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On-Drawing South American Extent: Geo-Poetic Mapping Palimpsest in the *Travesías de Amereida*

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Abstract
Contemporary urbanization, as a process extended beyond the cities, requires original design practices to contribute to the critical understanding and visualization of the multiple spatial and temporal layers that shape the territories. In this account, this article examines the geo-poetic mapping developed by the Valparaiso School of Architecture, as a radical means of exploring the territories and elaborating their palimpsestic representations. This contribution unfolds the geo-poetic vision of the South American continent created in the sixties by the School of Valparaiso, in Chile, as fundamental groundwork to critically question the historic and ongoing urban occupation of territories and their representations following colonization. Besides, it presents the *Travesías de Amereida*, a collective and situated architectural study performed throughout the vast South American inland, as a unique geo-poetic practice in which freehand mapping becomes an original means of rethinking and redrawing the ever-changing American extent. Through the analysis of drawings made before, during, and after the *travesías* were undertaken between 1965 and 1985, this article outlines how the geo-poetic vision and mapping practices—that embodies iterative freehand drawings combining different temporality, spatiality, and situated experiences—have attempted to unveil the South American continent as a palimpsest: an open extent to trace the ever-changing footprints that reshape its content. To conclude, the article assesses the contribution of situated geo-poetic mapping as a critical design practice to study and visualize the ever-changing, multi-layered, and multi scalar-realities on virtually unknown territories of contemporary urbanization.

Issue
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1. Introduction

In recent decades, the urbanization process has become a global and fast-growing phenomenon, expressed in the multiplication of the urban population over the last 60 years, and reinforced by the estimation that by 2050 at least 66 percent of the world's population will live in cities or urban agglomerations that need to be studied and planned (UN-Habitat, 2016). However, an emergent understanding of contemporary urbanization as a process extended beyond the conventional cities and the hinterland boundaries has contributed to the territories being visualized as places where deep, but virtually unknown environmental and socio-cultural transformations are the result of the current local/global interdependencies driven by global capitalism (Brenner, 2016; Correa, 2016).

In effect, the contemporary process of urbanization (Brenner, 2014; Kaika & Swyngedouw, 2014) is re-shaping

the notion of territories towards multi-scale geographies, situations, and differences (Elden, 2013; Escobar, 2008; Raffestin, 2012; Santos, 2017). These new notions challenge the conventional binary means of reading urban and rural interactions, the geopolitical boundaries of countries and regions, and they call for new tools to read and represent the ever-changing territorial diversity.

This understanding of urbanization has provoked a territorial revival in architecture and urbanism to explore new critical design-practices and epistemologies as a way to overcome the conventional and dominant technocratic approaches to urban-planning (Bélanger, 2017; Correa, 2016; Ibañez & Katsikis, 2014; Waldheim, 2016). In this context, situated mapping (Corner, 2014; Havik, 2014; Viganò, 2014, 2016) has become a key practice to represent, analyze, and interpret territorial complexities because it investigates the spatial dimension between large-scale geographies and local situations, and in the temporal dimension between the many layers of historical milestones that have shaped the territory as a palimpsest (Corboz, 1983).

1.1. Case Study: The *Travesías de Amereida*

Regarding the contemporary process of urbanization beyond the conventional city's boundaries and facing the need for situated design practices to analyze and interpret the multiple spatial and temporal layers shaping territories, this article deploys the practices of the School Architecture and Design of Valparaiso (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso) in Chile. The School of Valparaiso presents a radical approach to reading the historiography which has become embedded in the area since colonization (O'Gorman, 1958/2010) and the current occupation of territories in South America. Through the invention of a geo-poetic vision of the *extensión Americana* (American extent) created in the mid-sixties (Iommi et al., 1967, 1986) and continuing until today, the School of Valparaiso has developed the practice of the *travesías de Amereida*—collective and situated architectural studies performed mainly beyond the large cities located on the edges of the continent—which use situated mapping and design practices to radically explore, rethink, and redraw the American extent.

This contribution analyses archive documents, mainly drawings made before, during, and after the first *travesías* performed by the School of Valparaiso between 1965 and 1985. It traces the emergence of the geo-poetic vision of *Amereida* and its notion of extent—instead of territory—as a means of facing the geographical space of the South American continent without frontiers or preconceived definitions. Then, it investigates how this notion has been fundamental for the geo-poetic mapping developed in the *travesías*, which we envisage as an attempt to unveil the continent's territorial transformation as a palimpsest. Besides, the article unfolds the particularities of this geo-poetic mapping palimpsest, which are embodied in iterative drawings which com-

bine different temporality, spatiality, and situated experiences. Finally, the article aims to show that situated geo-poetic mapping provides an important contribution to the discussion of how to represent the ever-changing, multi-layered, and multi-scalar realities within virtually invisible territories that experience contemporary urbanization.

2. Towards a Geo-poetic Mapping of South America

In the mid-1960s and after a decade of leading a school of architecture which linked architecture to poetry (Escuela de Arquitectura UCV, 1972), the poet and professor Godofredo Iommi echoed the traces of historical dwellings imprinted on the continent by asking this radical question: What is the origin and the present meaning of 'being American'? (Iommi, 1999). This triggered the realization of the first *travesía* in 1965 and lead to the invention of a geo-poetic vision of the continent which was subsequently embedded in the way of conceiving, studying, and practicing architecture within the School of Valparaiso. Thus, this geo-poetic vision allowed the School to expand its situated modes of learning architecture beyond the classroom (A. Cruz, 1959) towards the continent.

In 1965, the professors of the School of Valparaiso together with artists and philosophers, organized a trip throughout the interior lands of South America that they called *travesía*, an experience oriented to poetically "unveil" (Iommi et al., 1967, p. 26) the continental realities of territories far from the cities (see Figure 1). For them, the big cities tended to hide the original meaning of being American, because "they are dense of knowledge and splendid but empty of myth, inventing themselves quickly and fallaciously" (Iommi, 1983, p. 2).

The *travesía* was integrated by the Chilean architects Alberto Cruz and Fabio Cruz, the Argentinean sculptor Claudio Girola, the Argentinean poet Godofredo Iommi, the Panamanian poet Edison Simons, the English poet Jonathan Boulting, the French poet and philosopher Michel Deguy, the French designer Henry Tronquoy, the Argentinean painter Jorge Pérez Román, and the French philosopher François Fèdier. They began the geo-poetic experience and study (Iommi et al., 1986, p. 159) on 31 July in the city of Punta Arenas, in the extreme south of Chile. Their trip went through the hinterland of the Argentinean Patagonia and pampas, passing through diverse landscapes and visiting small villages spread in the territorial extent. Due to the presence of the guerrillas in the Bolivian region of Tarija, this *travesía* ended suddenly on 13 September (Iommi et al., 1986, pp. 200–201).

Even if the sudden disruption of the trip made their goal to reach the Bolivian city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra impossible, the group experienced 42 days of poetic adventure, guided by openness towards the "unknown" encounter with the continent (Iommi et al., 1986, p. 70). The openness embedded in the *travesía* arose from the aim to incarnate the modern metaphor of the unknown

Figure 1. First *travesía*, 1965, with Alberto Cruz, Chilean architect, Godofredo Iommi, Argentinean poet, Jorge Pérez Román, Argentinean painter, and a *gaucho* in the Argentinean Pampa. Source: Archivo Histórico José Vial Armstrong (1965). Reprinted with permission.

expressed in the poetry of Baudelaire and Rimbaud, which they explored in fortuitous encounters with reality through creative action (Iommi, 1982b). This metaphor guided their inquiries into the meaning of being and inhabiting America, and lead them to engage in poetic acts, the construction of ephemeral works of art, discussions with local communities, and to carry out architectural observations in the territory. All these collective experiences were gathered in the creation of a geo-poetic vision of South America, called *Amereida*.

During the trip, the group collectively drafted the poem *Amereida*, a title that alluded to their reflections on the meaning of being American weaved with the invention of a founding myth based on Virgil's Aeneid (Iommi, 1982a, 1982c; Iommi et al., 1967). The poem attempted to recreate the idea of *latinidad* in the Americas through a poetic that echoed the founding myth of the Greco-Roman culture represented in the wandering journey of Aeneas. Therefore, *Amereida* proposes a poetic understanding of *latinidad*, has the potential to trace back the meeting of multiple races, languages, and territories of the Americas (Iommi, Rodriguez, Emilfork, & de Nordenflycht, 1972), and to overcome the geopolitical conceptualization developed since the 19th century, when the notion of *latinidad* was related to dominion and colonial hegemony.

The book, *Amereida*, published in 1967, is a poetic narration written by the group in their diverse languages. The poem was composed by historiographical viewpoints about the "invention of America" (O'Gorman, 1958/2010), interwoven with words coming from classical and modern poetry, with the direct observations and creative actions performed in the interior of the South

American continent. All these elements remain almost hidden within the poem which is written collectively in a non-linear chronology of the trip and without any formal references or quotations. Nevertheless, the poem presents ten cartographies (see Figure 2) that permit access to the geographical and territorial vision of the South American extent embedded in *Amereida*.

2.1. Ten Maps of Amereida

The ten maps in the *Amereida* represent the first transcription from the metaphorical space of the poem to the geographical space of the South American continent. By displaying a blanked continental extent (A. Cruz, 1995; Iommi, 1965, 1982a) without any of the geopolitical divisions which traditionally portray sovereignty and control over territories, the vast continent is represented as a primary form shaped by nature by the bathymetry of the oceans (Figure 2[1]), by the great rivers connecting lands (Figure 2[5]), and by the mountains dividing regions (Figure 2[6]). Concomitantly, the extent as a blank footprint map does not seek to represent the terra nullius—the governable void drawn by the imaginary, mastery, and control used in European mapping during colonization (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2013, p. 28)— on the contrary, the extent represents the possibility to unveil the lands as a palimpsest: an open blackboard upon which the ever-changing footprints that reshape the continent can be traced.

Subsequently, the representation of the Interior Sea (Figure 2[3]) refers to the vast inner lands of the continent, an interior conquered but ignored, sparsely inhabited, and almost strange to most of the urban popula-
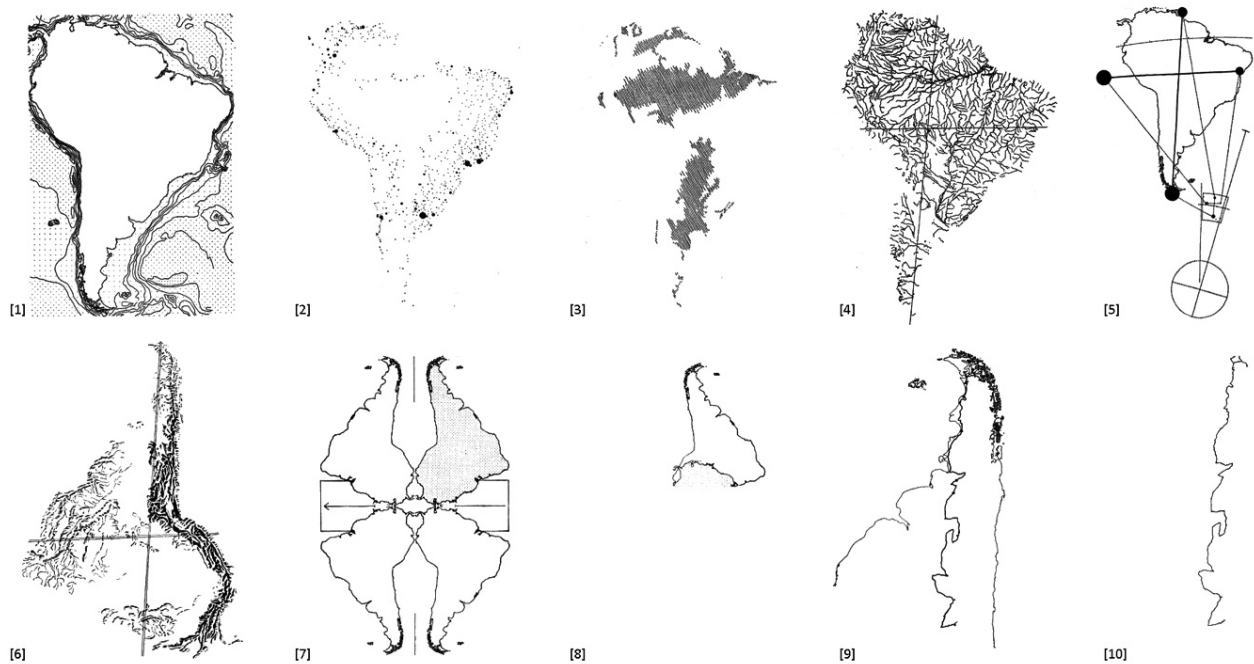
Figure 2. Maps from *Amereida*, 1967. Source: Iommi et al. (1967, pp. 9, 21, 29, 35, 39, 40, 171, 173, 186, 187). No Copyright.

tion occupying the edges of the continent (Iommi et al., 1967, p. 18). Poetically, the Interior Sea is the unknown (Iommi, 1984), a land for voyage, such as those taken by Aeneas and by the *travesía* (Iommi, 1982a, 1983). This map, made by lines without a backdrop or perimeter, represents the vagueness of the Interior Sea, and its open shape is an inversion of the dots-map (Figure 2[2]). The dots-maps shows—as NASA's nighttime satellite images have since 2009—the location of the big cities in the edges the continent.

Then, the radical action of rotating the map represents the notion of the Own North (Figures 2[6, 7, 8]), an operation aligned with the commonly used expression of 'to have a north,' which means to have an orientation or a goal. Thus, to conceive a proper orientation for the southern continent, to have a North is to look to the South (Eyquem, 1985; Iommi et al., 1967). The map is turned and inscribed with the Southern Cross constellation over the chart (Figure 2[4]) as an action to overcome the traditional Cartesian axes in colonial cartographies and to open up the multiple orientations that emerge from this intersection (A. Cruz, n.d.).

Finally, the two maps made with the route of the *travesía* (Figures 2 [9, 10]), followed by the final sentence of the book "*el camino no es el camino*" (the road is not the road; Iommi et al., 1967, p. 189), represent the incarnated metaphor of the unknown as the constant *equívoco* (equivocation; Iommi et al., 1986, p. 213). This means that the distance between what is known and what is to be known exceeds any plan and final purposes of a project, nevertheless, the openness towards the unknown allows one to encounter reality.

2.2. The Travel-Log of Travesía

The ten maps accompanying the poem *Amereida* are clearly not technical representations of the South American territory, but they do show the particular geo-poetic notion of the School towards the continental extent (A. Cruz, n.d.), based in the reflection between historiographic temporality and incarnated spatiality. From an architectonic perspective, these maps are the groundwork for a new exploratory mapping practice which aims to trace the links between the crossed continent and the human scale, captured through the *observación arquitectónica* (architectural observation). This is a situated drawing practice, which consists on making of freehand drawings accompanied by short notes, through a slow process allows one to contemplate and grasp the spatiality, gestures, and acts which shape everyday life. For the school, the architectural observation implies a poetic process in the sense of poiesis, that seeks to reveal and eulogize the reality, and a creative act in which the observations nourish the architectural study (A. Cruz, 1959, 1982; F. Cruz, 1993).

This geo-poetic mapping exploration—traced in the situated drawing practices developed by the architects and designers of the School of Valparaiso—seems to have its origins in the realization of the architectural travel-log of the first *travesía de Amereida* in 1965 (see Figure 3). The travel-log made by the architect and professor Alberto Cruz (A. Cruz, 1965) illustrate this new mode of mapping where freehand drawings such as the architectural observations, schematic maps, brief texts, and plans, are deployed as a collage to describe and in-
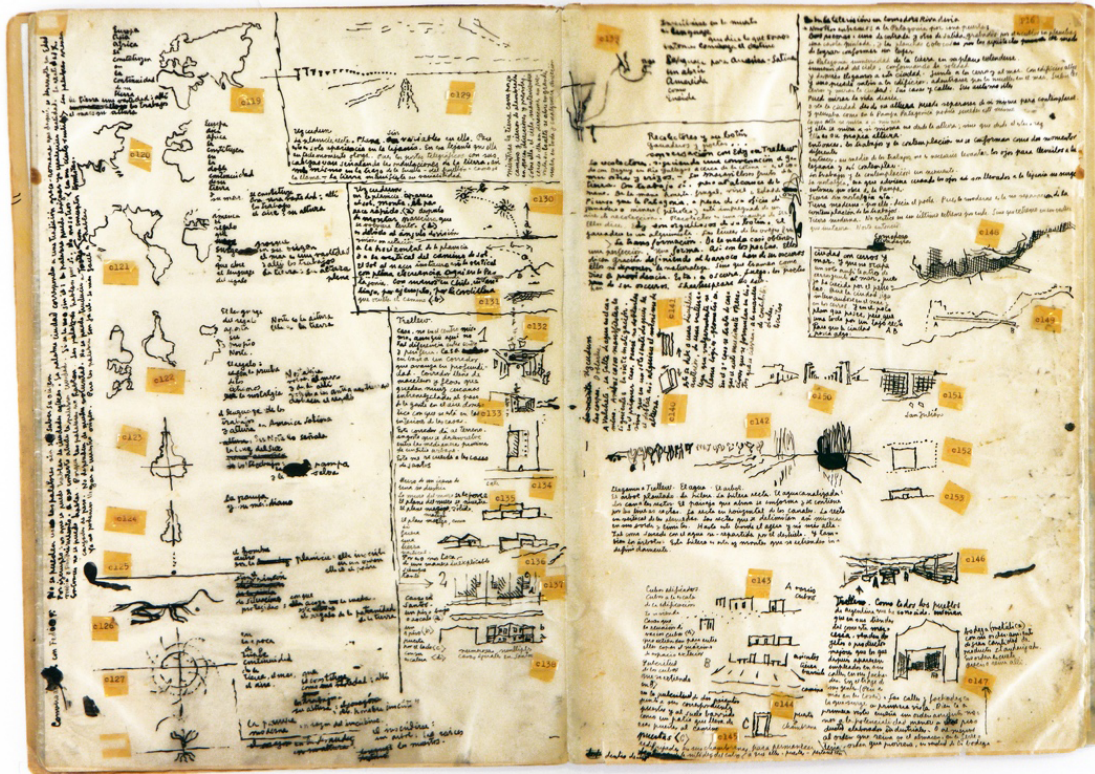
Figure 3. Travel-log of Alberto Cruz, *Travesía de Amereida*, 1965. Source: A. Cruz (1965). Reprinted with permission.

terpret the different territorial situations experienced on the trip.

In the pages of this travel-log it is possible to identify the original schemes of the continental rotation illustrated in *Amereida*, next to sketches and notes about the life in the vast pampas, and a series of observations of the landscape and buildings of the Patagonian villages of Uzcudum and Trelew (see Figure 3). In the same pages, a reflection on the South American *Plazas Fundacionales* with schematic plans and notes is followed by some statements describing the differences between creating towns and exploiting the territory. Architectural observations about the Argentinean villages of Santa Rosa, Dorotea, and Comodoro Rivadavia are mixed with the descriptions of some poetic acts performed during the trip.

The density of the content displayed in these mapping compositions can be understood as a palimpsest process because it brings together the diverse temporality and spatiality as experienced during the journey. It allows one to follow in their footsteps and the subtle historical traces imprinted on these South American territories which are normally omitted by conventional maps. Hence, these freehand drawings are different from those images captured by objective cartography or photography, because they seem to incorporate a variety of situations that move from two to three spatial dimensions, in different territorial scales, and different temporalities.

Furthermore, the travel-log that might be comparable to the ethnographer's notebook, did not only oper-

ate as a descriptive-analytical tool, but also as a creative-design tool to act and to make on the ground. In effect, the travel-log of Alberto Cruz is a set of large sheets folded to be carried during the trip. The 15 slides contain 321 drawings in aleatory order, creating a particular narrative composed by: (1) personal interpretations and architectural observation of landscapes, (2) the collective design of ephemeral works of art and poetic acts, (3) the encounter with the locals, and (4) the daily planning of the trip.

Consequently, the travel-log of Cruz and the book *Amereida* are two fundamental elements to understand the geo-poetic vision and the mapping practice developed during the *travesía*, in which poetry did not become only a metaphor of reality, but was conceived as an exploratory means to produce situated knowledge and to produce artwork beyond the conventional disciplinary boundaries of architecture and urbanism.

2.3. Tesis del Mar Interior y del Propio Norte

The poetic fundamentals which originated from the first *travesía de Amereida* became the groundwork for the architecture and design practices embedded within the School of Valparaiso. As such, the seminal works presenting their geo-poetic notion to the field of urbanism, *La Tesis del Mar Interior* (Thesis of the Interior Sea) and *La Tesis del Propio Norte* (Thesis of the Own North; Escuela de Arquitectura UCV, 1970), were both pre-

sented at the First International Seminar of the Pacific, held in 1970 in Viña del Mar, Chile. This meeting focused on the debate surrounding geopolitical and economic strategies for the development of the central and peripheral countries of South America towards the Pacific Front. In this context, and as a way to incorporate alternative viewpoints regarding South American urban development beyond the conventional political-economic discussion, the School of Valparaiso presented both theses as poetic-scientific bases for the exploration of new analogies and distinctions between specific data and criteria encompassing history and geopolitics (Buttazoni et al., 1971).

The theses manuscripts were accompanied by 15 large-scale maps to represent their proposal. One of these maps displays all the colonial and commercial routes in the Pacific Front during the 16th and 17th centuries. This map purposefully set the Pacific Ocean at the center of the chart to question the cartographies produced since the 16th century, in which the Atlantic Front and Europe occupied the central space (see Figure 4). Another map shows an aerial view of a South American continent without borders or geopolitical frontiers, representing the Interior Sea as postulated in *Amereida*. In the map, the red dots indicate the cities surrounding the continent, and the dark lines crossing the chart signal the first conquest expeditions performed in the 15th and 16th century, together with the current transoceanic industrial flows through the inland of the continent (see Figure 5). In spite of their careful elaboration, the 15 maps did not aim to show a territorial development strategy for South America, on the contrary, they were a speculative means to present the notion of Interior Sea and the continental extent of the Americas. For the School, these notions were fundamental to their thinking of the continent, the Pacific Front, and the World System; such notions lead them to question urbanism based merely on the productivity of a country, of a continent or a region (Buttazoni et al., 1971).

All these maps were redrawn and presented in the exhibition "30 Años de la Escuela de Valparaíso" celebrated in 1982 at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Santiago de Chile, to publicly affirm a geo-poetic commitment towards the Americas. Following the exhibition, the School decided to incorporate the *travesías* as a pedagogical experience to unveil the American extent.

3. On-Drawing Territories: The Iterative Mapping-Practice in the *Travesías*

Since 1984, the *travesías* prolong the study of the urban towards the continent, carried out mainly in remote places outside the comfort of city life. The professor Alberto Cruz described the *travesías* as a study of the American continent that requires crossing through its mainland and its oceans (A. Cruz, 1995, p. 8), because for him, travelling is the way to recognize the magnitude of the continent and to identify the constellation of elements and places through which the continental extent is exhibited and ordered (A. Cruz, n.d., p. 2,3).
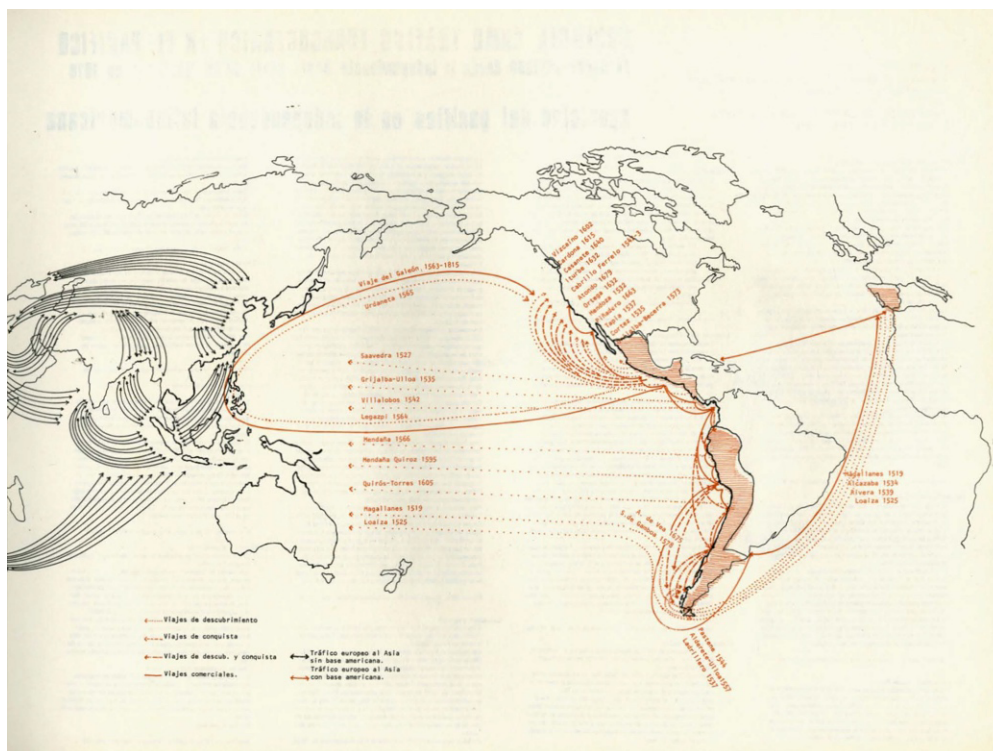

Figure 4. Map of nautical routes in the Pacific Ocean during the 16th and 17th century. Source: Buttazoni et al. (1971, p. 15). No Copyright.
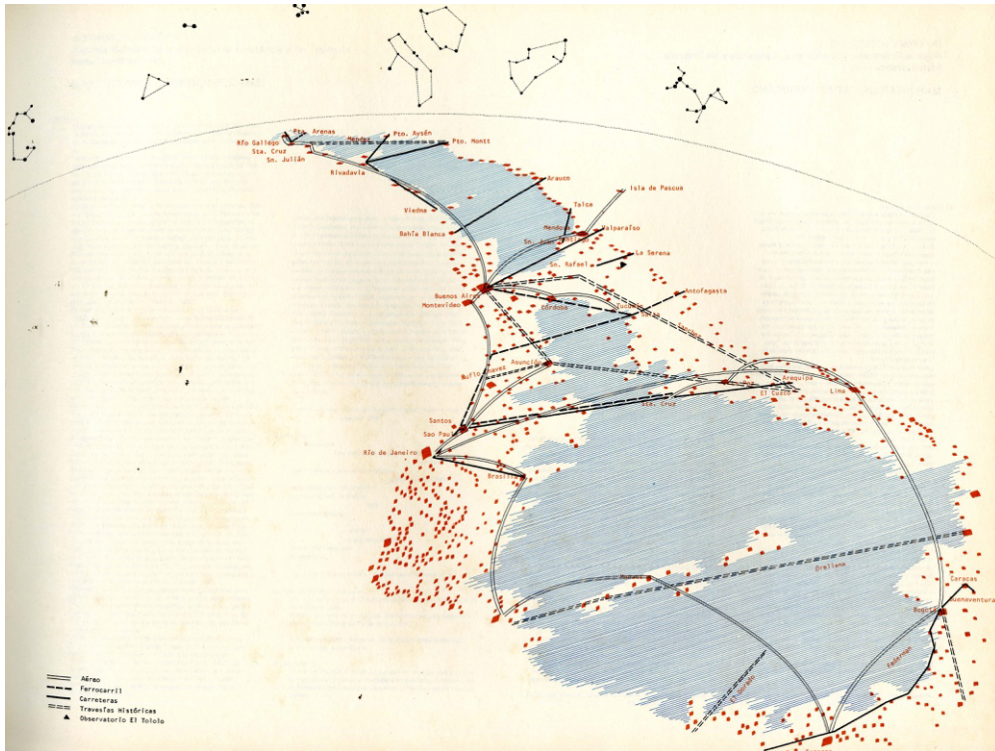
Figure 5. Map of the Interior Sea and South American cities. Source: Buttazoni et al. (1971, p. 29). No Copyright.

The *travesías* are trips performed every year by all the studios of the School of Valparaiso, in which of students and professors are engaged in a collective life, work and study (Escuela de Arquitectura UCV, 1996). This includes the organization of the trip, the permanence in the places of destination and, ultimately, the design and construction of an ephemeral Work of architecture whose purpose is to value the diverse situations recognized in the territory (see Figure 6).

In this way, the works of architecture erected in the *travesías de Amereida* are not conceived as projects to master the land or solve local problems (Jolly, 2017),

Figure 6. *Travesía* of Salar de Coipasa, 1987, Atacama desert, Bolivia. Source: Archivo Histórico José Vial Armstrong (1987b). Reprinted with permission.

but their goal is to create a place—in the poetic sense—for an active and celebrative encounter with otherness, namely the local community and nature.

Besides, the subject of study that each *travesía* seeks to approach, is associated with disciplinary questions decided upon before the trip in Valparaiso, which are gradually developed and reformulated on the ground. This process points out that the *travesía de Amereida* as a project has a temporality that exceeds the period of the trip, including the time for planning, the time for execution, and the time for the architectural summary back in Valparaiso. These three chronological periods are essential for the iterative mapping practice based on freehand drawing, conducted during the *travesías* project.

3.1. Pre-Travesía: Mapping to Be Situated

The pre-*travesía* is a period of three to four weeks before the *travesía* focused on collectively map the territory between Valparaiso and other places of the continent that are proposed by the members of the studio. It is a process to explore and trace the networks of urbanization shaping the territories, drawing up the potential routes and the places to be covered during the journey (see Figure 7). Hence, the pre-*travesía* mapping is

composed of the major elements of urbanization, such as the road infrastructure, geo-political boundaries, settlements, and the urban services which both enable an understanding of the large-scale territorial complexities and enable one to get to the destinations. This mapping process remains open to the situated experience, and the discoveries coming from the architectural observation and the poetic acts. Then, every studio of the School produces portable collage maps (in different scales and with digital and analogue data) to be carried within the travel-logs and to be enriched during the *travesía*.

3.2. Travesía: Situated Mapping

The *travesía* is a period of two or three weeks of situated practices in the continent. In this period, the mapping consists mainly of the making of freehand drawing in the travel-logs of students and teachers, which are shared to reflect and to co-design the architectural Work. During the *travesía*, the mapping process is deployed in two moments, during the trip and at the destination. First, during the trip, the group redraws maps of the territorial urbanization to corroborate and redefine the path that is underway. Besides this, they execute architectural observations 'in motion' in which the landscape is drawn
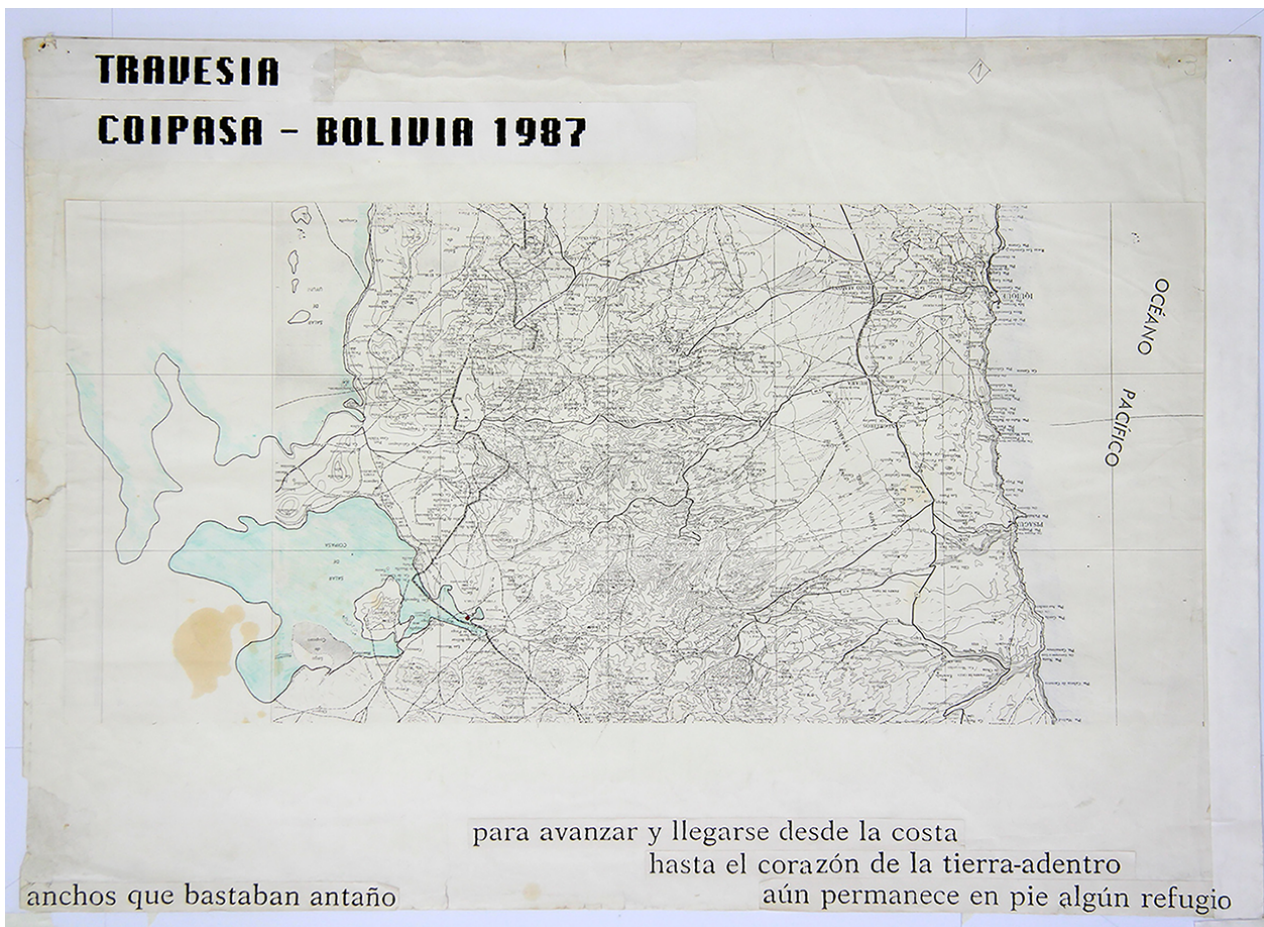

Figure 7. Mapping of the Altiplano region in Los Andes Mountain with fragments of the *Amereida*'s poem. Pre-*travesía* of Salar de Coipasa, 1987, Bolivia. Source: Archivo Histórico José Vial Armstrong (1987a) Reprinted with permission.

through the window of the bus and during the brief stops in different places across the continent (see Figure 8 top). This mapping might last more than six days when the destination point is far away from Valparaiso (e.g., the north of Brazil), or when there is no road (e.g., the Patagonian Fjords).

The second moment is at the destination. After the arrival, the group performs a study of the place and its surroundings through the making of architectural observations and cartographic schemes of the landscape (see Figure 8, bottom row). After defining the site for the work, together with the local community—if there is one—a more exhaustive morphological and topographic analysis is performed. Simultaneously, the design and construction of the project are developed, in which local materials and artisanal techniques are implemented. This whole process of describing, documenting, and designing is iterative because it requires constant reflection upon the drawings made during the trip and at the destination, to confront them with the preconceived ideas set in Valparaiso, and to iterate consideration of the real possibilities and resources for the Work.

3.3. Post-Travesía: Mapping as Narrative

The post-travesía is a period of one to two weeks after the travesía, in which the studios summarize their experience through a public exhibition that gives accounts of the trip, the Work, and the new knowledge unveiled by the travesía. This period is fundamental for the School of Valparaiso because each experience can be incorporated into the collective knowledge since the travesías de Amereida are considered a single project with hundreds of shared experiences.

Therefore, the large amount of material produced in the travel-logs of students and teachers—such as the architectural observations and the collective design drawings—is shared to present a common vision about the architectonic work executed and about the travelled extent. To summarize the travesía, the description of the project is usually illustrated through a series of schematic maps, such as those displayed in this sequence of free-hand drawings (see Figure 9). Using schemes in different scales but in equal size, this sequence aim to describe: (1) the international path of this travesía following the
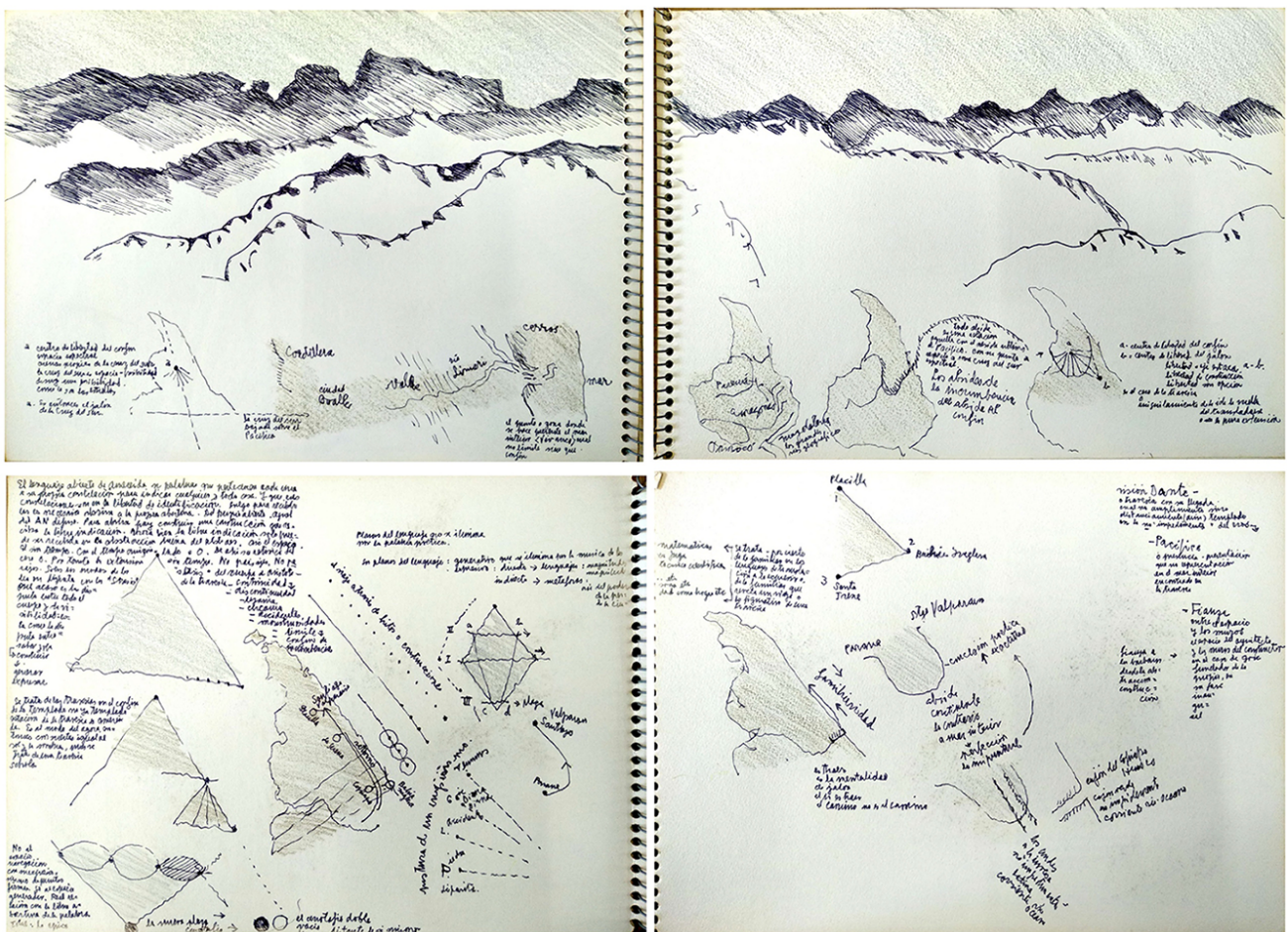

Figure 8. Travel-log of Alberto Cruz. Set of drawings in the Altiplano in Los Andes Mountain and schemes about the great rivers of South America and the site of the work in the *travesía* of San Andrés-Rosario, 1984, Argentina. Source: A. Cruz (1984). Reprinted with permission.
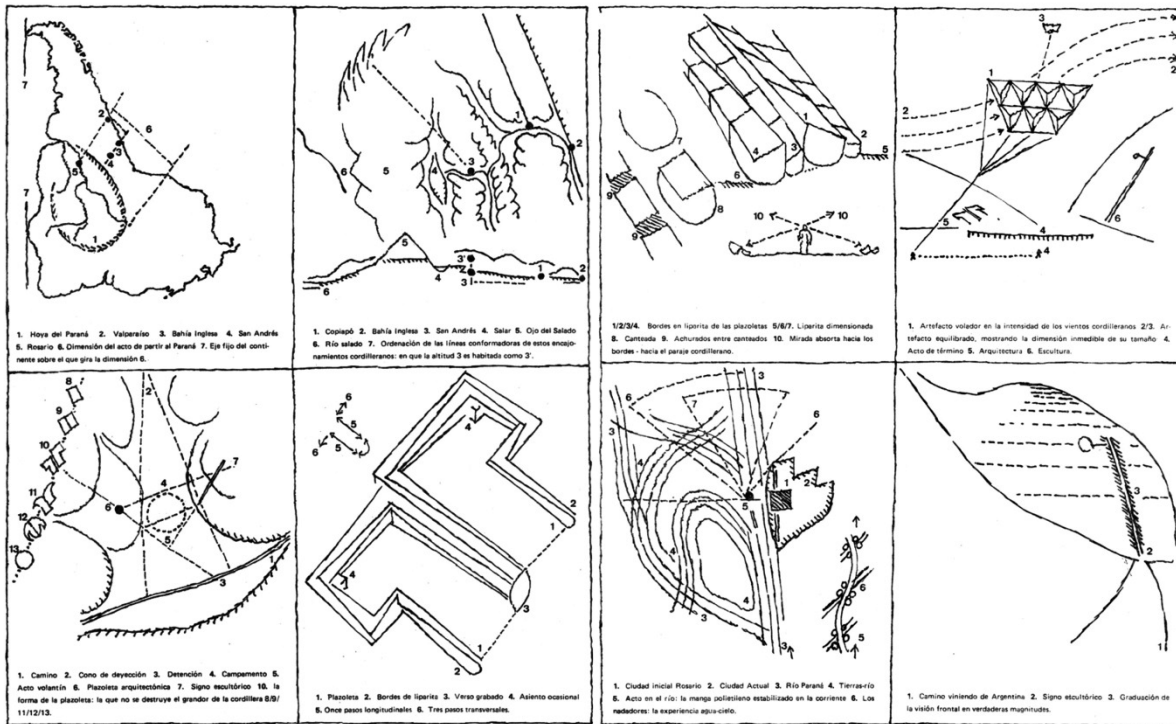
Figure 9. Sequence of maps describing the *travesía* of San Andrés-Rosario, 1984, Argentina. Source: Escuela de Arquitectura UCV (1991, pp. 184–185). No Copyright.

major hydrographic basin of South America; (2) the profiles of the territory surrounding the site of the work; (3) the layouts of roads and the camp; (4) the layout of the work traced on the ground; and (5) the isometrics details of the Work.

The mapping process made after the return to Valparaiso can be found in diverse exhibitions about the *travesías* until today. However, the most remarkable aspect of the schemes of the *travesía* of San Andrés, is the invention of the 'sequential frame,' in which the temporality and spatiality experienced are carefully represented in freehand drawings that shift from two to three spatial dimensions, and from the human to the continental scales. Then, the comments under the schemes highlight the relationship between the spatial intervention and the continental extent.

Thus, the iterative mapping practice permits to link and intersect the chronologies of the pre-*travesía*, the *travesía* and the post-*travesía*, with the ever-changing territorial realities, which is deeply attached to the situated experience of making the works in the place. This iterative and collective process to explore the documentation and the interpretation of urban and non-urban territories is understood as a palimpsestic mode to trace the territorial footprints of urbanization imprinted beyond the traditional city boundaries.

4. Conclusion

The School of Valparaiso—with more than 250 *travesías* performed in the South American continent—has been committed to unveiling the continent through their situated geo-poetic approach, is based on the fact that the *travesías* allow for the continual reinterpretation the territory beyond preconceived and conventional categories. This geo-poetic notion has permitted a critical regard of the historiography described since the Invention of America (O'Gorman, 2010/1958) in the 15th century, and the American extent has been a path to unveil the differences (Iommi et al., 1967, p. 84) of realities shaping urban and non-urban 'territories,' as opposed to the concepts of sovereignty and power relations over the lands.

The geo-poetic approach of the School of Valparaiso, which is a radical alternative to the usual technocratic attitudes towards territories, might be part of a turn toward critical thinking and practices emerging within academia, which range from decolonial epistemologies—that seek to bring into light the ever-changing territorial differences of territories which have been rendered virtually invisible by hegemonies inherited from colonization (Escobar, 2008; Mignolo, 2000; Mignolo & Tlostanova, 2012; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018)—to the exploration of new design practices committed to addressing these non-conventional issues in the field of design (Demos, 2016; Escobar, 2018; Javet, 2017).

Likewise, the geo-poetic mapping, envisaged as an exploratory and critical practice towards territories and urbanization, is an open field to radically rethink architecture and urbanism due to its engagement in direct experience such as situated hermeneutic mapping (Corner, 2014; Havik, 2014; Viganò, 2014, 2016). The latter performs descriptive and imaginative interpretations

Figure 10. Shaping the South American extent through the routes performed by the *travesías de Amereida*. Map by the authors.

on multiple dimensions of territories, which are virtually impossible to grasp solely through the use of remote analytical devices, such as those advocated by landscape urbanism (Thompson, 2012).

Looking back to the whole ensemble of *travesías de Amereida*, we state that their geo-poetic orientation to unveil the visible and invisible meanings embedded in reality (Heidegger, 1971/2001; Merleau-Ponty, 1964/1968) has been the base to sustain these experiences for more than four decades (see Figure 10). For the school, the metaphor of the unknown leads them to keep the territories unveiled by the *travesías* as an extent open to be permanently re-visited, as a palimpsest that can be continuously re-read and re-drawn (Corboz, 1983).

Consequently, the geo-poetic practices performed during the *travesía* are not actions conducted to master the lands, but rather to unfold new insights into the ever-changing transformations territories outside the cities. By incorporating design drawings and the building of Works into the geo-poetic mapping palimpsest, the *travesía* intends to restore the fundamental act of making (Ingold, 2013) as a means of engaging in broader reflection on the territories. Furthermore, the *travesía's* mapping and making are deeply embedded in the place and

in the encounter with otherness. It is this which allows one to reinterpret situations and differences through a relational understanding beyond the conventional dichotomies of urbanization, such as rural/urban, public/private, country/city, or local/global.

Ultimately, the geo-poetic mapping palimpsest developed during the *travesías*, have been the medium to move from a passive-contemplation based on the analysis of data and the interpretation of reality, to an active-contemplation (Browne, Cáraves, & Jolly, 2011), oriented to make situations from which new insights about territorial and urban questions can be drawn. This active engagement to search for knowledge of the openness is embodied in *Amereida's* geo-poetic statement "the road is not the road" (Iommi et al., 1967, p. 189).

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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