A Favela Pattern Language

Keywords: favelas #1, social patterns #2, mass housing #3, labor #4, urban design#5, porosity #6

Department of Architecture/ Chair of Dwelling)

Area of Research: Architecture, Urban Design, Urban sociology, Urban Anthropology, Planetary Urbanization

Research Summary: This doctorate aims to propose a method for the design of social housing that emerges from the social practices that exist in the slums. The goal is to communicate the social practices that exist within the favelas, especially those that emerge from the labor relations of the contemporary systems of economic circulation. An experimental method will address the following research question: Does the architecture of the favelas emerge from the social practices? By thus proceeding, the aim is to humanize architects’ practices and to experience new ways of studying mass housing by communicating the architecture that emerges from labor.

Research Methodology: Two case studies (an ethnographic research in the Grota do Antigo Telegrafo and in the Favela Sururu de Capote in Maceió) provide issues of debate and raises fundamental questions for this discussion along with an extensive literature review on informal settlements.

Key Publications:
Cavalcanti, A.R.C. The Brazilian Favela of Telegrafo and some variants of self-help housing planning in post-neoliberal city. (IASTE 2016, University of Berkeley, December 2016)


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Main Question: Does the architecture of favelas emerges from social practices?

Deliverables: Exhibitions, Book and Articles.

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