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Avenida Ixtapaluca (houses for Mexico)
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The first architectural style native to Los Angeles was the bungalow,¹ a model of single-family home which must be seen as the origin of nuclear element of the neighbourhood community group. The community group is nothing more than the social paraphrase of the dispersed city (edge city), the means by which to ensure homogeneity of race, class and, especially, home values.² The utopian landscape for the middle class. The fortunes of this model of urbanism catapulted it into the position of a true paradigm for all global territories, with the consequent deterioration of the traditional forms of the city. However the clonal processes of the model, far from the social expectations that demands of them absolute fidelity, on occasion mutates beyond the logic of repetition. Dan Graham was the pioneer of the critical revision of the American suburban city; but on the other side of the state of California and throughout Mexico there also unfold such GEO cities; sprawling developments of semi-detached houses built in an attempt to mitigate the growth of large metropolitan areas, siphoning off population to the pastoral confines of the new peripheries. Avenida Ixtapaluca (houses for Mexico) is a new approach to one of these settings. An aerial view appears to demonstrate the effectiveness of the urban and social order prevailing in the city. The repetition of a few standard types arranges the urban web in a strictly Cartesian form. The bird's eye view reveals a geometric space so scrupulously modelled that it looks like an artificial image, some digital artifice that simply multiplies infinitely a few icons of the system. However, this crystalline appearance gradually darkens. The first omen is in the soundtrack to the overflying camera: street sounds and the bullhorns of itinerate vendors presage the din infusing the diaphanous form of the city from up high. As the camera descends, the imperfections in that initial regularity are exposed. Many standard types have been modified, refined, parasitized. The city no longer appears as an artificial landscape, but on the contrary, upon the cold body of the geometric web emerge touches of do-it-yourself construction and small, colourfully painted walls. As we approach ground level, the city becomes the stage on which appear individual people incrustated with real actions in pursuit of specific needs. The architecture has not gone away, but it now suffers an evident infection caused by everything that grows in its Environs. The tension between the systemic determinism of clonal solutions and the proliferation of ungovernable peculiarities also occurs at street level. When the camera positions itself on the avenue its inhabitants invade the scene. A teenage girl appears carrying a hieratic piñata in the likeness of Buzz Lightyear. We follow her in the expectation of some event, but the fiction is limited to following her in a tracking shot, until she hands the figure over to someone who disappears, suggesting an endless relaying of the icon. The piñata – like an updated Aztec idol in times of global solutions – inevitably points to the gringo origins of the new popular imaginaries and, thus, reflects on the same story that justified the planning of the dispersed city. Just as

the piñata was originally used as bait in the evangelization of indigenous peoples, the Empire's mission now translates into the hegemonic export of a handful of heroes to manifold homogenized territories. But eventually the receivers of these standards, in this journey without end, may modify them just as they did with architecture.

1 Mike Davis. Ciudad de cuarzo. Arqueología del futuro de Los Angeles. Lengua de Trapo. Toledo. 2003. pp.63-ss.

2 Idem. p. 126