

TITLE

**From geo-politics to geo-poetics**

Decoding the 'Interior Sea' to (re)present the South-American continent

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ABSTRACT

For more than five decades, the School of Valparaíso in Chile has endeavored to develop a pedagogy and research in architecture based on the experience of building speculative works of architecture, away from traditional methods of research and theoretical production. This commitment for the Work has been materialized in projects such as the *Open City* and the *Travesías of Amereida*. However, and almost contradictory, this attitude towards architecture is based on a geo-poetic vision of the South American continent created by this School in the mid-sixties, which is postulated as a fundamental element in the development of architectural projects.

This geo-poetic vision emerged from the *Travesía of Amereida* in 1965, a wandering trip through the interior lands of South America, seeking to 'unveil' them through poetry and art in action, inquiring into the question of 'being American' and its correlation with the inhabited (and uninhabited) territory of the continent. From this original experience, the *Thesis of the Interior Sea* (1971) is formulated, taking the geo-poetic vision to the field of architecture and urbanism, and establishing a position facing the geopolitics of the seventies, particularly with the visions on the development of the South American region towards the Asia Pacific front.

However, for the School, this vision must be linked to the architecture-*praxis*. For this reason, since 1984 the *Travesías* are a direct experience of architecture carried out on the territory, whose main objective is to "unveil" the South American continent through the development of different design practices of architecture and design.

This paper aims to present the meanings of the geo-poetic embodiment of the *Interior Sea* and its transcription in the architectural-*praxes* developed in the *Travesías* over the last five decades, decoding how the iteration between descriptive, narrative and performative *praxis* allows to simultaneously build metaphorical and critical insights about the transformation of territories driven by continental urbanization and its architectural incarnation.

The presentation is based on the analysis of historical archive documents and experiences as professor at the School of Valparaíso.