

public, environmental, and democratic health

Edition 5 of Peripheries Magazine, Public, Environmental, and Democratic

health, launches amid a global pandemic crisis. This moment of historic challenge comes at a time of deep transformations in the dissemination of a regressive environmental agenda and an expressive growth in global ultraconservative socio-political forces, casting a light on the limits of society's hegemonic model.

If the current pandemic catastrophe presents itself first as a phenomenon that affects all of humanity, and, if it is a public, environmental, and health crisis, then it is also a crisis of democracy, ruthlessly exhibiting our incapacity to support and preserve essential rights. This applies above all to peripheral, Black, and indigenous populations, all of whom have been impacted by the pandemic in diverse and severe forms owing to the fact that these are the groups that have historically experienced colonialist, structural, racial, and patrimonialist inequalities within a violent socioeconomic system grounded in the concentration of wealth, the subjugation of labor, and the exploitation of the biosphere.

Humanity has come to experience an exponential increase in epidemic crises. According to specialists, this is due in particular to the advance of urbanization and exploitation of environmental systems whose ecological balance, heretofore guaranteed by the presence of native communities, has been radically altered. It is necessary to consider that the conditions for this balance are placed in risk by an unsustainable productive model, one that exploits natural resources at a rate incompatible with nature's ability to recover.

In this scenario of exploitation of the biosphere, allied with a context of corruption, instability, and inefficient government, the State has become decisive in controlling bodies and coercing those who would seek to resist the process of ethical erosion and the mercantilization of life and nature.

Peripheral groups are those that most suffer from the consequences of these crises. However, their forms of social and cultural organization as well as their relationships with nature present themselves as potency, producing alternative modes of coexistence between humanity and nature. This potency arises from peripheral experiences and concrete responses to critical contemporary conditions.

These responses to the crisis have been central in exemplifying how the peripheries possess an inventive potency capable of producing solidary alternatives. They also demonstrate the great capacity, despite material adversity, in the strength of relationships of solidarity — relationships that form a project of coexistence with much to teach today's cities and societies, steeped in a crisis-prone hegemonic model of individualism and competition.

Though this edition was first conceived in order to address the question of environmental and democratic sustainability, the event of the pandemic brought Peripheries to pivot, including public health as a thematic line.

With the understanding that public health only exists in the presence of environmental health and democratic health, the editorial team of this edition sought to unite content that dialogues with community forms and practices of resistance and the affirmation of the right to full existence, to mental health, and to collective well-being in the global peripheries.

In remaining true to our constant search for authorial diversity, this edition features 26 contributions from 15 countries.

food sovereignty

From Baltimore, Maryland in the United States, Eric Jackson, founder of the Black Yield

Institute, shares his vision of the history of “food apartheid” in that country. In an interview with Edmund Ruge, Jackson points to possible paths for the conquest of Black and peripheral food sovereignty, understood as the bond (and the right to said bond) between food and ancestral lands in opposition to the power dynamics and intentional and structural disconnection that restricts Black communities’ right to access to arable land and healthy food resources.

Rio de Janeiro’s Sustainable Favela Network connects initiatives and community organizers in the construction of sustainable projects that guarantee just and healthy food provision for favela residents. The Network’s current initiatives cover knowledge and practices in the areas of gardening and reforestation, environmental education, solar energy, memory and culture, income generation, and water and sewerage.

overcoming plural conflicts in the context of the pandemic

Gabrielle Araújo and Priscila Rodrigues, journalists at the Favelas Observatory, reflect on strategies for mobilizing against and confronting the pandemic as well as Rio de Janeiro’s entrenched police brutality in “The Favela Wants to Live!” The recently launched ADPF 635 (Claim of Noncompliance with a Fundamental Order 365, or ADPF das Favelas) gains specific attention in their piece.

On the topic of life contexts that share the reality of imminent war, from Rojava, in the North and West of Syria, comes “The Ecology of War,” produced by the Rojava Information Center (RIC), centering on the Kurdish liberation movement’s focus on ecologism in its economic system. The movement has maintained its model of collectivization of natural resources and land resources even faced with offensives and perversities on the part of Turkey and the Syrian Regime.

In his contribution, Wagner Silva explains the Matchfunding Enfrente collaborative grant. Having co-financed projects that contribute to confronting and overcoming material and

subjective conditions that stigmatize and segregate Brazilian urban peripheries in 2019, Matchfunding Enfrente 2020 has co-financed projects from the favelas and peripheries of Brazil for confronting inequalities in the context of the pandemic.

literature, poetry, and social distancing

Afrolit Sans Frontieres, a new virtual literary festival, has reunited 80 writers from 25 countries over its 5 iterations.

Zukiswa Wanner, a South African based in Nairobi, Kenya, is a writer, editor, and founder of the festival. She takes us through the details of Afrolit Sans Frontieres, from behind the scenes to in front of the cameras.

Africa is not only reading, but also writing and being read, and we have collaborated with Afrolit Sans Frontieres to source five short stories and two poems: *The Door of No Return*, by Natasha Omokhodion-Banda of Zambia; *From the Lost City of Hurlantis to the Streets of Helldorado (Or, Franco)* by Rémy Ngamije of Namibia; *Of the Poet and the Café*, by Girma Fantaye of Ethiopia; *A Certain 36th of November*, by Merdi Mukore of the Democratic Republic of Congo; and *These Things That Our Mothers Don't Dare Talk About*, by Laurence Gnaro of Togo.

The Angolan poet Yara Monteiro closes out the section with her poems “Once” and “Plot.”

photographic essays

The Images of the People photography agency, a longtime partner of Peripheries magazine, has produced two of this edition's three photographic essays, both under the curation of Rio photographer Bira Carvalho: “Sensible Approaches for Social Distancing in the Favelas” and “Water! The Right to a Common Good.”

Erosion of environmental balance also places at risk the lives of communities previously immersed in nature-based life. “Vanishing Islands,” written by Joyona Medhi and with photographer Abhishek Basu, warns of global warming and the ensuing dangers to climate refugees in the largest active delta in Asia, southern India’s Sundarbans.

peripheries features

A number of civil society institutions also strengthen the bonds of our network in this edition.

The CIMI, or Missionary Council for Indigenous Peoples, in its contribution, “Indigenous Resistance Amid Political Reconfigurations, Discourse, Demands, and Ultraconservative Attacks,” exposes how indigenous peoples’ right to land is under constant threat by the current Brazilian government. Indigenous resistance, however, historically present and even more so today, stands in opposition to grave retrocesses.

The Heinrich Boll Foundation — out of their office in Rio de Janeiro — shares their trajectory beginning in Germany in the 1980s and 90s, their spread to 33 international offices, and current actuation in 60 countries total. Program coordinator Marilene de Paula explains the work the organization undertakes to support civil society in the area of defense of democracy, human rights, and environmental justice.

Tiniguena, a non-governmental organization founded in 1991, arose out of an emergency network of civil organizations that sought to foment a new dynamic for effective popular participation in constructing the future of Guinea-Bissau. Their mission: “To promote participative and durable development based in the conservation of natural and cultural resources and in the exercise of citizenship.” In their contribution, the organization undertakes a critical analysis of the current political and socio-environmental context in Guinea-Bissau.

The Institute for Thought and Action in Defense of Democracy (IPAD) has contributed two interviews to this edition. The first features the work of Práxis, an organization dedicated to

mental health in Rio de Janeiro, as well as TETO, a collective dedicated to supporting the construction of popular housing in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais.

The second features Vensam Iala, a Guinea-Bissauan national, 10-year resident of Brazil, and founder of the Visto África collective. Iala shares the challenges facing immigrants, primarily African, and their forms of resisting racism and xenophobia in Brazil in “Anticolonial Narratives from the Africas.”

narratives

This edition features three narratives hailing from Brazil (Kariri), Kenya (Mathare), and Mozambique (from the Rovuma to Maputo).

Here, Raquel Paris, Kanyi Wyban, and Amade Casimiro Nacir take ownership of their own narratives in “Kariri History: An Arrow to Illuminate the Heart,” “Mathare Afrofuturism,” and “Are We, Afterall, as Poor as They Say?”

academic articles

Sufyan Droubi and Raphael J Heffron, in “Politics’ Continued Eros of Sustainable Development for Brazil’s Indigenous Peoples,” explore the crucial legal framework that guards the rights of Brazil’s indigenous populations in the face of confrontation and vilification undertaken by ultra-conservative sectors of the population.

Popular resistance in the neighborhood of Vargens de Sernambetiba, Rio de Janeiro, is the theme of Brasiliano Vito Fico’s article “Social struggles and the Role of Conservation Units,” wherein Fico analyzes the emergence of social conflicts in a periurban space and how social groups fight for a more democratic and plural city.

born and raised in the peripheries

Daniel de Souza, quilombola leader from the region of Eperecuru in the state of Pará, Brazil, features in this edition's Born and Raised in the Peripheries section with a profile written by Raquel Paris.

peripheries 6

Peripheries 6, "Race, Racism, Territory, and Institutions," is open for submissions. With publication set for January 2021, contributions will be accepted on a rolling basis until November 1, 2020 via revista@imja.org.br

publisher

Our Eduniperferias publisher has expanded its catalogue with the release of the following titles: *A favela reinventa a cidade*; *Macaé Evaristo: uma força negra na cena pública*; *Pesquisadoras da educação básica: germinando ações e saberes nas escolas públicas periféricas*; *Potência das periferias*; and *Periferias em vigilância*. Learn more [here](#).

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