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THE DIGITAL AND THE SOUTH: QUESTIONINGS VOL. 2

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The theme of issues 28 and 29 of VIRUS journal, “The Digital and the South: Questionings,” aims to critically explore the connections between digital media and the peoples of the Global South in various dimensions in this second decade of the 21st century. While recognizing digital culture's benefits to many aspects of human life, we also seek to highlight the inherent tensions in these connections.

This theme arises from an ongoing reflection process at Nomads.usp - Center for Interactive Living Studies, which publishes VIRUS. The Center was established in 2000 amidst the remarkable optimism that followed the Internet's opening to public access in 1994. Distributed network communication – a network of networks – brought promising perspectives for horizontal communication and free access to information. This environment stimulated the development of numerous computer programs, devices, and systems that permeated all areas of knowledge and aspects of life. Over the past twenty-four years, we have focused on exploring the limits and potential of digital, particularly in how it relates to the conception, approach, and documentation of built spaces. We have broadened this concept to include the spatialities arising from the hybridization of physical and digital environments and their dynamics.

The theme proposed for these two issues of VIRUS arises from a growing concern—one that we share—about the direction in which the digitalization of life has taken society. This trend has scrambled values and beliefs, distorted public debate, and reinforced asymmetric power relations on a global scale.

The papers published in these two issues have been selected rigorously through close collaboration among the authors, reviewers, and the journal's editorial committee. They encompass two sets of sub-themes. The first set, presented in V!28, includes papers that analyze the applications of digital technologies and their implications for urban dynamics and architectural design and production, focusing on perspectives from the Global South. The second set, featured in V!29, includes papers that discuss the conceptual, social, political, and technopolitical aspects of the spread of digital technology worldwide, particularly among the peoples of the Global South.

Issue 29 includes nine articles authored by researchers from various countries and Brazilian states and an interview with Professor Henrique Parra from the Department of Social Sciences at the Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil. At our invitation, Parra participated in an interview titled [The Technocene and the Reestablishment of a Horizon of Urgency](#). In this conversation, he explores **the role of the digital in the socio-technical arrangements that shape and organize everyday life** on multiple scales, along with its implications.

Three papers offer **conceptual contributions to reflecting on the digital in the Global South**. *Marcos Beccari*, in his article entitled [Dysphoria as the Potency of Contradictions: A Bet by Paul B. Preciado](#), proposes a critical reading of the uses and political implications of digital automation in the South in light of Paul B. Preciado's notion of dysphoria. *Lucca Amaral Tori* takes up the Yanomami concept of *ně rope* to build an analysis of the World Wide Web in [Land, Freedom, and Diversity: Metaphors to the Digital World?](#). *Eli Borges Junior*, *Evandro Laia*, and *Bruno Madureira* also dialogue with ancestral technologies, tensioning the concept of platformization in the South, in their article [Cosmoplatfromization: Digital Platforms from the Global South](#).

Two authors problematize **the city's physical and digital dimensions**. In his critical essay [Digital Frameworks / Modern Urban Frames](#), *Carlos Feferman* proposes that similar tools and structures acquire different meanings in urbanism and digital technologies. *Paula Lemos Vilaça Faria*, in [Between Physical and Virtual Windows: Openings of Living in the Pandemic](#), discusses the production of domestic space and the ambiguity of physical and digital openings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The action of **social and political control by large international corporations** through digital platforms is examined in three works from different perspectives. In [Social Robots: A Socio-technical Controversy](#), *Ramon Fernandes Lourenço* analyzes the concept of social robots through the lens of Latour's Actor-Network Theory. The other two works focus on the regulation of these digital platforms. In the article, [Global South Adrift: Digital Regulation in the European Union and Brazil](#), *Magno Medeiros* provides a comparative analysis of legislation in Brazil and the European Union. Additionally, *Arnaldo de Santana Silva*, *Milena Cramar Lôndero*, and *Vitória Santos* discuss the necessity of regulation to address the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community in their article titled [Digital Activism and Platform \(De\)Regulation in Electoral Context](#).

In the Project section, *Ana Cecilia Parodi Anaya* presents the [Ecological Ensemble](#) installation, which challenges **the notion of communication in both biological and digital networks**.

We are also pleased to inform you that, as of this issue, the V!RUS journal has become part of the Journal Portal of the University of Sao Paulo at www.revistas.usp.br/virus. Still, it maintains its previous website –www.nomads.usp.br/virus– as a mirror website.

We hope these two issues of V!RUS provide a qualified debate on current digital culture, especially in relation to countries in the Global South.

We wish everyone an excellent reading experience.