

## Living and education in times of crisis

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Housing is always a hot topic, as it is urbanization. The urbanization process, attached to the first industrialization and, later attached to the outsourcing of societies, has moved forward worldwide dramatically, especially since Second World War and, it has been part of public policy, often by default, in other cases to favor the enrichment of a few and, sometimes to make life more enjoyable, more beautiful and more humane to its citizens. The urban context has always been a powerful factor of socialization and acculturation, and it was not accidental that at the end of last century, emerged the concept of “educator city”. A concept that raised the importance of educational and un-educational potential that determines and guides the urban plots where most of humanity lives. Twenty-five years after the emergence of the concept, the idea that remains is like a rhetorical label, those labels that do harm no one.

About housing, some of the manifestations of the commodification of housing are privatization of public services, crazy increase in housing prices, evictions, and excessive expansion of the building, the pressure on the territory, critical or marginal status of the poorest sectors and mass expulsions by armed conflict or megalomaniac projects... [1] All of them are policies that have made the States and public administrations in mere observers at the service of private initiative. Actually, you can say that are these speculative and anti-social policies that have led to the bursting of the housing bubble and then the global financial crisis.

It turns out that housing is a human right recognized but a right that is not effective, like many other rights of every human being, as can be health and education, water and energy supply. And that is why we know, as has been fully demonstrated that the solution (the possibility of moving from aspiration to reality) it will be only possible if States and governments assume their responsibility and they do not transfer it to the market, to private capital. Area where what is sought is the business.

The monographic “*Habitar y educar en tiempos de crisis*” presents four rigorous and courageous contributions that share both the importance of highlighting the role

and the humanizing role of urban urbanism and housing as their side of potential educators and subjectivity-operators.

*Explorando nuevas formas de concebir y de abordar el problema de la vivienda desde el campo popular* it is an article that was written from Latin America and the Caribbean insist on the old policy which asseverate that the solution of all problems it is more market -including the housing problem-, as we see they are always at the service of global capitalism. Leaving for the States the caring of those unfortunate, those who are completely on the outside thought actions that appeal to welfarism and compassion, without changing even one iota their decisions and the conditions that produce them. For this reason, the article advocates the need for new policies, policies that arise from the consideration of housing as a human right, and suggests some strategies proven and feasible intervention.

*La problemática de la vivienda y la cuestión urbana : una reflexión sobre África desde África* reflects exactly what it announces. Contrary to what many Western people think, urbanization is a reality and a challenge in Africa. A reality greatly marked by the colonial impact and a huge urban growth, generally produced outside any kind of rules and regulations. One thing and another have had dire consequences, as exemplified by the case of the floods in Senegal on 2005 or the floods on 2009 in Burkina Faso. Possible alternatives raise the need for States to have a real social housing policy; the article claims the role of cooperatives, but especially the article states that what is at issue is to put structural policies in place (water, roads, planning...), policies that can only enforce strong, interventionist, honest States, States closely monitored by an articulated and empowered society.

The remaining two articles have been written from Catalonia, but both the first and second start of the Spanish reality, a reality that has put the issue of housing in the forefront of topicality and the social claim. It is not anecdotal that the mayor of the city of Barcelona, since June 2015, is the most visible face of a nonviolent, innovative, highly effective and massive movement: La Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH) [2].

*¿ Hablemos de vivienda ?* The article bearing this title begins by stating the need and opportunity to the fore issues relating to urbanism and housing. It also analyzes the dimensions it has acquired the housing crisis in Spain, “as if every week a village of 500 inhabitants is emptied”, and social and personal effects which involves an eviction. But it also highlights the existence of an outrageous number of houses built and unused, “to keep playing the real estate market”. To overcome

this situation, it is necessary “to require the social function of private property”, as it is already done in the field of urbanism, and that translates into bound and free soil transfers...

Finally, *Hacia la conquista del derecho a la vivienda a través del empoderamiento* is the most heartfelt of the monographic, an article written in the first person. Among other reasons because it has been written from within the PAH and because it has been constructed from 18 interviews of participants PAH Barcelona. The article begins by explaining why the emergency housing and presenting the Platform of People Affected by the Mortgage (PAH). In the second part, the article shows how the group counseling, empowerment and direct action, all three elements together, have been a real engine of social transformation.

Both the housing and education should be indisputably public policy of a democratic country that really wants to ensure access and universal enjoyment of all human rights to the people part. The market is certainly useful for many things, but not for the enjoyment of all universal human rights that we have recognized.

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## Notes

[1] Maquet Makedonski, P. (coord.), 2013, *Políticas alternativas de vivienda en América Latina y el Caribe. Un paso más en el proceso de construcción de la Vía Urbana y Comunitaria hacia un Pacto Social Urbano alternativo*. Buenos Aires: Alianza Internacional de Habitantes.

[2] Platform Affected by Mortgage (PAH).