

Cities, Communities and Homes: Is the Urban Future Livable?

- **Paper / Proposal Title:**

The perception of the city and the taxation: the strange and dangerous cases of the Mexican gated communities

- **Format:**

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- **Author(s) Name:**

Emanuele Giorgi, Viviana Margarita Barquero Díaz Barriga

- **University or Company Affiliation:**

Escuela de Arquitectura y Diseño del Tecnológico de Monterrey Campus León, Gto, Mexico

- **Abstract (300 words):**

Considering the rapid urbanization phenomena that are taking place around the world, we need to strongly reflect over the planning capacity of the governments to give solutions to the needs of the communities and to let them feeling part of the whole cities. In the last decades, several Mexican metropolises are facing strong growing phenomena and one of the urban results that mainly characterizes the contemporary Mexican society is related to the gated communities: theme object of strong debates in the fields of planning, architecture and sociology.

The aspect that this research wants to investigate, concerns the tendency of the inhabitants of these huge gated communities to pay sums of money, additional to the ordinary taxes, in order to have services that are perceived better than the ones provided by the standard taxation.

A first phase of the research, developed with colleagues from the department of urban policies, compares the perceptions of services with the services actually provided

(security, cleaning, etc.). Thanks to surveys organized within the city of Leon (Guanajuato, Mexico) with residents of three different areas of the city (lower-middle class, upper-middle class and a gated community) the research highlighted that, rather than the actual services, what is actually purchased in the gated communities is the "perception" of the services.

The following step investigates as this paradoxical situation turns into something really dangerous when the concept of "extra taxes" is transformed into a commodity to bargain with the local governments over the privatization of important public resources, such as the infrastructural network, the water and natural resources, or the protected areas. These results lead to the conclusion that the pure necessity of perceiving more and better services leads to phenomena of privatization of the common goods that often are devastating for the cities, the communities and the territories.

- **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

EMANUELE GIORGI

Full Time Visiting Professor at Escuela de Arquitectura y Diseño, Tecnológico de Monterrey, Campus León (Mexico), where he teaches at the course of Community Buildings and Final Project. He is engineer, and research member at China Lab, Department of Civil Engineering and Architecture at the University of Pavia (Italy). In the last years, he studied the topics of participation in architecture and communitarian settlements as major ways toward sustainable development. These topics have been the core of his doctoral research, thanks to which he achieved PhD in January 2016 with a supervisor from Tongji University in Shanghai (China). From this University he received also the title of Shuoshi Master of Architecture in 2012. In 2012 he received also the Master Degree in Building Engineering and Architecture from University of Pavia, Italy.

VIVIANA BARQUERO

Viviana Barquero is a researcher interested in the diagnose and development of sustainable communities focusing on the food-water-energy nexus as a model towards climate change adaptation in Mexican communities. She has a Ph.D. in Arid Lands Resource Sciences with a minor in Climate Change earned at the University of Arizona. She collaborates with the Institute of Environment of the University of Arizona. Her current work promotes the development of an Integrated Food-Energy Strategy that aims to improve livelihood conditions in vulnerable communities. She is currently a full-time professor at the Institute of Technology and Higher Education of Monterrey.

- **Email contact details:**

EMANUELE GIORGI – emanuele.giorgi@unipv.it