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ABSTRACTS

Villas Miserias in Buenos Aires between border lines.

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General Topic: Informal City in Third World Countries.

NON-regularization an urban exclusion.

Geographic Context: Buenos Aires – Argentina

Media: 1 or 2 Posters

The Villas Miseria are parts of informal cities inside the urban areas of Buenos Aires, physically included, but socially excluded.

It the largest city of the State of Argentina, almost 20% of its population live in these areas. There are 21 Villas Miserias and most of them are either called or known by numbers as "Villa #1" or "Villa #21".

In Third World Countries informal settlements are usually large parts of suburban areas, where recognizing the borders can be very difficult- we can name this phenomenon as *informal sprawl*. Instead the Villas Miserias are well defined "enclaves" inside the formal city - sometimes in the richer areas.

They all have the characteristics of informal settlements: inadequate access to safe water; inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructures; poor structural quality of housing; overcrowding; insecure residential status and so on. Furthermore, the Villas Miserias are "enclave" without any exchange with the other parts of the formal city. The border between the two parts of the city is very strong, sometimes it is actually represented by a real wall or a highway.

The differences between Villas and other parts of the city are not only related to the physical aspects of the urban structure, but there are also others differences with a deeper social connotation which regards save

accessibility to the villas by people coming from other parts of the city, use of public space and, economic activities (illegal- most of the times). In Buenos Aires formal and informal city share the same space but not with the same lifestyle!

In addition to the solution of the habitat problems (housing, safe water, land tenure), the Villas Miserias need a serious project, intervening to open its own borders, in order to create a urban interface between the two differences cities including urban infrastructures (as schools, market, cultural centre, gardens).

It seems clear now that, in my opinion, only by modifying the border space, the social inclusion of the people living in the Villas can turn out to be a real possibility.

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