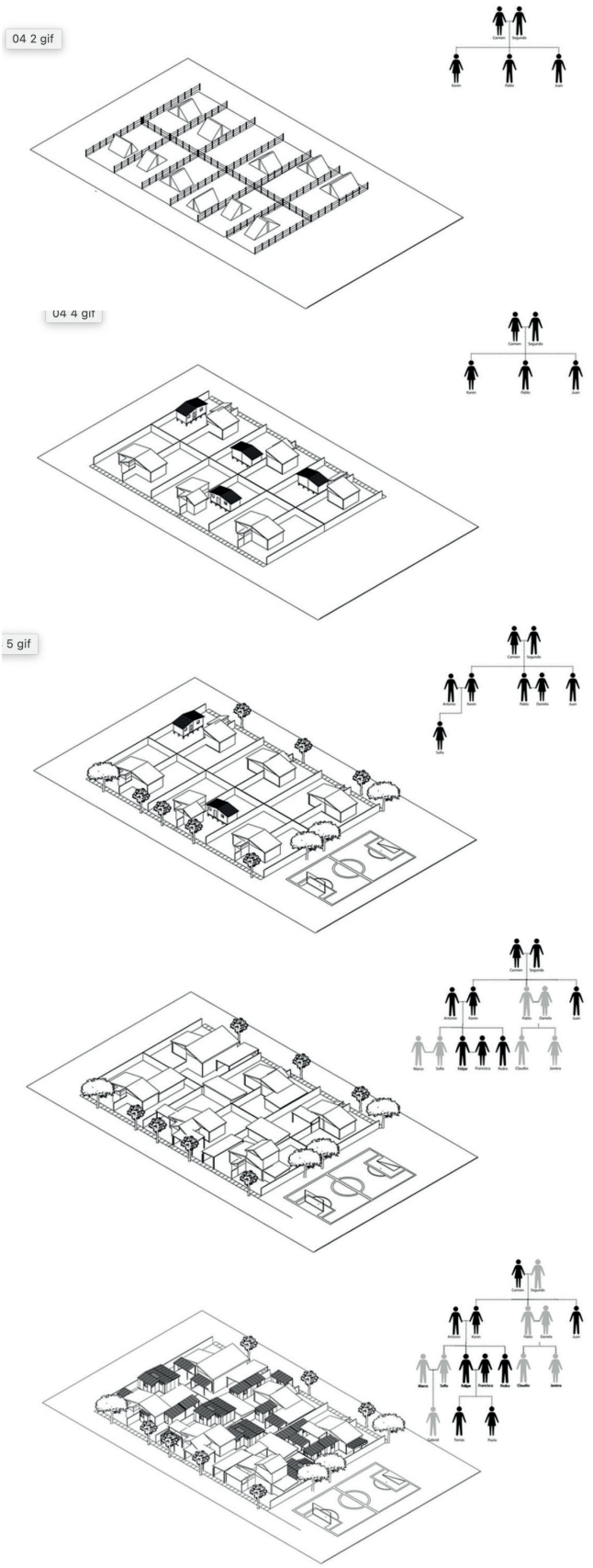
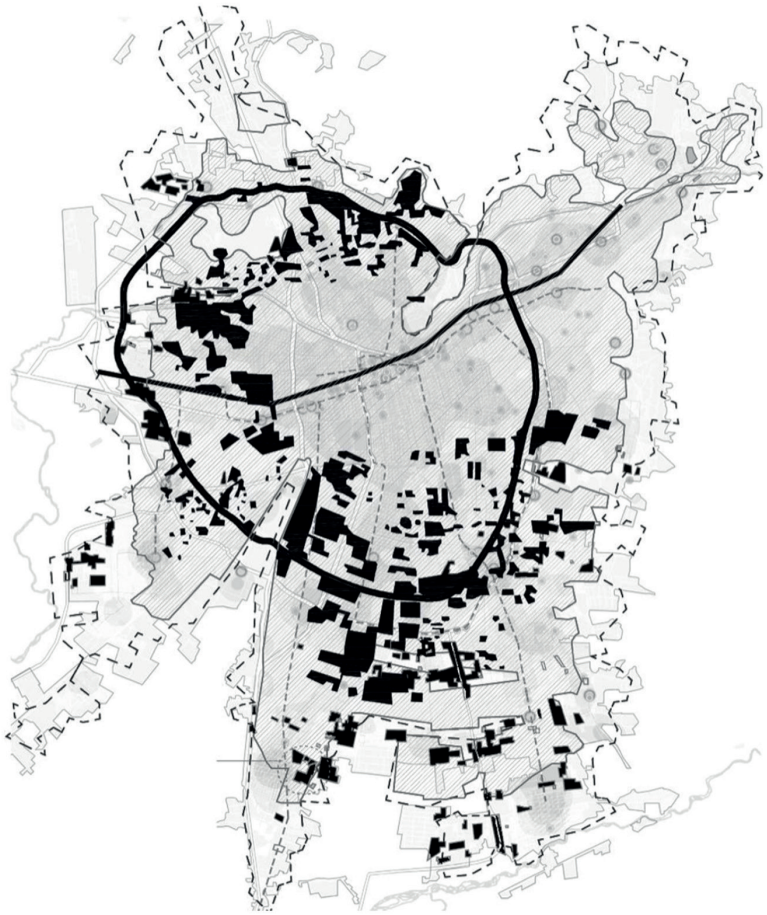


Image 45. Progressive densification of sites from World Bank Sites and Services Programe in 1980s. Drawing produced by © Laboratorio de Investigación 9x18, Pontificia Universidad Católica De Chile, all rights reserved

URL: https://laboratorio9x18.arquitectura.uc.cl



240 % aumentó el allegamiento entre año 2000 y 2015
(Casen 2015)

94 % declara que le gusta su ubicación
(Urrutia, 2018)

82 % familias allegadas no quiere cambiarse o no está haciendo nada por moverse a otra comuna
(Urrutia, 2018)

Image 46. World Bank Sites and Services Programme sites relative to original and current city border. Drawing produced by © Laboratorio de Investigación 9x18, Pontificia Universidad Católica De Chile, all rights reserved

URL: https://laboratorio9x18.arquitectura.uc.cl

construction and social political life can inform each other. Arabindoo's argument is that using "slum" terminology to theorise urban poverty and the evolution of the city, cannot necessarily confront the ways in which 'socio-spatial relations of the urban poor in globalising cities are restructured by the deep injustices of slum eviction and resettlement'. It is central to the argument of this thesis that this reductive approach to urban assessment must be confronted in order to move the parameters for knowledge production on the transformation of cities beyond academic provocations or material "fixes", into forms and fields that are actually actionable by those caught between such categorical impositions (Arabindoo 2011, 642).

3.4 REINFORCING PROPERTIED CITIZENSHIP IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SLUMS

The UN definition of 'slums' in the MDGs (United Nations 2008) emerged at a time when the key national proponents of international development were beginning to consider new concepts of growth that would provide space for a more proactive approach to poverty. It was at this time, according to Arindam Biswas, that the UK Department for International Development introduced the concept of 'pro-poor growth' in 'global development policy' (Biswas 2016, 505). Pro-poor growth grew out of broad-based growth strategies to tackle inequality, assuming some level of 'trade-offs between raising the share of income captured by the poorest in society or reducing the gap between mean income of the poor and overall income' (Biswas 2016, 507), and thus policies were independently crafted according to the choices of individual nations.

The term 'slum' became common through the introduction of the MDGs, though the MDGs themselves did not explicitly link property status with poverty at the outset. Indeed, the target outlined in Item 7D to achieve 'a significant improvement in the lives of at least

100 million slum dwellers' fell under MDG 7: 'Ensure Environmental Sustainability'. MDG 1 outlined target items to 'Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger' (United Nations 2008). The term 'slum' actually slightly preceded the MDGs, having been introduced in 1999 as part of the UN-Habitat 'Cities Without Slums' initiative (Gilbert 2007, 697). The goals of both the 'Cities Without Slums' initiative and of Item 7D of the MDGs were outlined in greater detail in 2003 in the UN-Habitat book The Challenge of Slums (UN-Habitat 2003). Even though the wording in these initiatives and studies was targeted at understanding the phenomena of urban poverty in order to improve the quality of life for the poorest, this global campaign was framed around the objective of erasure. As designed, it incentivised a wave of national campaigns to cleanse cities of their 'slums'. In Morocco, for example, the Ministry of Housing launched a 'Cities Without Slums' initiative in 2004, having identified approximately five million people living in conditions fitting the UN-Habitat definition (Atia 2019, 1). Atia explains that, whereas before the introduction of the 'Cities Without Slums' ('Villes Sans Bidonvilles') initiative, the predominant approach to addressing the housing deficit and predominance of poorly serviced self-built housing sites had been in situ upgrading projects focused on providing and improving infrastructures. In contrast, the launch of the Cities Without Slums initiative saw a shift towards resettlement schemes which relocated large numbers of urban poor to five-storey purpose-built apartment blocks on the city periphery (Atia 2019, 2). However, these projects were generally accepted to have been overwhelmingly unsuccessful due to resistance from those targeted for resettlement on account of the low affordability of the scheme (a US$2,100 deposit was required and there was difficulty securing a mortgage on the outstanding amount), the low quality of the construction and the lack of connective infrastructures (Atia 2019, 2).

Despite recognition in development literature that economic growth and 'development' (both as policy frameworks and institutional jurisdictions) differ in scope and require different measures to

track their progress,[19] at their core, both growth-based economics and development theory seem to converge around the principles of property financialisaton as an instrument tying urbanisation to economic growth (Bredenoord 2014, 400)[20] (UN-Habitat 2003) (United Nations 2016), Historical strategies pursued by development agencies such as the World Bank have rationalised projects for social inclusion as market inclusion, expanding pro-poor policy towards the concept of 'inclusive growth' rather than questioning the concept of growth itself as it pertains to the lives of the poorest (Arcilla 2018) (Ortega 2016) (A. Roy 2014, 139) (Arabindoo 2011) (Atia 2019) (Pugh 1994) (Chiodelli 2016).

Discourse from the likes of Hernando de Soto holds that property rights lie at the heart of social inclusion, providing visibility and legitimacy through market participation. De Soto argues for the use of titling for the poor as a way of turning '"dead capital" into "liquid capital" thereby converting slums into assets' (de Soto, 2000: 7, interpreted by (A. Roy 2014, 143)), indirectly challenging the linguistic separation of auto-construction by the rich and the poor. This view confirms the condition of poverty as a simple lack of access to the processes of market urbanism that leverage property to create

19 'Leading international institutions including the World Bank (WB), United Nations (UN), and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have aggressively advocated for inclusive growth as the mainstay of development policy. But even among international institutions, the definition and scope varies depending on the expert involved and their institutional outlook towards development' (Biswas 2016, 511). 'Equity is considered the source of inclusive growth, but it does not have a universal definition. It is more an open subject to the broad approach of the theme. Inclusive growth focuses on expanding opportunities for all, including the less well-off, through the elimination of distortions created by market, policy, and institutional failures. The policy is implied in the clearing up of what I term "circumstantial imperfections" in economic, financial, social, political, administrative, and legal spaces that exist in the governance with reformative regulation, legal, and administrative support. In this context, inclusive growth has emerged as a new development paradigm in growth policy. It embraces both income and non-income dimensions of well-being in a manner that transforms poverty reduction to inclusiveness of growth' (Biswas 2016, 510).

20 'Many housing policy packages – including the ABC schemes – have a dual intention of creating a country of homeowners while at the same time stimulating national economic production. The focus then is on fostering private sector activities, particularly in the construction and financial sectors.' (Bredenoord 2014, 400)

Characteristic	Indicator	Definition
Access to water	Inadequate drinking water supply *(adjusted MDG Indicator 30)*	A settlement has an inadequate drinking water supply if less than 50% of households have an improved water supply: • household connection; • access to public stand pipe; • rainwater collection;[i] with at least 20 litres/person/day available *within an acceptable collection distance.*
Access to sanitation	Inadequate sanitation *(MDG Indicator 31)*	A settlement has inadequate sanitation if less than 50% of households have improved sanitation: • public sewer; • septic tank; • pour-flush latrine; • ventilated improved pit latrine. The excreta disposal system is considered adequate if it is private or shared by a *maximum of two households.*
Structural quality of housing	a. Location	Proportion of households residing on or near a hazardous site. The following locations should be considered: • housing in geologically hazardous zones (landslide/earthquake and flood areas); • housing on or under garbage mountains; • housing around high-industrial pollution areas; • housing around other unprotected high-risk zones (eg railroads, airports, energy transmission lines).
	b. Permanency of structure	Proportion of households living in temporary and/or dilapidated structures. The following factors should be considered when placing a housing unit in these categories: • quality of construction (eg materials used for wall, floor and roof); • compliance with local building codes, standards and bylaws.
Overcrowding	Overcrowding	Proportion of households with more than two persons per room. The alternative is to set a minimum standard for floor area per person (eg 5 square metres).
Security of tenure	Security of tenure *(MDG Indicator 32)*	• Proportion of households with formal title deeds to both land and residence. • Proportion of households with formal title deeds to either one of land or residence. • Proportion of households with enforceable agreements or any document as a proof of a tenure arrangement.

Note: i 'Well' and 'spring' are considered acceptable sources in the original MDG indicator but are almost certain to be polluted in urban areas.

Sources: adapted from UN-Habitat, 2002a, 2002b.

Image 47. Original definition of slums published in UN-Habitat The Challenge of Slums. Global Report on Human Settlements, 2003 (UN-Habitat 2003). This chart is still being used in new publications. © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved

capital (de Soto, 2000: 7, interpreted by (A. Roy 2014, 143)) (Davis 2007).

Roy cites these framings of poverty – either 'of the poor as heroic entrepreneur, able to convert slum lands into assets of global value, or of the poor as financial stakeholder in urban infrastructure' – as essential to the theme of 'postcolonial government and the project of inclusive growth' (A. Roy 2014, 143). This narrative of 'inclusive growth' is self-contradictory in that it contains noble ideologies of assimilating the marginalised into the larger citizenry (A. Roy 2014, 143), while ascribing the benefits of citizenship to a consumer model, fully embedding conditions of social and political inclusion in market participation through property ownership. This not only simplifies or obscures other dimensions of poverty and property-related vulnerabilities from view, but also immediately discredits alternative systems of production and social construction. Such a view normalises and depoliticises 'differentiated citizenship' (Holston 2009, 264), wherein the homeless are not considered equal citizens with equal rights to the landed class.[21]

De Soto's work presents the 'slum' as 'a crucial space for bottom-billion capitalism' (A. Roy 2014) (A. Roy 2010, 5), in a process of rendering the forgotten visible, but only insofar as the spaces they occupy can be converted into 'assets' (Tutton, 2009) (A. Roy 2011, 229) (Fawaz 2013, 29). This applies especially in such cases where occupied spaces are large, as they represent wholly new development frontiers, often the last remaining in the city centres. Roy refers to this 'commodification of community economies' as 'neoliberal populism' (A. Roy 2011, 229). The social ramifications of this, according to Cowan, are that constructions of conclusive title registries 'effectively transform the idea of property (in land)

21 'I describe it, therefore, as a differentiated citizenship that uses these social qualifications to organize its political, civil, and social dimensions and to regulate its distribution of inequalities' (Holston 2009, 264).

as a socially embedded set of relations premised on use, political hierarchies and exchange, [in]to a commodity vision of land, cleaned of its local impurities and made universally fungible' (Cowan 2021, 445). Fawaz further posits that the accompanying regularisation and protection policies, which are designed to reinforce such processes of assimilation, further entrench a dualistic view of the urban poor as to be both feared and feared for. Such policies are embedded in ideals of reassigning responsibility for 'social and political life' from governments to the market (Fawaz 2013, 24).

Campaigns for asset conversion targeting the auto-constructions of the urban poor also feed, conversely, into a narrative of subaltern celebration that, rather than supporting autonomous claims for fuller citizenship rights embedded in the desire for security, services and social integration, has led to reduced provisions from both the state and supranational development bodies on the basis of 'helping the poor help themselves'.[22] However, as the mechanisms with which to assess progress were conditioned by the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary and premised on technical innovation and growth, helping the poor help themselves was less a matter of granting the poor agency to shape their lives around their own conceptions of dignity than it was providing minimal resources and 'technical assistance' which retained the recipients at a distance

22 Before Hernando de Soto's claims gained prominence and were championed by agencies like the World Bank, the English architect John Turner brought his experience working in Peru into the working methodologies of the Bank. Turner was a significant populariser of the ideology that 'slums' 'were less the problem than the solution' (Davis 2007, 72). Having spent a significant amount of time between the late 1950s and the mid-1960s working on reconstruction and upgrading programmes in Peru, Turner came to promote self-building and self- management of neighbourhoods on the basis that housing is best created and managed by the dwellers, rather than centrally administered by the state (https://www.spatialagency.net/database/john.turner.). This led to his book, Freedom to Build, in which he promoted a framework wherein 'the state as well as private professionals such as architects and engineers, act as enablers, resulting in a shift in thinking that valorises experience and local know-how over technocratic and professionalised forms of knowledge' (https://www.spatialagency.net/database/john.turner). Turner did not make explicit whether this freedom to build should be appropriated via squatting or granted by the state, but the position of intermediaries as 'enablers' in this framework opened an avenue through which the World Bank could steer a deeply material approach to market integration.

from decision-making (Cornwall 2000) (Lewis 2006) (Herz 2005).

Under the policies and practices of the World Bank, the ideologies of De Soto and architect John Turner were manifested in a programme of incremental 'self-help' construction alongside legalisation, which was lauded as a 'pragmatic and cost-effective approach to the urban crisis' under the Bank presidency of McNamara (Davis 2007, 71-72). The unfortunate unseen consequences of this were that, while supporting the image of the poor as capable self-constructors and entrepreneurs, self-help programmes implicitly downgraded funding provisions that might have come through other types of public housing initiatives. According to Davis and Pugh, the downgrading of affordable housing programmes to 'sites and services' projects and in situ upgrading as part of this rhetoric meant that 'little notice was taken publicly of the momentous downsizing of entitlement implicit in the World Bank's canonization of slum housing. Praising the praxis of the poor became a smokescreen for reneging on historic state commitments to relieve poverty and homelessness' (Davis 2007, 72). Many of these minimally serviced sites actually ended up in the hands of the middle class, because the minimum savings required to qualify for a construction loan from the Bank were high enough to exclude the majority of squatters from engaging in the programme (Davis 2007, 74). In an interview with Cristián Robertson de Ferrari, Ferrari explained that the 9x18 initiative was set up to protect the occupants of sites in Santiago initially produced under the World Bank sites and services programme in the 1980s, from predatory development practices which force multigenerational occupants further from the city. (Interview with Cristián Robertson de Ferrari, researcher in 9x18 project, 20.05.2020).

Many researchers have since argued that titling is neither necessarily a sufficient, nor an essential, pathway to housing security, for several reasons. Firstly, as land is assimilated into markets, land prices rise, forcing renters to relocate or incentivising owners with pressing financial circumstances to sell, rendering them

homeless once again (Fawaz 2013, 34). Secondly, titles are market instruments that do not carry the social and political leverage required to prevent future relocation or claim compensation when development interests incentivise state-led displacement. Whereas people with titles are often displaced for large-scale development projects, illegal occupants have often been able to leverage political support, either to prevent eviction or to secure significant compensation (Fawaz 2013, 34) (Benjamin 2008, 722) (A. Roy 2003).

According to Mazarro, while MDG Item 7D was met, (i.e., 100 million families were lifted out of 'slum conditions') the number of settlements classified as 'slums' grew by a far higher number during the same time period, resulting in overall growth (Mazarro 2018),. This reflected Mosse's statement that to 'bend these realities into the discipline bound logics of diagnosis and prescription' meant projects rarely achieved their stated ends (Mosse 2008, 4). Despite the lack of success, the segregation and repackaging of the city's elemental processes and artefacts continues to be reproduced at several scales, reducing the whole to a series of seemingly definitive and separable components to be tackled by clearly delineated associated disciplines, agencies or departments.

The overall growth of 'slum' settlements, despite becoming the focus of consistent global campaigns, demonstrates that the production of housing alone does not necessarily prevent the proliferation of autonomous construction. This is because housing form, the processes under which it is designed, constructed and managed, and its placement in the city, are socially important. I argue that the success of these processes is deeply linked to historical, social, cultural and economic characteristics in different areas of the city.

In Manila, for example, state housing programmes and many projects implemented by third-sector agencies have shown a demonstrable tendency towards cost-effective mass housing schemes of medium-rise, high-density type on the city outskirts.

Nonetheless, their quality, form, and position in the outlying provinces of the city mean that the families assigned to these homes often sublet and return to squat elsewhere in the city (Arcilla 2018). Alternatively, the breadwinners are forced to leave their family and squat alone to avoid hours-long commutes back to the economic hubs of the city, which can consume up to a third of their income (author interviews with numerous NGOs and peoples' organisations and individuals in auto-constructed settlements conducted between 2014 and 2018).

However, ensuring that affordable housing projects are actually suited to their target inhabitants is not only a matter of placement. In 2018 I visited the Vitas tenement buildings in Tondo, Manila where the occupants have created makeshift additions to improve the insufficient spaces. These additions protrude from the blocks and are structurally insecure, posing a significant danger at the higher levels of the units. The insecurity of the additions has been cited among the reasons to allocate the blocks for demolition and the residents for relocation though it is clearly demonstrative of a lack of consultation and resident consideration in the design process. I was also informed by a member of Urban Poor Associates (a local NGO engaged in talks with resident associations in the blocks) that the string of enclosed and poorly lit stairwells which punctuated the two sides of the blocks had become common sites of sexual assault and a source of daily fear among female residents.

The indicators of the SDGs and language of the New Urban Agenda continue to tie the provision of housing and the eradication of 'slums' to incentives of economic growth and market assimilation, with minimal caveats suggesting that privatisation should prevent sprawl or gentrification. (United Nations 2017) (United Nations 2016) (United Nations n.d.) The reduction of social needs to singular material deficits diminishes the value of existing realities in auto-constructed settlements and the knowledge practices of the poor that they demonstrate. The simplification of lives lived in poverty

to a matter of material deficits dehumanises the poor as grateful objects of development, rather than people with the capacity for creativity and desire which reaches beyond basic consumer choices (Freire 2018) (A. Appadurai 2006).

At the base of these indicators lies the assumption that the financial formalisation of property and piecemeal provisions of shelter and infrastructures can respond to complex problems of inequality and sociopolitical marginalisation. This assumption is built into the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary and as such, belies the importance of process in strategising and constructing projects. Because progress towards the development imaginary is measured in material terms, the process of realising it within the unique complexities of each place or project site becomes secondary and inconsequential to the measure of success.

3.5 MATERIAL CATEGORIES AND SCALE BY GENERALISATION

The use of socio-spatial categories like 'slums', 'unplanned expansions' and 'sprawl' capture an image of the city as a material, economic project of growth in a way that classifies local upheaval as anomalies or 'problems' within the universal ideal. Alternative knowledges (in that they present an alternative image of the world and urban life), embedded in local experience, are also erased, usurped or selectively drawn upon to support progression towards a predetermined future. This is what Santos refers to as a 'sociology of absences', wherein 'non-existence is produced whenever a certain entity is discredited and considered invisible, non-intelligible or discardable' (B. d. Santos 2012, 52). At the heart of categorisation and quantitative assessments lies the bias of scale as a logic of generalisation. The complex and particular is the enemy of the general, insofar as it reveals fissures and contradictions in a logic based on comparative uniformity.

Scientific knowledge forms an important part of the universal imaginary and the way in which it has been technologized in attempts to depoliticise development. Santos and Latour make similar criticisms of the ways in which knowledge has been universalised and the hierarchical logics underpinning its universalisation. Latour describes universalism as a hierarchical distinction between background and foreground that identifies 'local contingencies as so many queer particularities' in relation to the consistent background of 'universal laws', or reality (Latour, 1996, p. 370). Santos describes the same perceptual bias as the 'logic of dominant scale', which privileges knowledge drawn from 'entities or realities which prevail regardless of specific contexts' and therefore, of potentially global scope. In Santos' view, these dominant realities therefore 'take precedence over all others which depend on contexts' that, rather than simply demoting local orders or events to anomalous particularities, actively produce them as non-existent, 'captured in scales that render them incapable of being credible alternatives to what exists globally and universally' (B. d. Santos 2012, 53).

Generalisation is key to the globalisation of the international development industry and the coordination of efforts to implement shared ideologies of progress. However, as Carlos Vainer (2017) states, despite attempts to depoliticise city modelling by abstracting certain material and quantitative values from their contextual bases, 'practices of city modelling are not neutral' (Vainer 2017, 48). In addition, the apparently 'universal' implementation strategies that such metric categories are used to support – often packaged as 'roadmaps' or 'tool boxes' – are often derived from knowledge and experiences that are wholly different from the 'economic, political and cultural contexts' (Vainer 2017, 48) amongst which they will later be disseminated. As Vainer aptly states, 'Effacing the realities and social and territorial problems of the global periphery, they propose solutions that are, in the end, supposedly all-purpose

"instruction" on "best practice"; applied in situations and contexts entirely different from the ones for which they were conceived' (Vainer 2017, 48).[23]

As noted in chapter two, a key assumption upon which Santos argues that hegemonic universalism is structured is 'social and political neutrality as a condition of objectivity' (B. d. Santos 2018, 6). The more specialised and technical the abstraction of conditions from their more changeable and subjective contexts, the more any observations can be argued to be objective. As a result, quantitative measures have often been favoured as the most objective form of evidence in support of evidence-based policy (EBP) (Maginn 2006). However, quantitative measures can only be given meaning by predefining their scope with very specific lines of questioning. Such questions narrow the scope of discovery by assuming accompanying factors in order to define basic causal relationships that are not dependent on context and thus can be generalised for comparison across multiple localities.

For example, Maginn suggests that these questions might include 'How many people suffer from problem X?' (Maginn 2006, 8). In this question, the assumed factors are the nature of problem X and that all people consider themselves to 'suffer' as a direct result of that problem to a universally comparable degree, regardless of any accompanying sociocultural, political and economic conditions. Maginn argues that 'it is because of this ability to demonstrate causality and generalisability combined with its (supposed) reliability and validity that quantitative approaches are viewed by policy-makers as being more rigorous and credible than qualitative

23 To 'move the money' they have been charged with spending, 'development' agencies prefer to opt for standardized 'development' packages. It thus suits the agencies to portray developing countries in terms that make them suitable targets for such packages. It is not surprising, therefore, that the 'country profiles' on which the agencies base their interventions frequently bear little or no relation to economic and social realities (Ferguson 1994, 176).

methods' (Maginn 2006, 8). The eclectic nature of qualitative research, according to Maginn and Cornwall and Gaventa, is considered far less precise than quantitative measures, the former producing a wide-angle view that might distort the resultant image, while the latter view is sharper and narrower (Maginn 2006, 3) (Cornwall 2000).[24] The use of categories supports the translation of qualitative spatial conditions into numerical indicators, which can be broadly generalised to support coordinated policy approaches and international goals with universal standards such as the SDGs.

The process of evidencing policy through numerical indicators by predefining questions or problems does away with contingency, a fundamental component of design projects that seek to engage the social and political contexts in which they are developed. Contingency is a necessary part of collaborative design projects wherein project goals and strategies are adapted to discoveries that inevitably evolve throughout the process of research and design development.[25] Cornwall suggests that linear policy models (Cornwall 2000) that use enumeration to measure predefined parameters are also problematic in that they reinforce disciplinary knowledge silos, which generate an organisational disconnection between policy

24 Maginn notes that evidence generated by quantitative techniques is prone to data bias for several reasons, including the insufficient time provided for reflection to become embedded in future action; personnel changes that lead to evolutions in political ideology; 'separating and apportioning weight to endogenous and exogenous factors […] [of] change'; implementation and interpretation variation according to location and government levels; different cultural attitudes in localised structures and partnerships; and variations in the nature and extent of problems according to neighbourhood/site (Maginn 2006, 9).

25 The dismissal of qualitative research has been attributed to the presupposition of political neutrality in development and the negative political connotations associated with the use of qualitative methods and ethnography, arising from their links with radical leftist politics and feminist, anti-racist or decolonial movements (Hammersley, 1992) (Maginn 2006, 10)

deployment and assessment.[26] Just as data needs to be refined in scope with the use of categorical separations, such categorisations allow for corresponding professional knowledge specialisation. As a result, the extent to which assessments are actually taken up in policy or project development is not clear.[27]

In this way, the use of 'slum' as a proxy measure for poverty, alongside other urban spatial categories, has been widely instrumentalised as part of the urban 'data revolution' (UN-Habitat n.d.) (ECE, UN, and DM DGACM 2019). Data analysis now dominates the project of mapping property poverty against other urban development goals. The utilisation of GIS technology alongside other data collection methods has provided much greater scope to join spatial analysis with numerical indicators to give a more rounded view of each and every city. Especially in the largest supranational organisations with the greatest access to detailed data (the World Bank and United Nations), a number of programmes have emerged that are beginning to provide tools for better contextualisation of numerical indicators on increasingly detailed maps. The most detailed urban planning data is produced by UN-Habitat through programmes such as the Global Urban Observatory (GUO) (Atlas of Urban Expansion Project) and the City Prosperity Index (CPI).

The use of an urban observatory model at regional and urban levels

26 Maginn outlines the growing appeal of EBP in the US, the UK and Australia, as epitomised in the 1997 UK Labour party mantra, 'what matters is what works' (SEU 1998) (Maginn 2006, 9). EBP has been idealised by policy-makers as a concretely scientific approach to research, but one 'premised on experimentation' (Maginn 2006, 9). The importance of EBP is heavily emphasised by UN agencies, such as UN-Habitat, in all urban analysis and development propositions, though mentions do not include specific reference to any premise of experimentation. Many papers indicate a process of 'road-testing' policies to inform future development. However, it is unclear where and to what extent this is actually built into project or policy designs.

27 In some cases, separate agencies exist purely for assessment. For example, the Best-Practices branch in UN-Habitat's Research And Capacity Development Unit works to agglomerate findings in both UN and non-UN projects, usually those of NGOs, presenting a report and awards ceremony at the end of each year. This is not clearly reported on publicly and there is no clear cross-over within the different agency units.

is intended to provide greater data spatialisation using geo-spatial referencing to plot numerical indicators for SDG11 (Sustainable Cities and communities), such as the rate at which land is consumed by urban growth, or the concentration of air pollutants (UN-Habitat 2019, 15). At the city level, the GUO claims that 'indicators require data collection at city level using non-conventional methods that go beyond censuses or household surveys' (UN-Habitat GUO 2020, 15) (UN-Habitat 2019)

(UN-Habitat 2018). However, spatial investigations may not constitute the actual unit of analysis, but rather an additional 'determinant of indicator results.' Such steps should be welcomed, but the GUO makes little reference to what the non-conventional methods for data collection actually are. It alludes to the use of 'innovative digital-based satellite imagery analysis, coupled with ground-truthing and local observation techniques, and slum space mapping', as well as 'census-based slum mapping' (UN-Habitat GUO 2020, 21) (UN-Habitat 2019). However, it does not elaborate further on how slum space mapping differs from other mapping techniques, or what 'ground-truthing' might entail and who it may engage. Much of its methodology paper refers to the production of urban-scale plan views (UN-Habitat GUO 2020), supported by satellite images, with no mention, or evidence of horizontal representations such as structural assessments and street surveys represented in models, photos or sections. Neither does it demonstrate any 'non-scientific', experiential or non-static mapping. For example, maps that show movements and use of spaces at different times, or maps demonstrating the markers (both physical and ephemeral) that form social and political borders which are more often revealed in cognitive mapping exercises.

Policy reviews and SDG monitoring guidelines also make extensive mentions of the City Prosperity Initiative (CPI) which operates alongside the GUP in the Research and Capacity Development branch of the Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat 2018)

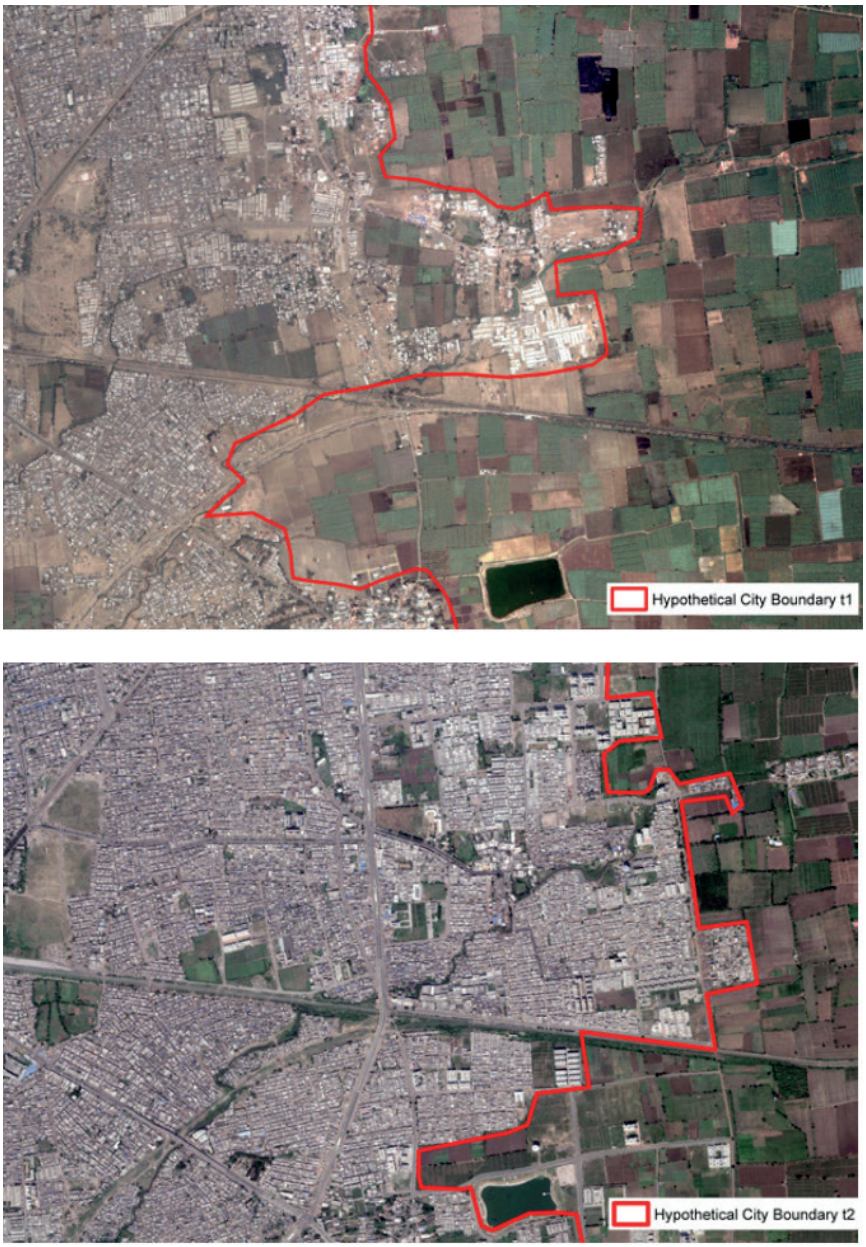


Image 48. p.15, of report titled 'Status of Human Settlements Statistics. Special publication by the Global Urban Observatory Unit, Research and Capacity Development Branch, UN-Habitat. The image illustrates the report statements that 'Measuring the rate at which land is consumed by urban growth (Indicator 11.3.1) requires adoption of spatial metrics (UN-Habitat 2019, 15)
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Images 49/50.

Example of Global Observatory data analysis on Atlas of Urban Expansion (Example city, Manila, Philippines) (n.d. Atlas of Urban Expansion Manila. Accessed 09 21, 2023.

http://atlasofurbanexpansion.org/cities/view/Manila.)

(UN-Habitat 2019). The Index used by the CPI is designed to create a detailed understanding of the city using indicators that align with, and elaborate on, the principles of the NUA and the Indicators of SDG 11. The City Prosperity Index is comprised of six data categories, each with a series of sub-dimensions and detailed indicators.[28]

The Spatial Capital portion of the index uses cartographic information similar to that of the GUO, cross-referenced with disaggregated data to analyse the spatiality of economic agglomeration, distribution of hard and soft infrastructures and ease of mobility in the city. However, though the index uses a moderate level of metric variation and disaggregation, the richness of the findings is severely limited by reliance on satellite maps and census material without ensuring field work is undertaken to corroborate the data and provide greater qualitative detail.[29] During my own time working in the CPI at the UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi, data was consistently sourced either from the government agencies which had commissioned the projects or from open-source repositories imported into QGIS and no fieldwork was undertaken or

28 Its six dimensions are Quality of Life; Equity and Social Inclusion; Environmental Sustainability; Productivity; Infrastructure Development; and Urban Governance and Legislation. The indicators involved in the calculation of the CPI can provide a fairly detailed picture of urban conditions, if the full data sets for the extended index are available and fully disaggregated by smaller areas.

29 The CPI partners with government institutions to provide data from national censuses, often in conjunction with local research organisations or universities. However, the CPI unit rarely conducts field research for the evaluation of the Index, and the data matrix lacks some sub-dimensions and disaggregation. The lack of important disaggregation is theoretically justified by the potential for comparability between cities, but the huge fluctuation in data availability has prompted the CPI to develop different levels of detail for the Index to be applied at. The varied use of basic and extended versions in accordance with data availability results in the loss of comparability. The unavailability of data can be attributed to many factors; as above, some states may be unwilling to release results that are unflattering, and which affect either the city's or the governing party's reputation. In other cases, countries may simply lack the resources to mobilise thorough censuses and questionnaires in unregistered neighbourhoods. Therefore, cities with large informal economies or with large numbers of unregistered homes make analysis extremely difficult, rendering the marginalised invisible, indicated only by large data gaps (if those gaps are even recognised). Better partnerships with popular organisations and technology start-ups could result in mutually beneficial strides being made in the documentation and mapping of unregistered neighbourhoods, but this has not been explored.

Figure 2: City Prosperity Initiative (CPI) and the street connectivity index

CPI DIMENSION	CPI SUB-DIMENSION	INDICATORS
PRODUCTIVITY INDEX	Economic Strength	City Product per Capita
	Economic Burden	Old Age Dependency
	Economic Agglomeration	Economic Density
	Employment	Unemployment Rate
		Employment to Population ratio
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT INDEX	Housing Infrastructure	Improved Shelter
		Access to Improved Water
		Sufficient Living Area
		Population Density
	Social Infrastructure	Physicians Density
	ICT	Internet Access
		Average Broadband Speed
	Urban Mobility	Length of Mass Transport Network
		Traffic Fatalities
		Per Capita Public Transport Vehicles
	Street Connectivity	Intersection Density
		Street Density
		Land Allocated to Streets
QUALITY OF LIFE INDEX	Health	Life Expectancy at Birth
		Under-Five Mortality Rate
	Education	Literacy Rate
		Mean Years of Schooling
	Safety and Security	Homicide rate
	Public Space	Accessibility to Open Public Area
		Green area per capita
EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION INDEX	Economic Equity	Gini Coefficient
		Poverty rate
	Social Inclusion	Slum Household
		Youth Unemployment
	Gender Inclusion	Equitable Secondary School Enrolment
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX	Air Quality	Number of Monitoring stations
		PM2.5 Concentration
		CO2 Emissions
	Waste Management	Solid Waste Collection
		Waste water treatment
	Water and Energy	Share of renewable energy
GOVERNANCE AND LEGISTRATION INDEX	Participation and Accountability	Voter Turnout
	Municipal Finance	Local Expenditure Efficiency
		Own revenue collection
		Subnational Debt
	Governance of Urbanisation	Urban Sprawl

Image 51. Indicators for the City Prosperity Index Street Connectivity Index (Figure 2, P11, UN-Habitat, Street Connectivity Index (SCI) of Six Municipalities in Jalisco State, Mexico, 2016 © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved)

nkages between CPI and SDG 11 Targets

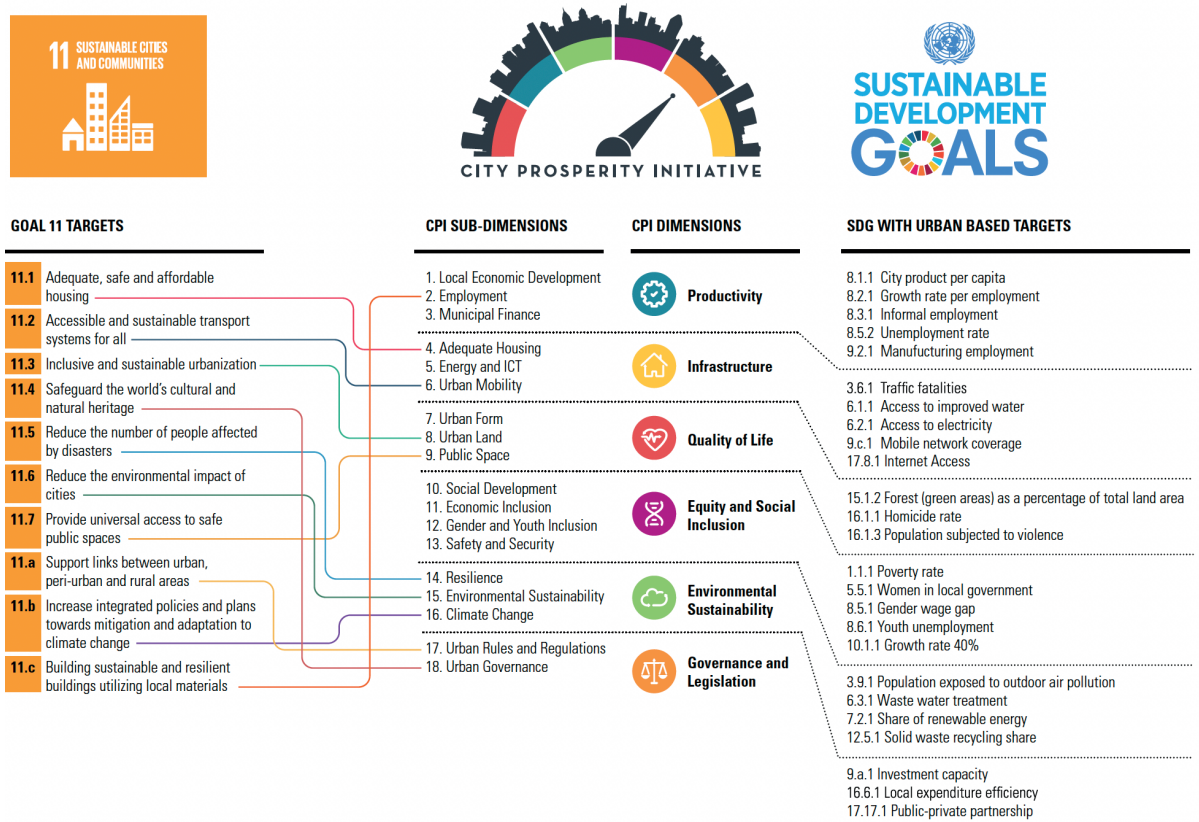


image 52. Mapping CPI indicators onto those of SDG 11: Sustainable Cities. This appears in several publications but this image was taken from page 14 of a 2020 paper from the UN-Habitat's Global Urban Observatory titled Status of Human Settlements Statistics. Special publication by the Global Urban Observatory Unit, Research and Capacity Development Branch, UN-Habitat. (UN-Habitat 2020, p14) © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved

planned.

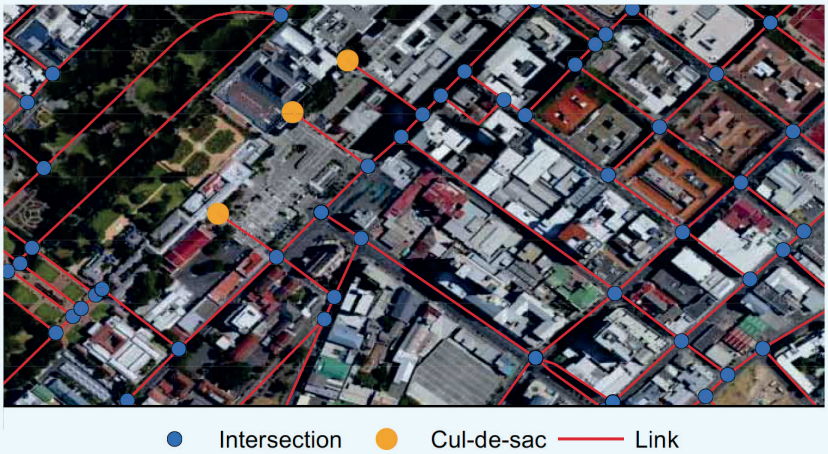
The spatial scrutiny employed in the CPI and the GUO uses density analysis and expansion patterns to identify the core, the main agglomeration(s) and metropolitan area. In contrast, assessment inside these areas is based on zonal averages and remains rudimentary, including factors such as road coverage, number of transport connections and land use distribution. The CPI has also developed some analytical tools which work at a greater level of spatial detail, including the Street Connectivity Index, and identifies a number of spatial 'typologies' based on semi-random sampling, including 'housing', 'atomised development', 'regular development' and 'semi-formal development'. (UN-Habitat 2013) (UN-Habitat 2016) (UN-Habitat 2014)[30]

Leaving aside the importance of contextual dimensions, which are lost in such attempts to build general and uniform metric indices for urban modelling, such data sets often remain inconsistent and incomplete even by the minimal standards for data disaggregation of the agencies that produce them. For example, accounts numerating 'slum dwellers' across the world vary significantly according to different reports within institutions such as the UN, and between

30 The Street Connectivity Index is also sample based and uses an equation that cross-references street length in kilometres, coverage as a percentage of the overall urban extent and number of connections per square kilometre.

Image 53. 'Halton sequence of coordinates used for sampling locales win an urban area', (UN-Habitat, Street Connectivity Index (SCI) of Six Municipalities in Jalisco State, Mexico, 2016, p16) © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved

BOX 2.11: STREET COMPONENTS USED TO MEASURE OF CONNECTIVITY



Source: Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe

Intersection Density
= No. of Intersections/ Area

Link to Node Ratio
= No. of Links/ No. of Nodes

Accessibility Index
Pedestrian Route Directness
= Actual Travel Distance/ Direct Travel Distance

Source: Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe

Image 54. Explaining function and use of Street Connectivity Index. From UN-Habitat 'STREETS AS PUBLIC SPACES AND DRIVERS OF URBAN PROSPERITY', 2013 p.44) © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved

institutions such as the UN and World Bank.[31] Given the disparity and statistical gaps, it should be fair to say that uniform values do not reliably provide even a basic numerical account of so-called 'slum dwellers', let alone the detailed ontological information required to assess similarities and differences between experiences and desires in specific sites, or to address vulnerabilities experienced by those not captured by the 'slum dweller' category. Additionally, even where large settlements might appear continuous by such metrics, entering and speaking with residents will reveal that they are often anything but. Unseen social–political borders separate particular areas on the basis of rental types, resources and lengths of occupancy.

In 2020, after interviewing Claudia Amico from Espacio Expresión (Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico 22/01/2020), Claudia invited me to contribute briefly to teaching on a live project being undertaken as part of the MA in Urban Planning and Design at the Universidad Católica del Perú. The project was established as a collaboration with a community in the mountainous outskirts of Lima, called Rímac.

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31 According to data from the United Nations based on their own definitions, as of 2018, there are over 1 billion slum dwellers in the world. Of these, 80 percent live in East and Southeast Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Central and South America. In Latin America, they make up 227 million of the population; in Africa, 238 million; and in Asia, 370 million. This global figure is expected to rise to 3 billion by 2030. However, these numbers vary – sometimes wildly – even within the agency itself. In 2020, and using 2016 estimates, the Global Urban Observatory reported that there were 112 million people living in slums in Latin America and the Caribbean, 228 million in sub-Saharan Africa, 71 million in North Africa and 588 million in Central, Southern and Southeast Asia (a very different figure from what had previously been reported). The World Bank does not display figures for the percentage of the population residing in slums for Western Europe and the United States, but we can compare a figure of 5 percent of the population of Central Europe and the Baltics in 2018 with 59 percent in the 'Least Developed Countries', as defined by the UN. However, many of the country-specific figures go well over 60 percent in Africa, with countries such as the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan exhibiting figures of over 70 percent, some reaching 90–98 percent. It should be noted that figures are missing for a very large number of countries. Such marginalised societies and spaces now account for over 29.244 percent of the global population according to 2018 data from the UN and World Bank, but are recorded elsewhere by UN-Habitat as only comprising 23.5 percent in the same year. Despite such vast numbers, these marginalised populations account for only a small percentage of urban land, though there are no figures available to identify this in UN or World Bank statistics.

During the project, it became clear that residents were self-divided along social-spatial lines into discrete comunas, with unused space acting as political borderlands between them. Those that had arrived earlier felt that newer expansions put an impossible strain on the water infrastructure and made the entire area more vulnerable to flooding and landslides. Any work in the area required an embedded understanding of these boundaries and consideration of how solidarity could be created across the distinct zones to strengthen the stability of the entire area, both socially through the design and production of shared public space and structurally through strategic infrastructural upgrades to stabilise the land and water supply.

In Manila, my own work with cognitive mapping (field work in March 2015 for Lot-17 project) revealed further invisible divides in the dense settlements of San Andres Bukid, where official lot lines often roughly outlined divisions between social groups. However, these lot lines often overlapped heavily, and the density of the area left no dead space to indicate boundaries. Boundary lines also often corresponded to resource divisions – the radial availability of electricity, water, the presence of essential shops, etc. Working across hundreds of small lots to strategise block-scale intervention was fraught with organisational, aesthetic and social difficulties due to contradictions between the desires of distinct but proximate groups (Bayat 2000, 457) (Massey 1991). Such political borders and the social separations they demarcate are not considered in UN metrics for defining city extents or urban typology groupings.

UN-Habitat's GUO attributes data gaps to different definitions and ways of classifying cities and their components. According to a paper introducing its methodology, 'Many urban SDG targets and indicators refer directly to cities as the unit of analysis for tracking progress. Yet countries define cities differently, based on a single or combination of criteria that includes aspects such as population size or density (or both), economic function, nature of activities (agricultural versus commercial), amount of locally generated

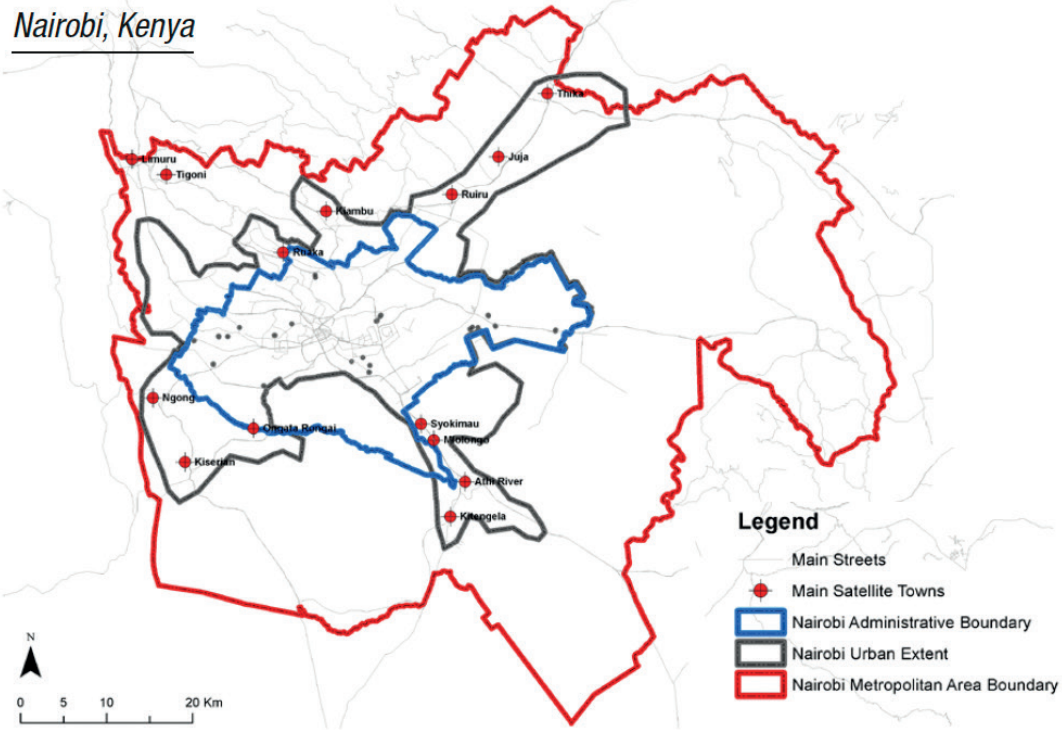
income, as well as political and administrative measures' (UN-Habitat GUO 2020, 8). The paper states that the lack of a 'single globally applicable definition' means countries are less able to align their efforts with the SDG and NUA metrics, as different urban zones such as the core, main agglomeration and metropolitan area are defined through specific data thresholds in the UN framework, which require universal uptake to achieve comparability (UN-Habitat GUO 2020, 8). These statements impressing the important of greater uniformity in urban matrices are repeated in reports on the progress of the SDGs (UN-Habitat 2018) (UN-Habitat 2019). I argue that such statements fail to bring into question the utility of metric comparisons that rely on heightened levels of generality and material homogenisation. I argue that the lack of ground-level engagement in these studies make the results virtually meaningless to the actual processes that shape cities and daily life within them. They contribute to the process of ontological erasure engendered by the project of universalisation by presenting a significantly incomplete data set as complete.

The collection of accurate statistics is not only hindered by limited resources and assessment mechanisms; it is also sometimes deliberately suppressed or manipulated by state officials.[32] This problem surpasses that of comparability, as initiatives relying on governments to provide statistics are often paid for by the states themselves and driven by political strategies of reputational alignment with UN agencies. This means that unfavourable data could counteract the media goals of the project.

During my own experience working for the CPI in UN-Habitat, I came

32 According to Davis, 'In the late 1980s for example Bangkok had an official poverty rate of only 5 percent, yet surveys found nearly a quarter of the population (1.16 million) living in 1000 slums and squatter camps. Likewise the government of Mexico claimed in the 1990s that only one in ten urbanites was truly poor, despite uncontested UN data that showed nearly 40 percent living on less than $2 per day' (Davis 2007, 26). Current World Bank statistics estimate the number of 'slum' dwellers in Mexico to amount to 16 percent of the population (World Bank 2020).

Concepts is often used interchangeably to refer to a form of urban area, Nairobi, Kenya



Criteria used for city definition

- **Area characteristics**
- **Population density**
- **Population size**
- **Economic function**
- **Administrative function**

Image 55. Demonstrating the multiple methods for defining urban limits, from 'Status of Human Settlements Statistics. Special publication by the Global Urban Observatory Unit', Research and Capacity Development Branch, UN-Habitat., p16 © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved

across this very problem, and the extent of the index produced was adjusted to account for the data gaps arising from government that had employed us refusing to provide certain information. Such omissions serve to compound existing capacity gaps that can occur from limitations in human resources, access to technology or training, as well as from the obvious constraints of the data collection mechanisms and issues with the metrics themselves. Government censuses, for example, are often distributed based on street address, but the vast numbers of people residing in unrecognised settlements with unclear or inconsistent property boundaries means that individual properties and residents are difficult to identify. Traffic sensors, credit checks and employment statistics, in the same vein, only include those that are able to access and become integrated in those systems. There is no comparable data on eviction rates or on the emotional and social implications of eviction processes in UN or World Bank public repositories, just as housing strategies and their relations to kinship structures or proximity to economic centres and livelihood opportunities are not made an integral dimension of housing statistics.

The GUO reiterates that the problem of mainstreaming uniform definitions applies to 'slums' as much as to cities as a whole, identifying this as the leading factor hindering the production of reliable data.[33] Such arguments do not question what such data actually reveals or allows for beyond the creation of EBPs. What constitutes 'evidence' is largely unquestioned outside the relatively new use of geo-spatial referencing to support numerical indicators. I argue that this is exemplified in the use of the 'national sample of cities' (NSC) approach that UN-Habitat has developed with partners to address the problem that data gaps pose to comparability. Where

33 The GUO states that 'while there has been progress towards adoption of geo-spatial data approaches in countries, and acknowledgement of the importance of the technologies to future data structures, the prevailing legal and policy frameworks in many countries is prohibitive, especially with regard to the adoption of data collected using these approaches to official statistics' (UN-Habitat GUO 2020, 16)

Image 56. Extended version of the City Prosperity Index matrix. Manual for internal use in UN-Habitat CPI, titled MEASUREMENT OF CTY PROSPERITY Methodology and Metadata, 2014 (UN-Habitat 2014, p6-7) © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved.

DIMENSION	SUB-DIMENSION	INDICATOR
PRODUCTIVITY (P)	1. Economic Strenght (EG)	1.1 City Product per capita
		1.2 Old Age Dependency Ratio
		1.3 Mean Household Income
	2. Economic Agglomeration (EA)	2.1 Economic Density
		2.2 Economic Specialization
	3. Employment (E)	3.1 Unemployment Rate
		3.2 Employment to Population Ratio
		3.3 Informal Employment
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT (ID)	1. Housing Infrastructure (HI)	1.1 Improved Shelter
		1.2 Access to Improved Water
		1.3 Access to Improved Sanitation
		1.4 Access to Electricity
		1.5 Sufficient Living Area
		1.6 Population Density
	2. Social Infrastructure (SI)	2.1 Physiscian Density
		2.2 Number of Public Libraries
	3. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	3.1 Internet Access
		3.2 Home Computer Access
		3.3 Average Broadband Speed
	4. Urban Mobility (UM)	4.1 Use of Public Transport
		4.2 Average Daily Travel Time
		4.3 Length of Mass Transport Network
		4.4 Traffic Fatalities
		4.5 Affrodbaility of Transport
	5. Urban Form (UF)	5.1 Street Intersection Density
		5.2 Street Density
		5.3 Land Allocated to Streets
QUALITY OF LIFE (QOL)	1. Health (H)	1.1 Life Expectancy at Birth
		1.2 Under-Five Mortality Rate
		1.3 Vaccination Coverage
		1.4 Maternal Mortality
	2. Education (E)	2.1 Literacy Rate
		2.2 Mean years of Schooling
		2.3 Early Childhood Education
		2.4 Net enrollment rate in higher education
	3. Safety and Security (SS)	3.1 Homicide rate
		3.2 Theft rate
	4. Public Space (PS)	4.1 Accessibility to Open Public Areas
		4.2 Green Area per Capita
EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (ESI)	1. Economic Equity (EE)	1.1 Gini Coefficient
		1.2 Poverty Rate
	2. Social Inclusion (SI)	2.1 Slums Households
		2.2 Youth Unemployment
	3. Gender Inclusion (GI)	3.1 Equitable Secondary School Enrollment
		3.2 Women in Local Government
		3.3 Women in Local Work Force
	4. Urban Diversity (UD)	4.1 Land Use Mix
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (ES)	1. Air Quality (AQ)	1.1 Number of monitoring stations
		1.2 PM2.5 Concentration
		1.3 CO2 Emissions
	2. Waste Managment (WM)	2.1 Solid Waste Collection
		2.2 Waste Water Treatment
		2.3 Solid Waste Recycling Share
	3. Suitable Energy (SE)	3.1 Share of Renewable Energy
URBAN GOVERNANCE AND LEGISLATION (UGL)	1. Partecipation (P)	1.1 Voter Turnout
		1.2 Access to Public Information
		1.3 Civic Partecipation
	2. Municipal Financing and Institutional Capacity (MFIC)	2.1 Own Revenue Collection
		2.2 Days to Start a Business
		2.3 Subnational Debt
		2.4 Local Expenditure Efficiency
	3. Governance of Urbanization (GU)	3.1 Land Use Efficiency

Productivity Index (P)	1. Economic Strength Sub Index (ES)
	2. Economic Agglomeration (EA)
	3. Employment Sub Index (E)
Infrastructure Index (ID)	1. Housing Infrastructure Sub Index (HI)
	2. Social Infrastructure (SI)
	3. ICT Sub Index (ICT)
	4. Urban Mobility Sub Index (UM)
	5. Urban Form Sub Index (UF)
Quality of Life Index (QOL)	1. Health Sub Index (H)
	2. Education Sub Index (E)
	3. Safety and Security Sub Index (SS)
	4. Public Space (PS)
Equity and Social Inclusion Index (ESI)	1. Economic Equity Sub Index (EE)
	2. Social Inclusion Sub Index (SI)
	3. Gender Inclusion Sub Index (GI)
	4. Urban Diversity Sub Index (UD)
Environmental Sustainability Index (ES)	1. Air Quality Sub Index (AQ)
	2. Waste Management Sub Index (WM)
	3. Sustainable Energy Sub Index (WE)
Governance and Legislation Index (UGL)	1. Participation Sub Index (P)
	3. Municipal Finance and Institutional Capacity (MFIC)
	4.Governance of Urbanization (GU)

Image 57. Basic version of the City Prosperity Index matrix. Manual for internal use in UN-Habitat CPI, titled MEASUREMENT OF CTY PROSPERITY Methodology and Metadata, 2014 (UN-Habitat 2014, p5)
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identifying this as the leading factor hindering the production of reliable data.[1] Such arguments do not question what such data actually reveals or allows for beyond the creation of EBPs. What constitutes 'evidence' is largely unquestioned outside the relatively new use of geo-spatial referencing to support numerical indicators. I argue that this is exemplified in the use of the 'national sample of cities' (NSC) approach that UN-Habitat has developed with partners to address the problem that data gaps pose to comparability. Where some cities lack the capacity to gather data, the NSC approach is deployed to identify an 'unbiased' representation of the country's cities with a varied sample base that takes into account 'national importance, geographic location, size of the city, population in the city, economic and political importance, youth/children and women representation' (UN-Habitat GUO 2020, 11) (UN-Habitat 2018) I argue that the fact that this sample is taken in cities which have the institutional and technological capacity to implement it, yet is intended to be nationally representative presents an immediate and obvious bias.[2]

While data and technology such as GIS can be helpful in establishing borders and unravelling some of the spatial complexities associated with poverty in the city, failing to include those affected presents the danger that such data will simplify and skew such complexities in ways that could ultimately damage the autonomy of those

1 The GUO states that 'while there has been progress towards adoption of geo-spatial data approaches in countries, and acknowledgement of the importance of the technologies to future data structures, the prevailing legal and policy frameworks in many countries is prohibitive, especially with regard to the adoption of data collected using these approaches to official statistics' (UN-Habitat GUO 2020, 16)

2 'Recent work on the politics of the policy process has challenged some of the assumptions on which these attempts to influence policy have been based. First, it has become evident that the linear model of policy making is deeply flawed. Less a set of rational choices than a complex, unpredictable and above all political process, the making and shaping of policy involves more than acting on information that is provided to policy-makers. As Goetz (1994) points out, what policy-makers want to know tends to determine how information is used. And this is shaped, in turn, not only by their political interests and the policy networks they are part of, but by the frames of reference within which a particular policy issue is interpreted (Cornwall 2000, 55).

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While data and technology such as GIS can be helpful in establishing borders and unravelling some of the spatial complexities associated with poverty in the city, failing to include those affected presents the danger that such data will simplify and skew such complexities in ways that could ultimately damage the autonomy of those being mapped. As Arabindoo tells us, 'This is evident in the Indian government's emphasis on conducting a Slum Census as well as its recent announcement to undertake a comprehensive GIS based systematic mapping of all the slums in urban India. The latter is of particular concern for, unlike recent scholarly efforts employing GIS mapping to disaggregate the complex spatiality of urban poverty in Indian cities (Baud et al., 2008, 2009), the state's effort amounts more to a notion of redlining slums than mapping urban poverty' (Arabindoo 2011, 643).[35] In an interview with the author (Shack &

34 'Recent work on the politics of the policy process has challenged some of the assumptions on which these attempts to influence policy have been based. First, it has become evident that the linear model of policy making is deeply flawed. Less a set of rational choices than a complex, unpredictable and above all political process, the making and shaping of policy involves more than acting on information that is provided to policy-makers. As Goetz (1994) points out, what policy-makers want to know tends to determine how information is used. And this is shaped, in turn, not only by their political interests and the policy networks they are part of, but by the frames of reference within which a particular policy issue is interpreted (Cornwall 2000, 55).

35 GIS mapping of such settlements is also often simply not possible due to the overlapping nature of property boundaries, and to suggest it misunderstands the very nature of urbanisation in such settlements.

Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela 30/11/2021), Sheela Patel who heads Shack and Slum Dwellers International (SDI) stated that her concerns about sharing data with researchers would be somewhat lessened if the analytical tools used to interpret data were shared more equitably with communities. If for example, training in GIS and scenario modelling was provided to communities producing their own enumeration data, then they would also have the interpretive tools with which to challenge the narratives that governments and other organisations employ to justify slum clearance. Such exchanges would ultimately allow communities to retain control over the narratives which their own data is being used to promote.

I argue that the distortion of lived realities in cities that can result from such extreme decontextualisation is more problematic than the data inconsistencies and incomparability in these assessment matrices. The complete lack of detailed spatial studies, embedded ethnographic research, and citizen engagement in these assessments leads to incomplete and homogenous representations of plural and complex ontologies, social structures and creative practices taking place autonomously of development. Neither the UN, nor the World Bank, whose access to country-specific government surveys and statistics makes them the largest and most resourced urban data collectors in the world, publish comparative architectural studies of individual settlements.[36]

If local experiences and voices were sought in contextualising some of the information being produced through some of these initiatives, they could contribute to the socialisation of otherwise specialised knowledges and analytical tools. If the scalar emphasis

36 'Most [Third World] cities lack accurate, current data on land conversion patterns, number of housing units (informal and formal) built during the past year, infrastructural deployment patterns, subdivision patterns and so forth' (Ellen Brennan, quoted in (Davis 2007, 45-46)).

were reversed to create a popular tool of use to governments as well as citizens, the CPI's framework could be used as a baseline against which to contextualise more disaggregated, qualitative narratives of life in the city produced by the citizenry. Bringing these narratives together in mapping exercises that are qualitatively disaggregated with contextually embedded evidence could be used to reflect on the impacts of existing policy frameworks and implementation processes. The expansion of urban research and analysis into the actual citizenry who construct their daily lives around specific social and economic resources, focusing on those that are hardest to reach, could lead to more locally progressive policies and greater inter-scalar institutional coordination. However, institutional bureaucracy, strict hierarchies, technical ideations of political objectivity and a culture of knowledge silos mean that such initiatives are unlikely to come from within institutions such as the United Nations but will require a concerted effort on the part of social movements and activist practitioners.[37]

3.6 CONCLUSION: DEHUMANISATION AND ERASURE OF THE POLITICAL AND THE PARTICULAR

This chapter has unpacked the ways in which limiting the assessment of project impact or success to quantitative and material terms serves to erase important aspects of production and inhabitation that imbue places and projects with meaning and value. Just as this reductive approach to urban analysis reduces the social

37 The CPI itself has shown no real intention or ability in addressing the disconnection between the index and local conditions on the ground. The unit has written a methodology for a Citizen Perception Index which is intended as a toll to extend the reach of the indexing project beyond government bodies and official data, but at the time of writing a Perception Index has only been carried out in one country, and the project used an expert sample to establish the data baseline. According to this methodology, a panel of 12 'experts' residing in the city is assembled to provide the assessment, rather than opening the index to the entire urban population, which is designed to make the process cheaper and more efficient. However, using an 'expert' sample to represent the experience of all urban inhabitants, of course, cannot capture the true differences between experiences of citizenship in different areas of the city.

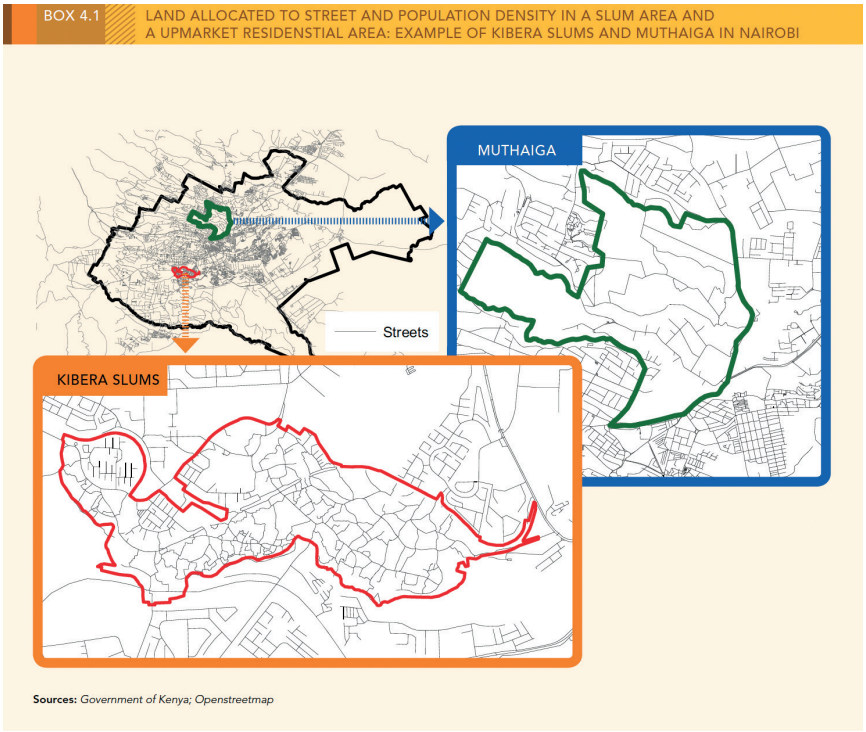


Image 58. Examples of maps produced by calculating the land area allocated to streets in urban settlements. From 'STREETS AS PUBLIC SPACES AND DRIVERS OF URBAN PROSPERITY', UN-Habitat, 2013 p.74) © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved

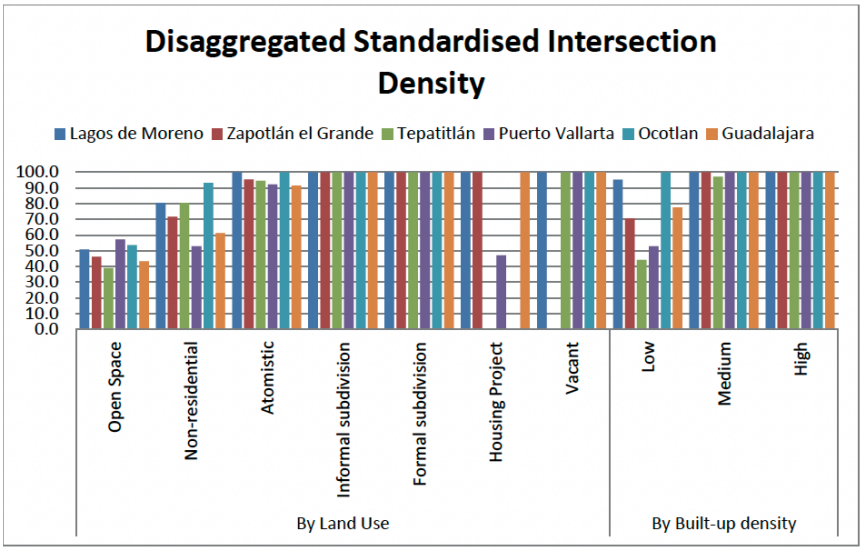


Image 59. 'Intersection Density (ID) - standardized across the land use typologies and by built-up density in the six municipalities' (Figure 15, p32,UN-Habitat, Street Connectivity Index (SCI) of Six Municipalities in Jalisco State, Mexico, 2016, p16) © UN-Habitat, all rights reserved

aspects of claims to the city (and a dignified life within it) to matters of basic material deficits, it also reduces cities and urban form to a series of parts.

I argue that the erasure of politics from development discourse is directly linked to the erasure of multiple ontologies and epistemologies that appear incompatible with visions of progress. The process of erasure takes several forms, but I argue that all can be traced back to the imperative of pre-determining a universal imaginary. The use of material and numerical metrics as a kind of representational proxy for more complex, highly qualitative and relational conditions constrains the possibilities of urban construction to the predetermined ends of the universal imaginary and isolates contradictory realities as anomalies in the timeline of progress. I posit that such metrics break apart complex, evolving conditions, fragmenting spaces and events from the wider narratives and relational conditions which make them meaningful but which also expose the contradictions and failures of imposing a universal imaginary on heterogeneous conditions.[38]

The conditions of economic strain under which many cities of the Global South have developed, and the rapidity of their expansion, have proven a clear trigger for the development of shadow housing and economies, as citizens take on the responsibilities of filling the gaps left by an inadequate system. At the same time, on both urban and territorial scales, the rapid, often polycentric urban densification of upmarket nodes has created uneven impacts on connectivity, soft infrastructural dispersal and employment opportunity, at times strangling peri-urban or marginalised interstitices. The imaginary of the Global City excludes and imperils the poorest of urban society,

38 'the ideology of universal metropolitan sociability, as well as all the juridical and political apparatuses that go with it, hovers above the world of colonial sociability as an ever renewed and always betrayed promise.' (B. d. Santos 2020, 575)

while invoking cruel forms of aspiration and hope that fabricate the acquiescence of ordinary urban dwellers. Aspiration is a powerful force, even for those for whom access to the riches of gentrification is permanently out of reach, as it is used to legitimise current exclusion based on elusive promises of inclusion.

Categorisation allows the 'international development community' (D. Williams 2013) to assign separate disciplinary approaches to specific populations or 'problems', where groupings cut across both populations and spatial conditions. The emergence of 'slum' terminology marks the beginning of a turn towards the conflation of poverty with housing status, and the power of terminology to effectively homogenise and dehumanise heterogeneous lives and realities in the public consciousness, as well as in policy.

While economic growth and development are often seen as separate concepts, both rely on the financialisation of property as a means of tying urbanisation to growth. I argue, in line with authors such as Arabindoo and Roy, that urban development policies that focus housing strategies for the poor on aspirations of urban economic growth further entrench a dualistic view of the urban poor as both to be feared and feared for (Arabindoo 2011) (A. Roy 2011) (A. Roy 2014). The assumption that mobilising shelter as a financial instrument among the poor can resolve complex problems of inequality and sociopolitical marginalisation simplifies the social and political dimensions of housing production and results in a commodity vision of land that obscures other dimensions of poverty and property-related vulnerabilities from view.

The production of absence as the result of using sociospatial categories and quantitative metrics perpetuates an attitude to policy research and evidencing that dehumanises the poor as objects of development, represented in numbers and infographics which obscure the particularities of local conditions and dismiss the importance of non-material contextual dimensions and lived

experience. The reliance on such metrics risks simplifying and skewing the complexities of poverty in the city, and ultimately the efficacy of projects resulting from those assessments. Large settlements may appear continuous by such metrics, but they are often separated by social–political borders based on rental types, resources, lengths of occupancy, and social and familial ties. The proliferation of so-termed 'slum' settlements during a period in which their reduction was a prominent priority of international development policy demonstrates that the production of housing alone does not necessarily prevent the proliferation of autonomous construction. Data sets built around basic material categories remain inconsistent and incomplete, even by the standards of the agencies that produce them. Yet they are presented as complete, effectively erasing knowledges and realities that contradict the success of neoliberalism and aspirational imaginary of global development.

Aspirational aesthetics, rhetorical attacks on the poor, their physical removal from spaces of 'progress' and the use of basic categorical metrics to assess the status of the present city against its projected future, all come together as a project of worlding a universal condition of urbanity. The totality of this project can be grasped in terms of a hegemonic visuality that dominates the representation of both history and possibility, thus sustaining autocratic authority over the future (Mirzoeff 2011, 3). Visuality is described by Mirzoeff as 'the making of the processes of "history" perceptible to authority', presenting 'authority as self-evident' (Mirzoeff 2011, 3). He clarifies that 'this process is not composed simply of visual perceptions in the physical sense, but is formed by a set of relations combining information, imagination and insight into a rendition of physical and psychic space'. The 'complex of visuality' classifies, separates and aestheticises the 'right' of the 'status quo' (Mirzoeff 2011, 3-4) and, in providing the illusion of totality in its visualisations, is complicit in the production of absence in the possibilities and realities that it omits.

The depoliticisation of development through arguments of technical objectivity upon which the system of categorisation is built is also an expression of the colonial nature of developmental knowledge politics, which assumes that generalised 'tool kits' built on knowledge from one side of the world can be applied to contexts which are wholly different. As Vainer states, 'all knowledge, no matter how abstract, is not something that floats around in the air. It is always, necessarily, located in a context, arising from a context and put into context.[...] The coloniality of knowledge rests on the power of attributing universality to a particular experience' (Vainer 2017, 52-53).[39] It is for this reason that Santos argues the answer to a sociology of 'emergences' – a counter-practice (my term) to end the paradigm of erasure – rests in the project of cognitive justice. Developmental knowledge politics not only attributes universality to a particular experience; it also disqualifies knowledge produced in other experiences, or in other evidentiary formats. As Santos aptly explains, 'Dominant politics becomes epistemological when it is able to make a credible claim that the only valid knowledge available is the one that ratifies its own dominance' (B. d. Santos 2018, vii). The production of absence in hegemonic visuality and developmental knowledge politics applies to both epistemologies and ontologies (of those 'that have been radically excluded from the dominant modes of being and knowing', and those that challenge the dominant order) (B. d. Santos 2018, 2-3). Alternative knowledges are not only dismissed on the basis of non-compliance in their methodologies of production or the forms which they take; they can also be deemed 'nonexistent' 'because they are produced by absent subjects, subjects deemed incapable of producing valid knowledge due to their subhuman condition or nature' (B. d. Santos 2018, 2). This means that the project of validating other ways of knowing sits hand

39 'Bourdieu and Wacquant (2002:15) provide a simple and clear definition of cultural imperialism; they suggest that "cultural imperialism is based on the power of universalizing particulars associated with a singular historical tradition"' (Vainer 2017, 53).

in hand with that of validating other ways of being and producing. It is first about 'turning absent subjects into present subjects' (B. d. Santos 2018, 2).

I argue that the place to recover the complex contextual links between space, spatial production and absent subjectivities is in sites of struggle for the rights to the city, framed around access to appropriate housing (considered as more than a basic provision of shelter, expanded to the physical and political grounding for a dignified life, with the freedom to define one's own conception of that dignity). I argue that the ways in which housing has become a social conditioner determining differentiated expectations of citizenship proves the failures and inhumanity of productive systems based on technical categories and knowledge silos. Cities are often a site of struggle because, while they give local expression to global systems, they also provide opportunity for mobilisation – their density as centres of economic, intellectual and political power mean that socially and economically distant groups sit in physical proximity (Massey 2009) (Sassen 2014). It is in sites of struggle for a dignified life in the city that other knowledges are practised and evolved, and in which the other realities of urban life are revealed. However, recovering these realities means overcoming the challenges of fragmentation and erasure produced by pre-determination.

4 BLOCKS, BARRIERS & FRAGMENTARY FORCES

4.1 THE PROBLEM OF FRAGMENTATION

In this chapter, I argue how the systems of categorisation and scalar bias which uphold the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary work to structure relationships between social groups claiming the right to housing, and professional practitioners engaging their claims. I also argue that the ways in which these relationships are structured around distinct project phases and specialisms, fragments narratives of socio-spatial production in global cities, reducing visibility among social movement struggles for housing.

At the same time, social movements organising around alternative ways of living and producing architecture in the city are expanding alternative possibilities for the future and building the knowledges with which to fulfil them. Yet the processes in which these knowledges are built are externally structured by the politics of production and of funding. They have thereby evolved in collaboration with different professionals who approach their roles with their own languages of specialism. The result is the fragmentation of knowledges built over the course of struggle which decreases their visibility and utility for other movements.

This system of ontological and epistemological erasure is exercised through the pre-determined ends of the universal development imaginary and means that social movements are tasked with proliferating the knowledges gained in their own processes of struggle. However, as I explain in this chapter, they face many challenges in that regard. In addition to the issues of fragmentation caused by project phasing and professional specialisation, I argue that social movements in the Global South face deeper issues of exclusion and denigration of their knowledges and ways of knowing. The right to differ – in conceptions of dignity and a good life, challenges the use of homogenising categories and general

theories which world the cities of the universal imaginary. At the same time though, the lack of any framework or criteria with which to aggregate lessons from different struggles for the city hinders the proliferation of knowledges and reduces their visibility. It is for this reason that Santos states 'The tragedy of our time is that domination operates as a coordinated totality while resistance against it is fragmented' (B. d. Santos 2019).

4.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENCE

Despite the consistent presence of different social movements across the world, Harvey and Santos both draw attention to the problem of fragmentation in the way that social movements' knowledges, practices and identities are presented, in contrast with the heavily coordinated impositions of neoliberal universalism (D. Harvey 2012, 22) (B. d. Santos 2020) (Meneses 2019). I argue that fragmentation does not only impact social movements: fragmentation is a multi-fold condition that occurs physically, socially, politically and epistemologically, and is a result of predetermination in the universal imaginary, exercised through the processes of generalisation, categorisation and erasure outlined in the previous chapter. These processes come together to homogenise different claims and socio-political conditions in accordance with material categories and knowledge disciplines.

The denigration of social movement knowledges as locally particular, and thus globally irrelevant, is supported by a kind of monoculturalism which, as Santos explains, enforces an 'illusion of full humanity' as 'the ideology of universal metropolitan sociability' (B. d. Santos 2012). To understand this concept it is important to revisit Santos' concept of the 'abyssal' line, described in Chapter Two as 'the radical division between forms of metropolitan sociability and forms of colonial sociability' (B. d. Santos 2020, 572), otherwise imagined as the world of the fully human and of

the subhuman, or of the 'us' and the 'them' (B. d. Santos 2020, 572). According to Santos, the ways in which exclusion is experienced is fundamentally different on each side of the divisional line. Santos terms these two different experiences of exclusion as 'abyssal exclusions' (experienced by those of 'colonial sociability') and 'non-abyssal exclusions', (happening within the domain of 'metropolitan sociability'). Though exclusions happen in the metropolitan sociability, the excluded still retain access to legal and political institutional resources which can be leveraged to addressed them. These are non-abyssal exclusions (B. d. Santos 2020, 575). Abyssal exclusions occur in the 'colonial sociability' – or within the 'zone of nonbeing' (B. d. Santos 2020, 576) – and are more complex due to the 'less than human' status of those that experience them. The lower status and visibility of those that experience these exclusions affects their ability to remedy them, not only because they are denied access to the institutional tools required, but also because 'their conception of humanity does not necessarily coincide with the one that prevails in the metropolitan sociability' (B. d. Santos 2020, 576), and therefore is not necessarily supported by such tools. Instead, 'The claims of such populations to full humanity entail the recognition of their own conceptions of humanity, their own ways of knowing and evaluating what counts as a full humanity. Otherwise, such inclusion will be another form of exclusion' (B. d. Santos 2020, 576).

The 'illusion of full humanity' presents the false perception that society has overcome abyssal exclusion, after 'the end of historical capitalism and the historical victories of women's movements' (B. d. Santos 2020, 575). The resultant failure to recognise the important differences between these two experiences of exclusion leads to a failure to recognise the fact that non-abyssal tactics of struggle are

ineffective in overturning abyssal exclusion.[1]

The universal imaginary mirrors this monoculturalism, and as such, policies such as the SDGs fail to recognise the fact that the different experiences of citizenship which occur within specific areas of the city have a direct impact on both the types of claims that social movements make, and the modes through which they choose to mobilise them. The colliding values of what Holston describes as 'principle' and 'prejudice' in relation to conditions of social membership generate conflicts not only with government institutions or 'providers' (Cornwall 2000) but often also with other citizen groups (Holston 2009, 254). Holston suggests that the global cities of the South are fraught with spatial tensions and volatility wherein particular 'regions become crowded with marginalized citizens and noncitizens who contest their exclusions' (Holston 2009, 254), creating a paradigm of insurgency that aims 'to expand democratic citizenships' against the simultaneous resurgence of 'new forms of urban violence and inequality [that] erode them' (Holston 2009, 254).

As urbanisation has developed in a fashion in which certain social groups arrive to the promise of work and a manner of living that affords them connection to essential hard and soft infrastructures, I have already identified that vast numbers do not enjoy the same securities. Most commonly, paradigms of poverty and denial of equitable access to resources are not a circumstantial condition limited to the events of a single lifetime, but a legacy carried

1 'In retrospect, the persistence of the abyssal exclusions to which racialized and sexualized bodies and populations are subjected in our societies reveals how ineffective such struggles have been in undoing abyssal exclusion. The zone of nonbeing seems today as violent as before, as denounced by such movements as Black Lives Matter or Ni Una Más (the slogan of the Latin American women's movements against femicide). The need to proclaim the right to life as the objective of struggle illustrates the extent to which the ideology of full humanity is illusory.' (B. d. Santos 2020, 575)

through generations, which have been socially and institutionally reinforced. These are conditions which Holston describes as enforcing 'a differentiated citizenship that uses these social qualifications [differences of education, property, race, gender, and occupation] to organize its political, civil, and social dimensions and to regulate its distribution of inequalities.' (Holston 2009, 264).[2]

The sense of differentiated citizenship operates not only as an external condition that is inflicted on those who are excluded from distribution but is also something that is carried by the excluded from their experiences of exclusion into their expectations. In an interview undertaken in Nairobi in 2018 (17/10/2018), a Kenyan lawyer associated with the Githurai Human Rights Network and Mathare Social Justice Centre informed me that the majority of those residing in dire conditions in Githurai and Mathare did not know the extents of their constitutional rights. At the same time, those rights have always existed for many of the occupants but have not as yet been materialised and the government has not provided avenues for the poor to exercise them. Many people dare not even draw attention to themselves due to the prevalence of extrajudicial killings in squatted settlements (Githurai Human Rights Network: Activist W and Lawyer A, Nairobi 17/10/2018). Shortly after my departure from Nairobi, I was informed that a prominent member of the Githurai Human Rights Network had been shot and killed by police in one suck attack.

Not only are conceptions of citizenship, rights and desires differentiated in accordance with the quality and status of different spaces in the city but, as Sassen identifies, the spaces of oppression to which the poor are increasingly expelled often lie at a significant distance from 'the oppressor'. Additionally, 'the oppressor' is not

2 Holston refers most prominently to Brazilian history to illustrate this condition, in which, over the course of more than 200 years and the transition from an imperial, slave owning nation to a republic, various legislative tools were introduced which limited social mobility by restricting voting rights, access to basic education and land ownership and suppressed wages (Holston 2009, 264).

Image 60. Banner for the Githurai Human Rights Network displayed during an event at the Mathare Social Justice centre pictured below (Image 61.) (Both images by author taken during fieldwork 2018. © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

Image 61. Mathare Social Justice centre. (Images by author, 2018. © Georgia White, all rights reserved)

clearly defined but rather is 'a complex system that combines persons, networks, and machines with no obvious center' (Sassen 2014, 10-11). The systemic entrenchment of extreme concentrations of wealth and power 'function as a kind of haze, impairing our ability to see what is happening' (Sassen 2014, 14). In the poorer or indebted nations of the Global South, this haze is further compounded by a reliance on international development funds, which come with their own political and economic directives. Though it may be the case that the physical separations between distinct areas of the city can be reduced through material interventions, ontological distances are continually reinforced by 'message[s] of political subordination and marginalization' (Brickell 2017, 26), which justify the violence of expulsion. It is for this reason that material claims leveraged by social movements and peoples' organisations are often enmeshed with claims for greater recognition of different conceptions of humanity (B. d. Santos 2012), challenging the derogatory lenses through which their very existence is often viewed.

Despite the additional complexities of overcoming abyssal exclusion, Sassen and others argue that cities are sites 'where power becomes concrete and can be engaged, and where the oppressed are part of the social infrastructure for power' (Sassen 2014, 10-11) (Hardt 2000). The prevalence of social movements in cities is largely due to the concentration of infrastructures of power, alongside extreme socio-spatial fragmentation and tension. As Köhler and Wissen state, 'cities represent to a large extent the global and local focal points of social movements, because a large part of the issues and institutions criticized by the movements are located in cities' (Köhler 2003, 942). The knowledge politics which reinforce the universal imaginary of development are institutionally centralised in global cities, in universities, businesses, think tanks and government agencies. The proximities at which different areas are located also makes comparisons stark and unavoidable, with dense squatted or auto-constructed neighbourhoods sitting alongside or directly in view of business centres, gated enclaves and private parks.

The question is how social movements should take advantage of this density and proximity by coordinating struggles and knowledge exchange while also fighting for recognition of their differences (in experience, desires, claims and identities).

4.3 THE ERASURE OF DIFFERENCE BY DEPOLITICISING CLAIMS

The monoculturalism which causes the 'illusion of full humanity' is carried into the relationships constructed around development projects in the conceptualisation of 'participation'. Because 'participation' in development projects is structured as consumer participation rather than political participation, it can lead to co-optation of political claims into narratives of consumer rights and further exclusion of sub-groups that the process fails to identify.

As explained in Chapter Two, the growth of global governance and neoliberal ideology is rhetorically legitimised by the inclusion of public opinion in 'participative' processes of production (Miraftab 2009, 33). Such global governance requires a democratic, 'transnational political order that the public sphere is supposed to influence and legitimate' (A. a. Kavada 2021, 5). However, this unified political order can only function on the basis that all citizenship rights are inscribed as equal, whereas reality shows that they are not experienced as such. The grounding of the public sphere in Euro-centric ideas of the latter half of the Twentieth Century has led to a distinction between sanctioned and unsanctioned spaces of participation (Miraftab 2009, 34), the former of which are increasingly occupied by mediating or intermediary entities, such as NGOs (Miraftab 2009, 34) (A. a. Kavada 2021, 356) (Waterman 2004) (Batliwala 2002).

These democratic constructions replace direct social action with

representation by external intermediaries and can lead to social movements being co-opted into hierarchical systems as they progress through processes of negotiation (A. Kavada 2014, 353). As Kavada explains, whereas social movements are often built on horizontal governance models, institutionalisation can often follow in their attempts to gain legitimacy in sanctioned spaces, whereby they are absorbed by the political system that they originally rose to challenge (A. Kavada 2014, 353). As Miraftab explains, 'A large body of literature has documented how such routinization of community participation depoliticizes communities' struggles and extends state control within the society. Drawing grassroots movements into NGOs maintains the status quo by stabilizing state–society relations' (Miraftab 2009, 34).[3]

Established models of assessment and evidencing in development policy take for granted a singular conception of citizenship based on equal rights to access a pool of resources or universal benefits, irrespective of the location, market standing or social capital of individuals and groups (Cornwall 2000) (S. Patel 2014). This obscures questions about 'the extent to which a vision of the social good is shared; and, where it is not, how marginalized groups can assert their particular concerns.' (Cornwall 2000, 54).

Restricting the role of NGOs to that of service providers, ultimately fragments the already diminished access to the public sphere among marginalised citizens in a process of co-optation by private interests. The relegation of citizen consultation and debate to sanctioned spaces of engagement reinforces this paradigm of

3 The role of NGOs in sanctioned engagement spaces is important because of their common positioning between national and international politics; NGOs are connected to the latter through development funding and accountability systems. NGOs' role in relation to development is complicated by the neoliberal nature of the development consensus, which rationalises the pursuit of private interests as a generative force for good. NGOs are often designated as a third sector, which rhetorically disconnects them from the political and economic relations of capitalist expansion, while accountability structures ensure that they remain organisationally tethered to the neoliberal reality.

clientelist participation as a stand-in for political participation. As Fehr remarks, this presents the dangerous potential for co-optation of non-governmental activism with dynamic, more-than-material claims, pushing activist organisations into forms of stakeholder activism. Whereas the traditional socialist conception of struggle places activists in the position of 'vying for the possession of what Marxist parlance calls the means of production', stakeholder positions are only facilitative of claims to the distribution of predetermined products (Feher, 2007, p. 24). The formative problem with the conception of participation as consumer accountability is that it assumes the democratic equality of stakeholders that are not equal, as a single constituency. A 'stakeholder constituency', being equally inclusive of commercial providers, consumers, workers and neighbours, neutralises challenges to the neoliberalisation of production and rights of citizenship, as well as the different extents to which people actually enjoy those rights (Feher, 2007, p. 24)[4]

Often, even where social movement demands include or are even centred around material needs, they further embed much more nuanced claims to dignity, social-political recognition and ontological freedoms. While processes of social organisation and auto-construction are productive and propositional, they are also reflective of the hidden realities of the city and as such, expose the failures of the universal imaginary to produce equality and inclusion. As Escobar states, 'actors recognize the stakes in terms of a cultural project; in other words, what is at stake in a social movement is historicity itself, not merely organizational forms, services, means of production and the like' (A. Escobar 1995). By assuming project participants are equal, opportunities to build solidarities and social relationships around the process of imagining and constructing a

4 limiting the role of NGOs to that of service providers can lead to simplistic, short-term supply solutions and can potentially undermine political accountability, while compromising their ability to offer 'an alternative to markets and the state (hierarchy) as the dominant forms of social organizations' (Baur 2012, 15).

project are lost and citizens are denied the agency with which to assert claims to their own conception of humanity or dignity.

Cornwall and Gaventa present this as an organisational difficulty which is rooted in the pre-determination of a project goal or end. They suggest that, without mechanisms with which to open discussions outside of pre-defined criteria, predetermination will often coincide with restrictive modes of social engagement. Their concern is that, in practices of 'participation' where differences are not addressed at the level of sub-groups, and especially where some actors are taken to represent others, consultations can coincide with silent repression of certain individuals or sub-groups where social biases concerned with gender, ethnicity, orientation and class are not addressed. To this I add language and different levels of literacy as an imperative consideration. Under strict criteria for meetings and potential propositions which can emerge from them, individuals may not feel that their views are relevant to the programme or a lack of background knowledge or confidence to speak out can lead to unreliable data.

As will speak about in more detail in the following chapter, the ways in which communities are first approached and the pre-planned format of interactions came up consistently in my interviews with both social movement organisations and practitioners. Those such as Claudia Amico suggested that she and colleagues as Espacio Expresión (22/01/2020) had learned from difficult experiences that pre-determining programmes in advance of approaching communities had a tendency to alienate individuals or sub-groups who did not see their experiences represented in the background material that had been gathered on sites and circulated in initial invitations to group meetings (Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, 22/01/2020). This was echoed by Tiago from Ateliermob (15/07/2019) who spoke about the potential for different levels of literacy to result in exclusion from certain conversations (Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, architect & founder (video call) 15/07/2019). As such,

Cornwall and Gaventa claim that 'universalism, by imposing a particular set of values under the guise of a concern for all, can in itself exacerbate social exclusion.' (Cornwall 2000, 53 emphasis mine)

4.4 THE ROLE OF FUNDING IN RESTRICTING POLITICAL ACTIVISM

In the context of this research, I suggest that it's particularly important to note how nations from the Global South are more reliant on aid and development financing, which heavily affects their political strategies, and therefore, the conditions that lead to the emergence of social movements. The conditions under which funding is allocated or sought impacts both the kinds of institutions that social movements are able to partner with and they kinds of activities that NGOs can undertake or associate with.

Funding is complicated by the status of international relationships in different contexts. Where funding may not be available from governments, social movements or people's organisations will be pushed to seek support from non-governmental sources, which can be local or international. In many cases, even local or single-nationality NGOs may have their own international relationships, which structure their own funding arrangements. Because of this, the ways in which international doctrine and imaginaries cross paths with national cultures and political histories become very intricate. For example, some governments apply legislative measures that restrict the operations of foreign agencies or of local groups funded by foreign agencies if they are seen to be engaging in national politics. A potent example is India, where in 2016 the Government Intelligence Bureau branded internationally funded NGOs such as Amnesty International and Greenpeace hands of western governments that are covertly serving a foreign policy agenda and preventing development progress through their campaigns for

human rights and protection of the environment (Doane 2016).[5]

Where social groups are able to partner with foreign institutions, collaboration with any organisation can come with benefits and costs; while larger organisations can provide large amounts of financial support and visibility, their reputations are often built on very specific working practices or products, which may restrict the use of funds to specfic activities or prohibit certain working methods. The more organisations through which money is channelled over the course of a struggle into different outputs and phases, the more difficult it becomes to trace how different policies and lending conditions affect the methods of organising and the ways that social claims are articulated at different points. Because funding is usually granted on very specific material terms, NGOs or practitioners need to specialise in different kinds of activities or outputs in order to maintain a stable reputation in their management of funds.[6] In an interview undertaken in Santiago de Chile in 2019 (22/12/2019), Vicente Stiepovich, current operations manager and previous head of funding strategy for Techo Para Chile informed me that a large part of what allowed Techo to maintain their operations at scale was the very precise and consistent methodology they employed, towards fixed outputs. The standardised surveys ensured that they could be undertaken by untrained volunteers and that even where a site required multiple visits to complete the survey process, new teams of volunteers

5 The Guardian reported in 2016 that 'The [Indian] Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) was introduced in 2010, requiring all NGOs to apply for a license to receive foreign funding. The act was initially targeted at international political funding, but NGOs were included in its remit.' It was then estimated in 2016, that 'at least 10,000 FCRA licenses, needed to receive foreign funds, have been revoked. Some of this is purely administrative – organisations failing to submit the proper paperwork. But it was also tactical on the part of the government: requiring short turnaround times, or digital returns for small organisations presents a huge barrier to organisations lacking capacity' (Doane 2016).

6 According to Miraftab, the process of relegating collective action to sanctioned spaces of engagement is 'often complemented by a bifurcated conceptualization of civil society as authentic versus a criminalized ultra-left' (Miraftab 2009, 41).

could simply pick up where the last team left off. The simplicity of their standardised construction types also allowed for most build projects to be undertaken by volunteer labourers, many of which were corporate teams. The reliance on crowd funding and corporate collaboration through labour donation means that Techo's brand is extremely important and their messaging must remain clear and succinct. In exchange for donations of funds and labour, corporation brands are publicly associated with the NGO, providing those sponsors with credibility in corporate responsibility. However, Stiepovich as clarified that retaining their brand and their ability to maintain a relationship with local government did mean making choices about what kinds of communities to engage in their work. For example, Stiepovich stated that the NGO does not work with local social movement UKAMAU (UKAMAU 2020), due to their public practices of protest, including the use of roadblocks (Techo Para Chile: Vincente Stiepovich, operations manager, Techo offices, Santiago de Chile 22/12/2019).

Due to their complexity, affordable housing projects and urban infrastructure programmes are heavily phased from their inception, through to completion. Sarah Redoblado from AlterPlan, a small Philippines NGO explained in an interview (30/10/2019) that AlterPlan is usually put in touch with a community by a community organiser NGO at which point the community will have registered as an organisation for the purpose of government recognition and basic goals will have been established. AlterPlan then provides feasibility studies for a future housing project, utilising geological surveys and policy reviews to establish whether or not relocation will be necessary. They also work with the community group or groups to deepen their understanding of important characteristics of the area and public perception of geological risk. All of these activities are utilised to propose a strategy which is presented to local government alongside the necessary research to prove the project's feasibility within policy guidelines and to provide parameters for funding. AlterPlan do not remain with the project

to establish detailed design proposals and oversee construction however. Instead, because each phase of such projects is funded by separate bodies under different conditions, once AlterPlan complete their contributions, the work is handed onto a technical assistance NGO such as TAO Pilipinas. (Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, architect and founder of Alterplan (video call) 30/10/2019

When each phase is strategised and funded through a separate organisation, each phase and output will be reflected on separately, breaking up the narrative of the project in accordance with particular outputs and preventing the proliferation of knowledges that are specifically concerned with the politics of constructing the process (for example, how social groups should choose the organisations that they partner with, how they should organise in order to claim government recognition, what kinds of restrictions different kinds of funding relationships might create, how to articulate their claims to different lenders etc.,). The systematic separation of projects into discreet phases, each with different management teams, contributors, funders and types of outputs was raised as a key issue for the social movements whom they affect by Sheela Patel of SDI (Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021). During an interview in 2021, Patel suggested that this had been an issue over which SDI had come to an impasse during negotiations with the World Bank, on a project concerned with sanitation provision in a large Indian settlement. Patel suggested that the community had insisted on retaining the same construction and management providers for the entire duration of the project to ensure that the communities involved could retain control over the management of the project and ensure the honest disbursal of funds. The Bank and local government had insisted that this was not possible and instead the project phases needed to be separately tendered. In this particular case, SDI successfully argued their case but it cost them four years in which the project was stalled (Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021).

Just as governments might restrict the opportunities for peoples' organisations and social movements to seek international funding, so lenders may restrict lending to NGOs if they are seen to be engaging in so-called political practices.[7] This can have profound effects on both the organisational and productive methodologies of people's organisations and the types of interests they can pursue. It also has a significant impact on the types of people's organisations that NGOs and activist practitioners can engage with, and on what terms. For example, 'non-violent action' is a prominent criterion for charitable engagement. Lending policies commonly prohibit engagement with groups that are seen to employ violent strategies. This is another sign of the 'illusion of full humanity', and the failure to recognise the difference between abyssal and non-abyssal exclusion. As Freire states, 'With the establishment of a relationship of oppression, violence has already begun. Never in history has violence been initiated by the oppressed. How could they be the initiators, if they themselves are the result of violence? How could they be the sponsors of something whose objective inauguration called forth their existence as oppressed? There would be no oppressed had there been no prior situation of violence to establish their subjugation' (Freire 2018, 55).

Conversations over the course of my own practice and field work revealed that people's organisations, such as Kadamay in the Philippines and Ukamau in Chile, are avoided by much of the NGO community due to their use of roadblocks in protests against evictions (Interview Techo Para Chile: Vincente Stiepovich, operations manager, Techo offices, Santiago de Chile 22/12/2019) Interview

7 Even UK-based organisations, foundations, trusts or labs whose purpose is to support social enterprise (such as UnLtd) do not support activities that constitute political activism, lobbying, or upheaval of social harmony. (UnLtd n.d.) In 2016 changes to British law on grant-making were introduced which, according to the British government, aimed to ensure that tax payer money goes to 'good causes, not political campaigns.' (Gov.UK 2016) (BBC 2016)

(KADAMAY (Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap – Association of poor peoples): Gloria "Ka Bea" Arellano, Chairperson. Urban Poor Resource Center of the Philippines, Quezon City, Manila 19/02/2016)(Interview Mary Racelis, researcher and housing rights activist, Quezon city, Metro Manila 02/02/2018). As a result, there are debates in the civil society sector about the level of engagement people's organisations, and the NGOs that collaborate with them, should seek with national and international development organisations. Some argue that as governments, bilateral and multilateral organisations hold real control over the kinds of policies that ultimately shape people's lives at all scales, people's organisations and their allies cannot separate themselves from those seats of power (Naidoo 2005). However, it is also noted that with increased collaboration, organisations put themselves at risk of corruption and restriction due to greater financial dependence (Clark 1993). This has led to a spectrum of engagement strategies among social movements and NGOs. These are outlined by Kumi Naidoo as 'principle non-engagement', 'selective engagement' and 'comprehensive engagement' (Naidoo 2005).

Comprehensive engagement is deemed necessary by some to alleviate damage caused by unguided development and to highlight the effects of harmful policies and practices. On the opposite side, many groups believe that the ideologies and practices of large development institutions have remained unchanged since their establishment as part of the 1945 world order and that engagement will not affect that. They argue instead for counter-organisations and approaches to set precedents for alternative practices (Naidoo 2005) (A. Escobar 2012) (B. d. Santos 2018).

Selective engagement strategies are more difficult to unpack as different organisations set particular terms of engagement according to nuanced case-by-case assessment criteria. In such cases, opportunities for collaboration may be determined by a feasibility study or 'cost-benefit analysis' (Naidoo 2005).

However, the act of weighing gains against potential restrictions and hinderances[8] is complex and is scenario-specific. Selective engagement is the most common approach to engagement that I have encountered in practitioner interviews and it is difficult to outline in any categorical manner as engagement criteria for specific projects differ widely. Because the ways in which relationships between social movements or peoples' organisations and professional organisations are so specific to the particular demands and political identities of social movements, as well as the political landscape of the countries they are organised in, it is difficult to establish any clear comparative analysis on the costs and benefits of different relationships. This is compounded by the fact that each organisation that becomes involved with an affordable housing project in the Global South will only be able to report on their own role in the particular phases that they are involved in.

4.5 SINGLE ISSUE MOVEMENTS

Because funding applications require strict costing outlines and impact predictions, projects are most commonly broken down into phases and material categories. For example, not only is a housing project likely to be broken into phases as mentioned in the preceding chapter section, but it is likely that any amenities and infrastructural connections to a housing site will also be funded and strategised separately. This means that social movements struggling for the recognition of difference and the right to define their own place in the city, are pushed to narrow their area of focus or the scope of their claims in order to claim funding in a piecemeal manner. Essentially, both social movements and the organisations or practitioners seeking to collaborate with them, are pushed to self-categorise or 'specialise'. This leads to the proliferation of what

8 E.g. potential corruption, management appropriation and fund siphoning.

Santos refers to as 'single issue movements' (B. d. Santos 2020, 575).

According to Santos, this can be explained by the fact that universal hegemony comprises a coordinated articulation of capitalist, colonialist and patriarchal models of domination, and, for a number of reasons, many struggles against it are often unable to sustain an equal focus on all these models. When social movements are forced to focus on only one of them, successes can often be fragmented, or even counterproductive in domains outside of their own single focus (B. d. Santos 2020, 575).[9] This is often due to a combination of factors, which include the condition of imminent threat (Almeida 2007, 125) in which struggles are formed, government-enforced restrictions on social activities, and the social and financial capital of the group involved in the struggle.

Mary Racelis, an academic and political activist working with social movements in the Philippines, informed me in interviews (2102/02/2018 and 26/09/21) that threats of eviction create a scenario of imminent pressure in which organisations will form through any means possible, despite differences in beliefs concerning long-term strategies, based on the singular commonality of that threat. This does not mean that those involved will have the means or impetus to put themselves on the front lines of what becomes a more widely political cause after the initial threat of eviction has diminished, even where the social and financial vulnerability of claimants may not have otherwise improved (Mary Racelis, researcher and housing rights activist, 02/02/2018 & 26/09/2021).

Whereas imminent threat can be a powerful catalyst for collectivisation, even among groups with otherwise very different identities and goals, vulnerability to threat is often compounded by

9 According to Santos, if 'single issue' social movements (B. d. Santos 2020, 575) cannot be coordinated to a greater degree 'victories in one domain of struggle will tend to coexist with defeats in another' (B. d. Santos 2020, 572-573).

limited social and financial capital. The imminence of an existential catastrophe forces those who are threatened to redeploy their limited resources away from other daily necessities to guard against that catastrophe, but without further financial support these resources will not be sufficient to expand campaigns beyond the 'single issue' at hand (B. d. Santos 2020). In such cases, the overwhelming pressure of imminent threat forces the vulnerable to ignore the cause of the condition which created and enforces their vulnerability, in order to focus limited resources on one moment or action to address the symptoms.[10] For example, a social movement facing eviction may be required to place all their resources into fighting removal from the site they occupy or for relocation nearby. Once they have earned the right to stay (if they do), they will require further funds, time and different kinds of knowledge if they are to use their experience to campaign against the planning policies that forced them into struggles against eviction in the first place.

This same logic applies to claims on the terms under which the same group facing eviction is granted the right to stay. Because neoliberal domination is not only exercised over the distribution of products but also the means of production and the standards by which products and production methods can be legitimised, it is particularly difficult for movements to articulate a claim for the rights to alternative methods of production at the same time as claiming rights to the products of the system they are challenging. In simpler terms, if an individual or group urgently requires shelter, it is difficult for them to claim the right to shelter (by demanding provision from government and/or development agencies) while at

10 'what Deleuze and Guattari call "neoterritorialities": gangs, bands, minorities, margins and "tribalisms" continue to affirm the rights of segmentary societies but tend to persist within the interiority of the state. These neoterritorialities remain relatively independent from each other by presuming a coded clarity of their own issue, campaign or identity. However, the clarity afforded by independent single issue struggles is ultimately unable to form a cohesive alternative to state-capitalism. […] The revolutionary potential of these groups should not be dismissed. But political isolation and single-issue reform campaigns without the larger horizon of revolution are in danger of being exceptions that only prove the rule of state-capitalism' (Nail 2012, 55).

the same time claiming that other mechanisms of production are required, or that the system they are appealing to is insufficient. Further, if the claim to the land that the group are facing eviction from is also a claim for better connections to the surrounding city, better infrastructure, upgraded roads and appropriate sanitation, these are claims that require their own focus in order to build new relationships and funding streams. It can also be the case as Santos points out, that focusing activities on claims in one domain and accepting offerings in response, can actually undermine claims in another domain.

If social movements were supported in strengthening coordination and knowledge exchange on different methods of claim-making; including organisational methods, recruitment, evidencing, lobbying and funding, this would reduce the burden on each individual movement to build knowledge from scratch and coordinate their efforts around every aspect of oppression that they experience. However, this would mean addressing the ways in which projects are reflected upon and represented by the organisations that contribute to each phase and considering how those reflections can be brought together to reinforce the perspective of the social movements and the entire narrative of struggle that they relate to.

4.6 FRAGMENTED NARRATIVES AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS

In many ways, social media and digital platforms have opened an important space for recruitment, collaboration and knowledge exchange among social movements. Digital platforms can be used as communication spaces and political forums of sorts, for those that are excluded from more direct political participation. They offer opportunities for connecting with others who may not be physically proximate but who share certain experiences or offer transferable knowledges. In this way, digital communications can

facilitate connections where socio-spatial fragmentation would otherwise prevent them. However, it is often suggested that digital connections lead to 'weaker' and less enduring ties between individuals and movements, due to the changeability of digital information and the open sense of ownership over digital spaces and content (Barassi 2013) (Jackson 2016) (Meyer 2002). Managing the precise messaging of content that is collectively owned, while maintaining open accessibility, can also be complex and time-consuming. Messages can be twisted or even usurped without dedicated management structures and carefully designed visual representation.[11]

Despite the limitations of digital space for disseminating knowledge and building solidarity, the power and speed of information dispersal it provides should not be underestimated. Whereas the battle to generate attention for social causes or claims in traditional media can be lengthy, social media can assist the fast circulation of independent reporting to wide-reaching audiences, even transnationally. This speed can be advantageous for groups seeking to recruit people to participate in physical mobilisations, as noted in reference to Egypt by Poell and Kavada, who state that 'no more than ten days separated the first call for mass demonstrations on the Kullena Khaled Said page and the start of the actual protests on 25 January 2011 (Lim, 2012). The speed of the mobilization process surprised the Mubarak regime and greatly contributed to its success.' (Kavada A. a., 2021, p. 13) The use of social media also greatly impacted the evolution of Occupy Wall Street, which grew from a single demand protest to a movement that encapsulated many political and economic claims, moving from a national

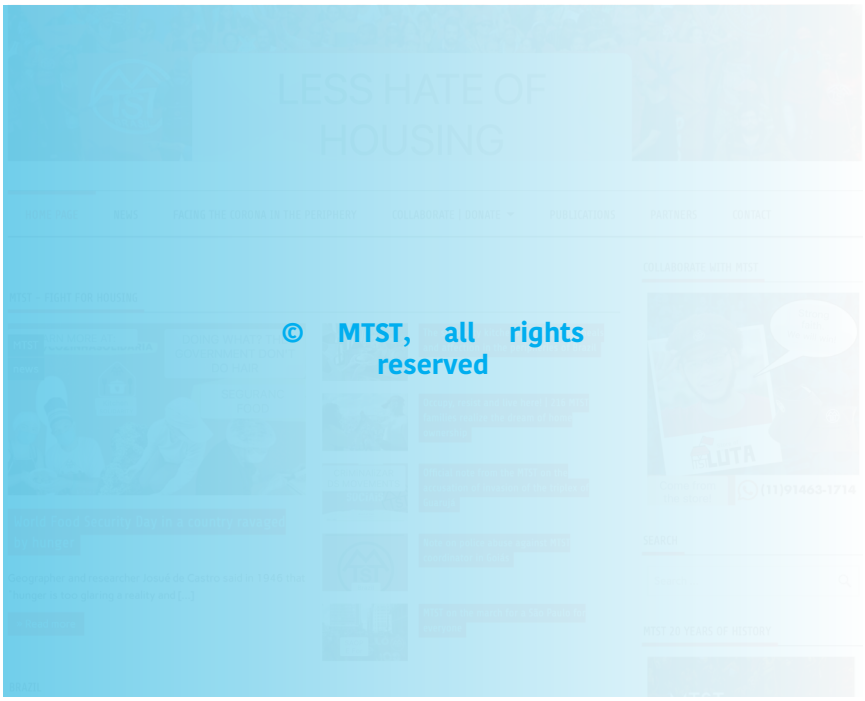
11 For example, Arabindoo, Cowan and Roy all speak to the use of GIS and enumeration data to redline 'slums' and justify evictions. (Arabindoo 2011) (Cowan 2021) (A. Roy 2003) In an interview (30/11/2021), Sheela Patel from Shack and Slum Dwellers International expressed deepfelt concern about releasing data that could be 'hoovered up' by academics and other professionals to produce studies which were of no benefit to the communities to whom the data belongs.

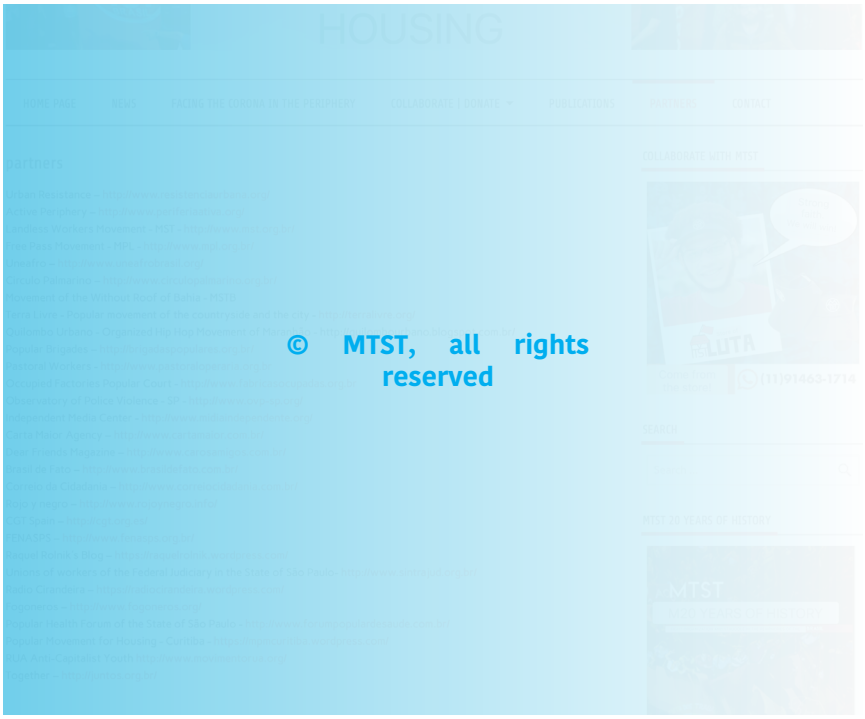
movement to one that cut across local and global borders, with occupations having a distinct local character in multiple cities across the world. For movements that use coordinated squatting to demand land rights and funding for construction such as MTST in Brazil (MTST n.d.) (MTST 2021), MTD in Argentina (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007) (Birss 2005) or KADAMAY in the Philippines (Interview with Gloria "Ka Bea" Arellano 19/02/2016), digital communications can facilitate coordination among large numbers of people, allowing for swift usurpations of land.[12]

Despite these advantages, social media platforms particularly, are algorithmically engineered to favour more intense moments of reporting, or types of reporting (such as live-streaming) which focus on 'sensational' events of protest and conflict (Kavada A. a., 2021, p. 14). Social media algorithms redirect user attention towards trending information flows. In practice, this can mean that these moments become disconnected from the longer narratives of slow violence which rationalise a movement's actions in these events (Kavada A. a., 2021, p. 14). Much in the same way that finance, threat and specialised knowledge silos force movements to focus on single issues, platform algorithms have a tendency to force the focus onto particular moments, actions or events.

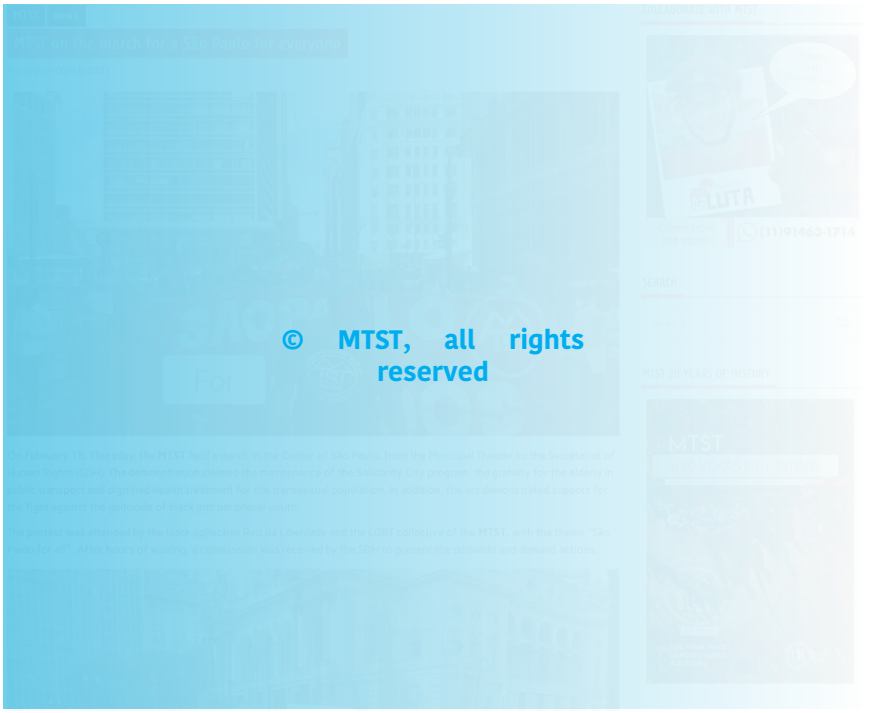
At the same time, while live reporting might be an appropriate method of representing process in which spaces are diverted from their normal functions and occupied in protest, different kinds of

12 Social media also allows for social organisation where the state may restrict physical collectivisation and action. For example, as Kavada and Poell explain, in the case of the Egyptian uprising, 'social media platforms were difficult to sensor and repress' as they lay 'outside the Egyptian jurisdiction'. This means that 'in a country where physical space was tightly regulated, social media provided, at least initially, the main outlet for discontent and were vital for opening up democratic publicness' (Kavada A. a., 2021, p. 13). The same was true for the Occupy movement, despite operating in areas of comparative political freedom, in that where forceful eviction from camps was carried out, conversations were able to continue unhindered around reporting happening on social media (Kavada A. a., 2021, p. 13).





Images 62-64, Home Page, Partner listings and News Pages from MTST website accessed 2020 (https://mtst.org)



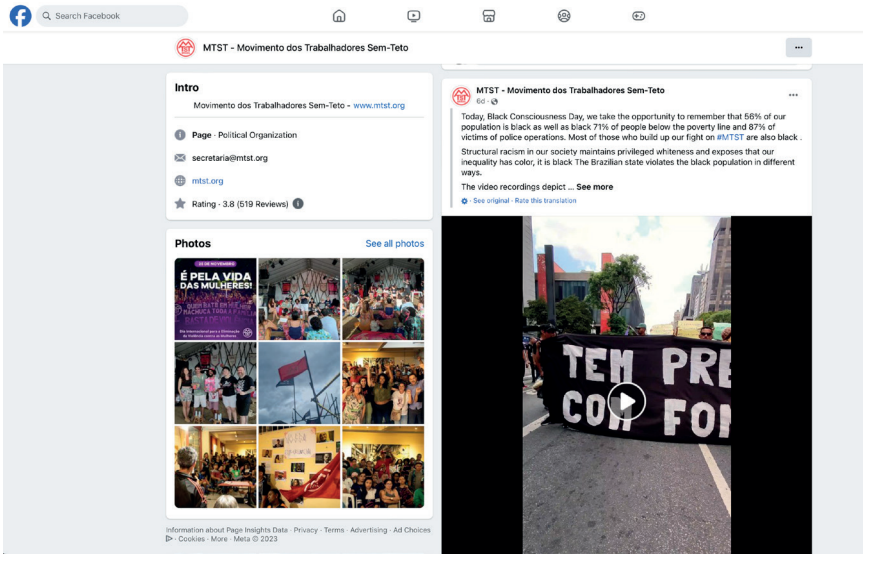


Image 65. Post from 20/11/2023 on MTST Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/@mtstbrasil/) © MTST, all rights reserved

representation are required to articulate the process through which an event of occupation settles into a more stable claim on those spaces and their reappropriation is formalised through gradual transformation. The knowledges drawn upon and built up in these processes, is profoundly important to the narrative of struggles for housing and the different kinds of domestic life that can be created in the global city. Giorgios Kallis and Viviano Asara suggest that it is this latter type of knowledge which remains under-circulated in any kind of forum (Kallis, Giorgos and Asara, Viviana. 2023). Their observations are based on a study of the Indignados movement (Kallis, Giorgos and Asara, Viviana. 2023) (Rovisco 2017) focusing on their occupations of squares in Barcelona. They suggest that the re-organisation and modification of space in the squares in the construction of shared resources including the communal kitchen, medical tent, library and kindergartens was 'not simply instrumental, for the purposes of mobilisation' (Kallis, Giorgos and Asara, Viviana. 2023, 57). Instead, they suggest, that these occupations can be read 'as both the materialisation and the terrain of prefigurative politics' (Kallis, Giorgos and Asara, Viviana. 2023, 57) - referring to the political process of embedding shared aspirations for the future in the collective actions in the present (Kallis, Giorgos and Asara, Viviana. 2023) (Yates 2021). Yet, they contend that 'though prefiguration went hand-in-hand with the production of new space in the square, the materialities and processes of this enmeshment have, so far, scarcely been investigated and a spatialisation of prefiguration is largely missing. The absence of scrutiny of why and how the movements evolved beyond the squares, deliberately taking spatial forms different from the camps exemplifies this gap.' (Kallis, Giorgos and Asara, Viviana. 2023, 57)

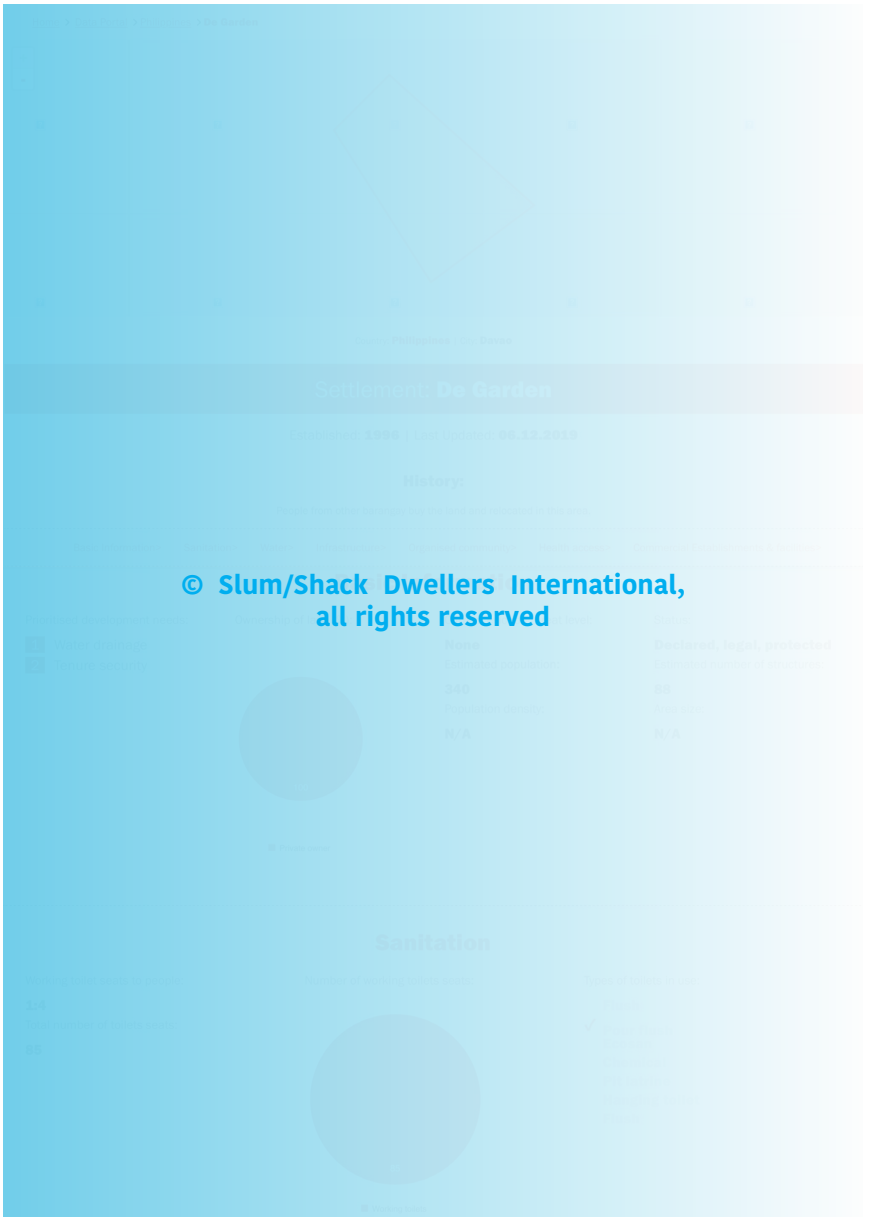
The interviews undertaken with peoples' organisations and design practices for this thesis point to two potential reasons for this loss of knowledge proliferation. Firstly, when movements begin to organise a formal claim to a site, this is often mobilised through partnerships with professional and/or government organisations.

There are many phases which take a temporary occupation through to formal construction and the evidence or propositions produced in each phase are often produced in collaboration with a different partner in language that is particular to each area of expertise (Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Beatrice Hati Gitundu, Urban Planner with SDI Nairobi 08/05/2020, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, Founder of SPARC and leader SDI 30/11/2021, Kabalikat: group meeting, Tondo area, Metro Manila 07/02/2018, Organisation for Internally Displaced People, Marawi, Philippines: Dhino Sarigidan, Leader17/01/2020). Secondly, there is a desire to protect the knowledge and evidence produced from being co-opted and used against the claimants (KADAMAY (Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap – Association of poor peoples): Gloria "Ka Bea" Arellano, Chairperson,19/02/2016, Kabalikat: group meeting, 07/02/2018, Urban Poor Associates: team, 02/02/2018, Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021, Chester Arcilla, researcher 22/01/2018, Mary Racelis, researcher, 26/09/2021). As described in the previous chapter, detailed maps and enumeration data is particularly vulnerable to co-optation and decontextualisation. The wide accessibility of social media platforms, together with the hidden nature of their architecture and treatment of user data raises questions about whether their potential for dissemination of knowledges and data of this kind is undermined by the potential for materials and messages to be co-opted or misconstrued through reproduction (Jackson 2016).

Preventing data decontextualisation and co-optation plays a key role in the resistance against homogenisation of social movement claims and experiences. Though people's organisations do produce quantitative data for strategic use in negotiations with government institutions and funding organisations, Sheela Patel, current leader of Slum and Shack Dwellers International (SDI) explained in an interview in 2021 (30/11/21) that these data metrics are not shared publicly or with researchers because, in her experience, open

sharing did not generate direct benefits for communities. Instead, she suggested that data was more effective when shared privately with authorities for leverage in particular negotiations. Though SDI use websites to share stories (SDI 2023), propagate their claims and demonstrate their tactics (SDI n.d.), detailed data derived from enumeration projects is retained on a private platform and in print, accessible only to the contributing community (Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021) (Beukes 2015). This retains ownership in the hands of the producers, who can choose the circumstances in which they will share it, and with whom. Layers of privacy allow for the group to present their activities and agenda while preventing detailed data from being subsumed into wider dialogues that disconnect information from the original intents and experiences of its producers. However, I argue that the consequence of this choice is that the knowledges produced during processes of enumeration (often a mixture of expert and social, experiential knowledges) are not articulated in ways that allow for open proliferation among other social movements. I argue that the public facing information which is accessible does little to challenge the use of basic enumeration categories, with site outlines presented out of scale and context, and a small number of infographics such as pie charts to illustrate figures. I argue that this misses an opportunity to bring stories and experiences into the sites in question, contextualising knowledges built around particular claims in a way that also exposes the myths and inadequacies of the neoliberal development system.

Though I argue that design practices should support the proliferation of social movement knowledges accrued over the course of their struggles for housing, I do also recognise the need to protect enumerative data and the rights of communities to choose when and how it should be shared. Despite the potential utility of tools such as GIS, Arabindoo warns strongly of the potential for co-optation and use in eviction campaigns (Arabindoo 2011, 643). Additionally, when these tools are used to define sites, without conducting grounding



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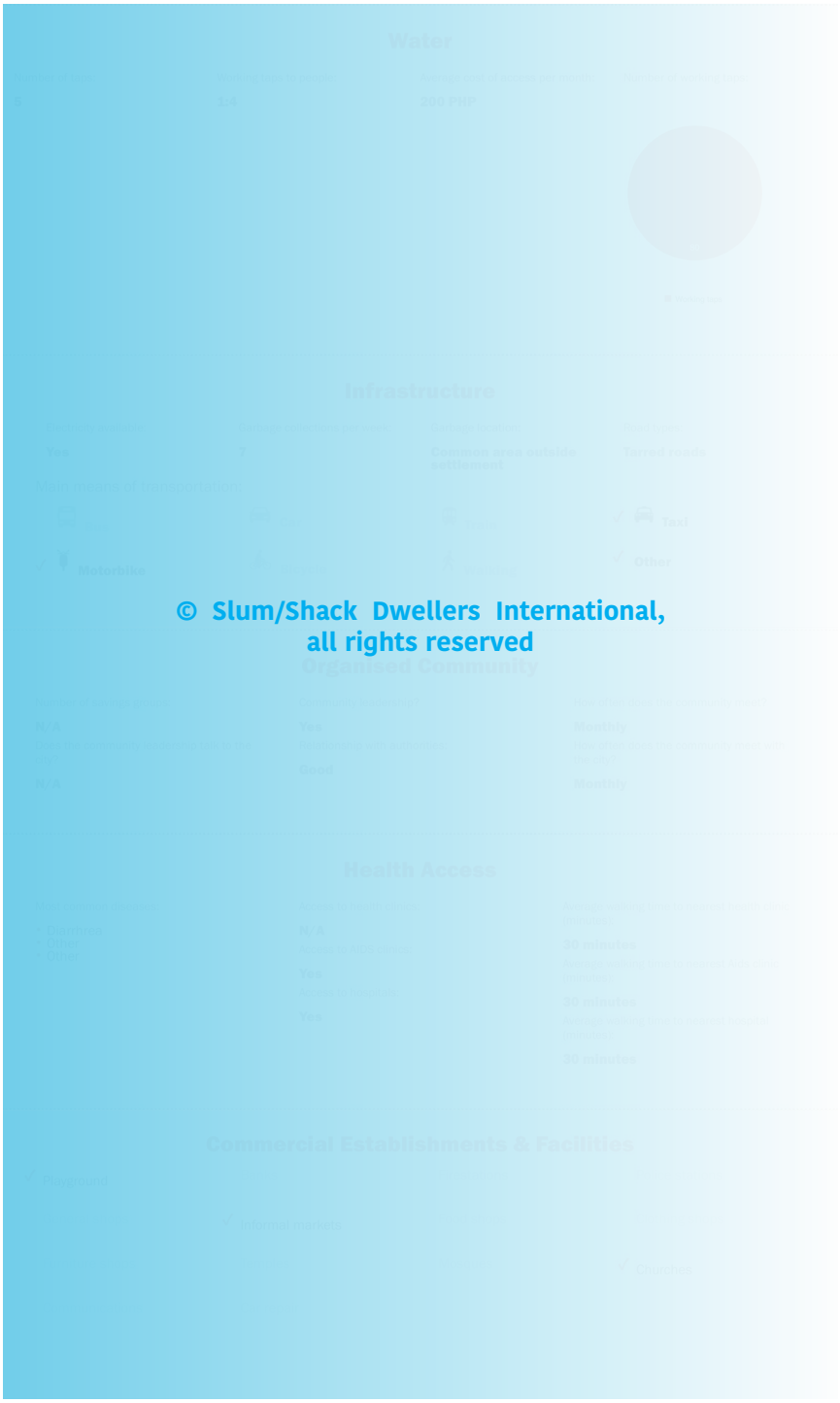

Image 67. Public facing enumeration data from SDI 'Know Your City Campaign, SDI, (Slum/Shack Dwellers International) [Image, SDI]

activities such as boundary walking and architectural surveys to contextualise and check the accuracy of data, significant errors can arise. For example, the overlapping nature of property boundaries in some settlements means that they simply cannot be accurately mapped from above. To suggest that they can be mapped accurately in this way, or should be, demonstrates a misunderstanding of the very nature of auto-constructed urbanisation.

When used alongside more qualitative investigations on the ground however, they can be a powerful tool with which to contextualise housing claims in the city, legally, infrastructurally and socially. Patel (SDI) suggests that if access to satellite data technologies such as GIS were equally accessible to the struggling communities in the process of making their own claims, there would be greater scope for control over the interpretation and future use of the data (Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021). Without community control over the ways in which data is assimilated and interpretated for presentation, Patel suggests that sharing the raw numbers can be disempowering and dangerous (Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021).

By building and sharing data through site-based activities and retaining raw data on a private platform for use only by member federations, SDI seek to re-orientate the focus towards the process of data and knowledge production as a mechanism for building solidarity and political autonomy (Beukes 2015). This is a strategy which Sarah Redoblado from AlterPlan also cited in interviews (30/10/2019) as an important principle of AlterPlan's practice. The data AlterPlan produces with communities (through workshops and cognitive mapping) is retained in physical documents on site, for use in further project stages, when engaging with authorities and other NGOs. Redoblado further explained that the future use and management of data forms a focus for sustained collective negotiation as the communities vote on how and with whom data

Image 68. Manila fieldwork for previous project. This type of image demonstrates the reason for which mapping roads or footpaths from above in auto-constructed settlements is likely to be completely inaccurate. (Image by author, 2015) © Georgia White, all rights reserved

is stored and redeployed. These levels of privacy therefore both take on a protective role over ownership and at the same time generate forums for collective negotiation that can span beyond the immediate goals of the group (Interview, AlterPlan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019).

However, while both SDI and AlterPlan's strategies to maintain ownership and data privacy are clearly important, neither organisation seem to publicly disseminate knowledges of the organisational or propositional process in any presentational format. In the case of SDI, statements suggest (Beukes 2015) that the private members area of their website provides information on enumeration methodologies and more detailed, qualitative information on each site and life within it. However, it is not clear whether members can access each other's information, or whether SDI produce any studies which contextualise the extents and proximities of all these claims, in relation to one another. AlterPlan do not publish information or analysis on lessons derived from their project processes either, but Redoblado states (Interview AlterPlan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019) that this is primarily due to funding and time limitations. Because their funding is strictly project based, there are no funds to account for the labour involved in collating and aggregating all the evidence and lessons accrued over the course of each project (Interview AlterPlan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019).

In order to ensure that single issue foci and professional silos do not lead to asymmetries in the success of social claims (victories in one domain of struggle against oppression corresponding to defeats in others), Santos suggests that greater coordination is required among movements or struggles with different foci (B. d. Santos 2020, 572-573). Such coordination, I argue, will only be facilitated by growing visibility among social movement struggles through the accrual and articulation of connections – to other movements and sites of struggle. I argue that knowledges built around the prefigurative politics of autonomous housing construction need to

be proliferated in ways which make them mutually intelligible and utilisable in other sites and struggles. I propose that knowledges on prefigurative processes of organising around alternative methods of production contextualise the political meaning and pragmatic reasoning of sensational events in the slower narratives of violence and oppression that underpin them.

However, as outlined in the previous sections, several complexities come together to present a series of potential blocks to the realisation of this aspiration. The immediacy of the threat which often triggers collectivisation and mobilises claims, compounded by a lack of social and financial capital and lesser social status of the excluded in 'colonial socialities' in the Global South (B. d. Santos 2012), mean that professional allies with social, financial and intellectual capital to leverage can make meaningful contributions - if the project is approached non-extractive and embedded ways. However, academics and design practitioners also face restrictions brought about by predetermination in the universal imaginary, which need to be acknowledged and addressed.

4.7 CHALLENGES FOR ALLIED RESEARCHERS

In the same way that social movements are pushed to focus on single issues, pre-determination also pushes academics and NGOs to 'specialise' in producing certain outputs associated with disciplinary divisions and to produce generalisable knowledge. As explained in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis, the generalisation of knowledge is both incentivised and made possible by the erasure of politics from narratives of production, presenting technical knowledge as objective fact which transcends the particularities of places and situations (Graziani 2020). The pressures to produce generally applicable research, as well as disciplinary divisions and exceptionally elite applicant eligibility criteria for academic grants (Dadusc 2013) can prove restrictive for embedded, locally particular

and socially collaborative research projects.[13]

As Dadusc underlines, whether applying for grants from government research bodies or from private trusts, researchers are subject to a number of requirements concerning their professional background, research methods, focus and predicted impact. Typically, as Dadusc outlines, research is expected to contribute original theoretical insights to a disciplinary area and/or some level of guidance for policy-makers. Through these processes, relevance is often conflated with impact, which Dadusc warns can demonstrate a palpable lack of 'awareness on how these requirements embody politics of truth that confine research practices to specific modes of knowledge' (Dadusc 2013, 48). Dadusc claims that too strong a focus on professional audiences can mean 'dismissing the effects of power exercised by academic modes of knowing on the social field that is analysed' (Dadusc 2013, 48).

This thesis argues that it is important to question research and research funding criteria which stipulates the importance of generalisability. Generalising categories utilised in social movement research often concur with disciplinary separations in other practices; certain fields will approach research from different sectoral angles (Meyer, 2002), as part of the same universal value system of knowledge. In 1995, Escobar commented on Jean Cohen's distinction (Cohen 1985) between studies 'concerned with strategy, organization, resources, interests, conflict and the like,

13 As Graziani and Shi explain, reflecting on their contribution to the Anti Eviction Mapping Project (AEMP) in San Francisco, 'Even with access to data and tools, the grassroots analyses AEMP is involved in producing are often seen as serving a political agenda and therefore irrational, subpar, and unreliable. Within mainstream academia, studies that claim objectivity, neutrality, and a flattened view from nowhere are praised, while studies that tackle head-on the impossibility of these assumptions and the unequal, power-laden structures behind them are dismissed. […] This mode of birds-eye-view research privileges national coverage over local nuance, ignoring the fact that the actual processes which produce displacement are locally varied and therefore require a local scale of analysis' (Graziani 2020, 405).

and which predominate in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, and those which emphasize the process by which social actors struggle to constitute new identities as a means to open democratic spaces for more autonomous action' (A. Escobar 1995). Escobar argued that these lines of categorisation should be combined to produce more comprehensive insights. As one such categorical approach, the ideological or identity-based focus has produced a number of broad thematic groupings across movements, some of which – such as the anti-globalisation movement or the Right to the City movement – have accumulated an extensive base of dedicated research. However, in many cases, social organisations have not directly affiliated themselves with such slogans but their claims or ideologies are categorised as affiliated by external observers. This is not to say that affiliations are not built into movements on the basis of such categorical slogans, but this is not always the case. Additionally, though many may use slogans such as the 'right to the city' to align their claims with a wider, recognisable ideology, each organisation will have different ideas about what those rights might be and how they should be afforded in their own city and state or nation (Mayer, 2009) (Domaradzka, 2018) (Diani, 2018) (Köhler, 2003).

Though ideological groupings such as 'anti-development', 'anti-capitalist', 'anticolonial', 'anti-gobalisation' and 'anti-institutional' may serve to bring attention to the global body of social activities, many claims which social movements are collectively mobilised and organised around are extremely multifaceted. Additionally, even where interests may be shared, organisational tactics can differ substantially, causing ideological rifts even across shared areas of interest. Often, claims to housing straddle multiple thematic areas of dispute, arguments and structures in ways that are individual and specific (Rajagopal, 2014). Arguments are often at once political,

economic and cultural.[14] As a result, when focusing on a particular area of dispute or organisational quality, one can easily overlook the ways in which multiple apparently unrelated claims can intersect or, conversely, how seemingly similar claims and identities can become completely divergent and contradictory. Just as numeral data can be combined in different ways to generate an entirely different narrative of reality, a selective focus on qualitative information can also distort reality in different ways. Bettina Koèhler and Markus Wissen point out that the very term 'movements' implies heterogeneity, diversity and contradictions. It hints at a variety of different actors which explicitly have no common (symbolic) representation.[15]

It is for this reason that Boaventra de Sousa Santos suggests that a general theory of unification among the heterogeneous struggles of social movements is impossible. (B. d. Santos 2005, 19) And yet, he also recognises that the absence of some sort of criterion of framework with which to draw the knowledges produced in struggle together, limits the possibilities for collaboration and knowledge proliferation. (B. d. Santos 2005, 16)

This is the crucial problem of thesis, and I argue that the possibility of building visibility among social struggles and proliferating the knowledges accrued in their processes is dependent on the way in which differences are approached – not as categorical definitions, but as mutually contextualising when considered as part of a diverse portfolio of attributes, principles and aspirations which characterise

14 As Rajagopal states, 'This basic lesson is amply illustrated by the emergence of thousands of Popular Organisations of farmers, urban poor, indigenous peoples, women, and workers, who have felt let down during the nation-building project during the post-colonial period' (Rajagopal 2014), all of which have distinct organisational dynamics and particular areas of focus.

15 Discussing terms such as 'global Popular Organisations', or the 'anti-globalization movement', they argue that 'emancipatory movements do not fight globalization per se, but all kinds of power relations - capitalist, patriarchal, racist - which are strengthened by the globalization process' (source?).

struggle (B. d. Santos 2012) (B. d. Santos 2018).

The erasure of certain differences which occurs by focusing only on certain attributes with which to generate comparisons and groupings, presents only a partial understanding of diverse struggles, and reduces the intelligibility of knowledges they produce. In fact, differences themselves, when contextualised in the wider narrative of struggle, can become a vehicle for debate, discovery, negotiation, negation, collectivisation and productive, creative collaboration.[16] Indeed, Barassi identifies in her paper on the Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC), that delineating differences and activating exclusions are equally important aspects of collective identity creation (Barassi 2013, 55). She reiterates that social movement networks should be understood as complex interactive processes of negotiation, rather than as fixed structures (Barassi, 2013, p. 49).

The opportunity to participate as equals in debates over differences in any productive process is an important part of politics and creativity. It is through such processes that common practices emerge which define new ways to live together (C. Mouffe 2018) (C.

16 'the bottom line is that at the beginning of the twenty-first century there are social classes and groups whose single (and most radical) need is the guarantee of the right to life, to fully human life. Understanding the visions of an ideal society imagined by bodies of populations subjected to abyssal exclusions requires an epistemological break with Westerncentric modes of thinking. After all, such modes of thinking have been responsible for their invisibility as political subjects. Only knowledges born in struggle will be able to retrieve such visions and the ways they guide social struggles. They are knowledges embodied and embedded in the social struggles as they unfold. They are complex assemblages of knowledges that often combine Western and non-Western cultural premises, scientific and vernacular or popular knowledge, reason and emotion, experience from past struggles (and even ancestral ways of knowing, particularly in the case of indigenous peoples' struggles), and reflexive creativity in the face of new challenges.' ' (B. d. Santos 2020, 577)

Mouffe 2002) (M. Miessen 2017).[17]

Where much academia leans towards the use of ideological categories as a way to maintain wide scopes of study, Kavada also point us towards 'a prevailing tendency within social movement research [...] to assess a movement's political agency based on the effectiveness of its contentious performance and claim-making in the public arena' (Kavada A. , 2016, p. 10). She notes that this approach considers collectives as whole 'entities' in order to study their public presence and their modes of addressing others, which puts their internal processes in a 'black box'. Instead, opening the view of research towards the processes of collectivisation happening through different modes of communication provides, in Kavada's words, 'a more multiplex and variegated view of political agency' (Kavada A. , 2016, p. 10), which points to 'the fact that the constitution of the movement as a political actor can, in itself, be a political outcome'; 'a movement's public performance may consist exactly of the process through which it creates unity' (Kavada A. , 2016, pp. 10 - emphasis mine).

I argue that knowledge on precisely the processes through which collectives are built, deepened, structured and negotiated have become disconnected from studies which focus the material outputs and specific events that emerge from them (Latour 1996) (Laclau 2005). And I argue that it precisely this kind of process-focused knowledge which are politically useful to struggles elsewhere and which imbue outputs with practical and symbolic meaning.

Santos presents Ernst Bloch's explanation of the 'Not' and the 'Not

17 'Procedures only exist as complex ensembles of practices. Those practices constitute specific forms of individuality and identity that make possible the allegiance to the procedures. It is because they are inscribed in shared forms of life and agreements in judgements that procedures can be accepted and followed. They cannot be seen as rules that are created on the basis of principles and then applied to specific cases. Rules, for Wittgenstein, are always abridgements of practices, inseparable from specific forms of life.' (C. Mouffe 2005, 112).

Yet' as an enduring philosophical problem of framing democratic production. In Santos' outline, the 'Not' represents something that is lacking, with no apparent will to address it, and the 'Not Yet' is a latent tendency towards existence which is still in the process of becoming manifest (B. d. Santos 2012, 54-55). The 'Not Yet' is therefore the hazy inscription of the future on the present moment or condition (B. d. Santos 2012, 54-55). It exists as a real possibility and a capacity which can neither be fully indeterminate nor fully predetermined (B. d. Santos 2012, 54-55). If the possible is being continually redefined or created with each event, the possibilities of the 'Not Yet' redetermine their surroundings as an 'anticipatory consciousness' (B. d. Santos 2012, 55). This 'Not Yet' composition of capacity and possibility always encompasses an element of uncertainty, 'as it originates in the lived moment, which is never fully visible to itself' (B. d. Santos 2012, 55).[18] It is for this reason that, as Santos states, despite the obvious importance of possibility as a condition which connects past and future by embedding aspirations and hopes in the experiences of marginalisation that shape them, the concept has been neglected in Western philosophy, overshadowed by the privileged conceptions of modern science, which are grounded in reality and necessity. In Santos' reading of Hegel, the possible is either considered not to exist or as subservient to what already exists, as contained in the real. Reality and necessity can account for both the present and the future without the need to consider the connective tissue of possibility (B. d. Santos 2012, 55). I proffer that the exclusion of possibility is a result of the product-centric value structures which punctuate the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary. The lack of consideration for the role of possibility in shaping actions in the present, does not leave room to consider the fact that 'identity and politics of social movement

18 But this uncertainty is not neutral. Uncertainty arises from an expansion of the present, which simultaneously serves to contract the future, offering 'a limited horizon of possibilities'. The simultaneous creation and limitation of opportunity renders those possible futures 'an object of care' in that the limits generated make the unique opportunities of change in the present ever more precious (Santos B. d., 2012, p. 55).

participants are not preconfigured but are instead articulated and shaped by processes of struggle' (Arenas, 2015, p. 1122).

In contrast with pre-determination, this thesis contends that pre-figuration –processes which embed aspirations for the future in the actions of the present – can be viewed as a lens through which to understand possibility as evolving within and reshaping, the context of the present. In each event during processes of collectivisation and collective production, other futures are revealed as possible. As such, prefigurative processes evolve through a perpetual feedback loop between action and reflection. By focusing only on the events or outputs, one misses their wider significance in terms of the possibilities that they open up and the methods for realising those possibilities that they reveal.[19]

The absence of analysis on the prefigurative politics embedded in the processes produce auto-constructed urbanism is particularly notable in development policies that inform urban planning such as SDG 11. Assigning spatial categories to identify and address the claims of social movements, cannot account for the ways in which spatialities contain and give rise to different socialities. Though there is a fantastic amount of work which seeks to address this reciprocity between urban architectural conditions and social constructions, I argue that issues of fragmentation still persist in different ways. Addressing issues of fragmentation, I argue can only come from deeply embedded and collaborative work designed to reveal and

19 'There is clearly a tension between trying on the one hand to capture a synchronicity and attempting to follow a process on the other. But localities, as I see them, are not just about physical buildings, nor even about capital momentarily imprisoned; they are about the intersection of social activities and social relations and, crucially, activities and relations which are necessarily, by definition, dynamic, changing. There is no stable moment, in the sense of stasis, if we define our world, or our localities, ab initio in terms of change. The CURS programme has "Change" in the first word of its title. As was argued in the opening section of this paper, its empirical focus was precisely on the quite contrasting ways in which local sets of social relations were being transformed: _how_ they were 'becoming'. It is an accepted argument that capital is not a thing, it is a process. Maybe it ought to be more clearly established that places can be conceptualised as processes, too.(3)' (Massey 1991, 275)

evidence in other ways the everyday practices of social movements, as articulated through 'multiple and overlapping spaces of action and meaning' (Barassi, 2013, p. 49) (Arabindoo, 2011).

As Massey writes, meaning is attributed to a place differently by each of the social and ethnic groups that inhabit that place, based both on their heterogeneous experiences of the past and their ideals for the future (Massey 1991, 276). And, in a later paper, 'If time is the dimension of succession and of change, space is the dimension of contemporaneous multiplicity. For that reason, as has been argued, it is the dimension of the social. It is space as a dimension that poses to us that most fundamental of sociopolitical questions: how are we going to live together?' (Massey 2009, 18) (Massey 1991, 276).[20]

Similarly, Barassi suggests the concept of 'ethnographic cartographies' as a method with which to address the ways in which space and place-bound logics restrict, inform, frame and proposition ways of living, organising and producing. For Barassi, 'ethnographic cartographies' should be concerned with the 'spaces of networking' which social movements occupy, transform and disseminate knowledges through (both physical and digital). However, she largely ignores the role of urbanisation in spatialising marginalisation and in shaping the experiences and aspirations that movements collectivise around. As Kallis et al. claim, 'Several recent political geography studies have analysed counter-spaces, in the form of occupied spaces, as collective world-making through the articulation of an alternative, subaltern urbanism (Vasudevan, 2015a, 2015b) or "vernacular architectures" characterised by

20 As Massey writes on the revelations of locality studies conducted in the UK, 'For each the "meaning" of Hackney is distinct–for the old white working class, for the variety of ethnic minorities, for the new monied gentrifiers. Each has its view of what the essential place is, each partly based on the past, each drawing out a different potential future. For the analyst of the locality this intersection is surely precisely one of the things which must be addressed. Hackney is Hackney only because of the coexistence of all those different interpretations of what it is and what it might be' (Massey 1991, 276).

makeshift forms of inhabiting the city and alternative "techno-popular knowledges" (Minuchin, 2016: 904). What is still lacking is an understanding of how counter-spaces can emerge as prefiguratively linked to social mobilizations' (Kallis, Giorgos and Asara, Viviana. 2023, 61 emphasis mine). Again, the prefigurative politics of social movement mobilisation (the labour of constant becoming, in a way) are explored in a number of social movement studies, but very few of these are focused on the relation between prefigurative politics, urbanisation and architectural production, despite the fact that, as I will argue in the following chapter, spatial occupation, repurposing and production is inherently prefigurative.

I argue that currently, despite the wealth of important knowledge being produced in academia, revealing the prefigurative processes which lead to successful claims for affordable housing by social movements requires visualisation in ways that reflect on the global order of the universal imaginary, from the perspective of precise localities. To unpack the reason for this proposition, it is useful to consider Lefebvre's description of the ways in which the city is constructed in the tension between systems which operate at two different scales.

For Lefebvre, the city operates at the interface between two orders: 'the near order (relations of individuals in groups of variable size, more or less organized and structured and the relations of these groups among themselves), and the far order, that of society, regulated by large and powerful institutions (Church and State), by a legal code formalized or not, by a "culture" and significant ensembles endowed with powers' (Lefebvre 1996, 100-101). As Lefebvre explains, it is through such powers that 'the far order projects itself at this 'higher' level and imposes itself [...] in/on the near order' (Lefebvre 1996, 100-101). This is not a one-way projection, Lefebvre explains, as 'the near order does not reflect transparently the far order. The later subordinates the immediate through mediations' (Lefebvre 1996, 102 emphasis original). I argue

that in the global cities of the South, the far order is dominated by the development imaginary and the local is effectively erased in the process of imposing its transformation.

However, despite the absence of reflections in the universal imaginary from the perspective of the near order, local realities are not simply passive conduits for global change, or, as Lefebvre puts it, 'passive outcomes of changes in the social whole' (Lefebvre 1996, 100-101). Rather, no component of the far order can be projected frictionlessly onto a near order reality, a composition which is instead tensioned by 'relations of immediacy, of direct relations between persons and groups which make up society' (Lefebvre 1996, 100-101). Neither, Lefebvre argues, is the city 'reduced to the organization of these immediate and direct relations, nor its metamorphoses to their changes' (Lefebvre 1996, 100-101).

This means that further work is required to evidence not only the ways in which urbanisation in particular places shapes social movement claims and organisational processes, but also the wider social and economic effects that 'the fact, nature and degree of the differences and interdependencies between them' can exhibit, well beyond the actual places and spaces (Massey 2009, 272). Whereas the 'local' is often dismissed in development theory as inconsequential and particular, in fact individual places, and acts playing out within them, are both a product of friction with wider forces of politics, culture and economy, and reciprocally impact on those forces (Massey 1991, 271). I argue that demonstrating this impact is absolutely essential to the proliferation of social movement knowledges. The only way to challenge the dismissal of social movement knowledges which occurs both as a result of scalar bias in the universal imaginary and the lower social status of the 'abyssally' excluded, is by evidencing the direct link between their processes of organisation and the propositions which emerge from them.

Evidencing the prefigurative processes of housing production undertaken by social movements in the South also means making links between the localities in which propositions emerge and the global scale (Lefebvre's far order) from which the universal imaginary is imposed. This means engaging in critical reflection on the ways in which urban policy structured around the universal imaginary works to erase differentiated citizenships and constrain the agency of the marginalised to create other possibilities for the future. Only by understanding the ways in which the pre-determined ends of development block different kinds of social movement actions will the methods with which social movements are overcoming those blocks become clear.

Finally, I argue that these latter two points concerned with linking propositions with process, and linking process with the blocks imposed by the universal imaginary, requires interdisciplinary work. Because these prefigurative processes are spatially embedded, propositional and architectural, I argue that these processes must be evidenced in ways which reflect these qualities. This means considering the ways in which aspiration catalyses collectivities which are further developed and articulated through design.

4.8 CHALLENGES FOR ALLIED DESIGNERS

Whereas designers and especially architects are well positioned to collaborate directly with social movements, they still face certain restrictions which impact working methodologies and geographic focus. These restrictions result from the ways in which the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary structure disciplinary divisions and impact funding criteria. Understanding the reality of these potential blocks must form an essential part of any practice which seeks to overcome them. While, ideologically, one can suggest that practitioners work without mandate or legal permission (M. Miessen 2017) (M. Miessen 2016), I argue that, realistically, one

might be required to think tactically about where blocks can be overcome or loopholes exploited, while treating those that cannot be overcome with reflective criticality.

The requirement to pre-define the end point of a designer's engagement in struggle comes from the pressure to calculate impact and expenditure. This pushes designers to specialise in particular phases in order to standardise their methods in accordance with particular outputs. Unfortunately, this structure leaves little space for contingency, or for background research on the processes which precede the designer's invitation to collaborate. If the designer is not invited but rather identifies the potential for collaboration through research or connections, the same problem of pre-determination limits funding opportunities to cover the time and labour required for analytical reflections on the process and reasoning leading to the identification of the particular site or struggle.

Claudia Amico, architect and co-founder of the Peruvian NGO Espacio Expresión, explained in an interview (22/01/2020) that funding requirements to pre-determine outputs in impact projections prevented her NGO from achieving a consistent level of financing to support staff. Espacio Expresión was established on the principle of working collaboratively with communities to determine project briefs in accordance with shared values and aspirations, curating events to bring people together for sharing stories and debating future possibilities. Espacio Expresión does not specialise in a particular type of output of method, but works holistically in each location to create integrated social infrastructure, environmental protection, and strategise future site management. This non-determinate approach makes it impossible to predict the exact process, outputs and cost of each project, or to quantify the impact that they might have in advance. Instead, as with many others working in this way, contingency becomes a core aspect of the work. For Espacio Expresión, this has meant that their small team works for free to create events in which they engage residents in

area assessments, and later applies for small funds for each project phase and assigns small amounts to cover retrospective activities (Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, architect & founder (Video call) 22/01/2020).

The result of pre-determination is to fragment the processes that unfold over the course of an affordable housing project, in accordance with certain outputs and disciplinary specialisms. This makes it unlikely that a single practitioner will be involved with a project from inception to completion. As a result, the evidence produced over the course of a project, is produced by different practitioners, in different languages of specialisation, hindering the ability to articulate the process itself.

For example, Sarah Redoblado, an architect and founding member of the NGO AlterPlan, explained in an interview (30/10/2019) that funding specificity was a key factor in determining AlterPlan's work focus. As stated earlier in this chapter, AlterPlan usually work with an organised community whose objectives have been predetermined – often with support from a 'community organiser' NGO. AlterPlan then works with those communities, other NGOs and government to create feasibility studies for housing projects. Those studies are used to lobby the government for the appropriate permissions. Once these permissions are agreed in principle, the project is passed to an NGO specialising in technical design, such as Tao Pilipinas, who progress the detailed project design and construction management (Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019). While in this case, close coordination between these local NGOs facilitates 'handover' between the project phases, the specialised nature of engagement at each phase means that the complete process is never articulated and reflected on as a whole.

Additionally, the separation of project funding and core funding[21] separates the actual design project from research practices required to identify a potential project and strategise a methodological approach, to develop relationships and produce a detailed brief. In the context of the organisation itself, a separation also is formed between project research and research which informs the organisational strategies of the practice itself. As a result, design and research which contextualises the process in each social, legal and political scenario is either split into phases in accordance with the criteria of different funding sources, or some aspects remain under scrutinised.

Interviews during the course of this research revealed that the separation of these processes in accordance with different funding types and providers devalues research and reflection as a secondary element of design work, which either happens haphazardly, by diverting small amounts of project funds, or which simply does not happen at all (Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019, Interview Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, 22/01/2020, Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019). Certain types of research that are essential to the project phase such a geological and structural surveys, are often included in project financing (Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019). However, there are two areas of research that are more difficult to outline and fund because their contributions cannot be narrowly defined in project timelines or in terms of pre-determined outputs. The first is background research, which is required to identify new sites or struggles, establish existing claims, and uncover site histories. The second is reflective research, which is required to review the outputs after completion – after they have become settled and have revealed their role in the lives of the inhabitants (Interview Alterplan: Sarah

21 (funding which covers operational costs concerned with maintaining a premises, staffing and activities which are not directly associated with a project such as fund-raising, research, administration)

Redoblado, 30/10/2019, Interview Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, 22/01/2020, Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019). This reflection is required to place the outputs in the context of their processes and the futures that they open, in the recognition that the completion of construction does not signify the end of a prefigurative project. The comparative reflection of the results and the process is also an important way to identify where certain moments might have impacted the project's success and develop the practice's methodological approach.

These areas of research are crucial to the establishment of a body of knowledge which can assist both activist practitioners and social movements in coordinating efforts to bring forward absent realities and alternative possibilities for the future. From my interviews and literature reviews, I conclude that research is rarely funded directly, which means that design practitioners need to be strategic about project funds and core funding where available or seek out academic collaborations. In smaller organisations, funding is usually sought ad-hoc for individual projects, or even for each project phase (this also leads to knowledge silos). In this scenario, interviewees suggest that some of the limited project funding must be used to research the next project, analyse the last one, or contribute to core or 'background costs': for example, those associated with fund raising, marketing, research, admin, premises and staffing. The cumulative effect of these difficulties is that small organisations or practitioners are forced to work on the back foot, trying to use each small project to pay for the work that came before it. As both Sarah Redoblado of AlterPlan and Claudia Amico of Espacio Expresión explained in interviews (Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019, Interview Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, 22/01/2020), this often means staff spend a lot of time working for free, under pressure to fit these projects in and around other work. It also means that they are spread too thin to aggregate reflections from all the project phases (and different projects), either for themselves or for others. It is for this reason that many interviewees agreed that the majority

of research, where it does take place, remains unpublished because of the cost and labour required to collate findings and articulate the links between project phases which contextualise the outputs (Interview Urban Poor Associates: team, 02/02/2018, Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019, Interview Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, 22/01/2020, Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019).

The discipline of design itself, having become an integral tool of neoliberal urbanism, is often separated from its ontological capacities. Yet the profession retains a multidisciplinary status, often serving as mediator and translator between ever-expanding, increasingly specific technical specialisms. When considered as part of prefigurative processes of production, design propositions serve to produce much more than products, they can articulate processes of negotiation and collective imagination. In this regard, they can also be deeply reflective – not only of desire but of need, and of methods. However, reviving the ontological meaning embedded in the prefigurative processes of design is not simply a matter of finding more engaged or willing designers, it is also a matter of developing and proliferating knowledge on the practical and political blocks that combine differently in different countries and cities, together with experiential knowledges on the ways in which they are overcome.

In order to support social movements to strategise relationships around their own claims, practices need to aggregate and disseminate materials which demonstrate the reasoning behind their legal registrations and funding structures and the implications of these choices in terms of the kinds of projects that can pursue and the methods they use. Much in the same way, activist practitioners need support to develop non-extractive collaborative practices with an understanding of how law and funding intersect at different scales in particular situations, in order to best situate themselves organisationally and methodologically. These choices require

recognition that organisational structures and legal registration in different places constitute a political machinery which requires explicit decisions and declarations of personal and/or organisational politics; something which is too often avoided.

These process-based knowledges are essential to proliferate among both practitioners and social movements. They articulate political practices which are replicable but also provide critical reflections on the ways in which the universal imaginary is mythologised. These types of knowledges are emancipatory knowledges in that they support the agency of citizens and social movements to imagine and produce other ways of living in the global city. As Paulo Freire points out, 'The oppressed have been destroyed precisely because their situation has reduced them to things. In order to regain their humanity, they must cease to be things and fight as men and women' (Freire 2018, 68).

4.9 CONCLUSION: THE PRE-DETERMINED AND THE PREFIGURATIVE

This chapter began with the contention that the system of ontological erasure exercised through the pre-determined ends of the universal development imaginary means that social movements are tasked with proliferating the alternative knowledges being produced in their own processes of struggle. However, many factors come together to fragment the narratives of struggle that contextualise those knowledges.

As of yet, though important nation-wide revolutions have emerged from the mobilisation of social movements,[22] the most significant

22 The Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela in reaction to IMF structural adjustment, MST in Brazil, constitutional reforms in Chile, establishment of Barcelona en Comu etc.,

barrier that urban social movements have to contend with is the delegitimisation of their knowledges, which cannot be confined within or fixed to either material objects or particular events. The bias of dominant knowledge structures towards the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary has resulted in difficulties in maintaining representational visibility for the prefigurative processes which connect practices of organisation with the results of mobilisation (D. Harvey 2020, 8).

Appadurai claims that despite the physical and intellectual gulf which separates local concerns from global debate,[23] 'a series of social forms have emerged to contest, interrogate, and reverse these developments and to create forms of knowledge transfer and social mobilisation that proceed independently of the actions of corporate capital and the nation-state system (and its international affiliates and guarantors). These social forms rely on strategies, visions, and horizons for globalization on behalf of the poor that can be characterised as "grassroots globalization" or, put in a slightly different way, as "globalization from below"' (Appadurai 1999, 231). Appadurai argues that the responsibility sits with academics to recognise 'the significance of this kind of globalization, which strives for a democratic and autonomous standing in respect to the various forms by which global power further seeks to extend its dominion' (Appadurai 1999, 231). He suggests that 'The idea of an international civil society will have no future outside of the success of these efforts to globalize from below. And in the study of these forms lies an obligation for academic research that, if honored, might make its deliberations more consequential for the poorer

23 Appadurai speaks of an intellectual apartheid which is emerging in two forms. This first of these forms is the divorce between the concerns of, and approaches to, globalisation which shape the internal debates of the academy (and set 'the standard of value' for professional inquiry on the subject), and the 'vernacular discourses about the global', the concerns of which are more reflective of the ways in which global systems impact national, regional and local life (Appadurai 1999, 230-231). The second form of apartheid Appadurai describes is the distance that separates the poor and their allies from both national and global discourses (Appadurai 1999, 231).

80 percent of the population of the world (now totaling 6 billion) who are socially and fiscally at risk' (Appadurai 1999, 231). I argue that this type of study should be undertaken as embedded design research, which uses spatial analysis and architectural propositions to illustrate the practices of grassroots globalisation as constitutive of an extensive and varied ecology of alternative knowledges, with very real implications for ways of living and producing outside of the neoliberal canon.

Prefigurative processes of auto-construction already present a model of alternative planning that contradicts and challenges the historic 'professionalised' Western conception, which separates the planner from the citizenry. Though systemic changes have occurred to consider how planning may at certain points, connect to and include the values and opinions of those it serves, we must also recognise that legitimation remains 'central to hegemonic relations of power'. (Miraftab 2009, 41) Therefore, social movements engaging in prefigurative processes of production are challenged not only to prove the legitimacy of their methods in the process of their own struggles but also to use their reflections to critique the systems of urban governance which promote of the western city as a universal object of desire. I established in chapter two that while neoliberal governance legitimises itself increasingly through rhetoric of inclusive, participatory systems, this consistently fails to deliver equity among the citizenry and effectively distribute either power or products. In fact, these systems of apparent inclusion further obscure the extent of socio-political exclusion among the poor. By relegating their opportunities for political debate to 'sanctioned' (Miraftab 2009, 34) spaces of negotiation that are most commonly occupied by intermediary representatives such as NGOs, citizenship rights are limited to monocultural concepts of consumer choice and the excluded are denied the right to differ. These processes replace direct social action with representation by external intermediaries and can lead to co-optation of data and claims (A. Kavada 2014, 353).

The consumer model of citizenship, obscures important questions

about the extent to which visions of the social good are shared and how marginalised groups can assert their claims. Claims to citizenship among dehumanised citizens often go beyond material needs to encompass conceptions of dignity, recognition, and ontological freedoms. These aspects of claims necessitate recognition for plural understandings of humanity and alternative spaces for political negotiation and organisation. In the 'zone of nonbeing', where the most extreme types of exclusion occur, struggles begin with the need for recognition as being fully and equally human, as a matter of survival. But the meaning of humanity held by marginalised populations may differ from the dominant cultural and political meaning, around which political systems are articulated. The struggle against exclusion is complicated not only by limited access to institutional tools but also by the fact that these tools are monocultural. The illusion of full humanity is the false perception that society has overcome exclusion, which leads to political neglect of the important differences between experiences of exclusion. Validating other ways of knowing requires validating other ways of being and producing, a recognition which will not be achieved without recognising that difference – especially among currently 'absent' subjects – is central to the condition of humanity. As Kallis and Asara observe in Lefebvre's work, 'the struggle to differ is the common hidden thread across all struggles. Against identification with any "model", "difference" wills to be other and is already other' (Lefebvre, 1980: 31,60).' (Kallis, Giorgos and Asara, Viviana. 2023, 60).

In the pre-determined ends of the universal imaginary, difference and particularity is dismissed as inconsequential to the general and global. Yet, differences can contextualise political debate (Mouffe 2002) (C. Mouffe 2018) (M. Miessen 2017). Conflict can be harnessed in productive ways when approached in constructive debate between political equals. Only when difference is used to fragment and categorise lessons from different experiences and contexts does it become an obstacle to knowledge production.

Harvey and Nunes suggest that it is only due to the lack of visibility of the prefigurative labour which mobilises and structures social movements that, when observed from a distance, protests can appear to emerge from nowhere and dissipate (Nail 2012) (D. Harvey 2020) (D. Harvey 2012) (Nunes 2021). Though widespread availability and use of social media and other web-based communications has facilitated autonomous reporting and dissemination of information, algorithms tend to push audiences between trending items or events, and funding limitations can result in reduced endurance of social movement campaigns. Such endurance is required to maintain information flows and collate different outputs in ways that render visible associations between outward-facing actions and the ongoing, inward labour of collective negotiation, and organisation in the pursuit of claims (Nail 2012). Whereas many global movements, such as Occupy, are also organised and articulated locally, the particularities of local organisational units and their relationships to the global campaign can become informationally subservient to their global narratives. The greatest problem with this paradigm is that it is knowledge about the methods and processes of collectivising and organising around a claim and proposition, which is most politically utilisable in other struggles and places. Whereas different movements may not share the same identity or ultimate goals, political processes of organisation and production can be reproduced and rearticulated around other claims, in other contexts.

The challenge for a counter-practice, therefore, is to situate itself in the prefigurative processes of collectivisation, negotiation and production – both material and epistemological. A focus on prefigurative labour, rather than products, will recover difference as a productive and creative reflection of reality and a lens through which to pluralise both knowledges and possible futures. In addition, these prefigurative practices need to be communicated in ways which articulate the longer narratives of struggle. Inherently, this is a collective and performative knowledge project because

growing visibility among social movement knowledges will require connection and multiplication.

In order to devise methodological principles for this prefigurative project of knowledge proliferation, it is necessary to understand the specific challenges posed to the legitimation of marginalised knowledges in the Global South. As the Global South is the focus of development, so it should form the focus of counter-practice. This thesis argues that overcoming fragmentation and growing visibility among social movement knowledges can only be achieved by reversing the process of homogenisation and erasure enforced by development policy which characterises the ontologies of the poor in the Global South as other, lacking or illegitimate. The knowledges actioned and built around struggle in post-colonial contexts reveal the additional complexities caused by international asymmetries of power that shape different experiences of exclusion in the global city and possibilities for overcoming them.

5 PREFIGURATIVE PRACTICES

5.1 THE PREFIGURATIVE NATURE OF POLITICAL ORGANISATION

In this chapter I speak about the ways in which design processes and designers can engage in prefigurative processes. In placing a discussion of design in the context of prefiguration I do not intend to propose a type or method of design that can be classified exactly as prefigurative. Instead, although prefigurative processes can include designing, prefiguration is used here to acknowledge the practices of non-governmental politics by social movements that are self-referential, reflective and projective. These processes evolve through contingency, based on action and reflection – continually reframing understandings of the past around emergent possibilities for the future. I argue that a counter-practice for design and research should be based around a recognition of the prefigurative nature of struggle, which is antithetical to the predetermined ends of the universal imaginary.

The prefigurative sits in direct opposition to the predetermined as a process which is forever in flux, forever becoming and producing. Prefiguration does not refer to the activities *pre-ceding* an event exactly, nor is it *pre-dictive* of a future scenario or condition. It is not fixed in a timeline or order of events. It is a way of bringing forward and envisioning new possibilities by enacting them in some form in the present moment (Nail 2012). It is thus a way of being in the world which is hopeful and explorative of future possibility. Inherently, it becomes a way of producing based on contingency and discovery, a way of acting in situated and reflective ways.

Auto-constructed settlements, encampments and resistance against dispossession have long punctuated the urban centres of Latin American countries including Brazil (de Souza 2006) (Levy 2010)((Holston 2009) (Holston 1991) (Maria, Sandra, Gadelha de Carvalho, and José Ernandi Mendes. 2011) (Irazábal 2019) (Petras 2017) (Fierro 2019) (Fierro 2021) (Fierro 2020) (Caldeira 2017), Colombia (McGuirk 2015), Perú (McGuirk 2015), Chile (Pérez 2017),

Argentina (de Souza 2006) (McGuirk 2015) (Birss 2005) (Petras 2017) (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009), Mexico (McGuirk 2015) (S. Stavrides 2020) (Petropoulou 2018) (Johnson, Jennifer L., and Shannan Mattiace. 2017) (Routledge 2003), Bolivia (Petropoulou 2018), and are now prominent in Asian cities of the Philippines (Ortega 2016) (Woods 1998) (C. A. Arcilla 2023) (Racelis 2003), Indonesia (A. Roy 2014), Nepal (Sengupta 2009), India (A. Roy 2003) (Benjamin 2008) (Beukes 2015) (Mahmud 2009) (Anand, Nikhil, and Anne Rademacher. 2011) (Kapoor 2011) (Bautès 2013). Whereas Latin America experienced the fastest rates of urbanisation in the 1970s and 1980s, currently trends of rapid urban growth are most prominent in sub-Saharan Africa, where auto-construction and resistance are becoming prominent in countries such Kenya (Dafe 2009) (Neuwirth 2006), South Africa (Miraftab 2009) (Ngwenya, Nobukhosi, and Liza Rose Cirolia. 2021), Nigeria (CMAP 2014), Zimbabwe (Moyo 2001), and Rwanda (Nikuze, Alice, Richard Sliuzas, and Johannes Flacke 2020). Studies also highlight similar patterns of struggles articulated through auto-construction in Northern Africa, in countries such as Morocco (Atia 2019) and in the Middle East, including in Egypt (Bayat 2013), and Iran (Bayat 1994).

It is in struggles against abyssal exclusion that alternative knowledges are rapidly and continuously produced as subjects are forced to forge their own tools for overcoming their excluded status in accordance with their own conceptions of humanity. These are ongoing prefigurative processes which cannot be predetermined as a linear project with a definitive material end. Whereas alternative tactics are invented and developed through autonomous construction and collective negotiation in and among social movements, attempts to gain recognition for these claims to full humanity, and the knowledges developed through such processes, is complicated by the status of excluded peoples in colonial contexts as 'subhuman' or 'nonexistent' (B. d. Santos 2018, 2). This problem of absence is compounded by the prefigurative, and therefore non-determinate, nature of such processes.

5.2 WHY SPATIAL OCCUPATION IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND AS AN EXPRESSION OF PREFIGRATIVE POLITICS

What Miraftab describes as 'insurgent movements' are already proving their ability to operate outside of sanctioned spaces, re-appropriating or creating new spaces in which to reclaim their rights of citizenship in counter-hegemonic practices of collaboration and production, often rooted in alternative economies that are based on sharing and equal distribution (Miraftab 2009, 35) (Stavrides 2020). Examples I will discuss in more detail in this chapter include settlements produced by MTST in Brazil, by MTD, MTL and Túpac Amaru in Argentina, Frente Popular Francisco Villa Indepediente (FPFV) in Mexico and by Kabalikat in the Philippines. All of these movements have produced housing for the poor but articulated their struggles for housing as much more multifaced rights claims - to social, political and economic autonomy. Autonomus processes of land reappropriation and transformation demonstrate the capacities of the urban to collectively imagine and produce their own ways of life. Miraftab terms practices of organised squatting and auto-construction as insurgent, characterising them as 'counter-hegemonic, transgressive and imaginative' (Miraftab 2009, 33). Their counter-hegemonic tendencies come from their ability to destabilise the established democratic order of planning by seizing disused land and property left open by speculative markets and transforming it into socially and economically vibrant settlements. (Miraftab 2009, 33).

Whether claims are initiated through organised occupations of unused land (as is the method employed by the Latin American Movements I will discuss) or by neighbours organising around the threat of eviction (as is often the case in the Philippines (C. A. Arcilla 2023) (Racelis 2003) and India (Beukes 2015) (Mahmud 2009)), these processes of collectivising around claims based of shared experiences and aspirations, are inherently prefigurative

and, as such, propositional. They demonstrate the possibility to forge solidarities around shared experiences in the past and present, and to use these reflections to reformulate possibilities for the future. (Miraftab 2009) We can think of prefigurative politics as the attempt to build practices in the present moment around future goals, ideologies or visions. In Kallis and Asara's explanation (based on their study of the Indignados movement's occupation of squares in Barcelona), it is the act of inscribing 'the goals of the movement into its practices and activities, creating the (vision of) alternative society, both in the present, and through a future-oriented creation of alternatives' (Kallis 2023, 58). In Luke Yates' study on political ideology in social movement mobilization and coordination strategies, it is 'the future-oriented construction of political alternatives, or of attempts to reflect political goals or values in social movement processes' (Yates 2021, 1033). As I will unpack in more detail in the following section, auto-constructed settlements – whether temporary or permanent – require and build knowledges on processes of negotiation and organisation which become embedded in the organisation of sites and building aesthetics (Holston 1991). I argue that prefigurative processes involving auto-construction are inherently propositional and, at the same time, indicative of a huge repertoire of knowledge which is constantly being accrued, applied and further developed in a feedback loop of action and reflection.

Nail closely relates the prefigurative to the 'future anterior', which he describes as a 'careful labour of eventual prefiguration, connection and condensation that brings together what seemed to be inexistent and invisible elements [...] into a new existence and visibility' that constitutes a 'new world of the present'. This present is never complete as a direct 'consequence of the past, or as the potential for a new future [yet] "to come"', but instead forms 'the [ongoing] construction of a new present in a future anterior that "will have been"' (Nail, 2012, pp. 80-81). Such a moment cannot be created from nothing, nor should it present a static insurrection contesting the successive view of past events. It is a creative

action, which works to reconfigure the past in accordance with new possibilities for the future that it creates by inhabiting it now. Just as Deleuze explains that what is possible is not predefined but created by each new event, the past anterior, by reconditioning the political situation of the present moment, renders new future opportunities visible.[1] The fact that futures can be imagined and inhabited in the present also forces us to reconsider and rearticulate the events of the past, and in so doing create 'a new world parallel to the old one' (Nail, 2012, p. 90). This is a process based on positive action, rather than theoretical construction, which, rather than present an inert hope, embodies an attempt to action new futures within the present moment (Nail, 2012, p. 90).

Prefigurative processes of housing production constitute an essential expression of life in the city and what it means to survive under differentiated conditions of citizenship. If evidenced adequately, the methods with which spaces are reappropriated through occupation and (re)invention can reveal not only alternative possibilities for the future but the means to achieve them.

As Holston argues, for the marginalised, the public square or plaza is an architectural embodiment of ideals of 'centrality and its sovereignties, its architectural design institutional organization, and use represents the hierarchies, legalities, segregations, and inequalities of the entrenched regime of citizenship that the insurgent contests' (Holston 2009, 254).[2] Many expelled citizens occupying precarious neighbourhoods on the periphery or interstices

1 'What I am proposing instead is a concept of the future anterior that functions as a new present moment within and alongside the other processes of political and temporal representation. This new present moment is not an infinitely split time but a productive one that both projects a new future and retrojects a new past' (Nail, 2012, pp. 89-90).

2 'although insurgent urban citizenships may utilize central civic space and even overrun the center, they are fundamentally manifestations of peripheries' (Holston 2009, 254).

do not have equal access to these spatial and/or political centralities, either physically or symbolically as equal citizens. If the civic square is an icon of democracy for the majority, it represents the fragmentation of the city for others, and the need for alternative spaces in which to foster solidarities and collectives.[3]

According to Santos, Habermas' construction of public space and life defines democracy as a generative force for new societal and cultural histories, and the public sphere as a place in which people are able to publicly problematise 'a condition of inequality in the private sphere', thus, demonstrating the existence of ontological plurality (B. d. Santos 2005, XIiv).[4] I argue, in line with those such as Holston (Holston 2009) and Stavrides (Stavrides 2020), that in the contemporary urban condition, it is in the act of auto-construction itself that private conditions of inequality are implicitly problematised in the public sphere. As Holston tells us, 'it is not in the civic square that the urban poor articulate this demand [for citizenship] with greatest force and originality. It is rather in the realm of everyday and domestic life taking shape in the remote urban peripheries around the construction of residence. It is an insurgence that begins with the struggle for the right to have a daily life in the city worthy of a citizen's dignity' (Holston 2009, 254). Thus, these 'insurgent' acts express 'demands for a new formulation of citizenship [that] get conceived in terms of housing, property, plumbing, day care, security, and other aspects of residential life.'

3 As Holston contends, 'In so far as the urban civic square embodies an idea of centrality and its sovereignties, its architectural design, institutional organization, and use represents the hierarchies, legalities, segregations, and inequalities of the entrenched regime of citizenship that the insurgent contests' (Holston 2009, 254).

4 'For Habermas, the public sphere constitutes a place in which individuals – women, blacks, workers, racial minorities – can problematize in public a condition of inequality in the private sphere. […] According to this conception, proceduralism has its origin in the plurality of the ways of life in contemporary societies. Politics, in order to be plural, must count on the assent of these actors in rational processes of discussion and deliberation. Therefore, democratic proceduralism cannot be, as Bobbio supposes, a method of authorizing governments' (B. d. Santos 2005, Xliv).

(Holston, 2009, pp. 254-255) (Fierro 2020).

Accordingly, these struggles are embedded in specific experiences in different areas of the city, where questions of housing and belonging are inextricably linked with opportunities for economic and social life. As discussed in Chapter 3 in reference to the prevalent paradigm of relocation to peripheral, mass-housing projects in South Africa, India, and the Philippines, causes of social immobility on the urban peripheries are multi-dimensional and contain spatial, economic, cultural, racial, and age- and gender-based variables. At Holston's periphery – a philosophical rather than explicitly physical periphery which I would extend to the interstitial spaces of marginality within the city proper – it is also opportunities for collectivisation which arise in the act of auto-construction. Though the act may be quietly individual and politically muted in the first instance (Bayat 2000), its meaning is often transformed as single constructions agglomerate – either silently, or through active negotiation. As Stavrides states, more than mere 'containers of social life and shared experiences [...] Spatial arrangements interact with social experiences both by giving them concrete context and by supporting representations of those experiences, which actually make them sharable' (Stavrides 2020, 336 emphasis mine). Those contextual representations are crucial to social/spatial differentiation across claims and needs which may appear materially similar, as a method with which to resist homogenisation and to pluralise understandings of urban reality.

Kallis and Asara are among the relatively few scholars examining the ways in which prefigurative politics inform and respond to specific urban spatialities. They describe the spaces which are reappropriated or produced in different ways by social movements as differential space, of which there are multiple types. One such type is 'diverted space', defined as the result of coordinated reappropriation, for a purpose which differs from its former designation (Kallis 2023, 60). Examples given include the occupations

of 'Tiananmen Square (Hershkovitz, 1993) and Occupy London Stock Exchange (Burgum, 2018)'. According to Kallis and Asara, these events were 'temporary practices of d'etournement where artifacts, places and significations of the dominant culture were temporarily appropriated and transformed into symbolic forms, taking on new meanings' (Kallis 2023, 60-61) Despite their temporary nature, the ways in which squares have been occupied over the course of protests, with encampments punctuated by shared facilities such as kitchens and libraries (Kallis 2023), demonstrates the prefigurative politics of their construction. However, Kallis and Asara rightly note that the most understudied, and yet most important, type of differential space is what they call 'counter-space'.[5] As opposed to diverted space, which occupies a defensive position that is most often temporary, counter-space is understood as a comparatively stable, concrete prefigurative expression of collective aspiration. This is very similar to what Solomon Benjamin refers to as 'occupancy urbanism', describing acts of auto-construction taking place in Indian cities as a method of 'claiming public services and safeguarding territorial claims, open[ing] up political spaces that appropriate institutions and fuel an economy that builds complex alliances' (Benjamin 2008, 719). Benjamin suggests that neighbourhood organisations in Indian cities such as Mumbai and Delhi most often engage the state, while 'remain[ing] autonomous of it', generating a narrative of the city 'as being constituted by multiple political spaces inscribed by complex local histories' (Benjamin 2008, 720). By creating locally embedded institutions and enterprise, Benjamin suggests that these organisations demonstrate the plausibility of other ways of producing and living that sit outside of the capitalist canon and of client–supplier

5 As referenced in the previous chapter, 'Several recent political geography studies have analysed counter-spaces, in the form of occupied spaces, as collective world-making through the articulation of an alternative, subaltern urbanism (Vasudevan, 2015a, 2015b) or "vernacular architectures" characterised by makeshift forms of inhabiting the city and alternative "techno-popular knowledges" (Minuchin, 2016: 904). What is still lacking is an understanding of how counter-spaces can emerge as prefiguratively linked to social mobilizations' (Kallis 2023, 61).

dynamics (Benjamin 2008, 719).[6] Again, these prefigurative methods which build multifaceted claims concerning economic opportunity, political agency and social autonomy around the struggle for housing involves deep levels of collective negotiation, knowledge-sharing and decision-making. The counter-spaces produced through prefigurative processes of social organisation demonstrate the dialectical nature of spatial production, which Kallis and Asara describe as maintaining 'a consistency between means and ends and a proleptic foretaste of the future society, that realize and become the third dimension of created alternatives.' They explain that 'This dialectical movement unfolds through three processes: experimentation, demonstration, and proliferation through "open prefiguration"' (Kallis 2023, 56). However, I argue that the potential for the proliferation of such practices is currently limited by the lack of visibility among the prefigurative processes through which movements organise, negotiate common aspirations and actually produce housing and infrastructure. For these methods of social organisation and production to proliferate more widely and to gain visibility, a collective campaign of some sort is required to bring knowledges based in locally distinct experiences into view as part of the same ecology of knowledge, to be drawn upon, replicated and recomposed in each specific site and struggle, rather than generalised to be made 'globally' applicable. This collective campaign would require a careful examination of the ways in which groups negotiate differences and commonalities as part of a prefigurative, productive and highly political process, in order to build and enhance the visibility of connections between different struggles, without any one identity or goal subsuming others.

6 'This politics is substantial and poses multiple crises for global capital. Locally embedded institutions subvert high-end infrastructure and mega projects. "Occupancy urbanism" helps poor groups appropriate real estate surpluses via reconstituted land tenure to fuel small businesses whose commodities jeopardize branded chains.' (Benjamin, 2008, p. 1)

5.3 PREFIGURATIVE PROCESSES: LINKING SOCIAL AND ARCHITECTURAL CONSTRUCTION

The construction or usurpation of space can be both a way to galvanise solidarity around particular desires or claims, and a way of proving the legitimacy of alternative knowledges and production processes. Whereas hegemonic visuality presents the reality of development as being driven almost exclusively by private investment and philanthropically funded technical assistance, a number of movements are proving their ability to collectivise, negotiate, organise, demand and produce their own realities autonomously of those systems. De Souza remarks that although Brazilian favela activism emerged strongly in the 1960s and endured throughout the 70s and 80s, activity dipped from the 1990s onwards in most cities as neighbourhood associations reverted to clientelism, often serving the interests of the middle class or acting as political bargaining spaces for the poor. However, De Souza states that Brazil has generated a strong global presence in resistance against oppression and injustice as a result of anti-globalisation protests and the hosting of the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre. Though this presence is not specifically shaped around space and 'urban territorial identities', he notes the importance of the Rural Landless Workers Movement (MST) and expansion of more specifically urban movements, such as the MST offshoot, the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto[7] (MTST) (de Souza 2006, 331) (Fierro 2020).

The Brazilian movements of MST MTST demonstrate a process of tactical collectivisation that is expressed through the creation of both private and collective spaces which strongly articulate desires for other modes of producing and living (de Souza 2006) (Fierro 2020) (Fierro 2019) (Irazábal 2019). MTST is described by Stavros Stavrides as typical of Brazilian housing movements in

7 Homeless Workers Movement in English

their tactics of organising large occupations on open lands and employing militancy to force the state to provide social housing funds for the sites (Stavrides, 2020, p. 145). Stavrides describes the important case study of the João Candido settlement in São Paulo, which illuminates the importance of organisational articulation in temporary settlements and their translation into permanent settlement designs, in this case using government funds to employ the architectural collective USINA Ctah (S. Stavrides 2020) (USINA ctah n.d.).

The community was brought together by MTST from disparate sites to organise a temporary settlement based on negotiated principles of occupation and spatial management, in accordance with the movement's established strategy and ideals (Fierro 2019, 404) (MTST n.d.).[8] The temporary settlement was consciously curated to balance private and common, self-managed spaces for community use. Common spaces included a public square that became the locus of political, cultural and educational activities, outdoor shared kitchens, and a kindergarten run by residents (Stavrides, 2020, p. 144). Only once the temporary settlement was established on these grounds of spatial organisation were funds and allies sought for the architectural design of a permanent construction. The clear articulation of common demands and the established political agency of the collective demonstrated that they did not need technical partners to represent their claims. The supporting

8 'MTST usually occupies unused land in the peripheries; there, activists build thousands of shacks made of black canvas. Each shack represents a family and its future home. Through the political strength associated with occupations (demonstrations, pressure, traffic blocks, etc.), the MTST negotiates with the municipality and State government on the construction of social housing for the activists. The movement's most common institutional arrangement to build the apartments is a federal programme created by Lula, called Minha Casa, Minha Vida – Entidades [My Home, My Life – Entities].' (Fierro 2019, 404) through which activists can access low interest loans from the Brazilian public bank.

Image 69. Posted to MTST Facebook page 10.11.2014 with text 'Condomínio João Cândido: A entrega das chaves para os lutadores será nos próximos dias!' translated as 'João Cândido Condominium: The keys will be handed over to the fighters in the next few days! © MTST, all rights reserved

https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=822988791072787&id=464790330225970&-set=a.466755456696124

architectural design agency (USINA Ctah)[9] was employed directly by the collective as a professional partner. This ensured the singular direction of accountability in respect of the design partner, only to the client (as the end user). The inhabitants determined the criteria for the building, which were used by a community panel to pass judgements on the design outputs (Stavrides, 2020, p. 145). As a result, the project reflected the same ideals concerning the role and dispersal of different kinds of public and private space that the temporary settlement exhibited, using a hybrid structural system of prefabricated components and simple material compositions to support semi-skilled labour. The shared construction process was mirrored in shared maintenance of the resultant buildings and collective spaces, evolving systems of common negotiation that informed the initial ad hoc settlement (Stavrides, 2020).

As Stavrides points out, the level of care exercised over spatial construction is fundamentally different when actioned by those that will inhabit the spaces, and is bestowed with greater meaning by embedding production in common ideologies of reciprocity and sharing that contribute to a collective identity.[10] In such cases, the principles of equality and commoning feed into spatial arrangements to address the everyday individual and collective needs of

9 Usina Ctah describe themselves as 'Founded in June 1990 by professionals from various fields of activity to provide technical advice to popular movements.' They describe their purpose 'to articulate processes that involve the ability to plan, design and build by the workers themselves, mobilizing public funds in a context of struggle for Urban and Agrarian Reform.' Further,They explain that they have 'already participated in the design and execution of more than 5,000 housing units, in addition to community centers, schools and kindergartens in several cities and rural settlements' and are currently expanding their practice in 'the field of visual arts, developing videos, exhibition projects and popular education workshops linked directly and indirectly to the work of conception and construction of the inhabited space.'
Their philosophy is strictly counter-hegemonic and anti-authoritarian, seeking to 'integrate and engender alternative processes to the logic of capital through social, spatial, technical and counter-hegemonic aesthetic experiences.' (USINA ctah n.d.)

10 Also demonstrated in Kabalikat, Manila, where the community duties were split into themes and rotated among groups assigned a colour code on a collective roster. This led to community finance schemes, environmental work, recycling businesses and common agricultural production.

inhabitants, on the condition of sharing maintenance responsibilities (Stavrides, 2020).[11]

I made a similar observation my own field work in Manila in 2016-2017, at which time I was introduced to the neighbourhood association and community organisation Kabilikat (Interview Kabalikat 07/02/2018) and given a tour of an affordable housing project and (Kabalikat site tour, Tondo Foreshore, Manila 07/02/2018) which they had completed with the assistance of the NGO Urban Poor Associates (Interview, Urban Poor Associates team, 02/02/2018) in the coastal area of Tondo. It was Urban Poor Associates who introduced me to the organisation and accompanied me on a tour of a vast area which included not only row housing and paved access streets which had been produced through the partnership, but also of the office which Kabalikat kept in the community in which they housed meetings and responsibility rotas. Responsibility rotas related to management of community gardens where common vegetables were grown, a recycling centre operated by local youth groups, and a craft centre where local women were making baskets from recycled materials collected from the streets and nearby waterways and which were sorted in the recycling centre. The area was divided into four quadrants, each of which was assigned a 'team' colour. This was used to fairly rotate tasks on the rota boards. Kabalikat were replanning only small areas of the vast site at a time, in order to create rotation spaces where temporary infill developments were placed to house families who were to benefit from new housing during site clearance and rebuild processes.

Occupation in such cases is used not only as leverage to gain

11 'John Friedmann's (1992, 1996) notion of "empowerment" is just one indication of such opportunity-creating tendency of the poor. It describes poor people's self-organization for collective survival through the institution of the household as the central element for the production of livelihood, the principle of moral economy (trust, reciprocity, voluntarism) and the utilization of their "social power" (free time, social skill, networking, associations and instruments of production)' (Bayat, 2000).

Images 70/71. Community activities rota and Kabalikat community hub, Tondo, Manila, Philippines (Images by author, 2016) © Kabalikat, all rights reserved

Images 72/73. Community garden and recycling activities and crafts created with recycled materials for sale. All organised by peoples' organisation Kabalikat, Tondo, Manila, Philippines (Images by author, 2016)
© Georgia White, all rights reserved

Images 74/75. Mangrove replanting to stabilise riverbanks and community garden, all part of Kabalikat housing and urban community regeneration project, Tondo, Manila, Philippines (Images by author, 2016) © Georgia White, all rights reserved

formal housing rights but as a process for building solidarity and organising new political collectives around locally specific needs.[12] In such cases, collective agendas are shaped through the spatial organisation and construction of housing and related facilities.

In MTST, camp coordinators are voted in by the occupying collective to act as adjudicators who assess and align local struggles with the wider movement's agenda (MTST n.d.). Camps are not considered a final product of the movement's activism but as a step in a process that aims to establish relationships which shape the social parameters for permanent settlements and their integration with surrounding areas – often from where the inhabitants originate – and generating political force through new recruitment and evidence of success in the resultant settlements (Irazábal 2019, 8).

Comparative examples can be taken from Argentina. The piqueteres movement, which has spread through several cities in Argentina, much like MTST in Brazil, organise squatting and collective production of shared utilities at the neighbourhood level, and generate alternative economic models with bartering systems(Birss 2005) (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007) (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009)In a similar way to the emergence of MTST out of MST, the political base of the piqueteres movement is not explicitly centred on housing but on wider socio-political segregation in Argentina, particularly in reference to unemployment (Birss 2005) (de Souza 2006) (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009). The piqueteres developed the tactic of disrupting commerce by interrupting traffic and impeding access to important road and rail routes. This tactic became known as '*cortes de ruta*'

12 'John Friedmann's (1992, 1996) notion of 'empowerment' is just one indication of such opportunity-creating tendency of the poor. It describes poor people's self-organization for collective survival through the institution of the household as the central element for the production of livelihood, the principle of moral economy (trust, reciprocity, voluntarism) and the utilization of their 'social power' (free time, social skill, networking, associations and instruments of production).' (Bayat, 2000)

(literally route cuts) or piquetes (pickets) (de Souza 2006, 329) (Birss, 2005). As the movement grew, diverse agendas emerged in different regional bases (coordinadores), with differing organisational approaches and alliances, but the different bases have often continued to act collectively, in some cases on such a scale as to temporarily paralyse the national economy (Birss, 2005). From one of the regional bases of the piqueteres emerged the Movimiento Territorial de Liberación or Territorial Movement of Liberation (MTL) and Movimiento de trabajadores Desocupados (MTD)(Movement of unemployed workers), both of which have expanded practices of disruption from the cortes de ruta to organised occupation of potential housing sites and the establishment of alternative economic systems (Birss 2005) (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009) (Petropoulou 2018).[13] For example, across their occupied sites MTD have built a network of enterprises, including business such as bakeries but also construction teams in an effort to become independent from government and social aid. MTD's stated goals are not to take political power or obtain favours from the state to achieve assimilation into the systems from which they have been ejected, but to gradually construct alternative structures that support a 'parallel society' (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007) (MTD de Solano and Colectivo Situaciones 2012) (Birss 2005) (Birss, 2005). This is not a fixed goal, but an evolving, prefigurative process of discovery which arises through reflection on each event of occupation or piquete.[14] The conscious reflection, which is used to develop the organisation in this way, is also used to build and develop their own 'alternate history', recontextualising their efforts

13 MTD comprises 17 autonomous blocs and calls for 'collective autonomy' from the state and political parties (Birss, 2005), employing a unique socialist doctrine that is enacted through principles of popular education and collective, leaderless decision-making, which takes place in assemblies (asambleas). (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007)

14 They state that 'what is truly exciting about the organization is that it brooks no dissociation between that excitement [of the blockades] and our everyday lives'. 'We don't want to be included; we only demand things in order to continue getting organized'. (MTD de Solano and Colectivo Situaciones 2002)

in light of new possibilities as they arise.

MTL (Movimiento Territorial de Liberación) arose as an offshoot of the Piqueteres in Buenos Aires, in response to eviction pressures mounting on a number of low-income urban residents between 2000 and 2001 (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009, 113) (Petropoulou 2018). Like their sister organisation MTD, MTL also approach the problem of housing as a much more multi-faceted claim, using organised squatting to leverage demands for minimal resources from government and integrating the process of housing production with the creation of shared resources and work opportunities. For example, The Monteagudo housing project was initiated and managed by MTL, from inception to completion. The design for the 18000 square metre site not only provided 326 apartments but according to Scheinsohn and Cabrera, also 'includes a multiple-use room; a complex of 10 business premises for commercial and service microenterprises, with the intention of creating more jobs; a space for a child day care centre; a space for a public square – transferred to the city of Buenos Aires municipal government for its administration – and several open spaces destined for use by community residents.' (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009, 114) Most importantly, to build the project, MTL formed a construction cooperative which ensured that the future residents were involved in the build process but were paid appropriately under employment of the movement (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009, 113).

In a similar example, the settlement of Alto Comedero, constructed by the Túpac Amaru movements in San Salvador de Jujuy, in northern Argentina, demonstrates a unique and powerful model of organisation and financing. The housing quarter of Alto Comedero was built over a number of phases, beginning in 2003. (McGirk 2011) The settlement is comprised not only of row housing but includes a medical centre with advanced hospital equipment and extensive leisure facilities including sport courts, play park and a water park,

complete with fibreglass seals and Dinosaurs.
Justin McGirk suggests that the housing quality equals that of homes built by state programs which are too expensive for the poorest citizens and applicants can remain on a waiting list of up to eight years (McGuirk 2015, 62). The way that Túpac Amaru have been able to produce these 2700 houses (which home 7000 people) to such a standard, and afford to a create dinosaur themed playpark and water park is by using standard issue designs from the ministry of housing, and avoiding architect fees.[15] Secondly (and more importantly), construction costs were drastically reduced by producing building materials such as bricks and steel window and door casings (even the fibreglass dinosaurs) in their own factories, established on site. The organisation employs the future residents as construction workers to build their own homes (fiver workers per unit) and uses government funds to build significantly faster and cheaper than private companies (McGuirk 2015, 58). Through this model, in the process of building housing for the poor, Túpac Amaru train and employ workers, and establish jobs and businesses that serve both the settlement itself and the wider city. The textile factory, and Metalworking factory for example, produce clothing, casement windows and furniture are the main centres of employment (McGuirk 2015, 65).

In a final example, this time from Mexico, Los Panchos - short for Frente Popular Francisco Villa Indepediente (FPFV) – have established a unique community through a process of organised squatting on an undesirable piece of land in Mexico City, previously used as a waste disposal site in the District of Iztalapala (S. Stavrides 2020) (Johnson, Jennifer L., and Shannan Mattiace. 2017). The process began in 1995, and over the course of completion according to Stavrides, has involved approximately 3,000 people. In order to

15 These single storey standard units are arranged with two bedrooms, over 50 square metres and have outdoors spaces to both the front and rear. (McGuirk 2015)

Images 76. (top) & 77. (bottom) Alto Comedero housing and leisure facilities produced by Túpac Amaru, San Salvador de Jujuy Argentina. (Images by Tomás García Puente, appearing in Domus online, - McGirk, Justin. 2011. Domus - Welcome to the Country Club. 24 11. Accessed 05 11, 2018.

https://www.domusweb.it/en/architecture/2011/11/24/welcome-to-the-country-club.html.)

secure a low-rate loan from the Instituto de Vivienda del Distrito Federal, the 'Acapatzingo Cooperative' was formed. (S. Stavrides 2020, 148).[16] This strengthens solidarity among the community, rather than fostering divisions among those who are more or less able to pay a standardised amount.[17] The planning and construction of the neighbourhood was a collective effort that was supported by activist architects and that aimed to produce a housing model based on 'equity and sharing' (Stavrides, 2020, p. 148).[18] There are multiple settlements which comprise the La Polvorilla neighbourhood. But the Comunidad Habitaional Acapatzingo (housing community of Acapatzingo) is cited by Johnson and Mattiace as perhaps 'one of the most radical experiements to grow out of the FPFV' (Johnson, Jennifer L., and Shannan Mattiace. 2017, 150). It is organised in such a way as to generate social autonomy; every spatial allocation, including street planning and parking are decided in community assemblies (Johnson, Jennifer L., and Shannan Mattiace. 2017, 151) The settlement is walled, and police are not allowed to enter the neighbourhood but instead an internal justice system has been established based on the same themes of equality that were applied in the establishment of the site. Security guards stationed at the gated entrance are in fact volunteer members of the community 'vigilance committee' (Johnson, Jennifer L., and Shannan Mattiace. 2017, 149). In turn, this frees the community to generate alternative

16 The loan is to be repaid collectively by all inhabitants over 30 years. Yet, unlike community mortgage programmes which assign standard parcels of land to each resident, the repayments are divided according to inhabitants' different means, which are established by the cooperative assembly. (S. Stavrides 2020, 148)

17 The failing of a number of community mortgage programmes in the Philippines has been due to the fact that each family was given a uniform lot and required to agree to pay an equal amount. If the full amount for the total land was not payed, no titles were secured, which led to divisions and evictions in the neighbourhoods, and ultimately, the sale of evicted lots to middle-class outsiders, leading to gentrification.

18 Energy is provided by solar panels located in common spaces and each house was designed autonomously by families, all with private gardens within a porous neighbourhood structure, inclusive of shared infrastructure, such as a community radio station (Stavrides, 2020, p. 148).

Images 78/79. The Acapatzingo Housing Cooperative. Source: website, desinformemonos.org, article title 'Acapatzingo: el otro mundo en medio de la Ciudad de México' translated as 'Acapatzingo: the other world in the middle of Mexico City', text by Camila Pizaña and Erika Lozano, Photo Erika Lozano

URL: https://desinformemonos.org/acapatzingo-el-otro-mundo-en-medio-de-la-ciudad/

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Images 80/81. The Acapatzingo Housing Cooperative Green house (top) and Radio station (bottom). Source: website, desinformemonos.org, article title 'Acapatzingo: el otro mundo en medio de la Ciudad de México' translated as 'Acapatzingo: the other world in the middle of Mexico City', text by Camila Pizaña and Erika Lozano, Photo Erika Lozano

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systems of social organisation 'free from state surveillance and control' (Stavrides, 2020, p. 148).

As both Stavrides and. Johnson and Mattiace state, The Comunidad Habitacional Acapatzingo is one of a number of settlements founded by the FPFV in Mexico City. Johnson and Mattiace suggest that a number of these were 'developed under the auspices of the original FPFV and benefit from ties they have cultivated with the political machines that left-leaning parties like the PRD have built up in recent years.' (Johnson, Jennifer L., and Shannan Mattiace. 2017, 161) As example, they cite the 'Unidad Habitacional Nuevo Azlán, also located in Iztapalapa, that successfully taps city programs like the Programa Comunitario Mejoramiento Barrial (Community Program of Neighborhood Improvement, PCMB) to fund "pocket parks" and other infrastructure projects for their community' (Johnson, Jennifer L., and Shannan Mattiace. 2017, 161).

As Stavrides remarks, this approach is not intended to enforce isolation. In a similar way to MTST, the Minas Polvorilla communities actively work to establish links with surrounding neighbourhoods, sharing knowledge on community organising and the advantages of committees, and advising on eviction notice responses in return for food supplies. They seek to create alternative social structures that provide an open space for adaptation (S. Stavrides 2020). Additionally, these cases demonstrate the social and political significance of housing projects when they are based on mutual negotiation, shared labour and collective care. When spaces are collectively managed and maintained, rather than atomised into units of private ownership, they become a lasting expression of what it means to create and share in a community of equals. Stavrides frames this as a condition of commoning: a notion that surpasses constructs of private property not only because it challenges individual notions of ownership, appropriation, knowledge and opportunities, but because it actually works to connect 'private aspirations and tactics to circuits of sharing' (Stavrides, 2020, p. 143)

Acts of commoning do not erase differences within a neighbourhood but provide them with common ground (made common by negotiation among equals) on which they can be exercised (Stavrides, 2020, p. 143).

It is worth noting that neither the de-centralised nor the not-for-profit nature of these movements prevented them from achieving momentous things. Neither are all of the outputs from these movements pre-determined. Indeed, the acheivements of movements such as MTL and Madres de Plaza de Mayo – neither of which began with the purpose of producing housing –have dwarfed those of the state, demonstrating the opportunities which lie in the agency of the citizenry (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009) (Bosco 2006).[19] Pre-figurative practices such as these respond to needs and possibilities as they arise, redirecting their focus and tactics in a continuous feedback loop of action and reflection.

The mixed politics of these movements move questions of housing production into much more multi-faceted considerations of life in the global city (Fierro 2020). Their politics address questions of agency, power, and elite capture of land, culture and social life (MTST n.d.) (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007) (Fierro 2019, 514). The processes of collective debate and negotiation which have created cultures of equitable, non-privatised resource distribution and shared labour, have also created emotional ties and confidence

19 In the case of Argentina, Scheisohn and Cabrera suggest that 'A relevant point here is that at the local level, the scale of these housing projects has by no means been small. In the final years of social housing production by local governments, the number of housing units produced averaged no more than 290 per year [1998-2006]. The social organizations' projects achieved more significant results:

- for the period 2006/2007, the MTL's Monteagudo project alone constructed 326 units;
- during 2007, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo Association completed 48 units in Villa 15;
- in 2008, a further 24 units were under construction in Villa 15;
- in 2008, 105 units out of a planned 432 were nearly finished, as part of the project in Barrio Los Piletones; and
- in Villa 20, more than **1,300** housing units are planned for the first phase of a project (2008–2010), with even more planned for subsequent phases.' (Scheinsohn, Mariano, and Cecilia Cabrera. 2009, 111)'

among members that not only are personal sufferings not unique, they can be a driving force for solidarity, and through solidarity, can be collectively contested (Freire, 2018) (Nail, 2012) (Holston, 2009).

Of these movements, MTST is the largest and most prominent. In a detailed study on their tactics, Clara Irazábal points to the importance of proliferating occupations as a way of growing their presence. Irazábal explains that 'of the array of Brazilian social housing movements, the MTST had 23 land occupations in Greater São Paulo in 2016, with 50–60,000 people participating in them, according to members' reports [...]. Just in the Nova Palestina occupation in the outskirts of São Paulo, MTST members claimed to have about 300,000 sq. mt. of land.' (Irazábal 2019, 8) The movement chooses their sites with great care, often on the periphery where sites are often larger and close to other squatted settlements from which they recruit members (Irazábal 2019, 8) (Fierro 2020).[20] By proliferating their settlements on large sites of land, MTST build visibility for themselves, but also for the struggle for housing more generally in the country, demonstrating to landowners and government institutions both the need for other methods of production and the will to realise them (Irazábal 2019, 8). This is echoed in the strategies of MTD whose occupations are strategised to cause territorialised political and economic disruption. Great consideration is given to the strategic location of occupations and, where possible, camps are established alongside important infrastructure, government centres or near large ports or an airport, to generate greater political impact than interventions at the periphery (Birss 2005) (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007). This generates maximum attention for collective claims over the course of the struggle to gain permanent permissions. (Birss 2005).

20 'when the movement is successful in attaining social housing projects in occupied lands, it helps improve the underserved areas with new transit, utilities, and services needed.' (Irazábal 2019, 8)

The possibilities for other methods of housing production to emerge through social organisation are being proven by movements such as MTST, MST, MTD, FPFV, among so many more. Their achievements emerge from prefigurative processes of action and reflection and make a powerful political statement, not only concerning the capacities of the poor to design and realise their own futures but also about the failures of the state and development policy to provide equivalent possibilities. As de Souza points out, even if we accept that residential segregation is not a pernicious intention of state apparatuses, it is entrenched intellectual and ideological prejudice, 'which prevents us from seeing that civil society does not only criticize (as a 'victim' of) state-led planning, but also can directly and (pro)actively conceive and, to some extent, implement solutions independently of the state apparatus' (de Souza 2006, 327).[21] Such examples are not demonstrations of 'territorial corporatism' or of turf politics, as explained by De Souza, but 'the concrete expression of a non-parochial, genuine 'militant particularism' (de Souza 2006, 329). Far from limiting spatial practices to the fight for material provisions, 'the dissident territories which are created by the insurgent spatial practices of those movements are bastions of an economic, political and cultural resistance in the framework of which local and regional particularities are highly valued and at the same time a universal message (freedom and solidarity) is sent' (de Souza 2006, 329).

21 Echoed by Irazázal who states that "By occupying vacant and underutilized land and buildings in and around Brazilian cities, not only are the social housing movements' unsung heroes/heroines confronting neoliberalism in Brazil at a time of the model's highest level of hegemony in the country and the world [3], the movements are also unveiling the impossibility of the neoliberal system to deliver sociospatial justice to the poor and enacting an alternative. Through restorative justice practices the movements triggered through land and building occupations, as well as through their internal dynamics and in their dealing with the state and other housing and land stakeholders, they go beyond critique of neoliberalism. They press for a substitute sociopolitical project that would allow millions of people in Brazil access to decent housing and to a myriad of other opportunities' (Irazábal 2019, 1)

5.4 PREFIGURATIVE LABOUR IS A RESEARCH PRACTICE

Appadurai argues for the 'right to research' to be recognised as a critical right of citizenship. Not only is the 'capacity to make strategic inquiries – and gain strategic knowledge – on a continuous basis' a practical necessity of modern life, but, as Appadurai argues, rhetorically claiming this as a right is a way 'to force us to take some distance from the normal, professionalised view of research and derive some benefit from regarding research as a much more universal, elemental and improvable capacity' (Appadurai, 2006, p. 168).

Appadurai ties the capacity to research not only to the achievement of 'socially valuable goals', but also to 'the social and cultural capacity to plan, hope, [and] desire' (Appadurai 2006, 176-177 emphasis mine). Of course, the two are connected, as Appadurai explains, because 'without aspiration, there is no pressure to know more' (Appadurai, 2006, pp. 176-177). Appadurai describes the maldistribution of this capacity as 'both a symptom and measure of poverty' that can be addressed though politics. However, I would add that it is not only the capacity to desire and to do research that is hindered by poverty or marginalisation but, equally, having one's research and desires recognised as legitimate.

Knowledge production that is situated in the experience of struggle challenges the separation of theory and practice as it entails a reciprocal and inseparable cycle of action and reflection, the results of which simultaneously are self-legitimising and grow self-belief in the social sphere (Freire 2018).[22] As an example, Holston describes a 1972 eviction in São Paulo, Brazil, in which 'an official from the

22 Freire argues that it is in the process of discovering the nature of oppression via organisation in a struggle for liberation that the oppressed generate greater belief in themselves (Freire 2018).

São Paulo courts went to Jardim das Camélias to notify residents that a writ of possession had been issued against them, ordering their eviction'. He describes how events escalated: a crowd that had gathered in response to the news eventually encountered and assaulted the court official, chasing him out of the area. The men involved were later arrested, prompting a group of residents to steal a truck and instigate an escape from the police station. This led to further arrests and the community then responded by forming an association to fight the eviction, employing a lawyer (who was later murdered when leaving a house in the community) (Holston 2009, 258-259). As a comparison, Holston provides another example from a similar neighbourhood, Lar Nacional, this time in 2003. In this case, an official arrived to explain the cancellation of a resident's title on the basis of a discrepancy over measurements. The title had been issued recently by the courts after a ten-year community battle, asserting uninterrupted possession over a period of time. As a result of this battle and the community organisation behind its mobilisation, the residents were equipped with legal knowledge and guidelines on the action to take in the face of the contestation. The association had issued orders not to enter into a fight with any official but to send them to the society. The resident in question was able to articulate the nature of the title and the process of law required to overturn a judge's ruling on the matter and produced documents from the society's archive to elucidate his claim. The official was forced to concede and there were no further visits to the neighbourhood from the Treasury (Holston 2009, 259-260). Where citizens feel that they have recourse as citizens, there is greater opportunity to express their claim to rights through legal and political means. Where they do not feel that such means are open to them, violence can become their only way to defend themselves.

In many ways, these tactical changes in pursuing land-based conflicts were due to competences that were built during struggles that were an inherent part of the experience of city life for the marginalised. Auto-construction itself, evolving sites from individual

structures to neighbourhoods, and the collective organisation that followed, was born of personal necessity but led to new civic identities, claims and modes of claim articulation.[23] This new type of urban citizenship was based on three core processes, according to Holston: 'The first generated a new kind of participation in an alternative public sphere, one based on residents' own grassroots organizations through which they articulated their needs in terms of rights and in so doing constituted an agenda of citizenship. The second gave them a new understanding of the basis of these rights and of their dignity as bearers of rights. The third transformed the relation between state and citizen, generating new legal frameworks, participatory institutions, and policymaking practices' (Holston 2009, 265).

Through this process of organising around the threat of eviction, a critical, active research practice was built around the right to housing and life in the city. This constitutes a process of prefiguration which is specific to the site and its own particular history, and which cannot be predetermined as an outcome of a dispute. In these cases, the process of organisation produces knowledge which is as important an output as the housing itself. Additionally, as a political project, the end point in the resident's struggle in this case could not have been pre-determined, nor can the value of resultant security, knowledge and social structures built

23 'In the autoconstructed city, these very same historical sites of differentiation fueled the irruption of an insurgent citizenship that destabilized the differentiated, as the urban poor gained political rights by becoming functionally literate, established claims to property through house building, established rights to urban infrastructure, made law an asset through their struggles with eviction, became modern consumers, and achieved personal competence through their experience of the city. These achievements validated their standing as citybuilders. Moreover, they produced an unprecedented involvement in law that made their leaders confident to confront justice officials with legal reasoning' (Holston 2009, 265).

throughout the process be materially quantified.[24]
In a similar process, Anni Beukes (a member of Slum and Shack Dwellers International), explains how SDI have developed their processes of enumeration as a collective research practice undertaken by local federations to define both the site that they lay claim to, and their objectives as a collective. For example, in an effort to prevent the eviction of a well-established colony in Mumbai in 1973, a self-enumeration strategy was launched with SDI to count official infrastructure provision, such as telephone poles, in the colony area (Beukes 2015). The tactic of counting telephone poles was employed because the addresses of telephone and electricity poles were already registered within the municipality, meaning that previously invisible dwellers could tie their status to that of the nearest infrastructural object, giving them an officially recognisable address and paving the way towards a claim (Beukes 2015, 8). In this way, the project of enumeration became a project of collective research, through which the participants gained strategic knowledge on government methods of land management and developed skills in data collection and evidencing with which they could argue their claims.

The Collaborative Media Advocacy Platform (CMAP) was formed in Nigeria in 2009 after a mass demolition event destroyed the homes and businesses of 1,900 people on the waterfront of Port Harcourt, Nigeria's oil capital. The area was demolished over the course of a single weekend in order to make way for a redevelopment project that aimed to transform the area into a 'garden city'. A number of those who peacefully demonstrated to prevent the demolition were shot. According to CMAP, the area housed nearly half a million people, though their settlements were not recognised on official

24 'regardless of a movement's political gains or losses, spatial struggles during social movements generate transformative emotional geographies and collective sociality.' (Arenas 2015, 1123)

maps. The organisation states on their website that it comprises 'a collaboration between local and international community organisers, filmmakers, broadcasters, urban planners, architects, designers, university researchers and – most importantly – ordinary people from across the city' (CMAP n.d.). Though they comprise architects and urban planners, their objectives are not restricted to design activities but include bringing lawsuits to regional courts on human rights violations, education on rights and law, locally and in mainstream media, facilitating cooperation between communities and government, and, most prominently, using journalistic training and media facilities to generate strategies and outlets for communities to generate solidarity and challenge social stigmas. The communities are currently in the process of constructing a floating radio station to be run by volunteers and governed by a board of trustees drawn from local community groups. As 84% of the adult population in the region are reported by CMAP to be radio listeners, this is proposed as a platform through which to elevate currently unrepresented voices in mainstream media and to tell their stories. In order to facilitate the operation of the station, CMAP are training local residents in journalism, story writing and sound engineering, and as studio operators, presenters, newscasters, station managers, community correspondents, music producers and drama directors (CMAP n.d.). The hope is that this will also create a platform that can boost professional connectivity between musicians and artists to form a point of discussion from a rights-based perspective (CMAP n.d.). These methods of organisation and production combine more traditional formats of education with opportunities to test out and develop existing knowledges which have been cultivated through lived experience and survival, to produce new social and political relationships and economic infrastructure, and to organise housing claims.

Aspects of MTST's praxis are similar to those of CMAP, including the use of discussion groups which accompany their strategies of organised squatting and which are intended to strengthen political

capacities and build social relationships in surrounding favelas (MTST n.d.) (Fierro 2020) (Fierro 2019). Discussion groups promote the informed use of existing legal frameworks to prevent evictions and stabilise possession of vacant lands (Irazábal 2019) (Fierro 2019, 412),[25] seized through organised squatting (de Souza 2006, 333). The knowledges built in these discussions are proliferated in an educational programme that is strategised through the construction of schools across camps and settlements (MTST n.d.).

The use of discussion groups to build solidarity and build new knowledges from collective experiences, is an approach that is also shared by MTD in Argentina (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007) Staging discussion groups in the occupied sites is intended to focus debates, and build knowledges through embedded action (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007). I argue that this constitutes a prefigurative research practice.

Freire states that social discovery of the true nature of oppression and self-belief in the ability to challenge it can be neither purely intellectual nor limited to uniformed action. Action can only become praxis, in Freire's observation, when it includes serious reflection that brings the intellectual component of discovery – or Appadurai's 'capacity to desire' – together with activism (Freire, 2018, p. 66). Ataöv concurs that action research is central to the recognition that 'theory can be produced only insofar as it provides in-depth understanding of social constructs inducing change through action' (Ataöv, 2007, p. 335). He suggests that the composite balance between research and action provides a platform

25 'The fact that MTST employs rights discourse does not prevent it from deploying extralegal strategies and arguments. The law alone does not provide enough traction to gain dignified housing: people have to become activists and to start a collective struggle. Thus, rights discourse is part of a broader strategy. MTST's strength is based on the ability to mix legal and extra-legal strategies, intervening with the power of the collective where the law alone does not suffice. Rather than activists being co-opted by legalistic discourse, it is actually the movement which – to a certain extent – manages to co-opt governmental institutions and to unbalance the force relations between governed and governors.' (Fierro 2019, 412)

for generating knowledge 'as part of social construction' (Ataöv, 2007, p. 335), entailing a continuous loop of reproduction as and through reflection. I argue that this feedback loop relies on the organising group's ability to retain their agency and oversight of their productive processes. When professional intermediaries divert control over certain aspects of the productive process, in accordance with technical or material aspects, the social and political narrative of the struggle becomes fragmented, and this feedback loop is broken.

5.5 DESIGN AS PREFIGURATIVE NEGOTIATION TOOL

Prefigurative organisational processes, such as those presented here, defy the predetermination of outputs or results. Instead, design and production emerge as reciprocally informative of one another in a looping process. This process cannot be articulated as a composition of clearly separable components or events, nor of a definitive beginning and end. As well as building knowledge around the processes of social construction, prefigurative approaches to spatial production also demonstrate the possibility of leveraging spatial experience and propositional practices as the basis for, and communicative medium for, collective negotiation, organisation and imagining. If one predetermines a design brief for a particular social group, the social political possibilities of spatial production – as a medium for defining collective identities with common desires, in order to establish new social and economic constructs through the processes of spatial production, management and occupation – are drastically reduced, if not lost altogether. Prefiguration is irreconcilable with predetermination. The only way to engage design as a prefigurative political process is to approach the process of design as an aspirational product, the ends of which are non-determinate.

One practice which approaches design in this way is the Portuguese

design practice Ateliermob,[26] who have initiated a cooperative as a twin practice alongside their commercial outfit, called 'Working with the 99%'. In an interview with the author (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019), Tiago Mota Saraiva, who founded the practice, explained that lessons from early projects revealed the need to launch activities to determine common needs as a condition of social collectivisation and to establish relationships (between individuals in the community and between the community and the architects) before developing a design brief. For example, he described an early design project for a community kitchen on a large site in Cozinha Terras da Costa, composed of shanty-like structures with limited access to services and infrastructure. Saraiva explained that when they began to discuss the design of the kitchen, it became apparent that the residents' main concern was actually the water source that the kitchen would provide. This meant that while basic design decisions were discussed, the emphasis changed to facilitate fast design and production that would create immediate access to water (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019).

In order to prepare for design workshops, Ateliermob have sometimes begun by distributing invitations along with information on the background of the potential project to local households (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019). However, Saraiva explained in an interview in 2019 that when they employed this method in a project to reconstruct a large number of houses that had been destroyed by fire, they sent out 200 flyers but received only a handful of exclusively female participants for the workshops. In response, the practice moved into a temporary office in one of the partially destroyed, unoccupied buildings. They maintained an open door through which neighbours could visit and enquire about the

26 Though Ateliermob operate in the Global North, the neighbourhoods that they engage are often deeply marginalised and deprived of economic and infrastructural connections to their wealthier surroundings. Many of these sites are occupied by international migrants of various nationalities, who struggle to access the same rights or visibility as other citizens.

Images 82-84. Community Kitchen, Terras da Costa, Portugal by Ateliermob (Images Ateliermob.com, page Cozinha Comunitária das Terras da Costa) © Ateliermob and Working With The 99%, all rights reserved

URL: https://www.ateliermob.com/projectos/cozinha-comunitaria-das-terras-da-costa/

nature and purpose of their presence. Curiosity did indeed prompt a number of visits from locals. They began to receive requests to facilitate community events, which began with a weekly pop-up cinema. This expanded to hosting informal lectures from individuals in the neighbourhood every Friday, in which people would speak about their lives in the neighbourhood and their work. During this period, the practice began to establish a relationship with the community and the neighbours found a platform through which they could establish relationships with each other, strengthening a sense of community. Ateliermob later used similar community events to present the work they carried out each week and to request input. They stated that a presence within the community, which created a sense of informality in a new space to share, was integral to the success of the project (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019). They also reiterated that this project had a predetermined brief that was shared by the municipality but that Ateliermob do not have a clearly defined practice agenda in terms of particular project types, nor any established criteria concerning the types of clients that they work with. This stems from their recognition of the need to produce adaptable methodologies that generate relationships at the same time as project briefs, to ensure that differences are accounted for and that all people are equally included (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019).

In other projects, Ateliermob have begun without any preparations at all, choosing not to present any initial materials, in order to allow participants free space to think, propose, and present concerns. Saraiva suggested that presenting materials in initial meetings can tacitly restrict what people may feel permitted to explore, and can alienate those who do not feel able to communicate in ways which match the technicality of the materials presented (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019). This is also an important and sensitive phase, in which the community is sometimes brought together for the first time, exposing internal disputes or grievances, dominance by certain individuals, or

Images 85/86. Open office and exhibition, restoration project for Marquis de Abrantes Palace, Marvila, Lisbon, Portugal by Ateliermob (Image Ateliermob.com)Ateliermob and Working With The 99%, all rights reserved

reticence among those who may not feel confident speaking. Conversely, it is an opportunity to identify important points of unity that can play a part in developing a collective identity, something which is essential to the longevity of projects, which goes beyond the material completion.

In Nigeria, CMAP have also focused on creating or occupying spaces specifically for the purposes of sharing and establishing relationships among communities, as part of a wider project of community organising and urban planning (CMAP 2014) (CMAP n.d.). The organisation has collectively designed and regularly deploys an inflatable cinema screen erected on a boat, which can be positioned at various places along the waterfront, which screens both mainstream cinema and films made by the community about their lives in the site (Uwemedimo 2015). The cinema acts in a similar way to the Ateliermob movie and storytelling space, becoming both an informal place to gather and a platform for telling stories and generating relationships of solidarity. The need for spaces in which to share stories and build relationships was treated as a design project by CMAP, and as a result, the spaces came to generate skills and knowledge in design and construction, as well as skills in communication, negotiation and organisation which were built in the activities they hosted on completion. These spaces came to host activities of ongoing negotiations and organisation but also became part of a growing network of spaces which host educational activities involving different aspects of storytelling for radio and screen. The CMAP training initiative provides residents with formal skills to produce lasting documentation of their experiential knowledges and expressions of solidarity, some of which have

Images 87/88. Chicoco floating cinema, CMAP, Lagos, Nigeria (Images Cmapping.net)

gained international recognition.[27]

Design processes are not only pertinent to the formation of propositions, they can also become a lens through which to reflect on historical and current realities as they are experienced by the collective involved. As a predominantly visual discipline, design can become a tool of ontological and epistemological translation, focusing claims and experiences through the medium of spatial, architectural contexts, exploring the ways in which socio-political conditions both shape and are shaped by them. For Ateliermob, architectural study and the process of drawing can also become a social exercise that can bridge the spaces of the researcher and researched, inviting conversations to unfold that reach into the nuanced needs and lives of those in struggle, either privately or collectively. Saraiva suggests (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019) that by structuring conversations with clients around an architectural survey process, details often come to light which may not have been considered in advance. Rather than using set criteria to establish basic facts, such as the number of children in a household, the number of bedrooms, services etc., Saraiva explained that Ateliermob have discovered that using architectural tools to survey houses forms a more dynamic interface with residents. He described the way that, upon entering houses to take measurements and draw, the process of design becomes a way to explore non-formal relationships that form-based, multiple-choice surveys cannot pre-empt and predefine. People discuss the way that rooms are occupied: whether some are rented for example, and how different uses are accommodated (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019). In these activities, I argue that the home and other spaces of interest can be seen as an ethnographic signifier

27 This led to an invitation by UN-Habitat to screen a film made by local people at the 25th session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council in Nairobi, after being chosen from competition entries. The film won an award but, more importantly, according to Michael Uwemedimo of CMAP, exposed their plight to a broader audience. (https://www.cmapping.net/people-live-here-video-wins-competition/)

of the people in the site, their relationships with each other and to wider society, and to government institutions. The configuration of spaces, as well as the modes and phases of building, contains a rich history, alongside expressions of future desires; for family, work, social status, relationships, security, and ways of life (de León 2021) (Holston 1991).

My own practice has confirmed the different results of such methods, having undertaken a project with squatted settlements in San Andres Bukid in Manila in 2015-2-16 that considered a recently issued eviction notice and potential methods for building on past protests which led to extended permissions to remain, and to assist in making such permissions permanent (White 2017) (O'Reilly 2016). In that project, with the assistance of a local resident and activist with whom I had become friends, and a local political leader and resident to whom I had been introduced, we began with an informal conversation around the improvised common kitchen area in the centre of the site. The conversation had no agenda, apart from my desire to introduce myself and to get to know their situation. As the central space had only become communal after losing housing to a fire, I expressed my interest in the structural condition of the site and the externally unclear boundaries between structures of different types, owned by different people. I sought permission to film the conversation for my records, after which I gave the camera to a pair of children who were observing the meeting next to their mothers. This very quickly eased the atmosphere for all and avoided a scenario in which the group felt gazed upon by an outsider – as the outsider featured more than equally in the footage, attracting the curiosity of the young camera operators. At the second meeting, I brought with me a printed satellite map of the site and asked those present to mark what they felt were important boundaries which distinguished each small area or lot socially or economically within the dense block. After marking shared infrastructure, sari sari stores where water and household essentials were purchased, we moved on to questions about each of the houses, the families that

lived in each, how they had created more structures on the site to accommodate their extended family groups, commercial enterprises, and much more. Quickly, some of the residents decided that it would be much more efficient to simply show me, and I was taken through the site, house to house, introduced to the residents and offered opportunities to take photos and make notes. The conversations that ensued in these scenarios were much richer than could have been elicited with a questionnaire, but the experience also illuminated so much about the dynamics of the residents in the site, the history of its growth and at times a sense both of pride and of dejection, mixing in complex ways.[28]

What was so important about this survey process was that it provided a three-dimensional understanding of the site, socially and also physically. Because the different levels of the structures overlapped in non-uniform ways in all directions, a map could never have produced an accurate understanding of the site's occupation, the different levels of access to basic utilities, such as water and toilets, or any idea of its structural organisation and integrity. The importance of threshold spaces and the blurred boundary between public and private areas became apparent only through these tours, the material registers of which would not be apparent without more contextual, in-depth examination.

Tiago Mota Saraiva from Ateliermob also drew attention in interview to the possibilities for space and spatial representation to become a form of translation (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019). To illustrate this, he described a scenario in which,

28 After ending my interior tour, I continued my experiment with placing the local children in the position of reporter, giving a small group of young children two cameras to experiment with. I knew from the conversations that a great concern of parents in the site was the lack of places to play and the close adjacency to a busy road and so I had hoped the children would document the site from their eyes. I learned that this might have been a fruitful idea had I planned it in advance and had I been able to leave the cameras with the children to collect at a future date. I received a lot of delighted selfies of the group, all taken on the stoop of one of their own homes.

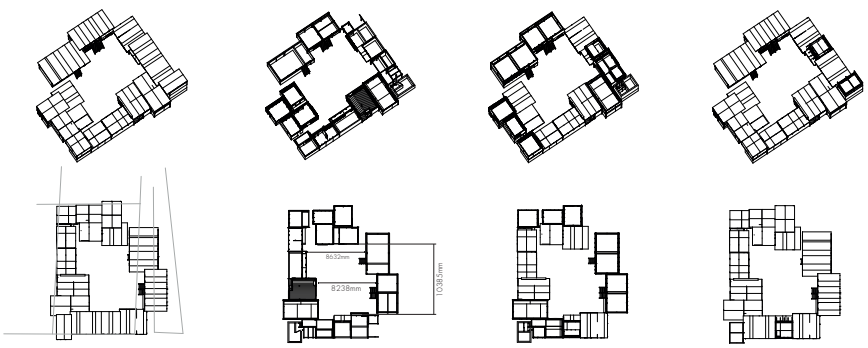
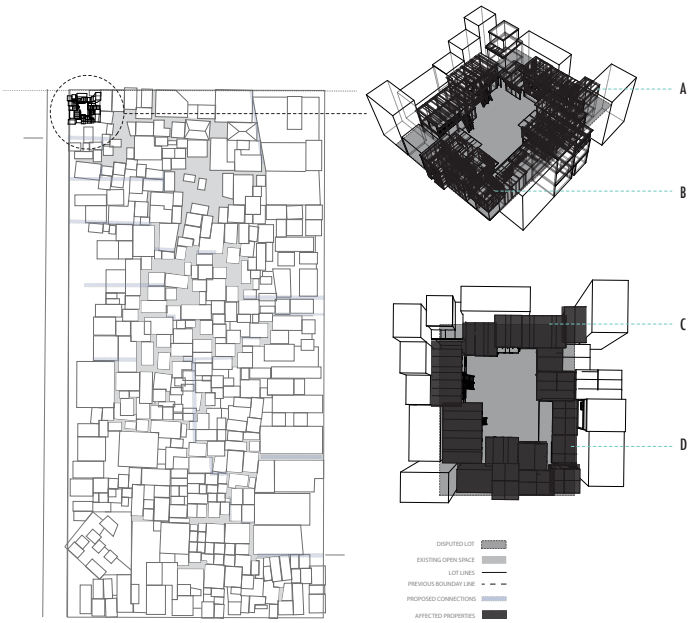


Image 89. Establishing site boundaries through interviews, boundary walking and structural surveys, San Andres Bukid, Manila, Philippines (Images/ project Georgia white, 2016) © Georgia White, all rights reserved



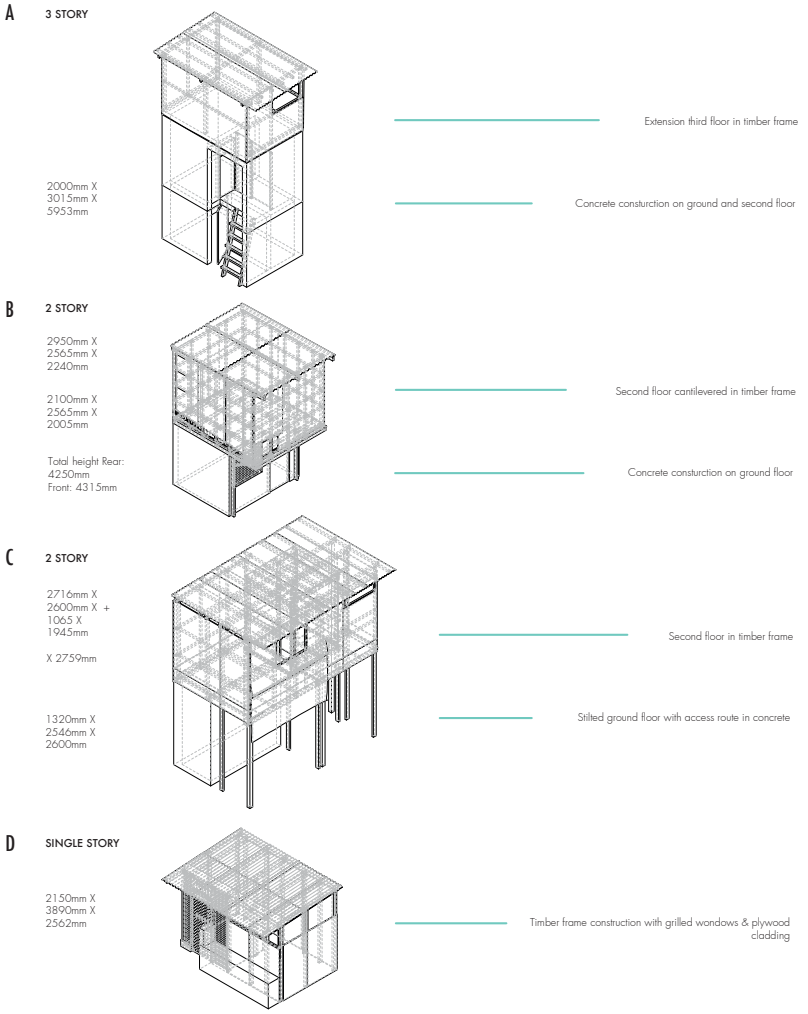


Image 90. Continued from previous page. Establishing site boundaries through interviews, boundary walking and structural surveys, San Andres Bukid, Manila, Philippines (Images/ project Georgia white, 2015-2016) © Georgia White, all rights reserved

during a design consultation on housing reconstruction, a woman directing the design process for her house refused to look at plans or drawings, instead walking through the space, pointing and asking what would be provided in each area. It became apparent that this was a mechanism to disguise the fact that she could not read. In these cases, Saraiva suggested that physical models would be more readable but, where possible, designs were dawn directly on the floor and scrap materials were used to construct three-dimensional place holders of different elements (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019). Within the spaces in question, representational tools can also become more animated and understandable. In such scenarios, design tools, such as model-making, marking out potential organisations, and drawing, can be used to draw collective imagining processes into commonly understandable propositions, or simply to promote collective discussion and establish common goals. In more advanced stages of propositional development, digital tools can also be deployed to facilitate design discussions in real time. Sheela Patel from Slum and shack dwellers international (SDI) explains (30.11.2021) that when SDI federations organise, discussions often unfold around activities which involve drawing directly on the ground, as a way to visualise the size of spaces. Small scale paper and card models are sometimes used to move those discussions into structural considerations but eventually, prototypes are developed in cardboard at 1:1 scale. While the scale provides for a much more experiential understanding of the debates, it also begins to demonstrate structural principles, indicating where reinforcements are most needed. However, using cardboard allows for changes to be made quickly and easily, facilitating negotiation over sometimes conflicting views (Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021).

Such methods accommodate different levels of lingual and technical literacy in an interactive, social and experiential process of collective negotiation. This kind of interactive, visual spatialisation allows for creative debate and provides opportunities to establish and

respond to differences and commonalities in a group. As Stavrides states, beyond language or representation, the actual occupation and experience of a space offers the opportunity to establish a shared understanding based on past experiences and bring these into propositions for the future. In the process of establishing shared aspirations, social movements also reveal the means to achieve them. In Stavrides' words, 'In actual spaces, people can experience the future and the means to reach it. Space, when it becomes enmeshed in prefigurative politics, is both experienced and potential, an actual materiality of arrangements and a dynamic construction of possible human relations that unfold in the present. Space as potential is more like a testing ground for the future: through real-time experiments parts of the future are brought to the present' (S. Stavrides 2018, 345)

These design processes become prefigurative by being embedded within the spaces at the centre of struggle and the processes of collectivisation among the social groups who occupy and claim them. As a result, they become both the focus of debate but also the staging ground for organisation, knowledge exchange, and the testing of collective futures.

5.6 PREFIGURATIVE DESIGN AS EVIDENCE

Whereas the previous section discussed how prefigurative approaches to design processes can become a social activity through which connections are built, or a lens through which ideas about the future can be negotiated and scenario tested, I also argue that design tools and languages offer evidentiary opportunities for articulating social demands and facilitating the expansion of negotiations to institutional levels. I argue that the unique advantages of approaching design as a prefigurative process is that it offers a framework for reflection on current and past conditions in ways that are both propositionally constitutive and at the same time

revealing of the means with which to achieve those propositions. Prefigurative design brings together action and reflection in a continuous feedback loop, wherein designs emerge as evidence of both the viability of alternative future scenarios and their necessity (by revealing the inadequacy of the current paradigm of provision). Further, as discussed in Section 5.3, these processes produce, embed, and reconfigure collective knowledges which are essential to the struggle to claim recognition for other ontologies.

The process of design consistently metabolises and recomposes past events and present conditions in propositional materials which juxtapose possibility with present. It reinvents past and present in the presentation of possible futures. I demonstrated in the previous section that it is when the process of design is released from predetermination and presuppositions about a particular end or goal that it can facilitate unexpected discoveries, concerning not only future possibilities but also present and past conditions. In such processes, the visual languages of design can be brought together with the experiential properties of space to facilitate communication and deeper levels of understanding between different groups who might not share the same linguistic tools.[29]
Despite statements about the value of 'ground-truthing' practices as a method for contextualising the results of urban- and regional-scale data analysis in development reports and guidelines (UN-Habitat 2011) (UN-Habitat GUO 2020) (UN-Habitat 2019), when urban enumeration and assessment is fixed in a standardised framework of numerical indicators at those scales, the data collected and the process of knowledge generation concerning life in the city

29 'space as capacity: Spaces can be pre-figurative because they can show possible arrangements of social relations by way of analogy: Spaces do not simply illustrate or represent social relations that may inhabit them, spaces contribute in the shaping of those social relations. It is because space is both a medium (analogically able to show possible new ways on inhabiting) and also part of the projected future, that space can prefigure and materialize, at the same time, a different social condition' (S. Stavrides 2018, 345).

are separated from the propositions and processes of production which are intended to respond to those lessons (UN-Habitat 2018) (UN-Habitat n.d.). Where enumeration is built into the process of developing future strategies, it becomes more than a means to an end, bringing forward different relationships, growing knowledge networks, and moving the physical evolution and (re)production of space into the public sphere and out of the exclusive domain of the market. It allows for the development of social dynamics though and in spatial reconstructions as a creative process of experimentation and collectivisation in which unexpected socialites can emerge. For example, Inconoclasistas were established in 2006 as a 'social communication laboratory from which they produce graphics (posters, publications, cartographies, etc.) and urban interventions' (Iconoclasistas n.d.) Their approach involves collective mapping workshops which they construct as a process of collective reflection through which to generative new collective subjectivities (Iconoclasistas n.d.) These mapping practices are treated as a collective research exercise, the directive of which is defined by the communities and refined through the process (Iconoclasistas 2020).

When processes of spatial production emerge in and alongside processes of social organisation and collective reflection in this way, there is no fixed end but rather incentives to continue negotiating and collaborating. The same political longevity is demonstrated in the settlements organised and produced by movements such as MTST, MTD, FPFV discussed earlier in this chapter. Because those settlements were built on the basis of ongoing collaboration, negotiation and shared responsibility, they continue to nurture those principles as part of their ongoing management. This is a further reason why design processes which take place within the spaces which are claimed, and with those who do and will inhabit them, have so much greater social and political scope, which endures well beyond any material completion. It is the embedded nature of the process which allows design to become politically and

socially prefigurative.

As previously stated, these prefigurative processes need not be focused on the formulation and realisation of material propositions but can be initiated as a reflective process and leveraged in an evidentiary capacity. Counter-mapping is a particularly potent example of the ways in which embedding the process of reflection in the spaces and social constructions it relates to can produce new social relationships, develop knowledges, and incentivise new spatial uses and configurations. In this way, SDI have been coordinating data collection and enumeration strategies (evidenced in ways that are understandable to, and legitimate in the eyes of, current government and international standards) with lobbying projects for land rights and finance for autonomous reconstructions (Beukes 2015). They have been working with comparative frameworks that can appeal to established evaluative systems, creating standardised collection formats that feed into a digital system for data management (Beukes 2015, 5). This system takes the form of a settlement profile and survey tool that is accessible online to local federations via a private membership portal, though the baseline results and objective of the campaign are published on the SDI website (SDI n.d.).[30] These profiles are created through boundary walking, using GPS markers and photography to note important landmarks which define each area. SDI suggest that engagement with development agendas is necessary to achieve the greatest political recognition, though they also acknowledge that this does generate struggles within the movement to retain their original identity, as situated within the marginalised spaces of the urban poor and their orientation

30 The settlement profiles are standardised on a low level of baseline information but appear to have room for expansion. According to Beukes, the profile 'locates slum/informal settlement dwellers and their settlements and includes the mapping of the settlement boundary. Each profile includes the history of the settlement, its security of tenure status, an estimate of its population and access to basic infrastructure such as water and sanitation. It includes the social, political and environmental conditions, including the scale and nature of informality and assets' (Beukes 2015, 10).

first and foremost towards solidarity among the poor (Patel 2001) (Beukes 2015). However, by using standardised assessment tools in enumeration processes undertaken by the residents of each site, residents build relationships and understandings of legal systems with which to leverage their claims. The intention is to use data collection and the actual process of assessment to build solidarity and shared identities among the communities involved (S. B. Patel 2001)(Interview, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Beatrice Hati Gitundu, Urban Planner with SDI Nairobi 08/05/2020, Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, SDI 30/11/2021)

The use of technically recognisable methods to build comparable metrics is designed to build political legitimacy for communities with city officials (Beukes 2015, 5) (S. B. Patel 2001)and has proven to be a successful negotiation tool, in the pursuit of support for upgrading initiatives (SDI 2023)(Beukes 2015)(Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, SDI 30/11/2021). The use of standardised metrics is also intended to create comparability, which can convey the scale of deprivation in the city, though spread across many specific areas. While the specific details of each site aren't published, the number of sites surveyed in this way and aggregated data on the organisation's indicating the level of organisation achieved in each site, lends visibility to the wider movement as an internationally connected network of locally organised struggles (SDI n.d.). It is for this reason that SDI argue the merits of a comparable framework that is orientated both inwards and outwards, building solidarity through evidence collection and demanding legitimacy through its standard of presentation and systemisation (corroborated in interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021).

Though there are many positives to this methodology of evidencing and it is important to recognise the arguments for maintaining data privacy to defend against co-optation, as argued in section 4.4, there

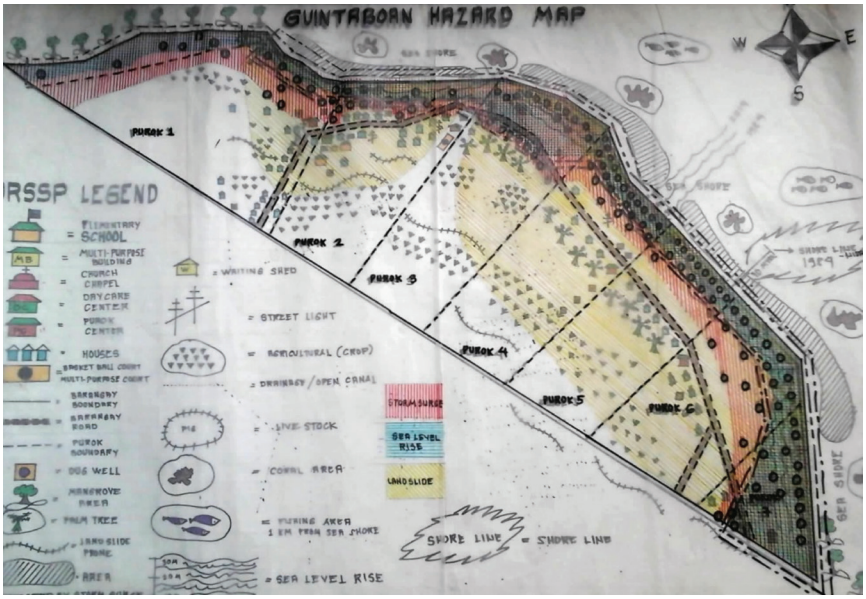


Image 91. Residents' hand drawn map of hazards within Barangay with AlterPlan, Manila, Philippines (Image © AlterPlan, all rights reserved)

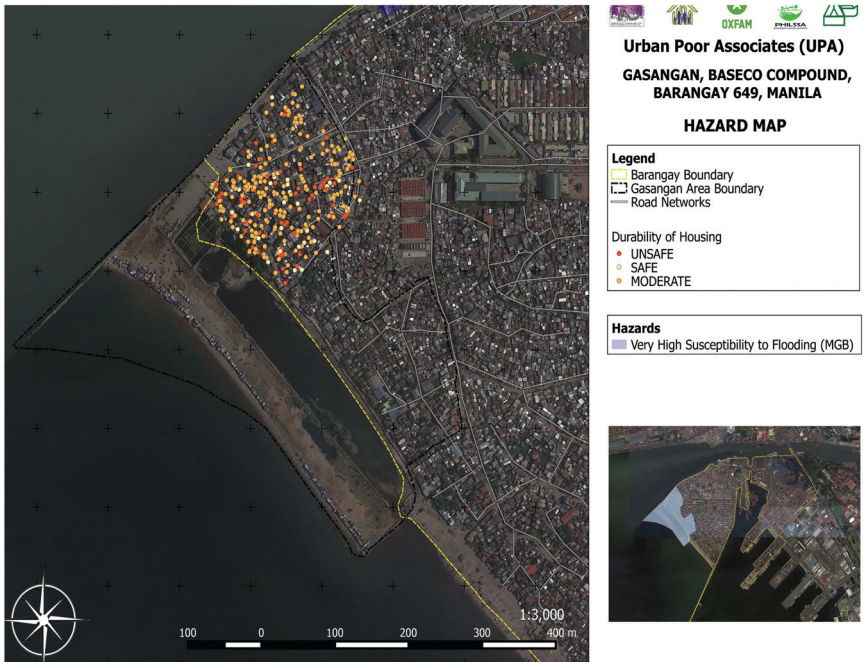


Image 92. Formalised map of hazards within Barangay with AlterPlan, Manila, Philippines (Image © AlterPlan, all rights reserved)

are limitations to the SDI Know Your City campaign (SDI n.d.). While clearly the methods of enumeration have proven useful in their evidentiary capacity in each site of struggle, I argue that by keeping almost all their data private, and without attempting to demonstrate the extent to which federations are multiplying or the number of sites that are under contestation, they lessen the efficacy of their systemic critiques. The enumeration data that they do publish, includes only a series of calculations alongside the site outlines, which lack scale, topography and indications of the amenities that are listed in the calculations. While it is clearly arguable that the location should be withheld, for the protection of the inhabitants, it is unclear why there should be no visualisation of relations occurring within the boundary line, or on it. Additionally, there is little attempt to visualise the methods of organising and producing these enumerations, including the process of boundary walking as a constructive and social practice, and there is little information to demonstrate how the results might differ from those produced through other methods (SDI n.d.) (SDI 2023) (SDI 2016).

While I acknowledge the dangers of sharing raw data and exact locations of politically precarious individuals or communities, counter-mapping produced through methods such as boundary walking and surveys provides the opportunity to materialise and spatialise conflicts in technical languages that serve to legitimise knowledges which are otherwise ignored by policymakers. For example, oral testimonies can be mapped and aggregated to demonstrate the prevalence of certain experiences or to demonstrate concrete links to the spatial characteristics of particular places where they occur (for example, certain spatial conditions such as poorly lit areas with few through sightlines from surrounding areas provide opportunities for assault or theft). These documents need not provide exact locations of individuals or their data but can be produced to different levels of detail or include different extents of context with which to identify the area. If careful consideration is given to the way in which information is

Image 93. SDI 'Theory of Change', SDI [Image, sdinet.org/what-we-do/]

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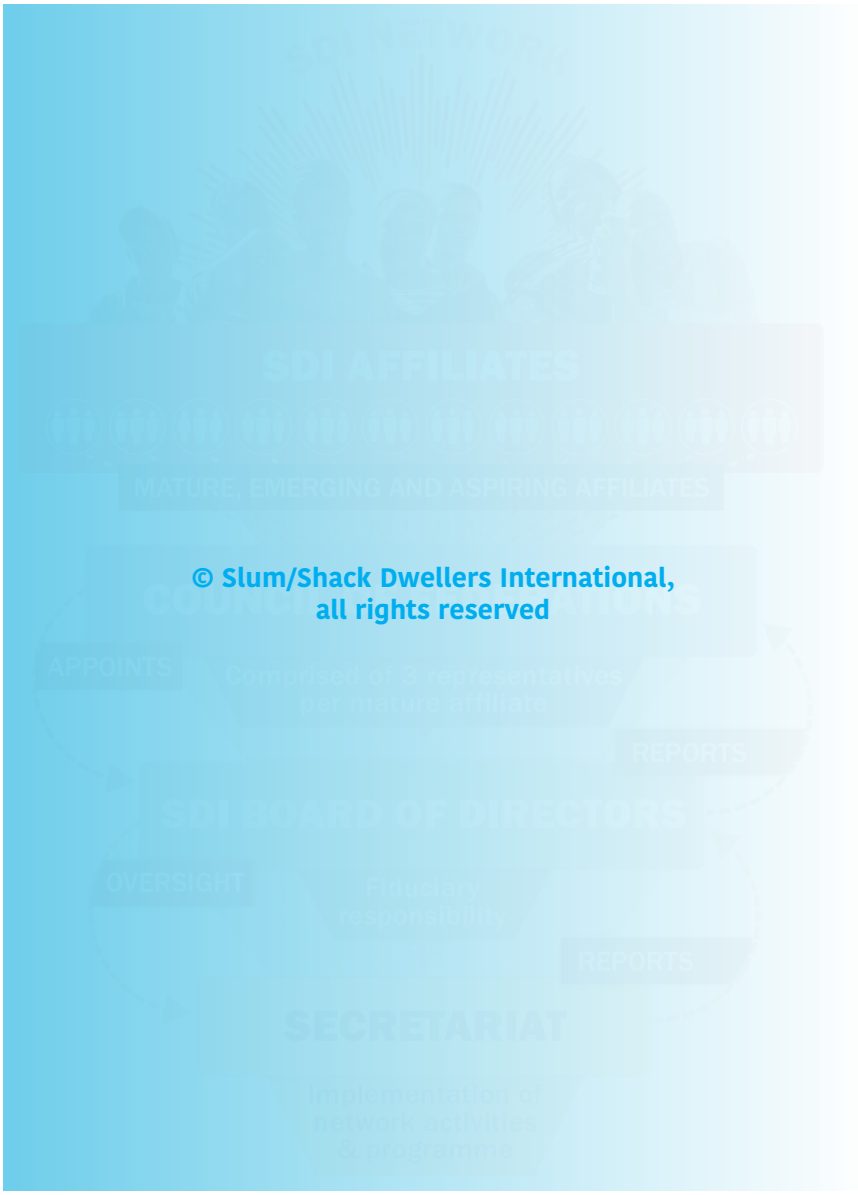

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Image 94. SDI 'Network structure', SDI [Image, sdinet.org/what-we-do/]

visualised in such work, data can be protected from co-optation and misuse and individuals or neighbourhoods can be protected from political targeting. Patel from SDI (Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/202) and Sarah Redoblado from AlterPlan(Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019) both spoke in interviews about the way in which compiling social movement knowledges about geological risk, structural insecurities, property boundaries and occupancy types into technical languages was necessary to gain the attention of governments and funders and the ability to negotiate on the actual method of addressing their claims. In the same way that Chester Arcilla spoke to me about leveraging cultural capital as an academic to gain access to data and files from government agencies (Interview Chester Arcilla, 22/01/2018), Patel and Redoblado clearly expressed the potential for practitioners to leverage technical skills in knowledge representation to assist in claim-making and negotiation(Interview Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/202, Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019).

In contrast to the publicly accessible data on the SDI data portal, the maps produced by Iconoclasistas often overlay information on official maps in such a way as to present a different understanding of a territory. By overlaying un-scaled illustrations and narratives on territorial scale maps, an impression of significance is portrayed, without outlining any particular site, area or community (Iconoclasistas n.d.). These maps effectively subvert the measures through which territories are assessed, categorised and managed, by combining both technical and non-technical methods of analysis and representation.

In another impotant example, data_labe is described by its organisers as ‘a data and narrative laboratory in the Maré favela – Rio de Janeiro’ the organising team for which is comprised ‘of young people living in popular territories who produce new narratives through data.’ (data_labe n.d.) Their projects include a community

communication map, which georeferences projects involving communications and solidarity-building such as local radio stations, debate spaces, and local papers. (data_labe n.d.) On a wider scale, their Favelas Cultural Guide extends similar information beyond the boundaries of Maré to demonstrate all types of cultural activities happening in favelas across the country. Any cultural, artistic or political initiative, space or collective can contribute to the guide by registering their practices and as the entries grow they inform a view of the city which is articulated not by socio-economic boundaries but by events, creative cultures and collectivities (data_labe n.d.) (data_labe n.d.) (data_labe n.d.)

These practices are reflected in their QuilomBox partnership project with Amnesty International Brazil. QuilomBox is a selection of manuals 'built by young black men and women mobilized across several states in the country' (data_labe n.d.) which outlines methods for collective construction and mobilisation around human rights (Anistia Internacional 2018). This project brings together ideas of mobilisation and reflection by proliferating knowledges and encouraging users to register their activities on maps which demonstrate the proliferation of the methodologies through new collectives.

While from the Global North, I consider the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project (AEMP) and its sister organisation, 'Narratives of Displacement and Resistance (NDR)' to demonstrate important possibilities offered by digital mapping platforms to layer different kinds of evidence and include an indication of time. AEMP was launched by a research collective in 2013 to evidence the damage of gentrification processes unfolding in San Francisco. While similar projects are taking place in the Global South – for example the Collaborative Mapping Project RMSP produced by The Observatory of Removals São Paulo (RMSP) (The Observatory of Removals

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Image 95. Andes Secos 2010 'Map of the Argentine area most affected by mega mining, its socio-environmental effects and the support and organizational networks deployed throughout the territory.'

[Iconoclasistas. 2010. Andes Secos 2010. Accessed 09 21, 2023. https://iconoclasistas.net/portfolio-item/soja-en-argentina/.]

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Image 96. Community Communication Map, data_labe

(data_labe. n.d. data_Labe Maps. Accessed 09 02, 2023.)

[URL: https://datalabe.org/mapas/. —. n.d. Guia Cultural de Favelas - About. Accessed 09 02, 2023. http://guiaculturaldefavelas.org]

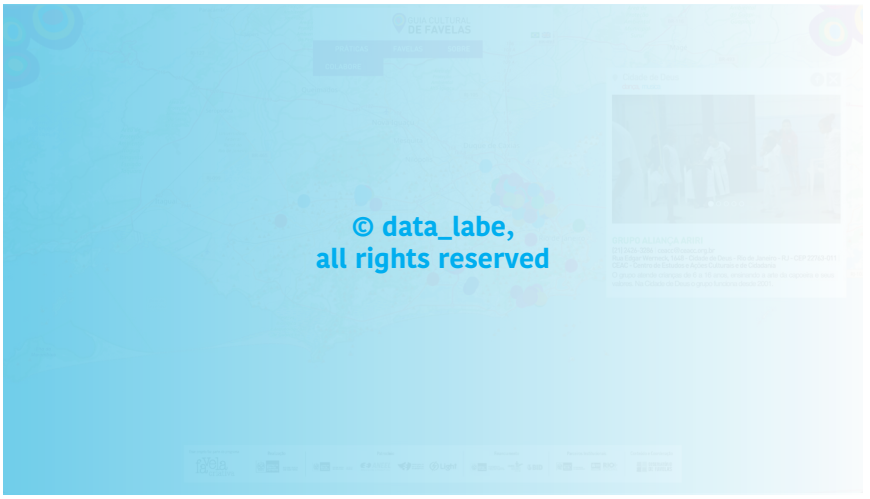

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Image 97. Interactive map of the Favela Cultural Guide produced by data_labe (data_labe n.d.) [https://datalabe.org/mapas/]

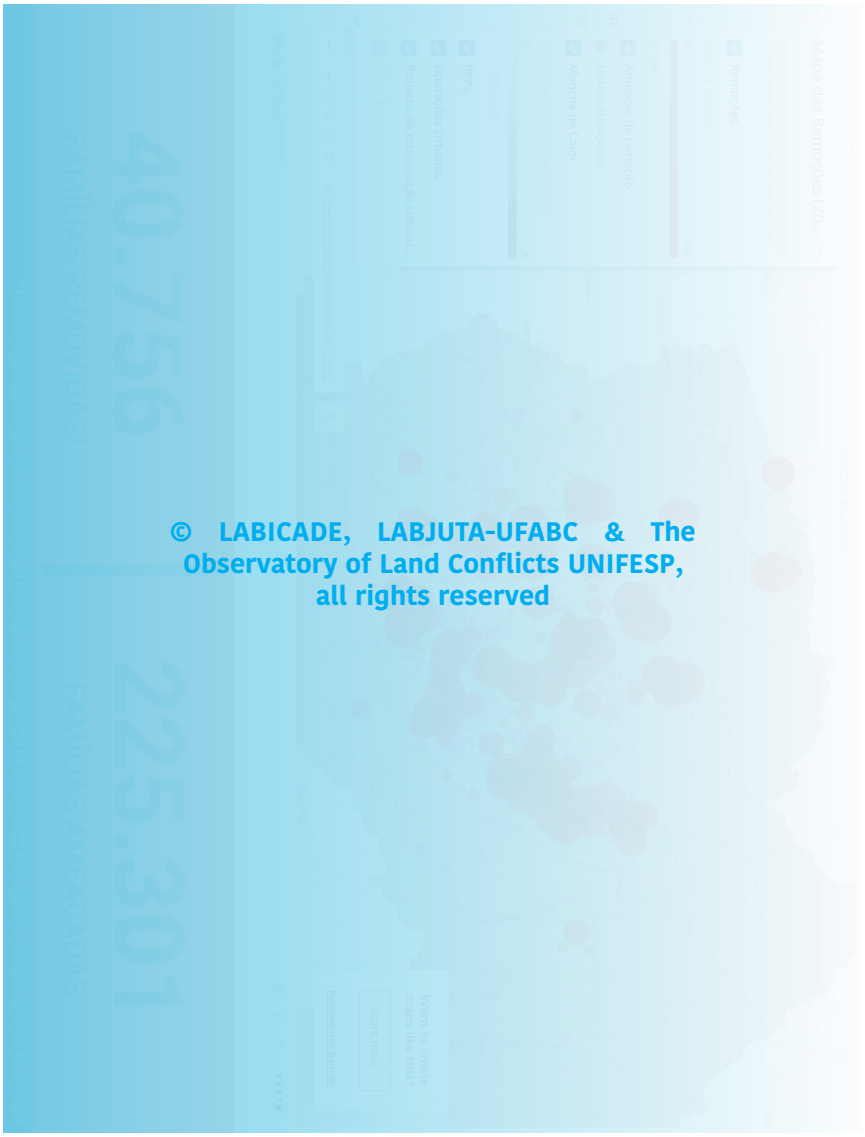

Image 98. Community Mapping RMSP, Observatory of Removals São Paulo: 'The Observatory of Removals, a project coordinated by LABCIDADE of FAU USP in partnership with LABJUTA-UFABC and the Observatory of Land Conflicts - UNIFESP, collects and disseminates information about removals and threats of removal in the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo (RMSP).

The mapping has a collaborative character and has been carried out since 2012. The objectives of this mapping are: (a) to identify and understand, at different scales, the impacts provided by removals and threats; and (b) to systematize and share information to strengthen the resistance of those affected against urban policies and projects that imply processes of dispossession and violation of rights. The mapping is updated quarterly and its latest version corresponds to the period from January 2017 to November 2022.' (The Observatory of Removals . n.d. Collaborative Mapping RMSP. Accessed 09 21, 2023. http://www.labcidade.fau.usp.br/mapa-denuncias/.)

n.d.)[31] – I argue that the layered use of mapping, oral histories and film (Maharawal 2018, 380) in the NDR project are particularly compelling (Anti-Eviction Mapping Project n.d.).[32] Collaborators involved with the AEMP, Terra Graziani and Mary Shi, expand on the questions which have driven the project and their own engagement with it, stating that 'AEMP's members implicitly asked, "What if we mobilized the accumulated epistemic privileges of the academy to radically empower our local communities instead of silence them? What if we used the data and methods of the university to tell the stories of those who have been told, time and time again, that their experiences were "only anecdotal", "missing the bigger picture", or "reactionary?".' They explain that 'It was in this spirit that AEMP produced its first maps, appropriating the scholastically legitimated tools of online mapping and data visualization to document what San Francisco residents already knew from experience but did not see reflected in dominant discourses' (Graziani 2020, 399).

Much in the same way, the aforementioned CMAP in Nigeria have used mapping as a way in which to organise stories and descriptions in relation to specific spaces, and to personalise both the nature of data and the methods of data collection. They have combined survey practices with social events and classes on digital tools, such as GIS, which allows those involved to synthesise information through the use of technologies that they may not previously have had access to, and which they also prove can be used in conjunction with far more inclusive methods of data collection, which provide more qualitative grounding for findings (Uwemedimo 2014).

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31 'The Observatory of Removals, a project coordinated by LABCIDADE of FAU USP in partnership with LABJUTA-UFABC and the Observatory of Land Conflicts – UNIFESP' (The Observatory of Removals n.d.)

32 In the words of two of the founders of AEMP and NDR, Maharawal and McElroy, the method of the NDR project is to 'embed oral history and video work in a digital geospatial interface with the intent of making tangible the life stories and community experiences of people at the forefront of the Bay Area's eviction epidemic– not just as victims but as actors and activists in the process of urban transformation' (Maharawal 2018, 380).

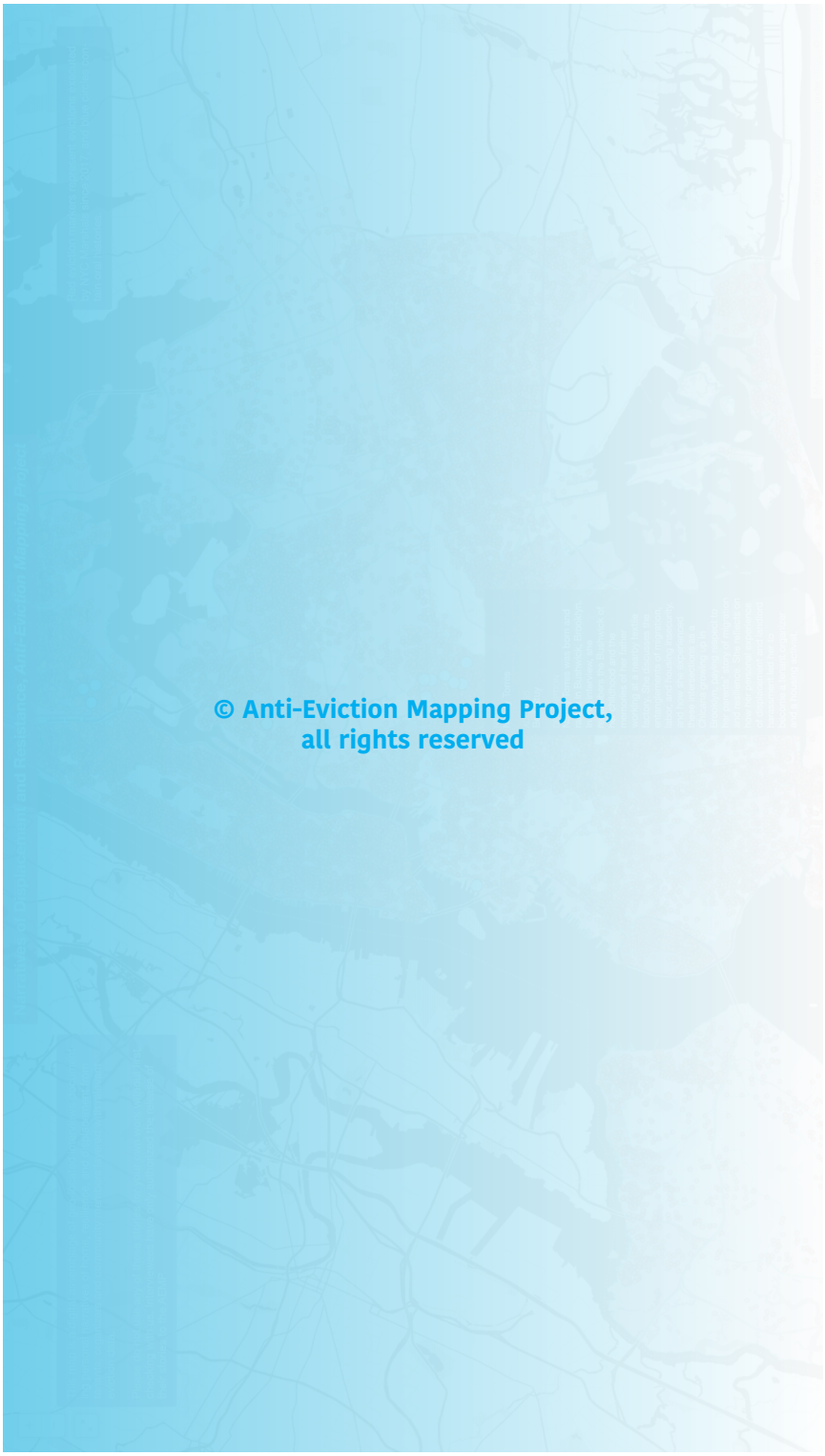

Image 99. Narratives of Displacement and Resistance, New York City - Anti Eviction Mapping Project

(Anti-Eviction Mapping Project n.d., https://www.antievictionmappingproject.net/nyc-narratives.html).

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Images 100/101. (Top and bottom) relocation tracking maps from San Francisco by the Anti Eviction Mapping Project. (Anti Eviction Mapping Project, Relocation Map, n.d, https://antievictionmap.com/blog/relocation-map?rq=relocation)

Through their Chicoco mapping project, the organisation seeks to analyse 'key problems and potentials' in the neglected squatted waterfronts of Port Harcourt, which are often omitted in official maps, to 'give focus to future planning interventions' (CMAP 2014). The project combined workshops and experiments in many different types of map-making, progressing through drone surveys, georeferenced structural surveys and physical indexing (Priyanka Bista 2014) (Tokuebiye 2014) (Bista 2015).[33]

In the same way that Ateliermob describe the process of architectural surveys as opening up a space for more dynamic conversations and non-prescribed exchanges of information to emerge (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019), CMAP argue that this method of urban enumeration is socially important, offering opportunities to explore new areas of the neighbourhood for the resident volunteers, forging relationships, and ensuring there are open communications between residents and the mapping team (Tokuebiye 2014). As well as seeking information, the teams were able to exchange information, offering opportunities

33 The project began with a series of workshops in which volunteers experimented with wayfinding and mapmaking, through what Priyanka Bista from the organisation describes as 'paper puzzles and on-the-ground exercises' (Priyanka Bista 2014). This was followed by a drone mapping exercise, using drone images to add new perspectives on the neighbourhood and to develop contextual understandings of spatial relations which may not be fully visible from the ground (Priyanka Bista, CMAP, Down There from UP Here 214). After the initial geo-referenced maps had been produced and both the workshops and community consultations had taken place, the second phase of the project aimed to verify the accuracy of the maps and to add further details of the structures identified through the field work. During the field work phase, local volunteers visited each structure to assign an index code identifier, which was manually applied to the structure using stickers and entered into a database where it would be 'associated with an attribute on the map' (Tokuebiye 2014). The stickers allowed for additional information to be included on the building marker, as well as contact numbers for resident reference. Each team undertaking the process of indexing was formed of four people, who were responsible for engaging residents in issuing the index sticker, writing the codes into a paper basemap for later digitisation, entering the number and accompanying notes on the structure's observable features into a handheld survey device, and drawing associated infrastructural components into a set of charts (Bista 2015). This meant that in addition to identifying the placement of key landmarks or different residences in the site in accurat maps, those maps were layered with qualitative information that demonstrated the actual purpose, use, appearance, and type of each structure, as well as its material conditions, construction method, state of completion or repair, and levels of access to surrounding services and infrastructures.

for residents of surveyed houses to become involved in future activities, complementing radio and poster campaigns with one-on-one conversations. Tokuebiye notes that the method was also important in rendering visible a process which might otherwise not be fully understood (Tokuebiye 2014).[34] The subsequent data merging workshops used QGIS to produce maps which contain structural data which is disaggregated to a high level of detail, and qualitative information in multiple formats, including photographs, oral testimonies, tenure types, and detailed information on household compositions and backgrounds. Perhaps most importantly, this process made residents of the area, many of whom were previously not computer literate, 'custodians of a most valuable information resource' (Uwemedimo 2014).

By embedding processes of spatial assessment in those of social organisation within the sites concerned, the counter-cartographies which emerge become experiential lessons on methods of collectivisation and social organisation. As André Mesquita (member of (Red Conceptualismos del Sur 2007) explains, 'While mapping with communities and social movements, the artists/collectives mediate a continuous process in which the act of listening, the systematization of data as well as decisions regarding the means to make the maps are constructed, negotiated and decided upon collectively. Through collective mapping, the language, tools and techniques of cartography formerly restricted to "specialists", are socialized and reinvented. They are shared freely and thus expanded to non-conventional uses' (Mesquita 2018, 26). This socialisation and reinvention of previously specialised tools of representation

34 The use of stickers was carefully considered as an alternative to the messy and impermanent chalk marks associated with the national census, and paint, which is explained as being 'strongly associated with the government enumerations that often precede demolitions' (Tokuebiye 2014), a socially and politically important detail which could easily be overlooked by agencies attempting to initiate such projects from an external position. In addition, the inaccuracy of GPS and the density of some sites meant that index entries on the geolocated maps were not input directly from site, but first marked on a paper map which was used to amalgamate the data after the completion of the field work (Tokuebiye 2014)

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Image 102. CMAP: Mapping phase II. Discovering and Describing. (Bista, Priyanka. 2015. CMAP Phase II: Discovering and Describing. 03 August. Accessed June 28, 2023. https://cmapping.net/mapping-phase-ii-discovering-and-describing/.)

Images 103/104. CMAP: Mapping phase II. Discovering and Describing. (Bista, Priyanka. 2015. CMAP Phase II: Discovering and Describing. 03 August. Accessed June 28, 2023. https://cmapping.net/mapping-phase-ii-discovering-and-describing/.)

becomes potent evidence not only of the conditions surveyed and the skill of the surveyors but also of a community's investment in the site and their ability to organise and negotiate shared goals. Ultimately, these processes galvanise organisational structures and protocols which have the capacities required to produce and maintain the proposals that emerge from them.

As previously stated, AlterPlan, with whom I have had the privilege to speak on more than one occasion, usually work with an organised community with predetermined objectives, alongside other NGOs, to create feasibility studies for community housing projects (Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019). These feasibility studies are used to lobby government agencies for the appropriate permissions and funding for their work and the next project phase. Once these permissions are agreed in principle, the project is passed to another NGO, who undertakes the detailed project design and construction management. However, the next phase of the project relies on the capacity of the feasibility studies to act not only as proof of the concept's compliance with existing planning law but also in some cases as a method for lobbying for certain exceptions or actual changes to planning policy, on the basis that such changes can produce the proposed result. Sarah Redoblado, a partner in Alterplan, stated in an interview (30/10/2019) that, in this way, design projects can be leveraged directly as a kind of lobbying propaganda, to demand policy change in ways that would open up particular scenarios which are currently restricted but desired – and required. This means that even where projects remain unbuilt, the design can be utilised as political leverage, the success or failures of which cannot be materially quantified, or predetermined (Interview Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019).

Spatiality is a powerful tool of imagination which lends itself to collectivity and negotiation through shared experiences, leveraged and built upon in actions to produce change. The rearticulation of the past and present through the development and presentation of

propositions – not just as evidence of a problem, or as justification for a predetermined intervention, but actually as a creative practice of collective imagination for alternative futures that simultaneously reflects on the mechanisms which block their realisation – is something unique to the use of design as evidence. The advantage of using space, examined in the languages of design as evidentiary material, is that it can demonstrate the experiential and emotional aspects of events, and guard against homogenisation by embedding representations qualitatively in specific times and locations, and can be used to synthesise multiple perspectives and scales. Spatial experience and articulations, more than simply representing reality, shape it.

5.7 THE PREFIGURATIVE FEEDBACK LOOP OF ACTION AND REFLECTION

History is a central aspect of universalism and its representation in hegemonic visuality. The linear arrow of history delineating the trajectory of progress in the development imaginary, erases realities which contradict either its success or inevitability, and constrains processes which seek to destabilise and reimagine that future. As Lefebvre remarks, 'the simplifying evolutionism of many historians and the naïve continuism of many sociologists, has disguised the specific features of urban reality. The acts or events 'producers' of this reality as formation and social oeuvre escaped knowledge. In this sense, to produce is to create: to bring into being 'something' which did not exist before the productive activity. For a long time knowledge has hesitated in the face of creation. Either creation appears to be irrational, spontaneity swelling up from the unknown or unknowable. Or else it is denied and what comes to be is reduced

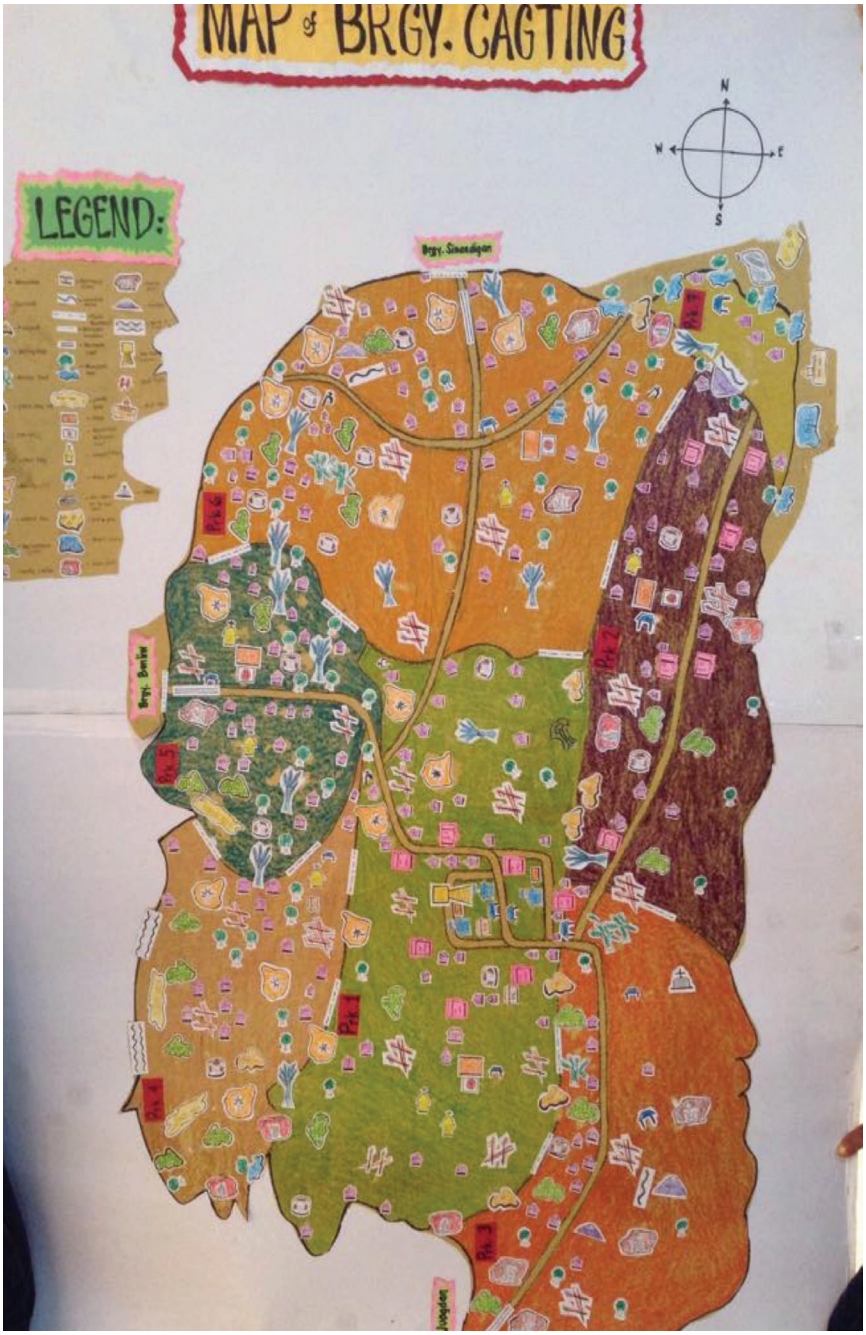

Image 105. Residents' map of points of interest within Barangay with Alterplan, Manila, Philippines (Image © Alterplan, all rights reserved)

to what was already existing' (Lefebvre, Writings on Cities 1996, 104).

Prefigurative spatial practices, such as those outlined in this chapter, challenge the linearity of history and are both reflective and propositional. They present localised reflections on the impacts of global systems, both past and present, and use these reflections to open up other possibilities for the future. It is this reflective/productive interface that makes them essential to understanding the different realities that make up urban life, and that makes processes of production readable and reproducible by others. For this reason, the way in which prefigurative design approaches production through the reinvention of history provides a unique position from which to reinvent the world, recovering the creative practices which emerge out of conflict and debate, and which cannot be otherwise predetermined. Prefigurative approaches to design as process provide methods with which to escape the constraints of linear history which points to a pre-determined end, and challenge the ways in which such thinking mythologises scientific productive processes.

Returning to Lefebvre's description of the near and far orders, local realities are not simply passive conduits for global change, or, as Lefebvre puts it, 'passive outcomes of changes in the social whole' (Lefebvre 1996, 100-101). Rather, no component of the far order can be projected frictionlessly onto a near order reality, a composition which is instead tensioned by 'relations of immediacy, of direct relations between persons and groups which make up society' (Lefebvre 1996, 100-101). Neither, Lefebvre argues, is the city 'reduced to the organization of these immediate and direct relations, nor its metamorphoses to their changes' (Lefebvre 1996, 100-101). Instead, the position of the city at the interface between the near and far orders means that urban reality can never be totalised at any

scale (Lefebvre 1996, 102).[35] However, hegemonic visuality refutes such incompleteness, presenting the far order as a homogenous, universal inevitability. In the process, hegemonic visuality is also able to dismiss or erase the importance and possibilities of prefigurative processes of spatial production. This means that claiming space for other methods of social and spatial production will involve challenging hegemonic visuality and the linearity of its historical narrative. As Stavrides suggests, 'One has to use against myth myth's own weapons in order to subvert or deactivate its power. And this means that one has to treat images differently' (S. Stavrides 2016, 213).

The extension of state power into social spaces of negotiation both legitimises neoliberal dominance, according to Miraftab, but also opens a field through which it can be challenged. This process of expanding the formal channels of participation out from institutional spaces can be used as a method of social containment but it can also expose contradictions that stimulate the growth of alternative democracies and counter-hegemonic practices (Miraftab, 2009, p. 34).[36] As stated by Harvey, the fact that symbolic inclusion does not always or often coincide with 'material distribution' reveals the true face of the hegemonic neoliberal order, and 'creates a disjunction

35 'at best, the city constitutes a sub-system, a sub-whole. On this book, with this writing, are projected mental and social forms and structures. Now, analysis can achieve this context from the text, but it is not given. Intellectual operations and reflective approaches are necessary to achieve it (deduction, induction, translation and transduction). The whole is not immediately present in this written text, the city. There are other levels of reality which do not become *transparent* by definition. The city *writes* and *assigns*, that is, it signifies, orders, stipulates. What? That is to be discovered by reflection. This text has passed through ideologies, as it also "reflects" them' (Lefebvre, Writings on Cities 1996, 102).

36 'dominant power can make itself comfortable on the pillow of hegemony only if there is no firm social and political challenge to hegemony. Consider, for example, the processes of state decentralization. This global trend embodies the state's hegemonic strategy to contain grassroots struggles through local formal channels for citizen participation and claims. Such a hegemonic move, however, creates contradictions that can stimulate grassroots movements building deep democracies from below. Through persistent counter-hegemonic practices, these movements expose and upset the normalized relations of dominance' (Miraftab, 2009, p. 34).

that insurgent movements are able to take advantage of' (Harvey D. , 2020). In this way, design as both a language and process of collective negotiation offers the opportunity to mobilise excluded knowledges in aesthetic, counter-visual presentations. This is required as part of the process of undoing the myths of universalism and, in so doing, making space for alternative knowledges and productive possibilities to emerge.

The sociology of emergences, according to Santos, will require a two-step process, with two aims: firstly, 'to know better the conditions of the possibility of hope', and, secondly, 'to define principles of action to promote the fulfilment of those conditions' (B. d. Santos 2012, 56). These two steps bear strong similarities to Freire's proposition for a 'pedagogy of the oppressed', which is also proposed in two stages. In Freire's description, in the first stage, 'the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation'. This unveiling entails a confrontation in which the oppressed expel the myths of the old order so as to change their own perceptions of 'the world of oppression' (Freire, 2018, pp. 54-55). In the second stage, when 'the reality of oppression has already been transformed, this pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation' (Freire, 2018, p. 54). Both of these stages require that the separation of action and theory be challenged to ensure that reflections are always tested and recontextualised in committed action, as, according to Freire, 'it is always through action in depth that the culture of domination is culturally confronted' (Freire, 2018, p. 54).

Whereas development theory predetermines intervention on a general basis, which provides little scope for locally specific feedback to re-inform global models, when social movements organise around a particular set of claims, which they then proceed to fulfil and maintain, a real-time feedback loop is established between action and reflection.

Still, stability and persistence across such counter-hegemonic practices are required to maintain pressure which can 'expose and upset normalized relations of dominance' (Miraftab, 2009, p. 34). Without strategies for collectivising these practices in some form of wider communications and knowledge exchange network, independent acts of insurgency can leave movements and their members vulnerable to state co-optation or manipulation in exchange for single-issue offerings, as discussed in chapter 4.5. Because imminent risk can force certain movements to accept offers on the most urgent aspects of their particular demands, if they remain unsupported by connections to wider claims that anchor imminent acts of oppression in slower systemic violence, the state can work to break down the total claim by addressing more minimal, material demands independently, and thus avoid taking responsibility for systemic failings.[37] It is because these practices remain isolated by their differences, and starved of the resources necessary to maintain an intensity of reportage on long-term narratives which anchor changing campaigns, that they become vulnerable to dismissal on the basis of the very specificity which they claim.

Given the role that hegemonic visuality plays in stabilising the predetermined ends of the development imaginary, through its command over history, the prefigurative project used to counter-hegemonic visuality must engage in reconstructing history in locally embedded, non-linear narratives. As Mesquita suggests, in

37 For example, whereas auto-constructed settlements may operate illegally and provide affordable shelter to those in need, such settlements remain vulnerable to eviction and often lack formal services. This is where vote-bank politics can become a weapon of organised poor populations, or an opportunity for political leaders to take advantage of poorer voters, who may be willing to accept promises that they cannot guarantee will be fulfilled. Despite this, many such settlements provide the ground for public collectivity that can aid a movement in mobilising beyond sanctioned spaces to claim democratic rights to the city that move beyond material needs (Miraftab, 2009, p. 35).

agreement with Freire, Santos and many more, 'It is necessary to decode the capitalist machinery in order to intervene in it, and to thereby situate insurgent strategies and actions' (Mesquita 2018, 28). Because prefigurative production works in the future anterior, this process of decoding the machinery of oppression is embedded in the process of production. In reflecting on and revealing the hidden or suppressed conditions of the past, propositions are revealed and, to an extent, inhabited in the present. It is with each event that new futures are revealed as possible. Likewise, the exploration of possibility can become a lens through which to view and organise representations of the past. I arge that this reciprocal process of action and reflection is essential to the struggle for alternative futures because the evidence required to support a proposition is created in the process of proposing it.

The creative link between past and possible is revealed in representations which articulate not just the product or result of the creative process but the 'acts or events "producers" themselves' which brought such a reality into being, not as a new spatial form but as a spatial sociality, which Lefebvre refers to as an oeuvre. Whereas spatial products are systematically presented in development policy as apolitical, static objects, the processes through which organisations such as CMAP or SDI build propositions around social political debate, collectivisation and research cases demonstrate the political importance of alternative processes of producing space and giving recognition to the ways in which the processes of production imbue the resultant products with different meanings – beyond the moment of completion, well into the future. Given the role that space plays in centralising power, especially in global cities, the spatiality of social movement claims and organisational strategies is centrally important to the study of urban social struggles, and to any project which seeks to understand and intervene in the social-material futures of global cities.

Still, an urgent practice lies in the project of making connections

between the events, claims and practices mobilised by social movements in order to enlarge their presence in the world by way of articulating them together (without homogenising). I argue that this is a reciprocal project of prefigurative organisation and production which presents the possibilities proposed by social movements for alternative futures as reflections on many experiences of the world as it currently exists. This reciprocal relationship between action and reflection can be utilised as evidence proving the legitimacy of social movement proposals in representations which simultaneously work to reveal the world of oppression which prompted their creation, expelling the myths of the old order in the process of inhabiting a new one.

5.8 CONCLUSION: THE CHALLENGES OF CONTINUITY IN PREFIGURATIVE PRACTICES

All of the uses of design explored in this chapter engage the in prefigurative politics of struggle in different ways. In a way, engaging in one aspect of prefigurative processes reveals possibilities for others. These uses are all part of what can be viewed as a spatial-organisational ecology which encompasses multiple aspirations, tactics and identities of struggle, but which share a prefigurative relationship to space. However, not all are visualised or articulated in the same way or to the same extent and, as a result, cannot be comprehended as part of the same knowledge ecology.

The most important aspect of the prefigurative practices outlined in this chapter is that they offer the possibility of embedding action and reflection in spatial processes of collectivisation and social organisation. In these examples, either propositions are being developed and inhabited which embed reflections of past experiences of oppression and dispossession, or in the process of reflecting on shared experiences and desires, propositions are formed within the means with which to achieve them.

In this thesis it is particularly important to reflect on the processes of enumeration and mapping presented here, and to contrast them with the common metric frameworks used by development institutions discussed in Chapter Three. In the enumeration practices observed in this chapter, rather than assessing an area from a distance, on quantitative bases which correspond to predetermined methods of provision, the process of enumerating and mapping actually becomes part of the means of transforming the condition which is being mapped. The maps resulting from prefigurative processes of social spatial organisation have a bearing on both material and social conditions, at multiple scales and in multiple timeframes. That is because these prefigurative processes of mapping produce not only evidentiary artefacts but also knowledge, social ties and organisational entities which can endure and evolve beyond the mapping project. It can be observed during the reflective process how the spaces being mapped either prevent or open themselves up to different types of occupation and social organisation. Sometimes new patterns of occupation emerge to facilitate the reflective processes, which, in turn, change the meaning of the spaces. At other times, the process or the findings will incentivise active spatial reappropriation and reorganisation, which can last well beyond the reflective project. In this way, each event of collective organisation embodies meaningful change, which can become constitutive of the next event. As a result, process emerges as the object of design in prefigurative politics, wherein the process of forming a proposition becomes and elucidates, in a way, the means of achieving it.

Despite the valuable possibilities of prefigurative design as a materially and socially productive, organisational process, the problem is that, after material completion, the reflections which survive and which are put forward in project reports by contributing professionals remain those articulated around the material result, and attribute any social change to the production of the material

object, not the process of collectivisation and organisation that produced it and gave it meaning. Despite the material biases of developmental rhetoric, in fact the process of production contains both the method and evaluative framework of a project, without which it is impossible to assume the value or meaning of a product, or to reproduce the meaning (rather than just the object) in other contexts.

As Graziani and Shi suggest, it is only contextually embedded work which produces knowledge that is sufficiently accurate for it to be 'politically actionable'. 'Such work can point to interventions, campaigns, and projects that can be undertaken at the local scale by local actors on much shorter timeframes than would be required by state or national-scale mobilizations' (Graziani 2020, 405). However, without a culture of articulating the prefigurative processes which strategise and give meaning to design projects by and for the poor, these processes and the politically actionable knowledges they produce cannot be proliferated in support of other struggles. While the commonalities that these practices share remain hidden, what differentiates and separates them rises to the surface as the prominent tool of identification. Without articulating the connections between these highly localised, embedded knowledge practices, they will continue to be dismissed due to the specificity which actually makes them so important.

Despite the lack of representation reflecting on long-term narratives of struggle and the knowledges produced through locally embedded work, there are events of collective exchange which show great promise. The World Social Forum (WSF), as the most prominent of these, demonstrates the possibility for organisations and movements of different origins, agendas, and identities to come together to exchange knowledge and express solidarities. Santos claims that part of the success of the WSF is particularly the diversity of participants and the principle of protection of that diversity 'from the fear of being cannibalized by false universalisms

or false single strategies propounded by any general theory' (B. d. Santos 2005, 16).[38]

However, Santos acknowledges that, despite the achievements and possibilities presented by the WSF, the greatest long-term challenge that it faces is one of 'absence of a general principle or criterion capable of providing unity and structure to the immense variety of political organizations, struggles and cultures that gather' there, with 'the capacity [...] to transform the huge energy generated therein into new counter-hegemonic collective actions' (B. d. Santos 2005, 16). I argue that such a criterion is necessary if such actions and solidarities are going to endure beyond the moment of a particular event such as the WSF, in addition to making the discoveries and solidarities generated in the event available to those who are unable to attend. However, the challenge of such a criterion is to provide scope for the aggregation and comparison of knowledge practices without obscuring the importance of their embedded differences. I argue that what is required is a way to aggregate such knowledges in such a way as to provide opportunities for comparison, facilitating debate which is focused on difference and commonality together, without allowing the scope of the comparative project to transform and obscure the original knowledges that are being drawn from. This is what happens in development policy, where the final knowledge product is presented as complete, having drawn from other knowledges what is comparably common but, in the process, actually erasing that which cannot be reconciled for the precise purpose to which the policy pertains.

38 'The political theory of western modernity, whether in its liberal or Marxist version, constructed the unity of action from the agent's unity. According to it, the coherence and meaning of social change was always based on the capacity of the privileged agent of change [...] to represent the totality from which the coherence and meaning derived. From such a capacity of representation derived both the need and operations of a general theory of social change' (B. d. Santos 2005, 16).

It follows that a project of knowledge aggregation and comparison cannot be centralised without reducing the visibility of diversity among the knowledge practices drawn upon. And yet, some collective approach to knowledge production which facilitates diffused (non-determinate) comparison is still required to provide some symbolic scale or unity to the wealth of knowledge being produced in struggles across the world, which continues to be dismissed.

As is the focus of this thesis, the problem that Santos suggests lies at the heart of this dichotomy is difference. Difference is at once the very basis of identity and the plurality of the world, and, at the same time, a divisional force which can fragment and atomise. The dichotomous situation which Santos presents is that, despite recognition of the negative potential of difference among NGOs and social movements, none have the individual 'capacity or credibility to confront it'. In addition, the simple attempt to do so can place an organisation at risk of replicating the very situation they set out to confront (B. d. Santos 2005, 16). The response to this, Santos suggests in multiple publications, should be a project of 'intercultural translation' (B. d. Santos 2012), which 'allows for mutual intelligibility among the experiences of the world, both available and possible [...] without jeopardizing their identity and autonomy, without, in other words, reducing them to homogenous entities' (B. d. Santos 2005, 16). Only through a project of intercultural translation will an ecology of knowledge emerge which can provide the symbolic scale required to claim legitimacy for marginalised knowledges, but also a collective resource for those denied the tools with which to overcome their own particular experiences of marginalisation.

As Miessen points out, and as I have endeavoured to show in this chapter, we are witnessing a period in which many practitioners are turning away from the standard model of architectural practice which centres the architect as the narrator of spatial processes

and engaging in cross-disciplinary work which redefines the role of space and spatial production. Indeed, such practices are not only the preserve of architects and research practitioners but are often led, sustained and given meaning by social movements themselves. As Miessen states, 'What was once seen as the preserve of architects – mapping, conceptualizing, making, or manipulating spaces – could arguably be described today as a new "culture of space"' (M. Miessen 2016, 32). This provides important opportunities to expand the practice of architecture and spatial design from its object focus to consider how processes of spatial intervention (including activities of reflection) 'present us with a prerequisite for identifying, effecting, and affecting the broader realities of politics through the application of physical and nonphysical structures to change and alter specific settings' (M. Miessen 2016, 32). I argue that this type of framing can be considered as a prefigurative approach to spatial practice, combining action and reflection. Rather than recentralise the architect in a different area of production, this approach should be used to construct a professional position embedded within the practices of struggle as creative (anterior) historian and committed witness. Such a role will entail utilising the languages of spatial design to facilitate shared reflections and collective imagining, which can become tools for organisation, negotiation and reproduction/proliferation.

6 COUNTER-PRACTICE

6.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR A COUNTER-PRACTICE

As I have attempted to show in the previous chapter, despite the low levels of visibility afforded them, social movements, peoples' organisations and allied practitioners are demonstrating other ways to produce, occupy and live in urban spaces which contest their marginalisation in the neoliberal imaginary of the global city. These practices of social organisation and production mobilise marginalised spaces of the city in their claims to social and political life, centred around the domestic sphere. It is not enough to say that claims to a dignified life in the city amount to claims for housing. They are claims to specific articulations of domestic, social, and economic life, structured around the architecture and placement of the home in relation to its urban surroundings, both immediate and distant.

The ways in which those domesticities are produced are also part of a wider claim for citizen agency, to decide for oneself what constitutes a rich and dignified life. It is a claim for the right to differ, without prejudice. This constitutes a planning and production paradigm which contests the protocols of development and the universalisation of knowledge and aspiration. But these alternative knowledge practices and their results remain fragmented and largely hidden from view outside of the sites in which they develop.

Additionally, the erasure of politics from development discourse, enters funding policy in profoundly clear ways, actively preventing activist practitioners from framing their working methodologies and objectives around the claims of social movements and marginalised people.

Whereas imminent threat and limited resources push social movements to focus on single issues, activist practitioners are pushed by professional knowledge silos and funding guidelines to

pre-define and fix their methods, in accordance with predetermined material outcomes and narrow areas of expertise. The combined result is that representationally, aspirations and possibilities for the future, become divorced from the processes through which they are shaped, achieved and made meaningful.

Specialised production chains fragment processes into phases in accordance with technical expertise, each expert reporting only on the outcome of their role in a project, making it extremely difficult to connect outputs with their processes which give them social political value.

Because each material claim is so particular to a given sociality and culture, built upon shared identities stemming from emotional connections to sites and historical experiences, their material outputs cannot simply be replicated elsewhere to the same effect. Likewise, the process of collectivisation and tactics of mobilising a shared claim are deeply dependent on the context and cannot be universalised. However, without some kind of infrastructure with which to grow connections, solidarity and visibility, each struggle must be fought in isolation, from scratch. This requires each movement, organisation, and practitioner to coordinate all aspects of their claims and build the knowledges, resources, and relationships with which to fulfil them.

Because social movement claims are so specific to their local histories and cultures, the knowledge practices emerging out of their struggles are vulnerable to dismissal as too particular to be widely relevant. Despite contributing to a diverse knowledge ecology on the social politics of the global city and alternative paradigms of production, without a mechanism with which to visualise the connections which draw organisations together as part of that wider ecology, both the ecology and the organisations in struggle remain fragmented, drastically reducing their visibility. I argue that this should be the focus of a counter-practice.

6.2 A PREFIGURATIVE COUNTER-PRACTICE TO PROLIFERATE A KNOWLEDGE ECOLOGY

Just as the pre-determined ends of the universal development imaginary fragment knowledges built around the prefigurative practices of social movements, Appadurai adds that "globalization resists the possibility of just those forms of collaboration that might make it easier to understand or criticise.' (Appadurai 1999, 232). The limited availability of technical knowledges (as a result of linguistic jargon, dominant use of the English language, plus the financial cost of knowledge access) makes alternative knowledge sources ever more necessary. Particularly if seen as a tool with which to claim political agency. Santos shares this observation, introducing the concept of cognitive justice as a foundational condition of social justice. However, he further states that cognitive justice is not a matter of creating 'a more balanced distribution of scientific knowledge', arguing that cognitive justice is not a simple question of challenging one knowledge autocracy with another, to overthrow and replace a dominant paradigm, but to expand the political space of knowledge production to include multiple realities, in equal standing (Santos 2018) (B. d. Santos 2012, 57).[1]

In response to this, in a similar way to other authors such as Rodrigo Nunes, Santos presents ecology thinking as both a goal, and as part of a method with which to overcome the negative, fragmentary aspects of difference.[2] The objective of ecology thinking is to present knowledges as a collective but plural resource, which opposes the

1 'Under the ecology of knowledges, granting credibility to non-scientific knowledge does not imply discrediting scientific knowledge. What it does imply is using it in a counter-hegemonic way. This consists, on the one hand, in exploring alternative scientific practices made visible through plural epistemologies of scientific practices and, on the other, in promoting interdependence between scientific and non-scientific knowledges.' (B. d. Santos 2012, 57)

2 (For Santos, this is one of the core ideas for an 'epistemology of the South') (B. d. Santos 2012, 57).

ideology of universalism and the general theory upon which it rests. The ecology aspect refers to the ability to aggregate the many different knowledge practices of the South in order to render them visible and comparable as part of the same knowledge network, while maintaining the situated nature of each contribution and contributor identity as autonomous, and thus, to guard against homogenisation.

This does not constitute a universal methodology or monolithic project centred on any one organisation or event. The ecology is a way of thinking about the existing knowledge practices mobilised in struggle across the Global South, in order to strategise methods with which to articulate the connections which bring them collectively into view as a network, rather than a point cloud. As Santos suggests, it should form the basis of a practice 'that goes hand in hand with the transformative work of the social movements, putting it in question, establishing synchronic and diachronic comparisons, and symbolically enlarging its dimension by means of articulations, translations, and alliances with other movements. It calls for artisanal rather than architectural work,[3] work of committed witnessing rather than clairvoyant leadership, accessing what is new for some and very old for other people.' (B. d. Santos 2012, 50-51)

Nunes imagines ecology in a similar way, though framed around forms and knowledges of organisation. In his book on organisational forms and practices titled Neither Vertical nor Horizontal, he argues ecology thinking as both a structural and theoretical concept with which to draw organisational forms together. As a structure, he imagines an ecology built upon a network of organisations, seeking connections with others for informational exchange. As a theoretical concept through which to analyse, aggregate

3 *in the sense of constructing independent forms from nothing, in my interpretation

and compare knowledge, Nunes suggests that ecology thinking facilitates open observation of organisational forms, discarding categorical definitions of organisational types or strategies which seek to fix certain organisational characteristics in relation to another (especially in regards to doctrine due to its divisional nature) (Nunes 2021). Instead, Nunes argues that as a conceptual framework through which to view organisational practices and build connections, ecology thinking frames organisation as 'as a distributed ecology of relations traversing and bringing together different forms of action (aggregate, collective), disparate organisational forms (affinity groups, informal networks, unions, parties), the individuals that compose or collaborate with them' (Nunes 2021, 163-164) to different degrees and at different times. As alternative to corporate productive models, in which 'a single agent [...] controls the entire supply chain', he suggests that 'a healthy ecology needs several actors that combine the ability to intervene at certain key points of the chain with the capacity to think the chain as a whole.' (Nunes 2021, 169 emphasis mine).

However, thinking the chain (or narrative of struggle) as a whole, will only be made possible by articulating connections which render the ecology and the knowledges proliferated through it visible. The problem, I suggest, is that the processes of struggle for urban housing rights and the knowledge circulated about them, are deeply embedded and thus not easily recognised as common, or shared. In addition, the emotional, memetic ties to place and the impact that this has on tactics and ideologies can often overshadow pragmatic organisational and procedural commonalities.

The goal of a knowledge ecology proposed here is not general to global struggle but specifically intended to address the ways in which urbanisation in the developmental imaginary of the global city causes social and physical fragmentations which overlap to varying degrees. Because this model of urbanisation has commodified the most foundational components required for a dignified human life,

struggles for human dignity have become entangled with struggles for basic rights to shelter, community, freedom of mobility, and economic opportunity. The financialisation of shelter has caused the differentiation of citizenship between the propertied classes and the dispossessed. Not only are the dispossessed denied the equal right to shelter and adjacent services, but they are also denied the agency and the spaces in which to claim or produce what is required autonomously. As a result, the need for other methods of production with which to produce other possible futures in the global city, is equally a need for other spaces (both physical and political) in which to make claims and develop knowledges that move aspirations forward in and through the construction of new spatialities.

The knowledges which remain consistently absent from development policy documents concern the ways in which spaces and spatial conditions shape social political relationships and in turn, 'spatial potentialities support creative explorations of possible human relations' (S. Stavrides 2020, 343 emphasis mine). Urban space, and most notably auto-constructed urban space, constitutes more than a mere component of neoliberal machinery, it reflects and shapes human social relations, creativity and desire. As Stavrides suggests, however, building and realising the potential of spatial production as a creative process of social construction, is more complicated than 'reiterating that new societies need new spaces' (S. Stavrides 2018, 343). Instead, 'emancipated societies, societies in which human emancipation unfolds, produce and need new spatialities, new ways, that is, to understand and employ space as a crucial factor of shaping human relations.' (S. Stavrides 2018, 343 emphasis mine)

This thesis argues that a prefigurative approach to design as process is required to facilitate proliferation and situated reproduction of knowledge practices in new configurations. I argue that this approach to design can support that proliferation by elucidating connections that render these knowledge practices visible as part

of an ecology. I suggest that in small and gradually bigger ways this can help promote the agency of the marginalised and open future possibilities outside of the capitalist, developmental imaginary. According to Boaventura, this first requires that knowledge practices be presented in 'mutually intelligible' (B. d. Santos 2005, 16) ways, while preserving their contextual and ontological particularities. This will allow for knowledge aggregation (as an ecology), facilitating intercultural comparisons between concerns or aspirations and the different responses mobilised against them (B. d. Santos 2005, 17), in accordance with each historical, legal and political context.[4] This process is both necessary and hugely complex, because whilst knowledge aggregation is required to clarify themes and practices that movements may unite around and proliferate; the simultaneous articulation of differences is essential to the resistance against homogenisation. Therefore, this this thesis argues that what is required are practices and spaces in which to coordinate knowledge exchange, without facilitating the co-optation of knowledge into universal narratives which strip it of meaning and its producers of their agency.

I first propose a series of core principles with which to structure a counter-practice and follow with a proposal which outlines how these principles can be activated in different spaces of action and reflection.

4 This extends to NGOs in the same way as it does to social movements. The responses or means with which to achieve a certain objective includes organisational forms and processes, project phasing, funding types and their correspondence to phases articulated in a strategic way. It also includes information on any differentiated responsibilities among actors involved at different times.

6.3 PRINCIPLES FOR COUNTER-PRACTICE TO SUPPORT THE PROLIFERATION OF KNOWLEDGES BY ARTICULATING CONNECTIONS

6.3.1 Principle A) Embedded Collaboration With Movements (Process)

Underpinning all principles of a counter-practice is the absolute necessity to work from an embedded position in struggle, not from a position of 'objective' outsider. Design in the form of counter-practice should be considered as much a practice of ethnographic research as creative process. Only when the designer embeds themselves in struggle will they be able to understand what has taken place before their own arrival but also reflect on the impacts of global systems from the perspective of those experiencing them. By sharing in risk, real solidarity and mutual understanding can be established between the practitioner and the social movement or collective in struggle (C. A. Arcilla 2019) (Dadusc 2013) (Mirzoeff 2011) (Strathern 2017) (Interview, Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, 22/01/2020)(Interview, Chester Arcilla, 22/01/2018)(Interview Mary Racelis, 26/09/2021).

This will require that the practitioner upholds the following sub-principles.

6.3.2 A1) Recognising Existing Processes

In the pursuit of understanding how groups navigate differences and commonalities within a prefigurative, productive, and highly political process, a meticulous examination of their strategies is essential. The goal is to construct and enhance the visibility of connections among various struggles, while ensuring that no single identity or objective overshadows others.

It is essential to recognise that the tools of design are not

exclusively pertinent to the construction of future possibilities but also serve as instruments for reflecting upon and documenting the current and historical social and spatial conditions of a site and its relation to its wider context (Interview, AlterPlan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019)(Interview, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021)(Interview, DAAR: Sandi Hilal and Alessandro Petti, architects & researchers, London 30/01/2022). Given the predominantly visual nature of design languages, they can serve as a potent instrument for ontological and epistemological translation, focusing on claims and experiences through the lens of spatial conditions and the intricate relationships they both shape and are shaped by. This process significantly enhances the mutual intelligibility of knowledge generated through processes of collectivisation and propositional development.

Approaching design as a prefigurative process provides a robust framework for contemplating the historical context of current conditions in the process of proposing alternatives. This approach is both constitutive in terms of constructing new future possibilities, and reflective in revealing the methods required to realise them. Prefigurative design effectively marries action and reflection in an ongoing feedback loop, where designs serve as tangible evidence of the feasibility of alternative future scenarios and simultaneously demonstrate their necessity by exposing the inadequacies of the prevailing paradigm of urban construction and provisioning.

In proposing that the prefigurative design process requires equal attention be paid to action and reflection, I do not suggest that practitioners should endeavour to make explicit representations of all the processes which precede their engagement with a particular site and struggle. Rather, they should endeavour to express connections to these processes through their contributions. In doing so, they establish meaningful links that render these processes mutually intelligible by contextualisation in a much longer narrative of struggle and social organisation, exposing the full

extent and importance of the prefigurative process. This integration of diverse perspectives and experiences in a process-centred view is instrumental in the goal of articulating the ecology as such, fostering mutual visibility, through connections and collaborations and encouraging knowledge proliferation among various movements and initiatives.

The aim of this approach to representational integration between action and reflection is not to place the practitioner at the centre of the narrative of struggle or to suggest that each practitioner should attempt to determine the form of the ecology themselves. I suggest an approach which reflects Nunes' proposition for the ecology wherein 'The point is not to fully produce but to induce effects by framing collective effort in such a way that establishes a space for collaboration that is open without being totally indeterminate, focused without being exhaustively defined.' (Nunes 2021, 206 emhasis original)

Principle A2) Using Design to Identify Collectives According to Aspirational Differences and Commonalities

Prefigurative approaches to spatial design not only contribute to the development of knowledges on social political organisation but also offer the potential to utilise spatial experiences and propositional practices as a foundation and communicative medium for collective negotiation, organisation, and imagining. These approaches showcase the dynamic utility of architectural design in shaping social interactions around common desires and fostering collaborative initiatives.

In the initial stages of community-based design processes, it is crucial to engage in activities that aim to identify common needs and differences as a prerequisite for social collectivisation (Interview, Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, 22/01/2020)(Interview,

Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019)(Interview, Urban Poor Associates: Full team, 02/02/2018). Even if enumeration activities have taken place within and by a collective, a review of the processes and results will ensure that the designer entering the site and establishing the detailed dimensions of a shared claim or claims becomes connected with those processes, which can be elaborated in greater detail through the process of formulating propositions (Interview, AlterPlan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019). These activities serve to establish relationships, not only among individuals within the community but also between the community members and the architect(s) involved in the project. This phase must precede the formulation of a design brief, setting the stage for a collaborative and inclusive design process and preventing the potentially exclusionary impacts of pre-determination.

This phase can be particularly sensitive and significant, as it can also be the first time the community comes together for such a purpose. The process of enumeration (continued and evolved in relation to emergent propositions throughout the design phase), can reveal internal disputes, grievances, or individual characteristics and experiences that might impact the extent of their input. Conversely, this phase presents an opportunity to identify key points of unity within the community, which are integral to the development of solidarity and collective identity. Solidarity is vital for the social and political longevity of resultant projects, extending their impact beyond the mere material completion of physical buildings.

Ensuring that designers engage in these earlier phases, even if that entails collectively reviewing earlier activities in the renewed context of potential propositions, is what differentiates counter-practice - as a collaborative and politically engaged approach to design as a *communicative* practice in aid of knowledge-sharing - from 'participative' design.

As Cornwall and Gaventa outline, "Participation" in the design

phase of development projects differs significantly from "political participation" (Cornwall 2000, 53). While political participation involves debate on societal ideals and governance, project participation assumes a pre-existing consensus regarding what constitutes "progress" and specialises the means to achieve it. This kind of pre-determination translates into strict meeting criteria and can deepen unseen divisions among a group, deterring people from contributing and resulting in unreliable data, or worse, building the potential for dispossession or disuse into projects before they are even fully realised (Cornwall 2000, 53) (Arcilla 2018) (G. S. Williams 2022).

A counter-practice should be articulated around the understanding that specific experiences of the city can differ from block to block and house to house, resulting in different desires for the future, and different approaches to fulfilling them. These sites are also not homogenous, with both hard and soft borders organising social groups and spaces into competing entities and discrete social centres. social-political borders based on rental types, resources, lengths of occupancy, and social and familial ties, can be invisible to outsiders and are not expressed on maps. Borders organised around resource access and distribution are particularly important to identify as they fundamentally impact the potential briefs for design and the strategic layout, if the project is intended for a large site.

When enumeration is integrated into the design process, it transcends its role as a mere means to an end. When contextually embedded and treated as a collective project, the process of spatial enumeration can foster diverse relationships, cultivate knowledge networks, and shift the trajectory of spatial (re)production from the exclusive domain of the market into the public sphere. This approach paves the way for the development of new social dynamics within spatial constructions, treating collective reflection as a creative process of experimentation, negotiation and knowledge creation in which unexpected socialities can emerge.

Activities such as boundary walking, when combined with cognitive mapping can bring social and political understandings of a site into 4-dimensional perspectives, unravelling the ways in which the formation and evolution of the site can manifest in different types of borders defined by social and political divides, resources, family groups, as well as municipal planning boundaries and ownership status. Combining aerial mapping with architectural surveys in the ways exemplified by CMAP, Inconoclasistas, Data_Labe, Ateliermob, SDI and Alterplan, means that results will combine spatial data at both urban and domestic scales in richly embedded representations appropriate to the intimate social nature of the process.

Methods of spatial surveying demonstrated by organisations such as CMAP and Iconoclasistas make site assessments a fundamentally social process that extends beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge; it also forges relationships and uncovers desires and insights that might remain concealed in other, less embedded observational methods based on predetermined inquiries. When architects engage in conversations with clients framed around an architectural survey, in the space in question, memories and emotions can be inhabited, unearthing crucial details and perspectives that might not have been initially considered. Rather than relying on rigid criteria to establish basic facts and numerical indicators such as the number of occupants in each house, bedroom requirements, or number of houses reached by different services, Ateliermob's approach (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019) emphasises the use of architectural drawing tools to survey houses and their position in a site, as a collaborative project, with the owners. This method also draws the designer into the experience and generates genuine relationships to the site and struggle. In CMAPs approach, housing surveys were a method of contextually embedding the area-wide enumeration and mapping process. Their surveys were undertaken by the community themselves who were first trained in the techniques. As a result,

the process became a method to generate relationships between neighbours who may not have previously known one another as well as proliferating and socialising skills and knowledges within the neighbourhood.

When employed within the actual site of design, representational tools take on a new dimension in the design process, becoming more vibrant and comprehensible. In such scenarios, design tools, including physical and digital model-making, abstract and plan-based organisational visualisations, photos, film and drawing, serve not only to capture collective imaginings but also to transform them into shared propositions, which are already virtually inhabited. These tools facilitate collective discussions and the establishment of common goals, facilitating real-time experimentation with which to bridge the gap between individual visions and communal aspirations within the design process.

Creating open, undefined spaces in which to share experiences without a predetermined agenda can also serve to bring forward voices which may be discouraged by a pre-determined brief, brought by a stranger to their experiences. As demonstrated by Ateliermob's inhabitation of a disused, damaged house in a site they were assessing for reconstruction (Interview Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, 15/07/2019), if practitioners reside in site and maintain a space in an unprogrammed and unscheduled way, they can use their resources to create a public platform. The simple presence and clear demonstration of openness by a designer in a site of struggle can be an act of solidarity which builds trust and mutual understanding. Establishing a consistent of presence in an unprogrammed space before undertaking any collective activities, can also provide opportunities for individuals who may not be confident working in larger groups or who may experience ostracization as part of a sub-group to come forward.

Early activities built around enumeration and sharing of past

experiences can also be used to identify existing skill sets, knowledge, and interests in ways of working and learning in a group (Interview, AlterPlan: Sarah Redoblado, 30/10/2019)(Interview, Kabalikat: Multiple members and community Leaders 07/02/2018) (Interview, Urban Poor Associates: Full team, 02/02/2018). This kind of investigation has allowed CMAP to establish different training programmes in communities of Port Harcourt in Nigeria, resulting in a greater media presence in radio and film, mapping and construction skills and proliferating knowledges in collaborative events both in surrounding communities and internationally.

Establishing skill sets and capacities can open potential for the design process to draw upon and build skills, resulting in designs for different kinds of construction and maintenance. In their collaborations with social movements, Usina Ctah state the importance of design processes which build capacities 'to plan, design and build by the [resident] workers themselves'. (USINA ctah n.d.) They state that adapting construction technology to the mutirão[5] system in which the amount of specialised labour required is minimised both reduces costs and socialises the build process, each time proving the abilities of residents 'to perform tasks previously assigned exclusively to technical specialists.' (USINA ctah 1998) In my own field work in squatted settlements in San Andres Bukid in Metro Manila, (2015-2017) I discovered that a large proportion of residents worked in construction and interior decoration meaning that a project could be designed with their skills in mind for both construction and maintenance.

In cases where sites are already occupied such as in the cases of Usina ctah's collaborations with MTST, structural surveys undertaken with the residents also uncover different levels of construction and

5 a hybrid structural system of prefabricated components and simple material compositions to support semi-skilled labour.

design skills, even if in practice, their abilities have been limited by time and funding.

Using the process of design to continually assess and negotiate differences and commonalities in a group ensures that debate is always constructive and creative, expressed through experimentation rather than oppositional arguments over fixed positions. Using design as a method of social construction is a principle that must continue from the initial establishment of a common claim or claims, through to detailed design, construction, and maintenance strategies. This is because initial commonalities can change and positions diverge as projects become more detailed and expose potential strategies for fulfilling them (C. A. Arcilla 2019) (Laclau 2005). For example, while it may be the case that a group is in consensus about the desire for housing, there may be differences about the choice of site, the type and style of structures, the types of infrastructural connections required, whether there may be shared spaces and what type or how to manage them, the ways in which funding is sought and finances managed, etc.

In contrast to the prevailing notions of 'participation' which are rooted in constructions of citizenship as social and material rights, prefigurative approaches to design as counter-practice align with the concept of citizenship as agency, emphasising the significance of direct involvement in decision-making processes concerned with public service provision. This approach underscores that active engagement in the politics of production demonstrates citizen capabilities to shape the services they receive, as more than mere consumers or passive beneficiaries. Moreover, by establishing their own models of self-organisation in order to facilitate provisioning, users develop unique identities as active agents in their own collective affairs but also gain the capacity to strategically wield them (Cornwall 2000, 54).

Principle A3) Using Design to Articulate Collective Negotiation

As described in the previous section, it is possible to mobilise the design process to establish collectivities around shared experiences and an aggregated knowledge base. This approach sustains solidarities to create the collective strength and capability not only to articulate claims but also mobilise responses independently.

The process of building and proliferating knowledges within physical spaces and through spatial representations goes beyond facilitating negotiations solely among individuals and struggling groups. It also extends to interactions between these groups and external entities, including governments and development agencies or NGOs. This impact transcends the scope of the architectural design project and the contributions of the designers themselves.

As demonstrated in the two Brazilian cases highlighted by Holston in chapter 5, and that of Golibar outlined by Arabindoo that I referred to in chapter 3[6] (all of which were struggles against imminent eviction from auto-constructed settlements), one can see a pattern of tactical, collective approaches to land-based conflicts, emerging from competencies built during everyday experiences of struggle for a good life in marginalised areas of the city.[7] Auto-construction

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6 In an example provided by Arabindoo, in 2011, at the height of protests against demolition for a group of tenement dwellers in Golibar, India, a priority demand emerged for the government to recognise 'and declare [19 of the protesting settlements] as "slums"', despite the negative social implications of such classification. This was because declaring the settlements as such would make them legally 'eligible for redevelopment' within the provisions of the 'Maharastra Slums Act, 1971' and would thereby, prevent 'arbitrary demolition' by the state (Arabindoo 2011, 642).

7 'In the autoconstructed city, these very same historical sites of differentiation fueled the irruption of an insurgent citizenship that destabilized the differentiated, as the urban poor gained political rights by becoming functionally literate, established claims to property through house building, established rights to urban infrastructure, made law an asset through their struggles with eviction, became modern consumers, and achieved personal competence through their experience of the city. These achievements validated their standing as citybuilders. Moreover, they produced an unprecedented involvement in law that made their leaders confident to confront justice officials with legal reasoning.' (Holston 2009, 265)

itself, either as an individual or collective act, is born of personal necessity but is inherently a research practice. When mobilised collectively, this knowledge grows new civic identities, claims, and methods of articulating claims to others.

The socialisation of expert knowledges and reproduction in new hybrid forms is apparent in prefigurative processes of design and organisation, the importance of which is further demonstrated in the practices of organisations such as USINA CTAH (USINA ctah n.d.), AlterPlan, SDI, MTST (MTST n.d.), MST and MTD (MTD Integrantes "Anibal Verón" 2007).

The method of community-led enumeration proliferated among SDI federations has proven an effective means for residents to establish legitimacy in their negotiations with governments, sometimes leading to initiatives for urban upgrading (Interview Sheela Patel 30/11/2021 and Interview with Beatrice Hati Gitundu 08/05/2020). This success has prompted SDI to advocate for a comparable site assessment framework that operates both internally and externally, fostering solidarity through the process of evidence collection while demanding legitimacy through standardised presentation and systemisation (Beukes 2015).

This process of enumeration evolves into a collective research project, providing participants with strategic insights into government land management frameworks and honing their skills in data collection and evidence presentation to support their claims (Beukes 2015, 8). This approach finds parallels in the enumeration projects undertaken by CMAP and AlterPlan.

By utilising spatial assessment processes as a way to catalyse social organisation and knowledge sharing within the targeted sites, the resulting counter-cartographies not only portray spatial conditions, uses, and potentials of the site but also reflect the organisational methods with which to extend the process into propositions.

As André Mesquita explains, "Through collective mapping, the language, tools, and techniques of cartography formerly restricted to 'specialists' are socialized and reinvented. They are shared freely and thus expanded to non-conventional uses" (Mesquita 2018, 26). This socialisation and reinvention of specialised tools of analysis and representation serve as compelling evidence not only of the accuracy of the analysis and validity of claims but also highlighting the extents of collective knowledge, commitment, and proficiency in methods of organisation and negotiation.

As Sarah Redoblado of Alterplan outlined in an interview (Interview, AlterPlan: Sarah Redoblado
30/10/2019), by utilising previously specialist tools, there is little room for government officials to dismiss information presented to them. This was echoed by Sheila Patel from SDI (Interview, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021), who suggested that by making data comparable to other assessments and assessment methods, they are able to articulate their competency for data analysis while arguing the merits of other analytical methods by presenting them together as a type of cross-contextualisation (Beukes 2015).

In many instances, social claims are articulated propositionally, often accompanied by concrete actions that illustrate a knowledge base and organisational competence capable of sustaining consistent 'counterpressuring forces' in the realm of social interest (De Souza, 2006, p. 328). These practices demonstrate collective abilities not only to criticise and prove the failures of development and state-led planning, but also to imagine, plan and produce solutions (de Souza 2006, 327). The propositional aspect of claims elevates the collective capacity to negotiate, not just the form of services provided but the ways in which they are provided and later managed. These propositions, by demonstrating not only a material desire but collective ability to negotiate, plan, imagine, strategise, and produce, elevate discourse about 'participation' from the sphere

of client-producer relations to the domain of politics (Interview, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021).

These processes of communalising and proliferating knowledge through a reciprocal approach to site assessments and design evolution can yield outcomes that extend beyond the material objectives. The act of designing in such a deeply embedded and collective manner nurtures social and emotional bonds and builds confidence in the discovery that personal hardships are not unique but can become catalysts for deep solidarities, which, in turn, means that they can be collectively contested (Freire, 2018) (Nail, 2012) (Holston, 2009).

This prefigurative process is deeply reflective of Freire's proposition for a pedagogy of the oppressed, which joins two phases in a reciprocal loop of action and reflection. In Freire's outline, in the first phase, the oppressed uncover the true nature of oppression and in through that praxis, commit to transforming it. In the second, once the transformation has taken place, this pedagogy is no longer relegated to the use of the oppressed and becomes the property of all in a continuous quest for liberation. Both stages involve confronting the culture of domination through deep action, first by changing how the oppressed perceive oppression and later by dispelling old order myths lingering in the new structure emerging from the transformation (Freire 2018, 54-55). When developed in collective and embedded ways, these knowledges and the social structures that they reinforce become as important an output of a project as any physical structure (Graziani 2020, 408).

Stavrides further emphasises the socially transformative potential of sharing, not only of knowledge but of investment and resources, especially when it extends beyond the process of claim-making into the production process itself, requiring personal investments of time and labour. This transformation gains even greater significance when the project's political sustainability requires ongoing negotiation

and collective care by its inhabitants. When spaces are collectively managed and maintained rather than divided into units of private ownership, they become a lasting expression of what it means to create and share within a community of equals. In this way, prefigurative approaches to design which provide structures for ongoing negotiation can move the process of housing provision beyond the constructs of private property, challenging individual notions of ownership, appropriation, knowledge, and opportunity. Commoning, in this way, works to connect private aspirations and knowledges with circuits of sharing, creating a collective resource that is both physical and intellectual. When a group have built a collective knowledge base and solidarity around the experience of struggle, organisation, and collective claims, those knowledges can be maintained, drawn upon and evolved in future negotiations. The process of constructing collective power around a shared burden, transformed into shared resource, as Stavrides suggests, 'does not erase differences within a neighbourhood but provide[s] them with common ground, (made common by negotiation among equals) on which to be exercised (Stavrides, 2020, p. 143).

Principle A4) Guarantee That Articulation and Visualisation of Propositions is Undertaken in Ways That Evidence the Processes Which Make Them Meaningful.

Hegemonic visuality is fundamental to the longevity of the development model. It is composed of both rhetorical attacks on poverty and auto-construction by the poor, and the concomitant mobilisation of 'poverty' aesthetics, portraying auto-constructed settlements as dirty, degenerate spaces characterised by criminality and despair. This derogatory, dehumanising visuality of the urban poor, is presented in direct contrast to the aspirational aesthetics of development and the global city, as if to suggest that the alternative to the utopian imaginary of development, is the dystopian reality of the 'slum'. It supports the treatment of the poor, and squatters of various different types and circumstances as objects of development,

rather than as human beings and citizens with political agency (Freire 2018) (Ferguson 1994) (Fanon 1961). Mirzoeff suggests that both narratives of disparagement and of aspiration are important to the construction of the universal imaginary as a hegemonic visuality, and assigns them definitions as visuality 1 and visuality 2:

'If Visuality 1 is the domain of authority, Visuality 2 would be that picturing of the self or collective that exceeds or precedes that subjugation to centralized authority. Visuality 2 was not invisible to authority and has been figured as the barbaric, the uncivilized, or, in the modern period, the "primitive." (Mirzoeff 2011, 23-24)

As well as mobilising reductive taxonomies against this "primitive" visuality, Mirzoeff explains that it is also actively erased or suppressed; 'enacted in the colonial and imperial domains that Conrad called the "blank spaces of the map," the blind spots of visuality.' (Mirzoeff 2011, 24)[8]

I contend that urban research has a tendency to focus on visuality 2, but without engaging a counter-visuality with which to overcome its status as either "primitive" or absent. Research which attempts to engage in critique of hegemonic visuality without engaging the aesthetics of struggle, fails to render the narratives being promoted comparable or mutually intelligible in terms of scale, context and objectives. I argue that this is due to two things: fear of acting as intermediary representative to claims which are not one's own, and incapacity resulting from specialist knowledge silos.

As Jiménez eloquently describes, 'to this day, investigations into how the urban is rendered visible as method and field site remain

8 'There are multiple forms of Visuality 2, because that difference "lives in intimate and plural relationships to [authority], ranging from opposition to neutrality."[65] The two modes of visuality are not opposed in a binary system, but operate as a relation of difference that is always deferred. So not all forms of Visuality 2 are what I am calling countervisuality, the attempt to reconfigure visuality as a whole.' (Mirzoeff 2011, 24)

conspicuously absent from the literature. The relation between the field as empirical site and the field as theoretical project remains largely bracketed and unexplored. We have come to naturalize scholarly accounts as speaking about a place (geographical or epistemic), paying little or no attention to how such places must themselves be drawn together as empirical and pragmatic problems.' (Jiménez 2017, 454)

While there may be no possible universal theory or method with which to draw these sites together in as empirical and pragmatic problems without becoming another tool of oppression itself, I argue in agreement with Jiménez, that perhaps what needs to travel or proliferate is not a particular method or goal, but an aesthetic sensibility; an aesthetic practice orientated towards translating the experiences of the city and the knowledge practices emerging out of its continual transformation (Jiménez 2017, 452).[9]

Stavrides emphasises that in many ways the struggle for the right to the city can also been viewed as struggles over representation. Representations are more than just interpretations or projections of existing realities; they are directly linked to ongoing struggles that shape reality. These struggles are mobilised through both material interventions and battles over how particular spaces are named, inhabited and understood. These struggles indicate that people are not merely passively cognizant of the social significance of places they are 'assigned to' by society but also learn to inhabit and imagine spaces that may not yet exist or are not part of their current reality, through shared forms of representation. As de León also notes, these struggles also highlight that representations, as products of an aesthetic practice, do not merely reflect a given

9 ' What if it was not the method itself that traveled as much as a particular cultural sensorium and material aesthetic? What if it was an emerging experience of the city as method that one encountered everywhere—if method was an infrastructure of feeling for the city?' (Jiménez 2017, 452)

reality but shape it, structuring perceptions, feelings, habits, behaviours, relationships, memories, and desires. (S. Stavrides 2018, 209) (de León 2021, 5) As such, aesthetics themselves constitute a crucial aspect of struggle which both articulates and facilitates the prefigurative labour involved in negotiating, imagining, 'creating and defending, another social reality.' (de León 2021, 4)

When we look particularly at the ways in which struggles are articulated around claims for the right to the city, as claims to different kinds of domestic life, the spatial and material nature of these claims means that they are already aesthetic. They are already demonstrative of visuality 2. What remains is to connect them in ways which contest their subjugation to centralised authority, thus activating them as counter-visuality. As I have attempted to demonstrate in this thesis, it is not the case that professional interventions are required to realise the possible futures that social movements are struggling for. As de León suggests, these possibilities are 'already being built in the interstices of the dominant capitalist order,' reconstructing the arc of history in local ways. 'These movements organize, and our task, then, is to defend, strengthen, affirm, and expand it.' (de León 2021, 8)

In order to do that, I suggest that a counter-practice - rather than become concerned with creating an all-encompassing taxonomy of struggle or attempting to pull different representations together in place or form - should be concerned with articulating the connections between the different events in the prefigurative process. These connections should be articulated in ways which engage the particular cultural aesthetic upon which collective identities are constructed in each struggle and in accordance with the experiences of the city that have collectivised it.

This reflective practice is very much predicated on the premise that reflection should be a process of asking questions of a given situation which are not pre-defined. The aspiration should not be

to confirm a proposition or hypothesis which pre-exists the social process but to allow questions to form in and of the process. In this way, the prefigurative should sit in direct opposition to the notion of pre-determined ends and as such, the process of knowledge production should not be based around preconceived ideas about how each struggle might fit into or even influence the wider ecology.

As Nail suggests:

'Instead of asking how a political event further articulates the becoming of a pre-given 'end of history', we should ask instead, what are the relative blockages, anticipations and mixed political processes at work in a given event, how do future events transform those of the past and present, and how do those of the past transform those of the future? That is, what is the relative mixture of the event's political anticipations and repressions and how can we avoid the dangers of representation while creating a constructive alternative? (Nail, 2012, pp. 48-49)

None of the materials produced in the examples given in this thesis seek to represent an entire process or reality which is in the process of transformation in one form, place or under any single authorship. They do not homogenise or utilise reductive categories which would be required to do so. The specificity of processes designed to produce evidence and represent resultant propositions demonstrate the importance of articulating and negotiating difference as recognition of political complexity in the auto-production of affordable housing. However, considered individually, the materials produced in these processes – such as enumeration in the form of maps, numerical data and structural surveys, organisational principles expressed in manifestos or method statements, meeting minutes, and propositions presented in site maps and building layouts, even photographs and films – are less consequential if they are not presented alongside each other and representationally linked.

Additionally, the actions themselves which lead to enumeration, organisational and propositional materials are often left unrepresented, despite constituting essential links in the prefigurative process. It is for this reason that I argue for a greater depth of reflection on process, alongside the evidentiary materials which result at each point. These reflections need not assume an ability to summarise or connect all events or contributions in one place but should connect action and reflection at each point of evidentiary production. Only by articulating connections which embed events or knowledge products in their prefigurative processes will the significance of each individual event or condition be made mutually intelligible as part of a non-linear chain of transformation and production. As Lefebvre states:

'Reflection emphasizes articulations so that delineations do not disarticulate the real but follow articulations. The methodological rule is to avoid confusion in an illusory continuity as well as separations or absolute discontinuities. Consequently, the study of articulations between the levels of reality enables us to demonstrate the distortions and discrepancies between levels rather than to blur them.' (Lefebvre 1996, 105 emphasis mine)

The hybrid forms of evidence which marry global and local scales (or what Lefebvre refers to as far and near order perspectives) are an integral part of this method. The action/reflection interface is what makes this multi-scalar approach viable.

The blind spots or absences in knowledges disseminated in development policy relate to the ways in which theory is made actionable and implemented at the local scale. As such, it is only by reflecting directly on actions in each context of implementation that this knowledge can be retrieved. But it is also only by contextualising this locally embedded action research in the global scale at which theory is reproduced that it is made mutually intelligible and as

such, is able to effectively critique the machine which had rendered it absent. This is what turns all the different expressions of visuality 2, into a counter-visuality, which actively contests the domination of visuality by international powers, by claiming the autonomous ability to decide what should be visible in each event, and what aspects of events or conditions should be considered common or different.[10]

The most powerful representations of these hybridised knowledge practices come in the form of counter-maps. Counter-maps are powerful because they combine several evidentiary capacities. Firstly, they are demonstrative of capacities to utilise and socialise otherwise expert knowledges and the analytical tools with which to represent them. Secondly, maps which utilise accurate scales are immediately recognisable and comparable. By making them comparable with maps used to shape policy dialogues, they expose the contradictions and failures of economic logics which have produced their marginality and invisibility in the first place. Not only do they carry this outward facing capacity, but inwardly, they can be used to expose previously concealed relations of domination and networks of power, enabling them to be confronted. (Mesquita 2018, 26)

While it is important to recognise the dangers of co-optation and misrepresentation which mapping presents, mapping itself isn't what opens doors to knowledge co-optation. It is the ways in which maps embed and represent specific types of data and the ways in which data can be extracted from the maps. It is also important to

10 'Countervisuality proper is the claim for the right to look. It is the dissensus with visuality, meaning "a dispute over what is visible as an element of a situation, over which visible elements belong to what is common, over the capacity of subjects to designate this common and argue for it."[66] The performative claim of a right to look where none exists puts a countervisuality into play. Like visuality, it interfaces "formal" and "historical" aspects. The "right" in the right to look contests first the "right" to property in another person by insisting on the irreducible autonomy of all citizens.' (Mirzoeff 2011, 24)

remember arguments from people such as Arabindoo concerning the government mapping practices in India as a covert method of redlining urban poverty, and Shelia Patel from SDI (Interview, Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, 30/11/2021) concerning the extraction of community data by academics and NGOs. Both of these arguments relate to the exclusivity of these kinds of knowledges and the importance of socialising the actual use of these tools in order to democratise the ways in which data is collected, represented and shared.

Counter-maps guard against co-optation by concealing numerical data which contributes to and result from their creation, and embedding non-generalisable, aesthetic representations within them instead. For example, CMAP's enumeration initiatives were able to produce detailed aerial maps which were embedded with material studies in the form of photographs, drawings and descriptive writing. Similarly, (in an example from the global north but extremely relevant for the discussion on aesthetic practices) NDR, a sister initiative to the Mapping against eviction project (MAEP) in San Francisco has produced an archive of oral histories which are co-located on a digital map demonstrating the historic geography of evictions in the area. As Graziani and Shi describe, this layered digital interface 'thus serves to link narrators' individual experiences of displacement and resistance to their larger social, political, and geographical contexts while also building solidarity among project participants.' (Graziani 2020, 401)

The political significance of presenting embedded knowledge practices and experiences of struggles at urban and regional scales is that it enables lobbying at these scales, without requiring individual collectives to homogenise their experiences and exact claims. This elevates the evidentiary capabilities of prefigurative design in challenging development dominance at the international scale, and detrimental planning policies at the urban scale.

By aggregating struggles in terms of their geographic spread while maintaining their differences in the ways they articulate their particular experiences and claims, their political impact can be substantially enhanced. For instance, when people can argue that different struggles on distinct sites, each seeking completely different material provisions and methods of fulfilment depend on the same policy changes, their arguments gain strength in demonstrating the plurality of possibilities opened by removing a single barrier. It demonstrates that these changes will affect a larger number of people across various communities and demographics.

By combining different scales of representation, these initiatives are able to make aesthetic connections between a critique of global systems on the one hand, and methods with which to challenge them on the other. In addition, they are able to challenge hegemonic domination over the arc of history by connecting prefigurative processes with the past experiences which mobilised them, and the propositions which they lead to. As de León suggests, these become counterhegemonic aesthetic practices which contend with the foreclosure of possibilities by creating 'perceptual-epistemological openings that make it possible to perceive another reality whose very existence is obscured within dominant ideology.' (de León 2021, 5) However, these possibilities are opened to others outside each particular struggle only when the processes of formulating and organising around them can become part of that aesthetic. By utilising multi-scalar, multi-temporal representations which elucidate the *processes* that connect the reality of oppression to the emergent futures that result from its transformation, the prefigurative reformulation of past and future is contextualised as a comparative aesthetic of present and possibility.

6.4 SPACES FOR PROLIFERATION AND ARTICULATION OF CONNECTIONS WHICH FORM THE KNOWLEDGE ECOLOGY.

6.4.1 Spatial Principle B1) By Creating Spaces for Knowledge Aggregation and Dissemination (Contact Zones)

In order to elevate the visibility and collective function of a knowledge ecology, two kinds of spaces are required. These spaces should be used to connect actions which mobilise and build knowledges in new hybrid forms, with visualities of knowledge aggregation. Spaces in which actions are mobilised to produce new hybrid knowledges are already being claimed and produced through struggle but spaces in which to aggregate knowledge in mutually intelligible ways are lacking. These types of spaces are required to strengthen and proliferate knowledge practices, elucidating connections through which they emerge as part of an ecology.

Aggregation spaces should be thought of as places in which the prefigurative processes which contextualise experiences, claims, methods and propositions in their own alternative histories. These connective, process-based narratives, should be used to articulate the connections between movements or struggles by locating them in their geopolitical, scalar and critical contexts (by which I mean the political and productive system(s) which they critique), without co-opting or attempting to taxonomise them in accordance with any single methodological argument or front of struggle.

This means addressing differences and commonalities in an open, prefigurative approach to organisation and design wherein doctrine can be placed aside, and functional differences emerge with which to articulate the practicalities (as opposed to ideologies) of the process (Nunes 2021).

Santos suggests that the only way to address differences in

productive ways (without erasing differential attributes of any kind) is through the mobilisation of 'contact zones' (B. d. Santos 2005). Contact zones are proposed as spaces in which conversation or debate can unfold, to contextualise differences in their pragmatic implications, leading to new knowledge combinations for new types of deployment. (B. d. Santos 2005, 17). This builds upon Santos' observations of the World Social Forum, in which he asserts that differences are celebrated as an expression of plurality and equality, by approaching dialogue in mutually constructed, respectful formats, allowing debate to unfold in real time, between equal participants. Such debate is an essential method with which to ensure reciprocal intelligibility among different movement knowledges and claims, providing space to contextualise and separate divisive differences from functional ones – or doctrine from practice - in accordance with the purpose under collective consideration. (B. d. Santos 2005, 17).

While I do not propose that contact zones should become the definitive design object of a counter-practice, I suggest that the articulation and/or creation of contact zones should be considered an essential component of the design of the design process. In designing the design process, the counter-practitioner must create or strategise spaces in which that process can take place and later be reflected upon. It should be considered an anchoring component in a portfolio of methods which make up counter-practice in the same ways that Santos suggests: 'The point is to create, in every movement or NGO, in every practice or strategy, in every discourse or knowledge, a contact zone that may render it porous and hence permeable to other NGOs, practices, strategies, discourses, and knowledges.' (B. d. Santos 2005, 17)

I suggest that these contact zones should be used to articulate a network of struggles, supporting collaborations and knowledge proliferation by ensuring that knowledges are aesthetically demonstrative of processes, before being aggregated in both physical and digital spaces. I argue that these spaces should

articulate the prefigurative relationship between action and reflection, ensuring that political knowledges concerning the right to the city are proliferated in situated ways, produced through actions in the spaces claimed and reproduced. Digital spaces should be used only to aggregate reflections emerging from those situated processes. They should not become vehicles for the separation of theory from practice, through the reproduction of reflection on reflection, which will only lead to increasing degrees of generalisation and separation from the actions which are needed to make the knowledges in question meaningful and politically utilisable.

6.4.2 Spatial Principle B2) Digital Platforms as Spaces for Knowledge Aggregation

Nunes suggests that around the time of the mid to late 1990s, a convergence of three main things occurred to constitute the idea of horizontality in social political organisation. Those were 'an increased awareness of the interconnectedness brought about by capitalist globalisation; the discovery of the organising and mobilising affordances provided by the internet; and the inspiration coming from autonomous movements in the Global South, especially the Zapatistas in Mexico and those that emerged in Argentina in the wake of the 2001 crisis.' (Nunes 2021, 159) The most important of those for my purposes here, is the second of those things which Nunes situates as an element or site of mediation between the other two, as 'if the world was increasingly networked, and political resistance increasingly took the form of the network, it was from movements networked on- and offline that one could expect both a new kind of democracy and 'another world' distinct from that of capitalist globalisation.' (Nunes 2021, 159-160) Thinking organisation as network ecology - greatly expanded and mediated in some ways by the advent of communications technologies and the internet in particular - allows us to consider the spatiality of on- and offline production and knowledge exchange at multiple scales, between

physical and digital space. When thought of as nodes in a wider ecology of connections, platforms can be used as invitational spaces for knowledge exchange and debate, expanding and deepening connections between struggles in the process of knowledge exchange.

Digital communication spaces can serve as a political forum of sorts, for those that are excluded from engaging more directly in political discourse across sanctioned spaces of engagement. They offer opportunities for connection with others who may not be physically proximate but are facing similar struggles or who may benefit from knowledge exchange on pragmatic matters such as those concerned with organisation and negotiation with different actors, or ways in which to draw attention to their experiences and claims. In this way, digital communications can facilitate connections where socio-spatial fragmentation would otherwise prevent them.

However, they can also be used as dynamic interfaces in which to aggregate knowledges in different forms and scales and to exercise control over access to those knowledges, through both the way in which knowledge is presented and through layers of privacy built into the platform itself.

As noted in chapter 4, many argue that digital media networks are useful to the proliferation of 'weak ties' that may be less grounded and long-lasting but can contribute to the impact of an organisation or cause as it becomes known by consistent mentions which are widely shared. Such ties are considered weak as they do not require personal sacrifice or collective experience to generate political solidarity. As they are based on distant experience and online information which is continuously updating, they can be less stable.

However, Kavada and Poell urge us to consider the spatiality of different forms of online and offline communication, their interconnection, and the potential of digital space for shaping

forms of publicness and public contestation rather than simply as spaces in which to express pre-formed ideas. They propose that we view movement communications as 'publicness in motion, as flows of public contestation moving through time and from place to place' (Kavada A. a., 2021, p. 4). Kavada proposes a view of collective action as process, emerging in conversation and later codified in texts (Kavada A. , 2016, pp. 9-10). Conversation refers to ordinary interactions, negotiations and collective action. Texts are not only literal written documents such as meeting minutes, manifestos or statements but also include videos, photographs or any lasting material production that has a propositional political nature[11] and therefore, reciprocally influences further conversations 'in other times and spaces' (Kavada A. , 2016, pp. 9-10). Texts and conversations are therefore mutually constitutive of each other in a reciprocal loop that, in turn, shapes the evolution of the organisation and its identity (Kavada A. , 2016, p. 10) (A. Kavada 2015, 879) .

I propose the use of digital platforms to serve as aggregation spaces which effectively link the conversations happening on social media platforms with spaces of action in the city, where knowledge is actively reproduced through prefigurative processes of production.

By ensuring that the different media platforms used by both collectives in struggle and counter-practitioners are digitally linked to each other, the burden to elucidate the entire history of struggle is removed from each actor and at the same time, what may have appeared as fragmentary events or products presented in different spaces, under different authorships, are drawn together and made mutually intelligible as part of the same process-based narrative.

If literal links are utilised to connect different platforms through

11 'we can consider these codes both as artefacts and documents that encapsulate the movement's identity, and as practices or common ways of doing things'. (Kavada A. , 2015, p. 879)

aggregated spaces where the reflective materials concentrate representational linkages, a dynamic flow of collectivity can be established, maximising the 'different affordances for interaction' (Kavada A. , 2016, p. 10) and proliferation that each type of contact zone (digital and physical) provides.

As aggregation spaces, the use of digital platforms offers multiple advantages. The most important is the ability to literally embed different kinds of knowledge and evidence in interactive ways and to layer levels of access to them.

For example, organisations such as CMAP have demonstrated a model of media production that remains situated in site and yet can be disseminated freely to reach wider audiences. Films produced in their classes generate political debate while building skills and are shown in local theatres to strengthen visibility and widen connections. Knowledges presented in cinematic media evade generalisation as they are inherently embedded and qualitative. Utilising different kinds of media such as film, radio and descriptive writing to present different kinds of evidence can also strengthen creative cultures and skills, while providing an emotive platform through which to challenge prejudices and false perceptions of social movement campaigns and actions.

Mary Racelis, an activist and professor in Ateneo University Manila, suggests that lived stories are an important means of personalising narratives of deprivation and challenging derogatory, criminal views of the urban poor (Interview 26/09/2021). Racelis has begun a campaign of interviewing members and leaders of urban poor organisations, publishing the interviews in Rappler, a popular Filipino paper, under the name of the interviewees. The use of mainstream media channels to spread real stories of exclusion means that solidarity can spread beyond the confines of marginalised sites to engage wide-spread prejudices (often stoked by government narratives) in other demographics. By moving these

narratives from closed institutional forums and marginalised sites into the public domain, with accessible forms of evidence, the personal realities of oppression can be publicly debated. These forms of narrative and filmic presentation are able to demonstrate the simultaneous emotional, political and material implications of processes that are hidden in purely empirical presentations.

Aggregating individual and collective stories produced in these ways can elucidate their equivalences in the ways in which they contest meta-narratives, or negotiate shared aspirations and tactics of realisation, without erasing the differences which make their outputs meaningful in each scenario. Together, though such narratives may be individual and locally specific, they point to wider issues of systemic inadequacies and violence.

As well as ensuring that these representational devices eschew cooptation into hegemonic visuality by utlising embedded, qualitative aesthetics in media such as drawing, film, modelling, descriptive writing and oral histories, digital platforms can be composed in layers, increasing data privacy protection with different levels of external accessibility. For example, SDI use completely separate platforms for outward facing campaigns and their inward facing knowledge aggregation. Aggregated knowledges on methods and process of enumeration are only accessible to member federations, and the actual data produced in each enumeration project is further protected and accessible only by the federation members which were involved in producing it. Similarly, Alterplan and Espacio Expresión ensure that all the materials produced throughout the design process are retained in physical formats. In all cases, these layers of privacy ensure that the raw data produced collectively, stays under the control and protection of the collective

for use in future negotiations. [12]

While levels of privacy should be strategised in ways that are particular to each struggle and each type of knowledge and data, I argue that the epistemological focus of aggregation should be the prefigurative dimensions of the productive process which serve to contextualise events and knowledges in their own histories, spatialities, and in relation to the hegemonic visuality which they counter. It is this connective contextual dimension of prefigurative production which protects events and knowledge practices from co-optation, fragmentation, and homogenisation.

By using aggregating platforms to connect more open conversational spaces to sites of active struggle where knowledge is produced in and about urban architectural production, a knowledge ecology begins to emerge which articulates together empirical and pragmatic aspects of struggles as they play out in each contested site.

In practice, this involves two things: an aesthetic approach to design as process, building process-based reflections into the propositional materials emerging out of struggles, and ensuring that these are aggregated in platforms which link directly to other online spaces such as social media platforms, websites of social movements and other contributors, and email lists. By doing so, feedback loops can

12 The ways in which knowledge is articulated across different media media platforms with differing levels of accessibility and visibility, Kavada and Poell note can affect the 'internal stratification' of a movement. In the case of Occupy, this dynamic interplay between spaces of action and reflection formed an outer ring of social media participants or followers, while retaining an inner ring of directly participating activists who were regularly present at 'physical occupations' (Kavada A. , 2015, p. 879). It was this regular, physical participation that activists considered to make them an 'Occupier' (Kavada A. , 2015, p. 879). The inner ring was also linked by an email list which was not widely advertised in external communications such as the website or social media pages, unlike movements operating in the 'pre-social media era, like the Global Justice Movement' (Kavada A. , 2015, p. 879). Instead, activists in Occupy could sign up to email lists only in physical meetings.

be established between real-time reporting and longer-term critical narratives of oppression, and between conversations, actions and the codification of knowledge in prefigurative reflections. These aggregative platforms should perform as hubs in an organisational network, to be drawn upon, interpreted, and added to as they draw together more sites and struggles in a proliferating knowledge ecology.

Because practitioners engage in multiple struggles, in multiple sites, they can use their position to generate linkages between the struggles and places they contribute to, in non-extractive ways. Rather than assume the position of external intermediary and representative of struggles to international agencies, funders, and governments, they can use their position to promote a counter-visuality which simply serves to expose the plurality and political utility of knowledge practices emerging out of the struggle for life in the global city. This counter-visual approach should also be used to socialise specialist knowledges that they have gathered as professionals but which remain hidden behind institutional walls, using their contributions to aggregate materials which demonstrate the different funding sources utilised for different events and outputs, and the ways in which they were approached. This should also render visible the compromises and advantages that different funding types and structures entail, as a politically pragmatic source of knowledge and, as critique.

By using their own websites or creating new websites for each project that they engage and linking them to each other, these aggregative platforms can act as hubs, connecting not only to each other, but to other platforms where different kinds of interactions take place, including social media sites and other contributor websites. By ensuring that the knowledges aggregated on these platforms are contextually embedded in the spaces and prefigurative processes they relate to they also demonstrate their belonging to a social political evolution which was present before

the designer's entry and will continue after. This decentres the professional practitioner and the material object in the historical narrative of struggle and dematerialises the ways in which political achievements are attributed value.

By promoting linkages between different spaces of conversation and knowledge production, these aggregative platforms can also promote contact and conversations or collaborations and knowledge exchange between movements directly, wherein the actual collective owners of these knowledge practices can debate and clarify the meanings of their own knowledge practices, in some cases leading to active collaborations. These hubs should serve to facilitate a dynamic relationship between online and offline space, promoting what Poell and Kavada call a 'dispersion of contentious publicness' via digital media platforms, which is consistently grounded by the 'centralizing role' of public action and occupation (Kavada A. a., 2021, p. 13).

6.5 CONCLUSION. COUNTER-PRACTICE BETWEEN PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL CONTACT ZONES

In conclusion, I propose the role of the counter-practitioner should be articulated as one of creative historian, using the design process to establish deep relationships with a collective and its claims on the historical evolution of a place. The design process in a counter-practice should be a mechanism with which to reflect on the prefigurative politics of collective production and recontextualise knowledges and emergent possibilities for the future in their own particular social, material histories.

The hybridised knowledge practices discussed in this chapter are essential to the proliferation of the knowledge ecology because of their mutual intelligibility as part of a counter-visuality. The ability

to act locally in ways that are reflective of the interface between the local particularities of site and the ways in which they are impacted upon by global systems is what makes them understandable as pragmatically and experientially different struggles, which connect at different points to the same narrative and visuality of coordinated oppression.

The incompleteness of knowledges presented in development policy is a result of the complexity and irreducibility of locally specific conditions and they ways in which they impact implementation. As such, actual methods with which to claim, negotiate and produce dignified affordable housing in the global city can only be formed and reflected on at the scale at which they are enacted in each scenario. It is for this reason I argue that the knowledges pertinent to these struggles on the ground and to be proliferated as such, can only be produced and represented at the scale at which they are practiced. Conversely, if these knowledges are to be mobilised in their critical, evidentiary capacities which makes them so politically powerful, they also need to be articulated at the scales of the systems they critique.

The connection and proliferation of knowledges built in struggle, as an ecology, I propose, can be achieved by mobilising the spaces which serve as the public sphere among the marginalised (both existing and claimed), as staging ground AND subject of prefigurative production and debate. I suggest that the spatial aesthetics of prefigurative processes and the propositions they inhabit render the knowledges produced through them mutually intelligible as part of a wider critical narrative. Aggregating these reflections on the relationship between propositions and process in spaces which aesthetically and literally link across digital and physical networks decentralises the professional and the product from narratives of social production. As a result, space becomes the mediating lens which joins the prefigurative politics of claiming spaces in which to live a dignified life in the global city, with platforms where

representation can be disseminated and debated across borders and cultures. By mobilising the space of exchange as the stage and subject of debate, potentially fragmentary aspects of difference can be set aside, and difference emerges as a functional concept with which to reflect on the contextual underpinnings of claims and the potential methods with which to realise them. By so doing, by proliferating connections between spaces in which knowledge can be exchanged and debated, the reflective process should provide the opportunity to create and realise new propositions in relation to newly articulated collectives. I argue that the spatiality of prefigurative politics as processes of social organisation and production, therefore becomes both matrix and staging ground for a counter-practice.

The proposition for a counter-practice should not be considered as a methodological proposal for a type of 'prefigurative' design. Instead, I suggest that social movement practices in the field of non-governmental politics are prefigurative in their very nature and that the way in which we communicate the interaction of the design development with those practices can better serve to make social movement knowledges replicable. I am not actually proposing a method of designing at all but instead, proposing a set of principles that can be used by design practitioners engaging in social movement struggles to support the documentation of knowledges and experiences which are carried through the design process. If thoughtfully documented, those processes of organisation, negotiation and establishment of common goals naturally get 'mapped' onto the decision-making process which evolves design propositions to meet the specific parameters of social claims. If records of those moments of reflection, testing, imagining and strategising are actually represented in spatial languages of drawing, mapping, photographing, filming as well as writing, the knowledges embedded in and expanded through those processes

will become intelligible for sharing with others.

6.6 REFLECTIONS ON THE IMPACT AND FUTURE OF THIS WORK

In a way this was a project of highly informative failure. Whereas the work continually exposed gaps that I have accepted will never be filled by recovering past work that simply never existed or is long lost, unravelling the nature of these gaps do demonstrate that there are different ways of working through and with struggles in the present that will ensure that these gaps do not occur in future projects, by and for future activists and future practitioners. What is lost to gaps in narratives of organisation and decision-making around collective desires, identities and histories is essential to the expansion of knowledge which makes such processes and related design outcomes replicable in meaningful ways. And so, the hypothesis of this project is also a proposition for future work. That is future practice that works with social movements to expose the process-based narratives of their struggles, including their informative failures.

As I mentioned in the introduction, when we teach architecture, we ensure that students articulate the rationale of their decision-making and the ways in which the outcomes evolve through testing. This is to ensure that they have understood how to optimise outcomes to respond to the particular scenario and to evidence the optimal nature of the final resolutions. This proves the validity and rigor of decision-making processes and serves as evidence of a certain type of knowledge which has informed the design process. Once one moves into professional practice, what seems to happen is that we assume that those processes have been undertaken and that the level of knowledge informing the decisions is sound. We no longer map the design process to the situation that it responds to. This lack of process demonstration means that the outside observer is unable to assess exactly how the resolution is optimal for the given situation or even, what the nature of the situation is that the

design is responding to. It is in the process documentation that knowledge is contained and evidenced, and as such, it is the lack of such documentation which makes replication impossible. What remains in representation of projects is the final products which, without the corresponding process records, are stripped of all knowledge that makes them replicable in any meaningful capacity.

When we teach the representation of process in architecture school, we find that this issue is so prevalently pernicious in practice that we cannot find professional, real-world examples to assist students in building that craft. The only examples at our disposal come from other students, either from past cohorts or other schools. And so, I suggest that the hypothesis presented here should be relevant not only to those practitioners already engaging in collaborations with social movements in various capacities and to the social movements engaged in struggles to transform their physical environments, but to future generations of practitioners and the way in which architectural education is able to prepare young people to act as citizens of the world.

This work is an invitation to others to utilise these principles to contribute to the realisation of an ever-expanding knowledge ecology, giving visible form to the knowledge-practices of social movements engaged in struggles for other ways of living and producing. Though I seek to contribute to the project of building this ecology in future work, the project itself cannot be formed around a concentrated centre which gives prominence to particular types of voices, it must be multi-centric and formed of heterogeneous contributions from diverse perspectives. In my future contributions, I hope to explore the possibilities of building digital platforms for dissemination, connection, and exchange into live projects which use design to support claim-making processes on the ground. I will seek to utilise the language of spatial surveys and design to reflect on the tactical logic of social movement practices and the basis of claims.

INTERVIEWS, SITE VISITS, PRACTICE

PEOPLES' ORGANISATIONS

KADAMAY (Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap – Association of poor peoples): Gloria "Ka Bea" Arellano, Chairperson. Urban Poor Resource Center of the Philippines, Quezon City, Manila 19/02/2016

Kabalikat: Multiple members and community Leaders in group meeting, Tondo area, Metro Manila 07/02/2018

Githurai Human Rights Network: Activist W and Lawyer A, Nairobi 17/10/2018

Community Media Trust: student member, Mathare, Nairobi 22/09/2018

NGOS & NON-PROFITS

Urban Poor Associates: Full team, Quezon city, Metro Manila 02/02/2018

Habitat for Humanity Philippines: Architect E, Habitat for Humanity Offices, Makati City, Metro Manila 14/12/2018

Public Space Network: Anna Wien, architect & founder, Gigiri, Nairobi, 18/05/2018

Alterplan: Sarah Redoblado, architect and founder of Alterplan (video call) 30/10/2019

Forensic Architecture: Samaneh Moafi, researcher (video call) 22/08/2019

Techo Para Chile: Vincente Stiepovich, operations manager, Techo offices, Santiago de Chile 22/12/2019

Ateliermob: Tiago Moto Saraiva, architect & founder (video call) 15/07/2019

Organisation for Internally Displaced People, Marawi, Philippines: Dhino Sarigidan, Leader, (video call) 17/01/20

Espacio Expresión: Claudia Amico, architect & founder (Video call) 22/01/2020

Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Beatrice Hati Gitundu, Urban Planner with SDI Nairobi (video call) 08/05/2020

Shack & Slum Dwellers International (SDI): Sheela Patel, Founder of SPARC and SDI 30/11/2021

DAAR: Sandi Hilal and Alessandro Petti, architects & researchers, London 30/01/2022

RESEARCHERS

Chester Arcilla, researcher and housing rights activist, Quezon City, Metro Manila 22/01/2018

Mary Racelis, researcher and housing rights activist, Quezon city, Metro Manila 02/02/2018 & 26/09/2021

Cristián Robertson De Ferrari, researcher in 9x18 research group (video call) 20/05/2020

SITE VISITS & MEETINGS/EVENTS

Site Visit, Vitas Tenements (unguided), Tondo area, Manila, 18/02/2018

Tour of Public Space Projects by the Mathare Green Movement in Mathare, Nairobi, Guided by members of the Mathare Social Justice Centre 28/08/2018

Attendance at Community Meeting Convened in Mathare Social

Justice Centre, Mathare, Nairobi 21/09/2018

Site visit & Survey Participation with Techo Para Chile, guided by Vincente Stiepovich, Santiago de Chile 23/08/2019

Site Tour of Housing by Habitat for Humanity, Guided by Members of Urban Poor Associates, Tondo area, Metro Manila 07/02/2018

Site Tour of Housing Project completed by Kabalikat, Guided by Kabalikat Members & Urban Poor Associates project coordinator, Tondo area, Metro Manila 07/02/2018

PRACTICE

Consultancy in UN-Habitat branches of Research & Capacity Development (CPI), and Urban Planning (Urban Planning & Design Lab & Urban Economy) 2018-2021

Collaboration on Urban Planning & Design MA live project, Universidad Católica de Perú. Urban upgrading in Rímac, outer Lima

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The keys will be handed over to the fighters in the next few days!

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Image 95. Andes Secos 2010 'Map of the Argentine area most affected by mega mining, its socio-environmental effects and the support and organizational networks deployed throughout the territory.'

[Iconoclasistas. 2010. Andes Secos 2010. Accessed 09 21, 2023. https://iconoclasistas.net/portfolio-item/soja-en-argentina/.]

P316:
Image 96. Community Communication Map, data_labe

(data_labe. n.d. data_Labe Maps. Accessed 09 02, 2023.)

URL: https://datalabe.org/mapas/.
—. n.d. Guia Cultural de Favelas - About. Accessed 09 02, 2023. http://guiaculturaldefavelas.org

Image 97.
Interactive map of the Favela Cultural Guide produced by data_labe (data_labe n.d.)[https://datalabe.org/mapas/]

P317:
Image 98. Community Mapping RMSP, Observatory of Removals São Paulo: 'The Observatory of Removals, a project coordinated by LABCIDADE of FAU USP in partnership with LABJUTA-UFABC and the Observatory of Land Conflicts - UNIFESP, collects and disseminates information about removals and threats of removal in the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo (RMSP).

P319:
Image 99. Narratives of Displacement and Resistance, New York City - Anti Eviction Mapping Project

(Anti-Eviction Mapping Project n.d., https://www.

antievictionmappingproject.net/nycnarratives.html).

P320:
Images 100/101. (Top and bottom) relocation tracking maps from San Francisco by the Anti Eviction Mapping Project. (Anti Eviction Mapping Project, Relocation Map, n.d, https://antievictionmap.com/blog/relocation-map?rq=relocation)

P323:
Image 102. CMAP: Mapping phase II. Discovering and Describing. (Bista, Priyanka. 2015. CMAP Phase II: Discovering and Describing. 03 August. Accessed June 28, 2023. https://cmapping.net/mapping-phase-ii-discovering-and-describing/.)

P324:
Images 103/104. CMAP: Mapping phase II. Discovering and Describing. (Bista, Priyanka. 2015. CMAP Phase II: Discovering and Describing. 03 August. Accessed June 28, 2023. https://cmapping.net/mapping-phase-ii-discovering-and-describing/.)

P327:
Image 105. Residents' map of points of interest within Barangay with Alterplan, Manila, Philippines [Image Alterplan]