



- 1, 2, & 3. Picture Libis Community in Valenzuela City.
4. Student Panel Critical Urbanism Studio year 2014.
5. A working model for the Studio 2015



CRITICAL URBANISM STUDIO

In the Critical Urbanism Studio students of the Development Planning Unit (The Bartlett, University College London) are exposed to the concept of design as a critically resistant and activist endeavour.

The studio hinges upon an extended and remotely simulated site analysis and phenomenological mapping, aimed at revealing qualitative and quantitative attributes of a case of informal urbanism from Valenzuela City (Metro Manila Region, Philippines), namely the United Libis Homeowners Association Inc., where the project leaders had previously run a project along with practitioners from the Community Architects Network (CAN, a programme funded by the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights).

Participants are asked to delve thoroughly into the phenomenology of such site, and are stimulated not to automatically assume an effort toward physical building as singular solution – and, rather, to value an informed understanding of the place and its human and social component as essential.

The outcome of the studio are yearly shared with community leaders and other partners of the Development Planning Unit operating in the Philippines, fostering a constant exchange and contamination of ideas between a studio run in the Global North and an activist endeavour materializing in the Global South.

CRITICAL URBANISM STUDIO

GIORGIO TALOCCI & CAMILLO BOANO



2. FOSTER THE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE ROLE OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT PROFESSIONALS BY STIMULATING SOCIAL MODES OF PRACTICE BEFORE SPECULATIVE ECONOMIC PROFITABILITY

DESIGN AND THE CREATION OF POLITICAL SUBJECTS.

The overall aim of the studio is to rethink the role of the built environment practitioner, in order to respond to the challenges brought by the high level of contestation of nowadays' urban spaces. Participants are asked to reflect on the notion of 'critical urbanism', and to understand whether an urbanism emancipated from the capitalist forces that are shaping the contemporary cities could actually exist. How to imagine people-driven processes? How to let them emancipate from logics of profitability and rather thrive on collective action and an immanently 'social' endeavour? Trying to answer such questions, the studio grounds in the methodology of the Community Architects Network, and in its deeply 'political' vocation: CAN's objective has been to empower urban poor communities across South East Asia, putting them at the centre of the process of urban transformation. In the same manner, the participants of the Critical Urbanism Studio are asked to keep in mind how their projects should eventually lead to the creation of new political subjects.



1. Picture of Libis Community in Valenzuela City.
2. Students presenting their project proposal year 2014.
3. A working model for the Studio year 2015
4. Students' work year 2014.



CRITICAL URBANISM STUDIO

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1. Picture of domestic electrical supply Libis Community in Valenzuela City.
2. Students discussing their project proposal during tutorials year 2014.
3. Students' work year 2014. A working
4. A model for the Studio year 2015.



6. SHARE KNOWLEDGE, PROMOTE DISCUSSION, REFLECTION AND AWARENESS, AND COLLABORATE IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE 'SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF HABITAT'

In the studio, participants are free to determine what kind of intervention they – and the community, as they will interpret it – deem appropriate for the site. Tangible outcomes so far have imagined variations on the site's physical fabric (in terms of both housing and mixed-use individual and community spaces) and certainly forecasted an impact on the social one. Proposals have encompassed re-blocking of the housing units, re-thinking of the public spaces, inception of economic activities, self-managed production of construction materials.

The production of such outcomes periodically lead to collective discussion (twice a year with the community and other partners from the field) where ideas get contaminated and put again into circulation within the network of urban poor communities in South East Asia.

CRITICAL URBANISM STUDIO GIORGIO TALOCCI & CAMILLO BOANO



ASPIRATIONS & DESIGN FRAMEWORK

PROPOSED INTERVENTION: 'Dwelling unit'
The basic dwelling, would be a 36 sqm flat minimum: 2 bedrooms, 1 toilet/shower, open plan living and kitchen. Shared circulation and laundry area outside.

PROPOSED INTERVENTION: 'Typologies and materials'
To accommodate 843 households in 228 lots, high rise concrete buildings would be needed in two mixed options: Blocks of flats (206 dwellings) and rows of houses (135).

PROPOSED INTERVENTION: 'Cluster arrangement'
The site development would be sub-divided in 25 clusters following existing groups of dwellings and neighbour relationships to facilitate design, implementation and phasing during construction and minimize disruption.

PROPOSED INTERVENTION: 'Tying up in between spaces'
Small pathways inside the community would be widened to at least 2m and lots should have a 2m front. Also, a shared laundry area outside every block of flats and houses could have private laundry areas on each balcony or service.

PROPOSED INTERVENTION: 'Open space and community'
Dwellings under the HV lines would be demolished except from the covered basketball court. New public space would be regenerated to fit community needs: green areas, nursery or children playground, a multi purpose hall, etc.

PROPOSED INTERVENTION: 'Widening of main road and mixed use of public space'
The main road (only access to LIBSI) should be at least 8m wide to allow public transport circulation from road by highway and improve community connectivity in the vicar context. Also, some permanent shops and market stalls in the vacant public space would support economic growth by facilitating interchange of goods and services within the community and with other neighbours from surrounding residential/industrial areas.

METHODOLOGY: DYNAMIC PROCESSES AND COOPERATION

Please refer to attached plan drawing for final re-blocking details.

IMPLEMENTATION

Principles: Regulation, Site Data, Facts, HRO, Key Associations, Community, etc.

Cluster 1: Awareness, Programming & Research, Use & Adaptation, Construction, Design and Review, Decision-making, Empowerment, Management, Contestation, Use & Adaptation.

Cluster 2: Awareness, Programming & Research, Use & Adaptation, Construction, Design and Review, Decision-making, Empowerment, Management, Contestation, Use & Adaptation.

...and so on to Cluster 25.

8. SUPPORT PARTICIPATORY, DEMOCRATIC, MULTICULTURAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY PROCESSES AND APPROACHES IN STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY AS A FACTOR OF RURAL AND URBAN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



1. & 2. Students work year 2014. A working
3. Community mapping in Libis.
4. Students' work year 2014
5. Students discussing their project proposal during tutorials year 2015.



The activities of the studio grounds in a participatory process whereby urban poor communities along with community architects, academics and local authorities, were taking part in a collective endeavour toward a shared creation of the built environment. The organization of the studio reflects such participatory process: the background of the students is highly interdisciplinary and they are stimulated to reflect on the reality of the different actors of the urban transformation and on the multidimensionality of the transformation process itself. The sessions are organized according to different scales of analysis and design, from the household to the city level passing through the collective dimension of the community itself – in so doing stressing the importance of building alliances and links at multiple scales in order to foster a truly open and inclusive process of transformation.

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