

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
SECOND SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Master of Science in Architecture
Honors theses

Intervention strategies in marginal degraded enclosures of the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires

El Programa de urbanización de Villa Maciel

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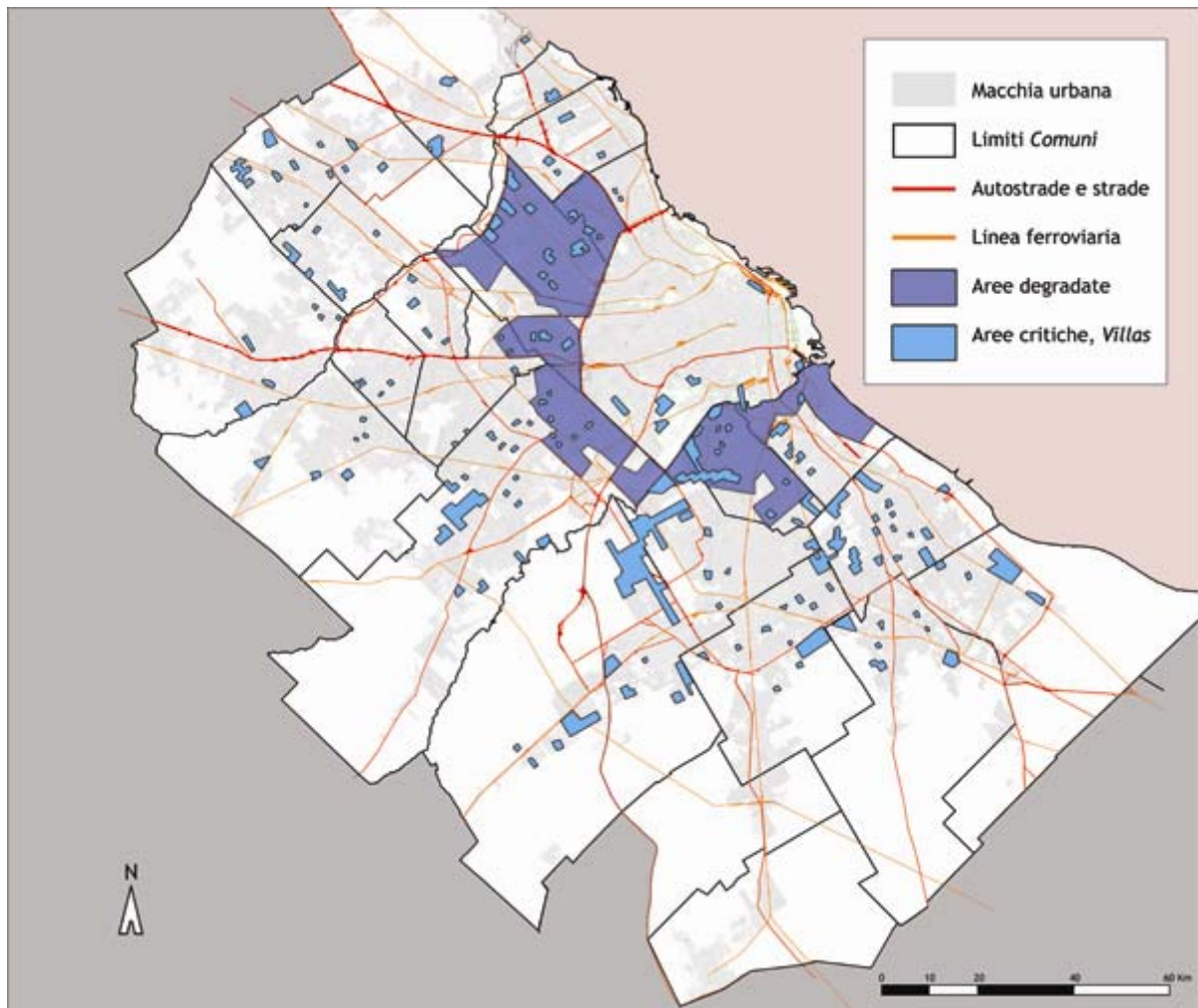
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Housing issue in Argentina is nowadays far more complex and conflicting than it was in the past. Extreme deprivation, accelerated informal urbanization and socio-territorial fragmentation are some of the aspects that constitute the present-day urban deficit, that harshly shows itself on the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, in opposition to the “Fist World” image that the capital city has and displays.



Contrast between Villa 31 and Buenos Aires downtown's skyline

The *villas de emergencia* officially become a typical and integral part of the city's conformation: even if they occupy relatively small surfaces, and they look apparently provisional, they are the permanent habitat of a huge share of the population with less resources, constituting the effective response to their housing needs. Considering them as marginal in the city structure is nowadays getting more and more senseless. The issue doesn't deal with the validation and legalization of the precariousness of such a kind of settlement, but with the awareness of them as an urban problem, in order to get to a physical and social integration between the legal and the illegal city.



Critical areas of the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires

Which role should we play, as architects, regarding this kind of phenomena? Reaching a deeper social inclusion is a task of the society as a whole, involving all stakeholders. There are not housing policies, but in a national frame, in order to achieve an equal, democratic and active society, that purposes integrated social policies concerning habitat, job, social development, environment, health and education.

The aim of this work is to evaluate which conditions the housing policies should contemplate in order to guarantee effective and lasting solutions. First of all, it is necessary to consider the urban dimension, trying to “realize cities”, besides just building houses: planning public spaces, educational, sanitary, cultural and recreational equipment to consolidate small centralities; defining a good accessibility; planning employment generation strategies; thinking about the location of the new residential areas, according to a plan of urban development; studying residence typologies, in relation to the specific climatic, social and cultural conditions of the place where they will be realized.



Plan of *Villa Maciel* and Masterplan of *Programa de Urbanización de Villa Maciel*

Particular attention has been turned to the present and future role that competes to the local governments. The working experience at the *Dirección de Planeamiento Urbano* of the *Municipalidad de Avellaneda* represented an interesting opportunity to involve myself in the elaboration and application of a specific government program, concerning the development of an informal slum: the "*Programa de Urbanización de Villa Maciel*".

Getting involved and working in social architecture area doesn't only mean to produce standardized and low cost dwellings for any geographical and social context. It implicates to understand, first of all, the population's life styles, traditions and real needs. Only through the cooperation of an interdisciplinary team, that works in social, technological, political and economic circles, including the active participation of the beneficiary families, it is possible to achieve a level of understanding of the problem, so that the proposed solution could be a suitable solution.

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http://www.architesi.polito.it/pdf/4036_uk_abs.pdf