The Messy Business of Ordering:
The Impacts of Urban Redevelopment in Manizales, Colombia

Ashley R. Coles

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Abstract

Modernist ideologies that dominate urban development strategies often rest upon the assumption that infrastructure and spatial design will result in social and economic ordering, but this narrow focus draws attention away from the underlying socio-economic context that is producing these problems in the first place. Living conditions, security, and resilience have deteriorated rather than improved as a result of a large-scale redevelopment project known as Macroproyecto San José. The results of this ethnographic study suggest that categorization and a focus on aesthetics have resulted in disorder rather than order, and that unless greater attention is paid to the broader socio-economic context, urban development projects such as this one threaten to worsen rather than improve living conditions for the intended beneficiaries.

Keywords: urban development, modernism, vulnerability, Colombia

About the Author

Ashley Coles is a PhD candidate in the School of Geography and Development at the University of Arizona. She has a BS in Atmospheric Sciences (2005) from Cornell University and an MA in Geography (2008) from the University of Arizona. Her research focuses on knowledge production in areas typically dominated by technical experts, especially in hazard management and development.

Ashley Coles
School of Geography and Development
University of Arizona
PO Box 210076
Tucson, AZ 85721-0076
coles@email.arizona.edu

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Introduction

In Colombia as in much of the world, modernist ideologies explicitly connect order, development, and hazard management. All three are simultaneously means and ends, often inextricably woven together into the same strategies and goals. Modernist development as a process and a (perhaps unattainable) goal entails the process of ordering—understood here as categorization, calculation, and arrangement of a physical space as well as the people and relationships within that space—as a strategy and as a demonstration of success. Improvements in statistical and mapping methods may be seen as scientific achievement, arguably one indicator of development, and are also among the tools used to exercise control over territories and populations. Hazards management shares similar characteristics and assumptions. Development goals usually include hazards management as a component because hazards threaten to destabilize order, lower standards of living and life expectancy, and eliminate other indicators of progress such as infrastructural improvements. Failure to prevent or mitigate hazards is seen as failure to control the territory and protect its resources, including its inhabitants.

Plans based on simplified, abstract understandings have a great potential to backfire, as the municipality of Manizales, Colombia, discovered in 2010 when it initiated a 10-year redevelopment project aimed at ordering a historical sector with severe socio-economic problems and high vulnerability to landslides and structure fires. This paper examines how Manizales attempts to order its territory and its inhabitants through various technical and social studies, urban and rural planning and zoning regulations, and the execution of development projects. Specifically, I focus on the enormous urban renovation project known as Macroproyecto San José, which primarily aims to improve living conditions by providing subsidized housing to poor residents, especially those who inhabit the steep slopes. As an "integral"[1] development project (Resolución 1453, 2009), it also includes plans to redesign public spaces, generate employment and training opportunities, reduce traffic congestion, and restore environmental services in an important ecological corridor.

I argue that the process of ordering itself undermines the project and is largely responsible for its failures. Under the current structure, Macroproyecto San José cannot possibly meet all of its goals and risks severe negative impacts for many of the supposed beneficiaries. The vision of the project assumes a static and homogeneous sector, focuses primarily on aesthetics, and ignores the depth of precarity that severely limits the possibility for many residents to absorb even the short-term negative impacts of this project. These characteristics are not unique to this project, but rather are deeply embedded in modernist development ideologies common to urban development. The implications of this case study thus reach far beyond Manizales and Colombia to urban areas around the world.

[1] All translations are the author's.

The Logic of Ordering: Modernist Development Strategies

The origins of development are commonly attributed to post-World War II reconstruction efforts in Europe, beginning with the conference at Bretton Woods and the establishment of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Peet and Hartwick, 1999; Saldaña-Portillo, 2003). While these events were formative in the dominant contemporary conception of development, postmodern and postcolonial theorists place the origins much further back, as deeply rooted in European Enlightenment thought and colonial practice (Moraña et al., 2008). Developmentalism achieved its epistemic hegemony in part through its links with the authority of science and reason (Esteva and Prakash, 1998; Escobar, 1999; Wainwright, 2008). Modern Enlightenment thinking sees the potential for the improvement of the human condition in the rational ordering of society and control over nature. Thus, modernist developmentalism emphasizes the use of science, reason, expertise, and technology to achieve rational social and natural order, leading to what Escobar (1995; 1999) has referred to as the "professionalization" and "institutionalization" of development. Experts and expert institutions are imbued with the authority to define development, identify problems, and then execute solutions (Escobar, 1995; Escobar, 1999). Modernization theory also assumes a dichotomy between traditional and modern that is ahistorical and abstract, denies the coeval emergence of development and underdevelopment, and assumes a linear trajectory of development that can be advanced with interventions (Grosfoguel, 2008).

The role of anthropological, geographical, and natural sciences research in colonial expansion and modern state-building has been well documented and extensively critiqued (Said, 1978; Blunt and Wills, 2000; Moraña et al., 2008; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Techniques of abstraction such as mapping and statistics simplify and compartmentalize a messy reality, making it easier for modern states to exercise control over their citizens and colonial subjects. But it is not just a matter of an authoritarian state manipulating its powerless subjects, as Scott (1998) seems to suggest. Civil society also imbues authority to science and reason and may choose to defer to the state's decisions because of a faith in scientific reasoning (Fals Borda, 1970; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999), or may attempt to challenge the state using scientific reasoning themselves. Additionally, while it often does not carry the authority of scientific reasoning, civil society also challenges the state with appeals to alternative rationalities.

Modernist ideology also tends to favor the visual aesthetic as confirmation of knowledge and control. The assumption that "seeing is believing" seems to apply as much within Latour's (1987) laboratory as it does to maps, and is part of the reason that architecture and design are such compelling components of development projects. Le Corbusier and the International Congress of Modern Architecture have been influential in establishing theories and trends in architecture and design of public space, including the assumption that social order is primarily achieved through spatial ordering. Social order is often verified by the apparent absence of garbage, indigence, and "inappropriate" public behaviors and use of space. In urban planning and development, spatial disorder is seen as a major contributor to urban problems, so ordering is seen as the solution. However, the assumption that infrastructure or spatial design will solve social and economic problems amounts to architectural determinism and draws attention away from the systemic conditions that produce these problems in the first place.

As Scott (1998) and many others have argued, efforts to control the environment tend to have a narrow focus that blinds administrators to the broader socio-economic context, which has resulted in some spectacular intervention failures including the present case study. For example, the failure of the Pruitt-Igoe public housing project in St. Louis, Missouri was widely seen as a failure of modernist architecture to achieve its "social engineering" agenda (Bristol, 2004: p. 360; see also Montgomery, 1985). The architectural community blamed the original vision and the physical design of the buildings for the project's demise rather than unemployment, poverty, racism, poor quality materials, ineffective social housing policy, and urban to suburban migration that reduced housing pressures and left the buildings insufficiently occupied to recover investments. Blaming the design instead of the broader context strengthens the image of planners and architects as social engineers and justifies ignoring the deeper issues that are more difficult to resolve.

But if the goal of development is to improve living conditions, projects must entail consideration for the broader socio-economic context or risk significantly worsening living conditions instead. The most marginalized sectors and their inhabitants are often the subjects of intervention because they are perceived as physically or socio-economically vulnerable. Butler's (n.d.) use of the term "precarity" draws explicit attention to how people are differentially exposed to harm because of systemic conditions, which may be related to race, class, gender, or any other factor. It is a useful concept in urban development because while certain populations may be targeted for benefits associated with an intervention, circumstances may preclude their ability to fully participate as intended. Furthermore, marginalized people are likely to have low resilience, or the ability to absorb different kinds of perturbations such as natural hazards or economic crises. Long-term projects may have short-term negative impacts that are too difficult to overcome, thus limiting their ability to enjoy the long-term benefits.

Since modernist ideologies dominate urban development strategies, it is important to consider how these ideologies could undermine the goals of these projects, at best failing to improve living conditions and at worst harming the intended beneficiaries. Macroproyecto San José provides an example of how development projects with good intentions but a narrow focus rooted in modernist ideologies can have devastating consequences.

Case Study: Macroproyecto San José, Manizales, Colombia

Manizales, Colombia, is the political seat of the Department of Caldas. The city of approximately 400,000 is situated along a mountain ridge in the Central Cordillera of the Colombian Andes. Geological faults, loose volcanic soil, steep slopes, and frequent heavy rain amounting to over 2,000 mm (78 in) per year create a landslide hazard that is exacerbated by construction and deforestation (Chardon, 2006). The combination has been devastating; more than 400 people have died and thousands more have been affected by landslides since 1960 (UNDP, 2005). Higher than average rainfall attributed to the recent La Niña events of 2010 and 2011 caused widespread flooding and landslides throughout the country, killing 486 and affecting 4 million (DANE, 2011). Hazard management officials in Manizales recognize that such events may increase in intensity and frequency as a result of climate change, making efforts to prevent landslides more salient (Mejía et al., 2006; Caraval & Quintero, 2009).

Manizales addresses landslide hazards with three strategies: monitoring, slope-stabilization infrastructure, and relocation of residents and construction from the areas considered to have "non-mitigable risk" (POT, 2007). All three strategies are attempts to control what many have called an "aggressive topography" so that residents can take advantage of the city's strategic location in the center of the coffee region, between the larger cities of Medellín and Cali. Manizales enjoys a higher average wealth than much of Colombia and is in fact the third most expensive city after Bogotá and Cartagena. Economic disparity is high, however, and despite high average wealth Manizales also has among the highest poverty and unemployment rates in the country (DANE, 2009). Thus, development projects in Manizales often attempt to address physical vulnerability and socio-economic vulnerability simultaneously. Macroproyecto San José[2] is one example of such a project.

Macroproyectos are nationally-funded but municipally-executed development projects deemed "of national social interest," intended to improve the quality of life in urban areas, primarily through the construction of social housing (Decreto 4260, 2007). Macroproyectos are described as:

> great works of integral urbanism which generate Social Housing of high quality for the families, well-being for children and equity for all; guaranteeing the implementation of social services such as: education, public space, health, recreation and sports, transportation, and public services (Proyecto San José, 2011; Macroproyecto San José, n.d.).

Toward this aim, Macroproyecto San José includes among its plans a new split avenue (Avenida Colón), a sports complex, an enormous elementary school (*megacolegio*), a technological park, an ecological park, and subsidized social housing (Resolución 1453, 2009). Approximately 3,500 Social Interest Housing (Vivienda de Interés Social, VIS) apartments will be constructed, of which at least 2,500 must be Priority Interest Housing (Vivienda de Interés Prioritario, VIP) which are smaller, less expensive, and intended for households who earn less than the minimum wage (Decreto 2190, 2009). The area of intervention is the Comuna San José, a sector comprised of seventeen neighborhoods of varying socio-economic status ranging from abject poverty to middle class (see figure 1). Some of the VIP apartments will be constructed in Barrio San Sebastián, which is a neighborhood primarily composed of social housing projects in another sector of the city. Macroproyecto San José is unique among the twelve urban development projects in Colombia because it applies a strategy of re-densification rather than expansion of the city, owing to the lack of suitable land for construction. Thus, in order to provide these spaces, the existing constructions must be purchased and demolished. In a fascinating discursive move, this process is called "generación del suelo", or soil generation.

Macroproyecto San José was adopted in July 2009 (Resolución 1453, 2009), and the first property was purchased and demolished in January 2010. Since that time, disorder, insecurity, and uncertainty have plagued the project and stirred up collective action from within Comuna San José. Pursuing demolitions house-by-house rather than by block has severely impacted mobility and security, and the stated priorities in subsidized housing for slope residents seem to

[2] Macroproyecto San José is the commonly used name for the Macroproyecto de Interés Social Nacional Centro Occidente de Colombia—San José.

have been cast aside along with any attention to the social problems that instigated the intervention in the first place. Some of the setbacks were the result of corruption, as might be expected in any development project, but others were built into the planning and execution phases as a result of narrow focus and problematic assumptions. Examination of these problems reveals that the project *cannot* meet its objectives as currently planned because of its own structure. The following analysis will explore the impacts that Macroproyecto San José has had on residents and likely outcomes if the framework is not dramatically changed over subsequent years of implementation.

Methods

The present analysis is based on fieldwork conducted in Manizales during June 2010 and from August 2011 to July 2012. During this time I conducted semi-structured individual and group interviews with 86 residents of Comuna San José, 8 non-residents who work in Comuna San José, 17 residents of Barrio San Sebastián, 11 municipal officials, 18 academics, and 3 external leaders and activists. Interviews with residents, workers, activists, and academics with ties to Comuna San José elicited discussion about livelihood strategies, problems facing the comuna, and the present and future impacts of Macroproyecto San José. In the case of San Sebastián the topic was broadened to problems in San Sebastián and relocation in general. Interviews were also conducted with representatives of the organizations involved in hazard management, relocation, and the macroproyecto. Organizations involved in relocation include the Oficina Municipal para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres (OMPAD), the Corporación del Desarrollo de Caldas (CDC), the Corporación Autónoma Regional de Caldas (CORPOCALDAS), and the Caja de la Vivienda Popular (CVP). Agencies directly involved in the administration of the Macroproyecto include the Empresa de Renovación Urbana de Manizales (ERUM), the municipal government (Alcaldía de Manizales), Fundación Fesco, Consorcio Avenida Colón, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Interviews with these organizations were intended to elicit goals, strategies, and challenges for the administration of their specific programs.

I also conducted 15 public workshops with residents in different sectors within Comuna San José, including La Avanzada (Barrios La Avanzada, Tachuelo, Camino del Medio, Rincón Santo, Asís, and Jazmín), Sierra Morena-Estrada (Barrios Sierra Morena and Estrada), and Galán (Barrios Alto and Bajo Galán, Holande, and El Maizal). The public workshops were designed to generate discussion among the residents regarding livelihood activities, living in hazardous areas, and their desires for their households, neighborhoods, and the Comuna. The goals of these workshops were to identify potential pitfalls in the planning and execution of the Macroproyecto and to generate potential solutions.

As an observer and occasional participant, I attended weekly public meetings of the Comité de Voceros (Spokespersons' Committee), a group of residents who organized in 2010 to monitor the planning and execution of Macroproyecto San José and speak out against rights violations and other problems associated with the project. I also joined them in their biweekly training sessions, where they were learning the legal framework underpinning the project in order to confront it with a better understanding of residents' rights and potential pitfalls. I also attended some

meetings held by the Comité de Vigilancia (Vigilance Committee) del Macroproyecto San José, which is a subcommittee of a government watchdog organization known as the Corporación Cívica de Caldas.

Finally, I collected locally-produced literature on the subjects of hazards, relocation, and Macroproyecto San José including legal documents, official communications, letters sent by residents to the administration, academic publications, and news articles in the city's principal newspaper *La Patria*. For this analysis, I analyze the discourses mobilized to justify and confront Macroproyecto San José and relocation, and how these discourses shape the planning and execution phases of these and other development projects in Manizales.

Results: The Effects of Ordering

Static and Homogeneous

Statistics and maps provide only abstract snapshots of a dynamic and complex reality, which can in some ways facilitate territorial management but can also create obstacles. For example, attempts to clear slums in Delhi ahead of the 2010 Commonwealth Games were stymied in part because conditions changed faster than the process of conducting surveys and obtaining necessary legal clearances. The process had to be reinitiated over and over to update their knowledge base, which was often filled with partial and some falsified information. Furthermore, a process of semi-regularization via state investment muddled the categories of formal and informal (Ghertner, 2011). Similarly, by treating Comuna San José as a more or less static and homogeneous sector, Manizales has created its own set of obstacles.

Once viewed as the progressive social and economic hub of the city, Comuna San José has over time acquired a reputation as a center for poverty, vice, and danger. The municipal government commissioned faculty at the Universidad Autónoma de Manizales (UAM) to conduct a socio-economic study of the sector (Arango et al., 2008a-c). The results of this study highlight problems such as poverty, unemployment, drug abuse and other illicit activities, single motherhood, and substandard housing. The municipal government used this study in particular to justify an intervention and secure the federal *macroproyecto* funding. But while Comuna San José does in fact experience relatively high poverty and crime statistics, national legislators were not given the complete story. The rather diverse sector was presented to them as a homogenous group of unemployed delinquents living in substandard housing in high risk zones. Even those who visited saw only the worst living conditions in the *comuna* because the tours avoided the middle class neighborhoods. Of course, these neighborhoods are located in the flattest sector of the city, not the steep slopes which appeared to be the focus of Macroproyecto San José. Nearly all residents interviewed challenged the homogenous presentation of the *comuna*, citing the diversity in income and education levels as evidence, arguing that they are "poor but good people" and that they are able to "live well" *because* they live in Comuna San José.

Beyond insulting the resident population, approaching Comuna San José as static and homogenous has generated a series of obstacles during the project's execution. This is especially true with regard to the housing and economic sectors, which contain a great deal of informality

that remains largely illegible to the municipal government and planners. The three principal categories of homeowner, renter, and squatter are not so clear cut where documentation does not exist or is outdated. Even in formal ownership cases, property improvements that were not reported have slowed the purchasing process as additional valuations must be conducted, and purchasing homes at higher-than-anticipated values has dramatically increased overall project expenses. The issue of documentation is perhaps more obvious in the case of informal settlements, where people may have lived for generations without any challenges but also without any legal claims. Since state funds cannot be used to purchase these properties, as would be required in order to claim them "for the greater good," a title transfer must be initiated in every case. Inheritance severely complicates these processes, and in many cases expropriation is the most efficient method of acquisition even if the owner wants to sell.

The result is that despite nuances in every case there are only a few explicit strategies for purchasing properties, and these processes have not been communicated clearly to the residents. At public meetings, the most common question asked of representatives of the administration has always been "what happens in my particular case?" Residents feel confused and misled, and project officials have found it difficult to address other important aspects of the *macroproyecto* with the community because they must devote so much time to explaining possible scenarios.

Similar problems arise with regard to compensation for businesses that must be relocated. Formal businesses receive six months of compensation to allow time to reestablish a customer base in a new location. Informal businesses receive only a small indemnification, although the amount and process for obtaining it are not clear. Subsistence activities such as small gardens and animal production do not count as businesses and therefore preclude compensation (Monroy and Nieto, 2011), despite the fact that many families depend on these activities for survival. Awareness that many residents use their current home for their livelihoods, especially informal economic activities, has not translated into housing solutions that will allow these activities to continue. Subsistence activities will be impossible under the current plans, and other activities such as room rental, sales, or in-home workshops will be impractical in the small apartments. The economic implications of this particular plan and its execution are discussed in more detail elsewhere (Coles, in preparation), but it is important to consider how the degradation of an already marginalized existence would severely undermine the goals of Macroproyecto San José.

The complex property regime is partly responsible for the delays in construction of the new housing units in La Avanzada, touted as the priority for Macroproyecto San José but already three years behind schedule (Resolución 1453, 2009). The framework of the project itself is also responsible for delays. The resolutions divide the area of the *macroproyecto* into "Urbanistic Execution Units" (UEU) in order to facilitate management and execution. However, the failure to acquire properties in La Avanzada has impeded progress there because an entire UEU must be purchased before construction may begin. Subsequent resolutions have redrawn UEU boundaries to make them smaller (Resolución 1527, 2010; Resolución 1793, 2011), but homes remain standing in each one. At the time of writing, the closest UEU to full acquisition lacks 12 properties, which cannot be purchased or expropriated because they were not included in any census, including the property invasion census. As one official put it, "they exist, but they don't exist. Juridically they don't exist." There has been discussion of redrawing the UEU boundaries again (but not removing them), but congressional approval can take months. In this case

simplification has made the arbitrary units less manageable, not more manageable, thus the project hinders itself and undermines its own goals.

Of course, some residents are reluctant to sell precisely because there is a lack of alternative housing solutions. Macroproyecto San José was largely justified in the first place by the quantitative (number of units) and qualitative (standards) housing deficit as defined in the POT (2007) and the UAM socio-economic study (Arango et al., 2008a-c). To be clear, there are empty homes and apartments throughout Manizales, but not at the prices or in the locations necessary for many residents of Comuna San José. Although hundreds of homes have been demolished throughout the community, ground has yet to be broken on any new housing within Comuna San José. Thus, the execution strategy is exacerbating the affordable housing shortage and effectively producing large scale displacement.

Residents are also increasingly reluctant to sell because property values have risen sharply since the start of Macroproyecto San José, following city-wide trends as well as the effects of the project itself. Rising property values are also increasing the overall cost of the project, which was budgeted according to earlier valuations listed in the housing register. Delays contribute to increasing property values, so residents hold out for higher prices, resulting in further delays and higher overall costs. Adaptation to a dynamic system should be a normal part of long-term projects such as Macroproyecto San José and are built into planning tools such as the POT (2007). The POT is subject to revision every few years, which is why it is known as the "organic law" (Ley 388, 1997). Intermediate Planning Pieces (Pieza Intermedia de Planificación, PIP) were established as part of the POT to execute small and intermediate scale changes on a shorter term. However, most plans are designed to comply with rather than alter the POT, and the PIP boundaries do not line up with any established political boundaries, greatly complicating execution. Adriana, an academic and advocate for the residents, stated that "it practically amounts to territorial disordering."

Development as Aesthetic

Planning documents such as the POT and those associated with Macroproyecto San José appeal to the logic of modernization through rational ordering. They explicitly link order to the goals of control, peace, formality, and social and economic development. The assumption is that arranging the space in "appropriate" ways, including the construction of infrastructure and land use regulations, will result in human development as well. The focus on spatial ordering rather than the underlying socio-economic problems has created a situation in which the *macroproyecto* will not be able to achieve its intended goals.

Infrastructure is one of the primary mechanisms used to control space, since it is often understood as a means to tame the environment as well as people. In Manizales, infrastructure is treated as the key to making the hilltop city inhabitable. First, areas are delimited in the POT as "potentially urbanizable" and "non-urbanizable" depending on calculations of risk due to hazards and a cost-benefit analysis. The "non-mitigable" risk zones are designated as "protected", and all structures within them are removed. Potentially re-urbanizable areas are subject to "corrective works" such as slope-stabilization infrastructure that will allow future construction there (POT, 2007). One of the previous managers of the ERUM told the Corporación Cívica that the best way

to protect the slopes is to build on them because the cement prevents infiltration of water, which can be collected in channels. However, this strategy allows construction in hazardous areas to continue and is not guaranteed to prevent hazards. In November 2011, a ruptured water pipe caused a landslide that killed 48 people in the moderately affluent Barrio Cervantes, where residents had felt relatively safe because of the slope-stabilization infrastructure. Yet the assumption remains pervasive; Adriana and others argue that "it's not that you can't build on slopes, you just have to figure out how."

However, the main problem with this infrastructural approach to development is that it casts aside the purported social and economic focus. The contradiction is obvious to residents, but seems overlooked by the planners and officials adhering to architectural determinist assumptions. Ligia, an employee of the Casa de la Cultura in San José, noted that "the *macroproyecto* has to start with the social. The problems are social, but they offer us infrastructure." Doña Luisa echoed the same sentiment: "the problems of this neighborhood [Sierra Morena] are not housing, or terrain, but are social." The residents do not believe that infrastructure and spatial design will fundamentally change living conditions in Comuna San José. As one community leader put it, "public space is nice, but people will turn them into spaces of vice" if poverty and unemployment are not addressed. Several other residents also mentioned that the social problems will continue with or without the infrastructure, or may even worsen as a result of the macroproyecto. A few residents pointed out that some of the first buildings demolished were educational or cultural centers, and that several social programs have been canceled. Discontinuity in these efforts is likely to have negative effects on social and economic development in Comuna San José, but as one community leader noted, social programs require constant investment and often do not produce visible and immediate results. Infrastructure requires only a single investment (especially if maintenance is not part of the plan) and leaves a dramatic, lasting mark on the landscape.

For residents, the emphasis on infrastructure and design reveals the true priorities of Macroproyecto San José. Even starting with construction of the apartments would have seemed reasonable to the community, since subsidized housing for impoverished slope residents was touted as the priority of the project and was largely responsible for its approval in the Colombian Congress and among residents. Starting with Avenida Colón and the mixed use zone rather than the apartments in La Avanzada suggests that the project favors commercial rather than social development. It also indicates to them that the city is not interested in improving the sector for the current residents, as lack of housing options has displaced thousands of residents already. Others see no possible future for them in Comuna San José because they will not be able to afford living there as expenses increase but incomes remain the same, or in some cases, decrease as a result of this project.

As indicated earlier, the apartments are not suitable for many of the slope residents of Comuna San José. This is especially true for those whose livelihoods depend on their indoor and outdoor living space, and for those who have large families. Overcrowding has become a concern, though officials have claimed that the project will reduce overcrowding in the comuna.[3] The project

[3] Overcrowding is a fascinating concept in this context. Official calculations are based on inhabitants per hectare, with no indication of what the desired value should be (POT, 2007). The UAM study (Arango et al., 2008a-c) considered the number of people per household, but did not consider the size of the living space. Macroproyecto San

managers intend to have the large extended families divide themselves into nuclear families and take multiple apartments, but many of them rely on a single individual's income and could not afford more than one even with the national and municipal subsidies. When asked about this potential issue, a previous manager of ERUM admitted that these apartments are not intended for the largest families. However, according to the *macroproyecto's* framework (Resolución 1453, 2009), the national and municipal subsidies can only be used toward purchase of an apartment in La Avanzada or in San Sebastián. These families would therefore only receive payment for the value of their home (typically $500 to $5000 USD) and possibly a subsidy for those living in a high risk zone. In the absence of stable income, these payments will be insufficient for quality housing. Their options will likely be restricted to more affordable but substandard housing on other slopes in the city, leaving them still physically vulnerable to landslides and in many cases worse off because of the displacement. Similarly, many current renters and owners of low-value properties have indicated that they are unwilling to indebt themselves since they do not have steady income. The legal framework permits them to make low monthly payments or enter the savings program, but it is not possible without income. Thus, the legal framework of the project excludes many of the most marginalized residents, whom project managers assume will benefit most from the intervention.

Residents are quick to argue that they are not against development or progress as long as they are able to share in the benefits. Most residents interviewed approve of beautifying the city in general, but recognize the limitations of aesthetic development and explicitly contrast "pretty" with "good". Two slope residents reported that a developer, not realizing they were from that sector, described the homes as "ugly shacks" that would finally be torn down thanks to the project. But Don Marcos argues that it is "better to live in a shack that is old but large than in one of the apartments." The poorest residents appreciate beautiful housing, and in fact make efforts to beautify their homes as well as they can. Tiles and paint are considered status symbols in popular neighborhoods, but first and foremost they are more concerned with functionality and affordability. As Orozco and Guerrero (2008) point out, informal housing in particular is well-suited to the needs of marginalized residents, who can build them immediately and can augment the space to accommodate growing families. The same is true for formal houses, but the apartments are non-malleable spaces. Two interviewees use the word "progress" to refer to augmentation of the living space, either through adding new constructions as the family grows or aesthetics such as paint. For them, the apartments will prevent progress rather than symbolize it.

Territorial Disordering

Above all, the largest complaint from residents of Comuna San José has been the apparently haphazard approach to demolitions and construction associated with Macroproyecto San José. Phases of the project are executed as the money or the property becomes available, resulting in decreased mobility, security, and quality of life. This strategy is therefore antithetical to the goals of the project, but in four years the situation has only worsened and with little progress to show for it.

José seems destined to exacerbate the presumed problem of overcrowding through intentional densification and exchanging large for small living spaces.

Financial problems have plagued Macroproyecto San José since its initiation. A team of managers was assembled from various financial institutions in Manizales to handle funds since they were coming from different sources and destined for different parts of the project. Their salaries took an enormous chunk of the initial funds available, including one official who earned more than the *alcalde* himself ("Renuncia", 2012). Scandals later surfaced when that same official resigned from office and revealed that no records had been maintained on the money flows (Gómez, 2012a), and the entire management staff was accused of wasting money on travel and lavish accommodations (Gómez, 2012b). Yet another official was investigated on corruption charges when payments made to residents were found to be irregular ("Tres entidades", 2012). The financial structure and complex institutional network involved in Macroproyecto San José had to be completely restructured in early 2012 because finances were in such disarray that ERUM did not pay its employees for four months and construction on Avenida Colón was halted for six months. Many residents who sold their homes did not receive payments for up to two years and were therefore unable to purchase another property. For a team of officials attempting to order an entire sector of a city, it seems quite incapable of ordering itself. Corruption and honest mistakes aside, the complex financial and institutional structures themselves created many of the problems the project has experienced until ERUM took over and simplified everything in early 2012.

Other demonstrations of disorder are more visible. Although offers are made on homes by block, residents do not respond at the same rate. Some agree to sell immediately, some ask for an updated assessment on property value, and others must undergo the process of expropriation because they refuse to sell or because it is faster as in the case of inheritance. The problem is that once the residents have vacated the property, mobs amass to strip it of any valuable materials such as doors, windows, tiles, and metals. While this creates an opportunity for poor residents to sell materials from a house slated for demolition anyway, theft from occupied homes and reports of violence are common. ERUM orders the contractors to demolish the homes immediately in order to protect neighbors, but this strategy has created another problem. The majority of the homes in Manizales are row houses that share walls on either side. Demolitions of one home often leave the attached homes exposed to the elements, and the contractors can only offer a sheet of plastic to cover the open gaps. Some have started leaning without the support of the neighboring house and are on the point of collapse (figure 2). Gaps between the houses are sometimes left with debris from the demolition, and contractors do not always adequately seal them off (figure 3). With more and more places to hide, delinquents from around the city have been attracted to the area and crime rates have soared. These gaps have also become repositories for garbage and human waste disposal, creating a widespread health hazard.

Residents are also endangered by construction on Avenida Colón, which has severely restricted mobility by removing primary access routes and filling them with obstacles such as debris and deep holes. Part of the problem is that the Avenida runs east-west, but most of the movement within Comuna San José is north-south (Monroy and Nieto, 2011). Construction affects nearly all of the north-south routes and cuts off much of the area to vehicular traffic. Foot traffic is also impeded, as dirt paths and stairways created to restore movement are often destroyed by rain.

There are procedures being followed, but to anyone outside of the administration the *macroproyecto* appears "improvised" and "disorderly." The single achievement as of this writing

is partial completion of one branch of Avenida Colón, but even that success is marred by continuing theft of streetlight cables and sewer caps along the new route. Project officials (with some exceptions) have tended to blame the unruly residents for the failures while residents blame the officials. An onlooker to a dismantling shouted to a *La Patria* reporter, "Look! Take a photo of what the *alcalde* is doing to us!" ("Desmantelan", 2010). In a later news article, a contractor told a reporter that he had considered hiring residents as security for the demolitions, but figured that they would just contribute to the vandalism ("Imprevisto", 2010). In two different interviews, residents agreed that the blame should be shared among residents and officials together, but that involving the community more directly in planning and execution would reduce such problems.

It may be an unusual critique, but officials in Macroproyecto San José may be *too* focused on long-term outcomes at the expense of short-term impacts. Over and over, officials have responded to complaints about negative impacts on the residents by reminding them that in a long-term project, the end result is several years away and that they must make sacrifices in the meantime. According to this logic, the ends (order) justify the means (disorder). For example, when confronted about businesses losing clientele and therefore sales as a result of Macroproyecto San José, two previous ERUM managers answered that fluctuations in supply and demand are normal and that businesses will recover. One claims that "[w]hat [the macroproyecto] is giving is improvement of living conditions in the comuna in a process that takes 10 years" ("Comerciantes", 2011). The official message is that the community must accept some discomfort before the fully developed San José will emerge.

The assumption that the community will weather the negative impacts is problematic given that the population is widely recognized as vulnerable. Most definitions of vulnerability include some measure of resilience, or ability to respond to shocks. The precarity that warrants an intervention such as Macroproyecto San José thus requires a more scrupulous approach to ensure that lives and livelihoods are not irreparably harmed. Precarity is a useful term in this case because residents of Comuna San José are differentially vulnerable and resilient to the various shocks that they may experience, either as part of the project or other circumstances. Landslides threaten the slope residents, but not those in the flatter areas of the *comuna*. Economic hardships are lessened for those who have diverse livelihood strategies. The impacts of Macroproyecto San José are unevenly distributed as well. Some will see great improvements in living conditions, including those who meet the eligibility requirements for the housing subsidies and do not require a large living space for their families or livelihoods.

However, others may not enjoy the benefits of "the new San José" because of the lasting effects of the supposedly short-term impacts. The rising violent crime rates threaten lives and economic security. Three interviewees reported that people are dying from the stress and uncertainty associated with the project. Additionally, not all businesses will recover from lost clientele during execution of the project. Miguel has lost two successive businesses in the four years of this project as his clientele has been relocated to other sectors of the city. Social support is disappearing as neighbors are separated by relocation, including Doña María, who has not seen her close friends since they moved because none of them can afford transportation. Residents who depend upon subsistence agriculture, renters, or other home-based livelihoods also stand to lose an important source of income or income diversity, without which they will not be able to

afford the higher living expenses. Thus, the negative short-term impacts are reducing resilience and steadily decreasing the possibility for residents to recover from this intervention.

Some are already fleeing the *comuna* as a result of the problems brought on by Macroproyecto San José. Hector, a slope resident, stated that "they have already ruined the comuna, so I'm leaving. Going to another part [of the city], one can progress more." Others intend to leave Manizales altogether and search for opportunities in other urban or in rural areas. Rather than risk being "left in the street" by this project, Doña Carmen has accepted a lot outside of town gifted to her by a friend. She is now ineligible for subsidies and will have to rebuild her home from scratch, which will be difficult at 71 years old and with no income to pay someone else to do it. Others who are leaving the *comuna* because they cannot afford to stay may very well end up on slopes in other sectors of the city, most likely in existing substandard housing or to start construction on a new informal structure. Thus, Macroproyecto San José is set up to displace rather than solve the socio-economic problems that plague Comuna San José, shifting the disorder around instead of actually ordering it, and in some cases worsening rather than improving living conditions. But, for good as well as bad, the project has several years left and changes are already being made.

From Chaos, a Different Kind of Organization

It is worth noting that attempts to order the two sectors of Comuna San José commonly seen as the most disorganized have led to strong reactions and a great deal of social organization from within the community. The Plaza de Mercado (Market Plaza), also known as the Galería, is perhaps the most important economic center of the city and is often described as the "lungs" or "motor" of Manizales. A wide variety of goods are sold within the walls of the five pavilions, but the streets surrounding the buildings are piled high with goods, people, vehicles, animals, and garbage. Formal vendors who sell indoors complain that the street vendors can sell for less because they do not pay rent, neighbors complain of contamination and disorganization, and even the former *alcalde* Juan Manuel Llano lamented the deteriorating security conditions in the area (Mejía, 2011). Lina, a former resident and community organizer called the Galería a "total chaos... but on the positive side it is very dynamic." She and others who have worked in the Galería described how successive *alcaldes* have threatened to tear it down because it does not appear to work, but the people organized themselves to protect their space and their livelihoods. The vendors gained participation in the development of the Plan Parcial de la Galería, which is one of the foundational components of Macroproyecto San José. All of the vendors interviewed who participated in the planning process were satisfied with their role and the outcome. However, the plan was shelved by the first administration to handle the *macroproyecto* and has not yet been implemented despite renewed interest on the part of the current administration.

In a similar but as of yet more successful example, the automobile mechanics in the Liborio sector also organized to prevent the destruction of their space and livelihoods. Liborio contains a concentration of mechanics' workshops and is also commonly characterized as disorderly because of the presence of informal workers, unsightly equipment, and pollution. The original plans for Macroproyecto San José ran Avenida Colón right through the middle of Liborio, requiring the demolition and relocation of most of the workshops. Scattering the workshops would have been devastating to the mechanics, who would be restricted to a few locations

because of zoning regulations and would lose established collaboration with other mechanics and clients. The mechanics organized and worked with the officials to redesign the plan such that Avenida Colón will now skirt the Liborio sector, preserving the mechanics' space and saving the administration a great deal of money in compensation payments.

Although the Galería and Liborio are among the most visually disorganized sectors in Manizales, the people who use that space are socially organized to defend their space. Beyond simply being a matter of interpreting a different kind of organization along an alternative logic (see Scott, 1998), these groups are challenging the limited scope and the process of top-down modernist ordering to co-produce a more agreeable and less detrimental solution. The Comité de Voceros has a much greater challenge given that Comuna San José is much larger than the Galería and Liborio sectors, and it is far less cohesive than the workers who are largely already joined in their respective unions. However, in July 2012 the neighborhood associations started to join efforts with the Comité de Voceros and present a united front against the current plans and execution strategies of Macroproyecto San José. The current administration appears to be more open to altering the plans through participatory methods, but will have to work hard to regain legitimacy and trust from the community.

Social work was finally introduced into the execution of Macroproyecto San José in April 2012, two years after the start of the project. Fundación Fesco is an NGO contracted by the municipal government for the social work component, which includes "accompaniment" through the home purchasing process in order to account for various types of vulnerability, communication between the residents and the administration, community organization, and other types of "social management". Fesco has had mixed results in these efforts because they have not fundamentally changed the approach of the project. Resident participation is still limited, and much of the social work has been data collection. However, a program to support the development or improvement of small businesses is one step now underway that could address some of the fundamental socio-economic problems in Comuna San José. JICA is also planning to include community gardens in the ecopark design, and although many have expressed doubt that their program will work, they are including residents in the design and execution processes. These initiatives cover a small fraction of the issues that trouble Comuna San José, but they are precisely the types of initiatives that could reduce the negative impacts of Macroproyecto San José and improve living conditions. Support for informal businesses, educational opportunities, youth programs, and resources for recovering drug addicts are other possibilities.

Conclusion

Despite good intentions, Macroproyecto San José has so far inflicted more harm than good on the residents of Comuna San José. Though on the surface it would appear that administrative ineptitude has created this disaster, closer examination reveals that these failures are largely attributable to modernist ideologies that dominate urban development projects around the world. A narrow focus on rational ordering and aesthetic design limits the scope of urban development projects and masks the deeper socio-economic context that produces the symptoms that these projects attempt to address. I have argued that the socio-economic context must be fully

addressed in order to reduce the potential to irreparably harm lives and livelihoods of the intended beneficiaries.

The case of Macroproyecto San José in Manizales, Colombia, thus far provides a clear example of how such projects can fail, since its large scale has made the impacts acute and highly visible. However, since it is also a long-term project, there is still time for some corrective measures and it can still be the "model project"—as it has been described by the administration—for Colombia and beyond. Including the residents more directly in the planning and execution phases is one way to identify potential pitfalls and solutions that project officials have not been able to see themselves. A broader perspective can lead to more diverse strategies for ameliorating the problems facing many communities, strengthening their resilience and reducing vulnerability to various kinds of crises.

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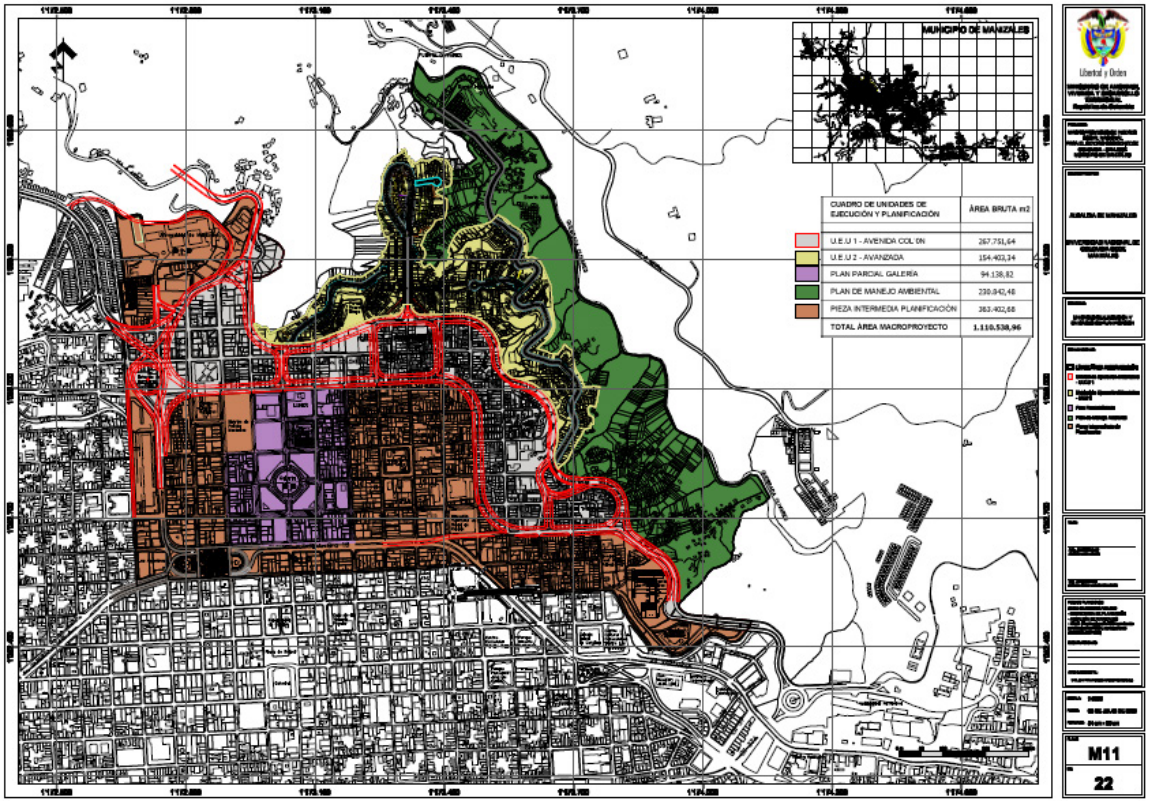
Figures

Figure 1: Macroproyecto San José



Source: Resolución 1453, 2009

Figure 2: Home at the Point of Collapse

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Figure 3: Demolition Patterns