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Design, technology and democracy: how can innovation of PD practices for civil society organisms extend and strengthen representation and participation of marginalized citizens in Ecuador?

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INTRODUCTION
Design products are human-made artifacts that interpret and consummate ideas, representations, and practices that shape the landscape of social reality. As social products, they cannot be understood as being at the margin of the social relations of production (Cueva, 2012). As such, design participates in the processes of modernization and capitalist expansion, and as a specialist activity has close ties with economic production and hegemonic development. In that way, hegemonic interests determine how artifacts, systems and practices are constructed, and the relations of design, modernity and capitalist economy affect how, what and who design represents in its theory and practice. This study will concentrate on the later phenomena from a contemporary, majority of the world perspective. Sensitized to the Global South experience, particularly Latin America, it will consider how exclusion from the broader economic system reflects on design with marginalized citizens. It will focus on work, and the particular precarized Latin American working class. And, divergent from modern westernized discussions that situate precarized work around the implementation of the neoliberal model in the 80s, situate the discussion around precarized work, not from a post welfare state experience, but from a post-colonial and development state understanding (Munck, 2013).

The aim of this study is to locate opportunities for innovation of Participatory Design (PD) practices that can extend and strengthen representation and participation of civil society organizations connected to the contemporary labour movement in Ecuador. Working on design practices that through the study of contemporary artifacts of representation and reflection and theorization about marginalized citizens, advocates for ontological and epistemological plurality that addresses the histories and necessities of an unprivileged majority. And supportive to the idea that while the academic and professional practice has moved toward inclusive processes, the problems connected to modernity, like marginalization and hegemony, demand a sense of purpose and dedication that implies a far more radical and substantive redesigning of the dominant cultures of design practice, research, and education (Schultz et al., 2018).

PROCESS
Participatory action research and PD
As main method Participatory Action Research (PAR) will be employed, according to the research problematic concerning the need for further theoretical and methodological knowledge that can be used and contribute to a design production respondent to the needs of marginalized citizens that can be positively articulated in the current material culture. Reiterating in the later, Thiollent’s consideration for Action Research from the South América experience “of great
relevance for application in projects concerning social improvement and community emancipation” (qtd. Chiara Del Gaudio et al., 2016). Together, with PD as a field of action, the Research Design will articulate an approach that encourages representation and participation, and is sensitive when dealing with nondominant, marginalized contexts.

PD workshops applied to each case study will guide design processes and methods for codetermination of technologies and practices. One PD Project per case study will be conducted in a common practice of PAR cycles. The reflection period would be dedicated to critical thinking about the experience, workshops, data and analysis made, for theorizing while doing research and projection of the knowledge to be studied and planned for the next cycle. (Table 1)

**Table 1. Cycles: Studying and planning, action, gathering and analysis of data, follow by a period of Reflection.**

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<th>CASE STUDIES</th>
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| The researcher will analyze the processes and artifacts of representation of civil society organizations connected to the contemporary labour movement in Ecuador. Focusing the distinctive ways in which this collective organization and action has historically enabled environments for representation and participation, and approaching cases through the lenses of the experiences of CONAIE – The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador, one of the most interesting, emancipatory cases of modern civil society organization in Latin America and “historically fundamental for the construction of cultural identity of indigenous peoples against colonialism, and to promote of participation of marginalized indigenous communities in political and decision-making processes”. (Quienes somos—CONAIE, n.d.)

Purposive sampling will be refined when specific characteristics arise after first findings, the number of cases will be restricted to three. The cases will respond to the prospect of generalization of findings through analogous relations, conditions and processes to other Latin American contexts.

Table 1. Cycles: Studying and planning, action, gathering and analysis of data, follow by a period of Reflection.
**Fieldwork**

Fieldwork will develop in the form of PD workshops. Detailed examination will be vital for sensitive reconstruction of cases and understanding of opportunities for innovation in relation to contextual conditions. Case studies will participate in qualitative data gathering through normal work in collaborative design actions (Hyysalo & Hyysalo, 2018). And, accordingly with the research design, case sensitive approaches will be developed and adjust. Observation, talking / research-sharing circle, open-ended questionnaires/ interviews will address the limitations of dominant research methodologies (Schneider & Kayseas, 2018) guided through participatory workshops.

Qualitative data collected will be analyzed employing community-informed interpretation of data. Report on data will emphasize strategizing work in collaborative design, research on design competency in organizations, addressing both the possibilities that design holds for organizational transformation and, in turn, the need for organizational capability building that allows design to thrive (Hyysalo & Hyysalo, 2018).

Findings will mature into final workshops centered in the implementation of transformative activities, critical discussion, and evaluation. This would be one of the final stages of the research process in each case, and will deepen the operationalization and conceptualization of findings.

During all cycles, the researcher will prepare and present lectures at universities, directed at sharing encountered history, theory and methods and, socializing findings with teachers, researches and professional designers. Report on these activities, will open dialogue in design pedagogy related to this research.

**RESULTS**

Publication of at least two articles and dissemination of results through workshops and lectures. A case-based, valid and reliable analysis of innovation in civil society, subjective and sensitive to the Ecuadorian postcolonial context, with findings that could be generalized through analogous relations, conditions and processes to wider contexts.

In a broad sense, refraining from encouraging processes or theorization that simply reassures diversity, the central expected result of this study is to develop theoretical and methodological knowledge that could challenge the politics of design practice and pedagogy through the study of innovation of PD practices connected to social innovation and community development, according to the relations, conditions and processes of civil society in Ecuador, and the extended Andean Latin American context.

**REFERENCES**


