



Universiteit Utrecht



CALL FOR PAPERS

Conflict, Fragmentation and Hope in the Neoliberal City: Urban Space in Latin America

International conference, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
6-7 November 2008

NALACS (Netherlands Association for Latin American and Caribbean Studies)
RedNLA (Network of Latin American Scholars)
CEDLA (Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation)
Utrecht University, Department of Geography and Urban Planning
TU Delft, Faculty of Architecture, Theory Department

Global capitalism emphasizes the role of the city, as flows of capital, people, commodities and policies move swiftly through the urban nodes of global networks. Much of the discussion on cities and globalization in Latin America has focused on the notion of space, and specifically on both the removal and erection of borders. The privatization of urban space creates borders, as public space is fragmented into fortified enclaves and consumption facilities are ordered by class and ethnicity. *Centros históricos* become tourist attractions once they have been declared national patrimony. Paradoxically, regulations for the preservation of historical centers often renew and reinforce structures of social and economic exclusion, as de facto *blanqueamiento* (whitening) policies are introduced. The contestation over urban space escalates as crime rates and feelings of insecurity increase, and streets become the backdrop for conflicts and confrontations, regulated by punitive populism, revanchism, and zero-tolerance policies. Yet while cities are spaces of conflict and fragmentation, they are simultaneously - following David Harvey - spaces of hope, where political, ethnic and sexual minorities can find new resources for mobilization and emancipation against the background of Latin American democratization.

These developments are all exacerbated by globalization processes, which shape cities and the ways in which citizens experience urban space. While at first glance cities worldwide appear to be increasingly similar, a closer look teaches us that conflict, fragmentation and emancipation are best understood within specific urban and national contexts. In this international conference, we seek to understand the impact of global capitalism and neoliberal policies on Latin American urban space. We explore how local governments, citizens and the private sector deal with conflict and fragmentation in Latin American cities.

The conference aims to develop multidisciplinary, multi-level ways of analyzing the processes currently reshaping Latin American cities. In the keynote speech, Prof. dr. Teresa Caldeira (University of California, Irvine) will examine the impact of neoliberalism on the space, culture and policing of Latin American cities. These issues will be discussed in depth in four parallel sessions:

- 1) Urban geography and public space
- 2) Urban cultures and identities
- 3) Citizenship and social movements
- 4) Police, violence and security.

Scholars from across the disciplines are invited to submit paper proposals for the parallel sessions. Proposals should include the paper title, a short abstract (max. 100 words), institutional affiliation, and contact information. Proposals should be sent **before 15 July 2008** to José Carlos G. Aguiar (jcaguiar@cedla.nl).

For further information please contact:

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