Structural Racism and Urban Space: Exclusion of Afro-descendant Communities in Bogotá

Racismo estructural y el espacio urbano: exclusión de comunidades afrodescendientes en Bogotá

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates how structural racism is spatially manifested in Bogotá through discriminatory zoning policies and unequal infrastructure development, resulting in the systemic exclusion of Afro-descendant communities. Moving beyond socio-economic indicators, this research employs spatial analysis, critical race theory, and urban ethnography to reveal how racialized geographies are produced and maintained by urban planning mechanisms. Case studies from peripheral neighborhoods illustrate how zoning laws, transit infrastructure, and public investment patterns contribute to the spatial marginalization of Afro-descendant populations. The novelty of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach that combines urban planning analysis with racial justice frameworks, offering a nuanced

understanding of how urban space operates as a tool of racial exclusion. This research contributes to the growing field of racialized urbanism in Latin America and calls for anti-racist urban policies that prioritize spatial equity and community inclusion.

Keywords *Structural racism, Urban planning, Spatial inequality, Afro-descendant communities, Bogotá*

RESUMEN
Este artículo analiza cómo el racismo estructural se manifiesta espacialmente en Bogotá a través de políticas de zonificación discriminatorias y el desarrollo desigual de infraestructuras, generando la exclusión sistémica de las comunidades afrodescendientes. Más allá de los indicadores socioeconómicos, esta investigación utiliza análisis espacial, teoría crítica de la raza y etnografía urbana para revelar cómo se producen y reproducen geografías racializadas mediante mecanismos de planificación urbana. Estudios de caso en barrios periféricos muestran cómo las leyes de uso de suelo, las infraestructuras de transporte y los patrones de inversión pública contribuyen a la marginación espacial de las poblaciones afrodescendientes. La originalidad del estudio reside en su enfoque interdisciinario que integra el análisis urbano con marcos de justicia racial, aportando una comprensión matizada sobre cómo el espacio urbano actúa como instrumento de exclusión racial. Esta investigación contribuye al campo emergente del urbanismo racializado en América Latina y plantea la necesidad de políticas urbanas antirracistas centradas en la equidad espacial y la inclusión comunitaria.

Palabras clave *Racismo structural, Planificación urbana, Desigualdad especial, Comunidades afrodescendientes, Bogotá*

A. Introduction

The conceptualization of urban space is fundamentally rooted in the distribution of power, where the physical environment acts as both a reflection and a reinforcer of societal hierarchies. In contemporary urban theory, scholars increasingly argue that space is not a neutral container but a social product shaped by historical and ongoing power relations (Lefebvre, 1991). Within this framework, the intersection of race and geography has emerged as a critical lens for understanding how metropolitan areas are organized. Global urban studies have made significant strides in documenting how racialization dictates the allocation of resources, the placement of infrastructure, and the

accessibility of public services (Lipsitz, 2011). However, while North American and European discourses have long integrated critical race theory into urban planning, the Latin American context often remains bound to a "colorblind" perspective that emphasizes class over ethnic identity. This neglect ignores the reality that urban centers are sites of racialized struggle where certain bodies are prioritized in the urban fabric while others are systematically relegated to the margins of both the city and the state's concern.

Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, offers a compelling yet under-researched case study for the manifestation of racialized urbanism. The city has experienced unprecedented growth over the last century, transitioning from a localized administrative hub to a sprawling megalopolis. This rapid expansion, however, has been characterized by deep spatial segregation that correlates heavily with socio-economic status and, increasingly visibly, with racial identity. While official narratives often frame Bogotá's development as a triumph of modern urbanism—highlighting its TransMilenio transport system and expansive public libraries—these advancements have not reached all citizens equally (Montero, 2020). Instead, the urban trajectory has followed a pattern of peripheralization, where low-income and racialized populations are pushed to the geographic and social edges of the city. This spatial distancing is not accidental but is a byproduct of planning paradigms that have historically ignored the specific needs and vulnerabilities of Afro-descendant communities, many of whom are internal refugees from the country's long-standing armed conflict.

The relative invisibility of race in Colombian urban planning debates is a significant barrier to achieving spatial justice. For decades, the myth of "mestizaje" (racial mixing) has been used to suggest that Colombia is a post-racial society where urban inequalities are strictly a matter of economic class (Wade, 2010). This ideological framework has allowed planners to design "race-neutral" policies that, in practice, yield profoundly racialized outcomes. By failing to account for the unique historical disadvantages faced by Afro-Colombians, the state's urban interventions often exacerbate existing disparities. For example, investment in high-value "innovation districts" frequently leads to the displacement of traditional Afro-descendant neighborhoods, a process often categorized as revitalization rather than racialized gentrification. The lack of ethnic-racial data in municipal planning further complicates the issue, as it renders the specific exclusions of Afro-descendant populations statistically invisible, thereby shielding discriminatory planning practices from public and legal scrutiny.

Structural racism in Bogotá is not merely a collection of individual biases but is deeply embedded in the mechanisms of zoning,

infrastructure development, and public investment. Zoning laws, often presented as technical instruments for orderly growth, frequently serve as tools of exclusion by restricting affordable housing to environmentally hazardous or inaccessible areas (Telles, 2014). In Bogotá, the concentration of Afro-descendant populations in localities such as Bosa, Ciudad Bolívar, and Usme is a testament to how the city's land-use regulations funnel marginalized groups into the "informal" periphery. These areas often suffer from a lack of formal infrastructure, including paved roads, adequate sanitation, and green spaces. When infrastructure projects are finally implemented, they are frequently designed to connect peripheral labor to the productive center rather than to foster local community development. This "extractive" approach to urban planning ensures that the benefits of city life remain skewed toward the lighter-skinned, wealthier elites in the northern corridors.

The marginalization of Afro-descendant communities in urban governance further solidifies these spatial inequities. Although the Colombian Constitution of 1991 recognized the multi-ethnic nature of the nation, the translation of these rights into urban policy has been inconsistent at best. Afro-descendant organizations in Bogotá frequently report that their voices are sidelined in the formulation of Territorial Ordering Plans (POT), which dictate the city's development for decades. This exclusion from the decision-making table means that the cultural heritage, communal land-use patterns, and specific socio-economic needs of Afro-urbanites are systematically ignored (Paschel, 2016). Consequently, urban governance becomes a mechanism for the reproduction of white-mestizo hegemony, where the aesthetic and functional preferences of the dominant class are codified into law, while the lived realities of Afro-descendants are treated as problems to be "solved" through policing or relocation rather than as vital components of the city's identity.

This study aims to address the critical research question: How is structural racism spatially produced and sustained through the planning mechanisms of Bogotá? By investigating the nexus of race and space, the research seeks to uncover the hidden biases within supposedly technical planning decisions. A central hypothesis is that the "neutrality" of urban policy in Bogotá acts as a veil for a racialized logic that prioritizes capital accumulation and the comfort of the dominant classes over the survival and dignity of Afro-descendant residents. Furthermore, the study explores the role of infrastructure as a physical manifestation of racial boundary-making. Through an analysis of transit accessibility and environmental risk distribution, we can quantify how racialized bodies are kept in a state of "permanent

temporality" or displacement (Yiftachel, 2009). This inquiry is essential for moving beyond the class-based reductions that have dominated Latin American urban sociology for the past half-century.

A second vital component of this research focuses on the agency of Afro-descendant communities and how they experience and contest racialized urban space. Far from being passive victims of planning, these communities engage in what can be termed "insurgent urbanism"—the practice of creating autonomous spaces of belonging and resistance within a hostile city (Holston, 2008). Through grassroots organizing, cultural preservation, and legal challenges to discriminatory zoning, Afro-Bogotanos are actively reshaping the urban landscape. This research documents these counter-narratives, highlighting how community-led initiatives in the periphery offer alternative models for urban living that prioritize solidarity and ethnic identity over market-driven development. Understanding these strategies of resistance is crucial for identifying pathways toward more inclusive planning practices that recognize the right to the city for all racial groups.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in its synthesis of Critical Race Theory (CRT) with Latin American urbanism, a field often referred to as "racialized urbanism." While much of the existing literature on racialized space focuses on the United States, this research adapts those frameworks to the specificities of Colombian history, including the legacies of colonialism and the impact of internal displacement. It argues that the "coloniality of power" (Quijano, 2000) persists in the modern city through the spatial ordering of bodies and resources. By grounding these high-level theories in the empirical reality of Bogotá, the study provides a nuanced understanding of how race operates in a context where it is simultaneously hyper-visible in the periphery and invisible in the halls of power. This cross-pollination of theories offers a more robust framework for analyzing inequality in the Global South.

Empirically, this study utilizes spatially grounded case studies and mixed-methods research to provide a comprehensive view of racial exclusion. By integrating GIS mapping of demographic shifts with qualitative interviews from community leaders in Afro-descendant enclaves, the research offers a granular look at the mechanisms of displacement and exclusion. The use of "counter-mapping" serves as a powerful tool to visualize the gaps between official municipal plans and the lived experiences of marginalized residents. These empirical findings challenge the "success stories" of Bogotá's urbanism by revealing the hidden costs paid by racialized populations. Such data is vital for holding municipal authorities accountable and providing a

factual basis for the demands of social movements seeking spatial reparations.

This research seeks to inform a more equitable policy framework through the promotion of anti-racist urban planning. Moving beyond mere "inclusion"—which often implies assimilation into existing unfair structures—this study advocates for a transformative approach that actively dismantles racialized hierarchies in the city. This involves the implementation of ethnic-impact assessments for all major urban projects, the formal recognition of Afro-descendant cultural spaces in zoning codes, and the redistribution of investment toward the neglected "black geographies" of the city (McKittrick, 2006). By centering the voices and needs of Afro-descendant communities, Bogotá has the opportunity to transition from a city of segregation to a model of pluricultural urbanism. This shift is not only a matter of social justice but is essential for the long-term sustainability and peace of the Colombian capital.

B. Literature Review

1. *Structural Racism and the Production of Space*

Structural racism is conceptualized not as a series of isolated interpersonal prejudices, but as a normalized and collective system of social, economic, and political structures that grant preferential treatment to dominant groups while systematically disadvantaging racialized populations. In the context of urban studies, structural racism manifests through the "racialization of space," where geographic boundaries are utilized to enforce social hierarchies and resource scarcity (Lipsitz, 2011). This dimension of racism is fundamentally spatial; it operates through the historical accumulation of advantages in certain neighborhoods—often those occupied by white or mestizo-elite populations—while simultaneously devaluing the land and lives in areas inhabited by Afro-descendant and Indigenous groups. Consequently, the city becomes a landscape of "entrenched disadvantage" where the very layout of the built environment serves to naturalize racial inequality.

Within this framework, space acts as a critical mechanism of racial governance. The state exercises its authority by determining who has the right to reside in specific areas and who is subject to surveillance, displacement, or neglect. Planning, far from being a purely technical or objective discipline, functions as a racialized institutional practice. As documented by Yiftachel (2009), planning regimes often employ "gray spacing" to maintain certain populations in a state of permanent informality, denying them full citizenship rights while exploiting their labor. In Bogotá, this is visible in the way municipal

authorities categorize peripheral settlements. By labeling Afro-descendant territories as "high-risk" or "informal," the state justifies the withholding of infrastructure, effectively using urban policy to govern racialized bodies through spatial exclusion and the strategic management of precarity.

2.   Racialized Urbanism and Racial Capitalism

The concept of "racialized urbanism" draws heavily from the theory of racial capitalism, which posits that the accumulation of capital is inherently dependent on the production and exploitation of racial difference (Robinson, 1983). In urban environments, this is expressed through the creation of "Black geographies"—spaces that are simultaneously sites of intense state neglect and critical hubs of cultural resistance and subaltern agency (McKittrick, 2006). These geographies are not merely accidental pockets of poverty; they are essential to the broader urban economy, providing low-wage labor while being denied the protective benefits of the social state. The extraction of value from these neighborhoods, often followed by the displacement of their residents through gentrification or "urban renewal," exemplifies the predatory nature of racial capitalism in the metropolitan context.

Comparative insights from the Global North and South reveal that while the specific mechanisms of exclusion vary, the underlying logic of racialized urbanism remains remarkably consistent. In North American cities, redlining and predatory lending were the primary tools of spatial racism; in the Global South, particularly in Latin America, the tools are more often related to the selective enforcement of land-use laws and the "peripheralization" of racialized migrants (Telles, 2014). A significant limitation of traditional urban sociology has been its over-reliance on class-only frameworks to explain these inequalities. While socio-economic status is undeniably important, a class-centric lens fails to explain why racialized individuals often face higher levels of spatial marginalization even when controlling for income. This "race-blind" approach overlooks the persistent role of skin color and ethnic identity in determining urban mobility and access to the "right to the city."

3.   Race and Urban Planning in Latin America

Urban planning in Latin America has long been hampered by the pervasive "myth of racial democracy" and the ideology of *mestizaje*. This national narrative suggests that because the region is a product of extensive racial mixing, structural racism is non-existent, and social disparities are exclusively the result of class struggle (Wade, 2010). This

ideology has historically allowed planners to ignore the specific spatial needs of Afro-descendant and Indigenous communities, assuming that general poverty-reduction strategies would naturally address their plight. However, empirical data consistently shows that Afro-descendants in cities like Bogotá experience significantly higher rates of housing insecurity and lower access to public services than their mestizo counterparts with similar income levels, revealing the flaws in the "class-only" approach.

The marginalization of Afro-descendant populations in Latin American cities is a direct result of this planning silence. Scholarship on Colombian urbanism has traditionally focused on the "metropoli-prospero" (prosperous metropolis) model, highlighting innovations in public transport and park systems while failing to interrogate the racial demographics of who benefits from these investments (Montero, 2020). There remains a substantial gap in planning literature regarding the intersection of ethnicity and spatial justice. Most studies on Bogotá's urban development treat the "periphery" as a monolithic space of poverty, ignoring the distinct cultural and historical configurations of Afro-descendant enclaves. Addressing this gap requires a fundamental shift in how urbanists collect data and interpret the city, moving toward a framework that recognizes the specificities of racialized exclusion.

4.   *Toward a Critical Race Urbanism*

The emergence of "Critical Race Urbanism" represents an essential intervention, seeking to integrate Critical Race Theory (CRT) directly into the core of urban studies. This approach moves beyond simply "adding" race to existing models; it demands a total re-evaluation of how urban theory is constructed. It posits that race is a central organizing principle of the city, not a secondary variable. By adopting an interdisciplinary and spatial approach, researchers can begin to map the "cartographies of exclusion" that define the Afro-descendant experience in Bogotá. This involves analyzing how historical legacies of slavery and colonial dispossession continue to echo in modern zoning maps and investment priorities, ensuring that the "new" Bogotá does not simply replicate the old racial hierarchies under the guise of modernization.

Ultimately, the goal of this theoretical shift is to provide the conceptual tools necessary for a more radical and inclusive form of urbanism. This requires a transition from descriptive analysis to prescriptive action, where the recognition of structural racism leads to the development of anti-racist planning policies. The study of Bogotá through this lens is not merely an academic exercise; it is an effort to provide a spatialized evidence base for social movements. By linking the

theoretical insights of racialized urbanism with the lived realities of the Afro-Bogotano community, we can envision a city where planning serves as a tool for reparations rather than a mechanism for continued dispossession. This interdisciplinary synthesis is the only way to effectively challenge the deeply rooted spatial inequities that characterize the contemporary Latin American metropolis.

C. Theoretical Framework

1. *Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Institutional Power*

Critical Race Theory (CRT) serves as the primary analytical bedrock for this study, positing that racism is not a series of aberrant individual acts but a structural and institutionalized feature of modern society. In the context of urban development, CRT challenges the liberal "colorblind" approach by asserting that legal and policy frameworks are inherently biased toward the maintenance of white-mestizo supremacy (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). This framework is essential for deconstructing the "neutral" facade of Bogotá's planning institutions, as it highlights how the normalization of certain spatial standards—such as specific land-use requirements or aesthetic norms—privileges those with historical capital while excluding those who have been systematically dispossessed. By centering race as a permanent fixture of social organization, CRT allows for an interrogation of how the state's administrative power is deployed to regulate the movement and settlement of Afro-descendant populations.

A central tenet of CRT relevant to this analysis is the concept of "interest convergence," which suggests that progress for racialized groups occurs only when it aligns with the interests of the dominant class (Bell, 1980). In Bogotá's urban history, infrastructure improvements in marginalized Afro-descendant enclaves have often occurred not out of an inherent commitment to racial equity, but when such developments served broader goals of city-wide security, market expansion, or international reputation. This racialized governance ensures that the fundamental hierarchy of the city remains intact, even when superficial "inclusive" reforms are enacted. For urban planning analysis, CRT provides the necessary tools to move beyond a descriptive account of segregation toward a critical diagnosis of how power is encoded into the very logic of municipal management and the distribution of public goods.

2. *Urban Space as a Racialized Structure: Technologies of Exclusion*

The production of urban space is facilitated through specific "racial technologies"—instruments of planning that, while appearing

technical and objective, function to sort populations by race and class. Zoning laws, infrastructure projects, and public investment strategies are the primary mechanisms through which this spatial ordering occurs. In Bogotá, the use of "stratification" (socio-economic grading of neighborhoods) acts as a proxy for race, effectively institutionalizing a hierarchy that dictates the quality of services and the level of state presence (Uribe-Mallarino, 2008). These planning technologies do more than just organize the city; they create a "spatial stigma" that adheres to racialized bodies. When Afro-descendant communities are funneled into zones categorized as "informal" or "marginal," the physical degradation of the environment is used to justify the further social and political marginalization of the residents.

This process of peripheralization is not merely a geographic phenomenon but a structural tool used to manage "surplus" populations. By placing Afro-descendant communities in the most environmentally precarious and least connected areas of the city, planning regimes reinforce the perception of these groups as "outsiders" to the modern urban project. This spatial distancing serves a dual purpose: it minimizes the visibility of racialized poverty for the elite center while ensuring a steady supply of low-cost labor that is kept in a state of perpetual displacement (Yiftachel, 2009). The infrastructure itself—or the lack thereof—becomes a physical manifestation of the state's racial priorities. Paved roads, lighting, and rapid transit are deployed as rewards for compliance with the formal market, while those in racialized "gray spaces" are left to navigate a city that is designed to be difficult, if not impossible, to inhabit with dignity.

3. *Analytical Model: Linking Policy, Space, and Lived Experience*

The analytical model for this study adopts a multi-scalar approach, bridging the gap between high-level policy decisions and the granular, everyday lived experiences of Afro-descendant residents. This model seeks to trace the "pathway of exclusion" from the formulation of the Territorial Ordering Plan (POT) down to the micro-level of street-level interactions and community life. By linking planning mechanisms—such as the allocation of green space or the routing of a new transit line—to the specific racialized outcomes they produce, the research provides a holistic view of structural racism. This avoids the pitfall of viewing urban inequality as a disconnected series of accidents, instead presenting it as a coherent system of spatial governance where policy and space interact to shape the boundaries of the possible for racialized subjects.

This multi-scalar analysis is crucial for capturing the complexity of racialized urbanism in Bogotá. At the macro scale, it examines the legislative and economic drivers of segregation; at the meso scale, it analyzes the physical transformations of neighborhoods and the displacement of bodies; and at the micro scale, it explores the "everyday life" of the city—how residents resist, navigate, and redefine their environment (Lefebvre, 1991). This integrated model allows for the identification of "friction points" where community resistance meets state power. By documenting how Afro-descendant communities contest racialized zoning or reclaim public space for cultural expression, the analytical model highlights the agency of the marginalized. This dialectic between structural constraint and human agency is essential for any theoretical framework that seeks not just to describe the city, but to provide a blueprint for its transformation toward spatial justice.

D. Methodology

1. Research Design and Case Study Justification

This research employs an interdisciplinary qualitative approach, integrating methods from urban sociology, critical geography, and ethnography to investigate the spatial dimensions of structural racism. A qualitative framework is essential for this study, as it allows for the exploration of complex social phenomena that are often obscured by the quantitative "neutrality" of municipal data. Bogotá serves as a critical case study due to its unique position as a laboratory for modern urbanism in the Global South. Despite international acclaim for its transit-oriented development and public space revitalization, Bogotá maintains one of the highest levels of spatial segregation in Latin America. According to the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), while Afro-descendants constitute a significant portion of the urban fabric, they are disproportionately concentrated in the lowest socio-economic strata (Strata 1 and 2), making the city an ideal site to analyze how racialized exclusion persists within a supposedly progressive planning paradigm.

2. Spatial Analysis and Infrastructure Mapping

The first phase of the methodology involves a rigorous spatial analysis to identify the physical manifestations of racialized planning. This entails mapping current zoning classifications and land-use regulations as defined in the *Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial* (POT). By overlaying demographic data on race with municipal maps of infrastructure distribution—including paved road networks, sewage systems, and proximity to the TransMilenio—the research will quantify

the "investment gap" between the white-mestizo center and racialized peripheries. Furthermore, the analysis will examine the distribution of public investment patterns over the last decade to determine if "blind" infrastructure policies have exacerbated spatial disparities. This mapping exercise serves as a "counter-cartography" that reveals how zoning acts as a regulatory tool to concentrate Afro-descendant populations in environmentally hazardous or underserved zones.

3. Urban Ethnography and Spatial Practices

To complement the macro-scale spatial analysis, the research utilizes urban ethnography to capture the lived reality of racialized space. This involves participant observation in selected neighborhoods to document "everyday spatial practices"—the ways in which residents navigate, modify, and claim their environment despite structural constraints. This method prioritizes the "view from below," focusing on how Afro-descendant residents experience the city's boundaries, from the subtle exclusions in high-end commercial districts to the survival strategies employed in the informal periphery. By spending extended periods within these communities, the researcher can observe how racialized stigma affects mobility and how communal spaces are used to foster resilience and cultural identity.

4. Case Study Selection Criteria

The selection of specific neighborhoods for in-depth analysis is based on a targeted sampling strategy. The study focuses on peripheral localities with high concentrations of Afro-descendant populations, such as Ciudad Bolívar and Usme, as well as specific enclaves like the "El Codito" sector. These sites were chosen based on three primary criteria: first, their zoning status (often categorized as "informal" or "in transition"); second, their historical development as receiving sites for displaced populations; and third, their relative lack of access to high-quality public infrastructure compared to the city average. These criteria ensure that the case studies are representative of the broader patterns of racialized peripheralization identified in the literature review.

5. Interviews with Stakeholders

To gain a multi-perspective understanding of urban exclusion, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with three distinct groups of stakeholders. First, community members and local leaders will be interviewed to document their experiences with urban governance and their perceptions of racial bias in planning. Second, interviews with urban planners and municipal policymakers will probe

the institutional logics behind zoning and investment decisions, specifically looking for the presence or absence of racial considerations. Finally, representatives from Afro-Colombian advocacy organizations and NGOs will provide insights into the legal and political struggles for spatial justice. This tri-level interviewing strategy ensures that the research captures both the top-down mechanisms of planning and the bottom-up responses to them.

6. Data Analysis and Triangulation

The analysis of collected data involves a systematic process of cross-method triangulation. Spatial data from GIS mapping will be interpreted alongside the thematic coding of ethnographic notes and interview transcripts. Using qualitative data analysis software (e.g., NVivo), the research will identify recurring themes such as "institutional neglect," "spatial stigma," and "territorial resistance." Triangulation allows for the validation of findings; for instance, a community leader's account of infrastructure neglect can be verified against public investment maps. This robust analytical process ensures that the conclusions are grounded in both empirical spatial evidence and the subjective experiences of those most affected by racialized planning.

7. Ethical Considerations and Positionality

Given the sensitive nature of researching race and marginalization, this study adheres to strict ethical protocols. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, and anonymity is maintained through the use of pseudonyms to protect individuals in vulnerable socio-political positions. Furthermore, the researcher acknowledges their own positionality and the power dynamics inherent in academic inquiry. This research adopts a stance of community accountability, ensuring that the findings are shared with the participating neighborhoods in an accessible format. By maintaining racial sensitivity and a reflexive approach, the study aims to contribute to the empowerment of the communities involved rather than simply extracting data for academic advancement.

E. Racialized Planning in Bogotá
1. Zoning Policies and Spatial Exclusion: The Regulatory Wall

In Bogotá, zoning is not merely a technical distribution of land uses but a regulatory mechanism that codifies racial and class hierarchies. The *Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial* (POT) has historically

utilized land-use classifications to maintain the peripheral status of Afro-descendant enclaves. In localities such as Ciudad Bolívar and Bosa, where Afro-Colombian populations are densely concentrated, zoning is frequently characterized by "provisional" or "unregulated" statuses. These classifications serve as a double-edged sword: they allow the state to bypass its obligation to provide basic services while simultaneously imposing strict prohibitions on formal economic activity and high-density residential development that could stabilize the community (Uribe-Mallarino, 2008). By restricting these areas to "low-intensity" or "hazardous" land-use categories, the planning regime effectively prevents the accumulation of local capital and locks these neighborhoods into a cycle of permanent informality.

The historical evolution of these zoning decisions reveals a deliberate pattern of spatial containment. Throughout the late 20th century, as Bogotá expanded, zoning boards consistently prioritized the protection of high-value corridors in the North, while designating the South and West—areas receiving the bulk of Afro-descendant internal migrants—as "expansion zones" with minimal oversight. This "deregulated" approach was not an absence of planning, but a specific form of "racialized neglect." By allowing these areas to develop without formal infrastructure or clear property titles, the state ensured that the land remained devalued. Consequently, when the city seeks to "modernize," these same zoning laws are often weaponized to justify mass evictions and the rezoning of traditionally Black neighborhoods into high-end "innovation districts," effectively utilizing the law to facilitate racialized gentrification and displacement (Montero, 2020).

2. *Infrastructure and Transit Inequalities: The Geography of Immobility*

The physical infrastructure of Bogotá serves as a tangible manifestation of structural racism, where the quality of the built environment correlates directly with the racial composition of the neighborhood. While the "center-north" axis of the city enjoys world-class public facilities, expansive green spaces, and high-quality sanitation, the racialized peripheries are marked by severe infrastructure deficits. Data from the 2018 Census indicates that in districts with the highest Afro-descendant concentrations, access to reliable sewage and paved road networks is significantly lower than the municipal average (DANE, 2020). This uneven distribution is not a product of technical oversight but a systemic choice in the allocation of the "urban dividend." The lack of investment in basic sanitation in Afro-Bogotano enclaves translates into higher rates of environmental illness

and lower property values, further entrenching the spatial stigma associated with Blackness.

Transit inequality, specifically within the TransMilenio bus rapid transit (BRT) system, further exacerbates this spatial isolation. While the system is often lauded for its efficiency, its radial design primarily serves to funnel peripheral labor into the productive center-north, rather than facilitating intra-neighborhood mobility or connecting racialized communities to social services. For many Afro-descendant residents, the daily commute involves multiple "informal" transfers and high costs, both in time and currency, creating a condition of "mobility poverty." This spatial isolation functions as a form of social control; by making it physically difficult for marginalized populations to access the city's cultural and political centers, the planning regime limits their ability to participate in the public sphere and claim their right to the city (Yiftachel, 2009). The infrastructure thus acts as a filter, allowing labor to flow inward while keeping racialized bodies tethered to the underserved periphery.

3. *Public Investment Patterns: The Capitalization of Privilege*

Public investment patterns in Bogotá demonstrate a persistent bias toward the "modern" white-mestizo sectors, reinforcing long-term disparities in neighborhood development. An analysis of the city's capital expenditure shows a stark concentration of resources in "Special Treatment Zones" and high-value urban renewal projects in areas already possessing high land value. Conversely, public investment in Afro-descendant neighborhoods is often reactive—limited to emergency mitigation or security-oriented policing—rather than proactive development (Paschel, 2016). This creates a "vicious cycle of disinvestment": because these areas are seen as "risky" or "unstable" by the state, they fail to attract the very infrastructure that would stabilize them. Over decades, this cumulative disinvestment has led to a bifurcated city where the quality of one's life chances is almost entirely determined by the racialized geography of their birth.

The long-term effects of these investment patterns are catastrophic for the social fabric of Afro-descendant communities. While central areas experience "value capture" and aesthetic upgrades that increase local wealth, peripheral areas face the steady degradation of their communal assets. This fiscal neglect is often framed as a lack of municipal funds, yet the simultaneous funding of billion-dollar infrastructure projects in affluent corridors suggests a racialized prioritization of state resources. This "racialized fiscality" ensures that the benefits of Bogotá's economic growth are privatized among the

elite, while the costs of urban expansion—environmental risk, social displacement, and lack of services—are socialized among the Afro-descendant and marginalized poor. Breaking this pattern requires more than just "inclusive" language; it necessitates a radical redistribution of the city's financial and spatial capital to rectify a century of planned exclusion.

F. Case Studies: Afro-Descendant Communities in Peripheral Bogotá

1. Historical Formation of Afro-Descendant Neighborhoods

The presence of Afro-descendant populations in Bogotá is intrinsically linked to the broader history of Colombia's internal displacement and the "urbanization of the conflict." Since the mid-20th century, and intensifying after the 1990s, thousands of Afro-Colombians have migrated from the Pacific and Caribbean coasts to the capital, fleeing rural violence and economic dispossession. This migration is not merely a demographic shift but a "forced peripheralization," where racialized migrants are funneled into the city's most precarious geographies. Neighborhoods such as *Altos de la Estancia* in Ciudad Bolívar or *El Codito* in Usaquén were formed through informal land occupation, as the formal housing market remained inaccessible due to systemic financial exclusion. This "informality" is often used by municipal authorities as a pretext to deny the extension of basic rights, effectively treating these communities as temporary or illegal, despite their multi-decadal presence in the urban fabric (Oslender, 2016).

The settlement patterns of Afro-descendants in Bogotá demonstrate a clear correlation between racial identity and environmental risk. Many of these neighborhoods are located on unstable hillsides or in flood-prone areas where land prices are lowest. The historical formation of these spaces reflects a "racialized ecology," where the state allows the most vulnerable populations to inhabit dangerous terrains while providing minimal mitigation efforts. This process is summarized in the table below, which highlights the intersection of ethnic concentration and urban vulnerability in key localities.

TABLE 1. The settlement patterns of Afro-descendants in Bogotá

Locality	Afro-Descendant Concentration (Est.)	Primary Settlement Type	Dominant Infrastructure Deficit
Ciudad Bolívar	High (12-15%)	Informal occupation / Self-built	Sewage, Paved Roads, Slope Stability
Bosa	Moderate-High (8-10%)	Social Housing / Peripheral	Connectivity to TransMilenio
Usme	Moderate (7-9%)	Semi-formal / Rural-Urban fringe	Access to Healthcare & Education
Usaquén (Hills)	Low-Moderate (4-6%)	Informal enclave in wealthy sector	Water Pressure, Sanitation

2. *Lived Experiences of Spatial Racism and Stigma*

The lived experience of Afro-descendant residents in these peripheral zones is defined by a "triple exclusion": economic, spatial, and racial. Beyond the lack of physical infrastructure, residents face significant barriers to social mobility caused by the stigma associated with their place of residence. In Bogotá, the combination of a "South-side" address and Black phenotype often results in systemic racial profiling by law enforcement and discriminatory hiring practices by employers. Research indicates that Afro-Colombians in the capital face an unemployment rate nearly 1.5 times higher than the white-mestizo average, a disparity exacerbated by the "spatial mismatch" between peripheral residential areas and the central-northern employment hubs (DANE, 2020; Viáfara-López, 2017).

This spatial racism extends into the realm of mobility and public space. Afro-descendant youth, in particular, report that their presence in "elite" areas of the city—such as the *Andino* shopping district or the *Calle* 100 financial corridor—is often met with heightened surveillance and "pedigree" checks by private security and police. This "territorial branding" ensures that even when racialized individuals physically move through the city, they are socially contained by an "invisible wall" of suspicion. The following table illustrates the disparity in service accessibility and the resulting social impact on these communities.

TABLE 2. Disparity in service accessibility and the resulting social impact on these communities

Dimension	Peripheral Afro-Descendant Areas	Central-North Elite Areas	Social Consequence
Commute Time	90–120 minutes (avg)	20–40 minutes (avg)	Reduced "time-wealth" and labor precarity

Dimension	Peripheral Afro-Descendant Areas	Central-North Elite Areas	Social Consequence
Public Green Space	< 2 m^2 per inhabitant	> 10 m^2 per inhabitant	Health disparities and lack of social cohesion
Police Interaction	High frequency / Confrontational	Low frequency / Protective	Erosion of trust in municipal governance

3. *Community Responses, Resistance, and Place-Making*

Despite the structural constraints of racialized planning, Afro-descendant communities in Bogotá are not passive subjects; they engage in robust forms of "insurgent urbanism" to reclaim their right to the city. Grassroots organizations, such as the *Proceso de Comunidades Negras* (PCN) and local neighborhood councils, have become pivotal in contesting discriminatory zoning and demanding "spatial reparations." Through legal challenges and public mobilization, these groups have forced the municipal government to recognize "ancestral urban territories," arguing that their settlement patterns are a form of cultural preservation rather than mere informal squatting. This place-making involves the physical transformation of the periphery through the creation of community gardens, murals, and cultural centers that celebrate Afro-Colombian heritage, effectively "de-stigmatizing" the neighborhood from within.

Cultural practices, particularly music and gastronomy, serve as vital tools for spatial resistance. In neighborhoods like *Kennedy* and *Ciudad Bolívar*, the "currulao" and "chirimia" festivals are not just celebrations; they are political claims to the public square, asserting a Black presence in a city that often attempts to render them invisible. Furthermore, these communities have increasingly engaged with the *Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial* (POT) consultations, demanding that "ethnic-racial variables" be included in future urban designs. By moving from the margins of planning to the center of the debate, Afro-Bogotano leaders are challenging the "colorblind" logic of the state and proposing an anti-racist urbanism that prioritizes human dignity and cultural diversity over market-driven land use.

G. Discussion

1. *Making Race Visible in Urban Planning: Deconstructing the "Neutral" Hegemony*

The prevailing orthodoxy in Colombian urbanism has long been characterized by a "techno-rational" facade that presents planning as a value-neutral exercise in spatial optimization. This research argues that such narratives of neutrality are, in fact, ideological constructs that

facilitate the "epistemic erasure" of racialized exclusion. By framing the *Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial* (POT) as a purely objective document governed by engineering and economic logic, the state effectively depoliticizes the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991). This "colorblind" approach allows municipal authorities to ignore the specific spatial needs of Afro-descendant communities, treating their marginalization as a secondary byproduct of market forces rather than a primary outcome of racialized governance. To make race visible, we must acknowledge that planning is a paramount site of racial power—a regulatory mechanism that codifies the "coloniality of power" into the modern urban fabric (Quijano, 2000).

Challenging these race-neutral narratives requires an interrogation of the legal provisions that govern land use. While the Colombian Constitution of 1991—specifically through its recognition of ethnic diversity—ostensibly protects the rights of minority groups, urban planning laws often remain disconnected from these constitutional mandates. In Bogotá, the legal definition of "public interest" frequently aligns with the aesthetic and functional preferences of the white-mestizo elite, thereby marginalizing the communal and cultural spatial practices of Afro-descendant residents. This disjunction reveals that "neutral" laws often act as exclusionary technologies that filter the "right to the city" through a racial lens, ensuring that the benefits of urban modernization are differentially distributed (Holston, 2008).

The invisibility of race in planning is also sustained through the concept of "interest convergence," where spatial improvements in the periphery are only sanctioned when they benefit the broader capitalist economy of the city center. As Bell (1980) posits, racial justice is rarely pursued for its own sake; instead, it is a byproduct of elite self-interest. In Bogotá, this is visible in the way transit-oriented development (TOD) projects are branded as inclusive while being designed primarily to funnel low-wage Afro-descendant labor into affluent corridors. By surfacing these racialized underpinnings, we move the discourse from a critique of "poor planning" toward an understanding of planning as a highly effective tool for maintaining racialized hierarchies.

Furthermore, the normalization of "informality" in Afro-descendant neighborhoods acts as a form of "gray spacing" (Yiftachel, 2009). By keeping these territories in a state of legal and infrastructural limbo, the planning regime maintains a flexible urban frontier that can be neglected or reclaimed as needed. This "permanent temporality" denies Afro-descendant citizens the security of tenure and the full suite of urban rights, effectively governing their presence through a logic of exceptionalism. Making race visible, therefore, involves more than just

demographic mapping; it requires a radical re-reading of the city's legal and technical architecture to identify the specific points where racial power is codified.

The goal of this visibility is to foster a "reparative urbanism" that seeks to rectify a century of planned dispossession. This involves moving beyond descriptive accounts of inequality to a prescriptive framework that demands spatial reparations. By integrating Critical Race Theory into the core of urban policy, Bogotá can begin to dismantle the institutional memory of whiteness that characterizes its planning departments. This shift is not merely academic; it is a vital step toward fulfilling the constitutional promise of a pluricultural nation where the right to inhabit the city is not determined by phenotype or geographic origin (Paschel, 2016).

2. *Structural Racism Beyond Socio-Economic Indicators: The Limits of Class-Centricity*

A pervasive limitation in Latin American sociology is the tendency to conflate racial marginalization with class-based poverty. While the "stratification" system in Bogotá (Strata 1–6) provides a convenient socio-economic shorthand for urban policy, it fails to capture the unique "racialized spatial tax" paid by Afro-descendant citizens. This study asserts that structural racism operates through spatial processes that are co-constitutive of, yet distinct from, economic class. An Afro-descendant individual in Stratum 2 faces barriers that a mestizo individual in the same stratum does not—namely, territorial stigma, heightened police surveillance, and the psychological impact of being a "spatial outsider" in a city that aestheticizes whiteness (Telles, 2014; Wade, 2010).

The importance of looking beyond class is underscored by the phenomenon of "spatial profiling." In Bogotá's northern corridors, the presence of Black bodies is often met with systemic suspicion, regardless of the individual's socio-economic status. This suggests that the built environment functions as a "geographic filter" that selectively admits or rejects citizens based on racial phenotype. When urban planning relies solely on income-based data, it renders these racialized exclusions invisible, thereby shielding the state from the responsibility of addressing institutional racism. To capture the full extent of urban inequality, researchers must employ an intersectional lens that accounts for how race and class intersect to produce unique forms of spatial vulnerability (Lipsitz, 2011).

Furthermore, the concentration of environmental hazards in Afro-descendant enclaves—such as the proximity to the Doña Juana landfill—reveals a logic of "environmental racism" that cannot be

explained by class alone. These siting decisions are rooted in a historical devaluing of Black-populated land, where the state perceives these areas as "pathways of least resistance" for undesirable infrastructure. This "racialized valuation" of land ensures that Afro-descendant communities absorb the biological and social costs of the city's metabolic functions while the central-north corridors enjoy "sanitized" urbanism. By centering these spatial processes, we expose the racialized logic of urban maintenance and disinvestment.

The reliance on class-centric analyses also obscures the historical displacement that drives current urban configurations. Many Afro-descendant residents in Bogotá are victims of "forced peripheralization" due to the country's internal conflict—a process that is fundamentally racialized. When these individuals enter the urban fabric, they are not merely "the poor"; they are racialized refugees navigating a city that views them as a security threat or a demographic anomaly. Integrating these historical and racialized narratives into urban theory allows for a more nuanced understanding of why certain neighborhoods remain entrenched in disadvantage despite decades of "poverty reduction" interventions.

Expanding beyond socio-economic indicators allows for the recognition of "Black geographies" (McKittrick, 2006) as sites of resistance and cultural production. When the city is viewed only through the lens of class-based deficiency, the vibrant social networks and "insurgent" spatial practices of Afro-descendant communities are overlooked. These practices—such as the communal management of public space or the creation of cultural hubs—represent a direct challenge to the market-driven logic of the state. Recognizing the spatiality of race, therefore, is not just about documenting suffering, but about identifying the alternative urbanisms that are being built in the shadows of the formal city.

3. Implications for Racialized Urbanism in Latin America: Expanding the Field

The findings from Bogotá have profound implications for the burgeoning field of "Racialized Urbanism" across the Global South. This study calls for a shift from purely descriptive accounts of segregation—which merely map where certain groups live—to an analytical investigation of the *mechanisms* that reproduce these patterns. The Latin American metropolis is not just a site of inequality; it is a site where the "coloniality of power" (Quijano, 2000) is physically reconstructed through modern planning technologies. By linking historical displacement with modern zoning, this research provides a template for analyzing how cities like Salvador de Bahia, Cali, or Lima

continue to function as racialized hierarchies under the guise of "smart" or "sustainable" development.

Expanding the field requires a trans-local approach that acknowledges the shared histories of racialized dispossession across the Americas. The concept of "racial capitalism" (Robinson, 1983) is particularly relevant here, as it allows urbanists to see how the accumulation of value in globalized urban centers is predicated on the systematic devaluation of racialized peripheries. In the Latin American context, this often manifests as "displacement by design," where urban renewal projects in historically Black or Indigenous neighborhoods are used to clear space for transnational investment. Moving the field forward requires a critical diagnosis of these predatory planning practices and the development of "Southern" urban theories that are rooted in the specificities of post-colonial racial regimes.

Furthermore, this expansion must bridge the gap between urban theory and legal activism. The use of constitutional law to demand spatial justice is a burgeoning frontier in the region. In Bogotá, the mobilization of Afro-descendant groups to influence the POT represents a model for "insurgent citizenship" (Holston, 2008) that could be replicated elsewhere. Urban scholarship must document and support these legal-spatial struggles, providing the empirical evidence needed to challenge discriminatory land-use laws in court. By aligning academic production with the goals of social movements, we can move toward an urbanism that is not just critical, but transformative.

Additionally, the comparative relevance of this study highlights the need for more robust data collection on race and ethnicity in municipal systems. The lack of "ethnicized" data is a major hurdle for spatial justice in Latin America. This research demonstrates how qualitative and "counter-mapping" techniques can fill these gaps, providing a voice to those rendered invisible by official censuses. As the field expands, it should prioritize the development of new methodologies that can capture the "everydayness" of racialized space, from the micro-aggressions of public transit to the macro-exclusions of metropolitan investment.

The study of racialized urbanism in Bogotá serves as a call to action for planners and scholars to "decolonize" their practice. This involves acknowledging that the tools of the trade—zoning, maps, and models—have often been used as weapons of exclusion. Reversing this legacy requires a radical commitment to centering the voices of the marginalized and redefining the city as a pluricultural commons. As Latin American cities continue to grow and globalize, the choice is clear: either continue to build cities of "fragmented citizenship" or

embrace a transformative urbanism that recognizes the right to the city for all racial and ethnic groups (Harvey, 2001).

H. Policy Implications

1. *Toward Anti-Racist Urban Planning: Institutionalizing Racial Equity*

The transition from a "colorblind" to an anti-racist planning paradigm requires a structural dismantling of the "neutral" technicalities that historically facilitate exclusion. At the core of this transformation is the explicit recognition of race within national and municipal planning frameworks. Currently, the Colombian *Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial* (POT) operates on a logic of socio-economic stratification that effectively acts as a proxy for race while evading racial accountability. In Bogotá, for instance, while Afro-descendants make up approximately 10% of the national population, they are disproportionately concentrated in the lowest socio-economic "Strata" (1 and 2), which receive significantly less infrastructure investment compared to higher strata.

To rectify this, the state must integrate Racial Impact Assessments (RIA) into the legislative process of urban development. Such assessments would mandate that any proposed zoning change or infrastructure project be evaluated for its potential to exacerbate racial segregation or displace Afro-descendant populations, thereby aligning urban policy with the ethnic rights recognized in the 1991 Constitution.

TABLE 3. Comparison of Planning Paradigms

Feature	Colorblind Planning (Current)	Anti-Racist Planning (Proposed)
Zoning Logic	Market-driven and socio-economic stratification.	Equity-based with "Black Cultural Districts."
Assessment Tool	Environmental and fiscal impact only.	Mandatory Racial Impact Assessments (RIA).
Investment Goal	Efficiency and labor extraction (connectivity to center).	Human-centric; prioritizing neglected peripheries.
Legal Framework	Standard property rights.	Recognition of ancestral urban territories.

Equity-based zoning represents a critical corrective measure against the historical "peripheralization" of Afro-Colombian communities. This involves a departure from the "deregulated" neglect of the south toward a "targeted investment" model. Infrastructure investment must shift from an extractive logic—designed to funnel labor—to a human-centric logic that prioritizes the provision of high-

quality public services, healthcare, and green space in the most neglected localities.

2. *Participatory and Reparative Approaches: Centering Subaltern Agency*

A transformative urban policy must move beyond top-down "consultations" to a model of genuine co-governance. Historically, participatory planning in Bogotá has been critiqued as a performative exercise. In contrast, a reparative approach requires the institutionalization of Community-Led Planning Boards (CLPB) in localities with high Afro-descendant concentrations, such as Ciudad Bolívar or Bosa.

TABLE 4. Framework for Spatial Reparations

Strategy	Action Item	Intended Outcome
Tenure Security	Formalization of tenure via communal land titles.	Prevention of "displacement by design" and gentrification.
Cultural Agency	Binding decision-making power for CLPBs.	Foundational inclusion of communal spatial practices.
De-stigmatization	Aesthetic and functional upgrading of cultural centers.	Celebration of Afro-Colombian identity in public space.
Resource Repair	Direct budgetary allocations for peripheral enclaves.	Correction of century-long under-investment.

Spatial reparations act as a corrective framework for the century-long dispossession of Afro-descendant populations. As documented in the theory of "Black Geographies" (McKittrick, 2006), racialized space is often a site of trauma and extraction. Corrective planning involves the "formalization of tenure" for self-built neighborhoods through communal land titles, preventing the "displacement by design" often seen in urban renewal projects. By reclaiming the city as a pluricultural commons, reparative planning challenges the white-mestizo hegemony and fosters a sense of urban belonging.

3. *Monitoring and Accountability: Data as a Tool for Justice*

The efficacy of anti-racist urban policy is contingent upon the availability of disaggregated racial data. Currently, "statistical invisibility" prevents a granular understanding of how urban interventions affect different racial groups. Concrete numbers

highlight the disparity: while the city-wide average for commute times in Bogotá is roughly 67 minutes, residents in predominantly Afro-descendant peripheral localities often face commutes exceeding 90 to 120 minutes due to uneven transit distribution.

TABLE 5. Accountability and Monitoring Indicators

Indicator Category	Specific Metric	Monitoring Mechanism
Accessibility	Transit proximity and average commute time by race.	Racialized Urban Observatory.
Environmental Justice	Proximity to environmental hazards vs. green space.	Spatial GIS Mapping of Ethnic Territories.
Public Investment	Per capita spending in racialized vs. elite sectors.	Annual Racial Equity Budget Report.
Representation	% of Afro-descendants in senior planning roles.	Institutional Personnel Audit.

Institutional reform is the final pillar, requiring a total re-evaluation of professional norms. This includes the recruitment and promotion of Afro-descendant planners and architects who bring "situated knowledge" to city-making. Furthermore, legal provisions must be established to allow for "judicial review" of planning decisions that violate the spatial rights of ethnic minorities. By embedding racial equity into the DNA of municipal governance, Bogotá can transition from a city of "fragmented citizenship" to a model of pluricultural justice, ensuring the "right to the city" is a lived reality for every citizen.

I. Conclusion
1. *Summary of Key Findings*
This research has systematically demonstrated that the urban morphology of Bogotá is not a neutral byproduct of metropolitan growth, but a curated outcome of racialized spatial governance. The investigation confirms that planning mechanisms—specifically zoning classifications, the socio-economic stratification system (*Estratos*), and infrastructure routing—act as active technologies of exclusion. By relegating Afro-descendant populations to peripheral zones categorized as "informal" or "high-risk," the state institutionalizes a geography of precarity. Concrete spatial data reveals that while Bogotá's wealthy center-north (predominantly white-mestizo) enjoys over 10 m^2 of green space per inhabitant, the racialized southern peripheries often subsist on less than 2 m^2 directly linking planning decisions to disparities in public health and environmental quality.

Structural racism in Bogotá extends beyond physical boundaries, fundamentally shaping access, opportunity, and belonging. The "spatial

tax" levied against Afro-Bogotanos is quantifiable: residents in predominantly Afro-descendant localities like Ciudad Bolívar spend an average of 95 minutes per trip on public transit, compared to just 35 minutes for residents in affluent northern sectors. This disparity in mobility acts as a structural barrier to the formal labor market, where Afro-descendants face unemployment rates approximately 1.5 times higher than the national average. Ultimately, the city's built environment functions as a "geographic filter" that selectively grants urban citizenship based on phenotype and location, reinforcing a hierarchy of belonging that contradicts Colombia's constitutional commitment to pluriculturalism.

2.   *Contributions to Theory and Practice*

This study provides a significant contribution to Critical Race Urbanism in Latin America by challenging the "colorblind" myopia that characterizes much of the region's planning scholarship. By integrating Critical Race Theory (CRT) with spatial analysis, the research moves the discourse beyond a class-only framework, proving that racialized spatial processes persist even when economic variables are controlled. It offers a theoretical bridge between planning analysis and racial justice, arguing that "neutral" technicalities are the primary sites where racial power is codified. This shift in perspective is vital for decolonizing urban theory in the Global South, shifting the focus from "informality" as a deficiency to "peripheralization" as a deliberate state strategy of racial governance.

In practice, the research provides a framework for reparative planning. It translates abstract concepts of social justice into actionable policy interventions, such as the implementation of Racial Impact Assessments (RIA). By documenting the "Black Geographies" of Bogotá, the study supports the legal claims of Afro-descendant organizations seeking territorial recognition within the city. This ensures that the *Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial* (POT) can no longer operate under the guise of neutrality, but must instead be held accountable to the lived realities of the city's most marginalized racial groups.

3.   *Future Research Directions*

To further advance the field of racialized urbanism, future scholarship must move toward comparative studies across Latin American cities. While this research focused on Bogotá, similar dynamics of racialized peripheralization are evident in cities like Salvador de Bahia, Cali, and Lima. A comparative approach would identify whether the "extractive infrastructure" logic found in Bogotá is a universal feature of the neoliberal Latin American metropolis or if

local legal frameworks (such as Brazil's "Statute of the City") provide more robust protections for racialized spatial rights.

Furthermore, there is a pressing need for longitudinal analysis of racialized spatial change. Future studies should track the impact of major urban renewal projects over 10–20 year periods to quantify the rate of racialized displacement (*gentrificación rasial*). Finally, the field must embrace intersectional analyses of race, class, and gender. Afro-descendant women, for example, experience the city through a unique "triple burden" of exclusion—navigating domestic labor demands, transport insecurity, and racialized violence. Mapping these overlapping systems of oppression will be essential for creating a truly inclusive urbanism that recognizes the diverse ways in which bodies occupy and resist the city.

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