

Explorations in Space and Society
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Know-space.
Exploring the flows of know-how

39Lo sQuaderno

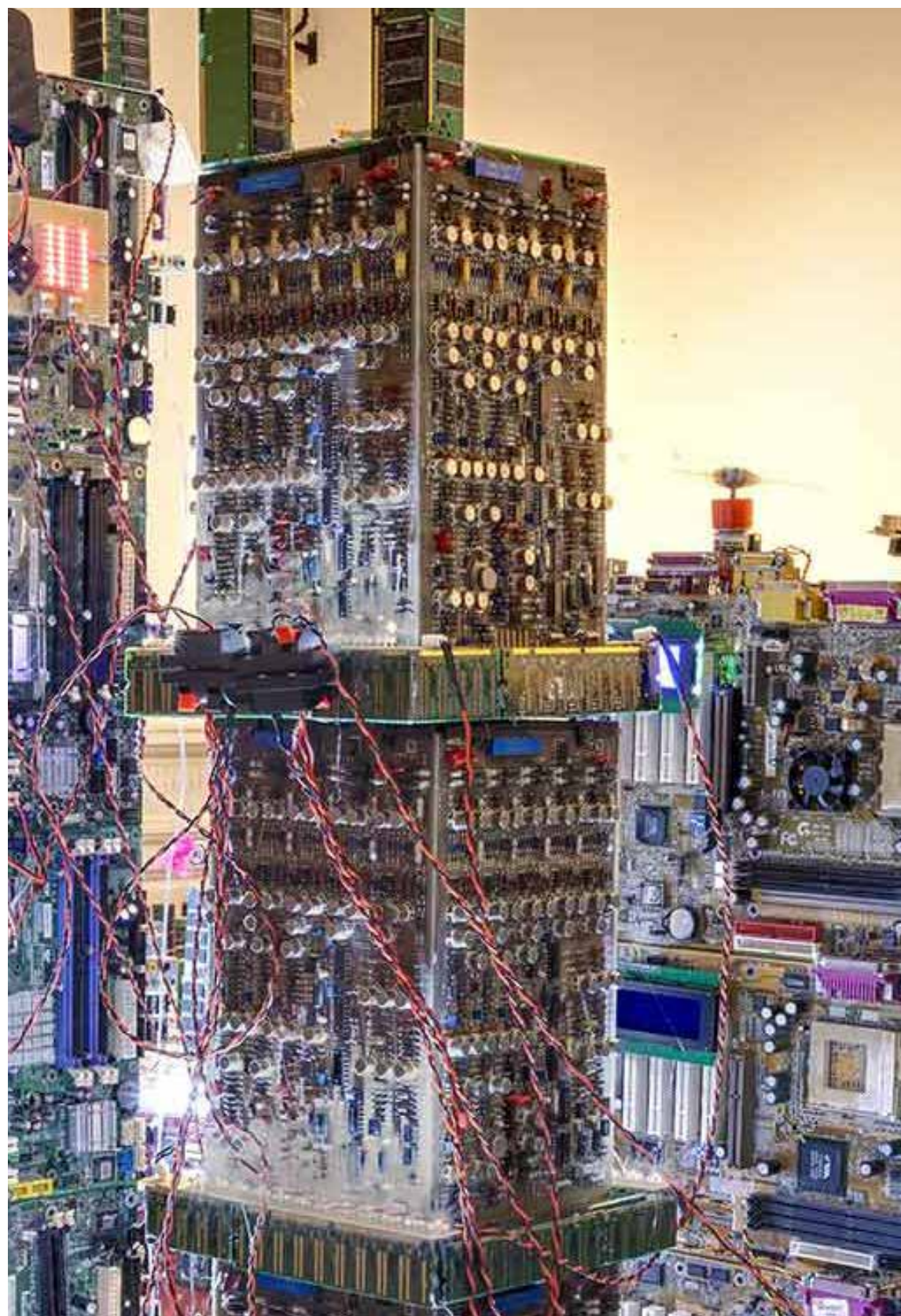


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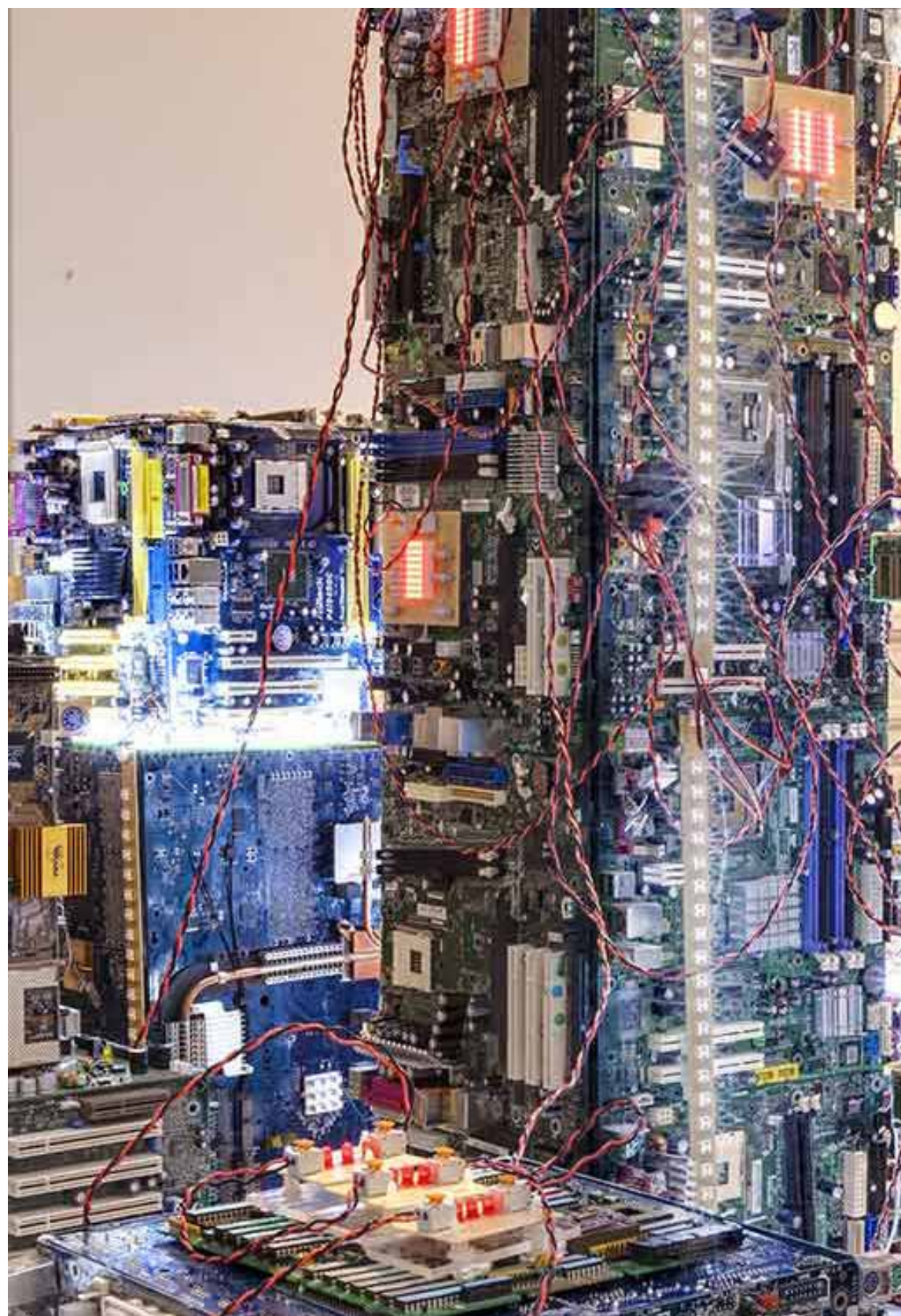
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EDITORIAL

How do we get to know about space? Which practical categories do we routinely deploy to make sense of it? And, relatedly, which theoretical categories are the most suitable to grasp the relationship between knowledge and spatial social experience?

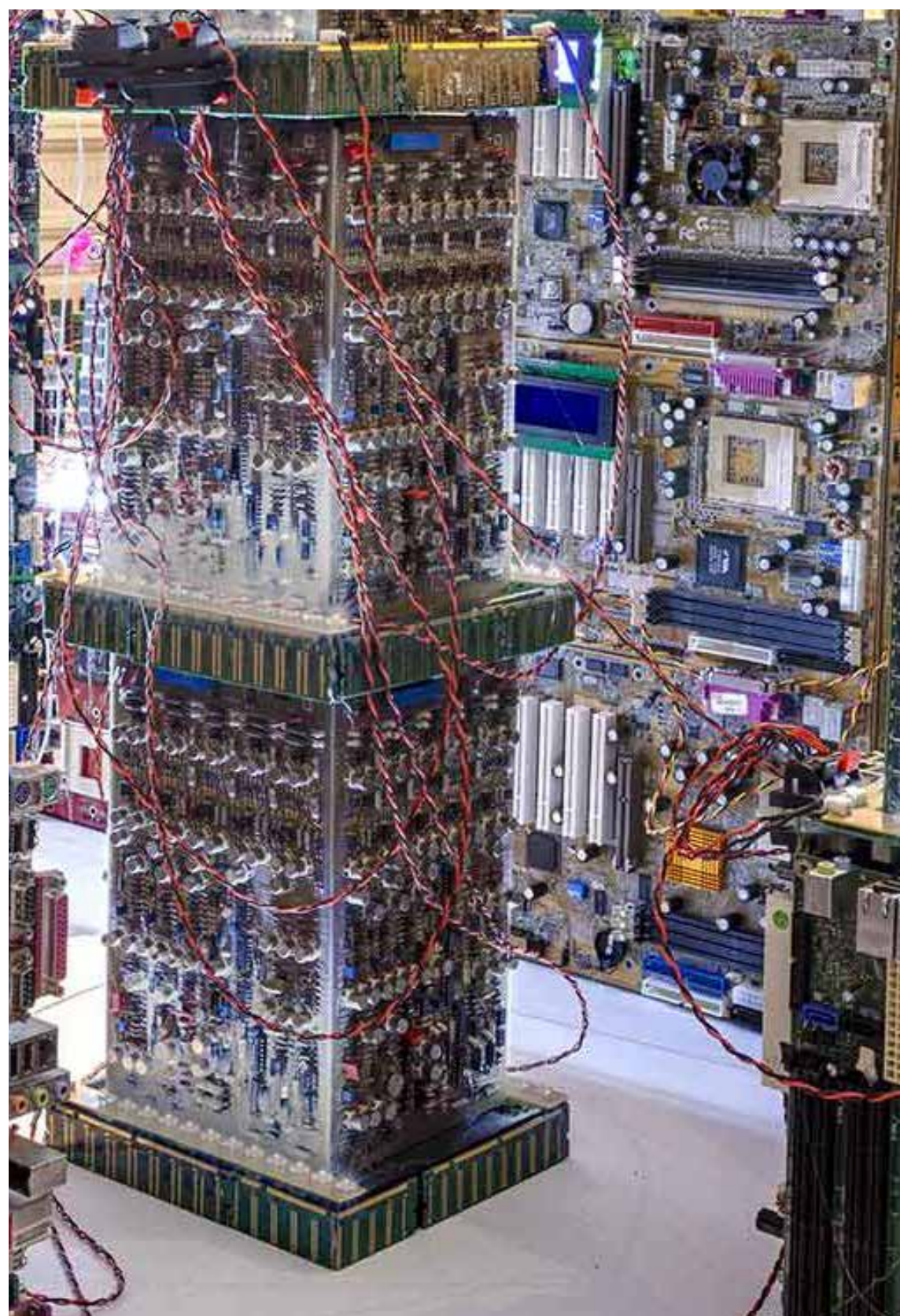
In this issue, we have gathered a number of contributions and reflections that tackle social theories of space, the power geographies of knowledge, and the spatial flows of know-how. More specifically, by 'know-how' we mean any form of structured knowledge or code endowed with immediate practical outcomes in action – roughly, the equivalent of the French term *savoir*. The intersection between know-how and social, inhabited space is a notoriously complex topic. Social space is not isotropic, rather, it is imbued with power relations – just consider, for instance, the centre-periphery relation that clearly entails (political, economic, cultural, technological etc.) asymmetries and hierarchies. But, how exactly do hierarchies and asymmetries come to be ingrained into space and spatial formations? Which forms of knowledge tend to remain local, and which forms, on the contrary, expand at larger scales? At which pace and following which routes do know-how formats spread around?

These are just some of the kick-starting questions we might need to tackle. The first set of articles in this issue discuss them at the theoretical level. In the opening piece, Rob Shields sets a wide genealogical horizon for inquiring into social spaces as a series of *spatialisations*. Spatialisations, Shields argues, are significant insofar as they record 'topologically' the affinities and relations between bodies, meanings and sites. In the following contribution, Isacco Turina identifies three ideal-typical models of knowledge that correspond to given historical situations where members of the same community are more aggregated or dispersed. He proposes to call them, respectively, wisdom, culture and information. Whereas the first form suits scattered social groups and is structured in formulaic expressions, the second fits societies with organised division of labour and is processual in kind; finally, the third emerges when the nexus between spatial distance and access to knowledge is deeply reshaped by communication technologies.

In the next think-piece, Jeff Ferrell elaborates on his notion of *spatial drifting* as a way to capture specific contemporaries ways of dwelling. Despite the fact that in many cases the drifter is a marginalised, even outcast figure, Ferrell argues that such figure is creative of new epistemic opportunities. While they may be 'dangerous possibilities', Ferrell invites us to consider the crucial role of drifting subjects in the general production of spatial knowledge. In a different context, the piece by Alberto Romele and Marta Severo addresses the digital connected city, highlighting how the notion of *trace* may help us understand the constitution of new know-spaces.

A series of case studies with interesting ramifications follow. Peter Volgger reports from his study project of the Mouride diaspora in northern Italy and South Tyrol, exploring the spatial topologies Mouride culture gives shape to. Max Weber once spoke of 'culture bearers', understood as 'human tools' for the transmission of ideas. Indeed, it is not only Mourides, but all sorts of *clerici vagantes*, ideological missionaries, cultural entrepreneurs, and *passeurs* of illicit or discredited theories (culture smugglers) who function as bridges between the territories of space and those of knowledge.

For his part, Panagiotis Bourlessas focuses on an urban interstice in Athens inner city. His aim is to explain the power of strategic and hegemonic representations in shaping and



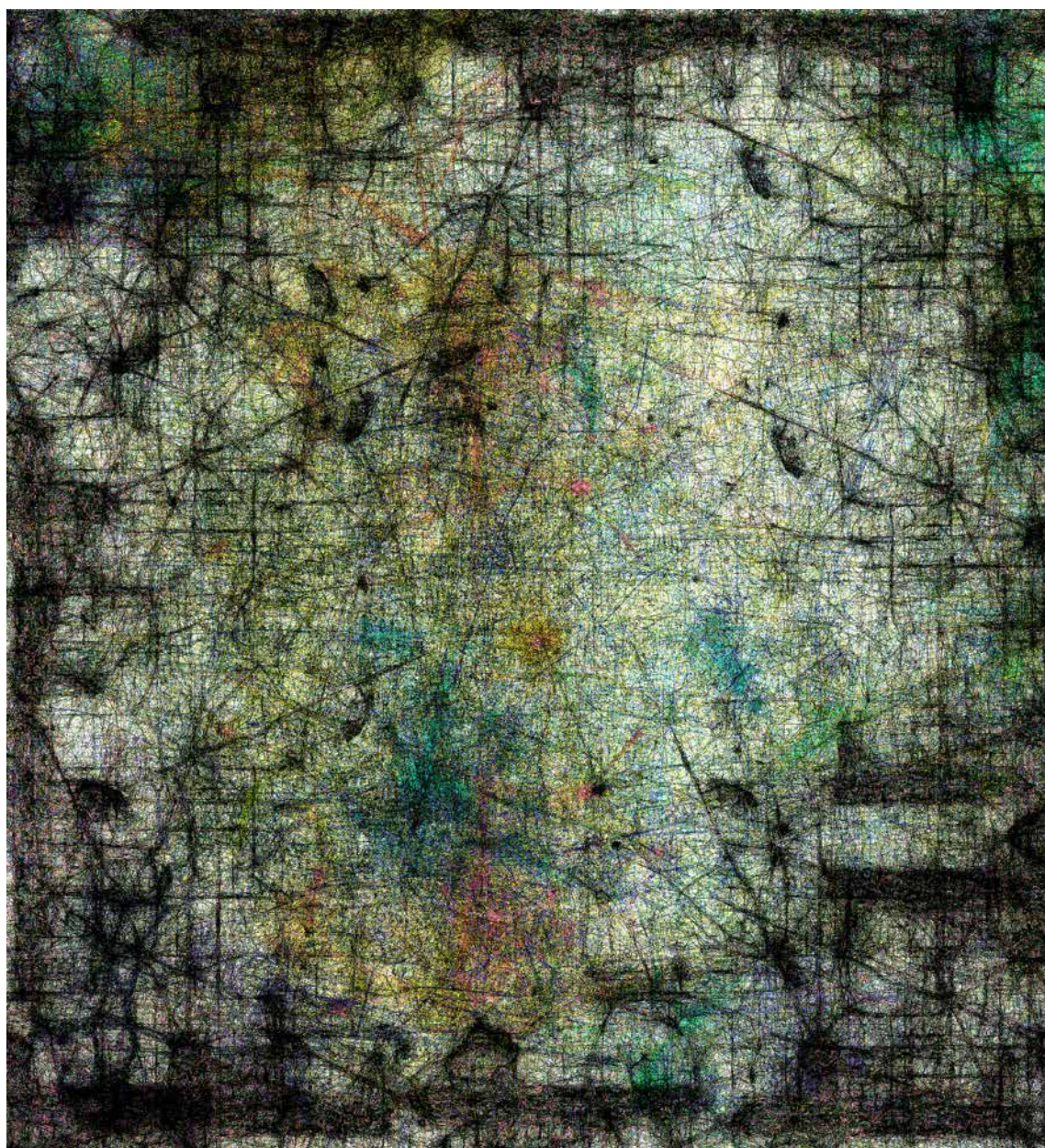
positioning certain locales, conjuring up a 'fate of place'. Subsequently, in an ethnographic observation of police work in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, Sebastian Saborio reveals the importance of spatial modelisation and the knowledge of territories in policing practices, especially in a warfare-oriented contexts. The flow of know-how is also essential in Jannes Van Loon's piece, where a reconstruction of the hip hop graffiti writing culture is attempted, with attention given to the various individual stances taken by writers themselves. The political dimension of know-how becomes more explicit in Pete Chambers's piece on contemporary Australia border policy and how it has become entangled with a whole social imaginary of security measures. Chambers exposes the mismatch and contradiction of Australia's offshore detention practices of immigrants vis-à-vis the welcome programmes for the wealthy (Significant Investor Visas).

The final set of articles deals in various ways with the question of how a spatial science of know-how might be developed. Here, we host a historical piece by Charlie Barnao on the so-called Portici group, a group of Italian scholars active in the 1950s and 1960s who played an important role in the post-war discussion of the so-called Italian 'Southern Question'. Barnao argues that recovering this marginalised scholarly tradition might help today's scholars in facing the current crisis of the social sciences, especially in Italy. Moving across the boundaries of the academia, Lorenzo Tripodi reports on the exercises in urban reconnaissance developed by the ogino:knauss' art collective. While ogino:knauss is arguably one of the most important experimental Italian vj-ing collectives in the last two decades, Tripodi reminds the reader how its activity has been 'too transversal and instinctive to find acknowledgement in the academic context, too convivial and anti-ideological to avoid being suspect to the activist milieu, not enough elusive nor commercial to catch on the art world.' With a relentlessly experimental attitude, these artists have been practicing and developing an intriguing device for urban exploration and theorisation.

In the final piece, Mattias Kärrholm focuses on a kind of special event in the domain of spatial knowledge, which he dubs 'the animistic moment'. Exploring comparatively the literary work of Clarice Lispector and the architectural work of Louis Kahn, Kärrholm seeks to distinguish the three processes of *hybridization*, *singularisation* and *animation*. Whereas hybridization results from category blending, singularisation aims to produce unique, unexchangeable entities. Animation differs from the previous strategies; it consists in the coming alive of an actor-body, following what Kärrholm calls a 'line of actantialisation'. We are particularly happy to publish this conclusive essay because we believe that animation is a crucial notion for upcoming social-spatial theory.

The cities of the guest artist Stanza, with their tension between hi-tech (the city of bytes and chips) and bleakness (the urban maps of burnt youth), flank our exploration, visually portraying the complex multidimension dynamics of spatial knowledge.

I.T. & A.M.B.



Genealogies of Social Space

Rob Shields

Knowing space is of universal social interest and the topic of some of the most historic knowledge projects and texts produced by human cultures. How is space known? How might we take stock of our spatial knowledges across cultures? What are the elements of a genealogy of space? If history and geography have a descriptive bias, a genealogy would go in a different direction, attempting to both avoid describing and 'speaking for' while critically exposing the conditions and formations of timespace discourses (however fragmented and discontinuous).

Yet conceptions such as space and time are intrinsic to the intellectual ordering of our lives and our everyday notions of causality and with it, agency. When we turn to our daily speech, read the headlines of our newspapers, or scan learned journals, we find an unexpected cornucopia of spatial references, elaborate expressions and elegant spatial metaphors which position the term within our own knowledge as well as practice. 'Space' evidently plays an important role in knowledge and in knowing the world. Nearly every philosopher and social thinker has dealt in some way with space or spatiality. Analysis is complicated by the intangibility (virtuality) of physical space. 'Space' is also translated in different ways between languages and between disciplines: engineers conceive of space as a void; physicists, mathematically as a set of dimensions (eg. from 2-dimensions of a surface up to 11-dimensions in particle physics). And, in the late twentieth century, social scientists began to understand space not as a void but as a qualitative context situating different behaviours and contending actions

For the English language the *Oxford Dictionary* presents more than 17 definitions for 'space', which is (like the French *espace*, and the Italian *spazio*) etymologically descended from the Latin *spatium* but whose English-language meaning is often more closely related to the Latin *extensio*. Hindu philosophy defines *Akasa* (*akasha* - space/ether. Sanskrit, from *kas*, 'to shine') as an infinite but indivisible imperceptible substance that has as its sole nature to be a static principle of extension (in contrast to movement, *prana*), or an eternal matrix or context of accommodation (*kham-akasa*, see Khândogya-Upanishad I. 9, 1). Italian and French writers such as Lefebvre (1981), Castells, Bachelard (1981) and Zevi have felt at ease with the use of the full range of meanings, denotative and connotative, of *spazio* and *l'espace*. In the *Dictionnaire Larousse*, 'l'espace' denotes 'place' (*lieu*), 'site' or an area, 'surface', or 'region'. *L'espace* does not mean just 'space'. By contrast, English-language theorists have often limited their appreciation of space to a quantitative definition with reference to distance and to time (and vice versa e.g. graphically on a calendar). 'Space' is clearly too vague a term to grasp spatial social experience, or to reflect on how it comes to be known.

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Shan Hai Jing / Kitab nuzhat

One of the first books, *Shan Hai Jing* (*The Guideways through Mountains and Seas*) (P'o Kuo [Guo Pu], 1985), though misinterpreted as mythology by subsequent generations, was originally a geographical compendium describing the character of regions at the edges of the Zhou Dynasty empire (approx 1046-771BC). Virtually spanning recorded history, including the history of European contact and the history of printed books, commentaries on *Shan Hai Jing* mirror cultural changes in the successive dynasties. Its classification changes in Chinese historiography from bestiary and mythology, to between travelogue and strategic guide,

The multiplication of spaces was deeply disturbing to the commonsense mind of both the European Left and Right. The implied subjectivity and relativism threatened the stability of objective reality, of what could be taken for granted as truth

depending on the extent to which it was found to be useful to the Imperial court as an empirical reference in dealing with peripheries and foreign contacts.

As Herodotus remarked, map-makers both challenged and structured how the Earth

was understood as a flat plane (Herodotus 1987 e.g. IV: 36). For example, Ptolemy's later concepts of latitude and longitude were related in part to an interest in defining *Klimata*, the ecologico-ethnological characteristics of regions (Ptolemy 1969). The most voluminous 12th century knowledge project was the geographical encyclopaedia *Kitab nuzhat al-mushtaq fi ihtiraaq al-afaq* (*The Recreation for Him Who Wishes to Travel Through the Countries*) by Idrisi Muhammad ibn Abd al-Aziz (Al-Idrisi & Sezgin, 1988). The *Kitab nuzhat* built on previous Arab geographies but also involved teams that did fieldwork. Although this Sicilian masterwork was unknown in Rome until the 16th century, its organization of research and its narrative and cartographic representation of knowledge — including a large silver globe (destroyed in 1160) and a circular map were, in the most profound sense, world views which influenced far more than cartographic practice: It inspired Imperial desires, and possibly Columbus. It anticipated the organization of state knowledge-enterprises in later centuries, from the Inquisition to the collecting practices of Napoleonic armies to Royal Commissions.

Extensio / Topology

However empirical geographies have attempted to be, there has been no consistent historical consensus on the nature of space that would establish cartographic method once and for all. Statements of the 'problem of space' by Aristotle, Euclid, Descartes, Leibniz and Newton, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, and Heidegger, along with modern writers such as Lefebvre (1981), have marked out entire epochs in the treatment of space. Enlightenment philosophies of space depended on Euclid's geometry and presumed a three-dimensional *extensio* known through geometry. However, the Aristotelian tradition casts space as a mental categories by which objects are named and classified. And by contrast, Kant cogently argues that space is neither cognitive nor subjective (Kant, 1953: 41-51). Privileging only relations over a geometrical reality involves attributing to space relations which are proper to objects. But if all continuous motions in a three dimensional space are real, not much is saved by denying the reality of space itself. At a minimum, space can be successfully argued to be an intangible substance and the substantial bearer of topological properties whose consequences we can notice in ordinary experience.

Classical approaches emphasizing three dimensional space break down both in everyday usage and metaphor as well as with the mathematical exploration of a second major anomaly in Euclidean geometry: the 'Parallel Postulate' — through one point in a plane it is possible to draw only one straight line parallel to a given straight line in the same plane. This Euclidean law can be violated if the three-planar dimensions of space are warped — such as in the geometries produced by Lobachewsky and Riemann in the first half of the 1800s. The art of Escher demonstrates the paradoxes of these mathematical 'phase spaces' — more pro-

jected topographies of mathematical solution sets than any Euclidean 'lived space'. Physicists and mathematicians envisioned an infinite number of spaces, all in motion with respect to each other. This opened up a relativist plurality of spaces and helped legitimate the possibility that the history of the earth and its discoveries might be construed differently in different sociocultural spaces. Ever since, Cartesian absolute space has become just the topological space that describes the human experience of embodiment. Other mathematical topologies may better describe the social configurations of those bodies in everyday life. Thus we are led to examine alternatives which might more appropriately describe the complexity of global culture than the commonsense, Euclidean *spatialisation*. In this plurality of spaces, it makes sense to talk of *social spaces*, of *spatialisations* which gain meaning as the changing topologies mapping affinities between bodies, meanings and sites (Poincaré, 1952: 50-58; Mach, 1901: 94).

Multiple Social / Spaces

Durkheim audaciously proposed a correspondence between social structure and the society's notion of space laying the ground for structural anthropological studies. He provide the example of the Zuni Indians, concluding that their space was nothing else than, 'the site of the tribe, only indefinitely extended beyond its real limits' (Durkheim and Mauss, 1963: 12). One could venture from reports of Aboriginal conceptions of space as the *Dreamtime*, that landscape can become even more than sedimented traces but an historiography, read through embodied presence, pergrination and pilgrimage. This view of social space is topological. It emphasizes qualitative heterogeneity, varying not only from place to place, region to region (some being perhaps sacred, others profane); but it is not locked within one topology: from the mid-1950s space is argued to be contested within societies. This heterogenous social space must be produced and reproduced as a cultural artefact. Hierarchies and asymmetries come to be ingrained into the world of places, distance and difference as an overarching social spatialisation not only through ritual but synaesthetically in everyday life. It is reflected, resonates with and is reinforced by the performative spacing of the body, the kinaesthetic geographies of gesture, the reach of the glance and repeated tracing of habitual activities.

The multiplication of spaces was deeply disturbing to the commonsense mind of both the European Left and Right. The implied subjectivity and relativism threatened the stability of objective reality, of what could be taken for granted as truth. Space, it was argued, must, 'exist before social groups can be perceived to exhibit in their disposition any spatial relations which may then be applied to the universe; the categories of quantity have to exist in order that an individual mind shall ever recognize one, the many, and the totality of the division of his society' (Needham, 'Preface', in Durkheim, 1963:xxvii). Such opinions are part of an attempt to re-align social science with the natural sciences (thus to re-achieve the lost Kantian orthodoxy of one space: the alignment of 'social space' and 'physical space'). This was crucial to the Nineteenth century achievement of a homogenous spatialization allowing and legitimating the power practices of an expansive European imperialism (Lefebvre 1981).

Piaget's experimental research challenges the Kantian assertion that space and time are *a priori* modes of conception. For Durkheim also,

space is not the vague and indeterminate medium which Kant imagined; if purely and absolutely homogeneous, it would be of no use, and could not be grasped by the mind. Spatial representation consists essentially in a primary coordination of the data of sensuous experience. But this co-ordination would be impossible if the parts of space were qualitatively equivalent ... To dispose things spatially there must be a possibility of placing them differently, of putting some at the right, others at the left, these above, those below, at the north of or at the south of Space could not be what it is if it were not, like time, divided and differentiated ... All these distinctions evidently come from the fact that different sympathetic values have been attributed to various regions ... and that almost necessarily implies that they be of social origin

(Durkheim, 1976:11).

Knowledges of 'space' are part of social and cultural processes. Yet social space is not just a cognitive mapping (cf. Kevin Lynch). It cannot be derived entirely from forms of social solidarity. This would render space entirely cultural and thus epiphenomenal. Space could be discarded as inconsequential. How might one understand conflicts over social space or the production of 'counter-spaces' of resistance? How might one understand the juxtapositions within social space and its nested spaces within spaces in which very different rules apply?

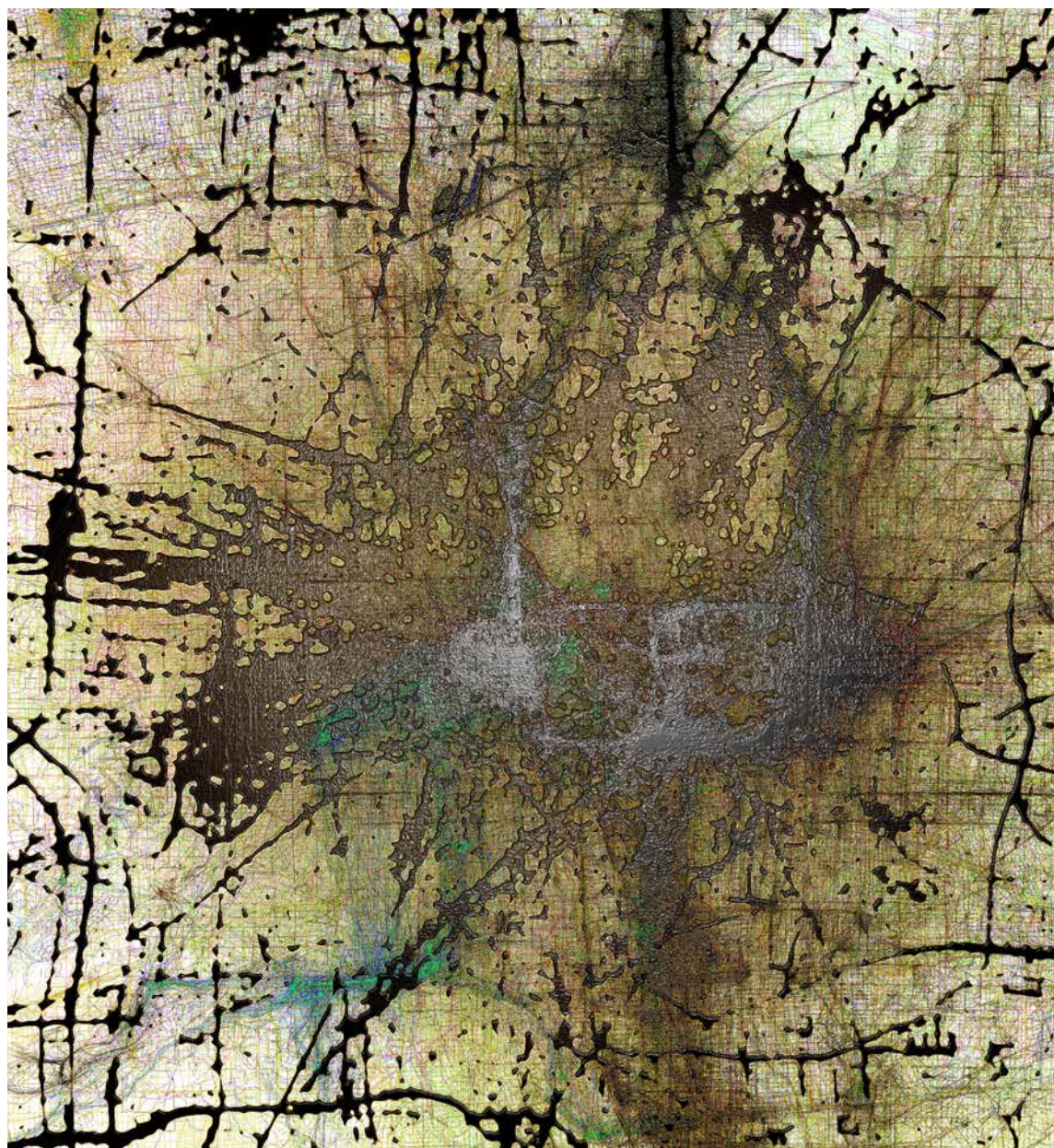
Spatialization / Difference

In the late 1960s, Lefebvre turned Durkheim's hypothesis of countless social spaces back on the West to consider struggles over the organization and meaning of space. What are the real relations masked by the spatial phantasmagoria of a Cartesian absolute, *a priori* and ineffable 'social space'? Is this contradictory and paradoxical structure not a type of cultural 'signature' of a dominant 'modern' technocratic and capitalist 'social spatialization'? This made social space appear to be a homogeneous, smooth order. 'Distance' became its most important feature. Rigorous discussions of the spatialization of this system were marginalized, even though influential writers of the first half of the century had placed a priority on the geographical expansion of capitalism as a 'fix' for system contradictions and inefficiencies. But the importance of non-Euclidean mathematical spaces in science set the stage for late twentieth century re-appreciations of social space.

Making *distance* the basis of the social appreciation of spatialization, is Eurocentric and technocratic. Distance — a word we should be extremely careful about — has been treated as an invariant quantity with a meaning in and of itself regardless of cultural variations in the qualitative meanings associated with distance. In such a spatialization of the world, alternatives are masked (Shields 1991). We need to know space as not just about relations and distance between elements but as a social produced *order of difference* that can be heterogeneous in and of itself. 'Knowing space' is not enough — trigonometric formulae, engineering structures, shaping the land and dwelling on it. We need to know about 'spacing' and the spatializations that are accomplished through everyday activities, representations and rituals.

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Saggezza, Cultura, Informazione

Abbozzo di una teoria dei rapporti fra distribuzione spaziale dei gruppi umani e tipo di conoscenza prodotta

Isacco Turina

Introduzione

Dal punto di vista dei rapporti fra la distribuzione spaziale dei gruppi umani e il tipo di conoscenza che essi producono, il problema fondamentale è quello di rendere disponibile a individui o gruppi che si trovano temporaneamente o permanentemente separati dalla loro comunità di riferimento, la conoscenza di cui hanno bisogno nel momento in cui ne hanno bisogno. In linea generale, la comunità sociale cui un individuo appartiene è anche la sua comunità epistemica, ossia quella che produce la conoscenza che gli occorre. Su questo punto, la teoria durkheimiana della conoscenza sarà la base della nostra riflessione.

Il bisogno di conoscenza può essere legato o all'azione pratica, e dunque a necessità strumentali o di sopravvivenza, oppure allo svago. Ritengo non sia utile né corretto separare le due funzioni. Nella formazione di una persona completa, il gioco trascorre nell'esercizio e l'esercizio trascorre nella presa effettiva di decisioni. Su questo punto torneremo più avanti. In ogni caso, nel nostro argomento la conoscenza sarà intesa come risorsa per l'azione e per lo svago, pratica ed estetica al tempo stesso.

Si pone quindi la questione di delineare il tipo di conoscenza che determinate situazioni di dispersione o di aggregazione sociale producono. I tre modelli che seguono vogliono essere idealtipici; non hanno pretese di esattezza cronologica né descrittiva e non sono esclusivi: i modelli successivi conoscono sopravvivenze dei modelli precedenti, per cui al giorno d'oggi incontriamo esempi sia di informazione, che di cultura, che infine, in forma residuale, di saggezza.

Saggezza

Gruppi umani nomadi o dispersi su un vasto territorio e con contatti irregolari fra loro tendono a creare una conoscenza di tipo sapienziale, o saggezza. La sua caratteristica fondamentale è di rendere disponibile a ogni individuo o gruppo tutta la conoscenza di cui può aver bisogno durante lunghi periodi di isolamento, nei quali si troverà a dover ricorrere al sapere accumulato da altri senza poter contare sullo scambio diretto con loro.

Le civiltà antiche del medio oriente e della Cina offrono gli esempi più noti, ma qualunque cultura contadina, persino nel moderno occidente, tende a generare questo tipo di sapere.

La conoscenza sapienziale è resa disponibile — ossia reperibile — attraverso la memoria, facoltà interiore che le persone, una volta addestrate, portano sempre con sé senza aggravio di bagaglio. Inoltre non richiede istruzione formale ed è quindi pienamente fruibile anche laddove non esistano scuole. La simbiosi di questo tipo di conoscenza con la memoria che ne è il supporto si manifesta nella forma che essa solitamente assume: versi, proverbi, massime, formule o esempi richiamabili rapidamente quando necessario, che si tratti di condurre un

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lavoro, affrontare un vicino o un animale, gestire i propri beni, curarsi, prendere moglie o altro. Altri caratteri distintivi diverranno chiari nel confronto con i modelli successivi.

Cultura

Quella che oggi definiamo cultura è invece il prodotto di aggregati urbani dove il contatto fra le persone e i gruppi che compongono la comunità di riferimento è meno costoso e più frequente che nel caso della dispersione territoriale. La divisione del lavoro porta a un aumento della conoscenza e alla formazione di gruppi specializzati che si incaricano di accrescerla, custodirla e trasmetterla.

Se tutto questo è notorio, è forse più interessante esaminare gli strumenti che in occidente sono stati messi a punto per rendere reperibile questo tipo di conoscenza. Il sapere sviluppato da un'intera città — e più tardi da un intero stato — non è appropriabile da alcun singolo soggetto. La memoria individuale non basta a renderlo disponibile in ogni momento e la stessa scrittura, efficace ai fini della trasmissione, lo è meno nel compito di riprodurre rapidamente i contenuti utili. Di conseguenza questo tipo di conoscenza non si struttura, come quella sapienziale, in formule prefissate da memorizzare, bensì in processi che una persona adeguatamente istruita può ripercorrere interiormente. La dialettica delle scuole ateniesi (a differenza della filosofia presocratica, che presenta caratteri sapienziali) ne è l'esempio maggiore. La poesia, ausilio alla memoria, cede il posto al dialogo, strumento della ragione. La ragione è infatti il mezzo che permette anche al soggetto isolato di rendere reperibile in ogni momento questo sapere, ricreando interiormente un dialogo che permetterà di giungere a una soluzione efficace nel caso volta per volta presente.

La successiva civiltà cristiana affiancherà alla ragione la coscienza, assegnandole la funzione specializzata di elaborare il sapere in materia morale; ma è verosimile che le due nascano insieme. In Socrate e negli autori posteriori la filosofia permette di risolvere problemi in entrambi gli ambiti che oggi chiameremmo della scienza e della morale. È il particolare interesse del cristianesimo per quest'ultima a scapito della conoscenza empirica che l'ha portato a estrapolare la coscienza dalla ragione. Ma di fatto le due funzionano congiuntamente, come la stessa tradizione cattolica, riconoscendosi erede della razionalità greca, ammette.

Nel contesto del tipo di conoscenza che, per comodità ma con grave anacronismo, qui definiamo cultura (più esatto sarebbe forse parlare di *lógos*), la ragione e la coscienza sostituiscono quindi la memoria nel compito di recuperare, nel momento del bisogno, il sapere necessario anche quando il soggetto si trova separato dalla sua comunità di riferimento. Rispetto alla memoria, ragione e coscienza sono più flessibili e permettono di adattare le risposte alle infinite varianti della realtà. In un corpus sapienziale sarebbe difficile individuare il richiamo a queste due facoltà interiori, che spiccano invece in ogni opera frutto di cultura.

Informazione

L'informazione è la forma che ha assunto il sapere nell'epoca in cui la relazione fra distanza fisica e accesso alla conoscenza ha smesso di essere misurabile. Ciò non significa che sia venuta meno, bensì che non è più possibile stabilire una proporzionalità inversa fra le due (maggiore distanza = minore accesso). Occorre notare che l'avvento dell'informazione non è la causa prima di questo processo, ma il suo effetto storico: le principali tecnologie di trasporto e comunicazione a distanza — treno, automobile, aereo; telefono, cinema, radio, televisione — precedono tutte lo sviluppo dell'informatica.

Se però da un lato queste tecnologie hanno virtualmente annullato la distanza come ostacolo all'accesso alla conoscenza, dall'altro hanno innescato un processo che, sul lungo periodo, ha fatto collassare le barriere fra le diverse comunità umane, mettendo in comunicazione saperi disparati prodotti in luoghi distanti del pianeta e dando vita così a un'unica comunità epistemica di riferimento estesa su scala globale. Ciò rende impossibile per un singolo individuo entrare in contatto diretto con una proporzione significativa dell'universo di

coloro che, complessivamente, generano la conoscenza di cui può avere bisogno. La semplice moltiplicazione numerica dei centri da cui scaturiscono frammenti di conoscenza erige una barriera altrettanto formidabile al recupero individuale dei contenuti utili quanto lo era stata in passato la distanza fisica. In mancanza di appositi strumenti, su cui ora ci soffermeremo, il soggetto è sempre separato dalla sua comunità epistemica, persino quando si trova in situazione di compresenza con molti suoi simili.

Nell'ambito dell'informazione, tanto la memoria quanto la ragione o la coscienza sono ampiamente insufficienti allo scopo di rintracciare volta per volta la conoscenza servibile. L'unico strumento che permette di farlo è il dispositivo elettronico esterno alla persona. L'elemento essenziale che caratterizza questo stadio del sapere è infatti la traduzione di ogni conoscenza in informazione, leggibile soltanto da tali strumenti e non dagli esseri umani (i pacchetti di informazione si presentano come quelle palline di carta compresse che esteriormente sembrano uguali ma che poi, gettate in acqua, si dispiegano dando vita a figure fantastiche e multiformi; ma, a differenza di quelle, sono sempre pronti a richiudersi e a riprendere la loro muta uniforme originaria). Nel settore del sapere l'informazione occupa, potremmo dire, il ruolo che secondo Simmel aveva il denaro nel mondo dei beni: ossia quello di equivalente universale che permette di passare da un contenuto a un altro e di scambiarsi tra loro.

Se però si trattasse soltanto di questo, potremmo considerare l'informazione come una tecnologia che si limita a cambiare forma a una sostanza preesistente che nel passaggio non viene modificata in misura rilevante, alla maniera in cui possiamo digitalizzare le nostre foto analogiche con la sensazione che, grosso modo, l'immagine rimanga la stessa. Ma se questa è una descrizione tutto sommato accettabile di quanto avviene alle forme precedenti del sapere nel momento in cui accedono alla nuova arena — l'enciclopedia in rete, la mail come sostituto della lettera, il video digitale, il libro elettronico — l'affermarsi dell'informazione come forma dominante della produzione e utilizzo della conoscenza porta con sé mutamenti più radicali.

Uno dei più importanti è la fine dell'opera come formato preferenziale di raccolta e organizzazione del sapere. L'opera, veicolo principale del sapere culturale, presuppone infatti un supporto specifico e ben delineato, insomma una forma esterna relativamente rigida e non facilmente modificabile. È il caso tanto del libro quanto del quadro, della lezione, della scultura, della foto, del manufatto di qualsiasi genere, dell'intervista, del brano musicale, dello spettacolo, della pellicola cinematografica ecc. I supporti che leggono l'informazione, almeno quelli più popolari, sono invece poco specifici e permettono di produrre, riprodurre e modificare diverse delle forme elencate senza dover cambiare supporto, grazie alla malleabilità dell'informazione come equivalente universale. Le differenze legate al canale, alla durata, alla strumentazione, alla provenienza, al contesto e ai sensi (udito, vista, tatto) non sono annullate, tuttavia trovano ora una piattaforma comune che prelude a una possibile perdita di rilievo delle loro differenze specifiche. L'accesso continuo — il cosiddetto flusso informativo — contribuisce a sfumare le barriere fra un'opera e l'altra, mentre la produzione collettiva di contenuti, di cui quasi ogni sito è frutto, diminuisce l'importanza del singolo autore, la cui figura era legata alla riconoscibilità dei confini dell'opera. La crisi del diritto d'autore sembra così andare di pari passo con la crisi dell'autore stesso.

Un altro effetto di un certo peso è la conflazione fra parola e cosa. Data la facilità e rapidità di produzione del sapere, la creazione di un discorso attorno a un determinato evento avviene ormai contestualmente all'evento stesso. Nella sfera dell'informazione, persino ciò che è sempre stato considerato irripetibile — l'evento, l'esperienza — nasce geminato, con la sua immediata codifica in informazione (didascalia, commento, immagine) come gemella siamese da esso inseparabile. La speranza dell'oblio viene così sottratta a infiniti attimi che in precedenza vi sarebbero scivolati insensibilmente. Addirittura, com'è noto, è sempre più frequente il caso di eventi ed esperienze pianificati appositamente in vista della loro

traduzione in informazione, per i quali quindi la parola è stimolo alla cosa. La produzione di sapere diviene così un movente a pieno titolo dell'azione anche in ambiti di attività, per esempio legati alla vita quotidiana, che in precedenza non avrebbero dato come esito atteso la creazione e soprattutto la diffusione di conoscenza.

Conclusioni

Se a questo punto seguiamo il metodo di Marx (l'anatomia dell'uomo come base per

ricostruire l'anatomia della scimmia) anziché quello opposto di Durkheim (le forme elementari come paradigma per comprendere le evoluzioni seguenti), possiamo, a partire dallo stadio attuale del sapere, illuminare retrospettivamente alcuni aspetti delle forme

Si pone quindi la questione di delineare il tipo di conoscenza che determinate situazioni di dispersione o di aggregazione sociale producono

precedenti.

In primo luogo perde vigore la distinzione fra usi strumentali e usi estetici della conoscenza. Al giorno d'oggi un membro competente della società dell'informazione ha bisogno di ricorrere di frequente al sapere per scopi perlopiù ibridi e difficilmente identificabili come puro svago o pura necessità. L'utilizzo dei sistemi di geolocalizzazione durante un'escursione può esserne un esempio. Ma anche rimanere in contatto con parenti lontani serve alla coesione familiare in modi che possono essere tanto affettivi quanto di scambio di prestazioni. Considerazioni simili valgono in ambito professionale: ottenere buone recensioni in rete può risultare vitale per un esercizio commerciale; un uso esperto delle risorse elettroniche può garantire risparmi nelle transazioni; l'ausilio di siti specializzati può coadiuvare nell'apprendimento di una lingua straniera ecc. Una separazione netta fra le due funzioni, ludica e pratica, è caratteristica del sapere come cultura. L'informazione riscopre invece, mi sembra, quella fusione delle due dimensioni che si riscontra già nella conoscenza sapienziale, dove un apologo o una filastrocca possono istruire e svagare al tempo stesso.

Il legame fra memoria e sapere e fra ragione e sapere si rivela invece, alla luce della situazione odierna, storicamente determinato e non essenziale all'acquisizione di conoscenza da parte di individui temporaneamente o permanentemente separati dal resto della loro comunità di riferimento. I dispositivi elettronici esonerano dall'esercizio assiduo della memoria interiore, mentre il declino della scrittura e della dialettica come momenti privilegiati di elaborazione del sapere — che oggi si presenta come commistione di orale, iconico, scritto, video, audio, interattivo in forme cangianti e raramente definitive — può ridurre il valore aggiunto tanto della ragione, solitaria o dialogante, quanto della coscienza come procedimenti per giungere a soluzioni pratiche efficaci.

È bene sottolineare di nuovo che, in questa analisi, la condizione di dispersione o aggregazione, con la conseguente divisione del lavoro, è la variabile indipendente che spiega il tipo di conoscenza prodotta. Per prendere un esempio peculiare, il monachesimo eremitico del deserto mediorientale, composto da individui isolati o legati fra loro solo da una debole rete di contatti, ha prodotto, nei primi secoli del cristianesimo, una forma di sapere sapienziale condensato in sentenze e massime. Pochi secoli dopo i monasteri occidentali, organizzazioni complesse e collegate per vari canali al resto della società, hanno invece dato vita a prodotti tipicamente culturali (dissertazioni, trattati, tecniche avanzate come miniatura e erboristeria). Quali opere saprà produrre in futuro il monachesimo connesso alla rete dell'informazione rimane, per il momento, materia di pura speculazione.

Abbiamo fin qui trascurato il fondamentale legame tra forme di conoscenza e potere. A una prima occhiata sembrerebbe che la saggezza porti ad attribuire un prestigio particolare agli anziani, mentre la cultura assegnerebbe un ruolo preminente agli specialisti del lavoro

intellettuale e, in epoca moderna, all'apparato statale come coordinamento istituzionale delle attività culturali. Nell'era dell'informazione emergono nuovi attori, i centri e le aziende dotati di tecnologie avanzate di controllo della conoscenza dalle quali ricavano un crescente potere commerciale e politico. Gli stati, impegnati a lottare per mantenere la pregressa posizione di dominio, saranno probabilmente costretti a negoziare con questi nuovi attori. Ma un esame di tale dimensione ci porterebbe troppo lontano dall'argomento di queste prime, parziali riflessioni.



Drifting through Space An Epistemology

Jeff Ferrell

Almost a century ago, the American sociologist Robert Park (1928: 882, 887-8) published an essay on migration and marginality. In it, Park argued that:

Migration as a social phenomenon . . . may be envisaged in its subjective aspects as manifested in the changed type of personality which it produces . . . Energies that were formerly controlled by custom and tradition are released. The individual is free for new adventures, but he [sic] is more or less without direction and control . . . The emancipated individual invariably becomes in a certain sense and to a certain degree a cosmopolitan. He [sic] learns to look upon the world in which he was born and bred with something of the detachment of the stranger.

In making this argument Park drew on the German sociologist Georg Simmel, and his 1908 essay 'The Stranger.' In this essay Simmel (1908: 143, 145-6) described the sort of person who relocates to a new community but never fully becomes part of it — the 'potential wanderer' who 'has not quite got over the freedom of coming and going.' The stranger's latent mobility, Simmel argued, creates a 'synthesis of nearness and remoteness' within the new community, and produces for the stranger a subversive sort of perceptual freedom; with the stranger's actions 'not confined by custom, piety or precedent,' the stranger is able to assess the new situation in a more general manner. Together, Park and Simmel were sketching a radical epistemology of spatial and cultural drift, and one that is radically sociological as well — a comparative epistemology by which the drifter, on the move between social and spatial settings, comes to see the construction of space and society, and to see past it as well. For these early social theorists, spatial dislocation and cultural disruption may have spawned desperation, but they also produced alternative ways of understanding the world, and even a kind of free-floating liberation through which new worlds could be imagined and undertaken.

A century later, our contemporary world certainly affords the opportunity to consider the insights that Park and Simmel offer. Ongoing civil and transnational warfare spawns swelling refugee populations who remain on the move between one location and the next, or consigned to the 'lowly nowherevilles of liquid modernity' (Bauman, 2002). Repressive governmental regimes regularly force the expulsion of dissidents and minority groups. Within China, across Europe, and around the globe, economic migrants wander in search of work, or are simply moved *en masse* from one work locale to another as economic demand changes (Saunders, 2010). The new consumer-driven economies of global cities disrupt traditional neighborhoods, spawn a precarious work force of part-timers and freelancers, and engender the policing of consumerist enclaves via the dismantling of homeless encampments and dispersing of undesirables (Ferrell, 2012). Moving from town to town or country to country, sleeping in parks or temporary shelters, haunting alleyways and train stations, those cut loose from social stability find little in the way of spatial or normative certainty. The tragedies

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of contemporary life flow beyond the borders that might contain them.

For the contemporary drifter the experience of alienation from past associations or stable community – or, with Simmel, alienation even from those communities of which the drifter is currently a part – is echoed and amplified in the ongoing experience of spatial alienation. The drifter inhabits space temporarily and provisionally, passing through it, in it but not of it, distanced from it by unreadable cultural codes and enforced anonymity. The drifter's physical presence hides a cultural and legal absence, and portends eventual physical absence as well.

Drifters offer up many dangerous possibilities to those who would prefer that the present social order remain unexamined and its inequities unexposed

Social space is cultural space, encoded with meaning and memory, and to flee from Tunisia to southern Italy, to cross from rural Mexico to a North American metropolis, to wander one country or the next chasing safety or employment, is to lose oneself

in ways that are at the same time spatial and normative.

The drifter's loss of spatial and social familiarity, though, creates at the same time significant epistemic opportunities; situated both inside and outside the social order, the perceptual orientation of the stranger, the migrant, and the drifter produces what Simmel (1908: 146) called 'many dangerous possibilities.' As he and Park were beginning to see, transitory outsiders inhabit a world of potent cultural marginality and comparative exteriority, seeing in their present circumstances not an ideal or innately superior social order, but only one situation among many. They in this way occupy a position fraught with both pain and potential; able to contextualize and compare what others take for granted, unable to feel fully at home, drifters do indeed offer up many dangerous possibilities to those who would prefer that the present social order remain unexamined and its inequities unexposed.

Cultural geographers and literary scholars have also noted such possibilities in their invocation of the *flâneur* (Baudelaire, 1964; Keith, 1997). A strolling urban explorer, a dawdling urban drifter who encounters the city as a series of unplanned episodes, the *flâneur* embodies a subversive model of urban citizenship that emerges from ongoing, uncertain movement within the spaces of the city. In Baudelaire's (1964: 9) classic conceptualization, this fluidity of movement produces also a fluidity of knowledge, perception, and identity:

For the perfect *flâneur*, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world. . . .

Adrift in the spaces of the city, lost amidst its swirl of people and situations, the *flâneur's* engagement is based not on settled boundaries or official knowledge, but on ephemeral urban encounters and a comparative understanding of the city's spaces. In Keith's (1997: 145) estimation, this form of engagement and understanding carries the potential for undermining the accepted order of urban life – since, 'spatially, the order of things is never more clearly revealed than through disruption, the striking juxtapositions of the street walk. . . .' Or as DeCerteau (1984: 101) puts it, 'the long poem of walking manipulates spatial organizations, no matter how panoptic they may be. It creates shadows and ambiguities within them.'

Raising the political stakes, Situationists and psychogeographers likewise emphasize the subversive politics and transformational potential of the *dérive*. A rudderless drift through urban space, a 'rapid passage through varied ambiances' in order 'to study a terrain or to emotionally disorient oneself', the *dérive* mixes abandonment of the 'usual motives for movement and action' with a reorientation toward possibility (Debord, 1958). For the Situationists, that possibility was no less than a revolution of everyday life (Vaneigem, 2001) – an

effort to undermine taken-for-granted exercises of power while simultaneously fomenting anarchic situations, with the effect of reinventing the world as a landscape of uncertainty and surprise. Developing this approach a half century ago, the Situationists intended to disrupt societies designed for consumerism and passivity, and to dismantle the spatial arrangements in which such consumerism flourished and was enforced. By this logic, the *dérive* — a process of getting lost while not looking to be found, of making one's way sans map or manufactured meaning — remains a precise counterpoint to the risk-managed, consumerist cities of today, the fever dream of those who find in abandonment and disorder an experiential politics of liberation.

Suggesting something of this experiential politics, Raoul Vaneigem (2001: 195) argued that the dynamics of the *dérive* are such that 'in losing myself I find myself; forgetting that I exist, I realize myself.' Here we glimpse not just the intentional Situationist politics of the *dérive*, but once again the latent politics of Park's migrants and Simmel's strangers — the sense that for drifters of all sorts, the move away from structural and spatial certainty produces both disorientation and new possibilities for personal transformation and spatial recalibration. Many of these possibilities are interstitial; as Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 380) say, 'the life of the nomad is in the intermezzo.' For drifters, life is indeed mostly lived in between — between temporary jobs, between relationships, on the move between one place and another. Even the enforced periods of idleness and waiting that so often afflict migrants, refugees, and other drifters can be seen as interstitial moments, as time lost between time, a suspension of aftermath and anticipation. Likewise, drifters by necessity haunt the lost ecologies of the spatial order, wandering alleys, waiting under bridges, squatting abandoned buildings, and otherwise standing in the shadows of the everyday. Sedentary citizens occupy space and time; drifters move through them, finding and widening their cracks and crevices. In this way they craft an interstitial epistemology, unmapping the gridded certainty of social and spatial structures, and creating emergent alternatives. After all, as Brighenti (2013: xviii, emphasis in original) says, 'interstices *cannot be known in advance*: the interstice is not simply a physical space, but very much a phenomenon "on the ground," a "happening," a "combination" or an "encounter."'

Some of these combinations have emerged as collective endeavors designed to explore drift's progressive political potential. The anarchic bicycling movement Critical Mass now 'dis-organizes' collective rides in cities around the world; mapless and emergent, these rides are meant to drift through urban space as on-the-fly gatherings that both disrupt the gridded certainty of the city's automotive infrastructure and demonstrate the desirability of unnoticed alternatives to it. Across Europe, a loosely federated precarity movement has likewise undertaken to both confront the conditions of spatial and occupational dislocation in the contemporary world, and to carve from these conditions new cultural and political possibilities. Groups like the feminist collective Precarias a la Deriva emphasize not only commonalities among those forced adrift by various economic and political circumstances, but argue also that the precarious uncertainty of contemporary life might in fact offer up new forms of collective action and intervention — such as Precarias a la Deriva's own *dérive* through the spaces of feminized part-time work (Ferrell, 2012; Shukaitis 2009).

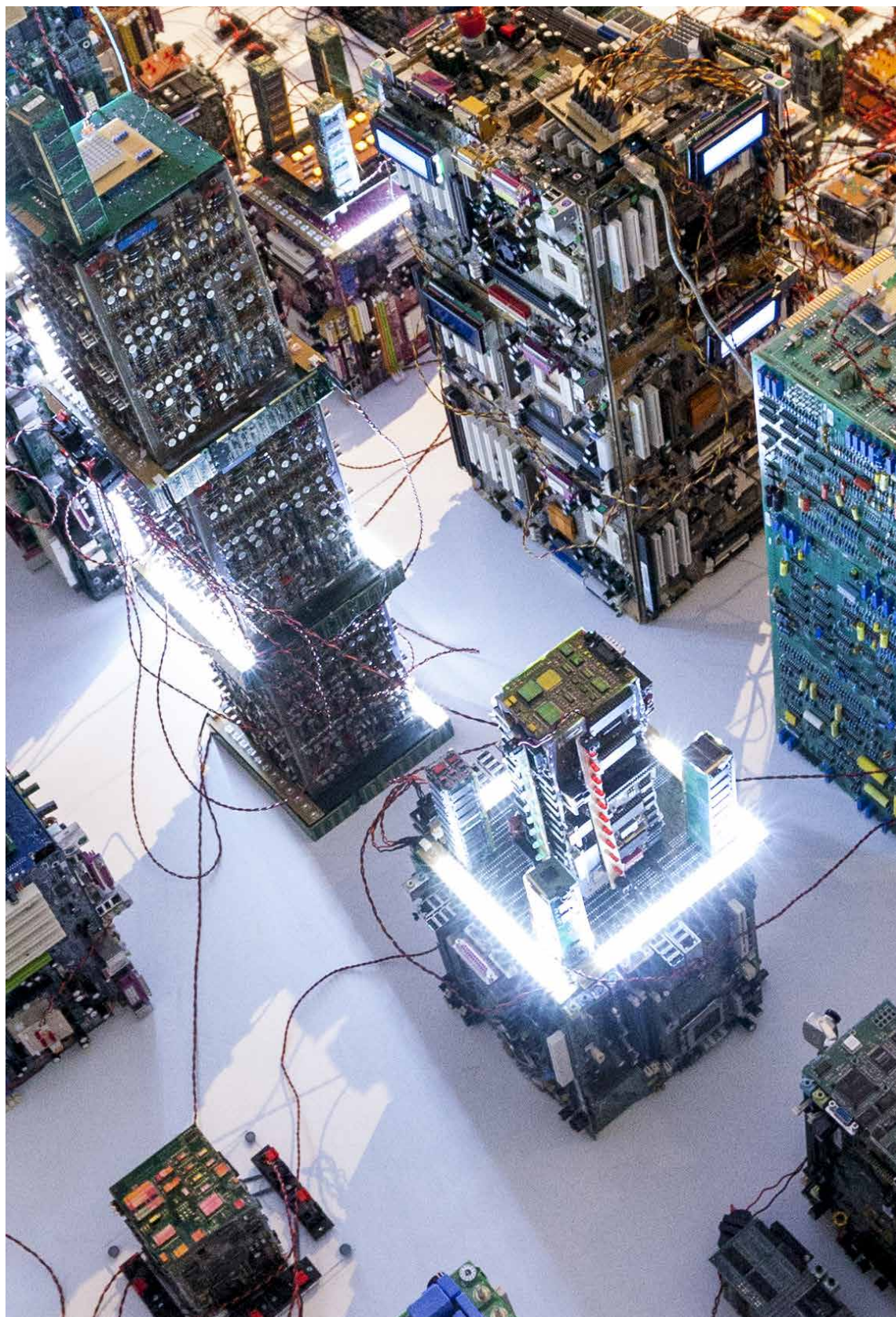
The homeless wanderer's serial exclusion from city spaces, the refugee's relocation from one camp to another, the Critical Mass ride's fluid disruptions — all are unique to their circumstances, yet all embody a serial sense of drifting dislocation, and with it a sensibility distanced from the stasis of social order. This hard-earned re-imagination of self and society holds the potential for pain and punishment, but also for a progressive critique of existing arrangements. A moveable famine of dislocation and despair, an ongoing experience of having nowhere to go, drift also spreads a moveable feast of social and spatial possibility, and an epistemic hope of anywhere but here. Shukaitis (2009: 166-8) has recalled that the phrase *precario bello* — beautiful precarity — was once used by progressive Italian groups to denote

radical withdrawal from the enforced routinizations of Fordist industrial production. As millions today are dislocated by post-industrial economies and by the spiraling harms of global injustice, perhaps a *deriva bella* will blossom amidst the subversive epistemology of drift.



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Digital traces for a new know-space of the city

Some theoretical considerations

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Marta Severo

Introduction

Two recent phenomena have deeply affected the know-space of the city: the failures of traditional data and the diffusion of digital traces. Indeed, urban decision-makers have lately revealed several discrepancies in relation to traditional data used in public policy, caused for example by excessively long publication delays, the insufficient coverage of topics that would otherwise be of interest for social cohesion, and the top-down process of data creation. To many of them, the exponential deluge of information available on the Internet represents a potential answer to such dissatisfaction. This information can be treated as a set of digital traces about the urban action (Benkler, 2007). Internet data (especially data from social media), considered as digital traces of social life, seem to provide interesting alternatives to the failures of traditional data, namely shorter publication time spans that are more adequate for public action, the coverage of new topics of interest, and bottom-up approaches to information.

In order to handle these data, a new group of methods called “digital methods” has been developed (Rogers, 2013). These methods have aroused great enthusiasm in the field of urban studies and numerous empirical analyses have been carried out. Yet, more recently, supporters of these methods have taken more prudent positions (Lazer et al., 2014) and have observed several theoretical and methodological issues related to them (Marres and Weltevrede, 2013). This paper is an opportunity to reflect on the use of digital traces for studying urban spaces, and on the theoretical attitude that have to be assumed in order to employ these data and methods in the field of urban studies.

Digital Hermeneutics

Post-phenomenology is a current in philosophy of technology dealing with the mediating role of technological artifacts in the relation between human beings and the world. According to Don Ihde (1990), there are four kinds of technologically mediated I-world relations: a) embodied relations, whose specificity lies in the transparency of the technological artifact – e.g. glasses; b) hermeneutic relations, that give a representation of the world that must be interpreted – e.g. thermometers and maps; c) alterity relations, in which the relation with the world is temporarily suspended, and the technology itself assumes the role of interlocutor/competitor – e.g. videogames; d) background relations, when a technology creates the conditions of our own relation with the world – e.g. heating and lighting systems.

Now, our first hypothesis is that digital traces, together with the methods that make their collection and analysis possible, establish hermeneutic relations between the researcher and his/her research object. The term “hermeneutic” refers both to the first order technique and the second order theory of interpretation and understanding of textual and non-textual

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expressions. This means that digital traces establish hermeneutic relations between the researcher and the social reality he/she aims to investigate, and that hermeneutics might be a specific approach to the way researchers generally approach social reality through digital traces.

In hermeneutic relations, the world – or one of its aspects – is the ultimate concern, yet the attention is firstly oriented toward its representations. For instance, when we read the external temperature on a thermometer, we certainly want to have a knowledge of the world,

Our intention is to suggest a different way of looking at the available data on the Internet and notably at the digital traces that can give new insights on urban action

but we do not have to open the window for knowing if it is cold or not. Similarly, reading a map, we presumably have the intention to go beyond the map itself, but we do not always have the opportunity to visit that place – and, in any case, our relation with the

world as readers of the map comes *a posteriori*.

Our second hypothesis is that digital traces, along with their methods, are hermeneutic technologies of a specific kind, because they are believed to abolish, for the first time in the history of social research, the distance between the world and its representations, between the map and the territory. To put it simply, there has been for long time a widespread opinion in the field of social computing and digital humanities according to which digital traces have, because of their high dissemination, and their often involuntary nature, a strong resemblance with the reality they are considered sign of. As Marres and Gerlitz (2015: 7) have recently said, “[s]cholars within a variety of backgrounds in STS, computational analysis, and political sociology have directed attention at a particular convergence between social methods and digital methods [...]”. For this reason, the two authors introduced the notion of “interface methods”, i.e. a work both on the similarities and the differences between digital methods and social research. Similarly, we suggest that a hermeneutics of digital traces consists into recognizing both the similarities and the differences between the world and its digital representations.

After all, this means to give due consideration at the concept of trace, as it has been theorized in humanities – especially in philosophy – during the second half of the twentieth century. In social computing and digital humanities, digital traces have to do with the presence, in the sense that they are collected and analyzed in order to fill the gap, *reduce* the distance, between the researcher’s intentions and the researched object. In philosophy, by contrast, the notion of trace is related with the “absence of presence” – this is the definition of trace given by Jacques Derrida. In other words, the concept aims to *safeguard* a certain distance, a gap, between a fact and its representations. It is precisely in this sense that we refer to digital hermeneutics as a discipline aiming at giving back to digital traces the depth that is proper to all traces.

Digital cities

Social media offer today the possibility to declare our geographical position, that is to say to connect our actions into the digital space to a specific point into the geographical space, through the voluntary or involuntary attribution (automatically generated by the platform) of geographical coordinates.

Scholars have used this specific kind of digital traces – which seem to entertain a privileged relation with the reality they represent – with different scopes: for studying the social distances (Scellato et al., 2010), in order to approach communities’ structures (Wang et al., 2012), for analyzing the development of specific local businesses and other aspects related to the social and economic dynamics of a place. Because of the great availability of digital

traces, urban areas are the preferred object of investigation — Zheng et al. (2011) coined the term “urban computing”. And yet, researchers have rarely considered the limits and the risks related to this type of representations.

According to us, one must consider two layers of complexity related to geotagged data. First of all, scholars must take into account the issue of the intentions of the user — the “intention of the author” is one of the most debated topics in hermeneutics. There is a difference between what a user declares, and what a user really does. The check-in of Facebook, for instance, gives a user the possibility to locate his/her actions in places where he/she is not. This aspect is all the more relevant considering that people are increasingly aware of the importance and the means for giving a positive presentation of self on social media. Moreover, there is a difference between the users’ intentions and the outputs of the platform — which often support specific (commercial) interests. In the case of the Facebook’s check-in, the location is most of the time approximate, at least when it does not concern a popular spot within a city or a specific shop, café, mall, retailer, etc.

Secondly, we argue that scholars should put more attention to the gap between the social reality and its representations through the analysis of digital traces. As an example, let’s consider the several maps of geotagged data collected on Twitter. The success of Twitter in this kind of analyses is due to several factors: tweets are public; they are easy to extract and to treat; their subject is identifiable through the hashtags; and geolocation is generally reliable. This method has found particular success in the study of natural disasters (Murthy, 2013). Twitter analyses during a tsunami or an earthquake play a crucial role for the media coverage of these events and the organization of reliefs. Several researchers have tried to translate this method to the analysis of ordinary contexts and, among others, to the study of the city (Hetch et Stephens, 2014). An interesting example is the study of Wakamiya et al. (2011) that identify city patterns on the basis of location-based Twitter activity. By measuring the amount of tweets sent in different times of the day within the same city, they construct a typology of urban areas (dormitory town, working city, night city, multifunctional city).

It is interesting to note that this technique defines the image of the city just on the basis of certain crowd activities, so it is necessarily reductive. Indeed, as we consider exceptional situations such as disasters or other normal situations such as daily life of the city, Twitter allows to identify and interpret only the peaks of activity and not the empties that are also important part of a phenomenon. So if the objective of Wakamiya et al. (2011) is to demonstrate the power of digital methods for urban studies, their study rather highlights the weaknesses of these techniques. In the words of Walter Benjamin, the city cannot be seen only as an object of macrosociological investigations. It is also a place in which stories of oppression and suffering take place, and that is why Benjamin saw in the outsiders, whose the stroller is a kind of prototype, the main actors of an “urban profane redemption”.

Conclusion

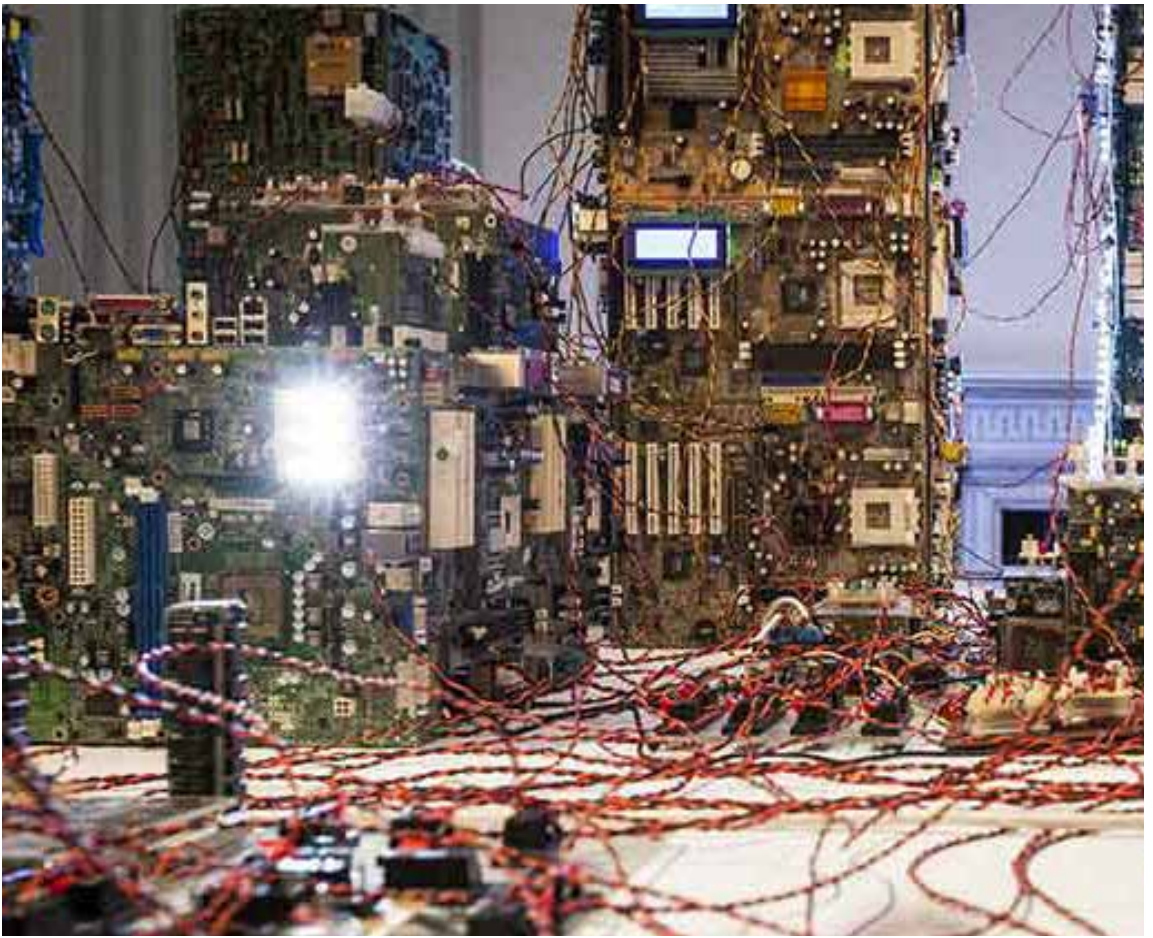
This paper aimed at contributing to a theoretical reflection on the use of digital data in urban studies and public policy. We did not expect here to create a general theory, but we simply proposed some preliminary notes based on usage experiences. In conclusion, we would like to introduce the category of “soft data” (Severo and Romele, 2015). In general terms, soft data are information that are freely available on the Internet, are not controlled by a public administration but are subject to the property rights of public or private actors. These data are public (i.e. visible) but not necessarily open, they can have different volumes and structures depending on the provider or the topic, and they are generally social, however not only.

Through this category, we do not want to theorize the existence of a new type of data, alternative to existing categories such as big data or open data. Our intention is rather to suggest a different way of looking at the available data on the Internet and notably at the digital traces that can give new insights on urban action. We do not want to deny the importance

of the digital traces in the fields of social and urban studies. Rather the contrary, we want to suggest a more conscious use of them, i.e. a use that is less dependent on the models of the so-called “hard sciences”, and more related to the sort of instability of traces that we have described. In this sense, the category of soft data indicates more than an object. It refers to a collection of methods, and, first and foremost, to a specific intellectual attitude toward the potentialities and the limits of the use of digital traces in social and urban studies.

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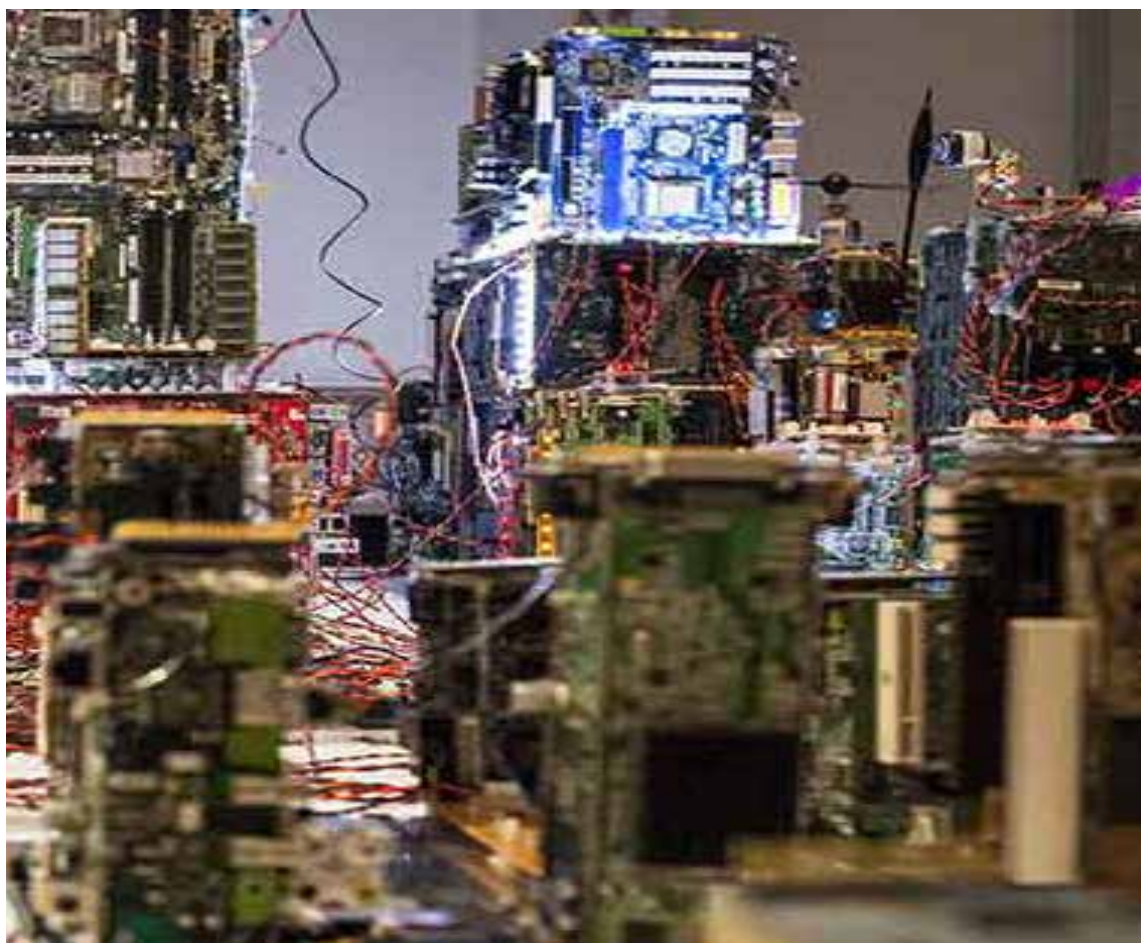


Stanza plays with two remarkably different urban registers.

On the one hand, Stanza presents us with high-tech cities. In these sculptures-installations, the prototypical urban shapes of modernity – such as the high-rise and the skyscraper – are re-constructed and re-constituted with electronic materials, including PCs' motherboards, wires, touch screens, sensors, captors, recorders etc. It is a real-time city that functions through constant self-monitoring of its own states and self-morphing of its own images.

On the other hand, however, such technological dream world is flanked by, or juxtaposed to, a series of 'bleak futures'. The latter come as digital prints of scathed, half-burnt city images. In this scenery, the human presence remains doubtful, and the 'agency of youth' may, in fact, be reduced to individuals 'bowing' to the digital systems of the Central City. Technology, it seems, may not be unlike an unfathomable 'valley of the shadow of death'.

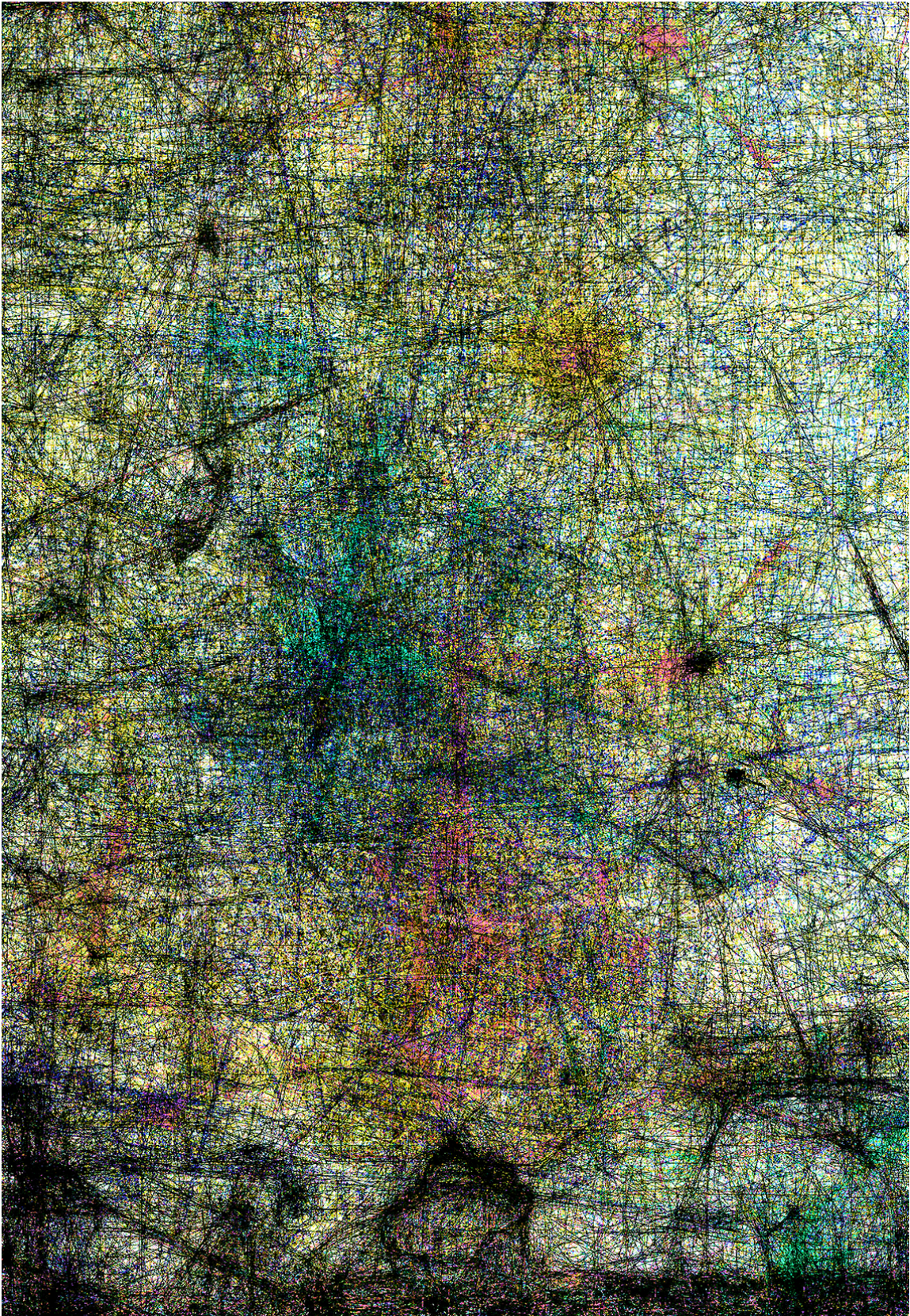
The looming question in the first urban register is thus tackled by the second register, namely: How is 'life in the Emergent City'? And, whose life is it anyway? Such interrogation seems a leading motif in Stanza's 'The Emergent City' series. This stream of works deals with the imaginary as well as the practical outcomes of pervasive urban ICTs and surveillance apparatuses.



In the context of this issue of lo Squaderno, we were particularly intrigued by the powerful visual stimuli provided by Stanza. Indeed, in our view, an analysis of the flows of spatial know-how cannot be dissociated from an inquiry into the limits of control, as well as into the not simply cognitive but also bodily and affective implications of information as generalised mediator of social life.

More specifically, the artwork featured in this issue comes from a selection of Stanza' projects, including 'The Central City' (1997-2012) (p.46,50), 'The Emergent City. A Life From Complexity to The City of Bits' (2012) (p.20,24, 40,54,56,80), 'The Nemesis Machine – From Metropolis to Megalopolis to Ecu-menopolis' (2015) (p. 1,2,4,6,26,32,33), 'The Valley of the Shadow of Death' (2010) (p.8,34,40), 'The Future Looks Bleak' (2010) (p.14,44,70), 'Capacities: Life In The Emergent City' (2010) (p.60), 'The Agency of Youth' (p. 66), and 'Herd Above the Noise' (p.78,79).

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stanza@sublime.net



The Mouride Trade Diaspora and the Making of a Vernacular Urbanism

Peter Volgger

Global flows, multiple identities and cross-border activities represented by transnational migrant communities test prior assumptions critically regarding the nation-state functioning as a container of social, economic and political processes (Grille et al. 2000, Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2014: 576–610, Pries 2008). Mouride migrants from Senegal belong to diasporic communities that operate within an in-between space by commuting between their land of origin and the host country changing their whereabouts seasonally. They neither belong to their country of departure nor to the country of arrival (Grillo et al. 2000). Differences like ‘here’ and ‘there’ are collapsing, as Mourides establish ‘circulatory territories’ (Tarrius 1992: 113–132). Hence, the creativity of their spatial production leads us toward a laboratory-like urbanism. The traditional scale of the city no longer describes the new emerging (trans-urban) phenomena.

In our research, we study global mobility and territories in dispersion. On the basis of ‘urban topology’ we underline the constants that are enabling the stabilization of structures in such a trans-migration realm. The global dynamics of those fragmented spheres are best described with the notion of the ‘archipelago’ (Barrajas 2003), which illuminates how those fragments provide coherence. By investigating Mouride spacemaking we aim at proving an autonomous ‘African system of reference’ within the city of Bolzano/Bozen, in northern Italy. Furthermore, we explore how the ‘African village’ framework is inscribed in the city. As patterns of dispersion intensify, Mourides generate a new territorial cohesion, a realm, in which the ‘collective’ has gained a new dimension.

Mouride spacemaking

The Mouride brotherhood emerged from the surroundings of the holy city of Touba and was founded by Amadou Bamba in rural Senegal in the late 19th century (Schmidt di Friedberg 1994). Urban traders and wage labourers scattered throughout the big cities of the world, gradually superseding the original constituency of a farming community. Their expansion also led to partial doctrinal modifications of their old doctrine (Bava 2003). The Mourides work hard in order to cede their surplus income to a spiritual and community leader known as Marabut. Mourides are initially itinerant traders, nearly full-time travellers, constantly moving in search of new goods and clients. The economic dimension of this transformation has attracted a lot of scholarly interest, but little attention has been paid to its urbanizing implications and the impact of Mouride expansion in urban areas throughout Italy. These traders have neither the time nor the resources to transform their living quarters in any radical way. The image of Bamba is the only mark to sign the Mouride space (Ebin 1996: 92–109).

In the mid-1980s, Italy became a target for an ever-growing number of Mouride immigrants looking for a livelihood. Along Italy’s beaches, the Mouride tradesman deals with

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nearly everything, although most of them specialized in fake ware (watches, jewellery, sunglasses, etc.). In Bozen, the Mourides form a predominantly young, male community of around 150–200 persons. Whilst Senegalese workers have achieved a measure of stable economic integration through employment in the local industries, their social integration remains hampered. Street commerce in Europe remains an arduous life.

Urban topology

How are Mourides able to construct and uphold identity in diasporic households? In which way are these households connected to each other? How can we model this emerging 'vernacular urbanism'? In a first step, we attempt to document the dynamics and mechanisms of migration by creating a topological model (Huber 2004, Günzel 2007). In order to answer, we refer to the 'archipelago-model' of Barajas, who investigated how migrants of the Cape Verde Islands reproduce their 'natural archipelago' in the form of a 'fictional urbanism' within the city of Rotterdam. With the means of transport migrants connect one island with the other, just like they connect them at home using their boats.

Can we shift his observations to Bozen? Can we combine those fragments of the 'archipelago' into a single reference? By constantly adapting to new circumstances and by creatively reassembling existing resources, migrants create new urban situations by connecting local to global processes. They open up new perspectives on the local effects of worldwide dynamics. As a result of those migrational practices, self-authorised structures emerge. As the context shifted to a trans-urban one, Senegalese people brought along all practices from the African itinerant trade linked with the concept of 'circulating territories', combining multiple places into a domestic, economic or religious reference space (Salzbrunn 2004, Tarrius 1992). This also leads to a redistribution of traditional activities and roles beyond the connectional frameworks we are familiar with.

Our analysis of the migrational space attempts to draw an 'urban topology' (Huber 2004) that visualizes the complex cohabitation in a poly-contextual space. A simple definition has often been used: Topology is the study of those properties that an object retains under deformation, specifically bending, stretching and squeezing, but not breaking or tearing. Topology is the study of properties that remain invariant under deformation. In architecture theory, topology enables the reconstruction of dispersed settlement patterns. Thanks to topology, architectural analysis is no longer restricted to the manipulation of shapes, but includes events and relationships. It addresses not only building forms but also the very modes of inhabitation of space as well as the very nature of inhabitants. In contradistinction to the mathematical, deductive notion of topology, architecture theory advances an inductive understanding of topology as production of space enacted by migrants themselves (as per Latour's dictum, *Follow the actors!*). For ethnic groups the notion of permanent and uncontrollable change, multiple influences, complex sets of parameters, etc., are fundamental parameters of their practice. How to describe and model the 'place' of trans-local actors? What type of urbanity can emerge from it?

The calculation of *topological sections* enables us to differentiate the *homotopic constants* from those patterns that have been transformed by the impact of migration. Constants are the elements of networks which are elastic ('resilient') enough to resist the transformations caused by migration. This enables the formation of identities and the stabilisation of structures in trans-migrational contexts. The topological sections reveal disruptions as well as transitions of large-scale phenomena. Contemporary city-planning strategies collide with bottom-up realities of the self-organized networks. We contemplate to analyse these spaces on the basis of the topological terminology of 'convergence', 'interference', 'transversality' and 'stratification'. Overall, the reconstruction of the transnational nexus between migration and urban structures contributes to the control and stabilisation of polycentric structures in trans-urban contexts and thereby enriches our understanding of contemporary cities.

The archipelago, in other words, refers to a heterogeneous and hybrid configuration of elements of both the land of origin and destination. It describes the so-called 'trans-migrational space' as temporarily stabilized assemblage of urban and trans-urban actors and elements. The archipelagos can only be conceptualized inductively, step by step. This mode of thinking without presuppositions is a significant indicator of our time. Migrant utterances are thus utterances of the city itself, premised on lack of *a priori* boundaries.

What are those 'elements' connected to a multi-local reference in the case of Senegalese

migrants? We can identify two different elements, there are two modules in Mouridee networks that are connected constantly: first, the *residential groups* or *households* (*nuclei abitativi* in Italy, *foyers* in France) consist of groups of 3 or 4 persons and refer to traditional Senegalese settlement patterns (*këës*). Mouride groups move along migrational trajectories and are flexible enough to follow individual strategies. Over time, mobility has become less important for the Senegalese in Italy and shifted towards the forming of a stable community and creating a safe place to live in. Second, the *prayer group* of the *daayira* (meeting place, circle). In the case of the Mourides, from the very first days of their arrival in Italy, they established weekly prayer meetings. Each *daayira* elects officeholders, who keep in close touch with the Cheikhs/Marabuts in Senegal. At each meeting they collect money to send it back to the Cheikh, who comes for a pastoral visit once per year.

By constantly adapting to new circumstances and by creatively reassembling existing resources, migrants create new urban situations by connecting local to global processes

Cycles of Mobility and Cycles of Mutability

Referring to Latour (1987), we can call our building blocks *immutable mobiles* and *mutable mobiles*. Jointly, Law and Mol's (1994) concept of *multiple topologies* gives us a tool to analyse hybrid and dynamic spaces and topological invariants. Latour's notion emphasizes the creation of a space, in which immutable mobiles can be created and combined (Law and Hassard 1999). Our concept of 'archipelago' draws on Latour (2005) and indicates a stabilized state of affairs, a 'bundle of ties'. In a scaleless space, a transnational connection, a single urban context and even a single household can form one such archipelagos – a bundle of ties, a hybrid interaction between things and human beings.

We analyze how Mourides manifest their religious identity organizing special events and connecting their different places of residence into a Mouride trans-locality (on 'trans-localities', see also: Sinatti, 2006; Brighenti 2009). Following continuous strategies across trans-local spaces (*silsila al-baraka*), Mouride migration de- and re-territorializes, connecting singular places into a transnational field (Riccio 2006; Brighenti 2010). Mourides act on more than one place simultaneously. They intertwine procedures of the land of origin and the current host country to a multi-local space connected by community and rituals (Turner 1995). This complex connection of places – in which connection counts more than place – works like a navigation-tool ('flying scaffolds') in a foreign environment.

The topological construction of the transnational archipelago

One special event in the building of the religious archipelago is the visit of the Marabut. It is the presence and the performance of the Marabut, in collaboration with his scholars, who turn an ordinary room into a sacred space where religious activities can take place properly. These rooms temporarily become sacred places for Mouride disciples who transgress partly muted racial and religious borders to ask for the Marabut's prayers. He is believed to mediate

the blessings between the disciple and God. A feeling of authenticity is thus created by the Marabut and his scholars. The ritual performance — consisting of speeches, prayers, and presentations — and the whole meeting provides rich empirical data for analysing the complex interaction between Senegalese within and outside their community, their trans-local networks, their connections to the local situation in Italy and the specific ways of Mouride space-making. In our research, we reconstruct the economic as well as the domestic archipelago, observing the economic cycles and family structures of Senegalese people. Indeed, trade is one of the major sources of income in Senegal. The extended family plays an important role in African migration as it enables its members to migrate. In return, migrants remit back part of their income.

Interesting spatial manifestations appear: the modules of the Mouride global network gathers around the village of origin, uninhabited during the most part of the year. The village is periodically reactivated in winter, when migrants return to it. The other cells (*foyers* and *daayira*) form a trans-national village for the rest of the year. Noteworthy is that, unlike a network, an archipelago always has a centre (Dakar, Touba, village of the family). Thus, to understand the Mouride way of trading we have to consider once more that it is an instrument of solitary aid. Many of those travelling vendors currently living in Italy were tradesman in Senegal and hence are still connected to their home country regarding their trading network.

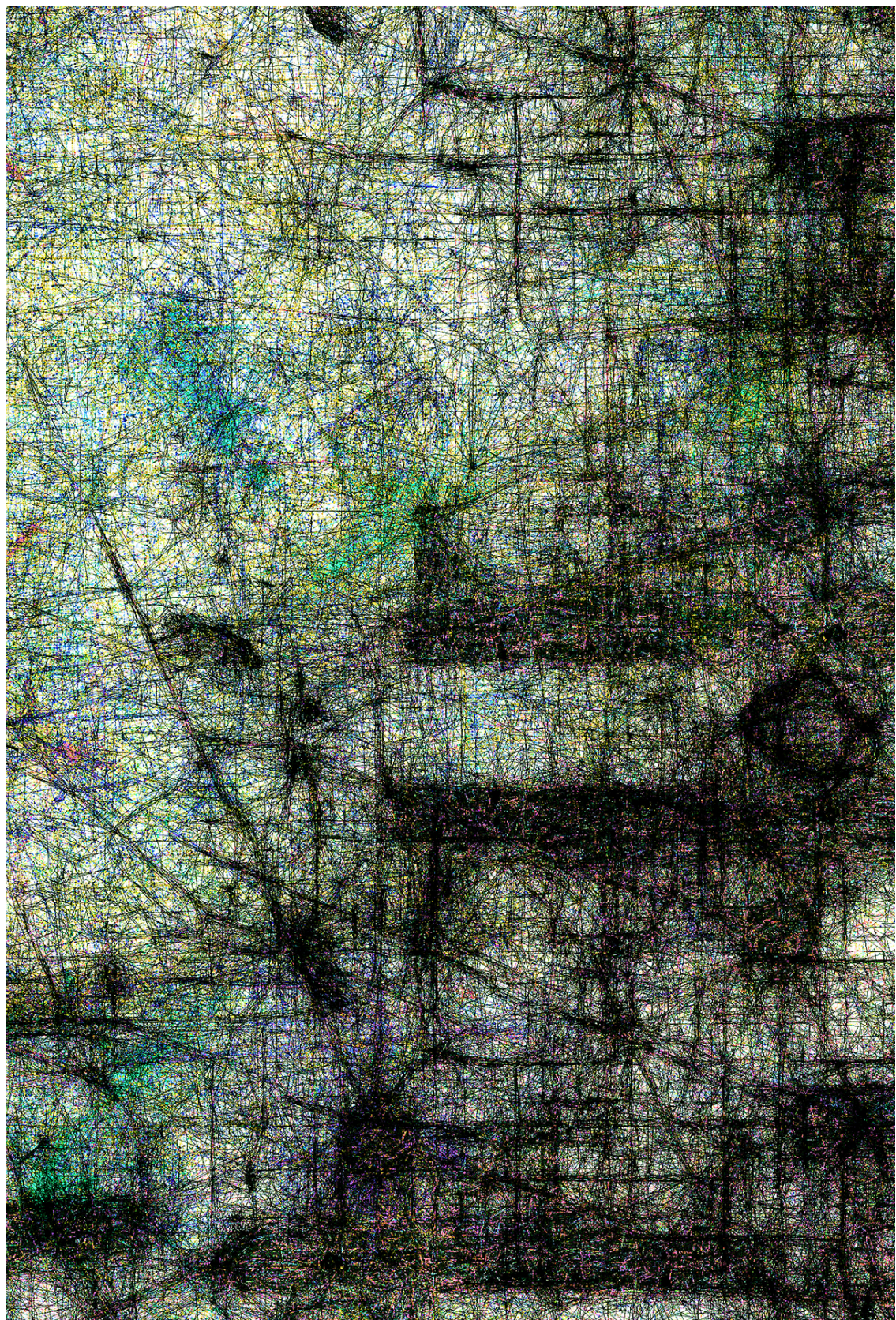
The topological construction of the urban archipelago

We attempt to document the dynamics and mechanism of migration by taking the hyper-form of the archipelago and elaborating it as a topological model. Our case study focuses on the Senegalese community in Bolzano/Bozen, northern Italy. It investigates the phenomenon of migration in an urban context and defines the position of a single household within this context. By analysing this phenomenon we may also hope to assist city-planners in coping with the new bottom-up realities of the city. How can trans-urban phenomena be incorporated into the process of city planning? Our central claim is that the Senegalese in Bolzano construct and inhabit an African village within the existing city. Phenomena of *urban clustering* were first observed in Italy by Scidà and Pollini (1993). As a result, Bolzano becomes part of a trans-urban nexus and is thereby connected to Senegal. In a state of transnational destabilization, Mourides build up 'neighbourhoods'. Our analysis shows that migrants, to paraphrase Sassen, become 'local villagers within the global cities of the world' (Sassen, 2004). Furthermore, it shows that it takes place through autonomous layers. Such a system of parallel coexistence cannot be described with the rigid terminology of 'integration'.

Alongside these fairly traditional and standard research tools, some PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) techniques have been used, notably the 'mobility maps'. Some Senegalese were asked to draw a mobility map of the town they lived in. This mobility map allows the recording, comparison and analysis of mobility of different groups of people within their community. It reveals relationships and patterns that might otherwise be hidden and highlights the external contacts of each individual. The mobility maps of Mourides differ a lot from those of other citizens because of the great pictorial emphasis given to the elements of the Senegalese network — 'casa' (household), 'lavoro' (work) and 'stazione' (railway station, travel). Indeed, several maps consist solely of these three network-elements. Mobility maps also highlight difficulty of access linked to spatial confinement by some Mourides. Confinement and spatial restriction in Bolzano has a complex explanation, but is certainly linked to cultural frontiers as well as the autonomous structure of a self-sufficient culture of migration.

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Urban knowledge as social practice

Athens in-between the Rhetorical and the Visual

**Panagiotis
Bourlessas**

Social spatialisation as spatial knowledge

What is central for the rapid changes brought about by a socio-economic crisis, what holds all alterations in a legitimate togetherness, is a major, often radical shift in the overall cultural system. Shifting perceptions, beliefs and meanings constantly represent and signify a revised society. A dominant 'culture of crisis' – societally diffused through political discourse and the media – enciphers specific ways of *seeing* (Berger 1972) and ways of *acting* in response. In the in-between space in which politics lays, 'reality' is imagined in novel ideological terms, which dictate our knowledge of it.

Places are inevitably and actively involved in such processes since they become the locations where crisis articulates itself. Merging the conceptual with the physical, places are created through what Rob Shields (1991) has called 'social spatialisation'. Specific processes, orchestrated by specific social groups, construct locations and channel the related social imaginations through specific ways. Imaginations will then invite corresponding actions. In social spatialisation, places turn into 'place-myths' which ground the cultural system of ideology and practice. Discourse thus shapes places and gives birth to 'opposite' places, according to binary relations that privilege certain ideological sides and cultural practices vis-à-vis others.

This article deals with how the city of Athens is 'known' by socially spatialising it. Specifically, we zoom in on a peculiar location and investigate how the knowledge of a place is selectively constructed and visually practiced.

The Big Picture. Rhetorics, practices and the in-between imagination of Athens city centre

The Greek socio-economic crisis renders the city centre of Athens a terrain for renewed rhetorical claims. The established imaginaries are now vulnerable to an altered 'reality' seen and presented in novel ways, as if the whole centre has now become 'minoritarian', i.e., spatially central yet socially peripheral. A contradictory positioning of central locations emerges, whereby they seem to be pushed towards social marginality. After the 2004 Olympics, the city centre has been pictured as a dark zone, a homogenised place of anomy, a ghetto of migrants, refugees, drug addicts and homeless people. Such descriptions are juxtaposed to nostalgic narrations about a romanticised past. The ghetto discourse is employed to stigmatise specific areas (Arapoglou *et al.* 2009). The contrast between, on the one hand, such a negative visuality and, on the other, the spatial and symbolic centrality of the area, adds to the city centre a quality of 'in-betweenness', transforming it into a constructed urban interstice (Brighenti 2013).

The political and ideological stigma (Maloutas *et al.* 2013) is best revealed once we

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bring to the fore the rhetorically legitimated actions. In 2012, the by-then Prime Minister symbolically marks the official, explicitly political rapture in a polemic declaration: 'We must reoccupy our cities.' Such a call for 'reoccupation' of the city is a major shift in the public knowledge of the centre that mirrors the interests of several different actors ranging from large-scale public projects to small-scale entrepreneurial moves, from grassroots movements to the brutal racist enterprises of the extreme right against foreign residents.

This direct link between representations and policies demands an investigation of the

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'iconography' of social problems (Vaiou 2010). When such iconography refers to places, it may result in the production of allegedly grounded social worlds through the activation and manipulation of a geographical imagination (Atkinson, 2005). The condition of

in-betweenness is defined by the existence of a possibility occurring as a correction to what was previously known as minoritarian. In other words, the creation of an in-between place automatically and structurally creates an opportunity that calls for its seizing. Therefore, and within the political space that unfolds in this possibility, verbal and visual imaginaries are formed. Declaring a place 'minoritarian' thus signifies a power issue (Brighenti, 2013, p.xvi). What the by-then Prime Minister's announcement reveals is nothing more than the direct link between rhetorics and action, between culture and politics. Like the interstitial city centre, places in general — even when they are decentralised, marginal or in-between — become the real terrains for this linkage to be activated and practiced, reproduced and contested. The examination of the ways in which places are imagined and hence known can reveal power relations 'in place' together with cultural meanings, perceptions of (non)belonging and conflictual senses. Like 'small snapshots' within the 'big picture', fragments of the city are re-discovered, re-known and re-activated. Here follows a tangible example of this process.

A Small Snapshot. A visual de-construction of the Gallery of Merchants

Located in the cultural city center of Athens, the 'totally inactive' and 'lifeless' Gallery of Merchants (GoM) has been described as in 'state of decay' to be countered by appropriate actions to 'reactivate a dead zone of Athens'. Within an 'urban regeneration' framework, the project Traces of Commerce (ToC) has involved creative practitioners, cultural events, scheduled workshops, artistic installations and ateliers.¹ The ToC project is a Latourian 'panorama' aimed at projecting a 'coherent scenery' (Latour, 2007, p.198). Because visuality constructs vision (Rose, 2012), cultural visual codes and practices shape our ways of seeing. And because visibility is 'a metaphor of knowledge' (Brighenti, 2007, p.325) what is seen becomes equal to what is known. Consequently, GoM is now identified through a massive production of images that contribute to an overall knowledge-shaping discourse.

Nevertheless, and beyond visual representations, an *in situ* exploration of GoM reveals a human presence that lays invisible in new image of the place — an unknown presence. Before the project's implementation, a homeless man has appropriated the arcade using it as shelter. A socially sensitive visual analysis of the official imaginary can thus be attempted. The visual is essentially employed in the process of social spatialisation, whereby a specific poiesis makes contradictory coexistences invisible. A close analysis of ToC reveals that material objects — either as discrete agents or as objects of human activity — are its predominant elements. In the context of urban regeneration, materiality stands for actual transformation.

¹ See the [project's official website](#).

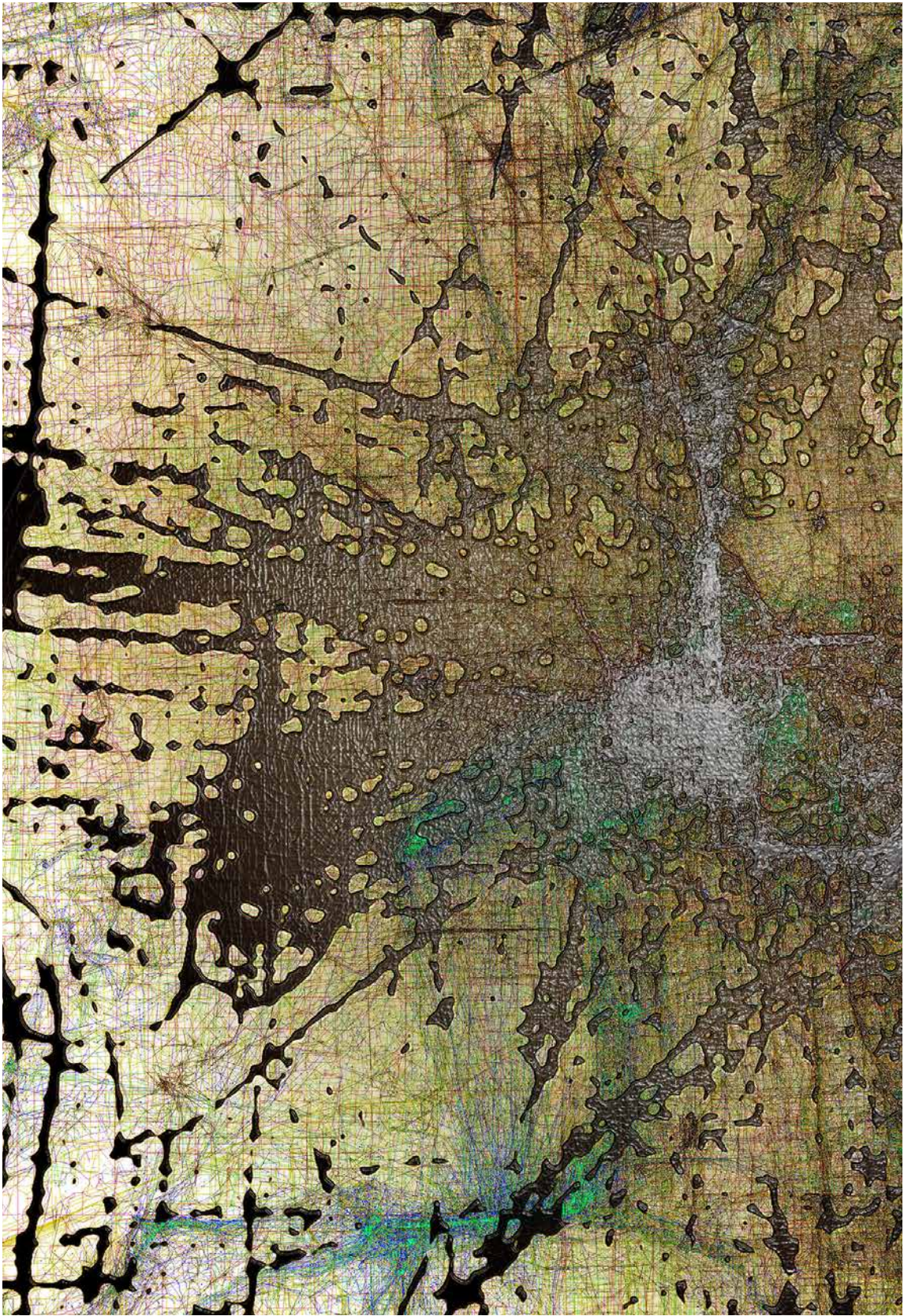
Similarly, the use of tightly framed pictures further stresses the importance of material alteration. Matter is anything but naïve: material forms are objectified human values (Miller, 1998). Aesthetical forms are the shell of cultural worlds and function as tools of ‘camouflaged’ politics. Material items seem to have a direct link to reality, thanks to their tactile nature and their persuasive, photographic representations (Berger, 1972). The emphatic representation of objects thus frames a situation as the ‘real one’.

Furthermore, materiality is accompanied by a bold depiction of human activities. This correlation may signify the role of people as active agents of change. New users appear to be active actors who work with their own hands. Such a bodily engagement may legitimise their presence there. It marks their involvement in the new identity of the place and simultaneously establishes a sense of belonging. Symbolically as well as physically, humans and non-humans collaborate in the formation of a new knowledge – as if matter itself and its transformation had paved the way for human insertion; as if altered matter becomes the symbol of altered users. The new, emphasised presence of people comes to correct what has previously been – officially – imagined as a place of absence, lack of activity, lack of life.

However, we know that inclusion has to be seen in relation to exclusion. Because ‘the invisible is intrinsic to the visible, is what makes it possible’ (Brighenti, 2007, p.328), we must also consider what is omitted from the frame of representation. We must seek for ‘visual mutations’. According to Rose (2012, p.66), ‘something that is kept out of the picture may nonetheless be extremely significant to its meaning’. Here, what remains invisible and excluded is the presence of the homeless person. Non-depiction has social consequences and shapes expectations about who is legitimate to be present, who really belongs there. In the social spatialisation of GoM, the homeless man can be visually erased and therefore socially neglected as a unknown element.

‘There is no virgin gaze because, in case there was, it would not be called gaze’² – Spatialising knowledge through visibility

The conceptual moulding of in-between places activates a sort of Aristotelian *entelechy* within them. It is a *political* entelechy. After their minoritarian description, central-marginal places create the conditions for the orchestration of change in the name of specific interests. Guggenheim (2011, p. 19) uses the word *détournement*, originally introduced by Debord, in order to interpret change from a cultural perspective: seen as ‘antagonistic and ultimately selfish’, change has the potential to disrupt ‘an object according to one’s own cultural tastes and strategies’. Knowledge accompanies and legitimates change, with the crucial, structural collaboration of visibility. Places become the physical backgrounds that host and invite social knowledge. Through social spatialisation, they become actors that actively contribute to a selective shaping of knowledge. They include and exclude according to ideology, linking the visual and the conceptual with the social and the practiced. The discursive gaze ought to be analysed in order to discover which social knowledge is being conveyed and which successive practices are called for. The discursive gaze can make real social problems invisible through selective visual and geographic distortions.



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Conoscenza del territorio tra guerra e controllo di polizia

Sebastian Saborio

Esiste una forte differenza tra il tradizionale controllo di polizia e quello in cui le forze dell'ordine si trovano in una vera e propria situazione di guerra guerreggiata. Per differenziare le due diverse situazioni, può essere utile comprendere l'importanza che, per gli agenti di polizia, svolge la conoscenza del territorio. Infatti, nel secondo caso questa assume un ruolo ancora più importante nell'evitare agguati armati da parte di gruppi criminali.

Per illustrare quanto detto farò ricorso alla ricerca etnografica che ho condotto nel 2013 per cinque mesi insieme alle forze di polizia "pacificatrice" a Mangueira, Santa Marta e Andaraí, tre favelas di Rio de Janeiro. In questa città, a partire dagli anni Ottanta, le gang della droga detengono il controllo di gran parte delle favelas e hanno imparato a "barricarsi in fortini posizionati strategicamente e a ricevere la polizia a colpi di fucile, mitragliatrici e granate" (Beltrame 2009, 80). Dal 2008, le autorità hanno avviato una nuova politica di sicurezza, le così dette Unità di Polizia Pacificatrice (UPPs), volta a espellere tali gruppi criminali e a riprendere il controllo delle favelas presenti all'interno delle zone urbane più valorizzate.

Anche se inizialmente la polizia è riuscita ad eliminare la presenza di uomini armati all'interno delle favelas pacificate, con il passare degli anni la possibilità che i poliziotti hanno di incorrere in agguati a fuoco è aumentata progressivamente. Di conseguenza, anche se le UPPs sono state presentate come un nuovo modello di polizia, esse si trovano a continuare la decennale guerra alle gang della droga. L'attività delle UPPs non ha come obiettivo principale quello di proteggere i residenti delle favelas, ma è orientata a dissuadere tentativi delle gang di dominare i territori mediante l'ostentazione delle armi. Per questo motivo, la presenza degli agenti non è solo consistente, ma tende anche ad assumere un'apparenza fortemente militarizzata, come ho avuto modo di comprendere già dalla prima volta che ho accompagnato i poliziotti dell'UPP Andaraí a pattugliare la favela.

In quella occasione, dopo circa un paio d'ore, dalla radiotrasmittente arrivò la comunicazione che un residente aveva denunciato un codice "5-1-3". Il caporale ordinò agli altri di dirigersi sul luogo a tutta velocità. Cominciai a temere che fosse accaduto qualcosa di grave. Preoccupato, chiesi cosa fosse un "5-1-3". "Consumo di stupefacenti, cioè ci sarà qualcuno che si sta facendo una canna e un vicino infastidito ci ha chiamati", commentò sarcastico il caporale. Sul momento mi calmai: tutt'al più, pensavo, saremo andati a chiedere se qualcuno avesse visto dei ragazzi fumare. Fui anche autorizzato ad accompagnare i poliziotti. Giunti sul luogo, con mio grande stupore, tre poliziotti scesero rapidamente con le armi spianate ad altezza d'uomo, salendo per una scaletta tra i vicoli stretti. Rimasi pietrificato di fianco al guidatore, che aveva il compito di non allontanarsi. Non potevo credere che un così futile motivo provocasse una reazione così energica. Cinque minuti dopo i poliziotti tornarono tranquilli e sorridenti, commentando che il *maconeiro* [fumatore di marijuana] era riuscito a scappare.

A differenza di quanto avviene nel resto della città, nelle favelas "pacificate" il controllo

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di polizia avviene secondo una logica di combattimento armato e non di semplice pattugliamento del territorio. Non solo: le caratteristiche fisiche delle favelas rappresentano un notevole ostacolo per i poliziotti. In quel caso, ad esempio, il ragazzo che fumava marijuana riuscì a scappare per gli erti vicoli cui non è possibile accedere con volanti o motociclette, facendo perdere le proprie tracce grazie alla conoscenza del territorio.

In ogni tipo di contesto urbano, per poter pattugliare le strade in modo efficace è necessario avere una buona conoscenza del territorio. Per Fabini (2015), gli agenti che

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prestano servizio nelle città da cui provengono sono da questo punto di vista avvantaggiati. Secondo Durão (2011), man mano che i poliziotti vengono socializzati allo spazio che devono tutelare, le loro capacità aumentano esponenzialmente. La mappa mentale

del poliziotto include i luoghi dello spaccio, quelli in cui il consumo di alcool tende a sfociare in violenza interpersonale, i luoghi in cui vengono commessi più furti. Ogni volta che un poliziotto viene trasferito, tale bagaglio di conoscenze va perduto.

Anche nelle UPPs la conoscenza del contesto ambientale delle favelas è fondamentale per i poliziotti: l'esperienza spaziale diventa un fattore essenziale per l'efficacia. Tuttavia, c'è una differenza fondamentale tra il normale pattugliamento di polizia e quello delle UPPs. Nel primo caso, il compito è prevenire il crimine mediante l'ostentazione della propria presenza e la repressione dei reati flagranti. Nel caso delle UPP, invece, il pattugliamento è condotto in un continuo clima di guerra.

Nelle località più pericolose, quelle in cui è più alta la probabilità di rimanere vittime di un agguato armato, è normale che nelle volanti uno degli agenti esca dal bagagliaio e, con la portiera alzata, estraiga il fucile verso l'alto controllando che non vi siano individui armati sui tetti delle case e alle spalle del loro veicolo. I poliziotti insistono sul fatto che i fucili dentro le favelas pacificate servono a far mostrare dissuasivamente ai membri delle gang la potenza di fuoco della polizia. Secondo uno studio quantitativo condotto nelle UPPs (Musumeci et al. 2013), il 32,4 % dei poliziotti teme di perdere la propria vita come conseguenza di agguati da parte di membri delle gang. Questo fa sì che i poliziotti che pattugliano il territorio svolgano anche le operazioni più semplici in uno stato di allerta, sempre pronti ad aprire il fuoco.

Se, nel caso della polizia normale, la non-conoscenza del territorio può condurre a inefficacia nell'azione repressiva, nel caso delle UPPs, essa può mettere a repentaglio la vita dei poliziotti. Durante il mio lavoro di campo ho avuto modo di notare che i poliziotti presenti da più tempo nelle UPPs erano anche quelli che davano maggiori indicazioni sui luoghi da pattugliare, sulle strade da percorrere e sui luoghi in cui era necessario prestare più attenzione. Tuttavia, un ricambio molto elevato di personale ostacola la conoscenza geografica ed ambientale rendendo l'attività di pattugliamento ancora più complicata, come si vede in questa testimonianza:

Rispetto all'UPP São Carlos, la UPP Andaraí è diversa. Nella prima ci sono molti più vicoli. La geografia della favela favorisce la criminalità. I trafficanti hanno una facilità di accesso migliore della nostra. Adesso, anche se è cambiato il contingente [dell'UPP São Carlos] i problemi sono rimasti gli stessi. I trafficanti hanno un vantaggio notevole sui poliziotti perché conoscono bene il territorio (Soldatessa, 24 anni, UPP Andaraí).

La topografia delle favelas rappresenta un ostacolo al mantenimento del controllo territoriale. Queste, infatti, sono posizionate quasi sempre su ripide colline che impediscono l'accesso motorizzato. L'intreccio di un numero infinito di vicoli e strade fornisce tanto vie di fuga, quanto nascondigli, quanto luoghi ideali per agguati. Per le loro caratteristiche fisiche, alcune

favelas vengono considerate più difficilmente “pacificabili” di altre. Di norma, la grandezza delle favelas, la quantità di vicoli e il numero di uscite rappresentano gli elementi principali che rendono più difficile ai poliziotti sviluppare un elevato livello di conoscenza del territorio e, di conseguenza, diminuiscono la capacità che gli stessi hanno di salvaguardare la propria incolumità.

Ad esempio, tra le diverse favelas “pacificate”, Santa Marta è quella considerata come la più facile da controllare: estendendosi su 53.706 m² essa conta 3.913 abitanti, e un solo un ingresso, mentre il resto è circondato da un muro che separa la favela da una fitta porzione di foresta urbana. In modo diametralmente opposto, il Complexo do Alemão ha un'estensione di 1.813.000 m² e circa 80.000 abitanti – “praticamente impossibile da dominare”, dicono i poliziotti. “C'è un mare di vicoli, non sai mai dove andare e se sei o meno al sicuro.”

In conclusione, l'attività delle UPPs avviene all'interno di un contesto di conflitto armato e di guerra guerreggiata, motivo per il quale la conoscenza del territorio assume un'importanza maggiore. La chiave per comprendere ciò che accade è dunque quella della strategia, della tattica e della logistica militare e non quella del tradizionale controllo di polizia.

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The Spatial Know-How of Graffiti

Jannes van Loon

Introduction

My research interest lies in understand the spatial behaviour of graffiti writers (van Loon, 2014). Although graffiti writers have unique perspectives on urban landscapes that determine where and what type of graffiti they produce, they also have collective or shared senses of place – i.e., a spatial know-how that structures their production (Castree, 2003). As *Table 1* illustrates, it is possible to distinguish four types of writers based on their connection to the graffiti subculture and degree of illegality of their deeds. Arguably, this typology is applicable to most Western cities.

This contribution focuses on the two types who stay close to the ‘rules of the game’ the graffiti subculture, namely, Artists and Bombers. Which spatial know-how do they produce? How is it shared, and which type of collective spatial action does it elicit? The spatial know-how of hip hop graffiti has been created in a very specific period in an unique urban context, i.e., New York in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and has spread with the rest of American popular culture.

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The origination of spatial know-how

What is remarkable about the spatial know-how of graffiti writers is that some general rules seem to be accepted, to a certain extent, in cities worldwide. Writers aim to achieve fame by spreading their nickname in tags, throw-ups, pieces and characters. Preferably, they target highly visible locations such as subway trains (Halsey and Young, 2006; Ferrell and Weide, 2010; Lachmann et al., 1988). To do so in an effective way, it is crucial that a graffiti remains untouched: by marking a surface writers transform surfaces into territories (Brighenti, 2010;

Table 1. Typology of graffiti writers: Amateurs, artists, bombers, and outsiders (from van Loon 2014)

		Connection to the graffiti subculture	
		Weak	Strong
Degree of illegality of the graffiti he/she produces	Low	<i>Amateur</i>	<i>Artist</i>
	High	<i>Outsider</i>	<i>Bomber</i>

Cybrivsky and Ley, 1974) and make of graffiti “a claim of a ‘right’ to the blank surfaces of the city” (Dovey et al., 2012, p. 22). One of the worst offences in graffiti is crossover, and the worst disputes, often but not always violent, arise when this rule is broken (Halsey and Young, 2006): “The first rule of graffiti is that it is disrespectful to ‘go over’ another writer’s work . . . There have always been conventions for dealing with going over, including discussion, payment in kind . . . and payment exacted in cans of paint or a punch on the jaw” (Cooper and Chalfant, 1984, p. 29). There are self-disciplining mechanisms at work within

the graffiti culture that lead to more or less collective patterns of behaviour. But, how could such mechanisms cut across urban contexts as varied as New York, Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, and Brussels?

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In order answer this question, it is crucial to analyse the where and when of the origination of graffiti. Explaining how graffiti originated in New York and how it spread to other cities reveals how the dominance of a certain spatial know-how influenced writing on surfaces.

New York, New York

It is difficult, or may be even impossible, to explain why graffiti was born in Philadelphia and New York during the 1970s (Powers, 1999), but, it is relatively easy to see why the phenomenon grew into being identified as a “symptom of urban disorder” (Cresswell, 1992, p. 329; Chalfant and Silver, 1983; Cooper, 2004). The rap-song *New York, New York* by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five contains three important indications: Here is a short fragment:

A castle in the sky, one mile high
Built to shelter the rich and greedy
Rows of eyes, disguised as windows
Looking down on the poor and the needy
Miles of people, marching up the avenue
Doing what they gotta do, just to get by
I’m living in the land of plenty and many
But I’m damn sure poor and I don’t know why

“The poor and the needy” thus experienced the city as a place where economic downturns combined with neo-liberal urban governance led to severe impoverishment of whole districts. Large parts of the Bronx, for instance, went ‘on fire’. Teenagers grew up in an environment of crime (e.g., 1.500 murders in the late 1970s), drug addiction, and depressing perspectives. The creation of an imaginary world, for instance through music (rap/dj-ing), dance (breakdance) and graffiti offered them a temporary respite from the harsh social realities they had to face (Feiner and Klein, 1982).

Secondly, although New York was on the fringe of bankruptcy, still “miles of people [were] marching up the avenue”. In contrast to Philadelphia, New York was still functioning as a vast urban fabric, providing graffiti writers with a massive supply of spray cans to steal from the many stores (Chalfant and Silver, 1983) and the extensive, partly elevated subway system offered a perfect canvas with great visibility. Crucially for the creation of the global graffiti subculture, the diverse economy of New York also contained many creative occupations. In this respect, some photographers developed an interest in graffiti and documented its rise (Naar, 2007). Photographers such as Martha Cooper and Henri Chalfant engaged with graffiti writers and summarized their ‘rules’ and works (Cooper and Chalfant, 1984). Graffiti was also documented in the documentaries *Stations of the Elevated* (1981) *Style Wars*, impressive views on the heydays and downturn of graffiti (Chalfant and Silver, 1983). The

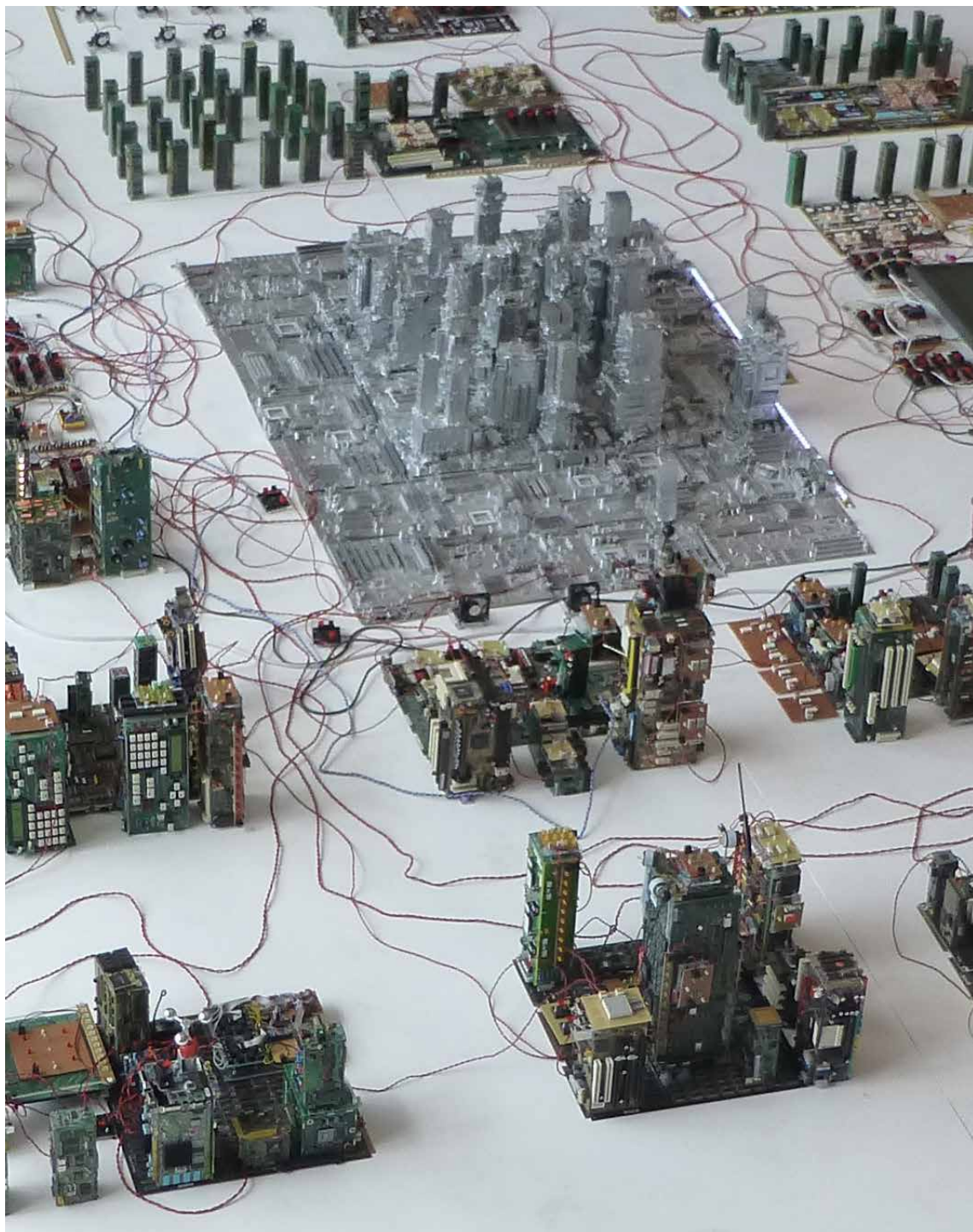
same year, an iconic graffiti writer, Lee, played the leading role in *Wild Style* (Ahearn, 1983). In a pre-digital, pre-intercontinental tourism era these books and films had a great impact on teenagers who almost literally copied the behavior of New York writers.

A third aspect that made of New York a so fertile context for the birth of the global graffiti subculture refers to the “castles in the sky” sheltering “the rich and greedy”. Part of the upper progressive middle class became interested in graffiti as an art form. Galleries arose as intermediaries between writers and collectors. Because “the white cubes of the galleries and the museums in part determine the artistic forms they contain” (Austin, 2010, p. 41) the shift to galleries tempered the initial wide spatiality of graffiti, channelling some writers into more conventional art spaces (Cresswell, 1992). This distinction between ‘responsible commodification’ and ‘irresponsible expression’ (Moreau and Alderman, 2011, p. 120) dominated the urban governance discourse, favouring commodified, regulated and controlled forms of graffiti over anarchic expressions that “deterritorialize the canvas, the studio and the brush in order to reterritorialize the wall, public space and the spray can” (Halsey and Pederick, 2010, p. 82). However, the ‘gallerization’ of graffiti further helped its internationalization. In Amsterdam, for instance, the first piece of graffiti was sprayed by the New Yorker Quick who visited the city for an exhibition. In that context, he made contacts with local writers, teaching them the crucial techniques (Koopman et al., 2004).

Different cities, same spatial practices

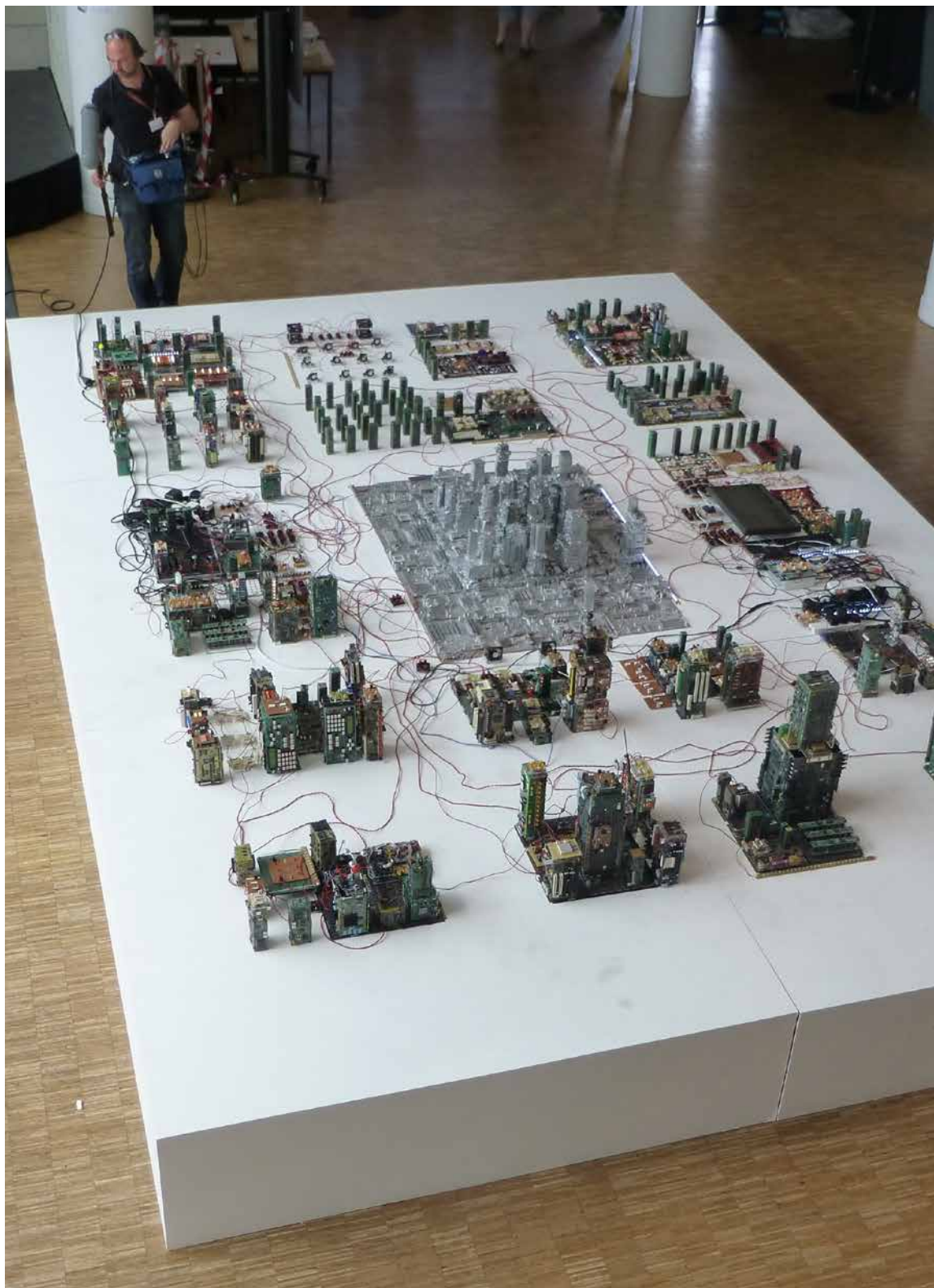
While urban contexts around the world differ widely, teenagers are still adopting a spatial know-how that is strongly based on the actions and ideas of New York originators (Campos, 2013; Halsey and Young, 2006; Brighenti, 2010). Crucial elements of this global graffiti subculture are name recognition (not going over) and place hierarchy with subways being at the top (van Loon, 2014). The generation that invented graffiti in New York can be seen as creators of “articulated moments in networks of social relations” (Massey, 1991, p. 28) illustrating New York’s position as important place within the power geometry of global capitalism, and its ability to have “power in relation to the flows and movement” (Massey, 1991, pp. 25–26).

The claim to universality could be contested questioning the extent to which different urban landscapes influence the spatial behavior of writers. What is the dialectical relationship between graffiti writers who write on urban surfaces and cities that produce specific writeable surfaces? In times where finance capitalism seems to penetrate almost every sphere of urban life, practices that resist capitalist dominance and try to ‘co-write’ urban surfaces without the aim of monetary rewards, should receive more scholarly attention (Tripodi, 2008; Dovey et al., 2012) and, perhaps also, more societal appreciation.



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Securing Australia – for SIVs, from SIEVs, via Edinburgh Gardens NYE

Pete Chambers

Edinburgh Gardens is the crown jewel of Fitzroy North, one of inner northern Melbourne's most gentrified suburbs. In 2009, Christian Lander, author of *Stuff White People Like*, dubbed Fitzroy [North Melbourne's whitest suburb](#). In January 2015, the median house price hit [\\$1,050,000](#), a far cry from Chopper Reid's stomping ground and the setting of precarious 70s student lives in *Monkey Grip*.

Over the past few years, Edinburgh Gardens has become a contested public space as a destination venue where large numbers gather and linger over booze and music on warm evenings. On NYE 2012 – and especially in 2013 – these spontaneous gatherings reached a peak of intensity, as *tens* of thousands descended on the park to party.

The NYE throng had been drifting north for years, approximating the push of gentrification. As memory serves it was 2010 when the focus shifted across Alexandra Avenue, from Smith Reserve, next to Fitzroy pool, up into the Gardens.

By 2012, NYE in Edinburgh Gardens was a 'thing' resonating on social media, and Yarra Council knew that tens of thousands could be expected. The park is physically big enough to accommodate these kinds of numbers. But only with the requisite organisation and will to manage it through the provision of lighting, bins, toilets. Yet after the park got hammered in 2012, in 2013 the council provided only a few more toilets and bins and some more toilet paper. It was something, but as someone there for an hour of the late afternoon of December 31, 2013, watching the gathering throngs while I pushed my son on the swing, you could tell the park was probably gonna cop it.

When the park did get trashed, the predictable blameshift started, with Murdoch and Channel 7 reporting how 'hipsters' and 'illegal dance party organisers' – from Sydney, no less – had *caused* [the mess](#). Not even the kids' playground escaped unscathed, as firm reports of revellers dropping low numbers in the kids' cubby house emerged – c'mon, guys.

Faced with NYE 2014, the council took the decision, 8-1, to enforce an alcohol ban across the park, especially after 9pm, and organised to have the park patrolled throughout the night by private security and VicPol. You might say it was the least worst option for the council, given resource constraints. Yet cleaning the park in 2013 cost thirty thousand (which produced an outcry); the security measures in 2014 cost 250,000 dollars (which passed almost unnoted). The decision to enforce the ban was not about simply about material resources, it was political.

The security measures were also in line with the police wishlist about 'what works': "fenced-off areas, alcohol inspections and private security guards and police [working together](#)". The net effect of the ban was a quiet, smooth space: the restoration of quiet enjoyment. It fits with where Fitzroy North is headed as a postcode, which also speaks to what's stultifying about gentrification – if you're not the gentry. By the time vibrancy is

Pete is currently writing a full-length work of social theory that addresses border security as a way of understanding power in transformation, as well as the co-emergence of offshore detention and onshore enclaves. The additional normative focus of this work develops the implications of border security, offshore, and enclaving as a way of thinking about global political justice, drawing on Hans Jonas, Heinz Von Foerster, and the law and custom of the sea. He also has a secondary focus on power in space, and at the moment he is examining the micropolitics of urban conflict playing out between motorists and cyclists in Melbourne, which gathers around the hashtag #boulietacks.

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being marketed, you know it's only a few years before an enforced silence descends. The end point of gentrification is the coupling of enjoyment and restriction.

Security measures restrict lively talking, spontaneous action, and arrival without prior authorisation. They tend to preclude the kinds of spiralling disinhibition that make a party wild, just as they tend to shut down the contentious sharing of space and ideas that political conversations and protest actions are about. One way they do so is by tightening around the kinds of environments where such gatherings occur. Security makes safe by emptying out,

If this continues as it has been, border security's next stage involves the gentrification of the entire Commonwealth along these lines

locking down, deadening. For 250,000 dollars, security measures silenced Edinburgh Gardens NYE 2014. The party probably will not return.

As a tactic applied to a public space that's been the beating heart of a changing neighbour-

hood for close to 150 years, the application of security measures to Edinburgh Gardens on its 'big night' is a stifling break with long held traditions of trusting people to 'just rock up' and use the park as they will. It amounts to saying that certain publics *are* the problem, and moreover problems who can't be managed or worked with, let alone provided for and looked after, only removed. Ban these publics from the space and you indeed remove the problem, so defined. But is it then still meaningfully public? Or then: a space for whom?

Security measures are not only popularly applied in our cities. Offshore, security measures are intentionally set up and carefully maintained as part of Australia's popular and electorally successful border security policies. Border security measures are there, in part, to prevent 'us' from passionately sharing deeply held concerns and suppressing disagreement — while negating expressed concerns of people's suffering. Security measures don't 'just stop the boats', they're set up to silence onshore political discussions about offshore human suffering. Like the silencing of Edinburgh Gardens, this is interested human behaviour, and is complexly political.

Yet the politics of offshore detention keeps washing ashore, in spite of the best efforts of the measures. This happened during the Australian Open men's tennis final on February 1 this year, when play was 'disrupted' during the second set. As a home spectator cocooned in my apartment watching the free-to-air telecast, it was very difficult to tell what was happening. I had never wanted Courier to say more than he usually does, but here he merely muttered that 'some kind of protest' was unfolding.

In the following minutes, *Channel 7* edited the 'disruption' out of frame. The selected shots kept attention studiously focused on court, alternating between facial closeups of Novak and Andy and wide screen sweeps of the on-court security. A minute or two further in, Courier started riffing on a piece of replayed footage from the previous year's final. The high definition slow motion closeup showed the moment when Andy Murray fumbled several attempts to catch a feather that had fluttered on to court. As Courier reminded viewers, this was the moment when Murray cracked. It would be a shame, Courier concluded, if, 'like a feather', *this* disruption would cause Murray to fail — once again. But what was the 'disruption' about? We weren't allowed to find out.

The 'disruption' was a political action protesting border security in Australia — and this means that, for these minutes at least, the broadcast staff were working as border security. Eight spectators, all of whom had paid for tickets, unfurled banners that read 'Australia Open to Refugees' and featured the twitter hashtag *#shutdownManus*. Two young women from among the protesters jumped onto the perimeter of the court, carrying banners and wearing t-shirts with similar slogans. This was all over twitter really quickly, and went global the next day. The best coverage, how very 2015, was given by [Vice](#). Yet any home spectator relying

on the free-to-air broadcast, the statements of the organisers, the players, or subsequent reports of the final would have wondered in vain what had occurred, or why, or why it might be worth considering. Most onshore media fell into line, and stayed silent, in contrast to the sustained and favourable coverage given to Andy Murray's 'hottie' Kim Sears and her 'Parental Advisory: Explicit Content' [t-shirt](#) – while kids on Manus are permanently barred from ever attending Rod Laver Arena.

In the years in which boats recognised as Suspected Illegal Entry Vehicles (SIEVs) were stopped by hardline border security measures, preparations for the solicited of arrival the Significant Investor Visa, the SIV, continued. With the SIV, invest five million in selected ways and you're guaranteed permanent residency within four years. In the past year, approvals for SIVs have increased fivefold. As of July this year, the SIV will be joined by the Premium Investor Visa: invest 15 million, get permanent residency in one year.

The preference for SIVs and PIVs over SIEVs makes pragmatic economic sense, just as it makes good politics for populists and good vision for Channel 7. But it also means that citizenship is for sale, which makes moral arguments against asylum seekers hypocritical, while it also makes the Commonwealth morally equivalent to people smugglers. If you have the money, prospective client, I guarantee you Australia – so say the smugglers to those who would board an SIEV, so say the government with their SIVs.

If this continues as it has been, border security's next stage involves the gentrification of the entire Commonwealth along these lines. Just over the horizon, one imminent Australian future involves the muted coupling of enjoyment and restriction in a globally competitive national scale gated community. Welcome aboard, and just hope you stay wealthy enough to remain welcome.



Il Gruppo di Portici

il Meridione alle origini della sociologia italiana

Charlie Barnao

Introduzione

Questo articolo ha per oggetto la ricostruzione del primo periodo di vita del cosiddetto gruppo di Portici¹. Mi riferisco a quel gruppo di studiosi che avevano la propria sede alla Facoltà di Agraria di Portici², e che – nel periodo dall'immediato dopoguerra fino ai primi anni Sessanta – sono stati un punto di riferimento importante per gli studiosi italiani e per quelli stranieri in una serie di studi interdisciplinari nei campi dell'economia, della politica agraria, della botanica, dell'agronomia e della sociologia.³

Qualcuno li ha definiti un gruppo di amici, qualcun altro un gruppo di studiosi all'avanguardia; per altri ancora si trattava di un gruppo di folli. Per qualcuno, addirittura, erano un gruppo di collaboratori della C.I.A. Per noi e per tanti altri si è trattato di un gruppo di scienziati che, a vario titolo e da diversi approcci disciplinari e punti di vista, con il loro lavoro hanno gettato le basi della sociologia italiana.

Mi occuperò di alcuni aspetti delle fasi iniziali della vita del gruppo riferita ai primi lavori di quegli studiosi che hanno seguito una prospettiva strettamente *multidisciplinare*⁴. Cercherò, inoltre, di mettere in risalto anche alcuni aspetti legati alle relazioni quotidiane tra i membri del gruppo, in particolare tra i più giovani studiosi e il loro capo carismatico e maestro, Manlio Rossi-Doria.

Le origini del gruppo

La vita del gruppo iniziò alla fine degli anni Quaranta quando Manlio Rossi-Doria, a quel tempo commissario straordinario all'Istituto Nazionale di Economia Agraria, dopo la Liberazione poté finalmente riprendere la sua attività scientifica alla Facoltà di Agraria di Portici. Entrò inizialmente come professore incaricato, diventando nel 1948 professore ordinario, dopo avere vinto il primo concorso regolare a cattedra [Lengyel Rossi-Doria 1991, 289].

Rossi-Doria si guadagnò presto, all'interno della Facoltà, la qualifica di maestro. Il "maestro" Rossi-Doria (per alcuni il "professore", per altri ancora "don Manlio"), unendo alcune caratteristiche carismatiche con altre doti di luminare in diversi campi di studio, riuscì in poco

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¹ Ringrazio il prof. Gilberto Marselli, responsabile della Sezione di Sociologia del gruppo di Portici fino alla fine degli anni Sessanta, per la sua disponibilità e per le preziose indicazioni fornite per ricostruzione della storia del gruppo.

² Centro in provincia di Napoli, 8 km a SE del capoluogo, sulle pendici occidentali del Vesuvio, che costituisce ormai un quartiere industriale e residenziale di Napoli.

³ Normalmente i termini maggiormente utilizzati per definire l'insieme di persone legate ai fatti di Portici in oggetto sono quelli di "Centro di Portici" o "Scuola di Portici", a seconda che si voglia sottolineare un particolare aspetto storico o un tipo organizzativo specifico. In questo lavoro preferisco utilizzare il termine "gruppo" per sottolineare l'informalità degli aspetti organizzativi dei primi anni di lavoro e la dimensione relazionale tra gli attori del gruppo.

⁴ Sul tema della multidisciplinarietà legata all'attività del gruppo di Portici si vedano, tra gli altri: Costabile [2008]; Costabile e De Benedictis [2004]; Pugliese [1991].

tempo a formare un solido e motivato gruppo di studiosi, dai laureandi ai ricercatori, che nel giro di pochi anni avrebbero preso il nome di gruppo di Portici. I primi componenti del gruppo furono economisti agrari: giovani laureati in economia e in politica agraria (ricordiamo, tra gli altri, Fedele Aiello, Paolo Buri, Angerio Filangieri e Domenico Viggiani) provenienti dall'Osservatorio di Economia Agraria per la Campania, Calabria e Molise, e giovani laureandi (tra cui Gilberto Marselli). In varie fasi successive si aggiunsero, e talvolta subentrarono al gruppo iniziale, altri studiosi tra cui Salvo Zeuli, Lucio Selvaggi, Massimo Giordano, Carlo

Cupo, Enrico Calamita, Vincenzo Faenza, Michele Anello, Ciro Borrelli, Bruno Biancheri, Luigi Coccioli, Carlo Aiello, Adolfo Dalia, Giuseppe Orlando, Giuseppe Barbero, Gabriele Gaetani, Antonio Zezza, Gian Enrico Marciani, Francesco de

Tema di studio centrale del Gruppo, fin dal suo nascere, fu la questione meridionale, analizzata attraverso diverse discipline: economia, sociologia, antropologia culturale, psicologia sociale, geografia, storia

Stefano, Guido Fabiani.

Tema di studio centrale del Gruppo, fin dal suo nascere, fu la questione meridionale, analizzata attraverso diverse discipline: economia, sociologia, antropologia culturale, psicologia sociale, geografia, storia. Le profonde motivazioni si manifestavano attraverso un radicale e inscindibile impegno sociale e politico. Fra i tanti episodi, si può ricordare come nell'immediato dopoguerra Manlio Rossi-Doria fosse impegnato in un'accessissima campagna elettorale in Basilicata, nella lista del Partito d'Azione, con Guido Dorso, Carlo Levi ed altri [Marselli 1990].

Riti ed informalità

Il Gruppo era strutturato con una gerarchia precisa, un percorso di accesso per i nuovi adepti, e veri e propri riti che rafforzavano il senso di appartenenza dei suoi membri [Marselli 1990]. Tra i più famosi possiamo ricordare il tradizionale "colloquio di iniziazione", durante il quale Rossi-Doria offriva uno dei suoi famosi sigari, un Toscanello, allo studente che chiedeva di accedere al Gruppo, spiegandogli come lo si fa scricchiolare per riconoscerne la qualità. Si possono anche ricordare le partite di calcio al Parco Gussone superiore della Facoltà, nelle quali il maestro era impegnato nel ruolo di capitano di una delle due squadre, sempre molto esigente nei confronti di quanti giocavano dalla sua parte, "ma anche — e ancor più — nei confronti degli avversari, continuamente incitati ad essere sportivamente più aggressivi" [Marselli 1990].

Le riunioni del gruppo si svolgevano, spesso, in luoghi informali come ad esempio la trattoria-bettola di don Nicolino ad Ercolano. Si trattava di incontri nei quali si sviluppavano relazioni produttive e profonde, espressione di un vero e proprio fermento culturale sullo sfondo di una fitta rete di legami sociali, politici e scientifici [Marselli 1991].

Tra gli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta, si formò intorno al gruppo una rete multidisciplinare di studiosi italiani e stranieri che facevano capo all'accademia, a riviste scientifiche di rilievo, a gruppi politici, a organizzazioni scientifiche di diverse discipline.

Le reti del gruppo

Tra gli studiosi italiani in connessione con il Gruppo si annoverano antropologi culturali (ricordiamo i legami con Ernesto de Martino — militante di sinistra dedito allo studio etnografico delle popolazioni contadine del Sud Italia — e Tullio Seppilli — antropologo medico che collabora con de Martino e orienta le proprie ricerche nello studio della complessa relazione tra il "biologico" e il "sociale"), psicologi sociali (Luciano De Rita e i suoi studi sui contadini lucani), economisti (Claudio Napoleoni e i suoi studi focalizzati sull'analisi del pensiero classico e sui problemi dello sviluppo del Mezzogiorno) e storici (Giuseppe Galasso, accademico e

giornalista, autore di numerose pubblicazioni sulla storia del Meridione).

Tra le riviste, vanno ricordate *il Mulino* (rivista di cultura e di politica fondata nel 1951 dal cui gruppo iniziale, nel 1954, avrebbe poi preso vita la casa editrice di Bologna), *Nord e Sud* (rivista di politica e cultura fondata da Francesco Campagna nel 1954 a Napoli) e *Terza Generazione* (rivista fondata da un gruppo di giovani cattolici di cui ricordiamo, tra gli altri, Bartolo Ciccardini e Ubaldo Scasselati).

Il Gruppo intrecciò relazioni particolarmente significative con molte organizzazioni culturali e politiche. Tra le altre sono da menzionare l'Associazione per lo sviluppo dell'industria nel Mezzogiorno (SVIMEZ), costituita nel 1946 dall'allora ministro dell'industria Morandi, e il Movimento di Comunità, inizialmente movimento culturale e successivamente anche partito politico, fondato dall'imprenditore Adriano Olivetti nel 1948.

Intense furono anche le relazioni con studiosi stranieri, in larga parte legati alla scienze sociali statunitensi (tra i primi arrivati a Portici ricordiamo: Pitkin, Peck, Banfield e Friedmann), che avrebbero dato grande impulso e vitalità al Gruppo sia per quanto riguarda l'apparato teorico-metodologico degli studi sul Mezzogiorno, sia per ciò che riguardava i contatti strategici per collaborazioni e successivi progetti con l'accademia d'oltreoceano.

Il Meridione

E fu proprio "l'allargamento dell'orizzonte analitico" connesso alla "esigenza di uscire dai ristretti ambiti disciplinari" che portò il Gruppo a interessarsi in modo particolare alle ricerche sociologiche, portatrici di contributi significativi per lo studio e l'analisi delle problematiche legate al Mezzogiorno. Alla sociologia veniva chiesto supporto per comprendere i processi di "esodo agricolo", "le grandi migrazioni, i nuovi rapporti tra agricoltura e industria, il mutato carattere del rapporto tra città e campagna" [Pugliese 1991, 329-330].

In particolare la ricerca su Scandale — Comune in provincia di Crotone in cui, tra il 1954 e il 1956, Rossi-Doria condusse un'inchiesta sulla Riforma agraria — fu una delle prime importanti occasioni che portarono il gruppo a confrontarsi con i metodi della ricerca sociologica che, a quel tempo, muoveva i primi passi in Italia [cfr. Lengyel Rossi-Doria 1991].

Studiare in questo modo il Sud significava tanto esprimere motivazioni politiche quanto sviluppare nuove tecniche e metodologie d'indagine. In una lettera del 1952, Rossi-Doria scriveva: "Il mio piano di lavoro e di vita può avere senso soltanto se riesce ad essere al servizio di quelle mete alte. Ma se fossero troppo alte? Se non riuscissi a dar ordine, continuità, nerbo, coraggio a quell'azione? Finire autore di due buoni libri, professore riverito, domani senatore autorevole, mentre i contadini continuassero laggiù ad esser bestie da soma e questa plebe cittadina in mezzo alla quale vivo qui a Napoli continuasse a vivere senza civiltà e senza speranza, significherebbe aver fatto fallimento, aver mancato al compito" [cit. in Lengyel Rossi-Doria 1991, 307]. L'impegno politico trovava così la massima estrinsecazione in un corrispondente impegno meridionalista [cfr. Marselli 1990; Pugliese 1991; Costabile 2008].

Conclusioni

Si conclude il nostro breve viaggio nel passato, alle origini della sociologia italiana. Sotto l'attenta guida di un capo carismatico come il prof. Rossi-Doria il gruppo di Portici si è distinto per alcune caratteristiche fondamentali: apertura internazionale, collaborazione interdisciplinare, legame stretto tra attività di formazione e attività di ricerca, un'attenzione particolare alla metodologia della ricerca sociale [Costabile 2008, 33].

Nel corso degli anni il gruppo di Portici ha costituito, così, una vera e propria "scuola" [Tiryakian 1986] formando una "comunità reale" di ricercatori professionisti che è riuscita a formulare un programma di ricerca scientifica multidisciplinare ed ha dato vita a un fenomeno eccezionale all'interno del panorama della sociologia italiana.

Ma questi aspetti da soli non sono sufficienti a spiegare l'importanza del Gruppo e il clima culturale che è riuscito a generare, se non si considerassero le costanti e profonde

motivazioni legate all'impegno sociale e politico da parte dei suoi membri. La questione meridionale e la costante attenzione ai temi della povertà e della emarginazione sociale nel sud del nostro paese hanno caratterizzato il continuo e convinto coinvolgimento politico e il ruolo *pubblico* [cfr. Burawoy 2007] degli studiosi del gruppo.

Forse possiamo concludere sottolineando e ricordando ancora una volta l'entusiasmo e le profonde motivazioni politiche e sociali del Gruppo di Portici, nella consapevolezza di vivere oggi in un periodo storico particolare per la sociologia italiana. Un periodo di profonda crisi per ragioni che vengono, da più parti, attribuite ad alcuni fattori principali: snobismo e disimpegno politico [cfr. Barnao 2009]; integralismo metodologico — se non addirittura *scientismo* [cfr. Marradi 2014] — e sottomissione della sociologia alle scienze naturali (come la biologia) [cfr. Maturò 2014; Marradi 2014]; settentrionalismo [cfr. Marradi 2014], all'interno di un generale contesto di politiche universitarie estremamente penalizzanti per gli atenei del sud Italia [cfr. Baccini 2015; Pujia 2015].

L'augurio che ci facciamo è che la sociologia italiana riscopra, valorizzi e promuova modalità di ricerca e motivazioni che sono nel suo specifico DNA e che possiede già in sé e nella sua storia. Per una riscoperta delle radici che può, forse, ridare vitalità a una disciplina in crisi.

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Exercises in Urban Reconnaissance

Lorenzo Tripodi

Exercises in Urban Reconnaissance is a toolbox to examine and disentangle urban complexities. Not the city, not the urban territory, not the urbanization process but the irreducible condition produced by the dialectical relation and the semantic stratification resulting from these factors. *EX* is the result of the fragmented and rambling activity of the *oginoknauss* collective and its individual members, which produced across the years a constant drift among different languages, perspectives and disciplinary approaches to the urban. An activity too transversal and instinctive to find acknowledgement in the academic context, too convivial and anti-ideological to avoid being suspect to the activist milieu, not enough elusive nor commercial to catch on the art world. Started as an anthological project resuming *dérives*, seminars and artworks, it turned into a compendium of ways to investigate the urban, its territories, its meanings and interpretations.

EX takes the form of a collection of sixty-four different definitions of the word “city”, each based on a different concept or disciplinary approach, each accompanied by a related exercise for a spatial/conceptual exploration according to that specific perspective. True and complex in itself, every single definition of city is also simultaneously partial and unable to fully explain its object. The word “city” is adopted here more as a catalyser and a provocation than an object in itself: the essential irreducibility of the complexities it implies and reconnects is exactly the only possible focus of the project.

Started with the objective to be published as a book, *EX* found its natural offset in an [interactive web device](#) enhancing the hyper-textual nature of the content. The 64 keywords arranged and displayed as a circle encompass the urban field, delineating a cognitive territory open to exploration and discussion. Accordingly, each keyword, each definition and associated exercise, is a possible entry point for the assessment of the causal (and casual) relations constituting the postulated urban complexity. The definitions are linked each other in the text and in the website, allowing the reader/explorer to circumnavigate and intersect the multiplicity of connections between morphological, cultural, economical, political and psychological factors influencing, determining and defining urban life, form and discourse. The initial purpose of the project was to reconcile a psycho-geographical attitude to getting lost into the interstitial and heterotopical territories of the metropolis with a rather analytical necessity to expose and criticise spatial production as an essential battlefield under global capitalism. The result went beyond expectations in establishing a matrix of constitutive elements of urbanity allowing a holistic examination of its multiple interrelations and dependencies.

After emerging initially from a brainstorm as a random collection of possible interpretations of the word ‘city’, the number of exercises went on steady growing until the decision to stop at sixty-four. The mathematic appeal of the exponential number is not just a numero-

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logical fascination. It finds plenty of suggestive parallels in nature and literature, starting from the combinations of codons in the dna, and of the hexagrams in the I-Ching divinatory book. The cosmological dimension of the project – to be taken with a dose of lightness and irony – pays tribute as well to literary experiments like Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, and the work of Perec and other members of *Oulipo*.

The successive reorganisation of the materials let emerge surprising symmetries and meaningful patterns. The wheel is divided in four quadrants with 16 exercises each. The

This project is the result of an obstinate flânerie into planetary urbanisation. It is a diary filled with curiosities and practical investigations into the substance of the urban condition

first, named *formation*, gathers basic foundational elements of the urban ontology, i.e. water, matter, nature, people, market, infrastructure, dwelling, form, architecture, public space, etc.

The second – *transformation* – is dedicated to the urban as

a process, approaching phenomena from their dynamic transformative capacity, i.e. production, stratification, neglect, transport, flows, education, rhythm, cycles, food, waste. The third quadrant, *appropriation*, is the more exquisitely political domain including such elements as power, rules, property, commodity, segregation, contestation, surveillance, memory, places, estrangement, governance, commons, etc. The final set tackles the *representation* aspect, examining names, classifications, signs, perception, knowledge, data, communication, art, narrative, words. . .

The 64 definitions serve as the starting point for as many exercises proposed to the reader, challenged to observe, assess and represent the urban context from a specific perspective, and to single out particular elements, rhythms or systems concurring in the production of the overall urban identity. Each exercise considers the necessity of maintaining a holistic gaze on the complexity of urban reality. At the same time, each suggests the adoption of a specific vantage point to bring depth and contrast to vision. Finally, each chapter is accompanied by notes, images and graphic suggestions from the authors' travelogues. They are not meant to provide a complete elaboration, rather, to slightly suggest possible interpretations of the exercise. These are fragments from a divagation around the global city, attempts at capturing the city's breath. They are simultaneously excerpts from a biographical account of interests and passions, and lived and productive experiences. Some of these explorations have been fully developed, others are merely a draft or something imagined.

This project is the result of an obstinate *flânerie* into planetary urbanisation. It is a diary filled with curiosities and practical investigations into the substance of the urban condition. It is a stroll through psychological urban territories reflecting on the relentless process of concretion and erasure that moulds the city and a decryption of stratifying remnants and memories. It is a critical disentangling of the forces, currents and shocks making and unmaking the city and the urbanized world.

The ambitious aim is, after all, to establish a new discipline, or rather a trans-disciplinary approach named *Urban Reconnaissance*. Reconnaissance is a term mainly employed in a military context. It reflects the necessity of a deep knowledge of the field of operation in order to dominate it strategically. But deeper than that, in the way we want to understand it, the discipline of urban reconnaissance has its etymological origin in the latin *recognoscere*, literally knowing again, that transmits the sense of how the knowledge of a place is essentially resonance, recognition of patterns, rhythms and recurrences which are primarily known to our body.

Urban reconnaissance seizes the invocation coming from the late Henri Lefebvre for the need of a new discipline of Rhythmanalyse, "with the objective, among others, of

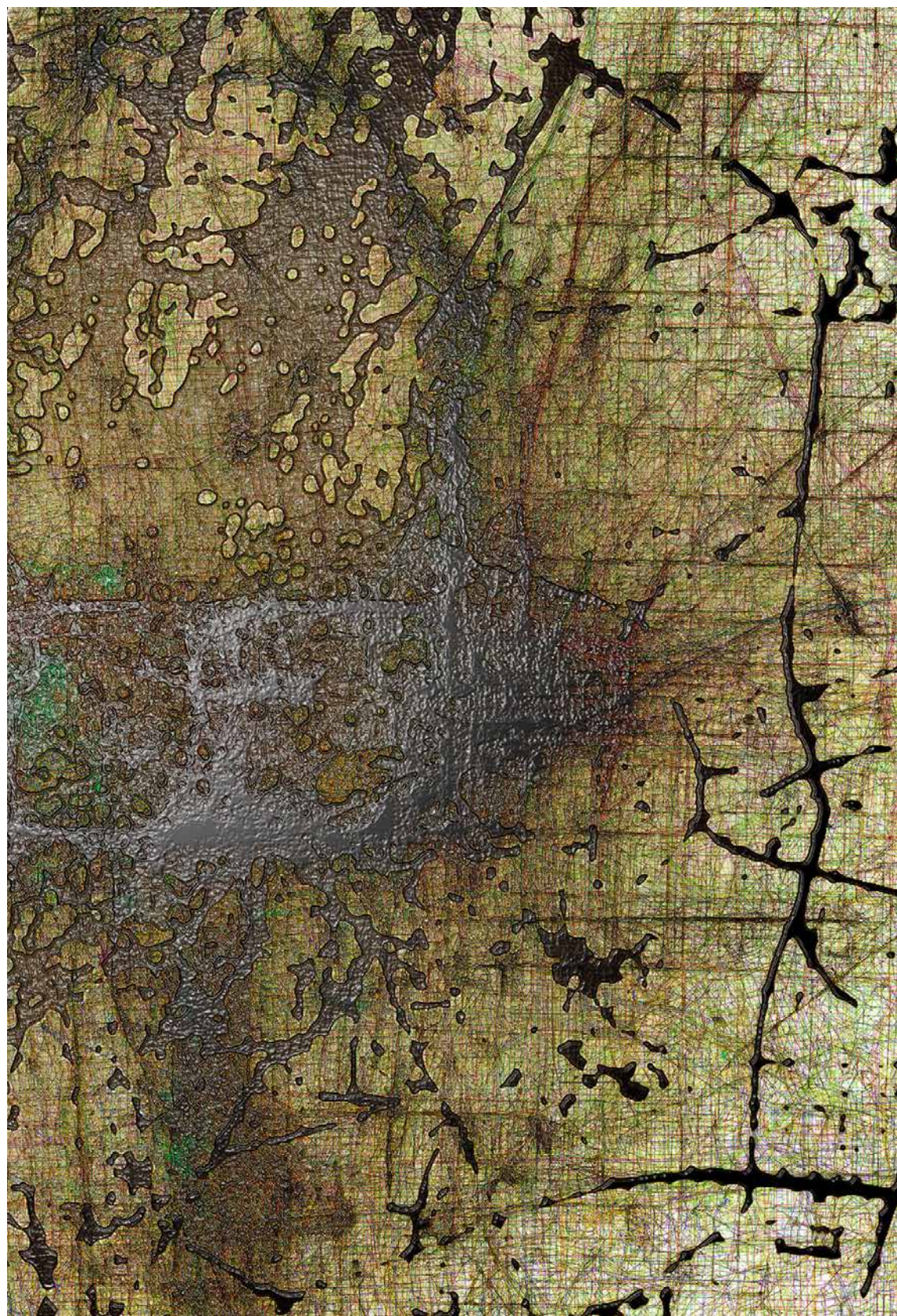
separating as little as possible, the scientific from the poetic"¹. The portrait of he makes the Rhythmanalist is that of a stroller "with his thoughts and his emotions, his impressions and wonders (...) more sensitive to times than to spaces, to moods than to images, to the atmosphere than to particular events, he is strictly speaking neither psychologist, nor sociologist, nor anthropologist, nor economist; however, he borders on each of these instruments in turn and is able to draw on the instruments that the specialist use" (*ibid.*).

Exercises in Urban Reconnaissance is an attempt to set a similar trans-disciplinary agenda putting the accent on the urban context as the epicentric space-time where human, natural and cosmic rhythms interlace in the search for a holistic eurhythmia. You can read this project as a literary work, as a manifesto or as manual of geography, no matter: it is a tool for reading cities as they were books and to explore books as they were territories. This is a pilot book for travellers who enjoy drifting in the city, a portolan chart transmitted to other navigators of the urban stream.

Since its first publication on the web, the interactive device has been used as a tool for leading workshops, seminars and specific research projects, many of them documented in the related [Urban Reconnaissance blog](#). Employed in different contexts, ranging from Northern European metropolises to sprawling territories of Southern Mediterranean coasts or small towns in the Caribbean islands, it demonstrated a great flexibility in encompassing both the common denominators of urbanization processes at planetary scale and the specificities emerging in each given local territory. It revealed also substantial capacity to include and stimulate discussion among groups with diverse profiles, overcoming specific scholarly/academic publics and serving as a dialogical basis for users of any culture, education and age background. Such a seminar activity has been ultimately the opportunity to check against concrete situations the set of definitions and exercises, and to steadily improve formulations and classificatory grid.

At the moment of the publication of this piece, the website is on the verge to be updated with a revised version of the text including few new definitions, and the printed book issue is in advanced editing phase.

¹ Lefebvre H. (2004) *Rhythmanalysis. Space, Time and Everyday Life*. London, New York: Continuum, p.87.



The Animistic Moment

Clarice Lispector, Louis Kahn and a reassembling of materialities

**Mattias
Kärholm**

Introduction

How can agency be delegated to things as a productive strategy in the context of making? Let us consider two insightful examples: the first one provided by Clarice Lispector, in particular her novels *The Passion According to G.H.* (1964) *A Breath of Life* (posthumous and incomplete); the second comes from Louis Kahn and his work on the *Indian Institute of Management* (IIM) in Ahmedabad (Srivastava 2009). Both examples invite a reflection on anthropomorphism/animism in a relational ontology of material agency, where a certain part of an assemblage is deliberately made into a critical and transformative mediator — a process of *actantialisat*ion, to use Latour's (1997) concept.

The conceptual borders between animism and anthropomorphism are blurry. Anthropomorphism is Greek and denotes something (non-human) that takes on human characteristics; animism is often used to describe the phenomena of giving souls to non-humans, but depending on what one means with the concept of soul, this is a definition that almost totally overlaps with the one of anthropomorphism. Recent theories of material agency and posthumanism (taking its cue from philosophers such as De Landa, Latour, Stengers, Bennett, Braidotti) has opened up for a transvaluation of valid methods for knowledge production in science and research. It has also opened up for a retake on one of the oldest and perhaps most well-known (and frowned upon) tradition in architectural theory: the anthropomorphic perspective. Anthropomorphism was strongly criticised during the 20th century, expelled from research and science, and for understandable reasons. Human history is full of negative examples of the opposite: the instrumentalisation of human beings and the transforming humans into objects (Kopytoff 1986). However, the anthropomorphic perspective (through this 'guilt by association') may have been discarded too easily.

The popular process of demystifying things, Bennett (2010) suggests, often just leads to the revealing of something human, other-to-the-object: humans are not reducible to things, but neither are things reducible to human action or intentions. Clarice Lispector also defends her animistic strategy in a similar way: "When I speak of things I'm not reducing life to the material, rather I am humanizing the inert" (Lispector 2012:142).

A similar reasoning has been developed by Isabelle Stengers (2011) following Latour's notion of agency as something distributed among human and non-human actors (Latour 1999; 2005). No one acts alone, in 'splendid isolation', but all actions are produced as relations between several actors. All meaning and agency are produced through relations, thus we are always already in the middle of a crowd, and one needs to trace all kinds of actors that make a difference to the situation, and not just (as is often done) actors with intention or motivation. We exist through our very participation in assemblages. It is only through these that beings are animated at all.

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'I am the night' (Clarice Lispector)

There are perhaps few better examples of someone deliberately using animistic strategies in writing than the Brazilian author Clarice Lispector. For Lispector, the human was never at the centre of the world (Moser 2009:220). Lispector animates the world and makes it her equal. In *The Passion According to G.H.*, Lispector describes the transformation of a woman (G.H.), confronting (and later eating part of) a cockroach in the room of her recently fired housemaid

Architecture does not only reduce us, it also brings new things onto the table. Architecture animates us

Janair. This starts a transformation process that Braidotti has described as the crossing of "a series of thresholds that are markers of difference, of otherness: social class, ethnicity, gender and species" (Braidotti 2011: 116). At the core of the

novel lies a passion for life and an openness of G.H. to both give, receive and transform.

A Breath of Life is the last and philosophically perhaps also most straight forward books of Lispector. Lispector once said that: "If I had given a title to my life it would be: in search of the thing itself" (Lispector in Moser 2009:267), and in this book she takes the task seriously, explicitly setting up a "Story of things" within the novel itself (Lispector 2012:99). The book is written as a dialogue between the author and Angela Pralini (a Lispector alter ego), whereby Angela declares: "You are my lit candle. I am the night" (Lispector 2012:110). Angela opens up for a symmetry between all beings. When it comes to animals it is stated that Angela's dog is "a person trapped by a cruel condition" (Lispector 2012:51). Later on Angela states that "A thing is a specialized and immobilized animal" (Lispector 2012: 101), and it soon becomes clear that Angela thinks that all beings, whether humans, animals or things have something in common. In the second half of the novel Angela also starts to give more specific remarks about things, explaining that: "Things make the following noise: chpt! chpt! chpt! A thing is a mangled being. There is nothing more alone than a "thing" (Lispector 2012:104). Lispector then goes on to give us specificities about silver boxes, houses, clocks, iron guardrails, cars, trash cans and furniture:

The armchair is mute, it's fat, it's cosy. It greets every backside like any other. It's a mother. On the other hand the edge of a table is a fateful weapon. If you were thrown against it, you'd double over in pain. A round table is sly. But it presents no danger: it's a bit mysterious, it smiles slightly. (Lispector 2012:117)

There has been a debate on whether Lispector is an essentialist or not (essentialist readings seem to be fewer, but see Hedrick 1997). Cixous argues that Lispector "tries to be as essentialist as possible, even if there is no essence" (Cixous in Lispector 1989: xix). According to Castillo, Lispector wants "to exhaust an object or a life by revealing its essential nudity is a death sentence" (in Hedrick 1997:50). This would be very far from Lispector, as she is always looking for life, even in death. She keeps questions open and restrains herself from conclusions. In *The Passion*, the author keeps the interstitial positions of becoming-animal and becoming-human, entangled in an on-going struggle with problems such as the formation of corporality and vision (cf. Goh 2012).

Lispector was a well-known reader of Spinoza (Moser 2009:109 ff). Nietzsche, Bergson and Deleuze have been pointed out as other references (Ballan 2008, Braidotti 2011, Goh 2012, Ittner 2005). Indeed, there is a perspective of immanence and becoming in her writing. In *The Passion* the struggle is not to delimit insides and outsides but to show how the insides and outsides of G. H. and the cockroach are folded into each other in a way that seems to make it impossible to speak of any absolute boundaries at all. Life or being cannot be grounded or contrasted to some higher transcendent category, rather, it is a pluralism of

equality, or 'pluralism as a monism' (Deleuze & Guattari 1987:20). Divinity for Lispector consists "in the absence of the distinction between my life and the absolutely indifferent, neutral process of life itself" (Ballan 2008: 553).

'The microbe wants to be a microbe' (Louis Kahn)

To jump from Lispector to the architect Louis Kahn might, at first, seem far-fetched. Kahn has often been regarded as a neo-Platonic and, in contrast to Lispector, a true essentialist, advocating architectural form as idea. Besides, Kahn's sensitivity was coupled with a quite dogmatic and traditional view of the architect, where he tended to argue for the architect as the sole interpreter of human space, downplaying the voices of the users. In *Form and Design* (1960; Kahn 2003: 65), he states:

A school or a specific design is what the institution expects of us. But School, the essence of the existence well, is what the architect should convey in his design.

According to Kahn, the architect sometimes needed to reinvent institutions and out-triumph the client (see Gutman 2010:108 ff). Even though Kahn's statements were often presented in rigid, anagogic and even dogmatic language, they were part of an on-going exploration of architectural elements. Here is where we can see some similarities with the strategy of the late Lispector. Kahn started, much like Angela Pralini, to produce new and quite specific collectives of materials and their new associated allies:

You should never make a space between columns with partition walls. It is like sleeping with your head in one room and your feet in another. (Kahn in Gutman 2010:100)

Srivastava (2009:214) reports a crucial event in the history of Kahn's professional career. On December 14, 1964, Kahn was working on the *Indian Institute of Management* (IIM). He came to inspect the building site and, disappointed by the result, realized that he, the architect, needed to be *better integrated* in the building process and with the people on site. The *Experimental Arch* was conceived to work with the materiality of the brick. During the process, many things about how the brick was to be used seemed to become clear. A new actor was produced: the *Kahn-brick*. A famous quote from the documentary *My Architect* (2003) says that 'if you ask the brick what it wants to be, then the brick answers that it wants to be an arch'. Kahn's strategy of putting his interventions with the brick into an anagogic language during his later years has been interpreted as an attempt to "communicate the experience of an active and symmetric exchange with materials" (Srivastava 2009:236).

One might agree or disagree with Kahn's rhetorics, but the idea was never to make the brick mute or to master it by inscribing it with a delegated essence. The point was to acknowledge the brick as an actor that brings something new and irreducible into the situation. Srivastava makes clear that Kahn was producing specific agencies rather than demasking essences (as however Kahn himself seems to claim):

The Experimental Arch was completed not as an exercise of translating abstract paper drawings onto real but inert material forms but instead as a "continuous happening" resulting from ceaseless and dialogic encounter with the material. (Srivastava 2009:218).

The brick was highlighted in a specific situation, as part of a specific network or assemblage, and it is the problematisation of the brick that I want to give Kahn credit for here, or, as his commentator Twobly (2003:11) summaries, "the point about Kahn is his search".

This search among inert things, I will here call 'the animistic moment'. It might be that the outcome can be described as a hybrid of Kahn and the brick, but the process was not simply hybridization. Neither in the case of Lispector nor of Kahn are we dealing with hybridization. It is not the blending of pre-fixed categories, rather, the dissolution of categories, a much more form-less folding of qualities into each other.

Nontheorizing

Georges Bataille once described how architecture, as "the ideal soul of society", petrified us, reduced us to our bones, and thus he explained the storming of the Bastille during the

French revolution as an “animosity of the people against the monuments that are their real masters” (Hollier 1995:48). But, architecture does not only reduce us, it also brings new things onto the table. Architecture *animates us*. One cannot become free through isolation and detachment. On the contrary, subjectivity is a process of *territorialisation* enacted through a series of different, sometimes overlapping assemblages (Brighenti 2010). This view of the mutual co-animation of associated actors is, as Stengers (2011: 192) suggested, important for animism. Thus, Kahn’s mistake was to reduce the plurality of the network to one isolated actor – the brick. The meaning of the brick is lost without a setting. With one brick alone we remain stuck in the trap of ‘the one’, like the essential one, the mystic one, etc. Hiding plurality might look like a way towards clarity, but most of all it is a way towards stagnation.

In *Agua Viva*, Lispector “follows movements of the body and enunciation, but it also follows a theme. Rather than a narrative order, there is an organic order” (Cixous 1990: 15). Lispector is “letting her body speak” (Folie 2011:194). One could perhaps even argue that Kahn at one point did the same, even though he then tried to stabilise this procedure into a narrative: what they are working with is what Stengers (2011:191) calls a “nontheoretical (theory: detached contemplation) awareness”. Latour has described something similar in his article “Trains of Thought” (1997). In certain situations seemingly obedient and mute things become *salient*. They go through a process of actantialisation, becoming mediating actors (rather than intermediary ones) clearly transforming the situation. Actantialisation is like a train wreck, where black boxed actors, mute and aligned, suddenly become visible and salient: the possibility of detached contemplation is now lost.

One could say that what Lispector and Kahn are investigating is the process of *actantialisation*. It is an experimental association to other networks, aligning the bricks of Ahmedabad with the arch, or a round table with slyness. It is a way of staying put in the question, keeping oneself to ‘the backside of objects’. The objects are formless and twisting monster, not yet finally or decisively abstracted and categorised; they can still be abstracted in new and unforeseen ways. G.H. and Angela Pralini surrender themselves to the immediate (cf. Goh 2012:125): it is a constant struggle *in situ* where the virtual is somehow made to sustain in the actual. The Deleuzian notion of *monster* is not a hybrid, a position of becoming, but the opening and actualization of new processes still saturated by indecision and possibilities (see Eriksson 2010:531). Such is the description of an intense situation of life that has yet to find its form, and as it is yet-to-become it can even take on situations and shapes that at a later stage might seem impossible to live or endure (cf. Erikson 2010:529). In a similar way, things are not always (if ever) mute, but can also take on un-thingly dimensions (both at the moment of investigation and in a rear-view).

The animistic moment

Kahn and Lispector were both masters in making the ordinary into extraordinary (cf. Conley 1990: xv). Both found a non-theoretical way of reassembling the material, a reshuffling within the given assemblages and networks through which they acted, experimenting in a process of *seeing without (yet) understanding*. This non-narrative association and rearranging of bodies and materialities, already in the middle of things, works by means of an intentional actantialisation; provoking and investigating the mediating and transformative role of an already entangled thing. Lispector took this much further than Kahn – she was an expert in staying put in the middle of crisis. But I would also invite to read Kahn from a more relativistic perspective – to read Kahn through the work of Lispector.

Louis Kahn has been the subject of some severe critique from Tafuri (1968; see Biraghi 2013). Kahn’s search for an absolute order within architecture was, for Tafuri, an anti-historic project, paradoxically an attempt at the end of history realized through the exploiting of history. Kahn tried to recover the mythic aspects of architecture through realizable utopias and

pseudo-monuments (Biraghi 2013: 65).

However, besides Kahn's essentialist claims, we also have his wish for the extraordinary, and the animist moments used as *in situ* architectural strategy. Kahn's own rhetoric was a not particularly good description of his own achievements. What Kahn ultimately produced was not the a-historical order of utopia, but something that nurtured the plurality of architectural forms and the heterogeneity of social institutions. In a way, Kahn used time as an open field, folding history into the future, just as much as he used beings as an open field folding things into humans. In the end, these processes of de-differentiation, this erasing of borders, can be seen as strategy of producing change and new species of space, not as a dethroning of architectural history, nor as a reduction of architecture into a single order, but as a creative reassembling of materialities.

Producing new sorts of not-yet-categorized spaces could be done through hybridization of different sort (like deliberately mixing 'the store' and 'the library', as in the construction of the London idea stores); it could also be done through a starting off with an established spatial sort and then specializing it, making it into a unique example of a kind (*singularisation*) only to desingularise it later on (like the example of Starbuck's starting a special kind of café in Seattle, then spreading it over the world). But Lispector and Kahn open up a third option – the animistic moment as a way forward. It is an actantialisatation opening for new associations and lee-ways between actors, potentially producing a new species of space – from the classic anthropomorphical species such as the caryatid and the atlant, to the Kahn-brick, or Lispector's sly round table.

Conclusions

Hybridization, *singularisation* and *animation* are related and sometimes deeply entangled processes, but they can also be distinguished. *Hybridization* is the blending of two (or more) categories, it works along the line of the pure – purification – and the mixed – hybridization (cf. Latour 1993). *Singularisation* works along the line of exchangeability and uniqueness, where singularisation means the process of becoming something unique, something unexchangeable, whereas the spreading of this by necessity involves a subsequent process of desingularisation (cf. Kopytoff 1986, Kärholm 2012). Finally, *animation* works along the line of actantialisatation, it is about the animation of an actor with a face or a body, an actor 'coming alive', becoming a *topos-kairos* (Latour 1997). By *face*, I mean a face that is possible to dissociate from a specific place on the human body, seeing it as an expressive surface/substance produced on any body (Casey 2007). This process entails the becoming of a living and moving body, a figuration, that also figurates my body or other associated bodies. This might include a certain aspect of danger. As intermediaries become mediators, their transformative powers increase and the process becomes undecided. Indecisiveness can be seen as coupled with a kind of grace, in the sense that you in some way make yourself a spokesperson for something else, while, at the same time, also let that something else be a spokesperson for you. To a certain extent, you put both yourself and the other at stake.

The animistic moment requires an unfolding that, rather than the biographical process of singularizing and writing the specific individual or type, or the blending existing stories through hybridization, must work *through bodies*. It cannot start with the biography of a thing (as Kopytoff would have it), like with the biography of the brick, or even of a specific brick, neither with a dialogue between voices. The animistic moments work with an organic order (the association and alignment of bodies) rather than a biographical, genealogical or dialectical order (the alignment of a narrative logic). It is a pre-contemplative practice of becoming, an in-between that to some extent has lost sight of its former categorical identities as well as of its future. "I am not speaking of the future," G.H. says, "I am speaking of a permanent nowness" (Lispector 1988: 140). It involves the association of events that not-just-yet can be aligned, a pre-actor-network of themed fragments, and a reassembling of the

material from within a situation, a revolt rather than a revolution (Jesi 2014).

Animism must here be a 'face-to-face' moment rather than a macro-perspective, situated rather than general. It is the folding of insides and outsides in a specific experiment, a provocation that through the temporary ignorance of borders actually ends up multiplying them.

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Know-space. Exploring the flows of know-how

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Guest Artist // Stanza



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