

Critical Exteriorities

Editors: Selina Blasco, Lila Insúa, Enrique Nieto [i2]

We welcome research with a focus on practices that take a critical stance on the hegemonic policies through which educational institutions in the fields of art, culture and architecture engage with their environment. We are also interested in theoretical reflections concerning these critical practices. This section is part of a collaboration between [i2] and the R&D project “La incorporación de las comunidades artísticas universitarias a las narraciones de la modernidad y del presente” [The incorporation of university artistic communities into the narratives of modernity and the present] (reference: HAR2015-64469-P), within the 2013-2016 Spanish Programme for Promoting Excellence in Scientific and Technical Research.

- Higher education centres in the fields of art and architecture are complex communities that may, or may not, go beyond their educational goals. Their role in society depends on whether they identify with such complexity; if it is acknowledged and enhanced, these institutions step outside the lecture room and increase their political influence.

This monographic section is open to research works that explore the extent to which the will of these institutions to engage with the environment (or the lack of such will) determines the way they take part in the narratives of modernity and the present. Manuscripts submitted to this section should also investigate such absence/presence and propose critical re-interpretations. With this purpose, we will focus on recent educational practices that constitute a form of critical resistance against any of the hegemonic policies through which the institutions engage with the (now problematic) outside world. Practices at the margins of institutions devoted to cultural education, allowing us to examine the relationships between the norm, which they establish, and certain forms of resistance taking place outside their boundaries, which are never clear enough.

This kind of research also aims to establish links between official programmes and those experiences that go beyond the institutional sphere. We seek to improve these educational models, which should not be viewed as antagonistic to each other.

Why are cultural practices so often related to dissident forms of learning? Is knowledge production dominated by official institutions? How can we put the focus on and challenge the mechanisms whereby knowledge is appropriated by hegemonic institutions? Would it be possible to incorporate external know-how and actions to change the status quo?

Why don't universities acknowledge their own status as communities? How can we activate the incorporation of educational communities in the fields of art, architecture and culture into the narratives of modernity and the present? What can civil society contribute to the learning of these communities?

- Our primary goal is to locate and organise case studies taking a critical view of the approaches adopted by educational institutions in respect of culture and other fields involved in the creation and transfer of knowledge. The objective is to analyse the evolution of certain university communities in a variety of contexts: in relation to participatory strategies, professional sectors and society at large, investigating and proposing ways in which to make them more visible.

The case studies submitted must focus on such issues as the emerging capacity of learning processes, the emancipatory role of creativity, the critical potential of cultural practices to promote actions that have an impact on reality, or the political dimension of work taking place at the boundaries.

Manuscripts should also describe and analyse the learning methodologies, tools, devices and protocols employed in the case studies, viewing them as prototypes that could be replicated, developed or altered in different situations and contexts. We also welcome theoretical analyses addressing the role of university learning institutions in the fields of art, culture and architecture, as well as those that speculate about possible and desirable futures for universities and learning institutions.

These studies could have interesting implications for the design of future learning practices that are critical of the normative learning models in place at contemporary institutions. Being familiar with the traceability, methodologies, similarities and differences between them can be useful to set in perspective the limits of such non-normative experiences. Examining their scope and effects will allow us to place them in relation to usual learning processes and introduce changes to the official educational methods.

The present project is also a meeting point for disciplines not always related to one another, like the fine arts, architecture, urban planning, landscape studies, audio-visual disciplines, the social sciences, science and technology studies or library management, which will undoubtedly result in methodological alliances and context exchanges between them. This call for papers is launched in the framework of a collaboration between [i2] and the R&D project “La incorporación de las comunidades artísticas universitarias a las narraciones de la modernidad y del presente” [The incorporation of university artistic communities into the narratives of modernity and the present] (reference: HAR2015-64469-P), within the 2013-2016 Spanish Programme for Promoting Excellence in Scientific and Technical Research.