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EXPERIENCING EUROPEAN STREETS: TACTICS FOR A TRANSLOCAL NARRATIVE

Thesis submitted to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to obtain a PhD Degree in Culture Studies

By

Agata Wiórko da Câmara Caeiro

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Abstract

The thesis engages in the debate on the experience of a specific kind of streets as part of the cultural life of cities.

The density and richness of de Michel Certeau's pages on spatial practice and his ideas on the relation of walking with an appropriation of everyday tactics are an essential foundational perspective for this study. Unlike what is accepted in traditional history, de Certeau posits tactics not as subordinate to strategy but as opposed to it. Just like strategy presumes control, tactics appears as the purview of the non-powerful, and informality of experience as well.

In an era in which accelerated processes of consumption and gentrification require creation and cultural work to be responsible, there is an urgent need to combat processes that obscure the wealth and potential of the various layers that make up the urban environment and locality. The research undertaken in this thesis thus aims to understand the potential relevance of a new cultural concept - that of creative street - which is based on values and experiences to be shared among a community of partners, stakeholders and the public(s).

Making explicit the conceptual narrative mechanisms of an inspiring, inclusive and participatory approach of the street, the work delivers a specific and innovative framework. The research addresses topics such as place, street, walking, experience and narrative; operative notions such as creativity, learning, connectivity, locality, mobility, interface, experience; and eventually on the practice of walking in traditions such as the *flânerie*, strollology, the Situationist *dérive*, *errance*, and contemporary artistic experimentation. All these frames the proposal of a European 'cultural' street circuit or network as the stage for connected locality. The outcome is a translocal tactic connecting a nomad community, through an open cultural concept to be shared across diverse urban contexts, nevertheless facing the same globalization issues and a cultural horizon anticipated by both contemporary thought and artistic and literary wanderings. The case studies discussed in this thesis are streets in Portugal, Estonia, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands.

Resumo

A tese envolve-se no debate sobre a experiência de um tipo específico de ruas como parte da vida cultural das cidades.

A densidade e riqueza das páginas de Michel de Certeau sobre a prática espacial e as suas ideias sobre a relação do caminhar com tácticas de apropriação do quotidiano são uma perspectiva fundacional deste estudo. Ao contrário do que é comumente aceite, de Certeau coloca as tácticas não como subordinadas à estratégia, mas como opostas àquela. Tal como a estratégia pressupõe o controlo, a táctica aparece como o domínio dos não-poderosos, bem como da informalidade e da experiência.

Numa época em que processos acelerados de consumo e gentrificação requerem criação e trabalho cultural para serem responsáveis, há uma necessidade urgente de combater processos que obscurecem a riqueza e o potencial das várias camadas que compõem o ambiente urbano e a localidade. A investigação levada a cabo nesta tese visa assim compreender a potencial relevância de um novo conceito cultural - o de rua criativa - que se baseia em valores e experiências a partilhar entre uma comunidade de parceiros, partes interessadas e o(s) público(s).

Tornando explícitos os mecanismos narrativos conceptuais de uma abordagem inspiradora, inclusiva e participativa da rua, o trabalho fornece um quadro específico e inovador. A investigação aborda temas como lugar, rua, passeio, experiência e narrativa; noções operativas como criatividade, aprendizagem, conectividade, localidade, mobilidade, interface, experiência; e a prática do passeio em tradições várias – *flânerie*, strollology, a deriva Situacionista, *errance*, a experimentação artística contemporânea. Tudo isto enquadra a proposta de um circuito ou rede de ruas 'culturais' europeias como o palco para a localidade conectada. O resultado é uma táctica translocal que liga uma comunidade nómada, através de um conceito cultural aberto a ser partilhado em contextos urbanos

diversos, enfrentando, no entanto, as mesmas questões de globalização e um horizonte cultural antecipado tanto pelo pensamento contemporâneo como pelas deambulações artísticas e literárias. Os casos de estudo discutidos nesta tese são ruas em Portugal, Estónia, Itália, Espanha e Países Baixos.

Key words

Culture, Experience, *Flâneur*, Narrative, Place, Project, Streets, Tactics, Walking

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Summary

Introduction

> *[Do] contemporary city-dwellers discover in and often against current forms of urban order opportunities to appropriate their own cities, to create or even reinvent shared spaces and inhabiting practices based on cooperation?*
> **Stavros Stavrides**

Cities are made of elements like buildings and streets, façades and pavements – this is their immediate material expression in the urban form, their "concrete-ness" (Latham, 2017: 190), as well of a range of "apparently immaterial elements" (Ibid. 184) – such as culture. For the human realization of freedom could only have happened in the city, the space of organized social life, place of multiple possibilities, from material enrichment to cultural progress (Ritter, 2003).

This implies thinking in terms of *emergence* – despite being also organized and planned, cities are about "a complex of relations that lacks any underpinning structural logic" (Latham 2017, 190); of the *machinic* – "not as the outcome of, but the prerequisite of technology" (Ibid.); *diagrammatically* – in order to map imminent relations of power or propose generative devices for new urban practice (Ibid.); and finally in terms of *expressivity*: "Not expressive in the sense of an individual subject. Not just in terms of a festival or event. It is the expressiveness in terms of the emerging relations and event-ness of bodies and materials" (Ibid.).

Exploring "the emerging potentialities of resistance and creative alternatives beyond contemporary forms of domination in today's cities" (Stavrides, 2016: 1), one could start answering to Stavrides question by saying that in order for city-dwellers to be aesthetically sensitive and artistically creative, and in order to generate social interactions that activate a sense of creative engagement[1] with a specific set of streets, the very definition of what it means to be *urban* shall consider in itself the drive to *dis*-cover both the materialities and the immaterialities of urban life – maybe while developing a child's state of receptiveness and trust in the urban milieu, maybe through the emotion of allowingness (*Gelassenheit*).

[1] One sees here creative engagement as opposite to Bernard Stiegler's "*I-don't-give-a-fuckism* (*je-m'en-foutisme*), the tendency toward social irresponsibility; to neglect the long term for short term interests." See http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/pdf/Stiegler%20glossary.pdf.

Such processuality stands in opposition to immature or purely demanding and consumerist positions. Maybe the *flânerie* and other "psychotechniques" (after Stiegler)[2] allow to *walk the talk* and become the pre-text for a potentially nomadic narrative, connecting physically distant geographical points. This straightforward approach of streets as stages for connectivity, engagement and learning stands for a sensitive, participatory and tactical way to deal imaginatively[3] with the complexity of the *urban* (life, form, fabric, code, communication at large).

In order to generate the image of such a cultural horizon – to be shared among a range of urban players and agents –, what shaped this project has been the focus on the creative power which lies in the act of walking across the urban mesh. The study acknowledges the cultural meaning of the Modernist *flâneur* and successive transformations the figure would endure.

As a matter of fact, traversing the city space appears to be about offering a distracted, if not alienated, public a richer choice in terms of the possibilities for the experience of space to become both an aesthetic pleasure and a civic craft.

This said, concrete creative tensions addressed are 'place' and 'street', 'time' and 'space', 'locality' and 'connectivity, 'atmosphere' and 'experience', 'heritage' and 'authenticity', 'creativity' and 'communication', 'mobility' and 'the other', 'citizenship' and 'partisanship', 'participation' and 'literarity', 'portal' and 'horizon', 'culture' and 'narrative'. In the spirit of Chattopadhyay (2012: ix), these are terms I try to "defamiliarize" myself with, more than to blindly reify.[4]

They are arranged in a way that stresses specific combinations, as if to produce, from the multidimensional puzzle, the narrative image of an argumentarium's structure. In other words, the cartography of the covered fields generates a matrix that, while keeping its

[2] http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/pdf/Stiegler%20glossary.pdf

[3] Indeed, "If globalization is characterized by disjunctive flows that generate acute problems of social well-being, one positive force that encourages an emancipatory politics of globalization is the role of the imagination in social life" (Appadurai, 2001).

[4] "[…] the central problem with theorizing cities today is a 'paucity of vocabulary', but […] this does not mean we necessarily need new concepts, but instead to rethink – or 'defamiliarize' – ourselves with existing terms." (Chattopadhyay 2012, ix in McFarlane 2017, 178)

internal topology, is to remain open and dynamic: inviting for additional information (case studies) or bibliography to keep the cultural horizon of the proposal publicly ready for further appropriations. In this sense it is the result of a both humanist-literary and semio-phenomenological approach of the spatialized *socius*.

The motor of the research (case study) has been the contact with cultural organizations engaged in activities related to the form of the street. Between a closed set of cities what has been imagined, beyond the theoretical landscape, is an exemplary territorial scheme *threaded* across Europe's geography.

The streets that were chosen to be considered and re-imagined were in the outstart the object of my own empirical walking practice. In a very improvised way, a personal interpretation of the *flânerie* and the *dérive* is complemented with information gathered in subsequent interviews and questionnaires with local agents. My task has been to integrate the very specific cultural dynamics of a set of street-assemblages and to contribute for a future strategic networked programming of their activities, to be based on the tactics for transnational cooperation that shall be provided by a narrative interface.

This research is the result of a synthesis of perspectives coming from a range of authors related to the fields of Culture Studies (with elements of *Kulturkritik* and Cultural Studies), Urban Theory (with elements of architectural thought and theory, and Urbanism), Human Geography, Anthropology, Sociology, Philosophy (with a focus on Phenomenology and Aesthetics), Literary Studies and Communication Sciences – considering both theoretical landmarks and a variety of empirical research. My point is that this messy entanglement[5] is what ultimately will allow for a new cultural concept to foster a local narrative-based public experience of a multi-dimensional European streetscape.

Thinking of the possibility and cultural relevance of merging the notion and experience of the street, critically considering its identity, architecture and form, as a stage and source of

[5] See the debated notion of "messy research".

narratives to be made manifest by an aesthetic proposal and artistic projects, what moved me has been to explore the form of the street to let it feel other and look new.[6]

In other words, studying a handful of European streets, in order to let them resonate some sort of each other's essences and hegemony, the process learns from the knowledge of the historical identity of the particular places, the sensorial experience of their atmosphere and eventually the production (invention) of cultural memory[7].

This means acknowledging these streets a new layer of meaning, performing theoretical thought.[8] However, to praise theory doesn't necessarily mean to remain encapsulated in theoretical positions, as one learns from Latour's overtly "anti-theory" (Laurier, 2011: 276) positioning.

Theory is foremost a geography of portals through which any reader might enter a dialogue with ideas and cultural experiments. In this sense, certain streets – as socio-cultural *complexes* – may play a creative part in today's urban whole, enlivening the contemporary global city.

De Certeau, arguing for more than just critical observation, acknowledges that walking has a potentially creative role in one's life, underlining that a progressive discovering of it is interdependent of creating one's own biography. Walking is not only a crucial element in the narrative of one's history, but also of one's geography, as Benjamin acknowledges in the anonymous epigraphy to the entry on the *flâneur* in his Arcades Project[9] (Benjamin, 1999: 40).

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[6] "Traditional art worked on the level of form. Contemporary art worked on the level of context, framework, background, or of a new theoretical interpretation. But the goal is the same: to create a contrast between form and historical background to make the form look other and new." (Groys, 2008: 40)

[7] See http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/pdf/Stiegler%20glossary.pdf.

[8] "It is theory that enables the expression and performance of critical thought and intellectual advancement, important not only for the production of academic knowledge, but also in influencing how academics find out about cities through the methodologies the use, and, furthermore, in work which seeks to positively influence diverse audiences beyond universities." (Jayne and Ward, 2017: 1)

[9] "And I travel in order to get to know my geography." Benjamin quotes "a madman", in Marcel Réja, *L'Art chez les fous* (Paris, 1907), p. 131" (In Benjamin 1999, 40)

Urban walking can be seen as a form not only of "uncontained" (Goffmann, 1963) participation in the urban scape, but of immersive, total experience of the urb, one that becomes legible when cultural agents make a specific effort: to communicate the several modalities involved in such aesthetic. When those modalities are consciously apprehended as cultural tools, spectators/passersby become more involved and conscious users of space and eventually become spatial creators themselves.

Walkscapes is a notion coined by Francesco Careri (2017), through which walking appears as a tool to embody critical practices, a strategy to observe the landscape directly and eventually leading to a less trivial perception of it (and the production of art). Careri's work integrates the anachronisms of diverse walking aesthetics and practices, as well as the individual person-based experience of walking in our vision of the always-changing Contemporary City. Walking is a privileged way to listen to the world, to pay attention and to prepare one's capacity for understanding (Davila, 2002: 16).[10]

The very first inspiration for this dissertation was the both historical and rhetorical figure of the *flâneur* – a sophisticated and simultaneously laid-back gentleman wearing a cylinder hat, walking a turtle across the pavements of XIX century Paris. This description very much leads to a character that is an unhurried urban explorer, ethnologist of cityscape and life *connoisseur*. A self-aware, ambiguous, half-distanced, half-emotional figure, the flâneur "constitutes the type of an urban stroller who, strutting, posing, and lingering at fashion-able places, sought interesting angles on the humanity of the city dweller" (Amato, 2004: 124).

> Amongst the urban crowd, the *flâneur* managed to keep his distance socially by transforming physical proximity into *aesthetic* proximity (…). Purely for his own satisfaction, he narrated the world around him without letting reality interfere with the plot, coming to enjoy the strange and unfamiliar. (Clark and Doel, 2011: 51)

The historical relevance of the *flânerie* is that it offers models of experiencing the surrounding world. For Benjamin, who spotlighted the *flâneur* as an urban character, "This form of strolling presupposes three elements, or the presence of three conditions: city, crowd, and capitalism." (Gros, 2014: 175) This crowd is not any mass of epic energy, but everyone moving and gesturing around, with their contradictory interests, in anonymity, as extras in

[10] In the original: "Marcher deviant le moyen privilégié pour écouter le monde, y prêter attention, parce que se déplacer est aussi une façon de se mettre a entendre." (Davila 2002: 16)

the reign "of selling, and selling yourself" (Ibid. 177), today within the flickering realm of marketing and hyper-consumerism culture.

Analyzing today the *flâneur* he (or she – as the *flâneuse*) appears to remain somebody elusive, an ambiguous character, and this latter relates the social dimension of the *flânerie* with a set of cultural positions, architectural insights and artistic activities with critical potential. Indeed, "The urban stroller is *subversive*. He subverts the crowd, the merchandise and the town, along with their values" (Ibid. 177), just like "The *flâneur* subverts solitude, speed, dubious business politics and consumerism" (Ibid. 178).

Taking the example of a few urban interventions that can be considered as an actualization of the *flânerie*, the thesis develops its own awareness about the tension between art and communication while addressing cultural concepts and above all artistic languages and utterances that work out as cultural seismographs of urban life.

The fact is that to get lost in the city has a concrete potential for expression and change. For the Situationist Vaneigen,

> The capitalist education of space is nothing other than education in a space where one loses one's shadow, where one ends up getting lost by dint of seeking to find oneself in what one is not. What a fine example of tenacity for all those teachers and other licensed organizers of influence. (Vaneigen, 1961)[11]

The richness of the concept of 'lostness' points also to the one of anabasis, which is related to a sort of "'street-smartness'" or 'migrancy-smartness'" (Bal, 2016: 61) – a productive response to one's experience of lostness. At each step, one shall not forget that the experience of the city, since the very first urbanizations, keeps shaping Human life (Stébé and Marchal, 2010: 3).

Walking is since Lettrism acknowledged as a political and aesthetical medium which might counterbalance the power of the urban (capitalist) system. And this is an approach of the city I want to 'update', under new conditions – Late Capitalism's development, the neoliberal environment, which is epitomized by phenomena like the so-called creative Economy, the Creative City or the Smart Cities movement. In fact, just like the *dérive* has been an effort

[11] https://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/comments.html

in surpassing the Surrealist *déambulation* (Careri, 2017: 73), a new cultural project concerned with the connectivity between diverse streets' *genius loci* is a way to take the situationist anti-bourgeois *dérive* to another dimension of the 'same' cultural endeavor: to redeem the human core of our contemporary urban condition, where streets are built – *apparently* at least – of the entanglement of images coming from branding, marketing, and specifically urban policies, place branding actions and territorial marketing strategies.

Furthermore, between the will to experience poetry, the unconscious and luck in Surrealism, and the more scientific approach of Lettrism and Situationism, an experimental post-Situationist approach is possible, where urban theory meets the narrative potential of Literature and Contemporary Light Art. In fact, the situations constructed by the *dérive* and Situationism in general, linking poetry to scientific knowledge, intuition to rules, are models to articulate space and time, modulating reality (to rephrase Ivan Chtcheglov [as Gilles Ivain], in his challenging *Formulaire pour un urbanisme nouveau*, published in 1958[12]).

Again, it is in this sense that I shall select not only a series of authors and ideas, as well as a few artworks and literary works, and comment on them to show how they embody spatio-political issues and maybe the flickering image of a widely inclusive cultural horizon.

The point is, still after Chtcheglov, that dwellers, and I include here the new breed of nomad inhabitants of the Global City, have the right and the power to change their urban environment by means of their will. And it starts with the motile capacity to get lost in the urban realm by means of specific techniques which were advanced by walkers for centuries (millennia) and tactically developed by the Situationists' *urban geographies* (Debord).
Furthermore, it might be that all is about being radically ironic (Morton, 2016) and free enough to reinvent the rules of the established city, grounding them in localities which aspire to be glocal in their own terms. This is a way to test the limits and the unexplored potential of the ways the Situationist practices were focused on *loosing useful time* in order to gain a ludic and constructive experience of the urban everyday.

[12] For Gilles Ivain [Ivan Chtgheglov] (1953), "The architecture of tomorrow will be a means of modifying present conceptions of time and space. It will be a means of *knowledge* and a *means of action*. The architectural complex will be modifiable. Its aspect will change totally or partially in accordance with the will of its inhabitants." (https://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/presitu/formulary.html)

In the ocean of images which is today Debord's "Society of the Spectacle" (1967) (comprising the virtualization of aesthetic experience, the commodification of places and developed systems for surveillance and control), to think along the successive insights of one's research might be a sort of para-kibernetic narrative infrastructure, pointing out the need for dwellers and nomads, municipal officers and institutional representatives to look at streets with a different sentiment and acknowledge their complex realities more fully.

I see here errancy as a term defining one essential and foundational aspect of Human existence, what leads to the importance of walking as a form of individual and collective urban intervention, which may assume the character of ludic explorations, experimental political gestures or tentative steps toward the critique of the built environment. Modern errancy, as established by movements such as Dada or Surrealism, is an inviting myth concerning the connection between urban banality and the urban unconscious. It is a model to inhabit the urban reality by means of psychological (self-made) research.

It is in tandem with this tradition that in Modernity the city starts to be acknowledged as a massive space to be (re)appropriated. Latour speaks of an experimental Modernity[13]: a bold and delicate, provocative and subtle approach of urban space, quite aware of the dangers of the game.

In any case, symbolic gestures (in my case, progressively to build the semblance of a new kind of urban connectivity based on walking, to be experienced as a network of cultural streets) have the power to expand their influence beyond their quite humble initial scale. Like an art object, they travel wherever the public feels to and grasps the sense they produce. I follow here André Breton in the article he wrote immediately after the famous Surrealist *nu-flânerie*: to realize such action in that particular place had the same value as to realize it across the whole city (Careri, 2017: 65).

[13] Maybe in the spirit of Bruno Latour's vision of history. In *We Have Never Been Modern* (Latour, 1993) Latour argues "not just against the existence of postmodernity but against modernity itself as any kind of separate age from the pre-modern (or non-modern)." (Laurier, 2011: 272) It is interesting a perspective when one thinks of the ways the very figure of the *flâneur* is historical and at the same time anachronic, once 'upgraded' in contemporaneity.

For this project, I extend the generalized notion of errancy to my own photography work.[14] My brief photographic documentation highlights identity, mood, movement, instability and performance in the streets. In a way, errancy is a derivation of the idea of divagation, which in turn stands partly in opposition to *flânerie* (Ibid. 108).

The *motto* for this work has been a fragment of a poem by Pessoa, who, despite of not having left the *Baixa* of his city for practically all of his life, was an extraordinary urban walker and a nomad soul:

> *Viajar! Perder países!*
> *Ser outro constantemente*
> *Por a alma não ter raízes*

It is relevant to the research as it mirrors my drive for constantly being *en route*, fascinated by the receding horizon all around.

In an inhumanly accelerating world, people are walking less and less. They run on a treadmill in the gym, use mainly mechanic transportation or travel virtually through the media – using their "digital hypomnemata" (Stiegler, 2010: 65). Simply walking, for pleasure or as a contemplative activity, is seen as a retrogression and a waste of time. In fact, it requires slowing down one's automatic velocity and a different level of consciousness, ability to be conscient of the present moment, and in particular of the "interrupted, uneven rhythm" (Ibid. 175) of the built environment.

Observing the richness and diversity of cityscapes and urban atmospheres, of built environments and their sensescapes, the complexity of the relations between a wide range of cultural agents involved in the production of the city, I believe that places offer you joy and knowledge, when lived fully, with an attitude which makes particular sense when one gets engaged in their co-creation, as a conscious member of an active public (Babo, 2015).

This scenario led me to team up with creative people from diverse European countries[15] in order to prepare an application for Creative Europe funds.[16] During the (unsuccessful)

[14] All the photos included in the thesis are taken by the author
[15] Estonia, France, Italy, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Scotland, Spain.
[16] The application process lasted from 2014 to 2018.

process my research was enriched by means of a series of interviews and questionnaires where cultural agents from diverse cities[17] participated with their visions, objectives and commitment with cultural development.

This commitment with open-ended encounters and conversations led me to develop a specific contribution for a new kind of urban cultural narrative, beyond agendas such as the ones of urban policies or mass tourism. The notion of street has been in the core of my approach since the very first beginning and the moment it became clear there was a cultural concept taking shape. The consecutive steps took me to a range of tropes that I hope to connect through critical and productive articulations, maybe managing to trace a few engaging *lines of thought*.

My intention is on the other hand to look for possible expressions of *Wanderlust*, articulating with them social and political needs that are relevant for contemporary citizenship. In this sense a nomad community of intellectual strollers might rebuild the narrative of the city across space-time. Also, because, as Thoreau noted (1861), strolling inevitably leads to other subjects, and this sense of meeting the other, in a path which takes it time, is important for a more socialised Europe. Walking and travelling may be a response to various disembodiments of urban life today. Furthermore, anyone's *Wanderlust* may lead to interesting narratives of contact fostering the sharing of stories. Interestingly, Solnit explains that between walking and thought, as expressed in words there is a strong bond to be explored. I see here a strong storytelling potential. “For Language is like a road, it cannot be perceived all at once because it unfolds in time, whether heard or read.” (Solnit, 2001: 268)

[17] Tallinn, Arles, Milan, Cologne, Riga, Leeuwarden, Gdansk, Lisbon, Edinburgh, Valencia.

Objective: cultural tactic

> *Without the possibility of action, all knowledge comes to one labeled 'file and forget' and I can neither file nor forget.*
> **Ralph Ellison**

Culture is a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development (which we might associate with liberal humanism); a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or group (which suggests a pluralist approach); and the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity (Williams, 1976: 80, in Butcher, 2005: 25-6). On the other hand,

> Culture is a shared and evolving vision of the world […] that is reproduced and manifested directly in behavior and indirectly in artifacts. Culture is a collective process, maintained through practices, but supported by artifacts and by memory. […] Since every culture contains contradictions that are also shared, these may create important divergences among the members of the group. (Robinson, Julia, 2006: 5).

My aim is to reflect on how I can contribute to an innovative urban cultural tactics, from the perspective of Culture Studies and reflecting on processes of creation and conceptualization, translation and narrativity. By means of its interdisciplinary take on a specific cluster of intermedia problematics, my work values the possible emergence of *original* modes of cooperation and communication between active cultural agents (networking) which are aware and proud of their original take on the urban (neighborhoods) reality.

I use the word 'tactics' to underline the operative link between reflexive cultural work and urban-led (street-wise) socio-cultural collaboration, where specific organizations' goals may become part of a wider horizon of values which, to a certain extent, is resilient to top-down place branding, traditional place-making activities or a range of neoliberal urban processes.

I also want to study how a certain tactical nomadology of cultural work may respond to (and work within) a stimulating cultural horizon. This is related to the possibility of creating the conceptual ground for an innovative cultural connectivity model for ongoing transcultural cooperation and quotidian resilience. In my project's vision, satisfactory answers to the research question shall lead to a sustainable tactic for cultural relevance based on networked locality – places becoming portals (Morton, 2016).

A preliminary idea to be stressed is that "Concepts are not just tools." (Bal, 2002: 29) While raising "underlying issues of instrumentalism, realism, and nominalism, and the possibility of interaction between the analyst and the object […] they travel between ordinary words and condensed theories" (Ibid.) My objective is to propose an instrumental conceptual aesthetic, absorbing and actualizing contributions from Modernity, Phenomenology, Post-Modernism, Structuralism and Post-Structuralism. (Leach, 1997) I proceed as if structuring a concept-based narrative which has the capacity to link knowledge and insights from various fields of experience (and cognition). "Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of fundamental encounter" (Deleuze, 1994: 139).

It is in this framework that the basis of my conceptual economy lies in a specific set of tropes and figures. between which lines of connection are drawn. Some of these concepts/notions are quite in fashion, while others are almost absent from our cultural debates. Capturing a sense of connectivity between them, through narrative, I believe I might have filled a toolbox to generate a new sense of belonging and cooperation between streets where these new cultural *strata* are going to make a difference – within an always evolving idea of Europe. Deleuze would see them as rhetorical weaponry.

There is here a work on intellectual and cultural traditions which are not that frequently put in relation in order to create a cultural experience. Their complexity and openness are stimulated, rather than simplified and emptied of the multiplications a very diverse public will generate. It is important to underline also that these terms have their history.

Shortly, the proposal is to generate a specific matrix for urban conscience and narrativity, something closer to grassroots cultural planning than to down-to-earth cultural management or entrepreneurship. I believe that these ideas, since put in this specific geometry of tensions and complementarities, have the power to generate various sorts of informal and creative 'spin-offs' (originating in platforms which may be institutional, organizational or simply interpersonal in kind).

In this exploration of the notion of cultural tactics, “Gramsci's social thought contains some remarkably suggestive insights into the question of dominance and subordination in modern capitalist societies” (Lears, 1985: 567). Through Gramsci one may question “values, norms, perceptions, beliefs, sentiments, and prejudices” that support and define the relation of urban communities with something which is *theirs*, although that fact is for a large majority of citizens not *reclaimed*. Commenting on the issue of architecture as medium, Robinson complements: “When norms are used to restrict alternatives or to stigmatize people perceived as non-normal, they become an impediment to productive change, but when used as a basis for providing human rights to people, they become a useful locus of comparison” (Robinson, Julia, 2006: 6).

This is related to another insight in Gramsci, the acknowledgement of the complexities of “the conflict that sometimes arises between a person's conscious thoughts and the implicit values embedded in his actions. This conflict points to the complexity of popular consciousness under capitalism” (Lears, 1985: 569). In other words, a tactics inspired by Gramsci’s moral is instrumental to rethink the tensions between consciousness and unconsciousness when it comes to the awareness of a certain set of streets as *common(s)*. What is at stake is not exactly counterhegemony, but ‘simply’ a more aware urban presence, capable of realizing a sort of walking-based cultural exercises – one possibility to actualize the *flânerie* in the context of the creative economy/city.

Then, in the spirit of the original *flâneurs*, one is here not focused on the effectiveness of tactics, but thinking of tactics as the accumulation of creative actions in which the spirit of *manoeuvre* (in the military sense) is not completely absent – it is this sense that one follows further ahead the notion of cultural partisanship, after Nawratek (2018), although with an undertone of Eastern wisdom – acknowledging a tradition in a significant number of contemporary thinkers.

The issue is that there are several goals – cultural connectivity, collaboration, cooperation, mobility – that embody a horizon of cultural translation and exchange. This is what cultural practice is about. In this sense, culture is a medium for everyday life appropriation; consequently, while cultural work deals with inclusive forms of cultural and creative

empowerment (Matarasso, 1997: 84) that confront the vulnerability that holds passive people to the givens of culture, and which transforms them into passive consumers of the urban realm. Indeed, "[Cultural ideas' changes] occur between individuals as certain people insist on some things and other people acquiesce. They take place as individuals collectively invent, accept or reject ways of doing things" (Robinson, Julia, 2006: 5). In any case, "The process of cultural sustenance or change is so diffuse and made of up so many individual actions that cultural ideas have a kind of life of their own beyond the direct influence of any one person or group." (Ibid.)

A point made here is that such "interpretative" (Fish, 1980) dynamics may be realized translocally and with a specific kind of resonances between places in mind. Cultural tactics – culturally productive tactics – mean thus not only to think but really explore the dialectic strategy/tactics in de Certeau – introducing some role play (theatricality): in the case study underlying this research, producers can be invited to be tactical and ordinary dwellers and passersby to engage in strategic-narrative thought. The tactics is here about producing an open platform for international mobility-based exchange. Indeed, "Strategies are undermined by unpredictability. Tactics make an ally of unpredictability" (Goff)[18].

This said, certain lines of work point to strategical possibilities: as de Certeau has explained, the weakness of the tactical dimension in cultural work may productively meet strategical needs, so a project like the one studied here is also about constantly inventing and reinventing ways to persuade partners and communities to enter its narrative and ultimately enrich it, even if just for a brief moment.

> A tactic is a 'calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus'; unlike strategy, it does not demarcate an exteriority necessary for its autonomy: 'The space of the tactic is the space of the other' (De Certeau, 1988: 37). Tactics 'traverse' and 'infiltrate' systems by playing out 'the guileful ruses of different interests and desires': […] Tactics refer to the kinds of action that are possible once people have been marginalised by different strategies, and include a range of everyday forms such as speaking, walking, reading and shopping. (McFarlane, 2010: 422)

This may be productively articulated with de Certeau's notion of user, exploring it across a specific set of territories. This tactical approach of cultural values(s) is to inspire the

[18] In https://beautifultrouble.org/theory/the-tactics-of-everyday-life/

organizational cultures of the partners which have been invited to think along the research's process.[19]

In entrepreneurial language, one may speak of three different focus in a company's actions planning: "Tactics – "How do we work?" contrasts with "Strategy – "What do we want to achieve"" and with "Culture – 'Who do we want to be?'"[20] One's focus is nevertheless not on performance, but on cultural performatics (Hunter, 2008): *the* "science of making through form(s)."[21] In other words, in an update of the Baudelairian (and others') *flâneries*, what is at stake is to performatically reinvent the possibility of pertaining to a translocal nomad community driven by street-based tactics and sharing a specific narrative thread.

Tactics is a way for agency to incorporate in one's sense of action a deep awareness of who one is as Human Being in the city, exploring through artistic and literary, as well as architectural and urbanist culture, and by means of walking-inspired practice, places as stages for subjectivation – here an experimental, provisional, tentative, fleeting, exploratory, self-production of a style, within a path pursuing the art of a life (See Philo, 2011: 163) After all, to produce one's subjectivity is "(…) precisely an ethicoaesthetic business" (O'Sullivan, n.d. 2).

It is in this mindset that one finds in Deleuze and Guattari a disposition for "creative invention of concepts and the intensive mapping of affects and events" (O'Sullivan, 2006: 11). In this mindset, could one talk of urban community-making without considering the concept of communication? And could one think of communication without reflecting on the concept of media? In this framework, the work in translation and narrative shall be

[19] In Management and Management Studies Peter Drucker's famous quote "Culture eats strategy for breakfast" is a widespread mainstay.

[20] Speaker, Trainer, & Consultant on Evolutionary Capabilities expert Michael Sakota in https://agilitrix.com/2012/11/tactics-strategy-culture/: "Culture is the foundation that Strategy and Tactics sit on. But culture is like an iceberg – a powerful force that is underwater where you can't see it. Sure, it's possible to work at the levels of tactics and strategy, but that is unlikely to make any lasting change or draw great benefits. Lasting change requires working at all three levels so that the tactics and strategy support the culture."

[21] Hunter adds: *Fine, but forms, shapes, are nothing without material, so the emphasis has to be on 'through' rather than 'form', it's the science of making through if it's a science at all, 'peractics'? Not only a science but a production, sliding into operatics, with its hyperbole and excess* (Hunter, 2008: 7).

framed by a quick note on urban culture *as* communication – thus on streets *as* cultural media (Robinson, Julia, 2006: 3).

The general issue concerns an "ecstasy of communication" which has been proven incompatible with knowledge society (Leach, 1999: 2). Indeed, information does not necessarily generate meaning (Ibid. 2), while "[…] meaning is itself also exhausted in the staging of meaning" (Ibid. 2) – and such informational pressure "pursues an irresistible destructuration of the social" (Baudrillard, in Ibid.). Thus, in the process, meaning is not only dissolved (Ibid.), but the prey of the excess of information.

It is in this framework – in search of meaning – that notions related to media theory frequently overlap concepts of communication. "The [latter] term derives from the Latin *communicare*, "to impart, share," literally, "to make common," from *communis*, "in common, public, general, shared by all or many" (Clarke, 2010: 132). Clarke points out fundamental connotations of the word:

> (…) the *communality* of communication—its complex multiplicity, its conditionality upon social grounds prior to individual intentions" and "the *materiality* of communication—the physical and technical infrastructures necessary for any conveyance of messages or transmission of information (Ibid.).

When one speaks of communication (of a project, of places, between people, between cultural organizations, and so on) one shall consider two models: the transmission model where "communication is conceptualized as a process in which meanings, packaged in symbolic messages like bananas in crates, are transported from sender to receiver;" (Craig, 2001) and the constitutive model – by means of which one understands "the elements of communication, rather than being fixed in advance, [as] reflexively constituted within the act of communication itself." (Ibid.)

Especially since this study's theme are the streets, McLuhan reminds us that "The term 'communication' has had an extensive use in connection with roads and bridges, sea routes, rivers, and canals, even before it became transformed into 'information movement' in the electronic age" (McLuhan, 1994: 89). "In this context, media are the modes of conveyance." (Clarke 2010, 133). In other words, media (and communication) not only integrate, but also define the *sensorium*.

One distinction is operative here: "Communication attaches most directly to the sources and destinations of messages, whereas media most directly concern the means by which messages move from one to the other" (Clarke, 2010: 133). One could agree that "Here again, communication is to media as speech is to writing." – in the sense that

> Communication factors into issues of synchronous and sequential temporality – 'real time,' the discrete moments of the origination and reception of messages – whereas media technologies generate 'virtual time,' processes such as inscription, storage, and retrieval, which suspend or manipulate the time of communication. (Ibid. 135)

This is crucial to be considered when a cultural project aims to performatively balance the fleeting, the atmospheric, the momentary, the lived, the secret, the intimate, the non-representative, with a hypomnesic (Stiegler)[22] dimension: the archive, the urban memory, cultural heritage and at some point a technical cooperation platform.

Most importantly, these are notions that, on one hand, result from scientific enquiry; but on the other hand have strong cognitive and metaphoric appeal, when one thinks on the communication processes to 'inhabit' the streets' stages.[23] In this framework, "*habitus*" (Bourdieu, 2013 [1972]) and the control of urban life may be creatively addressed (as communication); for Haraway, a critical position may be expressed in a subtle (Clarke, 2010: 137) way: implying "not a breakdown but a redeployment of the informatic tools of communication media, for one, a turn toward *narrative* media for social feedback, counter-communications opening the system up to other possibilities, other constructions" (In Ibid.).

Construction being a function of deconstruction – editing – of the urban everyday (as to be performed by this case study's public), one must also remind that communication is no less than "a synthesis of three different selections, namely the selection of *information*, the selection of the *utterance* [*Mitteilung*] of this information, and selective *understanding or misunderstanding* of this utterance and its information" (Luhmann, 2002: 157). When what is at stake, in creative citizenship, conscious travel or nanotouristic engagement is the meaningful encounter with the other – not just perceptions, information, motions – then the very notion of understanding is the ground for "participating consciousness" (Clarke, 2010:

[22] See http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/pdf/Stiegler%20glossary.pdf.
[23] At some point, one could imagine, for instance, *nu-flâneurs* as 'communicative packages' or 'narrative vehicles'.

142): “Understanding is never a mere duplication of the utterance in another consciousness but is, rather, in the system of communication itself, a precondition for connection onto further communication, thus a precondition of the autopoiesis of the social system” (Luhmann, 2002: 158)”. Clarke summarizes: “If one waves back, the social system continues” (Clarke, 2010: 142).

Methodology

> *To get a better understanding how, exactly, theory inspires people, is not a minor detail. We have to be open minded, on the look-out, read and interpret our feelings, get over frustrations, yet take our discontent deadly serious.*
> **Geert Lovink and Christoph Spehr**

> So we can be in this world, but not of this world. And dance in this world.
> **Kim Eng[24]**

> *A person's interests in research and in action, always have something to do with one's experiences gleaned along one's biographical wandering.*
> **Sacha Kagan**

This investigation has followed an organic dynamic, moving between theory and praxis, lived experience and intellectual synthesis. The methodology remained close to the researcher's personal sense of experience.

I strolled through methods and theories[25] like Benjamin across his *Arcades*' halls.[26] In this approach of research (Roy, 2017: 38), sensitizing concepts (Blumer, 1954: 7) were particularly useful. Various terms are put in dialogue with each other and with more stable scientific jargon, precisely in order to define less a territory and more a horizon of problematics. In the name of transdisciplinary enthusiasm, one risk assumed is the possibility of conceptual "diffusion" (Bal, 2000: 29).[27]

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[24] Kim Eng paraphrases Jesus in the Bible (John 15:19 and John 17:14-16.) The concept is furthermore addressed in Ephesians 4:22-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:1).

[25] "Theory, for Benjamin, in general always requires the stability of a (theorizing) subject and the imposition of subjective intention on the structure of historical time; the invariable effect of even the best-intentioned theory is a certain pacification of history and hence the loss of the capacity for recognizing sites where past and present lose their familiar contours. Hence theory for Benjamin must be replaced by method." (Pensky, 2004: 181)

[26] "The *Arcades Project*, as anyone who has strolled its halls knows, contains an astonishing number and variety of different theoretical orientations and resources." (Pensky, 2004: 181) Pensky adds: "There is, of course, no real method without theory; no possible rule for proceeding with the historical material without some intellectual commitments that determine in advance the overall significance of the historical material, the possibility of their recovery, the purpose of their construction into images, and the shocking effect that images are intended to deploy. In fact, the "theory" that Benjamin had in mind, and that he was anxious to conceal behind the historical material itself, was in fact "theory" in its oldest sense: theology." (Ibid.) Maybe Benjamin's writing is indeed not exactly theorical, but more like a "theoretical promissory note that would prove difficult if not impossible to redeem". (Ibid.)

[27] For Bal a 'diffusion' is the result of an unwarranted and casual "application" of concepts. Application in this case entails using concepts as labels that neither explain nor specify, but only name. Such labeling goes on

On the other hand, comparative thinking (Robinson, John, 2017: 84) has been an important methodological aspect that I linked to the learning processuality in urbanism's (Lees, 2017) principles – "thinking cities through elsewhere" (Ibid.) – comparison being useful to consider diverse streets' contexts in all their potential, precisely to work on "a more global urban imagination" (Ibid.) It goes down to creating experimental "tactics for a more global urban studies" (Robinson, John, 2017: 93). In three words, a "new 'comparative imagination.'" (Ibid.)[28]

This study tries, on one hand, to evoke a diversity of readings of the tactics of everyday life which "have foregrounded place in setting the rhythms of social conduct" (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011: 2). On the other hand, the study basically reflects on space (streets) in the terms advanced by Nigel Thrift:

> As with terms like 'society' and 'nature', space is not a common-sense external background to human and social action. Rather, it is the outcome of a series of highly problematic temporary settlements that divide and connect things up into different kinds of collectives which are slowly provided with the means which render them durable and sustainable. (Thrift, 2003: 95).

From the diverse encounters realized one has gathered a brief characterization of diverse contexts, and each node of the inherent system of streets is thus somehow clarified through descriptions of local atmospheres, and the main drives and desires of the interlocutors.

The diverse themes addressed here, orchestrated around a concern with the qualities of places and the value of experience are thus essentially as many lenses to observe and explore the urban environment and a specific set of streets' spaces in particular. During such exploration, certain problematics became relevant for the argument that progressively took shape, namely the problem of streets as assemblages, or the way a specific concept's processuality may enter and disrupt current creative economies in the milieu of the post-industrial city. In any case, "ideas are never 'pure' but rather emerge and become legitimated and contested according to particular material and social contexts" (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011: 13).

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when a concept emerges as fashionable, without the search for new meaning that ought to accompany its employment taking place.' (Bal, 2000: 33)

[28] Indeed, "Constructing comparators through tracing connections can draw on the great diversity of the globalized linked processes influencing many cities" (Ibid. 95).

Eventually, this thesis aims going from personal mobility to define in which way it is relevant to develop a new, common way of creating and using narratives originating from particular places/streets. There has been the task of analyzing the possibility of an original idea (concerning international cooperation in the field of cultural programming, under the heading "Connecting Streets") to be built on solid conceptual and theoretical grounds. The work on the idea's transformation into a concept (a problem of management studies) is not the objective of this thesis, but it must be considered as the background for what has become in the meantime a research on the potential of streets to become elements of a specific cultural network.

An organizational context

In 2014, the director of Projecto Travessa da Ermida had the idea to connect with partner organizations in similar streets in Europe. Curator Mário Caeiro[29], has interpreted the idea as an opportunity for space-based cultural exchange. An initial part of the work has been the search for potential case studies. Subsequent analyses led to the first strategic observations and provisional conclusions which gave the inspiration for the design of the sketch of a cultural project Connecting Streets.

In 2015, a cultural brainstorm meeting[30] in Palacio Belmonte (Lisbon) opened up the possibility of a international cooperation with the Sustainable Innovation Department of the Province of Friesland (Holland), at the time involved in a wide range of preparatory activities (including scouting) toward the realization of a quite important event in the country: the 2018 Leeuwarden-Friesland European Capital of Culture.

Informal conversations, professional meetings, creative brainstorms with artists, public, authors, entrepreneurs and other researchers were invited to follow.[31] Investigations were

[29] At the time preparing the fifth edition of the Project VICENTE in Lisbon.
[30] On the INTEREG Project "Islands of Innovation".
[31] At the moment, site investigations included meetings and actions of répérage in Tallinn's Kloostri Ait cultural center, Arles' Le Magasin de Jouets gallery, 5VIE in Milan, Riga's "Make Art" association, Leeuwarden's capital of culture headquarters, Gdansk's "Glaza Expo Design" gallery and the Gdansk

furthermore carried out during festivals, lectures, conferences, exhibitions and other art interventions, by means of participant observation of the production/documentation team; the assembled material – my notes, observations, memories and photographic documentation – was confronted with the theoretical apparatus that had been in the meantime made clear.

The criteria for the final choice of streets to consider more closely in this study were multiple: I considered their cultural potential (the street as an urban asset in the urban social dynamics of a neighborhood); pedestrian accessibility and human scale; the everyday dweller's and users' attention to (and care for) the value of locality, creative citizenship and entrepreneurship (with a social drive); emergent forms of social and economic dynamism and finally their characteristic atmosphere.

This selective process was realized in close contact with a range of cultural managers, patrons, curators, academics and artists; all had momentary opportunities to collaborate with each other, looking for common concerns and motivations, and helping me to progressively find my own research path. Here I must state that my role in such a cooperative process has been always related to the task of monitoring the whole process, during which I kept in mind that:

> It is theory that enables the expression and performance of critical thought and intellectual advancement, important not only for the production of academic knowledge, but also in influencing how academics find out about cities through the methodologies they use and, furthermore, in work which seeks to positively influence diverse audiences beyond universities. (Jayne and Ward, 2017: 16).

The very choice of the streets thus implied not only the preliminary translation of the initial idea(s) to each new contact, but also, in a sort of feedback, the ongoing appropriation of several contributions to the 'puzzle' being 'built'.

Shakespeare Theatre, Projecto Travessa da Ermida in Lisbon, Edinburgh's Sculpture Workshop and 21st Century Kilts project, Valencia's Casa Montana and the activist organization Salven El Cabanyal.
People who have been contributing to this thesis' process, with greater or lesser contributions according to my final editing choices, include cultural agents such as Francesco Careri (IT), Indrek Leht (EE), Nicolas Havette (FR), Alessia del Corona Borgia (IT), Reinis Druvietis (LV), Simon Tijsma (NL), Rochus Aust (DE) Eduardo Fernandes (PT), Jesse James (PT), Alejandro Garcia (E), as well as authors or researchers such as cultural activist Mário Caeiro (PT). architect Luís Santiago Baptista (PT), curator Marta Jecu (RO) and urban theorist Krzysztof Nawratek (PT/UK).

Intellectual swing

> *I explore. And logic is a term devoid of meaning when applied to an explorer.*
> **Marshall McLuhan**

The methodology of this study comprises three dimensions: exploratory, theoretical and applied research complemented by case studies, interviews (carried out with cultural agents based in the streets' areas and potential stakeholders: curators, programmers, managers, producers, communication experts, journalists, municipality officers) and the outline of a curatorial perspective.

In the spirit of "participatory pedagogy" (Aldrich, 2005: 174), sharing many characteristics with phenomenological philosophies, I "'engage' with the subject, not just 'learn' about it" (after Henryk Skolimowski).

This study is indeed an interdisciplinary affair. As Rendell (mentioning Bhabha) puts it, interdisciplinary practice concerns the co-existence of the critical, the intellectual, but also the emotional and the political dimensions (Rendell, 2007: 60). "Interdisciplinarity is always a site where expressions of resistance are latent. […] Specialists are often too protective of their own prerogatives, do not actually work with other, and therefore do not teach their students to construct a diagonal axis in their methodology" (Kristeva, 1997: 5-6).

Indeed, during the research I felt the need to cross disciplinary borders, acknowledging that "the transformational experience of interdisciplinary work produces a potentially destabilizing engagement with dominant power structures, allowing the emergence of new and often uncertain forms of knowledge" (Rendell, 2007: 60). In other words, the interdisciplinarity perspective in social research is a valid approach to ask how "habitualised bodies and materially modulated environments" (Michels, 2015: 261) become more or less stable, or more or less apt or willing to endure change.

A research project is on the other hand the result of a composition of specific tools, practices and vocabularies, reproducing and occasionally re-inventing the established spheres of

social research, for instance by introducing new terms, methods or bodies into its composition. Indeed,

> (…) interdisciplinary research is one possible way to irritate a discipline's affective dynamics and can lead to the emergence of new research compositions. This can unfold by introducing concepts from other disciplines (e.g. the notion of atmosphere, which has a history in the arts and philosophy) or by experimenting with other methods (e.g. videographic work) (Ibid. 263).

One is here maybe moved by something that moved Kracauer: "Spatial images are the dreams of society. Wherever the hieroglyphics of any spatial image are deciphered, there the basis of social reality presents itself" (In Leach, 1997: 60).

Indeed one questions here what kind of attitudes could a *nu-flânerie* be the production of/generate, just like the original *flâneur* was a psychoanalytic (Leach, 1997: iii) response to new conditions of Metropolitan dwelling, "whereby consciousness acts as a buffer against the continual shocks that constitute the experience of modernity" (Ibid.). In this framework, a phenomenological approach of the urban environment[32], of space as saturated with qualities (Foucault, 1967) is what might help to reflect on (and act upon) "the impoverished mechanisms by which space has been perceived traditionally" (Leach, 1997: iii).

Complementarily, it is the structuralist approach that allows one to read the city – and these streets, urban artefacts par excellence – semantically (Ibid.). Of course, with post-structuralism and "new ways of thinking that are themselves engendered by advances in technology and tools of representation" (Ibid.) one deepens a sort of theoretical-practice organic-intellectual (Gramsci, 1973) performance. Debray, speaking from the problematic

[32] One shall keep in mind that "Phenomenology is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view. The central structure of an experience is its intentionality, its being directed toward something, as it is an experience of or about some object. An experience is directed toward an object by virtue of its content or meaning (which represents the object) together with appropriate enabling conditions. […] In recent philosophy of mind, the term "phenomenology" is often restricted to the characterization of sensory qualities of seeing, hearing, etc.: what it is like to have sensations of various kinds. However, our experience is normally much richer in content than mere sensation. Accordingly, in the phenomenological tradition, phenomenology is given a much wider range, addressing the meaning things have in our experience, notably, the significance of objects, events, tools, the flow of time, the self, and others, as these things arise and are experienced in our "life-world". […] Basically, phenomenology studies the structure of various types of experience ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity, including linguistic activity." In https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/

of medialogy[33], puts it in highly ironical terms I feel some affinity with: "[…] the laborer of medialogical groundwork toils in an ill-reputed, indeed unsavory, non-place. They are the proletarians of the City of Philosophy" (Debray, 1996: 80).

In this framework, the very theorization of communication stands for the semiosphere as ecology stands for the biosphere (Debray, 1996: 139). For *mediology* – an interdisciplinary affair – is "an engineering proper", taking into account "the contents of communicated messages and systems of meanings, side by side with the domains of apparatuses and power relations" (Krajina, 2009: 413; Debray, 1996: 18).

In this programme, most Western ways of knowing are to be overcome: "Like any *relational* system of thought, sensitive to the distant harmonics of the *logocentrism* of the East […] mediology also turns its back on the logocentrism of our own localities. […] The East-Asian model does not say "My body is mine, but I really *am* my body." Why can we not train ourselves, as Berque calls for us to, to replace the sentiment that "I *have* an environment, it belongs to me" with «I *am* my environment»?" (Debray, 1996: 111).

Looking at how urban space reflects – produces – our animus, and in this specific case how certain streets demand a cultural intervention to heal their pathologies, one shall recognize that: "One gives one's surroundings full attention when they are the setting of one's misfortune or illness, once the trouble has advanced quite far" (Ibid.)

Nevertheless, according to Adorno, "a certain professional distance might be precisely what is required in order to maintain the necessary critical distance" (1980: 167). Indeed, one steps here almost irresponsibly frequently into unknown grown, but this is the price to pay when what is desired is an intellectual *flânerie* that might counteract the possibly too stable social and disciplinary boundaries in the research's processuality. For that would not give

[33] Medialogy offers "a unified approach for the socio-technical study of the history and political efficacy of the means of diffusion and transmission of culture over time and through space." (Vandenbergue 2007, 25) "One is acting as a mediologist each time one brings to light the relations that unify a symbolic corpus (a religion, a doctrine, an artistic genre, a discipline, etc.), a form of collective organisation (a church, a party, a school, an academy, etc.), and a technical system of communication (recording, storage and circulation of traces)." Quoted from the webpage 'mediology' available from http://www.mediologie. org

back the reader – as an urban dweller – the myriad of productive onlooks that the city (urban space, urban reality, urban fabric, culture, civilization, and so on) is the object of.

One shall nevertheless be careful enough, hence the frequent clarification on where the heterogenous ideas come from and even the contexts they appear in. Anyway, "[…] nobody needs a philosopher to think *for* them, but somebody may benefit from a philosopher thinking *alongside* them: a form of collaboration rather than domination (e.g., Deleuze, 1986; 1989)" (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 142).

As Deleuze has demonstrated, "communication, interpretation, explanation, representation, reflection, and criticism are more often than not a waste of time" (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 144). In contrast, the idea that Benjamin's intellectual work is characterized by a certain type of swing is here relevant to mention.[34] It is certainly a co-incidence the fact that Benjamin remained during the whole study a main reference. Maybe because the way he (tactically) articulates travel and biographical reflection is inspiring: "When Benjamin travels, he is interested in the local, but he doesn't 'go local', he always keeps a prudential distance. In his travel literature, as in boxing, there is a constant struggle for finding the right distance to be able to engage with the other."[35]

It goes by itself that translation (Benjamin, 1996: 260) is the key in these processes, in fact constituting the global methodological background.

Following the tactical steps of de Certeau, this work thus tries to remain true to actions themselves (de Certeau, in Crang, 2011: 108). In this sense, the anamnestic chapter dedicated to the 'Connecting Streets' concept is where the articulation between theoretical research gives way to curatorial vision, both sustaining a tactical approach of a specific experience. In doing so, again de Certeau has been helpful to acknowledge the way the "'scattered polytheism' of different systems of thought – the dispersed knowledges of practices that elude the gaze of theory" (Ibid.) could define somehow an inclusive transdisciplinary ethos.

[34] "The swing is presented here not as a jazz style or a golf movement, but as a sort of balance, a movement that goes from inside out with certain harmony. In general terms, swing is the grace of being able to flow through existence displaying a kind of aura. Some sportsmen have it, some intellectuals too, and it makes a huge difference." On Benjamin, In https://www.pauguinart.com/benjamin/

[35] In https://www.pauguinart.com/benjamin/

Theory "is exactly like a box of tools" (Deleuze and Foucault 1977: 208). It has been in the same vein that I read the (almost) performative spherology of Peter Sloterdijk[36] and Krzysztof Nawratek's partisan total urban mobilization[37], across Byung-Chul Han's accessible New Romanticism[38], Nancy's unworking of the concept of community[39] or Butler's 'infrastructure'[40]. Through a range of names and positions and concepts that were added to the 'conversation', a conceptual landscape is drawn, always ready to accept that spiritual overtones connected to Eastern wisdom could at any minute disturb the typically Western epistemological tradition.

Anyway, while a pragmatic tactic take on situated cultural work, the present study is also an effort in opening up a conceptual cartography for the possibility that the time is ripe to go beyond issues of class, oppression, resistance or even difference, to engage in a nano-scale model for the very experience of a contemplative urbanity, grounded on "metacultural discourse" (Collini, 2002)[41].

Finally, the relation of academic work and cultural work at large has to be addressed. It is no coincidence that in search for pedagogical art practices, it is precisely in Academia that some alternative visions to mainstream art (or culture, for that matter) are developed (Miles, 2008: 243). This thesis is to a great extent an action-research exercise, only possible because of the existence of a non-place called University, maybe a 'pause' in the hectic dynamics of urban culture 'out there'.

[36] In particular the *Spehres* trilogy, an encompassing and hollistic perspective on art and architecture.
[37] Both thoughtful and consize refelction on inclusivity in the post-capitalistic city.
[38] "*The Guardian* has referred to him as "intellectual lodestar" for the New Romantic movement in Germany" Scott Beauchamp in https://lawliberty.org/assessing-our-frayed-society-with-byung-chul-han/
[39] A fundamental reference concerning the ontological issue of togetherness.
[40] An unavoidable position on the street as infrastructural good.
[41] "[…] metacultural discourse should not deceive itself that it can somehow supplant the authority of politics, and in place of such hubristic practices, he recommends a more modestly framed conception of 'cultural politics'" (Collini, 2002) In: https://newleftreview.org/issues/II18/articles/stefan-collini-defending-cultural-criticism

1. A theoretical topology

Preliminary point: on the Everyday

> *Atmospheric characteristics of spaces, places and settings are grasped before any conscious observation of details is made.*
> **Juhani Pallasmaa**
>
> *Space is designed; and it is refracted by associations, re-imagined in personal terms.*
> **Malcom Miles**
>
> *Utopia lies at the horizon.*
> *When I draw nearer by two steps,*
> *it retreats two steps.*
> *If I proceed ten steps forward, it*
> *swiftly slips ten steps ahead.*
> *No matter how far I go, I can never reach it.*
> *What, then, is the purpose of utopia?*
> *It is to cause us to advance.*
> **Eduardo Galeano**

Lefebvre, in his radical critique of everyday life, defined it as "what is left over after all distinct, superior, specialized, structures activities have been singled out analysis" (Lefebvre, 1991: 97). The present research shares with the Studies on the Everyday "a cultural approach" (Highmore, 2001: xi), not least because to approach the notion of street, comprising several dimensions of their character and experience, implies an effort in registering facts, data, no less than emotions and feeling in a profoundly aesthetic way, that is, with "the kind of attention to form that is usually reserved for art". (idem: xii). This is the *sine qua non* condition for the lived acknowledgement of the complexity of the urban experience.

The everyday of the streets, as an historical over layering, may be captured by the image of stratification. Streets' *strata* are in this sense both possible to grasp in the very materiality of the built environment and by means of proactive processes of engagement with reality that unveil "aspects of life that lie hidden" (Highmore, 2001: 1).

To confront the everyday of streets implies a work on visibility/invisibility (of gestures, traditions, stories, memories, expectations, dreams, and so on) that has a social and political dimension pointing to the valorization of human co-present engagement. In this framework, "the everyday, as a theoretical and practical arena) has the potential ability of producing, not difference, but commonality. It might be that this is where its generative ability lies" (Highmore, 2001: 2). Sharply, Highmore underlines, in an actualization of the problematics of the *mental life* (Simmel, 2013 [1903]) in the city: "There is something of radical commonality (which, now that psychoanalysis has become part of our everyday life, might be less visible) to the suggestion that we all share a condition where our consciousness can be undermined by our unconscious" (Highmore, 2001: 2).

This is the mental context that allows one to look at the very existence of a specific set of streets as multilayered opportunities (portals, interfaces, devices, *apparata*) – that is *dispositifs* (Foucault) – with the ability to generate new modes of thinking; new perceptions of emergence triggered by an "heuristic approach of social life that does not start out with predesignated outcomes. In its negotiation of difference and commonality it might, potentially, find new commonalities and breathe new life into old differences" (Highmore, 2001: 3).

What is at stake is then not just the deconstruction of more or less generalized (lack of) perception of streets, but processes of construction and invention of their identity that take intractable objects such as 'spirit of place', 'urban atmosphere' or even 'character of a place' and manage to extract though a blend of intuition and cognition – a strictly personal cartography of sorts – the principles for a potentially collective form of cultural sensibility. A cultural project in this context, especially since concerned with the linkage between the particular and the general, the micro-analysis and the macro-analysis (Ibid. 5), have the task to *produce* a public.

A public for the contemporary street – in general –, and the active community engaged in experiencing a network of European singled-out streets – in particular –, is then invited to consider a specific basic insight: "Does the everyday provide the training ground for conformity, or is it rather the place where conformity is evaded?" (Ibid.). As de Certeau,

would put it, it is about acknowledging the semblance of speculative responses to the everyday, in processes of live performativity (Goffmann, in Ibid. 13).

This implies that a cultural project praising the very social potential of the everyday shall come to terms with its own constructive *hubris* (typical of top-down projects coming for many diverse fields, from heritage policies to plain urban development strategies) or ingenuity (characteristic of some urban activism) and to develop forms of openness to the movement of experience as built on individual resonance with urban space. This is where Tactical Urbanism, in its mix of theoretical and pragmatical takes on the diverse scales of the city, appears to be a compromise between citizenship and the everyday.

For de Certeau (1988), the everyday is nevertheless not to be addressed at the level of content – "a Sisyphean task" (Highmore, 2001: 14) that maybe machines are currently being involved in, as in the big data-driven digital culture – but at the level of form. To be underlined here, aesthetic forms. Indeed, "[…] one way of describing de Certeau's approach of the everyday is to see it as attempting to outline a *grammar* of everyday practices that will attempt to keep alive the specificity of operations while recognizing formally similar modes of practice". (Ibid.) This is related to the fact that while gestures are repeated, the level of consciousness implied in them varies considerably.

One must constitute the way senses determine everydayness (and vice-versa): "Surely this sense includes much that is not sensed so much as sensuousness, an embodied and somewhat automatic 'knowledge' that functions like peripheral vision, not studied contemplation, a knowledge that is imagetic and sensate, rather than ideational (…)" (Taussig, 1992: 141). Especially, the atmosphere or the character, or even cultural roles and missions of places, deserve a multilayered attention fueled by the lived limits established by the philosophy of the everyday and ideological critique (Aragüez, 2019), so that diverse levels of alienation are performatically grasped, if not somehow sublimated and finally maybe even 'absorbed' by the urban public.

If form is the ground for the experimentation with the everyday, the urban form of the street is arguably a most vital form in the urban fabric and certainly a most complex cultural

system. This particular system may be grasped and reinvented, precisely, by "cross-cultural estrangement" (Highmore, 2001: 14), where one can anchor *resistance* (de Certeau) or resilience to all forms of reification of urban living and alienation of everyday life.

The form of the street – and of course the forms in the street, as materializations of localities, traditions, ideas or ideology – is in this sense a matter of direct experience that Bataille in his base materialism (Noys, 2009) sees as a response to the everyday aspects of order, from civility to rationality. This is where Lefebvre's fight for the city meets 'heterogenous' citizenship (Highmore, 2001: 30).

In sum, postmodern research in the everyday is proving to be a driving force in an exploration of the world that is evolving parallel to the cognitive (Highmore, 2001: 32). It is common sense that the experience of the urban realm has been perceived both as a utopian and dystopian reality. If the city is sometimes valued as the ultimate social or civilizational artwork, other times it shows its negative image, shaped by all sorts of problems. In any case, utopia is always a provocation – in cultural and cognitive terms (Hanenberg, 2018).

Literatures engaged in sharing the experience of urban life captured this breath of thoughts and feelings, ranging for encompassing narratives to the attention to the almost invisible. Cultural work, in particular when realized alongside theory, does on the other hand gather concepts that help to both cartograph complex realities and change the way a public becomes aware of the issues at stake. What follows is then a theoretical topology of the key-concepts (and issues) this research addresses. It is to a certain extent not exactly an "utopian"[42], but a "pantopian"[43] (Hellerstein, 2020) reflective exercise.

[42] "Utopia is, in one respect, the unacceptable, a no-place, the extreme point of a polemical reconfiguration of the sensible, which breaks down the categories that define what is considered to be obvious. However, it is also the configuration of a proper place, a non-polemical distribution of the sensible universe where what one sees, what one says, and what one makes or does are rigorously adapted to one another." (Rancière, 2008: 40) Carey complements: "Utopia means *nowhere* or *no-place*. It has often taken to mean *good place*, through confusion […] as a result […] another word dystopia has been invented, to mean *bad place*. But, strictly speaking, imaginary good places and imaginary bad places are all utopias, or nowhere […] [But] to count as a utopia, an imaginary place must be an expression of desire. To count as a dystopia, it must be an expression of fear […]. Because they grow from desire and fear, utopias cry out for our sympathy and attention, however impractical or unlikely they may appear." (Carey, 1999: xi)

[43] Munford underlines, as early as 1922, that the word may derive from the junction of the Greek expressions eu (good) and topos. Indeed, "The word 'Utopia' was Sir Thomas More's sour joke; […] The satirical pessimist More meant Utopia as a place literally too good to be true. […] Pantopia, the All-place. Pantopia is a place where everything that happens everywhere, happens. Anything inevitable, like death or taxes, or cosmic, like

Place – both the starting point and the endpoint of this research – is an opportunity for something of a realistic utopia[44] (Jameson in Leach,1997: 246). Ironically, one could think here of how people move between 'utopian' places, precisely through travel, in order to *change* something. Creative places are then a sort of floating signifiers for every arrival's will for resonance (and for encounters to reveal something new): "[…] in aesthetic terms, it is hard to see how any ambitious artist could elude the inveterate impulse to create something different, minimally distinct from the space of what already is all around it […]" (Ibid. 247)

But "What is a creative place?" – asks Landry. The exercise of comparing his description of the categories implicated is stimulating, both for enthusiasts or critics of the notion.

> A creative place is somewhere where people can express their talents and potential which are harnessed, exploited and promoted for the common good […] It is a place with myriad, high quality learning opportunities, formal and informal […] The physical environment functions well for its inhabitants, it is easy to move around and connect with each other […] It offers rich, vibrant experiences through for example gastronomy, the arts, heritage and its natural surroundings, including thriving mainstream and alternative scenes and a healthy network of third spaces […] The public sector has clarity in its perspective and direction […] The society it rules over has a high degree of cohesion, it is inclusive and fosters participation, is relatively open to incomers and to new ideas, even though these can sometimes be uncomfortable […] Opportunities abound: the place is welcoming and encouraging. […] Social organizations are active, well-funded and constructive […] Business leaders are respected figures in their community and give something back […] You feel that this place has something we might call civic urbanity. (Landry, 2012a: 17-19)

Some of these 'utopian' insights are problematic; when taken literally or superficially; when one does not recognize many potential contradictions involved. This happens when consensus is reified[45], when measurement[46] is focused in narrow understanding of economy, when a distant cultural horizon is forgotten in the name of immediate results, when anxiety

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birth or beauty, is pantopian. Utopia is about ideals, Dystopia is about despair, Pantopia is about experience. […] If Utopia be thesis, and Dystopia antithesis, then Pantopia is synthesis. Pantopia is utopian, dystopian, both and neither. It's battered but resilient. Pantopia embodies both the brilliant wonder of innocence, and the hard wisdom of experience. Utopia is like a too-perfect small village; Dystopia is like a battleground; and Pantopia is like a big bustling city." (Hellerstein, 2020) (in http://paradox-point.blogspot.com/2012/06/onpantopia-theword-utopia-was-sir.html)

[44] The word 'utopia' as eternized by Thomas More's vision contains in itself a critical and ironical narrative, since it relates both to Eu-topia – the Good Place – Ou-topia – No Place.

[45] For Rancière: "Prior to being a platform for rational debate, consensus is a specific regime of the sensible, a particular way of positing rights as a community's *arche.* More specifically, consensus is the presupposition according to which every part of a population, along with all of its specific problems, can be incorporated into a political order and taken into account. By abolishing dissensus and placing a ban on political subjectivization, consensus reduces politics to the police." (Rockhill, 2008: 83)

[46] See the diverse rankings that legitimate a 'smart city', an 'innovative city or a 'healthy city' (Wood and Landry, 2012: 51).

for constant cultural production overwhelms the public's receptivity with stimuli that induce a closing rather an opening out. But then again, creative industries' narratives – an ideological construct and a conceptual mesh to say the least – have effective power on the urban structure and urban life, and not to find in them some critical potential would be possibly an unconscious mistake.

In sum, the creative city is a cultural horizon, also at the level of the curation of street life. One's tactic actions shall confirm – or not – the very validity of the jargon and its consequences. Locality has a go at finding ways to select what and how it shall be part of the tactics of places.

Let's not forget, following Bala (2018: 93), that "for de Certeau, tactics are like rhetorical tropes, which manipulate the rules of grammar but are nevertheless themselves grounded in very clear rules". In other words, streets may have (be) a grammar, but are no less the location of a range of "slangs" (Ibid.) – "embodied moments" (Ibid.) of aesthetic and creative practice. One reads, in Landry's strategic proposal: "The best of this place comes together in gathering places or civic precincts where public facilities such as a museum, a square or a sidewalk intermesh with private facilities and shops, but where the overall tone is one of civic generosity – the city giving back to its citizens" (Landry, 2012b: 20).

Additionally: "These desirable places enable us to experience the moment: a place open for coincidence – rather than having to do so something specific and always move on to the next thing." (Ibid.) As eventually, "there are two sides of this interactive experience of person and place. What the urban environment throws at us and what perceptual range and antenna we throw at it" (Ibid. 43).

Landry shares with his readers his "personal mantra" on "strategic agility" (Ibid. 57): "A place of anchorage; A place of connection; A place of possibility; A place of learning; A place of inspiration". (Ibid.) "The paradox is that the freedom of choice projected through and as liberation, can then be experienced as claustrophobic and crowd you in. It is largely

a question of scale and extent" (Ibid. 17)[47] Consumerism – an aspect of neoliberal everyday-urban life (Rossi, 2017: 213) is then an affective prison. However, creativity – as a productive aesthetics of living – can make a difference.

This leads to a brief note on community as Bauman's 'Being-in-Common' (vs. 'Common-being'), in contrast with the Metropolitan individual's (*blasé*) attitude toward common-being[48], or an apathic existence in the swarm, and on the other hand clear avoiding the sort of 'religious' "communion, with fusion into a body" (Nancy, 1991: xxxviii). "Commoning is not a means to an end but an always-in-the-making end produced by people who desire to be in common, who love sharing and share love" (Stravrides, 2016: 221).

Communities are here understood as "products of 'practices' rather than 'structures'", thus "created rather than reproduced" (Delanty, 2003: 130), precisely through communication and, most crucially, the consequent exposure to singularity (Nancy, 1991: 30).

Martin's notion of "place-frames" (Martin, 2004) demonstrates additionally that what is at stake in communities/neighbourhoods is the definition of provisional common interests and values, which sooner or later will lead to processes of signification. This is why one shall not equal community with a precise place, however it never loses its spatiality due to the fact that each constituent owns his particular space which connects with others'.

Indeed, for Holquist, a reader of Bakhtin, "There must be other selves if one's own is to exist" (2002: 55) and in a more managerial-entrepreneurial tone, Landry adds, agreeing with Erich Fromm: "[…] there is enlightened and informed motivation that acknowledges influences, critically accepting or rejecting them as appropriate. This form of authenticity gives the chance to ease into sensory perceptions with more openness. My experience is that this approach helps clarity" (Landry, 2012b: 23). De Certeau puts it in still another way: "To practice space is thus to repeat the joyful and silent experience of childhood; it is, in a place,

[47] This is a so pervasive phenomenon, that a recent study even demonstrated that cities with stricter billboard controls experience greater economic prosperity. See: https://www.scenic.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Beyond_Aesthetics1.pdf.

[48] "The blasé individual of Simmel's metropolis is comparable to the flâneur of Benjamin's arcade, although, unlike the flâneur he remains a creature of the crowd. The modern metropolitan type can thus be seen to be both a product of and a defence against the modern metropolitan existence." (Leach, 1997: 63)

to be other and to move toward the other" (De Certeau, 1988: 110). This is as well implied in the concept of collaboration, which for Deleuze is "transformatory, an act of creative de-personalisation that opens a 'line of flight' along which one becomes a stranger to oneself" (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 141).

Byung-Chul Han's book *The Expulsion of the Other* (2018) is "an evocative meditation on the fate of the human self in the age of digital capitalism" (Lankala, 2018: 120). His work offers us "concrete ideas, thoughts or 'weapons' that might help us overcome or resist our own weak desires and vanities".[49] This is important to reopen the case for the Other in contemporary conditions, reinvent it maybe, across the lines of Nature.[50] Han speaks eloquently of an ill social body, afflicted with "over-communication and over-consumption" (Ibid.). A *nu-flânerie* might well look for ways to open up a silence to oneself, in order to re-inscribe otherness in one's life, in such times where the digital revolution brought "The Terror of the Same" (Ibid.).

What is to be retained here is finally the notion that, immersed in "endless ego loop" (Ibid.), consciousness becomes enclosed in the Selfsame (Ibid). In order to face today's "banopticon" (Han, 2018: 12), tactics for a translocal narrative precisely depart from certain forms of hospitality, kinship and cooperation to explore boundaries of otherness; on one hand, keeping in mind that only in that way they could expand in open ways their core values; on the other hand, offering a model for a translocal social life inspired by the emergent myth of a *nu-flânerie*. For Han, friendliness means freedom (Ibid. 17). One could add, freedom to be social.

In this first subchapter, the concept of the everyday has been introduced by means of a set of loosely intertwined issues. Such juxtaposition of aspects of the urban context is the stepping-stone for further analytical moves to bypass oversimplification. When one wants a research (or a cultural project) to be close to lived urbanity in all its richness and complexity, the everyday is the conceptual humus that avoids that any specific discipline, method, tradition or culture relegates others to secondary positions. To acknowledge the very

[49] https://www.themindfulword.org/2018/byung-chul-han-philosophy
[50] Keeping in mind that "the city can no longer be thought of as in opposition to nature, but as a process through which both the social and the biophysical are co-produced" (Gandy, 2004, in Farías 2017: 43)

elusiveness of the everyday is thus the ethical backdrop for the endeavors realized in this study. Nevertheless, one idea acquires prominence: an imagined network of places might generate not only public interest, but the engagement of a public and new kinds of relations of the latter with the forms that make up the everyday of streets, consciously or unconsciously.

2. Place as urban opportunity

> *Alterity, we are told, is non-linear. The other side of this coin, however, is to assume that life is lived authentically on the spot, in places rather than along paths. Yet how could there be places, I wondered, if people did not come and go?*
> **Tim Ingold**

Conceiving and addressing Place concerns the notion of a particular position, a location, as well as a portion of space as being used (by someone). Place is commonly understood as a portion of space used for a specific purpose. Here one explores place as a critical aspect in the relation between the "global" and the "local", in a time of rapid flows of people, resources and knowledge around the globe, not to mention accelerating processes of gentrification (where a sense that regeneration is destroying community prevails).

For a place-based spatial praxis to become operative, sub-themes to develop here are the experience of place and spatial identity. Place identity is a sub-structure of a person's self-identity and consists of knowledge and feelings developed through everyday experiences of physical spaces. The place identity of a person can inform his/her experiences, behaviors, and attitudes about other places.

2.1 (In) Between Space and Place

A major reference to understand space (and place) is humanist geographer Yi-Fu Tuan[51], whom it is time to call to the discussion, especially because his *Space and Place*. *The Perspective of Experience* (1977) is a sensitive statement on the specific complexity these two terms evoke, despite one usually takes both "for granted" (Tuan, 2014: 2). Of the various themes addressed in the book, most important for this study is the fact that: "The ideas 'space' and 'place' require each other for definition. From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa" (Ibid. 6).

To exemplify his reasonings, Tuan recalls a conversation between Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg during a visit to Kronberg Castle (memorable thanks to a connection to Shakespeare). In the conversation, discussing the notion of *genius loci*, Bohr says to Heisenberg: "Isn't it strange how this castle changes as soon as one imagines that Hamlet lived here? As scientists we believe that a castle consists only of stones and admire the way the architect put them together. […] None of this should be changed by the fact that Hamlet lived here, and yet it is changed completely. Suddenly the walls and the ramparts speak a quite different language." (Ibid. 4)[52] The episode is a fine example of how myth and narrative are part of places' identities, framing a range of spatial experiences.

Concerning this relation between space and place, Tuan asks: "Given the human endowment, in what ways do people attach meaning to and organize space and place? When this question is asked, the social scientist is tempted to rush to culture as an explanatory factor (Ibid. 5).

In this framework, "[...] if we think of space as that which allows movement, then a place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place"

[51] For Tuan, in the line of wok of what John K. Wright called, in 1947, Geosophy (a subfield of geography where geography and philosophy meet), "the focus of humanistic geography is on people and their condition" (1976: 266)

[52] Bohr continues: "Yet all we really know about Hamlet is that his name appears in a thirteenth-century chronicle. No one can prove that he really lived, let alone that he lived here. But everyone knows the questions Shakespeare had him ask, the human depth he was made to reveal, and so he, too, had to be found a place on earth, here in Kronberg. And once we know that, Kronberg becomes quite a different castle for us." (in Tuan 2014: 4)

(Ibid. 6). Tuan emphasizes that architects frequently focus on spatial qualities of place, and that they can also concentrate spatial locality, or in his words "locational (place)" (Ibid.). He furthermore explains: "Human beings require both space and place. […] A healthy being welcomes constraint and freedom, the boundedness of place and the exposure of space" (Ibid. 54).

Tim Ingold in *Lines: A brief history* (2016) wonders about the creation moment of places and its relation to authentic life: "Life on the spot surely cannot yield an experience of place, of being some*where*. To be a place, every somewhere must lie on one or several paths of movement to and from places elsewhere" (Ingold, 2016: 3).

Stavros Stavrides adds: "It is not that action is contained in space. Rather, a rich network of practices transforms every available space into a potential theatre of expressive acts of encounter" (Stavrides, 201: 67). This is clear when Benjamin recalls Hegel's walks in Paris, in order to present 'his' Baudelaire (Benjamin, in Leach, 1997: 23).

On the other hand, just like "Physical environment can influence a people's sense of size and spaciousness" (Tuan, 2014: 54), "The mind learns to grapple with spatial relations long after the body has mastered them in performance. But the mind, once on its exploratory path, creates large and complex spatial schemata that exceed by far what an individual can encompass through direct experience" (Ibid. 67). Tuan continues: "The built environment, like language, has the power to define and refine sensibility. It can sharpen and enlarge consciousness" (Ibid. 107). Indeed, a body of empirical research documents the effects of architectural form on attitudes and behaviors (Robinson, Julia, 2006: 3). But more, "[…] both the ideas that generate buildings and the buildings themselves – may play a pivotal role in cultural change" (Ibid.).

In still other words, the awareness of a place's architectural features (and issues) is necessary for a place's identities and potentials' semblances. (Tuan, 2014: 107)[53]. On the other hand,

[53] "Consider the sense of an 'inside' and an 'outside,' of intimacy and exposure, of private life and public space. People everywhere recognize these distinctions, but the awareness may be quite vague. Constructed form has the power to heighten the awareness and accentuate, as it were, the difference in emotional temperature between 'inside' and 'outside.'" (Tuan 2014, 107)

"Spatial ability is essential to livelihood, but spatial knowledge at the level of symbolic articulation in words and images is not. […] Spatial ability precedes spatial knowledge. Mental worlds are refined out of sensory and kinesthetic experiences. Spatial knowledge enhances spatial ability" (Ibid. 74). Which means that the figure of the contemporary *flâneur* is an invitation to upgrade historical knowledge to lived contemporary walking/moving "performatics" (Hunter, 2008).

Additionally, during the present study, streets appeared as roads to somewhere[54]. Not only through narrative thinking outputs, but the very physical relation of these urban interfaces with the surrounding built structures (the cities they are part of). In these terms, when one thinks of the way the street is (and not only) a way to connect a public to nearby cathedrals, iconic monuments and buildings or museological institutions, "an object becomes a symbol when its own nature is so clear and so profoundly exposed that while being fully itself it gives knowledge of something greater beyond" (Tuan, 2014: 114).

It is time to ask: how do lived intensities become visible in/as urban space, precisely as moods, rhythmic patterns of social life, as in "the semblance of that World which is the counterpart of a Self" (Langer, 1953: 98)? Tuan offers a comprehensive perspective to address this issue's complexity and fluidity (Tuan, 2014: 166) especially when he states that a place's felt identity depends on diverse levels or dimensions of awareness. We could follow a full page of Tuan's text – grounded on a specific case study[55] – to really 'get the picture' here, for it applies to this study's case study and territories. But Tuan manages to summarize it in a very brief play with questions and answers (Ibid. 170-171):

> What is or what constitutes *my* neighborhood?
> Answer: It is where I live and where I go shopping; from which I gather that each person has his own neighborhood.

[54] To paraphrase a famous pop song, Talking Heads' *Road to Nowhere*.

[55] "Each neighborhood is a small part of a large built-up area, and it is unclear where one unit ends and another begins. A planner looking at the city may discern areas of distinctive physical and socioeconomic character; he calls them districts or neighborhoods and assigns them names if local ones do not already exist. These neighborhoods are places for him, they have meaning for him as intellectual concepts. What would be the perception of the people who live in such areas? Will they also see that in their area the houses are of a similar build and that the people are mostly of a similar socioeconomic class? The answer is, of course, not necessarily. Local inhabitants have no reason to entertain concepts that are remote from their immediate needs. […] The street where one lives is part of one's intimate experience. The larger unit, neighborhood, is a concept. The sentiment one has for the local street corner does not automatically expand in the course of time to cover the entire neighborhood. Concept depends on experience, but it is not an inevitable consequence of experience. (Tuan, 2014: 169-179)

> What is *our* neighborhood?
> Answer: It is the locale of my own kind of people, that is to say, the Irish in a mixed Italian-Irish working-class area.
> What is *the* neighborhood?
> Answer: It is the Italian-Irish working-class area, a physical and social unit that I am vaguely aware of as different from adjoining areas.

In crucial observations for cultural work which aims at producing affect[56] locally, Tuan helps us to understand how and when conceptual places involve (or not) emotions. This is relevant to question the givens of urban history or the very circuits and patterns of movement (Ibid. 183) that define the relation of the urban community to places.

One question then arises, a very important one for cultural projects that wish to establish with places a long-term commitment: how to generate knowledge of places – and phenomenological engagement – that is not just abstract but based in the "feel of a place" (Ibid. 183)? Especially since "It is made up of experiences, mostly fleeting and undramatic, repeated day after day and over the span of years. It is a unique blend of sights, sounds, and smells, *a* unique harmony of natural and artificial rhythms such as times of sunrise and sunset, of work and play" (Ibid. 183-184)? This is a major issue for nanotourism (experience-based and aiming for social integration during significant periods of shared time).

When what is for instance at stake is to render heritage urban meaning, Tuan proposes that "To strengthen our sense of self the past needs to be rescued and made accessible" (Ibid. 187). The question is how, and demands a preliminary take on the form of places, frequently what one tries to 'read' across the urban form (along with the urban codes, the urban image, and even the urban fabric): "The form is more important than the particular substance, which is corruptible" (Ibid. 190). In other words, place's memory (and memories) play a huge part of their evolution – mainly in the sense that these are either made visible (or not).

[56] "AFFECT/AFFECTION. Neither word denotes a personal feeling (sentiment in Deleuze and Guattari). *L'affect* (Spinoza's *affectus*) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act. *L'affection* (Spinoza's *affectio*) is each such state considered as an encounter between the affected body and a second, affecting, body taken in its broadest sense to include "mental" or ideal bodies)". Massumi, in Deleuze and Guattari, Félix [1980] (2004) *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia.*

Indeed, the musealization of a street is hardly going to help to actualize its urban meaning (Ibid. 194). And the problem is that "the cult of the past calls for illusion rather than authenticity" (Ibid.). One the other hand, when one looks at certain planning options and policies behind then, or when observes entrepreneurial and managerial experiments leading to accelerated gentrification processes, or also when one pays attention to urban activism – a democratic impulse (Felshin, 1995) – one understands that "When people deliberately change their environment and feel they are in control of their destiny, they have little cause for nostalgia" (Tuan, 2014: 195).

Thus, frequently an issue considered is whether to preserve or not the city's features and subsequently why shall we challenge the *status quo*? "The past really existed. All that we are we owe to the past. The present also has merit; it is our experiential reality, the feeling point of existence with its inchoate mixture of joy and sorrow. The future, in contrast, is a vision" (Ibid. 197).

In sum, place is a very complex issue in the sense that it is meaning continually in the process of reorganization. What an urban culture might do to tackle this fact is to raise sensibility and awareness. And why not start with Tuan's sensitive approach of places' experience as pauses in the very constant flows of urban time?

Culture has the responsibility of dealing with the inhuman consequences of "analytical thought's" (Ibid. 200) insensitive forms of valorizing the urban assets (such as streets' life). It is in this sense that place is a critical starting point to address the cultural connectivity of streets. Tuan's questions read almost like a cultural programme for such[57].

[57] What connection is there between space awareness and the idea of future time and of goal? What are the links between body postures and personal relationships on the one hand and spatial values and distance relationships on the other? How do we describe "familiarity," that quality of "at homeness" we feel toward a person or place? What kinds of intimate places can be planned, and what cannot—at least, no more than we can plan for deeply human encounters? Are space and place the environmental equivalents of the human need for adventure and safety, openness and definition? How long does it take to form a lasting attachment to place? Is the sense of place a quality of awareness poised between being rooted in place, which is unconscious, and being alienated, which goes with exacerbated consciousness—and exacerbated because it is only or largely mental? How do we promote the visibility of rooted communities that lack striking visual symbols? What is the loss and gain in such promotion?" (Tuan 2014, 200)

For example, places' sidewalks could be treated as sites for a specific but also open kind of interaction (Jacobs, 1961). The urban code, in this sense, is very much enriched, and to think about it with "sensitivity to human behavior" (Gehl and Gemzoe, 1996) allows for urban planning, cultural policies and of course artistic action to be more conscious of their social, emancipatory, entrepreneurial, revolutionary, spiritual (or other) potential.
To imagine streets as the stage for encounters is here less a problem of design (architecture, urbanism, urban design) than a matter of creative narrativization, in the sense that is opens up a horizon of shared "sentiment for place" (Tuan, 2014: 143). They might become another (arguably more creative) layer of the everyday life of specific places. Moreover, if "Intimate experiences, whether of people or of things, are difficult to make public" (Ibid. 147), the more interesting is the challenge to both open up this space in the urban narrative and communicate it to an engaged target public – progressively made aware of this kind of *treasure* the translocal city offers.

The intention in this chapter has been to clarify the critical and creative tensions inherent to the frequent overlapping of the concepts of space and place. Both are fundamental anchor points to consider the urban experience beyond what is usually taken for granted in mainstream discourse. Led by phenomenological insight, this subchapter establishes above all a general theory not only of places, but of movement and mobility, and also of urban cognition and subjectivation. Once acknowledged as the sites where intensities are to be lived (and eventually staged), streets may consciously become what they are maybe meant to be (in terms of cultural work): complex nodes in a network with always emerging traits.

2.2 Places as topological nodes in a network

Merrifield contests "a restrictive Cartesian view of socio-spatial reality"[58] (1993: 516), stating that "the spatialized dialectic of Henri Lefebvre offers a fruitful framework for reconciling the interaction between place and space insofar as it strives to overcome dualistic conceptions of capitalist spatiality" (Ibid. 516).

[58] Epitomized for the author by Entrikin's concept of 'betweenness of place' (1991)

Thinking of Lefebvre's *spatiology* (1991a), Merrifield underlines the notion of "practiced space", where everyday consumption, enjoyment, tradition, self-identification, solidarity, social support and social reproduction are "lived out. As a moment of capitalist space" (Ibid. 522). Places are certainly the stage for a "clash […] between capitalist 'utilizers' and community 'users'" (Lefebvre, 1991a: 359-360).

Indeed, through spatial thinking, one understands for instance that a material landscape is fixed capital (Merrifield, 1993: 520) which becomes "imbued with meaning in everyday place-bound social practices." (Ibid.) And this is where the articulation between Lefebvre and de Certeau is particularly relevant for this study, as Merrifield makes clear:

> According to de Certeau, place (*lieu*) is 'the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. […] A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability'. Space *(espace),* on the other hand, is 'composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it… in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is, when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualisation, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts' (Ibid. 528).

In this framework, places are here understood through a series of geographical concepts and their potential for framing cultural work topologically. Key concepts are 'rhythm', 'network', 'locality', 'connectivity', 'interface', 'assemblage' and 'portal' (the latter aiming to bridge these sections with the experiential dimension. What is explored here is their operative (but also narrative) potential.

Widespread definitions of place may be confronted with a current anthropological redefinition of the term, which is a take on places' complex constituency: "Once a moment of rest along a path of movement, place has been reconfigured in modernity as a nexus within which all life, growth and activity are *contained*. Between places, so conceived, there are only connections" (Ingold, 2016: 99). This perspective leads to another insight: "[…] locational identity of each place is specified independently of the identities of its more or less transient occupants" (Ibid.).

This means relating place to connectivity and to locality in a particularly productive way, especially if one looks at cultural projects which precisely want to address the economy of experience. As a matter of fact, "wayfaring, in short, is neither placeless nor place-bound

but place*making*" (Ingold, 2016: 104). This critically leads to the anthropological, geographical and sociological value of place.[59]

To consider place through issues of globalization is an important line of work (Clark and Doel, 2011: 50). Harvey and Sassen "have sought to explore the tensions between fixity and mobility, noting that place, if anything, is becoming more, rather than less, important in an economy where 'image is everything'" (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011: 103). Indeed, "Being merely local in a glocalised world, however, is automatically rendered a secondary existence, since the means for giving meaning to existence have been placed out of reach" (Clark and Doel, 2011: 50). Indeed, freedom of movement somehow precedes all kinds of freedoms.

This leads one to question how tactics for a translocal narrative face the emerging narratives of glocalization. Ulrich Beck offers one possibility: "The ethic of individual self-fulfilment and achievement [might provide] the basis for a new cosmopolitanism, by placing globality at the heart of political imagination, action and organization" (Beck, 1999: 9). Beck speaks of "the creation of new, spatially non-contiguous, communities of interest ('risk communities'), and simultaneously affect the nature of political and social life within states" (Holloway, 2011: 59).

It is with this creative tensions in mind that one shall notice today's (conflictual) co-existence between "strategic 'places to be' for those who seek to control the global economy" and "places where knowledge is embodied and acted upon by those who are, in effect, the 'fast subjects' of global society" (Thrift, in Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011: 11). In a word, one is here less concerned with the image of places and rather concerned with places' wordling processes. Deleuze's materialism of the immanent, an "ex-centric empiricism" (Clarke and

[59] Augé (in anthropology) or Bauman (in sociology) are examples: "Drawing obvious parallels with humanistic geographers' work on placelessness, he [Augé] appears to suggest that there are now many 'non-places' which are solely associated with the accelerated flow of people and goods around the world and do not act as localised sites for the celebration of 'real' cultures." (Merriman 2011, 10) "Bauman describes such kind of places as 'places without place', making an explicit link to the spatial strategies of purification and exclusion that are at the heart of consumer society (simultaneously condemning the shallow and banal sociality evident in so many sites of consumption)." (Ibid.) Indeed, the issue is not that 'simple': "Crang (2002) insists that many of the spaces Castells cites as non-places (malls, airports, hotels, etc.) are not simply places of homogenised commodity exchange, rationalisation and flow translation: they are also emotionally charged places of desire and disgust, inclusion and exclusion, sociality and familiarity" (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011: 103).

Doel, 2011: 144) has in this sense clearly helped to affirm the non-representational geophilosophies to come. It is a vitalist thought (Ibid.).

Marc Augé work[60] is also again helpful here. It largely 'haunts' one's processes of reinvention of places such as the streets studied here, especially in his understanding of "anthropological place" (Merriman, 2011: 29). Yet, when one is taking streets as lived cultural hubs, Augé's account is problematic even if inspiring[61]: "Place and non-place are rather like opposed polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten" (Augé, 1995: 78-79)[62]. In fact, one shall imagine a set of cultural streets rather as a peculiar experiential mix. Paraphrasing Augé[63]: maybe *spaces of temporary co-creativity, connectivity and socio-aesthetic production, where flâneries cross paths while engaging in more or less loose social bonds or even shared emotion.* Of course, such perspective is more in line with Massey (1991) or Thrift's (1999) more "dynamic and inclusive conceptions of place" (Merriman, 2011: 30).

[60] Notably *Non-Lieux* (1992; translated as *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, 1995).
[61] For instance, with Augé one "recognises that the ubiquitous familiarity of non-places is comforting to many users and consumers" (O'Beirne, 2006a in Merriman: 2011, 29). But since one's idea here is to stimulate engagement with place, for example through nano-tourism, there is the imperative that streets become places in the sense of emotionally charged.
[62] "Place and non-place are relational, con- tingent and in process, but it was only in later writings that he was to more strongly assert that airports, motorways and other spaces are often simultaneously expe- rienced as both places and non-places (Augé, 1996b, 1998a, 1999b)" (Merriman, 2011: 30)
[63] Non-places are "[…] spaces of circulation, communication and consumption, where solitudes coex- ist without creating any social bond or even a social emotion. (Augé, 1996b: 178)

2.2.1 (Rhythmically) patterned

> *We must learn not to be afraid of complexity, and to re-awaken a sensibility to patterns that connect.*
> **Sacha Kagan**

Rhythm is a fundamental dimension of place. For Lefebvre "(E)verywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time, and an expenditure of energy, there is *rhythm*" (Lefebvre, 2004: 15). Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis can "reveal the distinctive qualities of particular cities, helping to avoid overgeneralizations, and disclose the dynamic global flows and increasingly complex practices through which contemporary cities are constituted" (Edensor, 2017: 253).

It is furthermore crucial to acknowledge that time itself is a social force (Adam, 1995), a notion to keep in mind when one studies how to counterbalance normative and authoritative rhythms with the exploration of alternative ones, namely moved by inner individual sensing of energy – which are the more important for urban life the more they "take place" in the city.

In this research, it was obvious from the outstart that each street has a different rhythmic pattern, and that diverse creative agents have different wishes concerning changes in those patterns. This leads to issue of how to reconceive local rhythms by means of critically engaged forms of synchronization between individuals (Edensor, 2017: 249).

Capitalism is shaping urban rhythms in many ways, "producing novel rhythmic patterns across urban space that supplement and supersede the earlier arrangements of work and leisure" (Ibid. 250), namely through "rhythms of consumption which become inscribed in place." (Kärrholm, 2009) It is precisely 'against them' that *flâneurish* practices enter into dialogue with diverse forms of deacceleration of modern life: from 'go slow' – in Italy, for instance, the *Cittàslow* initiative – to 'slow food' (Highmore, 2001: 172) across 'slow tourism'.

When a place is enduring a pathological process, may one speak of *arrhytmias*? On the other hand, one could hardly say that certain routines are healthy vital signs[64]. In this framework,

[64] As Lefebvre puts it, workers' routines disclose the "untragic misery of the inhabitant." (Lefebvre, 1996: 159)

Miles reminds us that in certain moments of crisis or tension, different rhythmic patterns clash (Miles, 2008: 247-248).

2.2.2 (Fragmentarily) Localized

When we speak about locality, we may think about particular neighborhoods, places, or urban districts; we must consider, as well the fact or condition of having a location or position in space. But above all, one needs to address the fact that the very understandings of locality are interdependent of spatial and territorial features. In the specific context of this research, locality is above all a challenge. “Locality and fragment have impact on the whole”. (Nawratek, 2015: 20) Locality is thus another important aspect of place, not the least since it is a concept whose experiential dimension is where cultural development may anchor its foundations.

While in many cases locality has lost some significance for the formation of communities, in others a sense of place and valuation of the local remains the crucial cultural factor for urban development and renovation. This latter aspect becomes particularly obvious in times and situations of ongoing transformation of the concept of locality, in consequence of the digital revolution or transformative phenomena such as mass tourism or gentrification, and in social processes such as efforts in turning neighbourhoods more sustainable, safe, beautiful or simply resilient to unwanted changes.

One shall acknowledge that “the local [is] far from simply a handmaiden to the global, and the critical question of spatial scale [shall be] problematised across several intellectual perspectives” (Warf, 2011: 182).

Thinking on what a neighbourhood *is*, Hayward reminds us that it is “a plenum of gregariousness, a pulse, a conglomerate that constantly respires and excretes, the neighborhood holds ground just as it lurches for new resources. It is a bumptious, brutally lively, *coherence* of bodies (human and nonhuman), ecosystems, communities, and

buildings" (2017: 257). In her account of transsexuals' mobility, Hayward uses the word *transposition* in a way that suggests the very verb *to transpose* includes both a physical (urban) sense and a metaphorical-literary layer.

In fact, behind the clarity of the term transposition one envisages a sort of poietic image of urban (life and) places' social complexity appearing in full. After all, "These [places] are not utopic zones of love, though love can be found; neighborhoods are stresses even in apparent moderation, vehemently intractable. Neighborhoods exclude, are designed to make some vulnerable while others safe; neighborhoods can be percussed by bullets as much by traffic. To be neighborly is as much a threat as an invitation" (Hayward, 2017: 257). In a way, any neighborhood thus embodies a certain set of codes and for the traveler, the stranger or the occasional passerby this might be the essence of his/her contact with difference.

Places thus attract people, and groups, and whole communities in the sense that transpositions are there perhaps more viable. The acknowledgement of the immensely diverse ways transposition might occur (or be desired) is in this sense the opposite of the acritical and apathic acceptance – by travelers – of the urban givens (be it through social prejudice, bourgeois common sense or touristical marketing discourse).

Locality – at various levels – is an aspect of globality in (at least) this precise dimension of the cultural work. To generate models of connectivity, in this context, is about articulating the urban fragment across the 'space of flows' (Castells, 1989) with the 'space of place' (Castells, 2001). Saskia Sassen, who coined the term 'global city', is here helpful to understand how economic globalization is entangled with the socio-cultural contexts of places. Precisely in "Globalisation; issues for culture" (2006: 15-18), one finds important aspects of the present research's narrative-based mindset in terms of the issue of locality – in fact pointing out the importance of poetry and poesis-making (Ibid.).

Narratives of place and place-based narratives are definitely part of a socially sustainable response to the phenomenon of globalization. Indeed, there is today "a proliferation of networks that connect very different kinds of places around shared interests, shared ways of engaging with the broader world" (Ibid.16) This is an absolutely determinant framework for a new cultural concept to thrive by means of the translocal connections it may foster.

Within such kind of political and spatialized subjectivity, subjects are actors "acting out" (Stiegler, 2003) their presence and co-presence in "strategic spaces that make legible some of these development" (Sassen, 2016: 2). Sassen believes this to explain the appearance of "new, post-modern geographies" (Ibid.) where what is to be studied are what she calls "non-cosmopolitan forms of emergent globality or global consciousness" (Ibid.). Sassen explains that she uses the term non-cosmopolitan to underline that these new actors-subjects engage in actions that "may not be fully formalized" (Ibid.17).

Of course, and this relates to the present research interest in translocality as the basis for the circulation of imaginaries: "This is like thinking via a new semantics which opens up a new syntax as well." (Ibid.) Space syntax theory is indeed useful in order to understand how any spatial intervention – or interpretation of space – implies the problem of hierarchy and power (Nawratek, 2018: 7-8). Streets appear in this perspective as an element in the urban form that clearly invites for these ideas to be tactically experimented with.

2.2.3 (Networked) Connected (mobility and governance)

> *Networking is about knowing more people. Connecting is about knowing people more.*
> **Neil H. Bookspan**

Streets connect places. They bridge localities in a most naturalized way. This basic infrastructural fact helps to consciously explore the multidimentional potential of a diverse set of streets. In the spirit of Simmel, what is at stake is maybe a mystic insight – "the miracle of the road" (Simmel, in Leach, 1997: 64) –, a sort of belief in an immaterial connectivity beyond the visible materiality of the built environment.[65] This implies, as in Simmel's iconic reasoning on the bridge, the emergence of a specific process of conceptualization: connectivity is about keeping objects apart as to better link them to each other.[66]

[65] "Path building, one could say, is a specifically human achievement; the animal too continuously overcomes a separation and often in the cleverest and most ingenious ways, but its beginning and end remain unconnected, it does not accomplish the miracle of the road: freezing movement into a solid structure that commences from it and in which it terminates." (Simmel, in Leach, 1997: 64)

[66] "By overcoming this obstacle, the bridge symbolizes the extension of our volitional sphere over space. Only for us are the banks of a river not just apart but 'separated'; if we did not first connect them in our practical

Simmel diagnosis a major aspect of a society that separates its elements from themselves and from each other, not fostering connection unless within a less and less diverse morphology of hegemony.: "The deepest problems of modern life flow from the attempt of the individual to maintain the independence and individuality of his existence against the sovereign powers of society, against the weight of the historical heritage and the external culture and technique of life" (Simmel, in Leach, 1997: 67). Accordingly, he advocates as well: "It will require the investigation of the adaptations made by the personality in its adjustment to the forces that lie outside of it" (Ibid.).

To think on connectivity today, in a context of never seen-felt before "intensification of emotional life" (Ibid.), one may follow Thrift, who represents a "consistent concern for the flows of information and knowledge that shape individuals' conceptions of themselves and one another and that play a major role in the routinised reproduction of social relations." (Warf, 2011: 410). "This view focuses on the exercise of power by actors rather than just the embeddedness of power in networks." (Ibid.)

Additionally, in the context of "soft capitalism", connectivity is entangled with performativity. It is as well connected to the notion of scene: "Scenes are […] the *soft infrastructure* of the city, namely 'the system of associative structures and social networks, connections and human interactions that underpins and encourages the flow of ideas between individuals and institutions" (Landry, 2008: 133).

The notion of cities (and streets) as urban commons (Pusey and Chatterton, 2017: 63) is then key: "[…] the urban commons and its commoners open up new political imaginaries essential for pressing crisis and tackling injustice and transforming urban life beyond capitalism" (Ibid.) As a "dynamic, generative entity" (Ibid.) the concept may inspire immanent cooperation between streets, beyond their strict physicality.

thoughts, in our needs and in our fantasy, then the concept of separation would have no meaning." (Simmel, in Leach, 1997: 64)

And again, all this means both the commons and the very production-experience of community are part of a dynamics of creative-productive antagonism and solidarity (Hardt and Negri, 2009). The model allows community to feel empowered, precisely to face "the excesses of contemporary capital encroachment and expansion" (Pusey and Chatterton, 2017: 65).

The relation to governance is critical here, not only because it is related to the contemporary cultural shift from "managerialism, consent and consultation" (McFarlane, 2010: 368) to entrepreneurialism in city policy, but also because "we might talk about certain lifestyles as types of urban governance" (Davidson, 2017: 147). Governance makes the more sense the more it integrates ongoing urban learning. Concerning the criteria to evaluate such superposition (in the context of what he calls urban learning forums), "intensity, openness and quality" are useful to address urban learning situations "that seek to bring together different people, knowledge and perspectives in the context of uncertain urban development" (McFarlane, 2010: 370).

Cultural critique by the likes of Rancière[67] (2004) or Žižek (1989)[68] helps us to be aware of the potential but also the limits of the notion of governance as "technocratic rationale" (Davidson, 2017: 150). In this mindset, what is at stake is to reinvent the form (and the effects) of participation, consultation and empowerment (Ibid. 151), locally.

This cannot be separated from the topic of mobility. To think of this notion – be it of refugees or tourists, capital or artistic performance – implies decoding relations of power and acknowledging the life-worlds of quotidian mobility. Thrift speaks of mobilities as "structures of feeling" through which one shall acknowledge (phenomenologically) issues of "motion, action and process" (Adey, 2009).[69]

In this research, an important aspect of mobility concerns the specific mobility of cultural tourism. In "touristic dwelling" (Obrador Pons, 2003: 48) one shall not forget, there is not

[67] Rancière "argues that democracy as it exists today certainly does not reflect the ideas it is founded on" (Davidson, 2017: 149).
[68] Žižek points to the "perverse logics of contemporary urban governance, where seemingly illogical choices continue to dominate" (Davidson, 2017: 149).
[69] One may for instance think of the change in the experience of Lisbon by the mobilities brought by the transportation networks of tuk-tuks or electric scooters.

only a specific gaze at work (Urry, 1990), but also "[…] a host of embodiments associated with the tourist experience from smells and touches to excitations, thrills and fears." (Obrador-Pons, 2007).

Paradoxically, Lash and Urry (1994, 254) demonstrate that in current late-capitalist times one is at the same time witnessing the beginning of the end of tourism – since "the de-differentiation of tourism and everyday life under disorganised capitalism (to the extent that the former ceases to be 'special' and the latter 'mundane')" (Gale, 2009). Tourism is in fact exposed to new dangers, precisely because, as a mass industry accelerated by the mechanisms of splintered urbanism (Graham and Marvin, 2001), it has lost, for the largest part, its former humanistic (intimate) character (see Krippendorf, 2010). As a matter of fact, "In retrospect, tourism, far from being a leisure industry, represents the basic touchstone of society, which impedes social fragmentation. Equally important, there is no good or bad version of tourism, lest by the use people make from it" (Korstange, 2017: 3).

In other words, looking at the ways touristic excess has brought intense phenomena of exclusion to an enormous range of places, "Towards a more sustainable tourism, citizens should change the mainstream cultural values" (Krippendorf, 1982)" (In Ibid.). This is where nanotourism steps in, as a compromise between experience economy and citizen appropriation and participation.

Precisely tackling the way, the creative industries have established a specific "relationship between culture, technology and the economy" (Ibid. 29-30), the task at hand is to study ways artistic and cultural production might influence such state of things through connectivity.

In the computational language which surrounds us, network connectivity is related to the extensive process of connecting various parts of a network to each other (terms such as *gateways*, *routers* or *switches* have become part of everyday life's discourse). Since what is here at stake is to study the cultural (and specifically discursive) conditions for a cooperation between streets, grounding it on a number of materializations in the urban form (the street as a physical network for walking related activity), connectivity is arguably the mainstay of

the networked exchange to happen between partner organizations and institutions, artists and passers-by, within and beyond each concrete locality.

Network connectivity is, for technologues, a metric to discuss how well parts of a network connect to one another. Beyond this strict perspective and aiming to link it to the concepts of communication and mediation, this study tries to be aware of the topology of the key-elements in the Project's network, in order to eventually help to generate the (technical) elements which might guarantee that a new system could be put to work. One is thus working on a cultural connectivity model, identifying in place(s) existing organization(s), institution(s), people and narrative(s).

No less important, the notion of connectivity appears as a transdisciplinary operative term. It shall help communities involved in various dimensions of the urban life – artistic, business, touristic… – to connect and interact within (but also outside, autonomously) a translocal narrative of place-based innovation. In other words, still, the term could be related to movements such as The Internet of People, for connectivity in this project is firstly about letting people engage in conversations, debates, embodied cooperation and co-work based in Human contact.

In this spirit, global connectivity issues are to be addressed with a mindset that valorizes urban-socio-cultural locality – to do things in togetherness (community, cooperation, collaboration, co-creativity) arguably enriches the vision of places and boost their meaning and identity through conversational takes on diverse cultures. This also leads to the problematics not only of how to produce connectivity in the first place, but most importantly in how to maintain it on a longer term (a horizon of socially sustainable citizenship).

As an urban design principle, connectivity (in the sense of spatial permeability) refers particularly to the directness of links and the density of connections in a transport network. In this spirit, cultural connectivity is not that unrelated to the degree that transportation networks[70] – of which streets are obvious elements of – connect people to their destinations.

[70] "A highly permeable network has many short links, numerous intersections, and minimal dead-ends. As connectivity increases, travel distances decrease and route options increase, allowing more direct travel

But the point is furthermore to inspire the connected agents in order to produce engaged work in this specific connectivity consciously. In this framework, again, diverse layers of connectivity may generate a new sense of relation and belonging, not just based on the drive for acceleration, instead addressing its own dromologic principles (tending to slowness, pauses).

In these terms, a connectivity model is necessary to generate a specifically open (autopoietic) form of human connection: "What's more, the pleasures of social life register in our brains much the same way physical pleasure does, and our knack for social connection is reflected in some of the most basic ways humans communicate—by subtle uses of our voice, facial expressions and sense of touch."[71]

The notion of social cognition, a mainstay in mainstream social psychology, is a key term in social cognitive neuroscience (Liebermann, 2013). It is important for one to understand how people, more than financial gains, get a real reward by forging connections with each other, sharing information (Lieberman (2013: 125). One's need to connect seems to influence decisively how we remember and how we learn. In Positive Psychology, it is widely acknowledged that social connectivity is related to health and happiness.

Indeed, for Stavrides, an important cultural challenge is to "connect communing of those who share common worlds, opening the circles of sharing to include newcomers, opening the sharing relations to new possibilities through rethinking of sharing rules and opening the boundaries that define the spaces of sharing." More: "…a self-managed cooperation which is open to newcomers, knowledge 'production' which is not limited to those who understand it, create it or 'finance' it and festive and joyous events which do not separate consumers from artists and so on" (Stavrides, 2016: 3).

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between destinations, creating a more accessible and resilient transportation system" (online TDM Encyclopedia, 2009)."
In https://www.healthyplaces.org.au/userfiles/file/Connectivity%20June09.pdf

[71] ""To the extent that we can characterize evolution as designing our modern brains, this is what our brains were wired for: reaching out to and interacting with others," writes neuroscientist Matthew Lieberman in his book Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect. "These social adaptations are central to making us the most successful species on earth.""
In https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/social_connection/definition

In the creative field, it is impossible to ignore that "methodologies arise out of a will to collaborate, despite the many cultural, economic, geographic and in some cases technological obstacles" (Lovink and Rossiter, 2007: 12). Cutting-edge cultural concepts thus generate a sense of belonging which specific connectivity strategies will turn operative. It is in this sense that a certain *habitus* of cultural agents – frequently unaware of their nomadic potential – might be challenged by means of meaningful connections. For Julia Robinson (2006: 5) "While the issue of conscious change of culture is theoretically problematic, practically it is a given. It is taking place every day."

Again, in the street as a basic dimension of creative connectivity, the point is to search for a symbolic superstructural, dimension in it that may end up as a decisive contribution for the dynamic cultural identity of places (nodes) but also linkages – all starting with the very symbolic-phenomenological challenge which is the act of walking.

This *risking connectivity* comprises a certain mystagogical attitude (Stiegler)[72]. Cultural projects sustaining the link local/global may then be envisaged as promoting a cognitive nomadology of which connectivity is the origin and the outcome at the same time. It manages to help a public to engage with what Castells calls the informational mode of production (Castells, 1996: 13)[73] creatively and consciously.

Such connectivity is again related to the idea of translation – replacing mere transfer (Ibid.) between realities, traditions, values, whole cultures. Connectivity is here, first and foremost, as another word for something that is connected both to the idea of "innovative milieu" (Castells) and creative class networking[74].

A translocal narrative is a way to turn localities more resilient to mobilities they are not especially keen to foster. This is important for the stimulating of urban memory as

[72] See http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/pdf/Stiegler%20glossary.pdf.
[73] Manuel Castells (1996) The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, Oxford: Blackwell
[74] O'Connor 2007, 45: "Networking in the cultural industries has provided a rich research vein in recent years (Crewe, 1996; Coe, 2000; 2001; Grabher, 2001; 2002; 2004; Wittel, 2001; Ettlinger, 2003; Jeffcutt, 2004; Sturgeon, 2003; Nachum and Keeble, 2003; Neff, 2004; Mossig, 2004; Kong, 2005; Lange, 2005; Johns, 2006). This reflects a much wider concern with the subject suggesting to some a complete new organisation and 'spirit' of capitalism itself (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005). In particular it suggests the new forms of self-organisation of SME networks, and indeed, the replication of networked organisation within the structures of large, global companies (Amin and Cohendet, 1999; Grabher, 2001; 2004)."

"embedded in place" (Grabher, 2004). Network sociability seems to be the humus for places' multilayered – temporally and spatially – evolution. Of course, networking always implies forms of inclusion/exclusion, and this is where concepts – of organization, of experience, of place, of community – define lines of thought and the practical possibility of tactical appropriation.

In any case, "Cooperation is *always* a complex thing". (Lovink and Spehr, 2007: 83) More, lived experience shall not be exchanged for online proficiency.[75] Furthermore, Internet connectivity, one must never forget, "is not without problems, not least in its utilization for profit and control (precisely blockages)" (O'Sullivan, 2006: 13).

Lovink and Spehr are clear about two contrasting ways cooperation is performed in a global scale:

> Obviously, we have an idea of positive out-cooperating – this is when new forms of collaboration arise that are applied by the workers themselves, and old forms of hierarchy get ruled out in the same process. And we have a notion of negative out-cooperating – that is, when global power structures aim at the dis-empowerment of workers and local people, when hierarchy is reinforced by the power of being global, of combining and re-combining global workforce, resources and markets without participation of workers and people. (Lovink and Spehr, 2007: 87).

It is precisely because of this that institutions are important, as materializations of compromise anchored in social contact.

What is emphasized here is the "social and spatial dimension" (Radil and Walther, 2019: 2) of networks. After the influential works of Castells (1996), Deleuze and Guattari (2004) or Latour (1993)[76], "the network metaphor is now routinely framed as a central concern to human geographic thought and is often now fielded in introductory texts to discuss issues of movement and/or spatial interaction (e.g., Fouberg et al. 2015)." Networks are in sum "as social constructs" (Radil and Walther, 2019: 2-3).

[75] "It's no accident that it's much easier to make a computer predict the course of a space vessel than to program a robot to bake pancakes." (Lovink and Spehr, 2007: 83)

In such *complicated* places, "Nothing can be reduced to anything else, nothing can be deduced from anything else, everything may be allied to everything else" (Latour, 1988: 163). And more, in this focus on streets as place-assemblages, "all actors only gain agency by being part of particular networks made of more or less durable materials (Laurier, 2011: 275).

As Holquist, puts it, concerning the fact that there is no grand, coherent, all-inclusive theory of dialogism: "Rather, I see a series of attempts over time to define the mystery of relation itself, where relation is understood not merely as a specific relation [between Self and Other], but is a master category governing both thought and action".[77] So, since the essence of an interface lies in what it does, the very materiality of places gives the metaphorology of the stage (for dialogue, expression, creativity, citizenship and so on) an intense meaning.

Assemblage theory (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980) is fundamental to understand this process. In its core one finds "the development of yet another metaphor, that of the rhizome,"[78] (Radil and Walther, 2019: 3). Significantly, "[…] a rhizome, ultimately, is composed not of points but of the lines between the points" (O'Sullivan, 2006: 112).

Such metaphorology allows for a conception of the social as a dynamic process in flux. It allows to speak of social networks, a theory which helps to clarify the "processes that interact with network structures to yield certain outcomes for individuals and groups" (Borgatti and Halgin, 2011: 1168).

Consequently "Successful, innovative or resilient actors are ones that are simultaneously well integrated into a dense group of close relationships and able to create contacts beyond their own community" (Radil and Walther, 2019: 6). "Being 'central' in a set of relations is an important concern here. Some actors are central because they are 'embedded' within a tightly knit community of friends, kin or allies or because they are connected to many well-

[77] In http://jordanrussiacenter.org/event-recaps/slavic-literary-scholar-michael-holquist-negotiates-the-many-bakhtins/#.Wu8SWWaZPUo

connected actors. Other actors, called brokers, are central because they bridge communities that would otherwise be disconnected (Burt, 2005)" (Radil and Walther, 2019: 4).

Crucially, "In a general sense, actors that are close in geographic space may be more likely to form relations but those that are close on multiple social dimensions may also heighten that potential for interaction". (Ibid.)[79] Within this theoretical context, locality becomes an instance of centrality and community – identifying groups of densely connected nodes in a network. (Ibid. 9) Distance is also reconceptualized as "homophily: the tendency to bond with similar others" (Ibid.) Scale as well, which now considers less hierarchical 'levels' of territorially defined spaces or the size or scope of geographic process or outcome, and more the overall position of actor in a set of relations (embeddedness) and the way a community is bounded by social, economic, religious or political boundaries (cluster) (Ibid.) Finally, (relational) power is no more "the ability to reach people and places across scales and distance but the ability to access and control resources through network flows." (Ibid. 9-10)

To be noted, also because it is related to the way a good part of the urban public still sees places: "Research around 'places in networks' tends to draw on a conceptualization of place that has been critiqued at times but remains widely employed: place as small-scale regional space that is at least partly defined through absolute location. This tradition employs a largely descriptive approach to place or what Cresswell (2004: 51) called "the common sense idea of the world being a set of places each of which can be studied as a unique and particular entity."

This leads to important conclusions: power "is not something that circulates or flows in networks, it is an effect of the social interactions that hold the networks together".(Allen,

[79] "For instance, when a social network is projected on geographical space or across a study region, the most prominent information is the location of the various actors that compose the network. Each actor of a social network, represented as nodes in the figure, develops and maintains affective relationships, identities, and attachments to the places in which they are primarily located, indicated with vertical dashed lines. In typical geographical fashion, actor location can always be measured in absolute terms through geographical coordinate pairs and characterized or contextualized by the attributes of the places with which they are associated. Assuming the location of any two actors is not identical, several forms of distance can also be measured between nodes and their associated places to reflect a variety of conceptualizations of proximity in Euclidian or other types of space, including social, institutional, cognitive or organizational. Such distance measures, shown by the dotted line between places in Figure 1, would always be measured between actor locations (places) but not necessarily follow the form of an existing network. This information can be used to assess or condition the possible formation of new interactions between actors over time. (Radil and Walther, 2019: 7)

2010, 289), It is this framework that one may observe, evaluate or create networks where actors have the capacity to meet other actors, maybe to contribute to a more participated (democratic) urban environment.

2.2.4 Inter-facial

In a way, places have an infrastructural function in this research and the underlying case study. Infrastructure is here understood as "a visual and material, cultural politics, and this cultural politics is also a subaltern politics in that it exists beyond representation" (Chattopadhyay, 2012: ix, in McFarlane, 2017: 178). Thus, one avoids infrastructures' "usual reference points – sunk systems of water, waste, power, transit […] to place infrastructure in 'a new optical field' (Ibid. xvi): 'To enable a different vision of the city, we must unlearn our habits of thinking about urban materiality, particularly the material constitution of physical infrastructure.'" Precisely, as well, "Chattopadhyay aims to rethink the street as a space of *habitation*, of ephemeral performance and experience, rather than mere usage" (McFarlane, 2017: 179) In other words, "infrastructure here shifts from roads as a primary urban form of transit to streets as a variegated set of experiences, a 'texture of the conjunctural' (Chattopadhyay, in ibid. 120)

There are Classic understandings of interface: a surface forming a common boundary between adjacent regions, bodies, substances, or phases; a point at which independent systems or diverse groups interact; in computation as a system, a device or a lay-out or design. But these are somehow secondary to the work in this Project, where what is explored here is the notion of interface as defined by urban theorist Krzysztof Nawratek (2012), who identifies "mechanisms that promote independent fragments, including people, neighbourhoods and regions, so that they are not random, unsystematic bunches, but stable (yet flexible) structures" (Nawratek, 2012: synopsis), thus allowing for the multilayering of identities, as well as their co-relation, within an effort to stimulate what Nawratek (after Marx in his *Grundrisse*) calls the general intellect. (Ibid. 44)

Nawratek addresses the city primarily as a political entity – as in his previous book is *City as Political Idea* (2011) – to be re-invented. This position stands in stark contrast to other urban analysis that take for granted (and thus fail to challenge) dominant forms of political economy. In his analysis of the conditions to experience freedom and pluralism in the city, he even goes as far as to affirm that "public space doesn't exist (and neither does private)" (Nawratek, 2012: 21). So, the priority is to reflect on the organization of space, namely beyond its highly effective corporative dimension. This implies a work on similarity, the ground for cooperation (one which in the end inevitably leads to forms identity hybridization). For it is in the discontinuity between subjects – the fact that between their identities and potential characteristics there is an emptiness (not a vacuum), that these subjects may reveal themselves.

> More:
> Public space, besides being a vulgar version of Habermas's public sphere, is also a banalised emptiness. It was Lefebvre who wrote about the rhythm of the city and about the full/empty opposition. The space between buildings has always fascinated urbanists and what until recently was considered empty. This was until postmodern thinkers, such as Lefebvre and Dorren Massey, filled it with meanings and it became a social construct. The emptiness disappeared. Instead, an all-encompassing magma appeared. (Ibid. 44)

Nawratek consequently notes that "the magma, as it glues together all the particles of being, prevents any change. It is not possible to imagine a post-capitalist world, because there is nothing but capitalism. There is no pause, there is not a moment of hesitation between steps" (Ibid.) But, in any case, even in this totalizing "order" (Ibid.) parts (fragments) of the city could tentatively become the rhetorical device and the performatic stage for an interfacial politics where cooperation, connectedness, pluralism and freedom may acquire new interpretations.

Since the interface is seen as structuring of all kinds of relations, using the concept in the current *Zeitgeist* addresses on the other hand pressing concerns with the regime of Post-Truth, a discursive landscape in which emotion and personal belief influence objective facts, thus generating a specific form of public opinion; and allows for a thing-based exploration of the streets around Heidegger's understanding of *interesse*, leading to a richer and less alienated (Debord would say *separated*) experience of urban time.

For Heidegger, *interesse* is a philosophical word implying that something that is between us is the opposite of indifference. Hence, Nawratek's work helps us to question to which point is a certain urban scape, event or artwork truly *interesting*, in the sense that it might generate more life (or light) between the facades of the built environment and between the faces of those adventurous users of the city who cross paths. In other words, to which point is something interesting truly about addressing the empty space-time between the users of the city as relational and, specifically narrative, potency.

Since a sense of virtuality (Skrebowski, 2006: 43) is omnipresent, any cultural project may in this sense have the task to generate or integrate interfaces for a sort of (alternative) narrative citizenship. Between discourses, urban practices, the movement across the city and between a specific kind of urban form (the charismatic street), a virtual identity is generated, by means of the very experience of a cultural interface. Arguably resilient to the way that innovations such as Augmented Reality – "the completion of postmodernism's 'spatial turn'" (Skrebowski, 2006: 46) – are colonized by non-local concepts and globalized brands, this is maybe a narrative take on the democratic efforts of what Skrebowski calls Information Architecture.

It might be appropriate to go back to the computational definition of interface in order to move forward to what's behind the ideas of the streets as a network of interfacial politics. As long as promoting the gathering of multiple intelligences in order to generate a new kind of urban awareness, the creation of (the) interface(s) for interesse to be stimulated are a major pragmatic challenge which tactics for a translocal narrative face. It's about imagining compatibilities. For it is the interface between different networks which renders them compatible.

Briefly, a challenge is today to imagine a narrative, or several interconnected narrative platforms for social responsibility, where diverse urban realities are made compatible, within a model for effective multi-layered cooperation. Interfaces considering Urban Communication are crucial for always evolving forms of situated dialogism. This is where

Bakhtin's notion of *architectonics* (which he develops within this theory of translation) proves very *interesting* (Bakhtin, 1990: xxiii)[80].

It could be furthermore surprisingly relevant to develop the idea, for instance, of streets as assemblages of façades (*facia*, in Vulgar Latin, means 'face') – one thinks for instance on the way light festivals and other events use high-technology to turn buildings into interactive (video-mapping) images; or, in contrast, but certainly not devoid of a similar will to spectacularization, of the iconic street art architectonics of, say, Vhils – an artist widely known for his spatrialized work on facial portraits (See Caeiro, 2016).

Of course, if the design of a cultural interface implies a political dimension, then, as with the politically charged design of any pervasive, spatialized interfaces, "the act becomes increasingly political the more the interface mediates" (Skrebowski, 2006: 51). In this mind-set, (cultural) interfaces are empty entities which fulfil us (Caeiro, 2014: 339). In such framework, the dialogical is something always to be un- and re-discovered – face-to-face (interfacially).

2.2.5 More (Humanly) assembled

Deleuze and Guattari introduced the concept of assemblage in 1987. It designates "one of the two main ways in which the real is formed. Its conceptual companion is the *stratum*. […] Strata are empirically observable, but certainly insufficient to understand how things take shape, how cities and urban phenomena are structured" (Farías, 2017: 41)[81].

[80] "Architectonics is like architecture insofar as it is about building wholes thorough the manipulation of relations between parts. But architecture suggests the creation of static structures. The matter of architectonics is active in the sense that it is always in process (architecture is only one instantiation of architectonics, and aesthetics, as we shall, see is another) – not in any of the actual materials it employs to erect relations in themselves exclusively; even though such materials may be the most abstract categories, such as "being" or "relations" itself, they can still be treated as *entities*."

[81] "Strata define layers or levels of reality constituted by homogeneous types of elements, structures and codes. They distinguish three fundamental strata: the inorganic stratum, the organic stratum and the alloplastic stratum, which includes anthropomorphic forms, both technologic and linguistic." (Farías, 2017: 41)

In contrast, "Assemblages involve fundamentally different form-giving processes, not based on an unity of composition, but on the co-functioning of ontologically heterogenous terms, such as materials, technological artefacts, bodies, texts, concepts and symbols" (Ibid.) (Farías, 2017: 41). Deleuze explains: "The difficult part is making all the elements of a non-homogeneous set converge, making them function together" (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987: 51). Thinking in terms of "sympathy" and "symbiosis" (Ibid.), "one could think of assemblages as interstratic phenomena or as metastrata. But it goes beyond that, as the elements that constitute an assemblage are not just stratified entities, but also qualities, intensities or speeds." (Ibid.)

The term, while challenging "topographic understandings of near and far, as well as the idea of geographical scale" (Ibid. 42)[82] is a way "to explain the holding together of heterogeneous things without actually ceasing to be heterogenous (Allen, 2011: 157 in Ibid.). It is helpful to deal both with encompassing notions of 'street' and the possibility to *assemble* a set of streets around a cultural concept.

"In assemblages, components are rather contingent, in the sense that they are neither necessary nor fully random" (Farías, 2017: 42), and this is related to the problematic of affect: "Assemblages rely upon the *capacities* of entities, from rocks to concepts, to affect and be affected." (Ibid.) On the other hand, assemblages are *agencements* – "[…] arrangements endowed with the capacity of acting in different ways depending on their configuration" (Callon, 2007: 320).

In very close entanglement with assemblage theory, one shall recall here Actor-Network Theory. It offers "an inspiring conceptual repertoire based on the notion of actants, translation processes and modes of ordering that enables us to distinguish the various ways in which humans and non-humans shape urbanization processes" (Farías, 2017: 45). As a matter of fact, "ANT makes apparent […] that urban assemblages cannot be thought of as

[82] One shall not forget that, for Smith" scales like 'local', 'national' and 'global' are not given in nature but contingent and historically variable outcomes of various social processes." (Smith, 1993, in Castree
, 2011: 377) "For Smith, the importance of scale is that it materially 'contains' actions and events with ambivalent consequences." (Ibid.)

constituted or contained within a city, as they delineate a multilocal topology connecting elements and actors from specific sites within the city and across the globe" (Ibid. 46). It is evident how this perspective frames a nomad-translocal take on the streets as what seems to be – at first sight – a 'mere' infrastructure and a material accumulation of *strata*.

Paradoxically, it is thus possible to 'read' streets as *strata* of assemblages: "DeLanda imagines the city as a specific level of emergence of social assemblages composed of neighbourhoods' assemblages, which in turn would be made up of family assemblages, formed by person assemblages etc." (DeLanda, 2006: in Ibid. 46).

Before moving to the next point, it is important to mention here in more detail the work of Manuel Castells, since it is both attentive to the specificities of place and a profound shift in the organisation of society (Ibid.) – widely acknowledged as *The Information Age* (1996), *The Network Society*, or more recently *The Internet Galaxy* (2001). In these books' structural reading of the city, one recognizes a certain distancing from Lefebvre's take on space: "It is a question of going beyond the description of mechanisms of interactions between activities and locations, in order to discover the structural laws of the production and functioning of the spatial forms studied" (Castells, 1977: 124). In fact, "space, like time, is a physical quantity that tells us nothing about social relations" (Castells, 1977: 442).[83] Castells would nevertheless later backtrack from this social determinism, through the notion of spatial flows that characterize informational society (Castells, 2000: 14).

This is an important backdrop for networking thinking that tries to redefine glocalities through a cultural narrative (to be communicated across a range of medialogical platforms: the space of flows consists of three levels: the infrastructural – the "wired world"; the organizational – the processes of organization and, to be underlined, translation – and the managerial (Hubbard, 2011: 102). These three "coterminous networks" demonstrate that space still is the "material support of time-sharing social practices" (In Ibid.): "The key aspect of the space of flows is not its separation from the space of places, but its ability to

[83] Which leads him to define the city as "a residential unit of labour power, a unit of collective consumption corresponding "more or less" to the daily organization of a section of labour power" (Castells, 1977: 148).

fragment localities and reintegrate some of the components into new functional units on the basis of their connection to the space of flows" (Stalder, 2006: 161).

Castells "sociology of fluids" (see Urry, 2000 in Hubbard, 2011: 103) is in any case an evidence that "a space of flows is supplanting the world of places" (Ibid.)[84]. However, places seem to appear recently in centre-stage of a counter-hegemonic resilience to the very Digitalized Information Age, not the least because "the network society that Castells evokes so brilliantly is perhaps less structured than he might imagine" (Ibid. 105)[85].

2.2.6 Romantically attentive and ecosophically attuned

> *But what is this wholeness really, and are we parts of it, and what parts? If you thought it all sounded vaguely religious, you'd be right. A lot of thinking ecologically sounds religious, because it involves extremely profound and hard to express (at least at present) concepts and feelings.*
> **Timothy Morton**

Morton is key to address artistic production in an ecological perspective, which happens with intensity when the Romantic sensibility is updated in the Contemporary contexts, as a gesture of experiential resilience:

> The Romantic poets figured out that when you get 'scientific', as I was just describing, when you become open to all kinds of data, not just clichéd stuff, you must also get 'experiential'. You end up writing poems about the *experience* of encountering the rock, and how strange that actually is. (Morton, 2018: 27).

Precisely, during a stroll at the coast, Portuguese photographer Gérard Castello-Lopes (1925-2011) once encountered a rock in a walk by the beach and made of that encounter not only a career landmark but, as a consequence of his own reflections, an important moment in Portuguese Photography and Culture. It is an example of what Morton explains: "This is how living data works. You realize that you are included in the interpretation, so your art becomes 'reflexive' – it starts to talk about itself" (Morton, 2018: 27).

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[84] "[…] take any city pivotal to the articulation of global financial flow, and one can find many sites that exhibit the architectural anonymity." (Urry 2000, in Hubbard, 2011: 103)

[85] Indeed, today there are a range of "disruptive" (Foth, 2009: 19) takes on "computational intensification" (Barns, 2018: 204), some "[…] dissecting urban environments and infrastructure by trying to microscopically uncover the connections and interrelations of city elements." (Foth, 2009: xxviii)

Timothy Morton is the author of a number of books in "'eco' inflected aesthetics and critique"[86]. One of his works is particularly inspiring, if not consensual.[87] What is important to mention concerning his reception is that Morton's approach has both a spiritual and a literary dimension (essayistic) that allows him to be read and commented beyond the field of academia and to be discussed in broader circles of cultural production and the contemporary public sphere.

Morton puts forward an airy critique of anthropocentrism, claiming that more than facts on the ecological crisis what is needed is an internal, felt, shift that might teach us on "how to *live* ecological knowledge" (2018: 11). Toward a sort of "non-anthropocentric awareness of the profound ways we are enmeshed in ecosystems – of our interrelations with the other-than-human (Dickerson, 2019: 198). This other includes places, landscapes, architecture, which in this framework are lived (and read) by means of a *non-conceptual* awareness anchored in a notion of beauty where co-existence – "solidarity" (Morton, 2018: 131) – is celebrated.

Concerning the linkage between Eastern wisdom and Western science, Morton sees inner change as a new form of citizenship: "What is so powerful about psychoanalysis and some spiritual traditions is that they enable you to entertain the idea that thoughts and so on are not 'yours' all the way down, which can be very liberating: what matters isn't exactly *what* you think, it's *how* you think" (Ibid. 74).

And this challenge is to be lived – experienced – here and now. Also in the urban realm's second nature, a cultural project is born into a complex contingent reality: "Maybe this feeling of disgust [accompanying global ecological awareness] will diminish if we become

[86] https://www.ecologicalcitizen.net/pdfs/v02n2-15.pdf

[87] "Once upon a time, 'Tim' was a fine analyst of romantic poetry, but then *something happened* – 'Tim' became a celebrity academic. This book is both an expression and a result of that unfortunate metamorphosis. I will begin with the most obvious feature of this book: it does not really contain any arguments or reasoning at all; instead, it consists of 'a series of riffs.' These riffs combine name-dropping of high theory and philosophical terms of art, mixed in a jocular way with preposterous verbal sophistries, pop-cultural references and contemporary idioms. […] Morton is systematically evasive when it comes to saying something about ethical principles or resolving ethical problems – let alone addressing questions about political strategy, concrete actions, policies, organizational structures and so forth." Adam Dickerson in https://www.ecologicalcitizen.net/pdfs/v02n2-15.pdf This review by Adam Dickerson follows other harsh critiques, such as Wolfendale's (2014)

used to our immersion in the biosphere, just like our neurotic feelings diminish as we become friendlier with our thoughts – perhaps though psychotherapy or meditation" (Ibid. 77).

Morton states in fact, concerning one's relation to totality, that "panoramic meditative awareness is unique and specific. It's not just a colourless flavourless odourless box with thoughts churning around in it. It's more like an electromagnetic field with a specific frequency" (Ibid.).

In this phenomenological subjectivation – Morton mentions William Blake[88] – what's at stake is to link possibility to space (Ibid. 7): "It's the same with art. You can find out what a play is like by imagining how far you could distort it before it really does become something quite different" (Ibid. 8). This is a crucial position to address streets as creative ecosystems (Bilton, 2007) by means of a cultural concept/project that, once crossing paths with those spaces opened to possibility, aims to change its givens (and consequently approach data in a correlational [Ibid. 53] way), that is, to revise the "factoids" (Ibid. 9) of localities' everydays.

This stands for an attitude of curiosity mixed with the will to perform awareness. As a matter of fact, an urban cultural project might have no other option than to *live* urban knowledge (to paraphrase Morton on ecological knowledge) (Ibid. 11) And this certainly leads to the conscience that certain facts "require that we *don't* immediately 'know' what to do" (Ibid. 17)

In what is potentially a response to all sorts of urban scientisms – think of the smart cities' derives, not much more than acritical interpretations of the myths of technology (Galimberti, 2013) –, Morton underlines that any action whatsoever suffers from a paradox: "[…] we know what to do *and* we won't be able to get high enough above the world to see exactly what that looks like" (Ibid. 18). Action-research, without these values in its core, would be less inclusive.

[88] "I must create my own system or be enslaved by another man's", in Morton 2018 7)

Morton's notion of hyperobject is in the backdrop of such move, and where he speaks of nature, one may obviously think of the city: "The transcendental gap between things and things-data become quite clear when we study what I like to call *hyperobjects*: things that are huge and, as they say, 'distributed' in time and space […] such things are impossible to point to directly all at once" (Ibid. 22).

When one looks at certain urban facts, it would be wise to think that it might be our mind building that apparent reality. Certain relationships – say, for instance, the way a number of streets appear as an infrastructural given — maybe don't exist at all (Ibid. 53). Or, again, they might become protagonists of a lived sensory network. For such to happen, maybe one needs to address to problem of "charisma" (Ibid. 150), and in this sense some historical figures are clearly innovative "things" (to remain in Morton's jargon[89]) – which is of course the case of the 19th century *flâneur*, a momentous hero in a narrative of re-enchantment.

It is indeed possible – and arguably already happening – to revisit the history of modernity as a thing where we shall get inspiration to renew our vows with the sacred, the *sacrum* beyond organized religions and stagnated beliefs. This is important for this research both to frame careful approximations to a spiritual urbanity as to be performed in the now by whoever (and whichever organizations) *caring* for the city.

In an interesting linkage between an iconic object of the touristic culture/gaze and the emergence of the concept of landscape as a consequence of the activity of walking, Morton recalls:

> Picture postcards are descendants of what came before Romanticism in art, namely the Picturesque. In the picturesque, the world is designed to look like a picture – like it's already been interpreted and packaged by a human (…) The picturesque is keyed to a fundamental human-centred way of looking at things: it is *anthropocentric* (…). Say you are a Romantic poet or a scientist and you decide to take off and walk into that picture, into that 'landscape' – which means a *picture* of a landscape. The picture quality evaporates. (Morton, 2018: 24)

In this mindset, the pervasive circulation of images (specially via social media) look more like a sort of human curtain veiling urban reality, hiding it from our sensory investigations.

[89] Indeed, "H*ow everything is connected* is also *a thing*." (Morton, 2018: 79)

And this is where the phenomenological, approach 'saves' of the urban experience, bridging the individual and the urban cosmos.

The philosophical view Morton adheres to is Graham Harman's object-oriented ontology, which states that there is not a single main mode to access things. In other words, "things aren't directly, constantly present", (Ibid. 45), we let them happen to us. In fact, the intensifications of art clearly demonstrate it. Art renders urban living portals for attunement (Ibid. 139). Its opportunities are of course as many available as there are spaces and people, and one again Buddha is referential: "The way attunement is deep rather than superficial is why the legend has it that Buddha taught meditation as a form of tuning." (Ibid. 142) In other words, each community, group, family, person might see the objects (things) all around us as attunement systems.

So Morton's perspective is important to understand the relation between the ways we see things and what they are *while being observed*.[90] Consequently, also in the urban fabric, "there is a certain courage of letting yourself fall asleep and allowing dreams to come, which resembles the courage of allowing art to affect you" (Ibid. 171). This is an inspiring notion for the present research, for it will try to aesthetically connect realities (past and future, close and distant, visible and invisible, personal and collective) while somehow keeping them independent from each other.

On the other hand, what Morton helps to acknowledge is how to conceive the image of things beyond their thingness, which is a new form of holism. "In this holism, the holism of the present, the whole is always less than the sum of its parts" (Ibid. 15).

2.2.7 Spatially-timely (constructed)

Heidegger is a key-thinker to reflect on the problem of humankind's situatedness in the world. In a project "centred on the key concepts of *dasein* and the question of 'Being' […]

[90] "Appearance and essence are two different 'sides' of a Möbius strip, which are also the 'same' side. […] Attuning is like studying a Möbius strip, a special object in the form of a twisted loop. It's not hard to make one: tear a thin strip of paper, twist it and join the ends together. You will see that when you trace your finger around the shape, you land on the 'other' side. This is weird, it means that the shape only has one side." (Ibid. 160)

His project was […] an attempt to return humankind to some form of authentic existence" (Leach, 1997: 94). His philosophy of dwelling cannot be overlooked, when he states that "dwelling would in any case be the end that presides over all building" (Heidegger in Leach, 1997: 95).

Especially productive for this study – since it is simultaneously a take on the built (in the city) and discourse (narrative) – is the ways he brings the fundamental problematics of language to the discussion.[91] In Heideggers's spatio-linguistic thinking, one is reminded that "Bauen originally means to dwell" (Ibid. 96).[92] Indeed, what would be of Modernity as a project (Habermas) without *men* ready to poetically reinvent the dialectic of building and dwelling?"[93]

In Post-modernity, Jameson has helped to understand this contemporary age – "dominated by capitalism" (Jameson, in Leach 1997: 224) – as an age whose analogical spaces themselves became, as Deleuze puts it, "deformable and transformable" (In Leach, 1997: 295). For Jameson, just like maybe "There is no space outside exchange society" (Jameson, in Ibid. 224), "Of all the arts, architecture is the closest constitutively to the economic, with which, in the form of commissions and land values, it has a virtually unmediated relationship" (Ibid.)[94].

Heidegger is a crucial read concerning this problematic, also because he instantiates the theme of the work of art in space – and of the work of art as space: "So long as we do not experience the special character of space, talk about artistic space also remains obscure"

[91] "It is language that tells us about the nature of a thing, provided that we respect language's own nature. In the meantime, to be sure, there rages round the earth an unbridled yet clever talking, writing and broadcasting of spoken words. Man acts as though *he* were the shaper and master of language, while in fact *language* remains the master of man. Perhaps it is before all else man's subversion of this relation of dominance that drives his nature into alienation." (Heidegger in Leach, 1997: 95)

[92] One of the last texts of Kafka is *Der Bau* (1928), somehow the very opposite of a *flâneurish* take in the built, since, at least in one level of its reading, what is depicted is the ultimate retreat to the (blind) construction of a self.

[93] Now, in another essential articulation, Heidegger procedes: "The poetic is the basic capacity for human dwelling. But man is capable of poetry at any time only to the degree to which his being is appropriate to that which itself has a liking for man and therefore needs his presence. Poetry is authentic or inauthentic according to the degree of this appropriation." (Heidegger in Leach, 1997: 113)

[94] Looking around the urban scape, noting for instance how insurance centres and banks are now "our public buildings" Jameson seems to ask: "[…] is irony in architecture possible? (Jameson, in Leach, 1997: 246)

(Heidegger, in Leach, 1997: 117)[95], maybe because "in the experience of art, a peculiar exchange takes place; I lend my emotions and associations to the space and the space lends me its aura, which entices and emancipates my perceptions and thoughts" (Pallasmaa, 2010: 13).

In other words, "[…] space shapes the unfolding of encounters and […] is simultaneously shaped *by* encounters" (Wilson, 2017: 118). Speaking of buses as transportation spaces, Wilson reminds us that also streets are spaces in the very sense that they host "conversation, avoidance, musical performance, work, xenophobic outburst, community organization and daydreaming, and this can be shaped by many factors, including the time of day" (Wilson, 2017: 119). They are more or less livable assemblages of agents and objects.[96]

In fact: "Spaciousness is closely associated with the sense of being free. Freedom implies space; it means having the power and enough room in which to act" (Tuan, 2014: 51). And, of course, to move.

For Pallasmaa, "Architecture is deeply engaged in the metaphysical questions of the self and the world, interiority and exteriority, time and duration, life and death". (Pallasmaa, 2010: 19) The Finnish architect proceeds to quote David Harvey: "Aesthetic and cultural practices are peculiarly susceptible to the changing experience of space and time precisely because they entail the construction of spatial representations and artefacts out of the flow of human experience" (Harvey, 1990: 327).

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[95] Indeed, if "Once it is granted that art is the bringing-into-the-work of truth, and truth is the unconcealment of Being" (Ibid.), "The space, within which the sculptured structure can be met as an object present-at-hand; the space, which encloses the volume of the figure; the space, which subsists as the emptiness between volumes – are not these three spaces in the unity of their interplay always merely derivative of one physical-technological space, even if calculative measurement cannot be applied to artistic figures?" (Heidegger, in Leach, 1997: 117)

[96] Tuan notes furthermore: "Consider space. As a geometrical unit (area or volume), it is a measurable and unambiguous quantity. More loosely speaking, space means room; the German word for space is *raum.* Is there room for another crate of furniture in the warehouse? Is there room for another house on the estate? Does the college have room for more students? Although these questions have a similar grammatical form and all use the word "room" appropriately, the meaning of "room" differs in each case. The first question asks whether more objects can be put in, and the answer calls for simple and objective measurement. The second and third questions show that room can mean more than physical space; it suggests spaciousness. The question is not whether a house can be fitted physically into an estate, but whether the site is sufficiently spacious. And a college must have not only adequate classrooms and facilities, but it should feel commodious and liberating to students who go there to enlarge their minds." (Tuan, 2014: 51)

"A wise architect [thus] works with his/her entire body and sense of self" (Pallasmaa, 2010: 13). "The question "What is space?" [must] be then replaced by the question "how is it that distinctive human practices create and make use of distinctive ... space[s]?'" (Harvey, 1973: 14). Harvey explores the aforementioned idea "that space is not given and absolute or a 'container' into which intrinsically 'non-spatial' things are stuffed" (Castree, 2011: 236). In such socio-spatial dialectic (Soja, 1980), space is continually (re)constructed, currently in the milieu is neoliberalism's capitalism reality of flows.

Today, one is aware that spaces have (embody) social affects and have to a certain extent their own specific affective capacities and intensities. They are "saturated with qualities" (Foucault, in Leach, 1997: 331). In other words, space-driven cultural work is to subtly balance and caliber the opposite tendencies either to study the social structures that (to a certain extent) define the notion of space and specific places' identities, or the localized patterns of lived urbanity (see Sack's "spatial separatism").

As an example of such 'middle way' (Castree, 2011: 237), Harvey, as Neil Smith, is helpful to understand that in any concrete place we may explore the possibility *to put limits to capital* (paraphrasing one of Harvey's titles). His notion of place is thus particularly operative, in terms of a potentially globalized politics. By 'place' Harvey means the unique conjunction of built environments, cultures, peoples, etc. that distinguish one locality from another. However, unlike the regional geographers of the pre-1960s era, Harvey does not think that "places are *singular* – that is, absolutely different – because in a capitalist world economy *different* places are linked within a *common* economic framework" (Castree, 2011: 238).

In other words, in this study, streets appear clearly as very different from each other, but also very similar, in the way they *perform* the current civilizational processes. As Castree puts it, in a comment that one may explore in a wide range of disciplines, not just geography: […] one of the major intellectual challenges is thus how to understand the persistence of place distinctiveness amidst heightened place-interdependence (that is, heightened ties across a wider space)" (Ibid.). Culture will then have the task to develop human perception.

Artworks or literary experiments, since artifacts designed to offer situations of lived experience, may in this sense explore localities' specificities while empirically fostering a variety of geographical imagination (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011:16). Spatial politics is today greatly a matter of creative spatial production of cultural difference, be it or not accommodated in Marxist (say, Harvey's, or Jameson's) terms.

Deleuze's conceptual nomadology is here a solution for the always possible reapropriation of the history of space: "In the context of debates on space and place, it is noteworthy that during each 'immaculate conception' Deleuze was eager to disclose the geophilosophy that underpins the history of philosophy."[97] Indeed, space(s) is/are privileged stage(s) – stations, instances – for concepts to embody philosophical insights.

> "On Deleuze's account, philosophers are responsible for creating concepts: not concepts in general (Ideas, Truths, Universals, etc.) […] but situated concepts, contextual concepts, contingent concepts; 'localizing' concepts that only have meaning, value, and efficacy in a specific place or milieu. Concepts must be articulated" (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 143).

In such philosophy, where concepts work out as territories and events (Bonta and Protevi, 2004) space and time are reconceptualized through the notion of the fold.[98] This is decisive for work a constructivist take on the city: "There is no heaven for concepts. They must be invented, fabricated, or rather created and would be nothing without their creator's signature" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 5).

The process implies of course to look (and sense around) to the urban landscape. In this perspective, landscape *is* (a) space. For Assunto, real or imagined, spontaneous or designed, the urban landscape is a space (or the representation of a space) and does not *occupy* a space (or represents something in space). Within this notion, landscape is the very space which constitutes itself as object of aesthetical experience. Of course, the notion of space includes the one of *landscape* but is not fully covered by the latter.

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[97] That is, "multiplicities in Bergson, cartography in Foucault, relations in Hume, folds in Leibniz, territories in Kant, articulations in Spinoza, and differences in Nietzsche." (Clarke and Del, 2011: 144)

[98] "The Deleuzian 'event' is far removed from the commonsensical notion of something that is simply present to hand and fully given (what Derrida calls the 'meta-physics of presence'). Rather than a self-contained Now that happens once and for all (at time *t*), an event is an untimely Meanwhile or Meantime: a becoming-multiple (*and*, *but*) rather than a being-one (*is*). So, space-time does not consist of points, but of folds (Deleuze, 1993)." (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 143)

In the line of Virilio's notion of "habitable circulation" which accounts of the urban in terms of the opposition of stasis to circulation (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 442). "We thus inhabit not a democracy but a 'dromocracy' – a movement bureaucracy or speed (and slowness) technocracy." (Ibid.) It is the moment to acknowledge, with Assunto, the distinction between temporality and *temporaneity* (Assunto, 2011: 350)[99], since the present concerns not just the ephemeral time of the Happening, but the persistent time of contemplation, where both the remembering of yesterday and the expectations of tomorrow intervene. (Ibid. 351). Of course, this is in line with important philosophers of time such as Bergson or Virilio. In the cities of today, what is at stake is the exclusion of the (experience of the) infinite. Time as temporality is excluded from the urban narrative, particularly when it is substituted by technological-industrial space.

When one looks at the smart cities movement, it is striking how it seems to reconfirm insights by Assunto already in 1973. For this author, in industrialized territory, no less than in the urban environment, total urbanization, which comprises the violent death of the landscape, is already fully consummated (Ibid. 355)[100]. Assunto is no less than arguing for the city of contemplation: the individual, then, in his/her process of singularization of universal temporality, starts to live the "common" time of the city (Ibid.).

All this leads to a deontological problem (Ibid. 371) diagnosed by Dorfles[101] as early as 1968: it is our duty to reconvert the non-natural, to transform the artificial elements and events into natural ones, by means of an act of knowledge and will that shall not allow the non-natural to dominate irreversibly (Dorfles, 1968: 37-38). Of course, recent discrete moves toward an intelligent city – in contrast with the hegemony of 'smart' and 'smooth' urban culture – are trying to re-inscribe this constructive horizon.

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[99] The latter concerns the image of industrialized urban space, somehow eliminating temporality. In other words, the first is inclusive, while the latter is exclusive. "Temporality preserves and prolongs the past in the present, and in the present anticipates the future in which the present will be preserved, being thus prolonged; temporaneity is on the contrary a perpetual removal: continuous annihilation of the present in the face of the inexorable emergence of the future, of the absence of the not-yet" (Assunto, 2011: 350)

[100] "The spatio-temporal relation is since then on a mere relation of measure or of concentration, and the feeling of infinite became suffering for the indefinite, whose extreme manifestations are claustrophobia and agoraphobia. The space of the city is no more the image of time as historic *temporality* (qualitative) but image of time as *mechanic temporaneity* (quantitative)" (Ibid. 356).

[101] Who by the way wrote on the relation of kitsch culture to the landscape? See Dorfles, Gillo, (1968) *Kitsch. An Anthology of Bad* Taste, Gabriel Marzotta.

This is why Ingold is not fond of the issue of space – "unhelpful since it cannot but connote lifelessness, fixity, finitude and enclosure. Philosophically speaking, his foundational preference is for time, or more specifically *life*-times, and for inquiries into the rhythms and temporal textures of existence" (Lorimer, 2011: 252). And in this sense he is a crucial author – maybe in parallel with Deleuze's process philosophy and Thrift's non-representational theory –, to help one valorize lived and personal knowledge, instead of philosophical abstraction.[102] In other words, and close to de Certeau, his "turn to practice" (Ibid. 253) is very effective in recuperating the meaning of time as lived phenomenon.

Tuan underlines that time is "implied everywhere in the ideas of movement, effort, freedom, goal, and accessibility" (Tuan, 2014: 114). He adds the built environment is in this sense "spatialized time" (Ibid.) In the context of this research, distance – which belongs to the objective realm (Ibid.) thus becomes an element of a performative connectivity, which in fact spatializes 'objective time' (of travel) through aesthetic openness to potentially creative encounters. Distance is in this sense the pre(-)text for a common time, made visible and sharable by means of very specific "purposeful activities" (Ibid. 127). For, just like "We have seen how space and time coexist, intermesh, and define each other in personal experience" (Ibid. 130), while every activity generates a particular spatio-temporal structure that seldom thrusts to the front of awareness (Ibid.), a specific walking concept can be of great value.

Harvey's (1989) concept of capitalist "time-space compression" is well known. Multinational capitalism, transportation and mass communications, all have intensified over the last centuries the shrinking of distance and time so that events, financial transactions and communication can happen instantaneously. This acceleration had as a consequence the imposition, to urban conscience, of a simulacrum (Baudrillard) of reality of a saturated limitless space" (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 45).

[102] [It] could be called the reification of hyperabstraction: start with an abstraction, turn this into a quality of something yet more abstract, and then imagine that this meta-abstraction is concretely and plurally present in the world, instantiated in the very things from which the whole process of abstraction started in the first place. For philosophers the attraction of this strategy lies in its circularity: at no point in the cycle is one actually required to observe or engage directly with the world itself. (Ingold, 2006b: 892)

In sum, "We live in a world no longer based on geographical expanse but on a temporal distance constantly being decreased by our transportation, transmission and tele-action capacities" (Virilio, 2001b: 84). For Urry (1998), in this historical process in which societies have effectively been 'hollowed out' insofar as global flows and communications are so essential to how we relate to the city that our experience of time and space has been fundamentally altered.[103] Connectivity is in this sense perceived less as spatial than temporal, less as distance and more as speed ("The new space is speed-space; it is no longer a time-space" (Virilio, 2001 in Hubbard and Kitchin, 71).

In the electronic networks, we are thus far from Dewey's immersive experience (where there is an entanglement of subject and object, content and the way it is experienced. Media studies demonstrate that in the digital age there is a significant reconfiguration of the interfacial experience. The very notion of the interface is reconfigured:

> (…) interfaces are not just devices for connection, access or immersion, windows across which one may peak or interact with the virtual universe of the image. The interface is as well, and first and foremost, a format that translates into a mental space. It is in these terms that it is reconfiguring the Western imaginary. (Moura, 2011: 165, in Babo, 2015: 91) [researcher's translation].

In other words, in one way or another, today's informational system is wiping out the subject (Babo, 2002: 391, in Babo, 2015: 93).

Concerning this same time compression that has been diagnosed by the Modernity's critical thinkers, Byung-Chul Han offers a contemporary synthesis: with no time for thinking, thought is not allowed to deepen, and does not dictate time anymore, thus stops to communicating with what lasts. (2017) In other words (and now moving to the issue of space), "People are looking for an overall context that will enable them to understand the complexities of a world in which it is increasingly difficult to find a shared sense of community" (Renshaw, 2008: 100).

[103] For example, "[…] unlike the wayfarer which moves with time, the transported traveler races *against* time, seeing its passage not an organic potential for growth, but the mechanical limitations of his equipment." (Ingold, 2018: 105)

2.2.8 Urban (common) portals (in the cityscape)

> *Space is like a word when it is spoken – dependent on context, time and use.*
> **De Certeau**

Traditionally, "The public realm has been variously charged through the years as a political entity with the responsibility (but not the power) to keep the state bureaucracy honest and the market economy in check. In other cases, it is a performative zone outside the home where we practice civility" (Collins and Goto, 2008: 39-40). Several models contribute to its successive reconstitution: the capitalist Market and State model – where political coercion rules – the Active Citizenship – the classical approach, based on concerted action and deliberation; the Spatial-Social model (where urban planning allows for the integration of varied spaces, "mediated by conventions that allow diversity and social distance to be maintained, despite proximity" (Ibid. 40) and finally the feminist model – "a transformative model, intended to critique the patriarchal traditions and the problems of dichotomous thinking about public/private realities" (Ibid.).

Today, in an intensely multicultural urban identity, the public realm needs to be constantly negotiated to be effective as a stage for various expressions of citizenship. The challenge is then:

> (…) to understand what public means – not so much a site of comfort like the home, competition like the market, or poll-driven management by the state, but maybe a site of tolerance and unexpected experiences, and the potential for those that occupy urban spaces as well as those that claim expertise in urban spaces to find equitable means of creative engagement and the potential for transformative action (Ibid. 23),

that integrates "environmental concerns" (Collins and Goto, 2008: 40).

In this emerging paradigm shift, nature is a meta-public sphere (Ibid. 42). In this framework, also Collins and Goto reflect on the tradition of the commons, putting it in the core of an emerging urban sensibility where Human life is (re)considered: "Public space is to the commons as skin is to breath in the body. […] We are seldom aware of its chemical condition, its cleanliness or even its ability to support life – until it's too late" (Ibid. 44). In any case:

> The idea of public space is constantly evolving and a number of authors suggest that it is actually in a period of significant decline or outright hostile take-over. They see a

> public realm caught between the self-interests of nations and capital, and the mediated spectacle of consumerist desire. (Ibid.).

Of course, when by means of a cultural project's active agents in the community, who gather to question the way their public space *works*, one witnesses dialogues, discussions and performative actions as lived symbols of democratic will and maybe social sustainability. The point here is that, precisely through conviviality driven by aesthetics and conscious artistic events, the public space's everyday is more fully grasped and experienced: "Public space is an intimate experience in comparison to the commons" (Ibid. 45)[104].

One understands here the notion of portal as a radically empowering cognitive, conceptual and experiential tool for the appropriation of space. Portals are here seen not just as an architectural element but more like an ungraspable, intangible, quasi-spiritual object-place that we can experience. Like artworks or buildings, portals are for Timothy Morton without any doubt elements of reality, but "in a weird manner" (Morton, 2018: 159). Indeed, "a portal is a place where the past and future meet without touching" (Morton, 2016: 13).

In short, a holistic (narrative) model specifically relating urban landscape, atmosphere, behaviours and physical movement (nomadism) "creates a very interesting situation for art and architecture. We are no longer capable of stating that it's the end of history and that postmodern irony is the *modus operandi* from here on out. In a way, that is not ironic enough" (Ibid.).

Kracauer is a fine example of a cultural theorist interested in scratching the surface of the Everyday, precisely in order to grasp (feel) the "unmediated access to the fundamental substance of the state of things" (1995: 75 in Leach 1997: 51)[105]. Another take on such issues might be found in Pallasmaa's view on the introspective effect of architecture. The Finnish architect investigates the psychological effect of build surrounding, observing its intertwined influence, intangible functions being at the same time objective. "The ultimate meaning of

[104] "We see the commons as diverse and ubiquitous resources, which are perceived as too dynamic, too diffuse or too well integrated into the fabric of human life to have the kind of value that needs to be defended." (Ibid. 45)

[105] His portals were the hotel lobby or the employment agency: "Each typical space is brought into being by typical social relationships that, without the distorting intervention of consciousness, express themselves in it". (1995, 75 in Leach, 1997: 51)

any building is beyond architecture; it directs our consciousness back to the world and towards our own sense of self and being" (Pallasmaa, 2010: 11). What is to stressed here is the importance of self-observation and self-awareness with the help of architecture, which "(...) does not make us inhabit worlds of mere fabrication and fantasy; it articulates the experience of our being-in-the-world and strengthens our sense of reality and self" (Ibid. 12).

One thing is certain: "Walking establishes intimate contact with place. It attaches us to a landscape [and] coagulates time, expands distance, and makes places dense and prickly with details and complexities" (Amato, 2004: 276). Landscape becomes, then, "a lived phenomenon in which people form themselves as active participants, rather than being figured as peripheral spectators" (Lorimer, 2011: 253)[106]. Such existential time (Serrão, 2011: 28) is in opposition to the machinic time that governs the metropolis – "an unbounded, timeless intensity that is destroying the tempo of a progressively degraded society" (Virilio, 2012: 32).

As Simmel – with Benjamin one of the first sociologists of urban life – noted, "Instead of reacting emotionally, the metropolitan type reacts primarily in a rational manner, thus creating a mental predominance through the intensification of consciousness, which in turn is caused by it. Thus, the reaction of the metropolitan person to those events is moved to a sphere of mental activity which is least sensitive, and which is furthest removed from the depths of the personality" (Simmel, in Leach, 1997: 68). In other words, landscapes, cityscapes and streetscapes call for our engagement, and not only through conservation.[107]

Crucially, the idea of landscape was born in Europe at a civilizational moment when cities started to become regulated by the dynamics of work; in this sense, maybe current approximations of the notion of cityscape stand for a form of cultural resilience of the

[106] To think of the landscape as philosophical and properly experiential issue implies to acknowledge it as a specific way to apprehend natural things, which, precisely because as a form, resides in the spirit not in the things. (Serrão, 2011: 17) On the other hand, landscape is done and redone at each contemplative act, with the spatio-temporal flux appearing, for a moment, with a vitality that connects contemplator and contemplated (Ibid.) The notion of *Stimmung* is the philosophical term that describes this state of full individuality, in a complex balance between the natural and the human.

[107] "Conservation of the environment is not a guarantee of the protection of the landscape" (Serrão, 2011: 31) Serrão speaks of natural landscapes, but the statement is easily translatable to urban contexts.

aesthetic of the city environment, in times characterized by fast changes in the cities' form, atmosphere and codes. In any case, the origin of the term remits to separation; but today has a mediating function (Serrão, 2011: 33). And the concept is indeed instrumental: landscape is the form of a territory: just like the concept of "environment" includes the one of "territory", the concept of "landscape" includes the one of "environment". More, society's priority should be to intervene in the landscape, not in the environment and even less in the territory (Assunto, 2011: 129).

This perspective, capable of valorizing specific spatialities and urban morphologies, *vistas* and the urban image is complemented by the semiotics of Eugenio Turri (Serrão, 2011: 167), who proposes the metaphor of landscape as a theatre. The image specifically addresses the problem of accelerated urban expansion, and the author is aware of its links to systems theory (Ibid. 176). Landscape appears here as the communicative moment between two systems: the social system and the territorial system, which might explain why the term absorbs the vision of artists, geographers, historians, and so on (Ibid.)[108].

In this mindset, the streetscape, its conscious experience, is important for both dwellers and newcomers of a place to reinvent the (iconic) meaning of localities and connectivity. Streets, with their door-bridges (one thinks of Simmel's "will to connection"[109], are portals for meaningful encounters: "The bridge indicates how humankind unifies the separateness of merely natural being, and the door how it separates the uniform, continuous unity of natural being" (Simmel, 1909 in Leach, 1997: 63). Andrew Benjamin would state indeed: "Works with open doors must be what is henceforth demanded by philosophy and architecture." (Benjamin, in Leach, 1997: 298)

In *Portals*[110], all this is summarized in the architectural context, as if stating how "necessary" the "danger" of the aesthetic dimension is (Ibid. 161), and at the same time exploring the idea that "objects *are* directly the distortion of spacetime" (Ibid. 169). Morton states:

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[109] https://thresholdyork.wordpress.com/2017/04/06/bridges-and-doors-the-will-to-connection/

[110] *Portals* is the text by Morton which opens *The Baltic Atlas*, the book-catalogue of the Baltic Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2016. In an innovative attitude, three countries exhibited together for the first time, creating a regional pavilion focusing on, what they called, the post-Soviet-era infrastructure.

> Everything in a building is portal, not just the portals. An architectural construction through which I can experience something that isn't me, with or without some empirical guarantee that something that isn't me actually exists. A work of art is thus on the side of reality, albeit in a magical and strange way. (Morton, 2016: 13).

Morton strategically helps us to see any place – or any network of interconnected localities, for that matter – as the portal to each other and of the whole to other places/realities. Most important, this projection implies more than just knowledge, for as Morton confirms, "knowing is just one mode of accessing a thing" (Ibid.).

In an attempt to capture the essence of capitalist spatiality, this chapter has articulated a series of dimensions and problems characterizing places, in order to outline alternatives to ignorant or hegemonic visions of place. What has been defined are basic elements of the 'grammar' of place construction and placial experience – with the key-concepts of 'rhythm', 'network', 'locality', 'connectivity', 'interface', 'assemblage' and 'portal' working out less as a reductionist grid, and more like the necessary and sufficient metadisciplinary entries into a general topology of this research's *corpus* (European streets).

These seven 'lenses' define as well a range of opportunities to be explored. In other words, conscious cultural work in the city must necessarily develop models to address the problem of the experience of conflicting urban rhythms; the ways localities are seen (or not) as fragments of a whole; the contemporary possibilities of connectivity when it comes to the values of mobility and governance; or the challenge to reimagine citizen assembly and interfacial politics in a time ecological ethics take the center stage in the public consciousness. In other words, the very notion of urban network is valid only when this kind of interdependent and encompassing analysis is fostered. Only then might a tactical approach of urban networks appear as an overall sustainable practice.

3. Experience: integrating affect

> *On the one hand, one* […] *relates oneself to space, situates oneself in space. One confronts both an immediacy and an objectivity of one's own. One places oneself at the centre, designates oneself, measures oneself, and uses oneself as a measure. One is, in short, a 'subject'* […] *On the other hand, space serves an intermediary or mediating role: beyond each plane surface, beyond each opaque form, 'one' seeks to apprehend something else. This tends to turn social space into a transparent medium occupied solely by light, by 'presences' and influences.*
> **Henri Lefebvre**

Urban atmospheres "are born in the crisscrossing of multiple sensations. (Augoyard, 2007: 120) and it is through their acknowledgement that the richness of the experience of space in the city becomes perceptible (Hasse, 2012: 177). The term reminds us of how synesthesia plays a part in the production of urban meaning, which is today possible to grasp across a variety of theories of affect available: "phenomenological approaches, psychoanalytic theories, naturalist accounts and Spinozan-Deleuzian" (Thrift, 2004).

Like Ingold, with "[…] his ongoing inquiries into how environments are perceived, shaped and understood by humans" (Lorimer, 2011: 250)[111]. Tuan is a crucial author to reflect on how culture defines both spatial experiences and experiences of place, emphasizing or distorting human dispositions, capacities, and needs (Tuan, 2014: 5-6).

> The range of experience or knowledge. Experience can be direct and intimate, or it can be indirect and conceptual, mediated by symbols. We know our home intimately; we can only know *about* our country if it is very large. A long-time resident of Minneapolis knows the city, a cabdriver learns to find his way in it, a geographer studies Minneapolis and knows the city conceptually. These are three kinds of experiencing. One person may know a place intimately as well as conceptually. He can articulate ideas but he has difficulty expressing what he knows through his senses of touch, taste, smell, hearing, and even vision. People tend to suppress that which *they* cannot express. If an experience resists ready communication, a common response among activists ("doers") is to deem it private – even idiosyncratic – and hence unimportant. In the large literature on environmental quality, relatively few works attempt to understand how people feel about space and place, to take into account the different modes of experience (sensorimotor, tactile, visual, conceptual), and to interpret space and place as images of complex – often ambivalent – feelings. (Ibid. 6)

[111] "Instead of trying to reconstruct the complete human being from two separate but complementary components, respectively biophysical and sociocultural, held together with a film of psychological cement, it struck me that we should be trying to find a way of talking about human life that eliminates the need to splice it up into these different layers." (Ingold, 2000: 3)

Tuan continues: “Yet it is possible to articulate subtle human experiences. Artists have tried—often with success. In works of literature as well as in humanistic psychology, philosophy, anthropology and geography, intricate worlds of human experience are recorded” (Ibid.). In other words, the intentionality[112] behind/in the production of urban meaning is anchored on lived emotions and thoughts. In this framework, “memory and anticipation are able to wield sensory impacts into a shifting stream of experience so that we may speak of a life of feeling as we do of a life of thought. […] they lie near the two ends of an experiential continuum, and both are ways of knowing” (Ibid. 10).

This might lead to a sort of praise of attention or care, if not an ethics of citizenry recast of perception: “The structuring of worlds calls for intelligence. Like the intellectual acts of seeing and hearing, the senses of smell and touch can be improved with practice so as to discern significant worlds” (Ibid.). In the chapter dedicated to the “Body, Personal Relations and Spatial Values”, Tuan furthermore reminds us that: “[…] if we look for fundamental principles of spatial organization we find them in two kinds of facts: the posture and structure of the human body, and the relations (whether close or distant) between human beings” (Ibid. 34).

This is very accurate and useful to think of ways a cultural project shall combine the production of affect and discourse, visibility and connectivity, through processes that specifically foster the one on one contact between people and the very movement of a walking public. Another insight by Tuan is furthermore interesting to imagine the contemporary *flâneur/flâneuse* in his/her moments of longing for a relevant experience of loneliness: “Privacy and solitude are necessary for sustained reflection and a hard look at self, and through the understanding of self to the full appreciation of other personalities” (Ibid. 65).

Tuan is sharp in stating, in a more ‘politically’ affected tone: “The world feels spacious and friendly when it accommodates our desires and cramped when it frustrates them” (Ibid. 65).

[112] Tuan quotes Ricouer on this: “As Paul Ricoeur put it, "Feeling is ...without doubt intentional: it is a feeling of 'something'—the lovable, the hateful, [for instance]. But it is a very strange intentionality which on the one hand designates qualities felt on things, on persons, on the world, and on the other hand manifests and reveals the way in which the self is inwardly affected."“(Tuan, 2014: 9)

These examples might be of dimensions of experience a *nu-flâneur* public is asked to relate to, creatively. Such is the public to be called to discover their own bodies at work (walking): "The human body is that part of the material universe we know most intimately. It is not only the condition for experiencing the world, but also an accessible object whose properties we can always observe" (Tuan, 2014: 89). In other words, "[…] bodies and urban spaces construct each other in complex ways, meaning that it is impossible to think about bodies without thinking about space" (Longhurst, 2017: 53).

Tuan furthermore states: "Experience is directed to the external world. Seeing and thinking clearly reach out beyond the self. Feeling is more ambiguous." (Tuan, 2014: 9). After Ricoeur, he stresses that in feeling there is an intentionality which on the one hand designates qualities felt (about things, persons, world) and on the other hand manifests and reveals the way the self is affected (inwardly). Again, these are aspects of the complex experience of emotions, affects and sentiments by humans; without its acknowledgement no model for creative citizenship could be complete. The process is staged both in the built environment and the world of ideas (words) (Ibid. 107)[113].

The urban context is nevertheless very complex and challenging, especially when one acknowledges the superposition of excessive intensities of urban communication and the lack of urban knowledge (on architectural and built space):

> In place of a cosmos modern society has splintered beliefs and conflicting ideologies. Modern society is also increasingly literate, which means that it depends less and less on material objects and the physical environment to embody the value and meaning of a culture: verbal symbols have progressively displaced material symbols, and books rather than buildings instruct. (Ibid. 117).

Tuan is very sharp in this diagnosis, which a cultural connectivity Project, based on the practice and the experience of walking, could try to tackle: "Symbols themselves have lost much of their power to reverberate in the mind and feeling since this power depends on the existence of a coherent world. Without such a world symbols tend to become indistinguishable from signs" (Ibid.).

[113] "Without words feeling reaches a momentary peak and quickly dissipates. Perhaps one reason why animal emotions do not reach the intensity and duration of human ones is that animals have no language to hold emotions so that they can either grow or fester." (Ibid. 107)

Raoul Vaneigen, one of the most active Situationist theorists, indeed asks:

> The layout of a town, its streets, walls and neighbourhoods, form so many signs of a strange conditioning. What sign is recognizable there that could be ours? We wish to live in countries of knowledge, among signs as alive as the friends we see every day. The revolution will also be the perpetual creation of signs which belong to all. (Vaneigen, 1961).

Echoing Barthes' work on the sign, one may continue with Eco here: "A phenomenological consideration of our relationship with architectural objects tells us that we commonly do experience architecture as communication, even while recognizing its functionality" (In Leach, 1997: 174). In other words, even when not *used* in the strict sense, buildings signify, not the least because the urban scape and certainly because they 'embody' functions, which in turn or more or less acknowledged by dwellers. In this sense, Eco speaks of architectural connotation (vs. architectural denotation) (Ibid. 176-179). For the streets user and the *flâneur* in particular, the first is certainly a critical element of urban (meaningful) experience. Not the least because, for instance while walking, primary (denotation) and secondary (connotation) (Ibid. 181) architectural and spatial features of the built environment may be provisionally recast – as Eco outs it, thorough "undergoing losses, recoveries and substitutions of various kinds" (Ibid.).

As the sino-american geographer puts it, "experience is a cover-all term for the various modes through which a person knows and constructs a reality. These modes range from the more direct and passive senses of smell, taste, and touch, to active visual perception and the indirect mode of symbolization" (Tuan, 2014: 8). In this context, one contemporary pressing task is to challenge the visual with the felt: "Atmospheres disturb a widespread 'hierarchy of the senses' – ocularcentrism – that evolved under modernity and the 'objective' status of visual perception (Brennan, 2004: 17). After all, "Space is not about architectural order, ranking and distribution but rather, fluid, mutable, unmappable and difficult to grasp – 'like a sparkling water'" (Koskela, 2003: 306).

Today, with the help of Thrift's Non-representational theory, it is possible to address "the pre-conscious dimensions of life (questions of being and doing) and the worlds of affect and emotion that shape the intentions and behaviours of actors (Thrift, 2004; 2007, in Warf, 2011: 410). We also are now better equipped to understand how urban experience and

everyday life rhythms and the constructions of time behind them have been changed by the ways digital capitalism, which is "more mobile, more flexible, more insistently symbolic in nature" than its predecessors "and lodges itself into the innermost recesses of the human psyche." (Ibid.). In short, "Non-representational theories of affect share with work on emotional geographies the insight that affects express relations, and that the rational and emotional/affective are complexly enfolded" (Anderson, 2017: 21).

3.1 Atmosphere (everything and nothing[114])

> *The hands want to see, the eyes want to caress.*
> **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

The modern usage of the word atmosphere points to the conditions under which real or imaginary life might flourish (Gandy, 2017: 355). In this research, this original meaning is kept in relation with the notion of atmosphere as referring to the prevailing feeling transmitted by a place. Everyday language uses the word 'mood' to address this layer of urban meaning, while in philosophical discourse one speaks of 'affective atmospheres'. It is important here to note that the use of the word is furthermore expanded – and deepened – by the likes of Peter Sloterdijk in this spherology, where affective and metereological dimensions of the concept are tackled both through intense metaphorization and a closeness to scientific language, not far from New Science's epigenetic (Lipton, 2005) principles.

What must be continually stressed is that to consider both the immediate atmosphere of a place or its atmospheric conditions (a matter of politics) implies to draw on Spinoza's expanded conception of what constitutes a 'body' (Gandy, 2016: 355) to develop an approach of spaces that reads them as *alive*, where materialities unfold and intersect. In this framework, "the notion of a singular bounded body is replaced with a multiplicity of forms, movements, and affective capacities" (Gandy, 2016: 355), and all the heterogeneity of social life is in the spotlight. In this sense, a "collection of trajectories and circuits" (Stewart, 2007:

[114] Tonino Griffero: "Atmosphere can […] be everything and nothing, a bit like 'air': it is everything or almost so when it increases the quality of life, when some enterprise succeeds thanks to the atmosphere of trust or resilience (resistance, elasticity, vitality and good mood) as efficacious barrier against negative situations, yet it is almost nothing when it only indicates the superficial occultation of conflicts" (Griffero, 2014: 3)

59) or "webs of relationality" (Ibid.) appear as lines a researcher (or any other cultural agent, for that matter) might follow, only to acknowledge such entanglements as a dynamic force field (Stewart, 2011: 445–453)

The relation between atmosphere and space is certainly problematic because of all uncertainties involved, but it is being acknowledged as an essential aspect of urban theory. For one cannot simply say atmospheres are indeterminate (Anderson, 2009: 79) – since ungraspable in the surface of the built environment, for instance – and dismiss their impact on social, interactions. In this sense "an atmosphere is not an inert context" (Ibid.) but more something that the notions of "charged" (Ibid. 446) or "attuned" (Ibid. 449) better characterize. Against this backdrop, small-scale perturbations – pockets of presence – "may presage potentially larger events" (Gandy, 2016: 360).

Urban atmospheres[115] are thus the result of a complex and continually changing totality, both anchored in the very material forces shaping the city and disparate forms of consciousness and experience. In terms of a critical approach of the urban environment and the very everyday life in cities, to valorize the issue of urban atmosphere is of pressing political meaning. For Jameson, "waning of affect" is synonym of destabilization of the human subject (Ibid. 354). All sorts of material and sensory phenomena are then part of a 'landscape' that the urban conscience, individual and collective, builds on.

In this context, it is always important, for instance, to understand how a same atmosphere is for some publics threatening or inimical, while for others inspirational; or that completely different localities might in some dimension correspond to very similar – or even 'the same' – atmosphere. On the contrary, impactful agglomerations as crowds, communities, publics, or their absence, as well as their management, have great impact on places' atmospheres.[116]

[115] "When considering urban atmospheres we encounter a paradox: on the one hand, we can think of distinctive urban atmospheres such as particular streets or quarters, but on the other hand, the idea of an urban atmosphere can denote more generic categories of experience such as airports, highways, or more impersonal modes of social interaction. There is a tension, reflected in the phenomenological literature, between the precise characteristics of urban atmospheres associated with specific times, spaces, or situations, located within the wider dynamics of modernity, and an implicit attachment to a bounded, idealized, and to some degree ahistorical human subject." (Gandy, 2016: 354)

[116] One could furthermore explore here the difference between the crowd and the herd.

"Atmospheres are both experienced and created: they encompass extant features of emotional and material life as well as its staging or manipulation." (Ibid. 357)

For geographer Ben Anderson: "Affective atmospheres are a class of experience that occur before and alongside the formation of subjectivity, across human and non-human materialities, and in-between subject/object distinctions" (2009: 78). Latham notes that: "[…] the agency of the non-human can be seen in the ways that the presence of trees, scrubs, and all sorts of plants draw ecologies around them. Not only do they help clean and purify the air of cities, there is also good evidence that they help contain and smooth the moods (Van den Berg *et al*)" (Latham, 2017: 187).

In his critique of classic phenomenological thought, Gandy states, concerning the need for a more critically reflective (social) phenomenology:

> 'Sounds envelope and reverberate deeply within bodies,' suggests Revill, 'in ways which are specific both to their phenomenal properties and to historically constituted modes of listening, understanding and interpretation'. A more critically reflective phenomenology would of necessity have to take account of the limitations of European philosophical traditions and the need to recognize multiple constellations of subjectivity. (Gandy, 2016: 358).

To put in a more 'down to earth' language: each dweller, traveler, nomad, passer-by do their phenomenological labour, more or less aware of it; to pay attention to this diversity is a principle of aesthetic inclusivity. This does not mean the notion of embodied universalism is to be fully rejected[117]. But denotes the importance, for cultural work, to turn the urban sensescape a matter of sharable immersed critique, exploration and creativity. An issue remains in the backdrop: "[…] moving from single to multiple forms of subjectivity poses a tension in relation to cognitive modes of understanding focused on the individual human subject […]" (Ibid. 357).

[117] Gandy states, framing the way the new phenomenology is moving itself to a broader sense of subjectification: 'At the heart of this retooling [through the term 'atmosphere'] of seventeenth-century metaphysics,' writes the cultural critic Alberto Toscano, 'is the liquidation of the "Cartesian" bourgeois-individual subject which supposedly animated the humanist visions of French phenomenology and existentialism'. Yet the 'new phenomenology', that has been so influential in recent discussion about affective atmospheres, does not make this intellectual manoeuvre. The *leiblich* or 'felt' body is seemingly devoid of gender or any other kind of social difference, or indeed any clear sense of historical or geographical context beyond the confines of the (late) modern European city (for which Frankfurt adopts a degree of metonymic significance)." (Gandy, 2016: 369)

The point to be stressed here is also to differentiate between atmospheres as ideological constructs – typical in tourism discourse – and atmospheres and their political salience –an important field of work of communitarian engagement in locality (or in political populism. The issue is to imagine how creative (or not) are atmosphere-based forms of resilience to hegemonic powers. The position of feminist philosopher Teresa Brennan focuses on how affects are produced, is exemplary here. She reminds us of a particularly 'hidden dimension' of the urban experience: the olfactory realm, on which she bases her insights on the blurring of corporeal and spatial boundaries. Radically, she states that the transmission of affect is "a process that is social in origin but biological and physical in effect" (Brennan, 2004: 3)[118].

But one may imagine that the care for local atmospheres, including their conscious reinvention, is a model to remain resilient to undesired hegemonic drifts, be they subtle forms of incipient violence or widely expanded consequences of technoscientific *hubris*. In this sense, the atmosphere of a particular street is, on one hand, of the interest of a sensitive (in the sense of emotionally available and engaged) public; a single individual – say an artist in residence or a passer-by – may project their own 'aura' in the spatial setting contributing to changes in its atmosphere[119]. In sum: "Urban atmospheres cut across strikingly diverse ontological realms" (Gandy, 2016: 368). A cultural streets project, anchored in the concept of atmosphere, stands for a particular cultural work on the "geometry of perception" (Ibid.).

Griffero seems to believe that atmospheres could have the function once held by art in order to make sense of the sensible experience of the world. Asked "Why is the notion of the atmosphere so relevant today – especially – from an aesthetic, political, economic, perspective?", Griffero answers that:

> Looking at the affective life of human beings is a necessary step for the broader understanding of human life, and it plays a crucial role in order to face the current global social, political and economic challenges. Indeed, the "atmospheric" point of view enhances our capacity to strikingly grasp such complex systems. […] Further to this, the "atmospheric gaze" does not reduce the latter to a mere subjective matter, since the

[118] "In extreme cases, under fascist ideology, we encounter a 'corporeal ontology' that rests on violent forms of social differentiation so that the staging of rallies or other events can generate its own kind of corporeal agency that finds an echo in the social realm." (Gandy, 2016: 365)

[119] The opinion is of Jacob Böhme "in response to a paper presented by Sara Fregonese at the John Harvard Symposium entitled 'Topographies of Citizenship' hosted by CRASSH (Cambridge Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities) at the University of Cambridge, 4–5 February 2016. See S. Fregonese, 'Affective Atmospheres, Urban Geo-Politics, and Conflict (De)escalation in Beirut', *Political Geography*, 61 2017, pp. 1–10." (Gandy, 2016: 370)

> affective involvement concerns the fact that human beings live in an emotionally attuned environment.[120]

Concerning the relation between affect and emotion, it is worth to keep in mind, again with Jameson (2013: 32), that 'out there' there is an always emerging proliferation of 'nameless bodily states', the consequence of the continuous 'transformation of the sensorium' underway the acceleration of modernity. In this framework, it makes sense to ask, over and over again: "does language create mind or mind create language?" (Gandy, 2016: 359). And it is arguably an issue, to establish a range of possibilities for the ritualization of place.

This said, looking closer at apathy, it is arguably an urban "condition" (Bal, 2016: 62)[121]. While evoking spaces' affective traits, atmosphere-based thinking thus suggests theoretical reflections concerning processes of (healthy) co-creative subjectivation. Coming from Spinoza's introduction to the notion of affective capacities and today reaching the concept of atmospheric politics, the term 'atmosphere' enables a complex understanding of collective forms of specifically urban consciousness and experience of place.

Maybe that is what is at stake concerning the role of emotions in the city (in terms of the socially productive (un)*b(u)ilding* of atmospheres): "[…]awareness is necessary to allow humans to get emancipated from the constraints of our system and, as far as possible, to provide a tool that helps to freely choose what is better for us." (Griffero)[122] All in all, for this study, the relationship between space and bodies and, specifically, how changes in the constitution of a space, whether in its characteristics or in the bodies within it, alter the affective experience of these spaces (Shaw, 2014: 88) is decisive.

In urban *empiria*, the notion of atmosphere has been replacing the concept of affect with some ideas standing out. One, is that affective processes "cannot be limited to a particular person's body, but instead are understood as pre-personal and transpersonal intensities"

[120] http://mimesisinternational.com/httpmimesisinternational-comcategoryatmospheric-spaces/
[121] Bal reminds us that maybe "[…] indifference is so strongly opposed to sociality that we can consider it unethical. I have sometimes argued for an ethics of nonindifference – an ethical imperative to shed indifference's coldness in favor of a need, a passion to engage, below the threshold of thematic specification or political partisanship. One can see this in terms of what Deleuze calls an "immanent ethics": I hate, or I love, rather than I judge. It is immanent to the extent that its subjects are implicated in the subjectivity of others. Such an ethics rejects the idea of the linearity of history we call chronology." (Bal, 2016: 62)
[122] http://mimesisinternational.com/httpmimesisinternational-comcategoryatmospheric-spaces/

(Michels, 2015: 256)[123]. On the other hand, according to "new phenomenology" (Schmitz, 2009; Schmitz et al. 2011), "[…] it is only in the experience of atmospheres via what he calls the "felt body" (Leib) that emotions become part of a person's life (Schmitz et al. 2011, p. 247). And it is the felt body (Leib) in contrast to the material body (Körper) that perceives an atmosphere; the felt body here is "understood as the extraorganic dimension and the absolute place one can only access in the first person." (Griffero 2014: 32)

Michels nevertheless explains that "Yet the felt body is not fully disconnected from the material body as the affective involvement with emotions/atmospheres is "borne out by a surprising reliability of the gestures shown by persons moved" (254). In these "vibrant attunement[s] to meaningful surroundings" (244) – Schmitz describes them as "diffusely meaningful situations" – the felt body undergoes a process of "encorporation" (*Einleibung*) of emotions/atmospheres, "more a being-perceived than a perceiving", as Griffero (2014b: 32) notes" (Ibid.).

Anyhow, "the ability to be moved by an atmosphere is conditioned by one's personal affective history" (Ibid.) which leads us to the notion of affordance now in the context of lived space (Griffero, 2014a, b) Griffero "argues that an atmospheric environment is imbued with motory and image-motory suggestions that are corporally taken up by the felt body. The felt body thus does not experience its environment by way of interpretation but by mirroring its *(immanent) movements"* (Ibid. in Michels, 2015: 256).

For human geographer Anderson, after landscape designer Mikel Dufrenne, the issue of atmosphere implies the features of "processuality, relationality and indeterminability of the encounter between the perceiver and the perceived" (Michels, 2015: 256). Thus "in actualising these capacities in lived situations – by entering into a process of mediation – bodies' capacities may change in unpredictable ways. These situations of affective mediation are therefore also processes of relational becoming […]" (Ibid.) Deleuze and Guattari phrase this as "the nonhuman becoming of man" (in Thrift, 2004: 63).

[123] The architectonic dimensions to atmospheres has been explored from a phenomenological perspective by Jürgen Hasse (2012), as part of his wider project to apply the 'new phenomenology' to the understanding of urban space. Hasse believes that atmospheres and feelings originate in a spontaneous-affective realm of grounded sensation that lies outside of the individual human subject.

And if "discursive elements" (Anderson, 2014: 19-20) are themselves components of affective atmospheres, on the other hand,

> Habitualised bodies (re)produce material modulations through processes of aesthetic work and, vice versa, material modulations perpetuate or challenge the formation of habitualised bodies. In this sense, we can think of *modes* of atmosphere-making that reproduce or challenge specific patterns of atmospheric compositions. (Ibid. 261).

Gammerl speaks of "spatially defined emotional styles" (2012: 164).

In this study, streets are concrete atmospheric assemblages whose relative instability is to be furthermore *dehabitualized* by a cultural project's programme[124], which fosters, specifically affect production through walking practice. Michels rightly complements, in what seems to fit perfectly one's effort in connecting streets by means of their atmospheric similarities, resonances and contrasts:

> Researchers of atmospheres may therefore also attend to patterns in the composition of atmospheres and how they are reproduced or changed. Describing patterns in the composition of atmospheres requires a researcher to 'zoom out' and to describe similar compositions of affective atmospheres at other sites. (Michels, 2015: 261)

3.1.1 Stepping out of Plato's cave

Historically, "Over time, the proximate senses (touch and taste) drifted into ignominy, the acutely animal senses (hearing and smelling) were firmly demoted, and sight—the most distant and far reaching of our senses – was promoted to proud but unstable pre-eminence as the crowning metaphor for knowledge itself" (Jones, 2010: 88). Such critique of this centrality of vision in our culture recalls Plato's foundational allegory of the cavern and an "overarching set of analogies that link shadows with ignorance, darkness with deception, vision with understanding, and insight with enlightenment" (Ibid. 89). This is naturally the philosophical basis to address ocularcentrism through the medium of walking practice.

> Yet there is a paradox coded within this parable. Everyday vision for the unreflective prisoners is "blind," and there is no way they can attain higher knowledge unless they become free to *move,* physically and of course philosophically, to see another layer of reality beyond and behind what is before their eyes. Yet before they can achieve *inner* truth, they must become blind again, both to the specters in the cave and to the dazzlement of daylight outside. True vision in this narrative necessarily involves

[124] For Deleuze "Programmes are not manifestos – still less are they phantasms *but means of providing reference points for an experiment which exceeds our capacities to foresee.*" (Deleuze ad Parnet, 1987: 48)

> oscillatory movement: turning away from spectacle, or if one cannot turn the whole body, closing one's eyes to the visible world – or its mediated *image* – to question what one sees. Thus, there are two tropes of blindness in Plato's narrative: the ignorant blindness of the prisoners and the volitional blindness of the philosopher. (Ibid.)

Indeed – and one would like to stress here the wayfaring metaphor –,

> The pathway from ignorant blindness to philosophical *in*sight leads through the body: its turning and re-turning, its willed shift from retinal sight to mental image. The unspoken proprioceptive sense—the synthesizing viscera that produce orientation, balance, sensory location in space and time—is what permits the targeted blindness that will produce ultimate enlightenment in the unified, "grounded" philosophical subject. (Ibid.)

Jones concludes:

> Plato's parable of the cave thus abnegates the senses in order to arrogate their privileged relation to knowledge. Senses are denied—the blind inhabitants denied sight, the chained bodies denied proprioception—because such sensory occlusion seals the mind in media-driven illusions that must be shattered by intellectual travel and travail. (Ibid. 90)

Needless to say, impoverished sensescapes (in the sense of rarefied in order to suit control or commodification) has the perverse or pathological effect of rendering who experiences them less socially apt (nor the least because 'the other in you' would not find space-time conditions to be acknowledged.

The very theoretical dimension of knowledge is today rarely acknowledged as a sensorial matter, its original context of pilgrimage having been repressed. But the truth is:

> *Theôria* in its cultural context[125] required the pilgrim in ancient Greece to leave his city of origin and make a ritual journey to an oracular center or religious site, perhaps at a time when it would be animated by a festival honoring a specific cult figure. *Theôria* remained incomplete until one returned to one's city to recount the experience from afar. (Ibid. 90)[126]

Now it becomes clear how complex it is today to creatively undo (deconstruct, reinvent, edit, and so on) vision, and senses at large, in the contemporary urban milieu, accelerated by the mediascape (Appadurai, 1990) or the consumerist *apparatus*.

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[125] Jones refers to Andrea Wilson Nightingale's, Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy: Theoria in Its Cultural Context (2004).

[126] "Plato's diatribe against untutored sight merely internalizes the physical movement of the pilgrim, rendering this sojourn and exposure to others' mediations purely conceptual: "The philosophic *theôros* blinds himself to the human realm in order to see a vision that transforms his soul and gives him a radically different perspective on the world when he returns to it." (Jones, 2010: 88)

This is the backdrop for another important articulation, the more so when what is at stake is to create a community of critical-cultural pilgrims:

> In truth the senses are complex cognitive systems in which there is no clear separation between, for example, the "medium" of air, the "message" of sonic information, and the intricate body system that interprets sound waves as language, calculating location on the basis of the skull's own acoustic "shadow" and the microsecond delays between inputs at either ear. (Similarly, the eye is histologically and anatomically an extrusion of the brain, and the nasal smell receptors "recognize" specific chemical isomers emotionally before the brain can express to the mind what they are.) But if the hierarchy of a mastering intellect must continually be restaged and institutionally buttressed, that very process also leaves traces in the medium of its actions – the body. […] The dialectic between sense and reason fluctuates over time […]. (Ibid. 91)

In this framework, a sensuous take of the city, a one to one encounter 'mediunic' with places, might reinvent not only the first acts of sensorial resistance to Modernity of the original *flâneur*, or re-enact waves after waves of artistic avant-gardes, but go as far as 'back to basics' concerning the original relation between critical thinking and cultural pilgrimage. In sum: "The senses both constitute our "sense" of unmediated knowledge and are the first medium with which consciousness must contend" (Jones, 2001: 88)[127].

A set of cultural streets is in this sense a transnational theatre for sensorial apparitions, an infrastructure for networked pilgrimages, in a nutshell: a circuit of atmospheres.

Again, for Gandy (2016: 353), "the idea of an 'affective atmosphere' – as a distinctive kind of mood or shared corporeal phenomenon (situation) – deserves to be put in relation to "recent developments in phenomenology, extended conceptions of agency, and new understandings of materialism". For geographer Ben Anderson: "Affective atmospheres are a class of experience that occur before and alongside the formation of subjectivity, across human and non-human materialities, and in-between subject/object distinctions. (2009: 78). It is important to understand that the emergence of the term in cultural work implies an "'odd archive' comprising a heterogeneous array of perspectives drawn from disparate fields such as anthropology, critical theory, phenomenology, and other

[127] "Media theorists can argue (as with Kittler) that the senses are an effect of media or (with McLuhan) that mediating technologies are "extensions" of man. These two approaches—technological determinism (the body senses change radically with mediation) versus what we might call naturalization (the senses are grounded in the body and merely "extend" their reach through mediating technologies) – stage the senses in a crucial arena for determining the effects of mediation on understanding." (Jones, 2001: 88)

disciplines"[128] (Gandy, 2016: 357). This explains the fact that the concept addresses the changing characteristics of fleeting elements in the urban sensory experience, allowing for all sorts of cultural and political connotations to be critiqued and explored. To consider urban atmosphere implies interweaving bodily issues, perception at large and, when one thinks of atmospheric politics (Sloterdijk, Latour), the very human being.

In this sense, the atmosphere of a particular street is, one hand, of the interest of a sensitive (in the sense of emotionally available and engaged) public; a single individual – say an artist in residence or a passer-by – may project their own 'aura' in the spatial setting contributing to changes in its atmosphere[129]. Let's not forget that, for Pallasmaa, "The sense of 'aura', the authority of presence, that Walter Benjamin regards as a necessary quality for an authentic piece of art, has been lost" (2010: 34).

Concerning this research's object of study, it implies acknowledging both the sensory characteristics of direct corporeal experience – here focusing on the act of walking across a set of streets – and 'manipulated atmosphere – here the exemplary mix of literature/literarity and urban light art. The project's corpus is a fine example of a specific stage-narrative inviting "porous forms of urban sentience" (Gandy, 2016: 369) in all its variety, thus a sort of 'sentient public space'. As Griffero puts it: "Looking at the affective life of human beings is a necessary step for the broader understanding of human life and it plays a crucial role in order to face the current global social, political and economic challenges."[130]

[128] "The theoretical standpoint offered by Anderson points to the influence of Deleuzian-Spinozist formulations within cultural geography and also draws on a range of other sources, including phenomenology (especially the work of Mikel Dufrenne and Gernot Böhme) and historical materialism (in particular Marx's interest in revolutionary atmospheres). Anderson highlights an eclectic range of phenomena that might be gathered under the aegis of affective atmospheres including forms of 'impersonal or transpersonal intensity' outlined by Brian Massumi; the mimetic behaviour of crowds described by Nigel Thrift; forms of non-linguistic corporeal communication introduced by Teresa Brennan; the 'qualified aura' that emanates from individual bodies described by Gernot Böhme; and the significance of 'tone' in literary or cultural artefacts that forms of part of Sianne Ngai's study of the 'negative affects' of late modernity." (Gandy 2016, 357)

[129] The opinion is of Jacob Böhme "in response to a paper presented by Sara Fregonese at the John Harvard Symposium entitled 'Topographies of Citizenship' hosted by CRASSH (Cambridge Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities) at the University of Cambridge, 4–5 February 2016. See S.Fregonese, 'Affective Atmospheres, Urban Geo-Politics, and Conflict (De)escalation in Beirut', *Political Geography*, 61 2017, pp. 1–10." (Gandy, 2016: 370)

[130] http://mimesisinternational.com/httpmimesisinternational-comcategoryatmospheric-spaces/

As a matter of fact, "a body's 'charge of affect' is two-sided; that is, what a body can do and does do is a matter of intensive 'capacities to affect' *and* 'capacities to be affected'. On this understanding, cities shape and fold into an affect in all manners of dramatic and mundane ways" (Anderson, 2017: 22). In other words, in the spirit of Whitehead (1920), also "materials and their materialities are more than just objects worked on by human agency. They also generate their own forms of agency and action; agencies often both simultaneously interwoven with and independent from human action" (Latham, 2017: 185). In other words, when one thinks of the political as "not predefined or configured, but something that is discovered, acted into" (Ibid. 191). "[…] the politics of cities and urban environments are intertwined with the diverse agencies of the material in all sorts of ways." (Ibid.)

> […] affects are not the reserve of one special part of urban life. They are as much part of trans-local geo-economic processes as they are part of the particularities of sites; as much elements in the politics and governance of cities as they are folded with the hesitant formation of informal practices; as much part of the infrastructural backgrounds that sustain urban circulations as they are intensified in punctual encounters across social differences, as bodies meet and affect one another […] always imbricated in urban processes that are more than affective, the affective of cities is senses when we register the atmospheric qualities: vibrant, lively, scary, edgy, deadened, and so on. (Anderson, 2017: 20)

Massumi stresses multiple relations between emotion as 'subjective content' and affect as a question of bodily capacities:

> An emotion is a subjective content, a sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience, which is from that point onward defined as personal. Emotion is qualified intensity, the conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits into function and meaning. (Massumi, 2002: 28).

Anderson complements: "[…] the ongoing process of ordering affective life is connected to the (trans) local processes that ensure complex commonalities and differences across and between cities" (Anderson, 2017: 23). Thus "All cities can be thought of as made up of multiple, diverse, affects. Affects that resonate together to give cities, or parts therein, something like a background atmosphere; distinct affective qualities that envelope places. […] In short, when it comes to affective life, no one city can function as a 'paradigmatic city' […]" (Anderson, 2017: 23).

Summing up, if:

> Affects […] would not only overlap with those 'relational webs', but also be elements in the production of the particularity of urban life and the way in which particularity is

> registered; […] trans-urban processes are themselves affective and, in part, create affects. In short, it is not only that the study of affect has to be particularistic, and result in numerous case studies of affective differences. (Ibid. 24).

Then a serious cultural project has the responsibility to study, question and – why not? – define how affects emerge, in connection to other urban processes (Ibid. 25).

It is thus now very clear that debates about the privatization of public spaces in the contemporary Western cities concerns more or less difficult negotiation of the distribution of affects and emotions. So, when one thinks of the:

> […] specificity of cities – density, changeability, coexistence of differences, for example – [they] are as immediately affective as they are more conventionally material: changeability, for example, perhaps being felt in the 'aliveness' of a city, or a space or place therein. And it is to understand how urban affects are at once singular and general as trans-local processed or articulated and assembled in specific ways. (Ibid. 28)

Cities are thus no less than "roiling' maelstroms of affect" (Thrift, 2004b: 57), and these are not only patterned (Anderson, 2017: 20) but "unevenly distributed" (Ibid.) leading Bauman to recall that "moral space is "constructed" through an uneven distribution of felt/assumed responsibility" (Bauman, 1993a: 146, in Clark and Doel, 2011: 49).

The body and the city are mutually constituted (Pile, 1996), and urban social justice is always constructed through certain kinds of embodiment" (Young, 1990 in Longhurst, 2017: 51). Indeed, "[…] we are *all* bodies. We cannot exist, materially at least, in cities (or anywhere else for that matter) without them". (Ibid.) "In actuality, there is no *the* body. Bod*ies* come in a variety of forms that exist in a variety of temporal and spatial contexts" […] They are inscribed and inhabited by intersecting sets of power relations" (Ibid. 51) "Bodies are the most micro, or 'intimate', scale of analysis for studying the urban. […] Scale is not meant to be read as absolute, as in cartographic scales that are used to draw maps, but rather as overlapping:

> […] Examining international mobility and interconnectedness can tell a great deal about the form, function and politics of the urban, […] although there may be instances where the body is the most useful platform for thinking about specific kinds of actions and interactions in cities. (Longhurst, 2017: 52)

In this chapter one has acknowledged that the most crucial contribution of a new cultural project to the urban fabric, and the urban life at large, is the creative work on the

everydayness of affect. It is seen as potentially leading to creative re-arrangements triggered by the notion of urban atmosphere, assuming the centrality of the body/bodies in such processes. No less than the very conscious experience of places as atmospheres, the very work on places' messages and discourses becomes the cultural 'battleground' where a rising community of walking *nu-flâneurs* may communicate to the public realm their attuned sense of co-presence in the city as affective assemblage.

3.2 Conscience at work, toward intuition

> *If the body had been easier to understand, nobody would have thought that we had a mind.*
> **Richard Rorty**

While perception describes the multiple ways in which one receives information from the surroundings, cognition is about the way people *make sense* of the environment, in processes occurring through immediate sensory experience coupled with memories and experiences from the past. Coming from Seymour Epstein's cognitive-experiential self-theory – which echoes Jung's dual distinction between thinking and feeling as well as John Dewey's (2005) landmark critique of the separation between external stimuli and internal response (thus acknowledging the interrelatedness of events, environments, people, and actions) – and following latest developments in psychology, the above-mentioned bifurcation may be explored in term of its potential for urban experience.

One objective could be to acknowledge how specific places and moments may generate a particular experiential knowledge**,** helping it to integrate previous experiences of the European (or other) streets. In this line, Kurt Lewin's (1943) concept of the *life space* describing how elements of the environment make up a sort of cognition-based force field within which people live their lives is key.

Robert Sommer's notion of "personal space" (2007) is also interesting to evoke, as a form of portable territory that can shift in size and proportion based on every situation. For Sommer, there are both psychological needs and social conventions at play in human spatial interactions. This idea is tied to Edward T. Hall's (1966) *proxemics* or Máire Eithne

O'Neill's (2006) understanding of corporeal haptic experiences of space and place. In sum, spatial knowledge (Ingold, 2011) is the basis to open the possibility of reinventing lively ways by which we may stimulate the public to interact creatively with the environment of the chosen streets.

Tuan writes, accurately:

> People tend to suppress that which they cannot express. […] In the large literature on environmental quality relatively few works attempt to understand how people feel about space and place, to take into account the different modes of experience (sensorimotor, tactile, visual, conceptual), and to interpret space and place as images of complex — often ambivalent — feelings. (Tuan, 2014: 6-7).

Concerning the relation between the mind and consciousness: "Living structure is always a record of prior development […] behavior of the living system is 'structure-determined'. (Capra, 2013: 31). Cognition, then, is not a representation of an independent existing world, but rather a continual bringing forth of a world through the process of living" (Ibid. 32). This leads to what one could call the possibility of a phenomenological citizenship, based, of course, on first-person cognitive-conscious experience (and awareness).[131]

It becomes now very clear how artistic and cultural citizenship or cultural entrepreneurship for that matter, just like artivism or urban life-driven curatorial perspectives are diverse ways for people and organizations to redefine their role in the production of *urban futures*[132]. And maybe only certain narratives have the power to attract conscious change, for: "Cognition, as understood in the Santiago Theory, is associated with all levels of life and is thus much broader phenomenon than consciousness. […] consciousness is a special kind of cognitive process that emerges when cognition reaches a certain level of complexity" (Capra, 2002: 33).

People, like organizations, by means of multidisciplinary cultural work – and certainly a will to learn through aesthetics –, may attain higher degrees of consciousness that ultimately

[131] For Capra, what's behind a change in the way we perceive reality would be a critical neurophenomenology. He quotes R. D. Laing: "[…] a true science of consciousness […] would have to be a new type of science dealing with qualities rather than with quantities and being based on shared experience rather than verifiable measurements. The data of such a science would be patterns of experience that cannot be quantified or analyzed. On the other hand, the conceptual models interconnecting the data would have to be logically considered, like all scientific models, and might even include quantitative elements." (Capra, 2003: 40).
[132] Title of a volume edited by Malcolm Miles and Tim Hall.

generate a more complete sense of place(making). And this public must necessarily be built upon individual insights, experiences, celebrating anyone's contribution to a (w)holy urb. Just like a new kind of citizens, more nomad *and* more locally settled simultaneously, may become the building blocks for a new kind of emergent *socius* very much aware of how simple attentive actions are the *sine qua non* condition for the resilience and the very semblance of cultural systems of transindividuation (Stiegler)[133].

The transpersonality behind the emergence of this new kind or creative citizen of the urb is also the proof that consciousness is something *common*, and potentially universal. Indeed:

> In Deleuze's reading of Spinoza there are in fact two distinct forms of modern human sociability. The first is one in which control and organization are imposed from an outside […] a transcendent formation […]; and the second, what Deleuze following Spinoza calls the state of reason, in which men freely unite and are joined together through nothing other than their own will. (O'Sullivan, 2006: 79)

This is in harmony with an understanding of the public of a cultural project as a living organism with endless processes happening at the same time, where nevertheless – when a concept is successful or opening a stimulating a cultural horizon – some sort of collective subjectivation process finally appears and some sort of provisional identity becomes stabilized. This also allows for today's obsession with the curation of one's life to be sublimated into a sort of multitude of groups of carers. In this sense, the emergence of a cultural project like Experiencing European Streets is an experiment in such a parliament of aesthetes caring for diversity and complementarity, where views from within – cultural agency while being performed – could become operative and contribute to a "pharmacological" (Stiegler, 2013) paradigm shift.

This is where the essence of cultural concepts may acquire a psycho-political undertone, for there is no real democracy, or globalization, without what Capra calls "introspective practices" (Capra, 2002: 40). For Stiegler, "*attention* [is] one's ability to become absorbed, and particularly the capturing and codifying of absorption". It is easy to relate this to conscious practices of contemplation and meditation.

[133] Stiegler appropriates the notion from Simondon. See "Transindividuality" – "as the realm of culture, the cultural unconscious, memory that transits across individuals and generations. In http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/pdf/Stiegler%20glossary.pdf

Art and aesthetics play in this mindset a key role in an education capable of tackling the (probably unavoidable) processes of entropy and chaos. Precisely because they help cognizing subjects to understand the social dimension of consciousness. "The world everyone sees is not the world but a world, which we bring forth with others" (Maturana and Varela, 1987: 245 in Capra, 2002: 54). This is in line with the ideas of a mystic critical intellectual like Martin Buber, who grasped the theme of intersubjectivity coining the term *dialogical imagination*.

Capra mentions then the existence of a cognitive unconscious shaping our (urban) existence, including "not only all our automatic cognitive operations, but also our tacit knowledge and beliefs" (Capra, 2014: 271). And since "without our awareness, the cognitive unconscious shapes and structures all conscious thought" (Ibid.) it becomes then also clear that critical art or literature, when exploring their freedom from the chains of the everyday (Lefebvre, de Certeau), by means of imagination (Schiller, 2008 [1794]: 1025)[134] – not just phantasy in consumerism – could be today an important of a more multidimensional (Marcuse) social life.

After all, following Lakoff and Johnson, "the mind is inherently embodied. Thought is mostly unconscious. Abstract concepts are largely metaphorical" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 3). This triple acknowledgement helps us to frame the insight that the act of walking across a specific set of streets, within a specific narrative, is an emergent dimension of an exhausted European urban narrative. It is a narrative of belonging: "We belong to the universe, we are at home in it, and this experience of belonging can make our lives profoundly meaningful" (Capra, 2002: 60). In this sense, to belong to the urban cosmos – the life of the city – is a feeling that certain strategies and tactics stimulate. Consequently, since Human beings exist in language (Capra, 2002: 136), culture plays a crucial role in weaving meaning that potentiates shared values and behaviours that bring forth the urban. And this is why "the power battles of the Information Age are cultural battles" (Ibid. 137).

It is in this precise sense that to connect streets (there are of course already 'connected' but not in an autopoietic-emergent way) might be seen as the expression of an urbanistic

[134] For the productive relation between freedom and imagination, see Frank, 2018: 37-58.

sensibility, interconnecting form and matter, process and meaning (for Capra, the four perspectives that allow us to understand life's phenomena) (Ibid. 228).

Either way,

> An object or a place achieves concrete reality when our experience of it is total, that is, through all the senses as well as with active and reflective mind. […] Another place may lack the weight of reality because we know it only from the outside — through the eyes as tourists, and from reading about it in guidebook. (Tuan, 2014: 18).

In a way, it is here about turning the street into a more intimate reality, if only for specific moments in the urban experience. A paradox becomes here evident: a certain passivity is welcome, for it leads the spectator to be open to the experience of the urban scape becoming more intimate. (Ibid. 137) And there is then the link between the experience of intimacy and of connectedness: "There are as many intimate places as there are occasions when human beings truly connect. […] They are elusive and personal" (Ibid. 141).

In the perspective, a place demands a certain temporality/sense of time to become lived and fully grasped. Arguably it's about allowing the very tandem time/place to appear, as an invitation for intimacy (also with oneself): "A mature person depends less on other people. He can find security and nourishment in objects, localities, and even in the pursuit of ideas" (Ibid. 138).

When creating public space events (Berger, 2009: 74) with a long-term tactic horizon, such a process is part of a greater narrative, and what is valuable here, one that might trigger new ideas and becomes one's own inner voice. Berger continues:

> By this time, you are within the experience. Yet saying this implies narrative time and the essence of the experience is that it takes place outside such time. The experience does not enter unto narrative of your life — that narrative which, at one level or another of your consciousness, you are continually retelling and developing yourself. On the contrary, this narrative is interrupted. The visible extension of the field in space displaces awareness of your own lived time. (Ibid.)

One should remember about such creative yet clearly psychological impact on the audience. To move people's minds and hearts was and is an objective of art, though not always with clear intentions. Therefore consciousness, honesty and responsibility are a way for cultural agents to contribute, even in the smallest events for a positive change in people and the world

(paraphrasing profound words by Mahatma Gandhi[135]). Indeed, cultural work that comprises care for the mind at work (through walking, dwelling and creating practices) is contributing for "urban consciousness" (McDermott, 1974). This is where meditation or contemplation-akin practices meet artistic and creative exercises and experiments in urban awareness.[136]

If the artist is to transform or transmute the milieu, then, already according to Benjamin he/she must change "from a supplier of the production apparatus, into an engineer who sees his/her task in adapting that apparatus" (Benjamin, 1983: 102). Complementarily, "for Lefebvre, everyday life became a bit like quantum theory: by going small, by delving into the atomic structure of life as it is really lived, you can understand the whole structure of the human universe" (Merrifield, 2006: 5).

For instance: if

> […] the urban consciousness from which the symbolic emerges is organized according to the closed, internal logic of capital […] what if all thought did not emerge from urbanized consciousness? What if some imagination poured forth from another source like the body? If that were true, then it would have the power to defy capitalism. Theories of embodied cognition and affect pose that very possibility. Creativity that is not located in urbanized consciousness is not structured by the fixed relations of capitalism. Finding ways to harness the spontaneous connections between thoughts, words, bodily responses, and images would have tremendous potential in the fight against predatory capitalism. Creative activism is exploring how to do just that. I think theories of embodied cognition and affect in tandem with, not in place of, a Marxist materialist approach to culture will strengthen the possibility of resistance. (Vilaseca 2014)

In a nutshell, "imagination defies capitalism" (Ibid.) Anyway, "Probably power is never given, only rarely successfully taken, but can be realised in another sense from within" (Miles, 2008: 245). In this open-ended processuality, intuition may be seen as a dimension of tactics:

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[135] Mahatma Gandhi: "We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. This is the divine mystery supreme. A wonderful thing it is and the source of our happiness. We need not wait to see what others do."

[136] Berverly Naidus, artist, is an example of socially engaged art practice informed by the involvement with Eastern wisdom. "In 1989 I had my first opportunity to study with Thich Nhat Hanh[9], the Vietnamese Zen teacher, poet, and peace activist. After participating in a retreat that he led for activist artists, I began a slow process of integrating this socially engaged spiritual practice and different traditions of yoga, into my work and everyday life. Two subsequent health crises, both of which I have recovered from completely, reinforced the need for these spiritual disciplines to guide my activist art making. The breathing in and breathing out of despair, art as the embodiment and connection with a vision, and the communion offered by meditating with others, are now essential pieces of my path" (Naidus, 2008: 204)

> A highly delicate and complex theme, and one which could be lost in multiple representations, intuition is a revelation of consciousness and a condition that reveals the unknown. The moment of grace of intuition has no other significance except that of pre-serving the link with the invisible; a cosmic bond in which the harmony of the world is presaged, and sought in an inaccessible space, beyond oneself. (Ferretti, 2017: 7).

Indeed, "For Augustine and Plotinus, this is the only way man has to touch God, as intuition is the attribute of the divine, its unique way of 'doing'" (Ibid.).

It is in this framework that "[…] randomness (and serendipity) can contribute to creativity, but only if it can be intelligibly related to the relevant cognitive background" (Boden, 1997: 2). With a specifically urban agenda in mind, the work on consciousness might be parallel to the humble task of *upgrading* urban awareness. For:

> Downgrading *inhabit*, reducing it to a mere *habitat*, signifies a loss of the city as *ouvre* a loss of *integration* and *participation* in urban life. Indeed, it is to denigrate one of humanity's great works of art – not one hanging on a museum wall but a canvas smack in front of our noses, wherein we ourselves are would be artists, would-be architects. (Merrifield, 2006: 69).

Vyvere warns in this context:

> Excessive branding and opinion making is the same as forcing our truth upon our environment instead of observing, without judgment, what it wants to show us about ourselves. Ego overwrites our intuition! Our intellectual programming seeks to understand what is not needed. Excessive identification is at the source of all violence in the world, and confrontation of truths. (Vyvere 2017: 27)

Some figures work out as lighthouses in these endeavors: "In those sections [of *The Right to the City*] on inhabiting, and on the city as *oeuvre*, Lefebvre writes beautifully, and inspiringly, about the urban, invoking the power of the city, the promise of the city, more as an artist intent on pleasure than as a sociologist intent on measure" (Merrifield, 2006: 69). His fascination for the urban goes along with the very dialectical drive to speak simultaneously about the past, the present and the future.

It is relevant to relate Lefebvre's terminology with the one a contemporary thinker on intuition:

> Our body is an energy field, with chakras and energy centres, points, and channels. Every part of our body resonates on different vibrations. It is our antenna to communicate and capture, store and resolve subtle information from the form-field of *all*. This subtle body is in constant immersion with e-motions and intuition. (In this case, e-motion = energy in motion.) In the present moment, we constantly create our past, present, and future. The intrinsic reason to live is to heal karma and frustrations. To heal is to rewrite our truth with new information. (Vyvere, 2017: 26).

Morton, like Lefebvre and Vyvere, teaches us to look around for portals through which consciousness is attuned. It is rewarding to hear him state that he charisma of the *flâneur* is a force field (Morton 2016 ,157), just like contemporary actualizations of the figure shall produce unexpected waves of energy. The *nu-flâneur* could in this sense be something like a new kind of social antenna? To sustain this idea, Morton's insights on aesthetic sensibility are key:

> Some scholars have only lasted two minutes in the Rothko Chapel. Some other friends […] stay in there for ages and ages, soaking it up. Why is this feeling of attunement scary for some? It's because it appears not just to be something, they're in charge of, but something that's emanating from the paintings and the space itself. (Ibid.164).

After all, "living in a scientific age doesn't mean you are living in a cold world of objectivity […] It means that you realize that you can't achieve escape velocity from your phenomenological style or embeddedness in data interpretation or confirmation bias (three different ways of saying the same thing). We cannot get out" (Ibid. 62) We are all the time arriving.[137]

One adds that a contemporary performatic *flânerie* might be a form of urban-spatial attunement (Morton, 2016: 139-149) through/with the very act of urban walking. And there's a mystic aspect there: "It is correct to claim that this attunement is a kind of 'spirituality', exemplified in the use of drugs or the nomadic wandering of the *flâneur* or the psychogeography of the radical French Situationists of the late 1960's." (Ibid. 143) This chapter shall thus end with a provocation, paraphrasing (appropriating) the phrase with which Morton finishes his *Being Ecological*: You don't have to *be* a flâneur. You *are* a flâneur.[138]

In short, phenomenological insight fuels the embodied awareness of urban space through the concept of affordance. The city appears as the stage for sensorial apparitions. In this framework, citizens with the capacity to put their conscience at work deal more autonomously with the narratives that frame their perception of the world, intuitively becoming able to rewrite the tacit narratives that constitute places.

[137] Derrida's notion of *l'Arrivant* could be explored here, as suggested by Morton (2018: 165).
[138] Originally: "You don't have to *be* ecological. Bacause you *are* ecological." (Morton, 2016: 215)

4. Narrative: threading horizons

> *Literature and cinema would be devoid of their power of enchantment without our capacity to enter a remembered or imagined place.* [...] *Enigmatically, we encounter ourselves in the work.*
> **Juhani Pallasmaa**

> *Telling stories is as basic to human beings as eating. More so, in fact, for while food makes us live, stories are what make our lives worth living.*
> **Richard Kearney**

"Narrative cuts across genre, substance, form, culture, class, history – seemingly all of human thought and activity" (Kreiswirth, 2000: 378). Kreiswirth explains the acceleration of the narrative turn (Hyvärinen, 2010), as well as its translation into "less universal and more contingent forms of thought and analysis" (see Kreiswirth, 2000, in Ibid. 380) in a few lines: "The narrative turn encompasses more and more disciplines concerned not just with story as story but with storied forms of knowledge […]" (Ibid.). On the other hand, "Narratives serve as bridges between a people's experiences and the norms to which they subscribe. Narratives are thoroughly infused with values in ways that are at least didactic if not overtly rhetorical" (Hauser, 1987: 337).

4.1 Thinking narrative

The topic of narrative is here considered through a nuanced, specific and instrumental approach of the term within this project's case study, with no normative objectives behind it. Narrative is in this chapter understood as an element of the city's identity (a crucial part of its formation and constant actualization, as cultural horizon). Among the various conceptual possibilities to address narrative, one advances here first through two of the possibly most operative articulations of the notion, concerning a cultural project and its communication: Narrative Thought and Cultural Narrative.

Narrative thought, a refinement of image theory, deals with the cognitive-affective territory between the neurological functioning of the brain and the flow of everyday experience,

leading to issues that are a mainstay of this study such as storytelling (also in relation to biography). In its framework, narratives are the natural mode of thinking (more than analytical thinking); to think narratively enables us to transcend our evolutionary limits and actively shape our own futures; more, narrative thought is maybe another word for 'mind' (Beach, Bissell and Wise, 2016).

Pyschologically, and according to Goldie[139] "[…] our lives are messy, and narrative is the perfect medium for trying to keep them straight without oversimplification" (Altshuler, 2012). Goldie is indeed a fundamental author to understand a tripartite aspect of narrative:

> While narratives may involve causal accounts, they need not: a narrative can involve nothing more than a string of coincidences. Moreover, narratives typically have three additional features. They have coherence, revealing some connection between the narrated events. They have meaningfulness, revealing how the narrator, or the characters within the narrative, understood those events, and they have evaluative and emotional import, revealing how the narrative's characters or its narrator feel about those events. (Ibid.)

Since implying a multiplicity of voices, narratives become a crucial part of life just because they lead us to become self-reflective through the contact with a variety of perspectives (on a same event, for instance) (Ibid.).

Despite the complexity of such interplay, it is widely accepted that there are two kinds of narrative. "Chronicle narratives are about what happened in the past, what is happening now, and what is expected to happen in the future. Procedural narratives are about how to do things. They are about the actions[140] one can take to better inform one's chronicle narratives."[141] One is of course using here the term in an encompassing mode, not the least because narratives "[…] are the stuff of ongoing conscious experience, of moment-to-moment thinking, of the richness of mental life, and they are the foundations for informed guesses about the future" (Ibid.).

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[139] Goldie's *The Mess Inside: Narrative, Emotion, and the Mind* (2012) widely concerns a synthesis between narrativists, "for whom narrative is in some way constitutive of identity, and anti-narrativists like Galen Strawson, who hold that narrative is unnecessary and possibly harmful". (Alstshuler, 2013: 189)

[140] It is interesting to recall here the main role of actions in a narrative. They happen in the present inasmuch as they are showing a relation with an immediate past and their immediate future (Luhmann, 1981: 60) Actions somehow draw, or paint time.

[141] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_of_narrative_thought

And of course, if "The narrative's storyline is its meaning, which is created by a coherent arrangement of the events and actors" (Ibid.) an open narrative, specially across urban assemblages, is in any case extremely complex to tackle, for all the contingencies involved; on the other hand, we are surrounded by more or less Grand Narratives that our actions somehow interpret. One of them, possibly the one that most disturbs current societal and cultural development, is TINA – There is no Alternative (See Nawratek 2012: 101) – something of a narrative that states that a there is no narrative or that narratives have come to an end. Of course, this is in opposition to emerging ecological or ecosophical alternative horizon appearing to engage with the (non-narrative?) of the Anthropocene[142] and maybe polemically enriching the debate on the very Grand Narrative of the Anthropocene (Bonneuil and Fressoz, 2016: 45–96).

One deals here also with the articulation of narrative with cultural planning – "A plan is a narrative about how one intends to go from the present to a more desirable future" (Ibid.) – with a cultural narrative whose elements are the ideas, concepts and even experiences one tries to gather in this research. When one speaks of emerging narratives (as opposite to current), what is at stake is that fact that the emotions related to the acknowledgement of that emerging narrative are, rather, underdeveloped; on the other hand, a good narrative is plausible if its actors' actions contribute to the story line and are not uncharacteristic, i.e., are reasonably consistent across narratives. A good narrative is coherent if the actions of the actors and the effects of those actions conform to one's causal rules.

Briefly, it is crucial to stabilize the essential traits of a cultural narrative as a sort of narrative scaffolding, that each member of a community will enjoy sharing and more, co-building (co-writing, co-experiencing). In such process, the mind is in the center of all experiences and decisions (see TNT and current developments in the theory of mind). Narrative thinking is a frame of mind and in this research where a fundamental articulation where a cultural project (concept) and the city (streets), a target public and urban life takes place – precisely to generate meaning:

[142] Maybe the latter is a non-narrative, considering the limits of its narrativization: "[…] the challenge we are facing today does not merely lie in telling either scientific, socio-political, or entangled Anthropocene narratives to come to terms with our current condition. Instead, the challenge lies in coming to grips with how the stories we can tell in the Anthropocene relate to the radical novelty of the Anthropocene condition about which no stories can be told." (Simon, 2018: 1).

> The streams that flow through the story should thus be connected in a way that creates interest and makes sense within the frames by which people perceive the world. Meaning is not a simple sequence and often appears initially as tension, mystery and the need to understand, followed eventually by an 'aha' of understanding.[143]

Narrative thinking allows for the mind to relate to "stories that have flow, connection, tension and satisfaction"[144]. In this research and the underlying case study, certain images function like nodes of a both dynamic (loose) and tight (structured) web of notions that shall operate not as separate but connected, in a way building a range of overlapping and non-exclusive temporalities. Indeed, a diversity of streams – local stories, personal experiences, and so on – become the 'waves' of a fluid 'sea' that becomes legible only through a specific set of lenses (the most important one being the concept of the concept of the *flâneur*, operatively reconceptualized and turned performatic as *nu-flâneur*).

Interestingly, "A good story starts with a tension[145] and plays with this throughout. Playing to our need for stimulation, novelty and interest, the story tensions keep us attending to find out what happens." (Ibid.) Indeed, the present cultural project's narrative aims to relate a range of places through a narrative that is critical in kind: the *flâneur*, as an image (not only a symbol) embodies important tension in the very historical narrative of Modernity.

Before advancing, why is the notion of cultural narrative important? Cultural narratives surround us everywhere, appearing as more legible possibly only when stories start to define the patterns of counter-narratives to the hegemonic ones. For example, the story a community tells about their past, present, and future, but arguably what is crucial is to understand what narrative is going to be 'written' under the present contingencies of that community. Those contingencies may indeed come from inside or outside the community's narrative. Particularly important for the liveliness of a place (or a life, for that matter) is the narrative framing the decisions, actions, emotions and visions of the *now*, the present moment.

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[143] http://changingminds.org/disciplines/storytelling/telling_stories/narrative_thinking.htm.
[144] See: http://changingminds.org/disciplines/storytelling/telling_stories/narrative_thinking.htm
[145] "Tension in stories is built and demolished in sets of tension-resolution pairs, keeping the reader guessing and amazed at the completion of events. Remember that good stories are not all sweetness and light and a predictable progression from beginning to end. There is struggle, interest, excitement, worry and more."
In See: http://changingminds.org/disciplines/storytelling/telling_stories/narrative_thinking.htm

The point here is to acknowledge the relevance of a translocal narrative – a narrative of connectedness between places – based on a concept's prototypical values. Will this be a model to overlap specific cultural moments and characters – notably a hypothetical *nu-flâneur* – with a sense of the future – a city to come through a specific economy of urban experience?

One may take the context of learning, for instance: "When learners are enabled to make connections to where they live, when they create links to significant events, people and the land, they develop a sense that they are part of a larger story."[146] Indeed, be it in educational context, or others, cultural narratives are pathways toward the future.

This said, narrative is the more memorable (and motivating) the more it is experienced as a fragment of "lived truth". In his latest book, philosopher Byung-Chul Han ostensibly writes in the perspective of gardening – an activity to which he devoted himself in these last years – to the point that the book is possibly to be read almost more like a 'plain'' gardening book than an intellectual adventure (Han, 2018b). That is his narrative, anyway – a story on the awakening of the senses as a practice of resilience (to work, consumption, the market, and so on). In other words, a narrative, independently of the idiosyncratic imagery a 'teller' adds, offers its 'readers' a sharable structure, in a specific method to process information on the complex issues – namely strategy formation (Steen, 2005).

Although, a difficulty might arise: the currently hegemonic narratives in leadership are based on the new, the exceptional, (the spectacular), as if to sublimate the mundanity of cultural capitalism's everyday, while an emergent critical narrative such as Experiencing European Streets project, almost counterintuitively, 'rehabilitates' a Modernity's outcast figure only to put it in the core of a kind of urban awareness-based thread of storylines that tends to be about intimacy, the personal, the non-representational. This means such a project's sense of wonderment focuses on lived aspects of the European street in a way that arguably it is not possible to commodify within narratives of spectacularizing-alienation typical of the

[146] https://core-ed.org/research-and-innovation/ten-trends/2019/cultural-narratives/. In this concrete situation, curiously, "[…] educators propose, as a first action to be undertaken, to " Walk outside, place your feet on the ground and ask how well do I know the cultural histories of this piece of earth that lies underneath my feet?" In Ibid.

symbolic exchanges of the creative economy. Maybe this is again where the coopting tactics of this research show their weakness and power: as subtle shifts in narratives such as 'the new', the 'fantastic', the 'great', the 'next big thing' or – very typically – the 'recently opened' – all very present in gentrifying discourse.

It is nevertheless interesting to listen to leadership's discourse (narrative), not the least because it swiftly encapsulates, with some decisive instrumental shifts indeed, the power of narrative. For Denning, who coined the term "narrative intelligence":

> […] narrative thinking, encapsulated in stories and storytelling, is ideally suited to discussing the exceptional. Narrative thrives on the disruptions from the ordinary, the unexpected, the conflicts, the deviations, the surprises, the unusual. […] In this way, stories appeal not only to the mental process of the brain but are grounded in the feelings of the listener. They thus appeal to both the mind and the heart. […] Stories have the power of ascending to the particular from the universal, in contrast to science's power to ascend to the general from the particular. […] Stories, unlike logic, are not stopped dead by difficulty or contradiction. Stories thrive on conflict, on clashes of differing wills, on difficulties, on inconsistencies, on the very fault lines of society. We know instinctively that it is in these very fault lines that the keys to the living future lies. We intuitively grasp that this is where innovation comes from. Science and logic thrive on the banal, the regular, the routinely observable, the inert. (Denning, 2016)

Denning's *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action Through Narrative* (2016) bridges science and narrative, with storytelling conveying not only phenomenological experience(s) but also the results of more abstract analysis. Storytelling is indeed a communicational weapon, especially when what is at stake is a sort of social branding narrative.

The notion of *scenarios* is also of use here, for they stand for "meaning-making paradigms that structure social environments, behaviours, and political outcomes […] milieux and corporeal behaviours such as gestures, attitudes, and tones not reducible to language" (Taylor, 2003: 28, in Bala, 2018) As such, "scenarios are frameworks or broad outlines of practices" (Bala, Ibid.), comprising "more elements than text, narrative or plot, and reflect the diverse layers and systems at work in order for practices to enter or exit the repertoires and archives of cultural imaginings" (Ibid.)

Among the infinity of uttered narratives – see the notion of *paroles* (Barthes, 1975: 237), certain narratives become strongly felt or grasped narrative threads, in a way like symbolic matrixes for civic engagement. In this framework, a set of streets' creative agents may agree

on the range of modalities to better convey the 'same' narrative, while keeping it vibrant through performative difference. Narrative becomes then the inspirational-motivational-creative fuel for a more inclusive poetics of places. In these terms, each street, as well as each nomad walker, contributes to an infinitely variable plot that ultimately becomes a prospective narrative horizon. A cultural management strategy in this context aspires to stimulate the urban reality with the power of stories, short and long, aiming for the most ephemeral or lasting effects, be they storytelling atoms or encompassing mindsets – as if translating narrative arcs to the urban realm could be a way to lead people to read it, but also to tell and retell it.

In a way, narrativity is what makes a cultural concept work, an aesthetics appear, and subsequently that emergent narrative to become participated and shared. Narrativity has also the critical potential to turn upon itself (the capacity for stories to become aphoristic, conveying complex mental processes concerning their very production and not just 'flat' sequences of events).

Arising, as Barthes says, between our experience of the world and our efforts to describe that experience in language, narrative ceaselessly substitutes meaning for the straightforward copy of the events recounted. "And it would follow, on this view, that the absence of narrative capacity or a refusal of narrative indicates an absence or refusal of meaning itself" (White, 1980: 6). More, as Barthes famously remarked: "[narrative] is simply there like life itself… international, transhistorical, transcultural" (Barthes, 1975: 237). For White, narrative is the solution to a problem of general human concern, namely, the problem of how to translate *knowing* into *telling* (White, 1980: 5)[147].

Most importantly, to acknowledge the value of narrative in a cultural concept is particularly relevant when one is dealing with transnational contexts. Precisely, because as Barthes discovered, narrative is translatable without fundamental damage, unlike what happens when one translates a verse or a philosophical utterance. "Narration is [indeed] a manner of speaking as universal as language itself" (White, 1984: 1). Observed from several disciplines

[147] In fact, notes Hayden White on the etymology of the word: "The words "narrative", "narration", "to narrate", and so on derive via the Latin *gnarus* ("knowing", "acquainted with", "expert", "skilful" and so forth) and *narrow* ("relate", "tell") from the Sanskrit root *gnâ* ("know")." (White, 1980: 5) In these words, to tell and listen to stories is about sharing what is knowable.

and areas of studies (well beyond Literary Studies – for instance in narratology –, if not expanding these, from psychology to economics, from history to science), narrative is about trusting a tale.

This is important for how we organize our knowledge and has important consequences when it comes to the relation established between people and places and organizations. Furthermore, it is an operative term that helps us to 'travel' the restraints concerning both theory and methodology. Furthermore, a project's narrative may become a collective cultural outcome and the result of a communitarian performance. Because it has the capacity to become the role of a cultural *meta-code* (White, 1990: 1).

Therefore, narrative in this context is less a form of representation[148] than the way a sensibility appears. This in a way acknowledged the value of urban space's textuality (texture), which an encompassing narrativist take will recur to, to develop itself as a matrix for a new horizon's narrative. Barthes structuralist-post-structuralist-semiotic writings are here naturally of great use, through the notion of intertextuality (1981).

For Eakin (2004) (narrative) identity comes from the idea that one is some kind of story. Thus, what is at stake is in the end the exploration of emergent subjectivations – narrative identities – in/of a set of places (and of course people who for some reason enter in a relation with them) and research the possibility of connecting them through a narrativist approach of the urban form and experience, namely across the notion of autobiography.

In the Experiencing European Streets, there are in fact several initial narratives intertwined (larger, like Modernism, Globalization or even the Anthropocene; and more specific, like the ones around the potentially critical trope of the *flâneur* vs. the scripts of the smart cities or gentrification), and the point is to research onto their current potential for change and development, one based on a new open narrative to be produced by a set of institutions and organizations, urban space users, urban communities.

[148] Although this dimension is present in a future GF Literary programme.

In other words, narrative/narrativity is extremely important for it allows a conceptual and experiential (and even affective) focus on the criteria for the ordering (namely spatial) of what one might want to highlight or communicate in each (and all of the) street(s) involved.

Significantly, according to Walter Benjamin, modernity witnessed a displacement of "storytelling" from "the realms of living speech" to the real of technologically produced mass culture, a loss to narrative of the power and authority of the storyteller. So, the topic is the more relevant the more medialogical issues addressed. In practical terms, this means to consider narrative (storytelling as language) as translated across diverse media. With Ryan, on shall never forget that narrative is "medium-independent phenomenon" (Ryan, 2004: 15).

Having this in mind one may argue that a project like Experiencing European Streets is about acknowledging the value of a specific narrative device to produce its own narrative-producing public. Maybe a community of storytellers, who share their experience as *nu-flâneurs*, an experience valuing cosmopolitan, nomad, transnational identity and subjectivation. This is a way to face a fact (maybe a narrative itself): the decline of the narrative basis of knowledge has only become more intense with the development of mass media communication technologies such as film, video and computerization.

Promoting face-to-face encounters in the urban stage, a minimalist *flâneurish* meta-narrative allows for subjects touched by it to perform it pertinently. In sum, despite narrative being an elusive concept, its complexity – coming from the way it fuses or interconnects narratives – is important to attract a range of stakeholders to enter a relatively coherent place-driven cultural plot, maybe where the most important characters are values. This leads to the relation of narrative to life's paths.

According to Tim Ingold:

> To tell a story, then, is to *relate*, in narrative, the occurrences of the past, retracing a path through the world that others, recursively picking up the threads of the past lives, can follow in the process of spinning out their own. […] There is no point at which the story ends and life begins. (Ingold, 2016: 93).

Moreover, if one considers lines as paths, such perception perfectly fits the narratives behind writing, telling and even reading – which "is travelling" (Solnit, 2001: 72) and where "[…] the sign becomes an intensity, a trigger point for movement. Reading, if this is still a relevant term, is reading in order to be moved, to be 'set in motion'" (O'Sullivan, 2006: 20). Such

transdisciplinary insights reinforce the power of narrative in an urban project that aspires to include whoever feels it is the right time to enter this community.

In Berger's *Another Way of Telling* one reads: "Every step is a stride over something not said" (Berger and Mohr 1982: 285). Such approach allows public for nearly limitless space not only for interpretation but also inspiration source, as for example for artists. This also proves that some stories can only be felt but not heard or understood. They are indeed glimpses into narratives, first and foremost. They have something in common with the outcomes of internal (existential) dialogues[149] that one for instance has, until one of the inner voices takes the lead in terms of a personality's public role. This dimension of narrative thought is particularly important in this study in the sense that it frames the creation of a public, called to acknowledge the fascinating power of narrative (Meretoja, 2014)[150].

In this subchapter, the exploration of the overlapping issues of narrative thought and cultural narrative lay out the principles for a cultural project to become a public narrative where at the same time individual stories find their productive place, contributing to a more lived translocal horizon.

4.2 Narrative culture and the basic form

The narrative turn has developed along a range of research lines, of which one is the conceptualization of identity.

> In the past it was enough to know that someone had a specific trade and had undergone a training for that trade to understand the cumulative experience they had. In postmodern societies the individualisation of experience makes this easy identification of a life course and sequential modes of experience obsolete. (Richards, 2003: 1-2).

[149] See for instance https://nypost.com/2020/02/05/scientists-explain-the-viral-internal-narrative-phenomenon/
[150] This is however the more difficult – or an exciting endeavor, for that matter – the more our everyday is shaped by narrative in all kinds of, for instance, marketing sloganeering: "Cultural Narratives are Alive Within Us", Connect with Your Customers Through Cultural Stories" or "Empowering Your Customers as Heroes of their Adventure." (in http://cultbranding.com/ceo/power-of-cultural-narratives/)

Indeed, “The need to piece together a coherent life history partly explains the postmodern concern with narrative.” (Ibid.)[151]

For Adler, the tension between narrative and paradigmatic thinking[152] is crucial to the processes concerning “how we come to understand our lives” (Adler, 2008: 422). One could add, also on how come to understand the very practice of research.

> The paradigmatic mode is the mode of science and is concerned with logically categorizing the world. The other mode, which Bruner called the narrative mode, is concerned with the meaning that is ascribed to experiences through stories. […] They capture people’s own explanations about what they want and how they go about achieving it. (Ibid. 423).

Of course,

> Each mode of thought has significant strengths. The paradigmatic mode offers the power of prediction in that it sets up and tests hypotheses about the nature of reality. In contrast, the narrative mode organizes the complex and often ambiguous world of human intention and action into a meaningful structure. (Ibid.).

But it is in the narrative mode that self-stories assume a power that is helpful for a processes of narrative identity (Ibid.), more or less coherent (Bruner, 1986) and more or less capable of responding to the broader social context, that is somehow recombining a menu of available script templates (McAdams and Pals, 2006)

In the case of an emergent community of walking-dwellers, what is in any case more significant is how to develop one’s sense of unique self-narrative. So, if “One conflict inherent in approaching the same issue simultaneously from paradigmatic and narrative modes is that the goal of paradigmatic arguments is to generalize, to speak to trends in populations, while the goal of narratives is to explain how one’s life is unique.” (Adler, 2008: 424), “the primary psychological way to assess the value of one’s narrative identity is from

[151] In the past we were used to the museum being the 'factory of meaning', whose authority to produce cultural narratives was unchallenged by the visitor. These days, the visitor is more likely to be seeking part of their own story when they visit a museum – a piece of the puzzle which constructs their identity. The visitor will increasingly decide which parts of the cultural offer they want to consume and which are irrelevant for them.” (Richards, 2003: 1-2)

[152] “[…] one mode, the paradigmatic or logico-scientific one, attempts to fulfill the ideal of a formal, mathematical system of description and explanation. It employs categorization or conceptualization and the operations by which categories are established, instantiated, idealized, and related to one another to form a system.” (1986: 12)

within a narrative framework: Does the narrative effectively capture your perspective on your shifting intentions and actions?" (Ibid.).

This said (asked), a narrative always "mean[s] more than [it] can say'" (Bruner, 1990: 59). Narrative thinking as a form of inventive self-reflectivity is thus a form of remaining individual while inventing commonality, in processes that may address lived episodes, a sensed spatial detail, maybe an intimate dream, and, last but not the least, more or less shared concepts. For:

> Everybody within a culture must in some measure, for example, be able to enter into the exchange of the linguistic community, even granted that this community may be divided by idiolects and registers. Another domain that must be widely (though roughly) shared for a culture to operate with requisite effectiveness is the domain of social beliefs and procedures […] These are domains that are, in the main, organized narratively. (Bruner, 1991: 21).

Just like reality is constructed narratively, knowledge is never "point-of-viewless" (Ibid. 3). Indeed, in the social construction of the world one lives in, "[…] we organize our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative – stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on." (Ibid. 4) Crucially,

> Unlike the constructions generated by logical and scientific procedures that can be weeded out by falsification, narrative constructions can only achieve 'verisimilitude.' Narratives, then, are a version of reality whose acceptability is governed by convention and 'narrative necessity' rather than by empirical verification and logical requiredness […] (Ibid.).

For Bruner, to acknowledge the role of narrative in society leads to a "daunting task": "[…] to show in detail how, in particular instances, narrative organizes the structure of human experience – how, in a word, 'life' comes to imitate 'art' and vice versa." (Ibid. 20-21) He proposes a conceptual matrix addressed below.

Concerning "diachronicity", Bruner states – "As Nelson Goodman warns, narrative comprises an ensemble of ways of constructing and representing the sequential, diachronic order of human events, of which the sequencing of clauses in spoken or written "stories" is only one device". (Ibid. 6) This idea is important to imagine each street's narrative in the perspective of the notions of 'before' and 'after' entering the a project like Experiencing European Streets. On the other hand, each street may be reimagined as an (anachronic) urban moment in itself, for instance in the global narrative of the project as a whole.

Concerning “particularity”, Bruner states that “Narratives take as their ostensive reference particular happenings” (Ibid. 6). But that “this is, as it were, their vehicle rather than their destination” (Ibid.). In this sense, one may imagine how particular individual experiences may be shared within wider processes of (narrative) meaning; and certainly, how a specific street could materialize, in its uniqueness, the narrative of European cultural diversity’s spectrum. At individual level, each adherent to the street’s circuit could likewise be acknowledged as building his/her own sequence of experiential moments, in advance or in retrospective, thus as building-writing his path as a *nu-flâneur*.

On “intentional state entailment”, Bruner says: “The loose link between intentional states and subsequent action is the reason why narrative accounts cannot provide causal explanations. What they supply instead is the basis for *interpreting* why a character acted as he or she did” (Ibid.). As such, “Interpretation is concerned with "reasons" for things happening, rather than strictly with their "causes," […] “ This is particularly inspiring idea when one imagines each *nu-flâneur* in this project gaining existential momentum to *become* what his/her steps will later lead to.

This point is entangled with the next, what Bruner calls “hermeneutic composability”. He explains:

> The accounts of protagonists and events that constitute a narrative are selected and shaped, in terms of a putative story or plot that then ‘contains’ them. At the same time, the ‘whole’ (the mentally represented putative story) is dependent for its formation on a supply of possible constituent parts. In this sense, as we have already noted, parts and wholes in a narrative rely on each other for their viability. (Ibid.)

Indeed, “This puzzling part-whole textual interdependence in narrative is, of course, an illustration of the defining property of the hermeneutic circle. For a story can only be ‘realized’ when its parts and whole can, as it were, be made to live together” (Ibid.).

“Narrative genre, in this dispensation, can be thought of not only as a way of constructing human plights but as providing a guide for using mind, insofar as the use of mind is guided by the use of an enabling language” (Ibid. 15). “Because its ‘tellability’ as a form of discourse rests on a breach of conventional expectation, narrative is necessarily normative. A breach presupposes a norm.” (Ibid. 15). This leads Bruner to propose, after Victor Turner or Paul Ricoeur, that “narrative is centrally concerned with cultural legitimacy.” (Ibid.).

Decisively,

> The normativeness of narrative, in a word, is not historically or culturally terminal. Its form changes with the preoccupations of the age and the circumstances surrounding its production. Nor is it required of narrative, by the way, that the Trouble with which it deals be resolved. Narrative, I believe, is designed to contain uncanniness rather than to resolve it. It does not have to come out on the 'right side.' (Ibid. 16).

And of course, in cultural negotiation, this is related to Context sensitivity and negotiability. In considering context, the familiar issues of narrative intention and of background knowledge arise again. […] Indeed, the prevailing view is that the notion of totally suspending disbelief is at best an idealization of the reader and, at worst, a distortion of what the process of narrative comprehension involves." (Ibid. 16) Thus "[…] context sensitivity [is] that makes narrative discourse in everyday life such a viable instrument for cultural negotiation." (Ibid. 17).

Finally, speaking of "Narrative accrual", Bruner asks, indeed using a walking/street-inspired-metaphor: "How do we cobble stories together to make them into a whole of some sort? […] Yet narratives do accrue, and, as anthropologists insist, the accruals eventually create something variously called a 'culture' or a 'history' or, more loosely, a 'tradition.'" (Ibid. 18).

But "What kinds of strategies might guide the accrual of narratives into larger scale cultures or traditions or "world versions"?" In this study, an urban mythology does that job. At this point it is useful to recall the complex relation between terms "narrative" and "narrativity". The latter, which may be approached from a range of rival perspectives: make it "realist, phenomenological, discursive and cognitive" (Hyvärinen, 2010: 80) is in any case, for Sturgess, "[…] the enabling force of narrative, a force that is present in every point in the narrative" (In Herman et al., 2005: 346).

This is important when one's task is to a public's ways of participation in the urban environment (through stories, ideas and concepts). Coming from notions such as the city as text (Barthes), and of a rhetoric of the built environment (from Simmel to Latour), storytelling and other narrative strategies may lead different places to share a motivational-creative discourse. Something like a po(i)etics of places may be crucial for urban narratives that aspire to become discursive (and creative) platforms and interfaces.

Narrative can then be a democratic-inclusive cultural framework for the city's elements – such as streets and their characters – to become vital factors for urban space to be a rich set of plots. After all, how one arranges the plot points of one's life into a narrative (fundamental and/or experimental, based on perspective or prospective) is a fundamental part of being human.

In sum, narrative is fundamental aspect of urban life, and challenging it by means of creative-poetic-rhetorical endeavors seems to be an essential aspect of a responsible cultural programme. One thinks here of stimulating the urban reality with the power of stories, aiming for the most ephemeral or lasting effects, be they storytelling atoms or encompassing mindsets – as if translating narrative arcs to the urban realm could be a way to lead people to read it, but also to tell and retell it.

Back to narrativity, it is what makes a narrative concept work, an aesthetics appear, and subsequently a new narrative to become participated and shared. Narrativity has also the critical potential to turn upon itself (the capacity for stories to convey complex mental processes concerning their very production and not just 'flat' sequences of events). Indeed, "the absence of narrative capacity or a refusal of narrative indicates an absence or refusal of meaning itself" (White, 1980: 6).

Arising, as Barthes says, between our experience of the world and our efforts to describe that experience in language, narrative ceaselessly substitutes meaning for the straightforward copy of the events recounted. As he famously remarked, "[narrative] is simply there like life itself… international, transhistorical, transcultural." (Barthes, 1977: 79). For Hayden White (in *The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality*), narrative is the solution to a problem of general human concern, namely, the problem of how to translate *knowing* into *telling* (sharing).

Most importantly, to acknowledge the value of narrative in a project is then particularly relevant when one is dealing with transnational contexts; for what is at stake is the capacity to contact with other culture's though patterns. Precisely, because as Barthes discovered, narrative is translatable without fundamental damage, unlike what happens when one translates a verse or a philosophical utterance.

Therefore, one's focus in this point is on some general principles as they might be applied in this research. "Narration is a manner of speaking as universal as language itself." (White, 1987: 26). Observed from several disciplines and areas of studies (well beyond Literary Studies – for instance in narratology –, if not expanding these, from psychology to economics, from history to science), narrative is about trusting tales. This is important for how we organize our knowledge and has consequences when it comes to the relation established between people and places and organizations.

Furthermore, it is an operative term that helps us – in the spirit of Hayden White's seminal idea of *metahistory* (1973) – to walk across all kinds of sociological, ideological, and of course also theoretical or even methodological divides. A project's narrative may even eventually become a collective cultural outcome and the result of communitarian performativity. Because it has the capacity to be a cultural *metacode* (White, 1980: 6).

Therefore, narrative in this context is less a form of representation than the way a sensibility appears. This is why within the current narrative turn, urban space has a textuality that invites a narrativist perspective, an encompassing narrativist take on the multi-layered aspects defining the streets studied here. Their intertwined stories become a matrix for a new narrative.

Also, for Paul John Eakin, narrative identity comes from the fact that 'what we are is a story of some kind' (Eakin, 2004). So, in the end one may explore the narrative identities of a set of places (and of course people who for some reason enter in a relation with them) and research the possibility of connecting them through a narrativist approach of the urban form and experience. In a word, narrative is understood as an element of the city's identity (a crucial part of its formation, as idea and cultural horizon), which is something necessarily loose in terms of definition.

For the Experiencing European Streets project there are in fact several initial narratives intertwined (larger, like Modernism or Globalization; and more specific, like the ones around the tropes of the *flâneur*, or critically, of gentrification), and the point is to research onto their current potential for change and development, one based on a new open narrative to be produced by a set of institutions and organizations, urban space users, urban communities.

In other words, narrative/narrativity is important for it allows a focus on investigating and creativity concerning the criteria for the ordering of what one might want to highlight or communicate in each (and all of the) street(s); and it helps us to understand or define plots of past, present and future events.

According to Walter Benjamin, modernity witnessed a displacement of "storytelling" from "the realms of living speech" to the real of technologically produced mass culture, a loss to narrative of the power and authority of the storyteller. Having this in mind one could argue that a project like Experiencing European Streets it is about acknowledging this (in terms of a specific narrative device) while allowing for the project to produce its own community of storytellers, who share their experience as *nu-flâneurs*, an experience valuing cosmopolitan, nomad, transnational identity and subjectivation.

More, to effectively promote face-to-face encounters in the urban stage, depends on the potential for certain narratives to generate an engaged reception – one by means of which the performing readers/writers add *supplements* to a story's structure, words or common understanding.

So, in sum, despite narrative being an elusive concept, its complexity – coming from the way it fuses or interconnects narratives allows a concept's narrative to resonate urban theories at large, in order to put them in the core of a Cultural Management strategy. A vision's tale, conveying the conversation around a set of values.

For this research's purpose, it is no less important to reflect upon the concept of *people-narrative*: a narrative in which people are implicated. For "people-narratives, where they are successful, can reveal not only coherence, but also meaningfulness and emotional import, both for those implicated in the narrative its1elf, and also for those who engage with the narrative." (Goldie, 2009: 15) It is common sense that the experience of the urban realm has been perceived both as a utopian and dystopian reality. If the city is sometimes valued as the ultimate social or civilizational artwork, other times it shows its negative image, shaped by all sorts of problems.[153]

[153] Indeed, literatures engaged in sharing the experience of urban life captured this breath of feelings, ranging for encompassing narratives to the attention to the almost invisible. (Miles, 2020)

It becomes clear that to create a cultural project's narrative, for instance, what is demanded is a sense of affect, that makes the narrative (as authored concept and engaging experience) work. After all, this is both relatively easy and potentially critical: "[…] a narrative need not be narrated in the sense of being written down, spoken, or otherwise represented in a publicly available medium. It can be thought through by a single person (Goldie, 2009: 17).

As it becomes obvious, a cultural project's narrative, for instance, may appear as the result of one and many co-creative authors, each engaging in different layers and with diverse intensities in the narrative substratum (which might for instance be captured by a brief synopsis and a powerful imagery).

Notes Goldie, at this point, that he sees past and future events as "non-actual" episodes. He also stresses that actual and non-actual episodes can be bound up with each other in always emerging ways (Ibid. 16). When one speaks of a concept – the concept of a cultural project, for instance – it is the very action of conceiving – to take into or form in the mind – that *thinks through* episodes (Ibid. 18). The consequence is obvious: "Where a narrative reveals the emotional import of what is narrated, it shows (or states, or otherwise discloses) that a certain kind of response is thought to be called for or to be appropriate." (Ibid.) In other words, the ways a public conceives the emotional import of what happens is expressed through narrative thinking.

This is related to the role of imagination in perception (a theme addressed by Hume or Kant, and more recently by Peter Strawson). For the latter, when we think of an object, or a person – or, say, a street – non-actual perceptions are alive in the very present perception (Strawson, 1970: 53). This is certainly a point where the notion of *branching possibilities* (Goldie, 2009: 21) meets both an analogic metaphor (the branches of a tree) and the growing technoscientific advancements in fields such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality. For example, a cultural project may propose a couple episodes within a story, but its lived experience be generated by the very engagement with the original narrative proposal by a varied members of a specific target public.

Time to address briefly the problem of the autobiographical narrative, framing it by a phenomenological understanding of the relation between narrative and experience, as proposed by Júnior (2016: 141). Following Michel Serres, this author helps us to acknowledge something crucial: just like the writing of a phenomenological text demands a *fabrication* [*tessitura* in the original] – which is all about developing one's voice's potency and power by means of a creative and heterodox, if not fictional and poetic, sensitive and profound craft – so does the self-creation of a specific urban self – nomad, curious, engaged – demand the development of a narrative sense of participation in the urb. Be it through the conscientization of myths, projects, fears or most direct places' cultures.

Júnior explains, about the techniques of writing used by Serres: "Vocation, evocation, reinvocation, invocation, convocation and provocation are writing methods mentioned by Van Manen (2014) as possibilities of phenomenological writing. In reality, vocation is the widest sense, bearing a relation with the construction of a voice of the text". (Júnior, 2016: 143, author's translation)

This is extraordinarily relevant for both an individual and collective construction of urban meaning, for the city *is* always (also) a text being written not only by who is aware of this, but mainly by who isn't. In other words, we might be dealing here with an aesthetic-narrative imperative that helps people to address both the city for instance as a myth to be rewritten or a given reality to be re-mythified.

What's at stake is the problem of liveliness – curiously enough, in the original, *vivacidade* [as in the English "vivacity"], which links the words viva (alive) and city (cidade). "[…] narratives may be fictional, factual or imagined, there is no difference, por its potency lies in the reinvocation they will realize, that is, in the senses they'll bring up (Van Manen, 2014). The ground from where these senses are being reevoked is no other than the very experience of the world, personal and shared, and that is why also fables and historical events are potent in reinvocations" (Júnior 2016: 143 – author's translation).

Just for this specific literary jargon to become clear, this research dares to expand it in a meta-operative appropriation:

- Vocation points to the construction of a voice; one may see it as the emergence of atomic but also comprehensive situations for dwellers and travelers to become creatively aware of their being (in the) urban;
- Reinvocation is about acknowledging that, just like language has hermeneutical character, so may a specific narrative's poetic expression become a tool to generate vivid urban meaning;
- Evocation is about the movement of reinventing/recreating the given, by means of the specific 'writing' methods used;
- Invocation would concern the intensification of the sense and sensibility – is in imploring, conjuring, as in an incantation; interestingly – for its potential for reasoning about the practice of art: *invocation has the objective of intensifying the sense of form to produce a strong sensation in the reader. This sensation, which might be an image created during the reading, is the potency of revelation of the sense of the phenomenon*;
- Convocation would be the methods to achieve empathy and complicity, as in the promotion of an ethical sense;
- Provocation would stand for a situation that challenges the comprehension of the reader of the city. For Júnior, it might lead to epiphany, and therefore to action.

Of course, these separated levels of analysis – quite obvious when one observes the practice of literary writing – demand no less their comprehension as a dynamic cluster of multilayering.

Finally, concerning the relation between narrative and planning, Goldie reminds us that: "[…] there are other ways I which you can plan, adopt policies, learn from your mistakes, and so on. But I would like to suggest […] that there is something very important that makes narrative thinking a natural way of doing these things." (Goldie, 1970: 25).

In sum, if narrativity is what makes a cultural concept work, such endeavor is crucial for contemporary hegemonic narratives to be ethically and creatively unworked, in learning processes charged with the experience of lived truth. In other words, the narrative perspective on cultural work is what fosters the possibility that new horizons might build on whichever powerful narratives (Modernism, Globalization, the Anthroposcene) only to let novel ways of storytelling to become rewarding aspects of the cultural experience. In this framework, the notions of meta-narrative and of basic a reoperative tools for an inclusive and participatory building of the case for the role of the flânerie in the contemporary urb.

4.3 Place as (narrative) fragment

> *The fragment, like a miniature work of art, has to be entirely isolated from the surrounding world and be complete in itself like a porcupine.*
> **Friedrich Schlegel**

> The empire exists both as a project (horizon) and as a "hidden" entity here and now. It gives meaning to fragmented aspects of reality and is being constructed when those fragments interact. Every interaction and exchange happening in a context of the creation of inclusive world-ness is also an act of creation of the empire. This perspective allows for and justifies local, fragmented, urban and rural, post-capitalist experiments. It gives meaning to all miniscule actions and autonomous entities. The empire is a Gestalt of the coming, post-capitalist world. (Nawratek 2018: 88)

Is there an inclusive narrative that is linking encompassing emancipatory urban gestures around the world, to which an emergent cultural project could relate to, departing from its own contingencies to give its own contribution to a glocal society? Nawratek believes so, through the image of the "horizon of the whole": "I argue for a messianic inclusivism engaged with the fundamental incompleteness of every fragment, narrative, and action in the world." (Nawratek 2018: 47).

Fragments could teach us something on non-duality, on dialectic (to use a political term):

> Our language and thinking are obsessed with opposites—cold/warm, water/fire, good/evil. In fact, many of these opposites are not what they seem—cold/warm is just a difference in temperature; water/fire have nothing in common; good/bad need very careful contextualisation and could change their meanings based on a normative system we are operating within. (Ibid. 47)

This perspective takes Hegelian dialectic (thesis-antithesis-synthesis) to another level of operativity, not far from Taoism's unity of opposites and close to a sort of permanent social constructivism:

> Instead of the process of becoming, which is linear and finite (result exists here at the end), I point to the invariably transcendent, constant infinite in its manifold horizon of the whole. […] The perspective I am taking is obviously rooted in Ernst Jünger's stereoscopic view as an ability to see beyond particular aspects of any being; moreover, this perspective opens all situations to infinity of their developments […]. (Ibid. 49)

A cultural prospective based on specific places, enacted by concrete experimental communities, thus becomes a mediation device with a powerful message:

> For humans, who are temporal and spatially limited beings, the access to the whole (as an Absolute) is impossible, yet humans can construct and use a prosthesis to compensate for their limitations. The ability to create tools (mediators) between the world and humans is often seen as an essential human feature. In the context of the horizon of the

> whole, humans can construct finite, temporary horizons in the form of radical contextualisation. (Ibid. 49)

In sum: "The totality of the whole is the horizon that we are never able to achieve, but it has the power to strip partial narratives from their hegemonic power, thus preventing temporary hegemonic narratives from becoming truly totalitarian." (Ibid. 49) In this prototype humanism of sorts, "nothing is better to trade than a promise" (Ibid.), which is another way to say that the hope behind a cultural project's vision is itself a dynamo for a narrative of connectivity to take its place – as long as its rhetorical power manages to capture a community's attention. "When the whole is close to Jünger's Gestalt, it is a way in which diverse elements and logics come together into one synergetic narrative." (Ibid. 64)

> In the world of *total mobilisation*, alienation is overcome not by recreating a relationship between labour and production (nationalising of means of production), but by creating a clear context and narrative of action and agency. […] Successes of the social-democratic European dream, of the neo-liberal centre, or of the populist (and proto-fascist) right have been all guaranteed, and then, lost their legitimisation, by coherent narratives and embedding individual actions into a broader context. (Ibid. 33)

More: "Built infra-structure could be seen as an accumulated, but temporarily dormant, power and freedom. Buildings and their elements, roads, pavements could become actors of different socio-political narratives." (Ibid. 40) In sum, narratives of commonality, along with the mobilization of actors and the construction of consensus are essential elements of a non-capitalist horizon, one where the current hegemony of a mode of exchange will be overcome.

Against this emancipatory backdrop, one reads, in a media and marketing company's website called Social Streets[154] (whose very brief history seems to be a both exemplary and compelling narrative)[155]: "Stories have the ability to reinvent a place or a community, and to help people to fall in love with the place in which they live, work and play. It's important to know your story, and to tell it well." A stroll (scroll) down the company's Place promotion tasks list[156] is enlightening, concerning the model through which places may be marketed in

[154] https://socialstreets.co/services/
[155] https://socialstreets.co/about/
[156] ""Capture the imagination – We help people fall in love with the place in which they live, work and play. Without a narrative, a place can seem empty, generating only the hollow ring of inanimate materials. […] Celebrate heritage – Stories preserve our own history and culture, passing it along in a form that's easy to remember to the next generation. […] Every place holds a fascinating story waiting to be told and to inspire a new generation of people looking for a sense of connection and meaning with their surroundings. […] Create a sense of belonging – Places are about people. […] A strong sense of narrative can unite new and old, providing a sense of belonging and emotional connection, thereby increasing civic pride and participation.

the current creative environments. Again, marketeer discourse has its limits, but certainly aspects that may be critically co-opted, not the least because this is a (digital) communication-driven discourse operating with e precise social mission and a strong sense of locality (Roman Road LDN in East London).

In this company's website, there is as well a sort of tutorial for place making anchored in narrative.[157] In this highly pragmatical mindset and framework, a place's "compelling" narrative is swiftly to be translated to the digital platforms, not before a logo is designed. The branding procedures stabilize a place's infinite change potential in a specific direction – consumption in a competitive environment:

> A good brand will be a distillation of the cultural heritage that has formed its people and places up until this point, inspiring recognition and sense of belonging in the local community. / A good brand will also tell visitors the type of experience they can expect in your place as opposed to another neighbourhood town, high street or development. This helps you attract relevant new visitors. (Ibid.)[158]

This is reasoned along, again, the 'narrative of place': "People live in areas for a long time and a place brand should be timeless enough to be relevant today and in fifty years of time, as well as true to its past." (Ibid.)

This example is clear concerning the way expert may turn a place into a commodity, designing it for the experience industry and having a digital community as the main target public in mind[159]. This explains the informal, but highly coded language of the project. For

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Promote community cohesion – In our current climate of Brexit, migration and faith wars, understanding the universal experience of being human is essential for community cohesion. Inspire with pictures – Narrative isn't just about the written word. A picture can tell a thousand words. Images can capture an entire story and are just as powerful." In https://socialstreets.co/services/place-promotion/

[157] "How to use a narrative. This is the unique DNA of your place. A convincing and consistent narrative of place will help attract people and inward investment to your place-making scheme. Use it to define the brief, spirit and development of your place-making schemes, from the identity (brand, language, tone of voice, imagery) to the experience (lighting, street names, programming of events and markets, industry and workspace theme)."; "Find your story. We dig deep into a place's memory to find the raw gems, often languishing in neglect, and polish them into fine diamonds to inspire your community, to give meaning to place, and to stimulate a sense of belonging and civic pride. Our journalistic roots mean we have a nose for an authentic story. We look beyond the press release, the purple prose, the fake news, the reinvented history, to find the real story that will capture the imagination, win hearts and secure loyalty". Other topics addressed are *Create a heritage-led place brand*, *Give meaningful names to new places*, *Develop cultural tourism*, *Create tours, trails and apps*.

[158] A good brand will also tell visitors the type of experience they can expect in your place as opposed to another neighbourhood town, high street or development. This helps you attract relevant new visitors. https://socialstreets.co/services/place-promotion/place-branding/

[159] "We start with content strategy. This establishes where we want to place ourselves and how we can get there. High quality optimised content will provide the steady stream of targeted content that is needed needed to get first page ranking for agreed brand terms, and to establish long lasting values and associations with your place, ideal for destination tourism. Content marketing is used to grow audience, increase engagement and

example, in 'What does it involve?', one reads, among other more traditional items, "Live streaming and other flashy stuff" (Ibid.).

In another website dedicated to leadership "enabling of cultural evolution"[160], one reads that "[…] a positive and deliberate cultural narrative is a key part of any successful culture". Again it is worth to pay attention to the tone, not the least because one recognizes sharp contrasts to, say, the way a project like Experiencing European Streets communicates, first of all internally, its open-ended narrative and its relation to *anyone's* experimental flâneries; and again, some aspects are not to be completely dismissed in, say, a critical version of the mainstream placemaking narratives.

Asking "So what can you do to embed new cultural narratives?", a story is told: "In a recent workshop with a group of senior leaders, there was a strong narrative that 'it isn't safe to name the elephant's in the room'. While most were not aware of where that belief had come from, it was strong enough to impact each leader's behaviours on a daily basis. This reinforced the existing narrative. A number of the leaders experimented by constructively naming "the elephant" whilst also stating their positive intention in doing this. The conversation in the leadership team changed dramatically. As a consequence, how these leaders engaged with their teams has also changed. The culture is starting to evolve, and a new narrative is being born. One step at a time." (Ibid.) The walking metaphorology aside, the fact is that this episode may be inspiring when a cultural organization tries to engage in group work, namely to address the 'elephant in the room' – be it at local or translocal level. In this case study, there are indeed a few elephants in the room (globalization gentrification, maybe bourgeois liberal individualism (Butler, 2016), and so on), and perhaps one is so big nobody has tried until now to undo its narratives: capitalism.

Nevertheless, though a myriad of small steps – walks, performative walks, *flâneries*, errances, strolls, and so on –, as well as considering a solid conceptual theoretical-philosophical-ethical-spiritual backdrop in the realization of urban encounters of all sorts,

develop loyalty. Social media publicises content to targeted audiences, facilitates conversations and provides timely publicity, ideal for markets and events. Mail campaigns will reward existing fans, developing loyalty and converting followers into buyers." In https://socialstreets.co/services/place-promotion/

[160] https://adaptivecultures.co/cultural-narrative/

entrepreneurial narratives may be creatively coopted, with more or less conflict of course. This is also where a different – alternative – urban narrative at large is being forged.

In this study, the *flâneur* is the main character in a narrative that involves walking, places, connectivity, change, and so on. It is widely 'told' across the mentioned theories and very concretely translated to the account on the Experiencing European Streets project. This is the narrative of a floating signifier to be 'written' and 'lived' as soon as the first *nu-flâneurs* start their path. As such, aiming to intensify urban moments and encounters, the project bears some closeness to the Deleuze's rhizome, in the precise sense that it fosters "transversal connections and communications between heterogenous locations and events." (O'Sullivan, 2006: 112) In other words, the Experiencing European Streets proposes the re-territorialisation of a myth (the *flâneur*), as a rhizomatic move towards an always emerging experiment of subjectivation (a spiritually performative experiment).

In sum, for an emergent community of walking-dwellers to feel related to a specific set of places, the notion of fragment (of a never fully graspable whole) is fundamental to foster inventive self-reflectivity. A network of streets thus appears here as a narrative accrual (as well as potential) waiting to be activated by the possible and a sense of performativity.

4.4 A meta-narrative assembling creative agency in the Anthropocene's city

> […] *there is a war on the idea of interdependency, on* […] *the social network of hands that seeks to minimize the unlivability of lives.*
> **Judith Butler**

Today, ecological thought (of which Morton is a symbol) meets the imperative of bodily subjecttivation through infrastructure (of which Butler is an advocate). Before advancing in a reading of Butler's theory of performativity through an ecological lens[161], let's reinforce two ideas: first, that nonhuman objects facilitate (or hinder) the capacity of bodies for agency

[161] See Barad 2007; Bell 2012; Morton 2010a.

(Butler, 2016: 72); second, that among the nonhuman agents, images and discourse at large shall be considered, which implies that the art of rhetoric is not to be dismissed in emancipatory endeavors.

Advocating an ethics of nonviolence, and anchoring its insights in phenomenology, Butler believes[162] that under today's shared conditions of precarity, what is at stake is to create "[…] political alliances across race, gender, and class lines" in order to "address the problem of socio-spatial infrastructure" (Butler, 2017). She adds:

> I am sure that Merleau-Ponty is in the background of my thoughts, for he is the one who tells us that the limits of the body do not contain us but expose us to a world without which our living is not possible. Indeed, we are given over from the start, so to have a body is already to be in the care of the other or to be in need of such care. We cannot separate our idea of a persisting body from networks of care in this regard; when infrastructures fail and falter, so too do we. (Ibid.)

And the moment is quite specific: a "conjuncture of street and media [that] constitutes a very contemporary version of the public sphere…" (Butler, 2011)

Butler is helpful to bridge political and ecological partisanship (Barnett, 2017), contributing to the alignment between them along the issues of "exposure and precarity infrastructure and coexistence; and assemblies and assemblages" (Ibid.). Her concern has been for a long time the body, not in a "narrowly anthropocentric" (Ibid.) perspective, but as acting "within the dynamic play of forces that make coexistence more or less possible". (Ibid.) The way Butler addresses the theme of infrastructure (as the support for socio-political action) establishes limits to this work's take on the street as urban form.[163] Mobilization and infrastructure are of course highly interdependent issues. Taking Arendt's notion of appearance (in public space) further, she states: "In effect, the demand for infrastructure is a demand for a certain kind of inhabitable ground, and its meaning and force derives precisely from that lack." (Butler, 2015: 127)

So, "Plural and public action is the exercise of the right to place and belonging, and this exercise is the means by which the space of appearance is presupposed and brought into

[162] https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/judith-butler-on-building-a-world-together/6765

[163] For instance, when she states that "If we think about recent forms of political assembly, they do not always take place on the street or in the square. Sometimes that is because streets and squares do not exist or do not form the symbolic center for a specific political community and its aspirations". (Butler 2014)

being" (Butler, 2015: 59). Again, this idea helps to understand how a small errant community of *nu-flâneurs* can perform its socio-aesthetico-political forms of walking and co-operating: "acting in concert can be an embodied form of calling into question the inchoate and powerful dimensions of reigning notions of the political." (Ibid. 9)

Arguably this opens up the possibility for (urban) *flânerie* as (cultural), work which one believes is only superficially a contradiction in terms. Butler's "supported and agentic" body is key here (Butler, 2015: 128), even if there is who sees limitations in Butler's notion of the performative.[164]

In this research, one insists, shall we consider cultural walking practices a new form of creative labour? Commenting on Butler's book, Wark (2016) reminds of "The labor of many genders, the labor of many species, the labor of the dead and the living, not to mention cyborg hybrids." In this sense, another idea is key: subjects compose themselves the social infrastructure, and the Experiencing European Streets project's community to come needs to understand how to relate to that given, namely though a precise (membrane-like) communication strategy that could at the same time protect its identity and foster its progressive (organic) growing. This is its meta-narrative. Let's now check its 'landscape'. Timothy Morton has "an understanding of ethics and politics as intimately intertwined with the conditions that make coexistence thinkable and doable". (Barnett 2017, 8) Indeed, it is possible "to think ecologically with Butler,"[165] for

> Ecologically speaking, assemblages involve multitudes of participants – living and dead, human and other-than-human – that easily escape our sense of politics. This is significant in part because the networks of relations that compose human beings – the quintessential political subject – are never entirely or simply human. Such beings are themselves dense gatherings of multiple kinds of materialities. (in Barnett, 2017: 16)

[164] "This is because Butler has not really strayed all that far from Arendt. In Arendt, politics is a meeting of minds; in Butler, it is also a meeting of bodies. But what is not really part of this politics of bodies is the *laboring* body. Hence infrastructure appears as that which supports a political body; it is not that which a laboring body also builds and maintains. Like media, infastructure is not really performative. In Butler, political bodies perform with public spaces, making them part of their assembly, but the reciprocal kind of performance is lacking, in which infrastructure makes labor part of itself. "So, the pavement and the street are already to be understood as requirements of the body. (128) But the (laboring) body is not a requirement of the pavement." (Wark 2016)

[165] "Ecology acknowledges not only how things are interconnected and interdependent, but also how relationships among human and more-than-human actors, things, objects and places must be articulated. No relationship is simply given; all forms of relation are shaped by actors of various kinds inter- and intra-acting with(in) one another. It is both possible and productive to construe Butler's recent theoretical work as a creative project that imagines new modes of coexistence that exceed 'the human'." (Barnett 2017, 8)

As noted earlier, various forms of infrastructure (or conditions of coexistence) are secured, lost and sustained by an outlaying of effort. Public assemblies have the power to occasionally induce, other worlds by (temporarily) establishing the conditions for inhabiting relations in more egalitarian ways. Moreover – as Butler argues – "certain forms of assembly may go further toward performatively enacting or inducing other relations by creating systems, structures and practices that project the world they hope to create and inhabit." (Barnett, 2017: 14-15).[166]

In sum, and this is possibly the main political undertone in the *nu-flâneries* proposed here: "thinking through the relations that compose public assemblies is a useful way to begin decentring the human" (Barnett, 2017: 15) – and it is in this precise sense that streets become the both human and non-human environments an urban public is invited to acknowledge and engage with. It is in this very precise sense that a major rhetoric challenge for a cultural project is to embody a narrative.[167]

Experiencing European Streets' narrative "frame" (Ibid. 16) – to a great extent realized through literary, artistic and photographic content, which in turn becomes material for shared myths and storytelling – is indeed something of a language of our streets' assemblages. It demonstrates how fundamental, and precious, and rich, may a set of cultural streets become – as spatializations of an alternative narrative of locality and connectivity, mobility and cultural tourism, and maybe even urban creativity and aesthetics; and as the stage for spatial practices that develop also an alternative space-time awareness.

[166] "[…] how to rhetorically decentre the apparently human? We would have to reimagine routine forms of protest and public assembly such that more than human lives either appear as lives within the frame or, still more radically, human lives appear as but one element in assemblages that include all sorts of non-human things. In shifting from assemblies to assemblages, I am attempting not to weaken but to bolster Butler's claim that it is gatherings that make things happen. Whereas the notion of assembly remains mired in anthropocentric dreams of human agency, the concept of assemblage reawakens us to the complex and contingent relations that compose the world as it is and as it could be". (Barnett 2017, 17)

[167] "One question that Butler does not ask, but which we must, is whether and how it is possible for those more-than-human elements of assemblages to surge forth into perception? Can we apprehend the more-than-human world in and among human assemblies? How can the repressed be made to return? What would make it possible for a public assembly to appear as an association of assemblages? Answering these questions returns us to rhetoric, and to the rhetorical practices that take place within the scene of public assemblages." (Barnett 2017, 16)

To address the latter, again Virilio's chronopolitics comes to mind. Just like phenomenology has expanded the narrativist perspective on the human experience of time, it was Paul Virilio who for the first time introduced the term dromology, derived from the Greek *dromos* meaning race or racecourse. In defining the concept of dromology as the science of speed, Virilio explains that "Speed enables us to see." (Virilio: 1999: 21)[168]

More, in *Speed and Politics* Virilio:

> […] refuses to regard the political economy of *speed* as subservient to the political economy of *value*, the latter of which is a manifestation of the market and the state. Speed relates to the 'war machine', which is exterior to the state and is its condition of possibility (cf. Clastres, 1977; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 443)

Such dromological insights help us to analyze the impact of Modernity at large and modern technologies in particular on our perception of the city and of each other.[169] However, one must not oversimplify Virilio's notion of speed, for it ultimately "permits us to see, to hear, to perceive, and thus to conceive more intensively the present world" (Virilio, 1997: 12) Another aspect of dromology is indeed virtualization – what Virilio sees as "desertification" in *Negative Horizon* (2005). In its processes we witness a loss of immediate co-presence and of embodied experiences.

Moreover, the French thinker notes that our physical bodies are losing density, durability and thickness, and this is crucial to reinvent the possibilities of walking, traveling or entering specific atmospheres. But for Jameson, it is possible to read in Virilio's diagnosis a specific celebratory dimension – a sort of hope in place:

> Virilio could be criticized for the utopianism of his futuristic vision, and for failing to take sufficient account of the corporeality of the body in his thinking. Likewise, it could be argued that the homogenization of global communications, far from promoting a simple placelessness, may have a counter-effect of a renewed celebration of the specificity of material place. (In Leach 1997, 358)

[168] "It [speed] does not simply allow you to arrive at your destination more quickly, rather it enables you to see and foresee. To see, yesterday, with photography and cinema, and to foresee, today, with electronics, the calculator and computer. Speed changes the world vision. (Virilio 1999, 21)

[169] Sloterdijk, addressing the self-movements of the world (2006, 36) notes on one of its symbols, the car: "[…] the automobile is the sanctum of modernity, it is a cultural center of a kinetic world religion. It is the rolling sacrament that makes us participate in something faster than ourselves. (Ibid. 39)

In any case, “agency becomes tyranny when knowledge is power-over, not power-to. For the question is whether a life in cities can be reclaimed as liberating” (Miles, 2019: 2) The issue can be summed up as a problem of balance between Human desire (for an ecological balance protecting Human being) and resilience to overwhelming socio-economic pressure (say, today, the robot economy of disaster capitalism). (Ibid.) In fact, that’s where emergent experiences are trying to shape a post-industrial society – as in Nawratek’s proposal of a total urban mobilisation (2019) – a society finally inventing ways to feel *at ease with itself* (Miles, 2019: 2).

In this subchapter, the political horizon of creative agency has been highlighted, with a focus on the notion of infrastructure, ultimately what allows communities to act in concert. The creative tensions in the *flâneur’s/nu-flâneur’s* narrative potential – with all sorts of personal stories attached – thus appear as a rich reality to render urban rhythms and spaces at large a sense of possibility.

4.5 Mobilizing the Urban: the partisan

One might address the issue of engaged participation in the life of the city through a semi-metaphoric narrative of mobilization, as proposed by Nawratek in his own reading of Ernst Jünger. Nawratek’s narrative is a way to address a problem diagnosed by Virilio: “The crisis of the grand narrative that gives rise to the micro-narrative finally becomes the crisis of the narrative of the grand and the petty”. (Virilio, in Leach, 1997: 366) De Certeau puts it in other words: “The whole [is] made up of pieces that are not contemporary and still linked to totalities that have fallen into ruins” (de Certeau, 1988: 201).

The hero carrying the torch toward a new horizon might be the partisan (Karatani, 2014), whose action is seen as decisive for the problem of immunity (Esposito, 2013). This geometry of concepts is put at work within Bill Hillier’s configurational theory of architecture (2017). In other words, Jünger offers a model for a radical inclusivity that differs from Marxist and Hegelian thought in order to embrace Walter Benjamin’s stereoscopic

perspective, known for its alternative temporality and within it the notion of "dialectical image"[170] (Nawratek, 2018: 8).

All of this is the backdrop for a main proposal: "[…] the logic of accumulation of agency already operating in contemporary cities should not be seen as ultimately subsumed by capitalism, but as a conceptual gateway to new post-capitalist world." (Nawratek, 2018: 16). For Nawratek, a nomadic-partisan sensibility harmonizes messianic time and a contemporary ethics of the Anthropocene. Crucially, Nawratek speaks of what Taubesian (messianic) place *does*, not what it *is* (Ibid. 17) And the point is that it resides in the core of the notion of material flatness, a notion which precisely allows for the continuous emergence of dynamic *free radicals*[171] changing the city's materiality.

Nawratek states that: "What is needed is a hybrid subject and focus on a process of mediation between different orders, scales, times, and spheres, on the production of new connections and orders." (Ibid. 19-20). More:

> If capitalism is reducing and compressing the complexity of the world into simplistic, easily accountable, and defined fragments, this process could be described as follows: a being – financial equivalent – another being; the intellectual project of post-capitalism must focus on processes of translation and mediation, on the replacement (or improvement) of the financial equivalent or on the creation of a metanarrative, putting these translations into a broader context. (Ibid. 20)

So, again, takes on space, place and territory, in the framework of cultural work, clearly demand an anchorage in issues of translation, mediation and narrativization.

For Nawratek, the figure of the mobilised partisan, which appears in Jünger's vision of anti-alienating tactics is a 'lost link' with the city as second nature; and certainly, a valid image for a city of agency. "Jünger writes about individual freedom in an era of technological and

[170] "It's not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on the past; rather, image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is a purely temporal, continuous one, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: is not progression but image, suddenly emergent. Only dialectical images are genuine images (that is, not archaic); and the place where one encounters them is language." (Walter Benjamin, "Awakening" (*Arcades*, 462; n2a, 3)

[171] The importance of free radicals is crucial for Jünger. In *Der Arbeiter,* he pictured a pluton of old soldiers armed with a single machine gun against the crowd. The soldiers win. In an essay titled *Der Waldang* ("Exploring Wilderness") published in 1951, Jünger describes dissidents, minor opposition forces as a fundamental force for good." (Ibid. 18)

political oppression. The forest he writes about is a deep ecology of myths and stories, rooted in the mythical moment when humans were able to sustain their spiritual connection to nature. (Nawratek, 2018: 71) "A city of agency is a place where Jünger's anti-alienation strategy is fully realised". (Ibid. 98)

Since the partisan seeks to establish a new structure for the public sphere, while not representing an alternative order – which in turn will not allow him/her to make any claim to ideological legitimacy for guerrilla tactics (Schmitt, 2007) – it is interesting to follow the line of thought that links him/her to the fields of education, activism, social interventionism and all sorts of "solidarity in difference" (Bartholomew and Mayer, 1992).

A cultural project's core public is then to be found within the notion of what Nawratek calls the social infrastructure, a sort of invisible, or immaterial, or submerged network, that provisionally comes to existence through encounters between a range of cultural partisans. In very plain terms: "[…] NGOs can provide a sphere where forest rebels find their shelter in the spotlight of the watchful guards of the (neo-liberal) establishment" (Nawratek, 2018: 74).

It is in this framework that:

> […] the figure of a forest rebel/partisan seems highly relevant because the way it operates is, at the same time, a parasitic existence, tolerated by dominant socio-economic and cultural structures, and a challenging agent of change. Only this perspective allows for the use of pre-modern hierarchies in attempt to build post-capitalist social structures. (Ibid. 75)

And in a comment of particular relevance to the notion of cultural streets (more or less in moments of crisis): "Therefore, NGOs may work as one half of the urban post-capitalist framework, providing the institutional platform for partisans. The other half should emerge in abandoned and unused fragments of the city, where post-capitalist, transgressive partisan strategies could be actualised." (Ibid.)

Streets are complexes of actors, individual and collective, interacting with spatial issues to produce an environment. In this sense, diverse scales and 'stages' are called to the fore when it comes to produce urban cultural activism (this implies acknowledging the diverse elements of a street, namely potential 'partners in crime', including institutions whir are not in the

street, bit in its perimeter of captivation). This is related to a narrative of nomadism in Nawratek's partisan – in this research's case the *nu-flâneur* as creative dweller/traveler – in its core.

Welcoming unpredicted opportunities "[…] where the real freedom can be found," (Nawratek, 2018: 77-8), these ideas frame the notion of urban prototyping, a link between urbanism and culture, art and citizenship. (Ibid. 94) Again because the prototype, since 'just' an experiment – also as a theoretical concept –, is "more than many, but less than one" (Jimenez, 2014), and at some point becomes a 'portal' for citizens to engage in a city of agency: "It is not a city of laziness; […] not city of exploitation; […] not a city where 'bullshit jobs' kill workers' souls." (Ibid. 95)

Certainly, "the real is constantly in a state of mobilization" (Lefebvre, 1991: 399). It is thus clear that for a more democratic construct of, say, Europe, there must be an always-emerging grassroots movement, aided or not by always-attentive top-down urbanistic visions, aiming for the development of a panoply of representation spaces, the guarantee diversity (locality), while considering particular forms-situations such as the neighbourhood, the street, the building, the house. Between design and performance, concepts and explorations, cultural streets can become in this sense a good example of a multilayered creative approach of the urban reality.

Mapping this into critical theory terminology: there is a creative axis connecting planned to lived space, and vice-versa. Looking at streets, which are the actual result of *strata* of time and without a doubt more or less lasting power structures which shaped them, there is always the potential for transition – or revolution, to use a term shared both by Lefebvre and Nawratek and which one finds, maybe not without surprise, in Benjamin's "The Flâneur": "Revolution disenchants the city" (Benjamin, 1999: 422).

In sum, the contemporary *flânerie* shall be thought along the concept of partisanship. The *flâneur* appears as a figure for a radically engaged and inclusive citizenship, maybe as a symbol of mobile and dynamic autarchy, spatially translated into the notion of urban prototype.

5. Flânerie: from walking to contemporary artistic experiments

5.1 Who is the *flâneur*?

> *Walking as an artistic practice is a well-established method (and it is worth recalling that "method" itself is derived from* meta-*(above, or after) and –*odos *(road), roughly designating the road once taken)* […]
> **Stephen Wright**

The figure of the *flâneur* (Salazar, 2017) is central in this research. It is semiconsciously behind the investigation methodology for addressing urban space; it is the main trope in the naming process of the research's case study; and it stands out as a productive motif for a contemporary (Agamben, 2009) awareness of the relations between individuals and urban space (Didier, Berry-Chikaoui, Florin and Gervais-Lambony, 2007: 193-194)

Despite its elusiveness[172] (Tester, 1994: 1) – and paradoxically also because of that – the *flâneur* is "a key-figure of mobility" (Coates, 2017). Both symbolizing and performing a cultural-aesthetic awareness and engagement in the urban milieu, it frames a specific kind of cultural agency: "The flâneur is a figure of agency in the city whose idle yet assertive negotiation of the street has been used to discuss modernity, the embodied mobile person and the urban (Adey, 2009; Barker, 2009; Benjamin, 1996; Brown and Shortell, 2014; Buck-Morss, 1989; Martínez, 2015)" (Coates, in Ibid. 28).

The 19th century bourgeois *flâneurs* are wandering observers, "whose aim is to derive 'the eternal from the transitory' and to see the 'the poetic in the historic'" (Butler, Christopher, 1994: 133). It is important to confront their mythical status with their *origin*:

> The flâneur was originally a comical figure portrayed in mid-19th-century Physiologies, a series of illustrations, poems and short essays about Parisian life (Ferguson, 1994). The *Physiologies*, the works of Balzac and the writing of a number of journalist commentators would later become the source texts that Charles Baudelaire would

[172] Coates: "The flâneur is not a word conceived by a single author but rather a figure that has emerged within a particular European setting, re-invoked on multiple occasions by major writers and theorists such as Baudelaire and Benjamin (Baudelaire 1972; Benjamin 1996). As a figure […] rather than merely a word, its semiotic boundaries blur, taking on mythical and aspirational qualities. The flâneur-as-figure simultaneously embodies a kind of person, a kind of movement and a disposition towards the world." (Coates, 2017: 29)

> convert into a 'male bohemian fantasy' (Goldstein 2008; Gluck 2008). (Coates 2017, 29)

To be a *flâneur* it was necessary "a certain bohemian decadence and a certain bourgeois privilege" (Luvaas, 2016: 27). It is important to refer here that Baudelaire's *flâneur* is not the "popular" (Gluck, 2003), but a dandy figure whose "ambulatory reveries" (Kaplan, 2009: 62) are already imbued with a feverish artistic dimension. "As Baudelaire stressed in his salon of 1846, the true artist, encapsulated in the image of the *flâneur*, was a man of fashionable sensibilities who, in strolling and documenting the city, concerned himself with interrogating 'modern beauty and modern heroism' " (Gluck, 2008: 67 in Coates, 2017: 29)[173].

> Unlike Benjamin's focus on the demise of the flâneur as a sign of the alienation of modernity, Baudelaire, alongside other literary figures, emphasised the creative and expressive potential of flânerie. […] He emphasises the immersive and sensory sophistication of the flâneur, connecting the figure's marginal position to the creative practices he engages in. (Baudelaire ,1972). (Coates, 2017: 32)

Baudelaire considers that "Not everyone is capable of immersing himself in the multitude as in a bath: enjoying the crowd is an art". It might demand "a taste for disguise and masks, hatred for home life, and the passion for travel" (Baudelaire, 2008: 22). For Baudelaire, "The solitary and thoughtful stroller finds a singular intoxication in this universal communion." (Ibid.)

What is most important to stress is that the concept of *flânerie* implies processes of urban appropriation and the production of sense. Even if his joys are "as fragmented as modern work, and above all […] to a great extent [meaning] adaptation to modernization rather than a questioning of its pace and direction" (Medina in Medina, Ferguson and Fisher, 2007: 77).

[173] Indeed, Baudelaire "[…] as early as 1863, said of 'the modern' in art, that it is manifest in the 'ephemeral, fugitive, the contingent' (cited in Smith 1996, 251). "[…] this would give way to the heroic Modernist figure of 'the new', where novelty and innovation are set against the (back)ground of established (Romantic) traditions." (Dallow 2008, 139) On the other hand, "[…] in the postmodern era, it is/was 'the old', the recycling of sights and sounds of the past, which came to stand out, giving rise to an ecology of culture – a (relatively) closed economy of cultural signification" (Ibid. 140)

The rise of urban anthropology (cf. Hannerz, 1980) also invoked the *flâneur*, who eventually took a firmer place within ethnographic imaginaries with the 'mobility turn' of the 1990s and early 2000s (Sheller and Urry, 2006).

Coates adds, in a long ethnographic account of all the available expressions of the tandem *flâneur/flânerie*:

> It has inspired discussions of creative practice as a mode of being in the world (e.g. Gluck 2008), which at times has acted as form of resistance against the alienation of capitalist modernity (Buck-Morss, 1989). It has been extended to the vicissitudes of post-modernity (Bauman, 1994), and within ethnographic approaches, it has inspired researchers to explore the evocative phenomenological and transgressive aspects of moving in the city (e.g. Barker et al., 2013; Laviolette, 2014; Martínez, 2015). (Coates, 2017: 30)

In sum:

> The flâneur used a wide range of ambulatory strategies and performances to establish his place in the world. The most often quoted and famous of these is the short-lived vogue for flâneurs to walk tortoises on leads along the sidewalk. Through these sorts of iconic mythologies, the flâneur came to represent resistance based on movement, performance and the sensory. According to Benjamin, however, the artist, the photographer, the journalist and the detective replaced the flâneur in the 20th century. (Coates, 2017: 29)

Summing up, the historical figure of the flâneur is a model for conscious mobility and aesthetic agency. It is at the same time an open narrative's key-character, which has been important to study in the past (namely in the 19th and the 20th centuries) in order to understand its potential for actual and future uses.

5.2 Following the steps of Benjamin

> *Flâner est un état d'esprit, le flâneur à la différence du contemplateur Rousseauiste intériorise l'extérieur. La relation de l'espace n'est pas objectivante, mais elle n'est pas non plus totalement suggestive. La flânerie induit une nouvelle conception du rapport au paysage qui n'est peut-être pas propre à la ville, mais dont la ville est le terrain sacré.*
> **Sophie Didier, Isabelle Berry-Chikaoui, Bénédicte Florin and Philippe Gervais-Lambony**

It is enlightening to follow Alexandre Roy (2017)[174] in his genealogy of the category of the *flâneur*. The notion of *flânerie* appears for the first time in Benjamin's *Arcades Project* (written between 1827 and 1840); for him, the *flâneur* is an urban explorer "whose demise came with the 'democratic' excesses of consumerism" (Miles, 2017: 99-100). To be noted,

> Beyond the methodology of hermeneutics, in which past is recovered from the perspective of a present that finds its own self-understanding only in the horizon of a recovered tradition, Benjamin sought a way to actualize historical material that would *uproot* and shock what has been constructed as "the present," that would disrupt the very relationship between past and present that hermeneutics assumes. (Pensky, 2004: 181)

Benjamin's work thus conveys the historical manifestations of consumer culture while "bringing to mind the shopping malls of today" (Miles, 2017: 100).

He links the emergent social phenomenon to the consciousness of urban form, via Baudelaire's "allegorical" (1999: 894) gaze: "For the first time, with Baudelaire, Paris becomes the subject of lyric poetry. […] It is the gaze of the flâneur, whose way of life still conceals behind a mitigating nimbus the coming desolation of the big-city dweller. […] The allegorical gaze as gaze of the alienated. Flâneur's lack of participation" (Ibid. Exposé of 1935, Early Version 894).

[174] One reads in the abstract of his thesis: "Using an ethnographic approach, an analysis of texts produced by the *flâneurs*, and semi-directed interviews, the thesis analyzes the motivations of *strollers*, the ways they move about the city, their different uses of information and communication technologies and their perceptions of this new space. By considering the act of *flânerie* as a cultural phenomenon, and an act of urban appropriation, this thesis tries to shed some light on potential effects of the smart city on *flânerie*. But also, by considering the flâneurs as producers of texts, this research tries to see how they might shape the smart city and points out some mechanisms that make it difficult."

Benjamin's appropriation is nevertheless not without problems (Lauster, 2007)[175], but it remained – despite (or because) its melancholic undertones (Berry-Chikaoui and Florin, 2007: 195), a powerful urban myth. In any case, it helps to position the *flâneur* as an urban product, both the result of powers stronger than him – the urban ecosystem –; and of his own performativity as *anticorps* (Roy, 2017: 4).

Clearly, the urban passages of Paris – pedestrian covered streets designed for bourgeois consumption – are the specific object of the *flâneur*'s spatial appropriation (Tester, 1994: 65). They are its very pre-text. As a part of the whole of the city, a specific element in the urban form, they force a certain way of life and being. But the flânerie appears in them precisely to demonstrate one must not necessarily be brought under any spatial contingency.

In this same direction, Nuvolati defines the *flânerie* today as a mode to experience urban life, with the act of walking linking sensuous exploration to interpretation. It is clearly "a modernization of the romantic concept of the gentleman wanderer of Paris, to a more gender-neutral, less class-conscious method of being in the city" (Luminais, 2015: 1). The *flâneur* is thus no longer necessarily a masculine figure (Wolff, 1985; Wilson, Elisabeth, 1992). It may transform into a post-modern *flâneuse* (Scalway, 2006)[176]. In sum, the *flâneur* has become in post-modernity a productive, reflected anachronism (Bal, 2016: 50)[177].

If one considers that a *flâneur* might be or become an expert in the urban milieu (Debray, Lefèbvre), it is thus a far from anodine concept that he bodily puts into practice (Roy, 2017: 4). He embodies if not resistance, resilience, and is, yesterday and even more today, "only

[175] Lauster warns: "Benjamin's concept of the flâneur as a myth supporting his one-sided understanding of modernity as involving self-loss, alienation, and fetishization and shows that some of the journalistic sources he dismisses can assist an understanding of modernity in terms of a dynamically growing public sphere." (Lauster, 2007, abstract)

[176] More, if for Janet Wolff the figure of the *flâneuse* in the nineteenth century "remained impossible despite the expansion of women's public activities, and despite the newer activities of shopping and cinema-going. For central to the definition of the *flâneur* are both the aimlessness of the strolling, and the reflectiveness of the gaze". (Wolff: 219) In any case, in Literature, Régine Robin (2009) "excels at conveying the subjective and kaleidoscopic sensations, interspersed with fictional and cinematic itineraries, of the global flâneuse who travels to New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo, London, and Buenos Aires — anywhere but her home towns of Paris and Montreal" (Boutin, 2012: 130).

[177] For various posterities of the *flâneur*, see *The Flaneur Abroad: Historical and International Perspectives*, edited by Richard Wrigley (2014), which offers various perspectives on a range of transpositions, in various epochs, of the figure of the flâneur to contexts outside Paris and even Europe (cities such as Amsterdam, Brussels, Dublin, Le Havre, London, Madrid, New York, Prague and St Petersburg.

desirable for some" (Coates, 2017). Thus, there is in that move a creative, artistic and specifically urban potential: "[…] the sociological processes that define flânerie today are perhaps less about epochs of modernity, consumption and post-modernity (as Bauman suggests) than they are about transgressive acts that produce a particular form of sociality." (Ibid. 37) As "Flânerie is no longer the remit of the lone man in the crowd[178], but rather a means of producing collective intimacies in the street (Martínez, 2015 in Coates, Ibid.).

On the other hand, if the *flâneur* originally worked out as a figure for understanding the relationship between the individual, modernity and the city, today is being "invoked in relation to the methods and experiences of the ethnographer, who moves and takes note in similar ways" (Coates, 2017). Today new (kinds of) *flâneurs* are maybe expressions of an expanding common urban sensibility which includes modes of creative citizenship, group transgression, collective research and of course nomad artistic practice. One must be very much aware that, in these terms, "for some it is precisely the *flâneur*'s sensibility linking space, language and subjectivity that is needed to read cities" (Amin and Thrift, 2002: 11).

Despite the fact that the *flâneur* "possesses both a poetic sensibility and a poetic science that is almost impossible to distil as a methodology for urban research (Ibid.), there might be a para-science of the *flânerie* that since Benjamin turn the landscape of the city[179] into a stage for concept-making.[180] In any case, "the [original] flâneur is in search of experience, not knowledge. […] for the flâneur the experience remains somehow pure, useless, raw" (White, in Boutin 2012: 130).

[178] Benjamin: "Dialectic of the flâneur: on one side, the man who feels himself viewed by all and sundry as a tru suspect and, oi the other side, the man who is utterly undiscoverable, the hidden man." (Benjamin, The Flâneur: 429)

[179] "Not to find one's way in a city may well be uninteresting and banal. It requires ignorance – nothing more. But to lose oneself in a city – as one loses oneself in a forest – that calls for quite a different schooling. Then, signboards and streets names, passers-by, roofs, kiosks, or bars must speak to the wanderer like a cracling twig under his feet in the forest, like the startling call of a bittern in the distance, like the sudden stillness of a cleaing with a lily standing erect at its centre." (Benjamin 1978, 8-9)

[180] "The new phenomenon of the boulevards and the urban masses made the flâneur into a 'man of the crowd' whom Benjamin counterintuitively interpreted as a person disconnected from the crowd". (Boutin, 2012: 128) To be noted, his stage – the spatial environment of the arcades – will lead Benjamin to create and work on influential concepts such as mechanical reproduction and aura.

As to confirm the radicality of the *flâneur*'s walking gaze, Engels's vivid account (via Benjamin, precisely in "On Some motifs in Baudelaire") on the Metropolitan (busy) street works out as an afterimage of this study's almost unconscious drive (for a new kind of post-industrial and post-consumerist *flânerie*). "There is something distasteful about the very bustle of the streets, something that is abhorrent to human nature itself" (In Leach, 1997: 23).

Following the steps of various authors, one has threaded here in more detail the original conceptual territory that the flânerie – as a critical tool – offers urban and cultural theory.

5.3 Toward the contemporary flânerie

> *O public road, I say back I am not afraid to leave you, yet I love you,*
> *You express me better than I can express myself,*
> *You shall be more to me than my poem.*
> **Walt Whitman**

In contemporary experience, "[…] the pleasures of aesthetic space would not remain a private affair. The *flâneur*'s ludic world was gradually transformed into a *managed* playground: modernity appropriated the pleasures of *flânerie*, putting them into the service of consumerism." (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 51). The result was the shift away from a repressive mode of social control (forcibly maintaining the order of cognitive space) towards a new seductive mode (guided by the contours of aesthetic space) Neither spares much room for morality." (Ibid. 50).

Most interesting is nevertheless to continually check what of the original romantic almost vouyeuristic melancholy is kept, and how it may be translated into our technoscientific

contemporaneity – thus interpreting Romanticism[181] in a novel, non-elegiac, post-critical, constructivist way.[182]

Roy states indeed that the original *flâneur* is not engaged in a critique of the developments of capitalism – he is more fascinated. As Hess notes, he is valorizing the ephemeral (Hess, 2008) and does it with poetic engagement with the urban rhythm, implying a dromology: "In 1939 it was considered elegant to take a tortoise out walking. This gives us an idea of the tempo of flânerie in the arcades" (Benjamin, 1999: 422).

So how does this dimension of slowness (Frisby, 1994) remain today a valid relational technique[183]? Precisely through the conscientization of the drive for immersion in atmospheres – Debord's *varied ambiances*[184] (1995: 1). For Shields, it is because of this that "Flânerie is more specific than strolling".[185] In response to the division of labour, it implies on the other hand a certain lightness. In this same vein, Davila:

> […] contrasts the concept of "effectiveness" associated with the world of the visible, not to say the spectacular, with "efficiency" a notion borrowed from François Jullien's analyses of Chinese thought: a discreet way of making slow and noiseless transformations, which are nevertheless quite strong enough to alter perception.[186]

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[181] With rare exceptions (see the concept of romantic materialism), "The Romantic Movement of the 18th century mourned the triumph of science and the loss of innocence effected by the industrial revolution and saw nature as being the centre of genuine emotions. The most celebrated Romantic poet, William Wordsworth, was an early tourist-pilgrim in the MacCannell mode, finding authenticity in the plaintive Gaelic song of a Highland girl encountered on his travels and described in his poem 'The Solitary Reaper' published in 1805." (McLeod, 2005, 183) Indeed one shall not forget that the Romantic movement has been an exception in the civilization's drift toward materialism, specialization and compartimentation.

[182] A fine example of practices which imply walking as a lived collective appropriation of the very space of streets is the movement Reclaim the Streets, where the values of activism are combined with partying.

[183] In arts production, there is one possibility: "By dooming viewers to a slowness and a re-learning process with regard to how they look at things, almost invisible works challenge the logic of meanings in order to 'open the perceptible up to an unstable and subtle development through the determination of a threshold of perceptibility which is also a possible threshold of the disappearance of the datum'". (Kramer-Mallordy 2012).

[184] "To show "psychogeographical pivotal points" in Paris, Debord and Asger Jorn cut up a street map, brought together districts that were miles apart and in actual physical space, and added arrows representing the flow of atmospheres" (O'Rourke 2013, xviii)

[185] Paetzold nevertheless states that: "City strolling is concerned with the atmosphere of the urban scenes on streets and squares. City strolling is not just a practice of walking and watching but also a way of theorizing and writing. It is a cultural activity." (2013, p.5)

[186] In his comment to Davila's text, Kramer proceeds: "While Marcel Duchamp enjoyed ever-growing acclaim, going hand in hand with nothing less than institutional recognition since the late 1950s, the generations of the two subsequent decades illustrate, in their own way, a liking for "de-materialization", not to say "the immaterial". Still rooted in a phenomenological reading, Thierry Davila develops the role of experiment conveyed by the aim of changing perception through case studies of European and American artists. Based on configurations of individual issues involving Yves Klein, Piero Manzoni, Andy Warhol, Ian Wilson, and Robert Barry, to name but a handful, the author retraces the different adjustments and transformations made to the "infra-thin", which are henceforth played out more in relation to disappearance and invisibility than to

However, if it is always productive to go back to Benjamin, one cannot forget some essential traits of his *flâneur* – "the priest of the genius loci" (Benjamin, in Hartmann, 2007: 69). It is after all not only a form with extraordinary literary power: "The flâneur brings alive and invests with significance the fleeting, everyday occurrences of the city that ordinary people failed to notice. [...] The flâneur's expert knowledge of the city, however, involved more complex skills than passive observation and the recording of minute details" (Gluck, 2003: 69).

For Roy, that is why the *flâneur* shall not be confused with somebody looking for something (Roy, 2017: 6). On the 'contrary': the productive power of the figure concerns vagabondage – which presupposes not only the already mentioned slow pace but the awareness of the function of observation – and, significantly, not necessarily high propensity for movement (Nuvolati, 2009).

Honoré de Balzac, "generously mixing metaphors in his sensuous description of flânerie in *Physiologie du mariage*" (Boutin, 2012: 124) speaks of a "gastronomy of the eye" (Balzac, 1990: 29). In fact, as one would say today, urban visual culture is the *flâneur*'s most natural environment (Thomas, 2008: 8). He(/she) produces sense out of what he sees (feels, walks by).

In any case, "The *flâneur/flâneuse*'s peripatetic encounters with the city across the decades may go in different directions, but the contributions to the special number anticipate his/her footsteps and attempt to pave a way forward for a more sensual theory of modernity. (Boutin 2012, 131) In these terms, Situationism, in its attraction for the unexpected and the unknown (Nuvolati 2013) was an important moment of psycho-socio-political alignment.

Concerning the differentiation between Benjamin's tentative walks and Debord's *dérive*, Roy underlines that the *flâneur flâners* in order to express himself, reacting to changes he is the witness of, while Debord enters a combat attitude (Roy, 2017: 8), in a call for arms, "an opening up' of that which is closed, a breaking out of alienation" (O'Sullivan, 2006: 139).

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the *barely*-visible. To bolster his argument, he devotes an essential chapter to the acoustic experiments of Max Neuhaus." (Kramer-Mallordy 2012)

The Situationists will address this issue with the urban and social criticism in their backbone:

> [Debord] introduced activism to the field of urbanism, something that was nowhere to be found among the surrealist dreamers, who were too passive, too ready to let themselves go, carried away by chance on the unconscious. To avoid this it was necessary to move beyond the past and passivity, drifting had to be more controlled, more systematic, and new cities and spaces had to be invented that would provide greater scope for the *dérive*. (Sheringham, 2006: 144)

"Where were these dériveurs? They hid themselves in the sinuous folds of large cities. What they experienced is incommunicable, unrepresentable. It happened and it will never return other than as allusions and suggestions, maps and drawings, photos of cities in which to wander." (Ibid.) Indeed, "The Theory of 'Unitary Urbanism', […] was developed by drifting, by walking, by evaluating the ambience of the oldest parts of Paris and other European capitals, Debord found theory through the soles of his feet." (Kaufman, 2006: 118)

O'Sullivan points out that Chetchglov's city is a model for a new Baroque (O'Sullivan, 2006: 8). Later spatial practices – from parasite architecture to the occupation of 'loose spaces' and non-authorized street-art, and even in the edges of the culture system – this is visible. In fact, "we might characterize this change as the opening out of the Baroque house onto the Baroque city" (Deleuze, 1994: 123) – one where "the sum of the arts becomes the Socius, the public social space inhabited by baroque dancers". (Ibid.)

This presupposes to regard "The city as a new kind of fold *and* as a platform for new kinds of folding then. In many ways thus is a description of modernity, but it also takes us beyond the modern conception of the city." (O'Sullivan, 2006: 139) "Cities, for both Deleuze and Chtcheglov, are stages for experimentation and play, for the actualization of different virtualities and the performance of different possibilities. And for both writers, these cities are yet to be made, or rather, the people for them are yet to arrive (Deleuze shares with the Situationists this prophetic orientation" (Ibid.139) In these terms, Situationist myth-making is a form of counter knowledge. (Ibid.145)

Arguably an issue raised by this is that critical urban strolling, since Rousseau's alert "reverie" (in O'Rourke, 2013: 25), is still looking, always anew, to new models of *flânerie* to keep in the very fabrication of the city a space – and a time – for phenomenological and experiential resilience. Azevedo mentions the rise of the cyberflaneur (Santos and Azevedo,

2019) who through artistic and experimental practices addresses creatively incorporates issues such as "hyperlocalisation or ubiquity and pervasiveness," (Ibid.) in this way reacting to a new experience of space and time where digital technologies are already naturalized (imposing a notion of real-time).

To acknowledge the many faces of this "co-constructive" (Roy, 2017) *flâneur* is thus about interpreting its original ways in always changing conditions, the problematic of acting alone – as the original lonely *flâneur* – or in group – as the original avant-garde, surrealists' and situationists' groups. *Flânerie*, today, in large urban centers, is arguably also a way to tackle a balance between these two vectors – moments of individual insight in pollinating articulation with convivial encounters.

Now, the problematics of the *flâneur*'s "spasmodic" gesture (Hess, 2008: 13) and of the personal experience of such gesture is not easy to be grasped if one is immersed in theory only. (Coates, 2017: 33).[187] Coates warns: "In ascribing flânerie to those we study, or suggesting it as a methodology for ourselves, the capacity to generate grounded figures of mobility can be lost. (Ibid.)

Coates explains why his is a valid critique, explaining his own experience as urban etnographer. It is indeed dramatically different to stroll in Caldas da Rainha or Tokyo, in the specific sense that not only for the dweller, but also for the stranger, an extremely complex reality will always be also – and obviously – the result of the 'looking glasses' used.[188]

Namely, one cannot avoid to privilege using this or that conceptual or disciplinary lens at certain moments of one exercise in telling the tale of the *flâneur*. Furthermore, there always remains the problem of translating one's volatile experience to the languages of, say, academia, activism, entrepreneurialism, management or planning.

[187] For instance, "Bauman argues that we have now all become post-modern flâneurs. Indeed, he makes the somewhat flippant suggestion that it takes heroic courage to not be a flâneur in contemporary life. Such bold analyses can only be made in the abstract realm of theory. Bauman did not talk to flâneurs, or other walkers within the city. If we look at specific ethnographic contexts, however, we find that while some of Bauman's theoretical insights resemble everyday life, they subsume the multiple practices of divergent peoples to one overarching claim about contemporary life." (Coates 2017, 33)

[188] Coates mentions for instance the architectural gaze behind Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation* (2003) cinematic flânerie. (Coates 2017, 34).

For instance, surveillance policies, urban image concerns or the very materiality of urban space vary in so many ways, that all their subtle layers are impossible to be fully grasped, again, neither by locals nor by strangers. The nomadology of the gaze, as lived through walking is then a sort of performative non-place that, when all potentially involved to investigate collaboratively and if possible, also co-creatively, spaces', places' and atmospheres' moments, secrets and treasures. Coates reminds us in fact that, following a personal experience, there is an important socio-cultural potential in a *nu-flânerie*, and it has global value, when one thinks of a "mobile intimate public" (Coates, 2017: 35), "producing collective intimacies in the street (Martínez, 2015).[189]

But the most critical issue remains: "Fascination with the transgressive potentialities and phenomenological implications of flânerie should not replace attention to who desires to engage in these transgressive practices and who does not." (Coates, 2017: 37) Which is another way to say that *flânerie* cannot avoid conflict. Specially because contexts signify positions (contingencies) and projects (horizons).

Coates finally asks, enriching the field of problematics: "The celebratory tone of recent work on flânerie in anthropology is engaged with a wider concern with the phenomenology of resistance, subversion and/or transgression. However, the question remains as to what these transgressive acts produce." (Ibid. 38)[190] In a complementary perspective, it also becomes

[189] "During fieldwork from 2009 to 2011, I found that many Chinese migrants learned to want to remain 'unseen' in the streets and general public life of Tokyo (Coates, 2015). Chinese migrants in Tokyo suffer from negative representations that posit them as criminal and deviant. […] According to the testimonies of my interlocutors from 2009 to 2011, these perce tions translated into increased attention paid to Chinese migrants as they walk in the streets, particularly men who are the primary target of discourses about criminality. […] Previously, I made the mistake of seeing this phenomenon as an issue that reflected the vicissitudes of certain kinds of ethnic subjectivity in Japan; however, it is not simply the case that Chinese people do not want to be flâneurs. More recently, in another period of fieldwork from 2014 to 2016, I came to know a group of some 15 young Chinese who complicated my previous findings. This group was made up of passionate visual artists and musicians, who relished walking the streets of Tokyo at night and showed little concern for the forms of surveillance my other interlocutors feared. Stating that they were not afraid of the Japanese police, or what others may think of them, they went into the night to take photos and sketch drawings; explore different Japanese music sub-cultures; and engage in mischievous drinking sessions in places they should not. They cited and performed bohemian identities, referencing fin de siècle artists and punk rockers, and championed an aesthetics of transgression that, as Francisco Martínez suggests, 'draw meaning from stepping away from prevailing connections, working on retrieval and making the public intimate' (2015: 427).

[190] "In the case of the young Chinese bohemians I have recently encountered, their production of a new intimate public sphere defined by artistic practice is often premised on elitist attitudes towards other Chinese. Their transgressive flânerie could also potentially re-inscribe wider concerns about Chinese migrants in Japan rather than challenging them. Conversely, some of my current fieldwork suggests their position as Chinese tricksters in Tokyo also creates new connections and intimacies between Chinese networks and Japanese subcultures. It

obvious that consumptionist practices might be co-opting the *flâneur*'s tactics.[191] But is consumption necessarily negative, and to what extent? The trend for civic consumptionism is one valid model to respond to this problematic.

In sum, whereas the average city dweller pays no attention to commonplace urban sensations, the flâneur capitalizes on his extreme familiarity with the ins and outs of the city and reports on everyday sensory encounters of all kinds. The flâneur in popular guidebooks is indeed a "roving empiricist", as Richard Burton suggested (1988: 60). (Boutin, 2012: 127) On the other hand, the *flâneur* is 'just' – or for the most part – a myth: "It has something of the quality of oral tradition and bizarre urban myth" (Shields, in Tester, 1994: 62).

is too early to tell, but these potentialities suggest that anthropologists need to not only attend to the agency embodied in figures such as the flâneur, but also the grounds that position them, and the ways this dynamic might relate to other figures within social life." (Coates, 2017: 38)

[191] There, "a whole industry exists around walking in Tokyo, and it is a common trope in contemporary fiction, as well as a mode of consumption supported by a plethora of magazine guides to the city. There are even people who engage in walking practices eerily similar to the historic flâneur." In Edogawabashi Park on sunny mornings, for example, I have seen an elderly gentleman walking a giant tortoise. Eccentric peripatetic practices can also be found within designated areas of Tokyo that support some of Bauman's claims about flânerie in contemporary life. On weekends, combined practices of strolling, consuming and looking in Omotesando and Harajuku are popular among young people interested in experimenting with fashion. From distinct subcultures, such as goth Lolita and gyaru, to personal style choices, these fashionable youths exemplify Bauman's point that flânerie has succumbed to the ubiquitous nature of consumption and the ways it structures space and practice (1994: 146). Coates furthermore tells, in first person: "My assessment of the flâneur and walking practices in general comes from research with Chinese people living in Tokyo, Japan. I have found that, depending on a person's per- ceived subject position, the desire to engage in idle walking practices differs greatly. For some, the city calls to them in ways that encourage transgressive acts very similar to the flâneurs of old. At the same time, others perceive the city as threatening and dangerous, and explicitly avoid the streets of Tokyo when possible. This suggests the plural nature of experiences of the city, and raises the question: 'Who wants to be a flâneur?'" (Wright: 2009).

5.4 The flâneur in the smart city

> *That's the trouble with fast policy: here today, gone tomorrow.*
> **Justin O'Connor and Mark Andrejevic**

The concept of *flânerie*, with all its mystic edges and critical resonances is particularly interesting to envisage in the context of the smart cities' phenomenon,[192] currently promoted by agents in the corporate world and some cities in their move toward culture. Either way, the notion of smart city is leading to a specific perspective of the city where governance – ideally open – is boosted by the internet of things. (Szabo et *al.* 2013)[193] It contains a political promise: better urban life, based on the technology available and on development. Since the organization of the urban infrastructures is key to produce ways of living, this global movement shall be quickly recalled here, for the sake of understanding how the figure of the *flâneur* is (or not) a productive one, in this rapidly evolving context.

The next paragraphs relate the *flâneur* to issues of communication, urban sociology, mobility, as well of the use of information and communications technologies, in order to question aspects of civic engagement within the smart city's aesthetic. For the present study, the notion of 'smart people' is relevant, since in one simple expression three criteria for a

[192] It stands for a paradigm difficult to differentiate from the notions of creative city and the digital city. "In fact, there is a wide agreement that a SC is characterized by a pervasive use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in various urban domains in order to help cities make better use of their resources. ICT systems are viewed as the digital nervous systems that obtain data from heterogeneous sources (i.e. traffic lights, parking spaces, security cameras, etc.). A SC is then viewed as a complex system in which a great volume of real-time information is processed and integrated across multiple processes, systems, organizations and value chains to optimize operations and inform authorities on incipient problems. A SC is then a city where ICT contributes substantially to solving the emerging problems of urban living. *De facto*, one additional characteristic of SC is the role of human capital. ICT is unable to transform cities without human capital, and without fostering a city's capacity for learning and innovation." https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/smart-city-vs-creative-vsdigital-thierry-burger-helmchen

[193] "The development of cites are not any more solely dependent on the city's basic (physical) infrastructure but more and more correlated to the availability of information and communication technologies (ICT) supporting knowledge sharing about cities. More formally, Gartner defined smart cities as "multiple sectors cooperating to achieve sustainable outcomes through the analysis of contextual real-time information shared among sector-specific information and operational technology systems". In this context, the real-time information is big data and the contextual sharing system is generally believed to be realized by the Internet of Things. Internet of Things is visioned to become true with over 50 billion connected devices around 2020. (Szabo et *al.* 2013: 295)

definition of contemporary citizenship emerge: high educational level, intense presence of culture, high degree of tolerance and intense participation of citizens in public life.[194]

In concrete terms, some of the Smart City (SC) elements prove to be fascinating contexts for *flâneurs* to react to. For instance: "Theoretically, urban informatics research moved beyond simplistic proclamations of ''anytime, anywhere'' access to data, information, and networks towards the integration of technologies into meaningful cultural practices contextualized in specific communities, cities, and space." (Foth, Forlano, Stachell and Gibbs, 2011: x)[195]

This new urban form offers contemporary *flâneurs* another landscape to become resistant/resilient to, and of course many diverse institutional, organizational and informal contexts to connect with (or not). Walking is a form of "re-knitting the patterns that connect," (Kagan, 2010: 32) so there's at least now two cities to inhabit, one 'virtual' and one physical, to be lived either as "social butterfly" or "engaged citizen" (Foth and Forlano and Satchell, and Gibbs: 2011).

Under these new contingencies, one already witnesses a call for (humanist) arms, in and outside the SC confines. From inside, initiatives such as the International Forum for the Human Smart City, who certainly believes in the taming of the big data[196] monster. Outside, critical positions such as Hollands's, for whom the SC trend is no more than a marketing move (Hollands, 2008) are well known. But it is in critiques such as Richard Sennet's that we find a response to SC's false promises concerning social equality, participation and collaboration. Also, there are now voices who speaks more and more about a relational dimension of urban life without which quality of life is impossible. (Moreno, n.d.) Anyway, "No one likes a city that's too smart" (Sennet, 2012) Maybe no one in his/her right mind.

[194] Others – smart governance, smart nobility, and smart environment also directly touch this studies' issues. But this study is on the other hand not keen to debate efficacity, that would be counterintuitive toward its transgressive off-beat contemplative tone.
[195] To be noted: "From this perspective, the city is spatially constituted as a hybrid that merges digital and physical worlds into a new urban form, which technological and material edges are seemingly invisible without analysis." (Foth, Forlano, Stachell and Gibbs, 2011: x)
[196] "The hype and hope of big data is a transformation in the knowledge and governance of cities through the creation of a data deluge that seeks to provide much more sophisticated, wider-scale, finer-grained, real-time understanding and control of urbanity." (Kitchin, 2014: 3)

Confirming Debray's or Virilio's diagnosis, the SC's paradigm has led the city to become mainly a time, and less a space.[197] The point is that this is contributing to the privatization of the very everyday life (Hess, 2014: 16). In other words, through a myriad of smart devices and actions, the whole urban fabric is manipulated, and it remains unclear – at least for the mainstream public sphere – what shall the political model to regulate (or manage) such a 'mess', from which an individual tactics is to emerge.

It all depends on one's optimism, when one reads, concerning our communitarian drive: "The notion of smart community refers to the locus in which networked intelligence is embedded and continuous learning is nurtured. To explain functioning mechanisms of smart community, the hidden portion of the iceberg is collective intelligence and social learning." (Nam and Pardo, 2011: 287) Sounds like we are witnessing collective intelligence at work. (Roy, 2017: 31), through an integrated approach connecting "entire communities (governments, businesses, schools, non-profits, and individual citizens)." (Nam et Pardo, 2011: 287) But is that intelligence aware of the role of socialization in urban consciousness, of the meaning of urban *impromptus*; will it give itself time for the experience of moments of awareness, beyond the rhythms of the technology-driven daily life?

It is against this backdrop that the *flânerie* remains a specific figure of resilient action, attentive to the values of curiosity and contemplation (Roy, 2017: 34) and promoting more the experience of pleasure for life than quality of life in an abstract, measurable way. This doesn't mean *flânerie* and the smart city are incompatible concepts (Ibid.). If one is airy and the other obsessed with quantification, there is now the possibility to live a double live, none of them exactly opposite to the other. (Ibid. 36)

Yet, what might be the impact of the culture of *flânerie* in the SC's rhetoric and procedures? (Ibid. 37) The production of moments, including aesthetic proposals and artistic interventions, might be the language of a *nu-flânerie*, shared by both emergent target publics and *cum-flâneur-artists*. These trends might position the figure in the core of a more widely acknowledged emancipating walking philosophy.

[197] With consequences, as Roy exemplifies: to know our bus is 15' late will lead us to wait at home? (Roy, 2017: 31)

Yet, if the figure of the *flâneur* might be re-emerging itself in new shapes, this implies to recognize in this mythical figure aspects one might not want to keep. For some authors, there is in the original character a "disguised fetishism." (Featherstone, 1998) Would a new *flâneur* feel today the same need to lose control and feel alienated Mazlish (1994)? This is why Featherstone – contesting Bauman – insists that maybe it really "takes a heroic constitution to refuse being a flâneur." (in Featherstone 1998: 918).

In this sub-chapter, the contemporary *flâneur* appears as an inspiring motif for a multiple variegated identity – expert, aesthete, researcher, luddite, voyeur, cynic, and so on. In practical terms, the *flâneur* appears as a sort of complex floating signifier, whose original (historial) fascination, as well as more recently critical actualizations (in particular by the Situationists) seems to be far from exhausted. One has tried as well to point out the critical meaning of the *flânerie* for the contemporary urban realm, currently the prey of the smart cities' movement.

6. Walking this way

6.1 Walking in history

> *As walking, talking and gesticulating creatures, human beings generate lines wherever they go.*
> **Tim Ingold**

There is a virtually endless history of walking concerning both spiritual and political awareness practices.[198] In a more specific account of the relation of walking to the modern urban environment, a series of historical flashes run almost like a movie. "In European urban environments, walking was a chore and a danger well into the 17th century, and in many streets up into the 19th century". (Kagan, 2010: 10) "But late medieval city streets gradually were improved (e.g. with pavings in some major cities) and urban life was marked by markets, processions and carnivals that progressively introduced city walking as an increasingly significant and meaningful social activity". (Ibid.) [Soon] "smooth surfaces" (Ibid.) would be the stage for promenades and strolls of "superior people." (Ibid.) Such "refined" (Ibid.) walking practices are an expression of "a tremendous stratification in Europe from the 17th century on-wards, as the upper classes took up walking practices, from promenade and strolling to the "Grand Tour" around Europe (i.e. the upper class origin of tourism". (Ibid.) Soon, the social elites would develop specific walking repertoires.[199]

In the nineteenth-century, as emerging (relational) technologies, promenading and strolling would soon introduce the need for "the correct place, the right occasion, and the proper surface.[200] By the end of eighteenth-century "new breed of walkers [who] left the smooth and safe surfaces [...] and the main routes [...] to explore nature (…) (Kagan, 2010: 12) were

[198] One imagines Buddha or Christ teaching while walking along the *ghats* of Varanasi, Franciscan monks traversing the medieval city and ageless Hindu sahdus walking across India for millennia. More recent iconic images would be Gandhi's salt march against imperialism, Martin Luther King Junior's walk from Selma to Montgomery and later the "Poor People's March" he led to Washington.

[199] "Most elaborate were the walks at Versailles under Louis XIV (Kagan 2010, 11) – "organized by ranks, often carrying or featuring objects, processional walkers and riders moved at a measured and solemn cadence, making their movement anything other than everyday walking." (Amato 2004, 79 in Ibid.).

[200] "Elaborate marble floors, spacious stairs, or finely graveled garden paths, the very opposite of the narrow, filthy, congested, rutted, mundane lane or common street, fit the movement of the proper and privileged" (Amato (2004, 80). And accordingly, "Footwear too became part of fashionable attire for such occasions, and not designed with any long-distance walking in mind (Kagan 2010, 11), just like "Walking in gardens […] provided the training ground for the romantic traveler (Ibid. 11)

part of a growing more or less informal community that, "[especially in Germany] began to see their public strolls as a means to health, wholeness, and community" (Amato, 2004: 101 in Ibid.) Indeed, "Romantics started to idealize walking "into an elevated vehicle for experiencing nature, the world and the self [with] intrinsic worth as a unique way of experiencing and knowing the world [...] an indispensable "poetic" mode of locomotion offering a sense of communion and an elevated state of mind" (Ibid. 102-3 in Ibid.)

It is interesting to recall here the American writer Henry David Thoreau, a lover of landscape[201] for whom "every walk is a sort of crusade" (1990: 117). In an 1862 essay he reflects on a specific mode of walking – *sauntering* – recurring to history and etymology in order to explore its critical potential.[202]

The Romantic take on the urban experience was a response and a consequence of important material transformations in the urban environment – the network of roads and transportation started to ensure relative safety (Amato, 2004: 107) – and carried out clear signs of social division: higher classes practiced such walking "to the bewilderment and disdain of those who walked out of necessity" (Ibid.) Yet not all Romantics, approved such attitude.[203]

Wanderlust – the word appeared in the very beginning of the 20th century – and Strollology (*Spaziergangwissenshaft*) are other enduring takes on the art of walking. Both come from German tradition, the former possible to trace back to German romanticism and the latter to

[201] He would write, in his Journal, in 1850: "A man can never say of any landscape that he has exhausted it". (Thoreau, 2011: 177)

[202] "I have met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of Walking, that is, of taking walks — who had a genius, so to speak, for *sauntering*, which word is beautifully derived "from idle people who roved about the country, in the Middle Ages, and asked charity, under pretense of going *a la Sainte Terre,* to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, "There goes a Sainte-Terrer," a Saunterer, a Holy-Lander. They who never go to the Holy Land in their walks, as they pretend, are indeed mere idlers and vagabonds; but they who do go there are saunterers in the good sense, such as I mean. Some, however, would derive the word from *sans terre*, without land or a home, which, therefore, in the good sense, will mean, having no particular home, but equally at home everywhere. For this is the secret of successful sauntering. He who sits still in a house all the time may be the greatest vagrant of all; but the saunterer, in the good sense, is no more vagrant than the meandering river, which is all the while sedulously seeking the shortest course to the sea." (Thoreau, 2011: 177)

[203] "Rousseau […] associated walking to a social-political identification with "the sincerity" and "moral life" of countryside people vs. the "idleness" of the riding and sitting urban elites. (Ibid. in Kagan, 2010, 13) But his example of social awareness is the other side of prejudice: "The subversive potential of urban walking as a social-political, collective activity, was carefully kept under scrutiny and minimized both preventively and repressively" (Kagan, 2010: 15)

the city of Kassel in the 80's, where it was founded by Lucius Burckhart. *Wanderlust* is about the impulse to venture into unknown, leaving daily routine behind, to rediscover oneself. It is about the uncontrollable desire to 'hit the road and travel', by whatever means desired. It is a common word in some tourism market segments, where traveling is 'sold' as a valuable Human experience.

Wanderlust is more about the journey than the destination. Its promise is possibility, and consequently, even familiar paths may have something new to offer. But besides these generalisations, Solnit, in *Wanderlust,* states: "Many people nowadays live in a series of interiors -– home, car, gym, office, shops – disconnected from each other […] On foot everything stays connected, for while walking one occupies the spaces between those interiors in the same way one occupies those interiors. One lives in the whole world rather than in interiors built up against it." (Solnit, 2001: 9)

This is crucially related to a demand, in Human beings, to feel the world as an atmosphere to explore. A will to perform life which is necessarily preceded by the its will to start to walk. This need is better acknowledged if one is able to discover in oneself one's Wanderlust energy. Some poets have put is as basic psychological principles (*Navegar é preciso…*), but in very concrete terms this is about the self-discovery of a nomad self.[204]

Spaziergangswissenschaft – the science of strolling – is the German word for Strollology. Promenadology is the French-origin term for the same method in the field of aesthetics and cultural studies. In the term(s) hides the notion that to become aware of the environment a sense of strolling is crucial. Maybe that walking is the only method to attain specific form of freedom. For, while walks outdoors across the fields, and notably in walks extending over several days, "'Outside' is no longer a transition, but the element in which stability exists." (Gros, 2014: 32)

[204] Solnit 'discovered' her own *Wanderlust* when she began reflecting on walking after participating in a political demonstration in Nevada against nuclear testing activities in the area. "It was a revelation to me, the way this act of walking through a desert and across a cattle guard into the forbidden zone could articulate political meaning". (Solnit 2001, 8)

This is a model for the walking spirit to take 'possession' of the traversed territories. It is important to recall that the term and special field of studies was created as a cognitive-sensorial alternative to the technocratic centrally planned economy.

Independently of Strollology's procedures and outcomes (resulting in educational needs, driven by the curiosity for heritage and tradition, desire to meet the Other will to encounter the new…), it is important in the way it addresses a fundamental aspect of walking ethics[205]: "The authentic ascetic should plunge into things, dig into the tangible to find the absolutely elemental as energy, until resistance is felt". (Gros, 2014: 133) Strollology puts the Human body in the center of all urban revolutions. It is critically expanding the notion of urban *flânerie*, still marked by a tension between detachment and participation, passion and hate for the city.

Walking is currently acknowledged as a therapeutical activity, not the least because, as writer Joan Bakewell puts it, "City life cuts you off from the seasons […] walking restores your awareness."[206] Geoff Dyer, recalls Adorno in *Minima Moralia* on walking practices ("Human dignity insisted on the right to walk, a rhythm not extorted from the body by command or terror"). (Ibid.) For musician Billy Bragg, "Walking is a time for contemplation and, on good days, inspiration." (Ibid.)

In recent times, pedestrianism has been an important part of urban activism and civil protest which goes beyond the traditional forms of demonstrations, through processes that involve digital communications – that is the case of flash mobs or groups mobilizing alter-globalization riots.[207]

For the wider urban community, the fact is that, "with advanced public transportation systems and the reign of the automobile (and bicycles, motorbikes, mopeds) in contemporary (post World War II) 'modern' societies, walking has become "curtailed, segmented,

[205] Gros, in *A Philosophy of Walking* (2014) explicitly relates the experience of walking not only with a variety of perceptions of space and time, but the very emergence of ethical values.
[206] In https://www.theguardian.com/global/2010/nov/16/in-praise-of-daily-walk
[207] Indeed, "Today, the possibilities for an urban revolution recur, I suggest, in DIY societies, in street-level dialogues, ordinary reclamations of urban space for individual and group use, and in protest and its cultures. From Occupy in 2011 to Extinction Rebellion in 2019, in city after city, a new vision of a society built from the street upwards, against the power of money, emerges." (Miles, 2019: 11 draft paper)

minimized or displaced altogether" and it "increasingly seems largely superfluous and antiquated," (Amato, 2004: 18 in Ibid. 16) despite "Walking has nevertheless become easier and safer than ever". (Ibid.)

One may today speak of the commodification of walking practice (Kagan, 2010: 17) across streets that are less and less designed for sociability (Amato, 2004: 233). For Kagan, walking is currently an invisible social and spatial practice:

> With the contemporary eclipse of walking from everyday life, the local, contextual knowledge of places is fading away – although it would be so important to an ecologically sound relationship of neighborhoods to their natural environments, as well as to local empowerment of communities. (Kagan, 2010: 17-18)

Amato had previously noted: "Reduced to being mere geographical points on a map and without inhabitants who have local experience, knowledge, and passions of home, the great majority of places now exist as revolving doors, under outside control and manipulation" (Amato, 2004: 269-70).

But walking's symbolic power and the very capacity to evoke alternative worlds through direct experiences has led to the fact that walking practice is coming back to "both policy and academic agendas" (Middleton, 2011: 90), walking as a subject demands to relate the problematics of affect and performance, especially when those agendas imply the search for arguably more 'authentic' experiences dealing with a wide range of concerns. As a medium walking leads to the debates on "emancipatory potential of city space." (Ibid. 93)

It is also a fact that "more creative engagements with walking are not actually concerned with walking itself." (Ibid. 97) One must consistently keep this in mind, not to reify either the act of walking as such or artistic or citizenry objectives realized through walking, so that pedestrianism remains productively (not just instrumentally) in the urban agenda.

At the same time, very different contexts continually offer new dynamic grounds for the operative relation of walking to urban life, culture and politics, even when the horizons of art are not present neither relevant in terms of the meaning of the action. An example is the *walking political* in Armenia that Stephen Wright writes about, trying to grasp a spiritual energy and simultaneously understand its critical manifestation of agency – "the agency of the *invisible-yet-undeniable,* that is, the imperceptible yet sometimes incontrovertibly active

presence of what, for lack of better words, we are prone to call angels, spirits or ghosts." (Wright, 2009)[208]

Indeed,

> […] by this logic, walking is a decreative practice, enabling us to (de)create facts by exposing the contingencies behind their false self-evidences. Perhaps therein lies the strange agency of the invisible-yet-undeniable: and in an attention economy awash with the fruits and fructifiers of 'creativity,' it is refreshingly decreative. (Ibid.)

As Wright points out, antagonism (Laclau) or agonism (Mouffe) is possible to be performed as a demonstration of soft power, the more legitimate – since a form of citizenship – because it is in direct, bodily, reaction to the urban *sensorium* (Goonewardena, 2015). In other words,

> […] through walking, the goal is to "walk up" a vast archive through bodily experience that is coextensive with those errorscapes themselves… a Sisyphean task, to be sure, 'perennially in search of the present tense,' as the factographers acknowledged, but one whose by-products are potentially very revealing. (Wright, 2009)

In such deactivation[209] of space, another concept might be then called to the fore: "escapology"[210].

> Yet escapology is a paradoxical undertaking, and an often-ambivalent science. For obvious reasons, escape itself can neither assert itself for what it is, nor perform itself as escape: it must always appear impossible from the perspective of power, yet at the same time it must be always already under way. Escapology, then, is less the study and implementation of sets of tactics or strategies for avoiding capture, than the acknowledgement of a simple, concrete fact: *escape happens*. (Wright, 2013: 23)

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[208] Wright observes the example of the 'walking political' in Yerevan: "Understandably, we're not sure how to measure this agency, though we are convinced it is somehow graspable and that in many cases its conditions of possibility are linked to developments in art. […] The past eighteen months have witnessed the emergence of a highly original form of mass political dissent in the public space of the Armenian capital, Yerevan: *walking political*. Grammatically, one might prefer the term "political walks" were it not for the fact that this particular mode of contestation is all about walking, not the trajectory walked. There is neither starting point nor destination; rather, walking itself has become a dissenting political activity with a horizon: political transformation. And this walking is at once utterly invisible and utterly undeniable as political action. If the walkers-political look for all the world like people strolling along the street, it's because that's what they are. And if the regime knows full well that such walking is the body politic's organic refusal of its legitimacy, it's because it is that too. (Ibid.)

[209] "'Deactivate' is a verb often used by Giorgio Agamben to name the political conditions of possibility for genuine paradigm shifts, which can only happen, he contends, if residual pow- er structures are effectively deactivated." (Wright, 2013: 19)

[210] "In lieu of an example, then, consider this speculative etymology suggestively put forth by a contemporary escapologist. The verb 'escape' is usually thought to derive from the Vulgar Latin *excapare*, from *ex-* ('out') + *capio* ('capture'). It may well be, however, that it comes from the Late Latin *ex cappa*, in refer- ence not to capture at all but to a 'cape' or cloak which remains behind even as the living body which it had clad has slipped away." (Wright, 2013: 24)

This subchapter has explored the possibilities of walking beyond the specific lens of the *flâneur/flânerie*. When one acknowledges the history of walking itself as an assemblage of critical insights and philosophical notions – sensorium, Spaziergangswissenschaft/strollology, Wanderlust, pedestrianism, escapology, and so on –, always in relation to specific urban contexts and historical moments, one becomes capable of turning both the practice of walking into a powerful engagement with the present.

6.2 Tactical walking – a turning point

> *Thus, the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into space by walkers.*
> **Michel de Certeau**

In comparison with the Situationists' takes on the colonization of the life-world by the capital, de Certeau is more optimist (Crang 2011: 110), precisely through his notion of tactics (and his tactical approach of knowledge).[211] De Certeau, in syntony with Lefebvre, "sees tactics transforming the *places* designed by hegemonic powers and envisioned as the neat and orderly realm of the concept city, into unruly *spaces;* that is, he sees practices as spatialising places." (Crang, 2011: 108): "Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities." (de Certeau,1988:117)

In this view, in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts." (de Certeau, 1988: 117, original emphasis).[212]

[211] Which in turn differs from Foucault's, who comes from a country where "it always seems to be raining" (Philo, 2011: 163)

[212] Crang notes, on this issue: "This rather unhelpfully inverts the usual geographical usage where space is associated with the abstract form of space and place with the more lived and experiential. In part this stems from the translation of the French words *lieu* as 'place', and *espace* as space. In some sense the translation would be better with 'location' instead of place." Indeed, "The sense that de Certeau gives it (lieu) is clearer when we read it as 'the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location (place)' (de Certeau

Tactics appear in this framework as a "practical knowledge." (Ibid.) In other words, unlike strategy, which is about organization and discipline, "zoning activities, prescribing some activities in some places, proscribing them in others" (Ibid.), "tactics are the 'ruses' that take the predisposition of the world and make it over, that convert it to the purposes of ordinary people." (Ibid.)

In this mindset, whichever forces which for instance look over a place to 'take over' its locality – be it the hubris of politicians, policy makers, entrepreneurs and conventional technical agents, are never fully capable of fully realizing that endeavor: "The gaze of power transfixes objects but also thus becomes blind to a vast array of things that do not fit its categories." (Ibid. 109) Tactics is about encountering and creating "ghosts in the machine that render the city truly 'habitable' and inhabited". (Ibid.)

Walking appears then as a fully appropriative tool to set oneself "against the geometric forms of knowledge and ordering of spaces, seeing such mathematical languages and forms of knowledge as leading inexorably to places being depicted as equivalent to one another." (Ibid.) What de Certeau counter-proposes is the more productive idea that "Each [place], like the deteriorating page of a book, refers to a different mode of territorial unit (of socioeconomic distribution, of political conflicts and of identifying symbolism' (de Certeau, 1988: 201)[213].

In a *flâneurish* mindset, de Certeau's tactics are actually not politically oppositional, they are evasive of the orders and plans of the dominant knowledge rather than forming a coherent, and equally limited, resistance. Such always dispersed, limited evasions, that he

1988, 117). Here one can see the connection with the synchronic structures of structural linguistics, and thus de Certeau's turn to 'speech acts' and the use of everyday language, after Wittgenstein, is enacting a post-structuralist move. However, this version of place also invokes a deeper ontological sense from Lacanian analysis of the 'propre' as a purified centre organising knowledge. Here then he looks to the control of space as a matter of strategy which is orientated through the construction of powerful knowledges." (Crang 2011, 108)

[213] In any case, for critics coming from more activist areas, "the opposition of tactic and strategy is thus rather more like a series of gaps or misalignments in a dance than how it is often portrayed as resistance or transgression." (Crang, 2011: 111)

refuses to say could constitute an alternative order have frustrated those seeking just such an alternative model for society. (Ibid.)

On the other hand, considering urban narrativity, in de Certeau one finds the sense of place as actively constructed through the conjunction of memory and circumstances (Crang and Travlou, 2001, in Crang 2011: 110): "His work has emphasised the invisible myths that do not merely ornament places but deeply structure their uses." (Ibid. 110-111) In that point it is a prolonging, of course, of Lefebvre's critique of mythification – "Escaping the imaginary totalizations produced by the eye, the everyday has a certain strangeness that does not surface, or whose surface is only its upper limit, outlining itself against the visible" (de Certeau, 1988: 93).

Indeed, some spatial practices "are foreign to the 'geometrical' or 'geographical' space of visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions. These practices of space refer to a specific form of operations ('ways of operating'), to 'another spatiality' (an 'anthropological', 'poetical and mythic experience of space') and to an opaque and blind mobility characteristic of the bustling city. A migrational, or metaphorical, city thus slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city." (Ibid.)

If " 'The city', like a proper name, thus provides a way of conceiving and constructing space on the basis of a finite number of stable, isolatable and interconnected properties" (Ibid.), one is here more interested in how that same city is to be appropriated by the "tactics of users" (Ibid.) The political consequence is, as de Certeau puts it, that mythified (and mystifying) strategic discourses – for instance hegemonic grand narratives – may be creatively unworked by citizens on the move.

It is in this sense that walking becomes a pedestrian speech act (de Certeau, 1988: 97), and that the accumulation of singularities becomes more operative than the Modernist crowd. De Certeau's image of the "chorus" (Ibid.) of footsteps is metaphorically apt and one finds a similar idea in Jacobs' idea of urban "order." (Jacobs, 1961: 50)[214]

[214] "This order is all composed of movement and change, and although it is life, not art, we may fancifully call it the art form of the city and liken it to the dance – not to a simple-minded precision dance with everyone kicking up at the same time, twirling in unison and bowing off en-masse, but to an intricate ballet in which the

Interested in walking as a space of enunciation, de Certeau is precise in the distinction of the walking practices – which are "*ways of using*" the city (de Certeau, 1988: 98) – from the spatial system: "the pedestrian speech act has three characteristics which distinguish it at the outset from the spatial system: the present, the discrete, the 'phatic.'" (Ibid.) And of course, "In the same way, the walker transforms each spatial signifier into something else, for example when "he forbids himself to take paths generally considered accessible or even obligatory." (Ibid.) In other words, the walker edits, the surrounding city *live* – producing, one could say, his 'mix'. While doing it, the phatic function of bis/her steps… steps in.

The point, again, is that each modality of walking adds to the aforementioned chorus, enriching it with clashing melodies, moving canons or moments of unexpected grace. Most importantly each walk or each walker represents a rhetoric (Ibid. 100) – inhabiting the constructed order, changing the literality of meanings (Ibid.) – and/or communicates a style, involving "a peculiar processing of the symbolic." (Ibid. 100). Perhaps – one could ask until when? – "The long poem of walking manipulates spatial organizations, no matter how panoptic they may be." (Ibid. 101)

Two figures of speech are relevant then: "Synecdoche replaces totalities by fragments (a *less* in the place of a *more*); asyndeton disconnects them by eliminating the conjunctive or the consecutive (nothing in place of something). Synecdoche makes it more dense: it amplifies the detail and miniaturizes the whole. Asyndeton cuts out: it undoes continuity and undercuts its plausibility." (Ibid. 101) In these and other figures the unconscious is symbolized and discourse manifests processes of subjectivation. This links de Certeau's semio-phenomenology to the Surrealists, that would indeed agree that "To walk is to lack a place." (Ibid. 103)[215]

individual dancers and ensembles all have distinctive parts which miraculously reinforce each other and compose an orderly whole." (Jacobs, 1961: 50)

[215] "The moving about that the city multiplies and concentrates makes the city itself an immense social experience of lacking a place – an experience that is, to be sure, broken up into countless tiny deportations (displacements and walks), compensated for by the relationships and intersections of these exoduses that intertwine and create an urban fabric, and placed under the sign of what ought to be, ultimately, place but is only a name, the City." (de Certeau 1988, 103)

What is at stake is to link acts to footsteps, while opening meanings and horizons, in processes where the *believable*, the *memorable* and the *primitive* overlap everywhere, in places, names and certainly in place's names. Sometimes inviting travel, which "produces […] the body of legends that is currently lacking in one's own vicinity" (Ibid. 107) De Certeau indeed "saw walking as a form of practical narration" (Crang, 2011: 109) with the plural accumulation of the multiplicity of practices generating a "piling up of heterogeneous places." (de Certeau, 1988: 201)

Walking in the City (de Certeau, 1988) is undoubtably an important text for the history of the relation between the action walking and urban space. De Certeau's pedestrian – like Simmel's stranger – is no more a historic-literary character but the common man, which witnesses a democratization of the *flânerie* (Roy, 2017: 13). This opens up a new specific sociologic terminology: the walker as *actor-user* and the walker as *narrator-interpreter* (Nuvolati, 2009), which are instrumental models to explore and even go beyond walking's semiotic potential.[216] The city becomes known by walking "rather than looking down at a static plan." (Crang, 2011: 109)[217]

De Certeau's walker is, on the other hand, a cartographer of his own visuality. This creative tension between reader and writer is an important aspect of the activity of urban walking, and arguably one at risk when phenomena like the smart city tend to destroy the possibility of a performative-individual urban expertise. Another aspect of this threat to individual experience of the city is of course the growing tentacles of the digital city, collecting the populations' data – including the walkers' – with radically diverse objectives than the aesthetic and existential contemplation of the urban.

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[216] "We may think of [walking] as non-semiotic behaviour, basic locomotion, something we have in common with other species. But there are many different ways of walking. Men and women walk differently. People from different parts of the world walk differently. Social institutions – the army, the church, the fashion industry – have developed their own special, ceremonial ways of walking. Through the way we walk, we express who we are, what we are doing, how we want others to relate to us, and so on. Different ways of walking can seduce, threaten, impress and much more. For this reason, actors often start working on their roles by establishing how their characters might walk. As soon as we have established that a given type of physical activity or a given type of material artefact constitutes a semiotic resource, it becomes possible to describe its semiotic *potential*, its potential for making meaning – for example, 'what kinds of walking can we observe, and what kinds of meanings can be made with them?'" (Leeuwen, 2005: 4)

[217] "In making this move one can see him setting himself against the geometric forms of knowledge and ordering of spaces, seeing such mathematical languages and forms of knowledge as leading inexorably to places being depicted as equivalent to one another." (Crang, 2011: 109)

Many researchers see similarities between walking and *flânerie*, most pointing out the relation between a democratic public realm/sphere and the possibility that citizens make sense of their walking practices, whose grammar is wide. But what kind of gesture does walking mean?

For Roy, three main axes appear in the scientific literature: one takes walking as an activity of resistance to control, by means of a sensitive reconfiguration of the environment.[218] Walking is here close to Depardon's *Errance* (in Hess, 2008: 18) becoming suspicious, simply because there is a specific form of freedom arising there: the freedom for oneself to indulge in the discovery of the magnetism of the urban scape. (Thomas, 2008: 6) In this sense, walking – as Chalati adds – stands for a performative revelation of urban meanings (Chalati, 2012: 16), if not of the whole anthropic space.

In fact, as a social fact, walking may have quite important consequences in terms of urbanistic awareness and urban planning itself. One thinks of the way convivial pedestrian streets generate a very specifically convivial urban fabric. In other words, to rethink mobility taking into consideration the act of walking is a very strong issue in a contemporary city development, leading to a more intimate notion of the city.

The activity of walking is taken, in the study, as where a series of notions converge, all possible to anchor their contemporary relevance in the figure of the flâneur, because it bears a fascinating dimension of appropriation and co-construction – "democratic possibilities." (Middleton, 2011: 93) Through it we access once more the notion of the user of the urban space[219]. Such use may of course be at individual or collective level and may – at least potentially – be available to a range of social classes, offering an alternative to their everyday rhythms.

It is also in this sense that a sidewalk may become a stage for users' performances and performatics. The problem nevertheless concerns how may awareness be performed in the very stages of the streets, not only in "exceptional walking practices", but maybe also in

[218] Roy (Ibid. 12), in his case study (Paris), thinks that urban signs saying *Interdiction de flâner* are a good prove of this.
[219] For more about the usological turn, see Wright, Stephen, *Toward a Lexicon of Usership* (2003).

"mundane and habitual" (Edensor, 2010: 70) walking? There shall be maybe an appropriative drive in extremely subtle balance with a contemplative or meditative attitude, as if to let aesthetics and critique, participation and cooperation interact? In any case, Coates underlines that a conceptual difference between *flânerie* and walking practices at large stands also for a creative tension precisely between 'looking' and 'walking'.[220]

All in all, a certain way of walking, whenever somehow actualizing a succession of historical understandings of the *flânerie*, including scientific ones[221], is a tool for symbolic interpretation of the territory and the very rethinking of surrounding materialities through phenomenological insight. One could think here of "the vitality of brick-stones and their capacities to enable sensual and imaginative experiences" (Edensor, 2013); or on the way an artistic intervention destabilizes what one would expect in the everyday materiality of the city. For Wylie (2005: 235), walking is a way to engage simultaneously with landscape, subjectivity and corporality."

Walking translates in an important individual contribution not only for the health of urban space's "*amniotic fluid"* (Careri, 2017: 80), but also for a constructive urban ethics. (Boff, 1997: 90-91, in Motta and Alice, 2019: 2)[222] On the other hand, walking generates certain forms of a knowledge (Middleton, 2011: 99) that frequently will not leave fragments in its wake. For Ingold, "a more grounded approach to human movement, sensitive to embodied skills of footwork, opens up a new terrain in the study of environmental perception, the history of technology, landscape formation and human anatomical evolutions" (Ingold 2004, 315) For Tuan, there is indeed a crucial difference between walking as knowledge and everyday walking. (Tuan, 2017: 68)[223]

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[220] For anthropologists engaged in 'walking practice', such as Sarah Pink, the distinction between 'walking practice' and flânerie lies in the practice of walking itself (Pink: 2008). Many other mobilities scholars, in discussing the embodied As Pink (2009) points out, by conflating the flâneur with walking in general, we focus too much on the visual qualities of walking and neglect the other sensory and proprioceptive qualities of moving." (in Coates, 2017: 32)

[221] "The practice of flânerie has also been used to describe the methodologies of ethnographers, academics and research-based artists." (Coates, 2017: 31)

[222] "Ethics refers to everything that helps to improve the environment so that it becomes a healthy dwelling: materially sustainable, psychologically integrated and spiritually fertile" (Boff 1997, 90-91, in Motta and Alice 2019, 2)

[223] "Spatial ability becomes spatial knowledge when movements and changes of location can be envisaged. Walking is a skill, but if I can 'see' myself walking and if I can hold that picture in mind so that I can analyze how I move and what path I am following, then I also have knowledge. That knowledge is transferable to

To conclude, walking as a not politically oppositional tactics is a fundamental cultural weapon. It is a practical knowledge without which locality or social networks would be the prey of strategies which for the most do not consider the Human element of the city as deserving a fuller autonomy. As a space for enunciation (de Certeau), walking is indeed the practice where the socius is truthfelt as alive.

6.3 Time for time

> *Above all, do not lose your desire to walk. Everyday, I walk myself into a state of well-being & walk away from every illness. I have walked myself into my best thoughts, and I know of no thought so burdensome that one cannot walk away from it. But by sitting still, & the more one sits still, the closer one comes to feeling ill. Thus, if one just keeps on walking, everything will be all right.*
> **Søren Kierkegaard**[224]

To the sense of the possible implied here one may link various forms of artistic and cultural activism, playing their game while also co-opting various urban systems. Many of them consist in itinerant performances, taking over spaces, inhabiting places, in manifolded encounters where the word (discourse) is key, but also something else, usually way more unnoticed, maybe because of its take on slowness, which is more like "an exercise of self-cultivation." (Motta and Alice, 2019: 3)

Just like "staying in silence and walking are nowadays two forms of political resistance "[225], for some authors, the act of walking may indeed appear as a deeply spiritual activity, for instance through "moving meditation" (Ibid.).[226] Walking, in this perspective, offers "a return to the self, the rediscovery of a natural rhythm for breathing, a sharper perception of things, in a state of mental serenity. (Ibid.) "For the contemporary Westerner whose senses

another person through explicit instruction in words, with diagrams, and in general by showing how complex motion consists of parts that can be analyzed or imitated." (Tuan 2017, 68)

[224] A letter to Jette (1847)

[225] Cf. David LeBreton interview with Grupo Joly, available at https://desenhares.wordpress.com/2017/10/21/ficar-em-silencio-e-caminhar-sao-hoje-em-dia-duas-formas-de-resistencia-politica/?platform=hootsuite. [Accessed 21 October 2017].

[226] "The act of walking in a meditative state – was put into practice and developed by Buddha Shakyamuni himself." (Motta and Alice 2019, 3)

for natural processes are most often numbed" (Kagan, 2010: 33) perception thus becomes an art (O'Rourke, 2013: 27) and/or a transformative challenge.

Indeed, "In Buddhism, [Byung-Chul] Han writes, there is no miracle, only hard daily work: letting go of the past and not transcending or dreaming of a world beyond this one. He compares Buddhism with walking. Walking has no future, as you're always in the midst of walking."[227] In this mindfulness-culture reading of Han, "'Dying' means always walking, philosophizing, exploring and experimenting with life, not as a way of meeting a specific objective, but as a way of being grounded in the here and now."[228]

It is interesting to notice that Han, in his *Psychopolitics* looks at the figure of the (philosophical) idiot in search of models of almost partisan humanship that somehow is itself another possible actualization of the anachronic *flâneur*.[229]

In any case, as Vaneigen reminds, quoting Eliade:

> 'Any act', writes Mircea Eliade, 'can become a religious act. Human existence is realized simultaneously on two parallel planes, that of temporality, becoming, illusion, and that of eternity, substance, reality.' In the nineteenth century the brutal divorce of these two planes demonstrated that power would have done better to have maintained reality in a mist of divine transcendence. (Vaneigen, in Knabb, 2006: 118)

It is interesting here to understand that in such practices, silence may be both "a narrative element and essential component of storytelling", and crucially, no less "a form of participation" […] which does not easily translate into the coda of *effect*". (Bala, 2018: 95)

In sum, for "The great romantic walker, the eternal wanderer, communed with the Essence. Walking was ceremony of mystic union […] in the pure bosom of a maternal Nature. […] The urban stroller doesn't put in appearance ate the fullness of Essence" (Gros, 2014: 181).

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[227] To die means to walk, he says, emphasizing that we are always dying. Similarly, Michel de Montaigne said that to philosophize is to die." In https://www.themindfulword.org/2018/byung-chul-han-philosophy

[228] Western and Eastern philosophy, I believe, share this humble approach to life. We never philosophize or meditate to conquer the world, but to praise its beauty." In https://www.themindfulword.org/2018/byung-chul-han-philosophy

[229] "The idiot doesn't belong to a specific network or alliances, so he or she is free to choose. The idiot doesn't communicate; instead, he or she facilitates a space of silence and loneliness, where they only say what deserves to be said. The idiot listens, as a generous way of stepping aside to give room to the others." In https://www.themindfulword.org/2018/byung-chul-han-philosophy

Moreover "The walker is fulfilled in an abyss of fusion, the stroller in a firework-like explosion of successive flashes" (Ibid.).

As it becomes evident, many theories and practices of the urban are possibly rediscovering the potential of the city to become less an experience of separatedness (Debord) and more a inhabitable[230] political idea where a new kind of devices, interfaces, weapons and portals shall help us to rediscover and reinvent the deepest pleasures of the urban flux, through the overlooked[231] practice of walking.

In this study, a nomad utopia and locality-based innovation might go hand in hand, precisely through the strollology principle. Strollology might be behind an operative re-evaluation of the category of the pedestrian, and artists pedestrians show us the way to recreate a more walkable Planet. One could recall here a sentence by Siegfried Kracauer: "The worth of the cities is determined by the number of places in them made over to improvisation".[232]

Kagan's and Amato's insightful account of a certain cultural prejudice[233] against walking practice contrasts with a variety of (active) walking cultures: modern pilgrimage (Kagan, 2010: 6) is one of them; others are a variety of collective walkshops and performative walks, such as the ones organized by Phil Smith – a leading British walking artist, prolific writer on walking arts, and advocate of 'Mythogeography' and 'Counter-Tourism'; but it is worth highlighting here alternative types of walking tours. In the latter, while avoiding standardization "tour guides search the unexpected" (Ibid. 31) and lead participants to engage with the urban realm in a way that transforms them into s sort of "urban alchemists" – as Wynn (2010: 158) puts it. Evoking Pasteur's quotation that "chance favors only the

[230] For Bachelard, "[…] all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home" (1994: 5)
[231] "In his book *On foot: a history of walking*, the historian Joseph A. Amato describes the changing significance of walking in the history of Western Europe, from a necessity, a chore and a sign of inferiority, to a chosen activity vested with specific qualities and values." (Kagan, 2010: 8)
[232] In the original: "Der Wert der Städte bestimmt sich nach der Zahl der Orte, die in ihnen, der Improvisation eingeräumt sind." Siegfried Kracauer, *Straßen in Berlin und Anderswo* (1926).
[233] "Prejudices also differentiate walkers from each other", (Kagan 2010, 8), as notes Amato, on the prejudice of the city walker against the "slow and clumsy" country walker (Amato, 2010: 13)

prepared" (Kagan, 2010: 31) Kagan, speaks of "serendipedestrianism"[234] – a way to live the urban metabolism.[235]

As one confirms in the example above, "For the wayfarer whose line goes out for a walk, speed is not an issue. It makes no more sense to ask about the speed of wayfaring than it does to ask for the speed of life". (Ingold, 2016: 105) This a personal way to resist "the processes of speeding-up, shrinkage, disembedding, and globalisation" (Merriman, 2011: 31) one is (more or less intensely) immersed in. Maybe it is no less a contingent, lived, personal way to perform one's almost heroic resilience to the overwhelming extension of Modernity,

Motta and Alice note, on the film *Journey to the West* (2014), by Tsai Ming-liang, which opens their article (2019): "The monk's slow movement seems to make the space denser and broader, if compared to the other passers-by. It is an intense film experience, which subverts the aesthetic patterns we're used to and which are marked, among other things, by an accelerated temporality." (Ibid. 1) Such contributions, in audiovisual media[236] or urban interventionism, wherever their spatial and institutional context, seem to reinforce, in today's urban space, the role of the consciousness of time in a better city. It may be researched (or performed), on one side, within a drive to reinvent the notion of time.[237]

[234] "I am re-using here an almost tautological expression, "serendipedestrian", which I first introduced in a talk (entitled "The Serendipedestrian") at the "Sideways Symposium: Moving On", on September 15th, 2012 in Zutendaal, Belgium." In https://footworkwalk.wordpress.com/2013/07/05/sacha-kagan-serendipedestrian-colloquy/

[235] In https://footworkwalk.wordpress.com/2013/07/05/sacha-kagan-serendipedestrian-colloquy

[236] "The experience of watching the movie, therefore, is similar to a meditative practice, where we focus our attention in a particular object for a set period of time, exercising our attention. (Motta and Alice, 2019: 2)

[237] Davila rightly points out that already in Duchamp there is a specific awareness of this field of enquiry: "By way of the "inframince" – the "infra-thin" – the father of the readymade managed to include his visual ideas, from about 1935 on, within a phenomenology of the imperceptible, where singularity and differential action are expressed not only in scaled-down dimensions–the fact of removed thickness and thus formal evidence– but also through operations playing on duration, slowness and delay." (Kramer-Mallordy, 2011)

Urban time (Wright, 2009) is here a notion we may reflect upon in order to understand the viability of a more multilayered public space/sphere, considering the intensity in/of the urban experience, which includes issues related to memory (anamnesis[238] or *durée*[239], for instance). In this sense, the notion of a public time (Wright, 2009) is a good start.[240]

"If we are to enjoy time without qualities, time itself must be freed from commodification and an economy of scarcity." (Ibid. 132.) This is aligned with the *flânerie* as resistance to external time. Critical art practices, independently of their more or less socio-political meanings, are since long promoting alternative modalities for the experience of time, namely recognizing the values of categories such as fluidity and flux for a more *gracious* take on the temporal becoming of the city. (Caeiro, 2014: 104)

The ephemeral is so to say redeemed in this perspective, in a process that des-objectifies the urban *décor* (Davila, 2002: 122) and actualizes it as a process which implies that the one engaged in it acknowledges his/her own durational transformation. For Wright, in such "undisciplined" (Wright, 2009: 130) *praxis* one experiences a time with qualities. *The Lost Steps* by André Breton is an example of this kind of struggle against "the stagnation of everything which is spontaneous and precious in the world" (Breton, 1996: 4): "The street, which I believed could furnish my life with its surprising detours; the street with its cares and glances, was my true element: there I could test like nowhere else the winds of possibility." (Ibid.)[241]

Recent performative activism, in Brazil, demonstrates how meditative walking, in the context of art practice, and clearly inspired by the *flânerie*, is also a political action developed

[238] For Stiegler, "the process of recollection or remembrance; direct dialogical interaction without having to rely on external memory supports; an antonym to hypomnesis, adopted from Plato. In http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/pdf/Stiegler%20glossary.pdf

[239] In the sense of Bergson's defence of free will in *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of* Consciousness (1889) in response to Immanuel Kant, who believed free will was only possible outside time and space.

[240] "Might one not think of a public time as carving out breathing spots, intervals, transitory breaches in the very core of collective existence, time slots still unfetteterd by moral or political discipline? When one turns to practical examples of time-based art practices, often inscribed in the body politic or human landscapes – infiltration practices, tactical media initiatives – which unfold not only in space but in time, one is obliged to acknowledge that time is their defining but as yet entirely undefined factor." (Wright, 2009: 129)

[241] It is worth to continue reading, for its allegorical character: "Every night I would leave the door to my hotel room wide open in hopes of finally waking beside a companion I hadn't chosen. Only later did I fear that the street and that unknown woman would in turn tie me down, but that is another matter." (Breton, 1996: 4)

as artistic citizenship, where shared practices open up an interstitial and potentially collaborative space. It is no coincidence that here (artistic) performance is (de)contextualized as a spiritual practice[242]. In the urban realm, such kind of practice of time is, as one shall see, related to the building of consciousness: "the consciousness of freedom, even inside more tumultuous contexts, coopted by power logics. (Motta and Alice, 2019: 14)[243]

Crucial in one alternative take on urban performance is that "[…] in an urban space determined by forces of globalized capitalism […] we tend to forget the creative potential of walking, limiting ourselves to a kind of functionalization of walking, involving discipline and a stiffening of body and perception." (Ibid. 11-2) The answer to this situation is outlined:

> The perspective conversion frees us, that is, it frees us from a series of mental patterns, judgements and previous analysis of things, frees us from our usual emotions, frees us from what is known. In exchange, it grasps the world as pure opening, as pure being possibilities, integrating the inherent risk in moving in cities such as Rio de Janeiro. (Ibid.)

Summing up, this kind of highly tactical artistic practice, aligned with a spiritual insight, demonstrates for their agents the deep connection between Oriental wisdom and Western philosophy – "reminding us of a Spinozan position: *'Better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.* '" (Ibid. 14)

[242] See *Motta, Gilson; Alice, Tania* (2019) "Performance as Spiritual Practice".
[243] The authors are members of an art collective called *Heróis do Cotidiano* [Heroes of the Everyday]. One this thematic framing, they state: "[…] if, traditionally, the hero acts in order to protect the order from the threat of chaos, nowadays, the fact that the forces of order – laws, State, police, political institutions – promote disorder leads to the inversion of the hero's role, who becomes the generator of a temporary state of chaos, in order to give visibility to forms of social exclusion and inequality. (Motta and Alice, 2019: 3)

6.3 At every step, a constellation[244]

> *To insert a fable in the velocity of the megalopolis, to build an apparition, of which no anonymous testimony could explain the origin and the consequences, to invent* rumours *which spread and disperse before silently dying, these are what the agitations of the* flâneur *boil down to.*
> **Thierry Davila[245]**

If in etnography, a "Baudelairian turn" (Kramer and Short, 2011: 324) is fueling a generalized perception that walking practice is as actual and urgent as ever, in the arts field, the figure of the *flâneur*, along with the acknowledgement of various ways of walking, is being actualized in a myriad of forms. The notion of a walking turn helps to acknowledge the importance and validity of such a wide range of avant-garde and critical art practices, from now Dada errances, Surrealist deambulations and the Lettrist walks to the Situationist practices, from the space-transforming nomad adventures of Gordon Matta-Clark to the individual travels of Francis Alys.

Today, many consequences of the original meaning of strollology have expanded into a sort of nano-critical art as performed by the likes of artists such as Gabriel Orozco, Francis Alys, Erwin Wurm or Régis Perray. It encompasses walking performances, cinema and the production of cineplastic objects who testify each artist's philosophy of walking. In *Marcher, Créer. Déplacements, flâneries, dérives dans l'art de la fin du XXe siècle* (2002), Thierry Davila lays out the foundations and basic phenomenologies behind a Contemporary Urban Strollology.

Davila mentions the fact that in the Contemporary Walking Arts, the artist, and not only the performer, become essentially mobile individuals, whose peregrinations influence their realizations. (Ibid. 17) When Alys defines his own practice as *nanoturismo* (Davila, 2002: 18) he is demonstrating how his *cinéplastique* is the visible materialization of a complex

[244] Translation of "A cada passo, uma constelação", the name of a recent performative walks initiative integrated in the project *Matéria para Escavação Futura [Matter for Future Excavation] curated* by Joana Braga and Ana Jara. Cf. https://teatrodobairroalto.pt/espetaculo/a-cada-passo-uma-constelacao-joana-braga-20191026/
[245] Researcher's translation.

experience of walking across the city, where intellectual and psycho processes are linked, resulting from the very pragmatic strategies to traverse diverse urban territories.

One could mention here Freud's notion of *Verschiebungsarbeit*, as if art could be something as the city dreaming (beyond what is otherwise its everyday and functional-pragmatical dimension). In Alys' or Orozco's experiments, Davila sees them as *déplacements* – which might be read literally: as a narrative of potential *dis-placement*. The poetic-political Contemporary resacralization of the city, the sacred territory of the Baudelairian *flânerie* (Ibid. 29). It is in this sense that strollology is the method to look for surprises.[246]

This kind of works, many of them "bypassing the awfulness of the city to recapture its passing marvels" (Gros, 2014: 180), "exploring the poetry of collisions" (Ibid.) resonate the original and emergent meanings of strollology, where, most crucially there is the possibility that segmented and accelerated urban time is finally redeemed: "When you hurry, time is filled to bursting, like a badly-arranged drawer in which you have stuffed different things without any attempt to order" (Ibid. 37).

Furthermore, the stretching of time provoked by strollology allows space to be experienced as deep (Ibid.). "Urban encounters" (Liggett, 2003)[247], like artworks, performances, or simply the various forms of commitment to the pleasures of traversing the city allow for an empathy for the lost energies in the city to appear. For Gilles A. Tiberghien in his preface to the Spanish edition of Franceso Careri's *Walkscapes* – significantly called "The Nomad City" – the very term "Walkscapes" defines the revealing power of a specific dynamics related to the act of manifesting the inner frontiers of the city, revealing and identifying previously neglected areas. For it sets the whole body in motion, carrying a Human spirit animated by a more knowledgeable capacity of looking around. (Tiberghien, 2013: 11).

Careri (2017) sees the genealogy of walkscaping as integrating the transitions from Dada to Surrealism, from Letrism to Situationism, from minimalism to *land* art. In these three

[246] Davila plays with the meaning of the decomposition of the term: *sur-prises*. (2002, 42) Such surprises may imply to look with different attitude to the smallest of details in a façade or a door, a hidden story behind an urban form, a collective memory barely visible and almost forgotten.
[247] Briefly, "moments that sidestep the dominance of the abstract spaces of late capitalismo" (Liggett, xiii)

passages, the experience of walking was determinant for the very evolution of artistic practice, which today runs parallel escapades from architecture to adjacent fields (Tiberghieri, 2013: 21). Today, it is an expanded creative field – to paraphrase Krauss but using the term in a somehow plain way[248]. One could mention in its extreme edges the clearly interdisciplinary work of Christian Nold, an artist, designer and academic researcher who builds participatory technologies for collective representation, very much integrated through walking workshops.

Let's then recap some of such moments, between practice and theory, specific artworks and events and their mythical echoes, always keeping in mind that: "Walking blurs the borders between representing the world and designating oneself as a piece of it, between live art and object-based art." (O'Rourke, 2013: 13)

During the twentieth century, walking practices progressively lost their formerly almost exclusive link to religious ritual (Careri, 2017: 62). The 14th of April 1921, Dadaists realized a lay pilgrimage to the Church of Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre. Among them were André Breton, Louis Aragon, Benjamin Péret, Philippe Soupault and Tristan Tzara.[249]In the now mythic Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre walk, the power of the occasion – the *kairos* – lies in the fact that the group would not relate to urban space leaving a new object or retiring any existing element in space; they are focused on not realizing any material operation, trying not to leave any traces. What shall remain are just memories as translated to notebooks, photographs and articles (Careri, 2017: 65).

For diverse reasons, including the fact that because of the rain the pilgrimage in itself would be considered by the organizers a failure, so it ended up being a one-off happening. Crucially,

> […] even though the spectators who attended this visit were physically in the middle of Paris, they nonetheless found themselves faced with an undesirable part of the city that

[248] To be noted, "Rosalind Krauss's essay 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' in October 1979 jumped in to reconstrue the foundations of what art practices were and were not and what they could become. […] Krauss was disputing what she saw as a too easily acquired pluralism, arguing that artists and architects don't move in opposite directions but in parallel. […] She saw herself as combating the notion that anything goes, everything is possible, of there being no longer any real difference between things." (Marshall, 2015)

> was not typically included in the spectacular vision of Paris found, or more appropriately produced, in guidebooks and other popular media. (Haladyn, 2013: 21)

Paris' everyday was already at the time being disseminated as a sensational spectacle (Schwartz, 1998: 13-16). In two words: "Undermining the spectacularization of Paris, the Dadaist excursion to Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre reframes the city by focusing on a site that does not support the common-sense representation of the modern metropolis" (Haladyn, 2013: 22).

Arguably, one only understands the aforementioned sensation of failure if one bears in mind that the Dada movement shared with the theatrical imagination a drive for spectactacularization. (Ibid. 23) Let's also not forget that "Dada arose out of the failure of the prewar avant-gardes to develop a coherent critique of modern life in its totality, combined with widespread domestic dissatisfaction in combatant nations caused by enforced conscription, rationing and military setbacks" (Gardiner, 2000: 27). On the other hand, this fragile provisional community epitomizes the latent conflict between Dada and Surrealism.[250]

In any case, for Breton, "Dada is boring only in relation to one's expectations of it" (In Haladyn, 2013: 27). Breton is thus from the outset very much aware of what happened: "Presented without external meaning or purpose, this excursion calls upon the visitor to recreate the site through a personal act of aesthetic judgment that necessarily supersedes the realities of the site in-itself, which become a backdrop for the drama of modern subjectivity." (Ibid. 28)

And so forth, Breton encourages people to be *flâneurs*, with one's affects defining the reality of the world where one is (Ibid. 29), not without a spiritual dimension at stake.[251] Breton

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[251] "That the event did not hold the attention of visitors, a lack perceived by the Dadaists (and the bulk of subsequent historians) as a failure, is its success in highlighting the more profound failure of participants to recognize and judge their boredom as an absence of any subjective calling or passion – with the church representing a backdrop in which the gap between a presumed experience of the sacred and the boredom at the absence of any divine revelation is played out. What the experience of boredom speaks to is a confrontation with one's subjective existence, which in a sense comes down to, as Breton foregrounds in this project, an ability to say yes to even the most overlooked or seemingly insignificant aspects of everyday life. This is precisely what Benjamin meant by profane illumination, which notably builds upon the primarily creative understanding of will put forth by Nietzsche – whose "whole enterprise," Breton argues in the Anthology of

symbolizes here the project of surrealism[252]: "to restore the imaginative and creative power of subjective will to humanity, which had been lost or given up in the name of the church, the state and the pursuit of rationalism." (Ibid.) What is sought for? "Profane illuminations" (Benjamin, 1979: 209). And maybe, one day, not only the freedom of imagination, but the very experience of absolute sur-reality – "a cultural *reality-edifice* in which the world is experienced in a manner similar to Schrödinger's cat: being at once real *and* imagined." (Ibid. 31)

In May 1924, Breton took a memorable four-day stroll with colleagues Aragon, Morise and Vitrac to the countryside of Paris. During the rest stops of this "quartet deambulation" as Breton defined it, automatic texts were produced, many reflecting the environments traversed, not without a growing feel of distress. At this point, the Dadaist quest for the banal gave way to the Surrealist adventures with chance – according to the memories of Breton, for instance in the strangest of encounters: with a white cockroach.

In sum, and to recall the Dadaist experience as related to a tension, until today, between art and entertainment:

> The people who chose to attend these events were prepared to have their senses shaken by the now familiar and formulaic ever-new spectacle that was Dada; and it is precisely this form of Dada that Breton attempted to undermine with this excursion. The meaning that could be derived from this project again strictly depended on the spectators' abilities to confront the site's apparent lack of reason and cultural insignificance, to subjectively will meaning into one's experience of a world that is encountered as arbitrary and indeterminate. (Ibid. 30)

This is an example of the "dehumanizing aspect of being a spectator" (Olin, 2003: 326).

What visitors experienced on this excursion – seeing what they *think* they see (Ibid. 32) – was their own semblance as *flâneurs*. "The gratuitousness of this excursion to Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre represents illuminating potential of the everyday as an event without inherent meaning, but a perpetual event in which individual meaning must be willingly created out of the banalities and boredoms of lived existence within the world". (Ibid.) The event resonates another insight, related to itinerance and nomadology: "Having performed the

Black Humor, "was to restore to man all the power that he had invested in the name of God." (Haladyn, 2013: 27)

[252] He would soon publish the *Manifesto of Surrealism* (1924).

action in that particular place was the equivalent of having performed it on the entire city" (Careri, 2017:75)

Another sign of these times – and their enduring mythic resonance – is Duchamp's famous take on urban image. In 1917, he would select the Woolworth building in New York as a ready-made. Among the reasons, maybe because the giant object was a symbol of the *hubris* of business, money and consumption in American culture (Zabel, 2004: 171). It is a fine example of the power of the eye (when aligned with intentionality).

In the 1950's, with the Lettrists and Situationists, the word *dérive* (drift) makes its sensational appearance in the jargon of culture. The dérive is a ludic collective activity which has led to a specific technique of appropriating the urban reality by means of walking: psychogeography. This is related to the mental effects which urban contexts produce in the mind and life of human beings.

In this framework, the *dérive*, is like a construction, an experiment, where new behaviors are tested, materializing alternative appropriations of the very urban fabric. They point to surprising changes in urban life. Furthermore, it is about acknowledging the importance of an ephemeral city (more than the very work of art).

Debord and his friends were aware that their responsibility would be to somehow actualize the avant-garde heritage. They did so, in great part, through a "playful pedestrianism". (O'Rourke, 2013: 12) where spatial tactics clearly addresses the urban unconscious. Chtcheglow "thought it necessary "to bring about a complete spiritual transformation by bringing to light forgotten desires and by creating entirely new ones. And by carrying out an intensive propaganda in favor of those desires" (in O'Rourke, 2013: 10) he "goes on to portray the ideal city of the future in which drifting is the main activity of its inhabitants." (Ibid.)

The Situationist drift, first and foremost as a critique to bourgeois way of life, tends to be more cerebral, more studious and more solitary, like "intellectual gymnastics" engaging with imaginative processes (Ibid.) When one looks at the *oeuvre* of Ralph Rumney (1934-2002),

one meets someone who spent his life living as a conscious wayfarer, in transit between all sorts of social environments. Such *derive*[253] may furthermore have a technical – somehow paramilitary – dimension, rejecting the dream-driven spirituality of the surrealists in order to pursue the political programme of psychogeographical urbanism. In any case,

> The spatial field of a derive may be precisely delimited or vague, depending on whether the goal is to study a terrain or to emotionally disorient oneself. It should not be forgotten that these two aspects of derives overlap in so many ways that it is impossible to isolate one of them in a pure state. (Debord, 1915: 178)

Debord's "Anti-Walk" (Careri, 2017: 67) practices produce a wide range of (constructed) situations.[254] As laboratorial microevents, they are the result of intensifying gestures toward the interstitial city. The consequence, the city is less just a scenery and the very protagonist it its own semblance as idea. Most of these activities in fact open up the horizon of a more playful and spontaneous city. Debord's Unitary Urbanism is clearly about "building adventures", in bold effort to abolish time[255] if that is what it takes to encounter authentic life.

It is otherwise the intellectual and discoursive complement to Constant's concept of a New Babylon[256], already a Situationist appropriation move entering the terrains of architecture. One where the Gypsy people's mobility is playfully transformed into a living symbol (Wigley, 1998: 67). Most importantly, for Constant, a new city should be reconstructed by means of connecting heterogenous 'bits'.

In the mid 60's, Anti-walk gives way to Land Walk (Careri, 2017) by the likes of artists Tony Smith, Carl Andre, Richard Long, Walter de Maria, Robert Smithson or the Fluxus group. A whole urban space grammar will then be explored, "attitudes becoming form" – as

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[253] "In a derive one or more persons during a certain period drop their relations, their work and leisure activities, and all their other usual motives for movement and action and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there. Chance is a less important factor in this activity than one might think: from a derive point of view cities have psychogeographical contours, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes that strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones." (Debord, 2015: 176)

[254] See "Définitions", in *Internationale Situationniste*, núm. 1, Paris, 1958.

[255] See Debord, Guy, "l'urbanisme unitaire a la fin des annéss 50", *Internationale Situationniste*, núm. 3, Paris.

[256] Indeed, "*New Babylon* was a utopian architectural proposal, a high-tech, open megastructure elevated above the existing city where people could freely wander, socialize, and reconfigure the environment to explore new sensory and social ambiences. These initiatives all sought to bring art, urban space and individual experience closer together, and to encourage people to constantly play to explore and transform social life (McDonough, 2002, in Ibid.)

Careri puts it, evoking the famous show curated by Harald Szeemann. An unforgettable performance work is certainly Vito Acconci's *Following Piece* (1969). Another expression of what seems to have been a walking turn are Tony Smith's trips in the 60's – in June 1967, the critic Michael Fried, irritated by such kind of work they are an expression of a war of theatre and literature against art (Fried, 1967).

In this new expanded field of sculpture (Krauss, 1983), an artist states that the ideal sculpture is a street (Carl Andre); drawings may attain the unusual length of a mile (Walter de Maria); interiors are treated exteriors and vice-versa (Robert Smithson); a collective of artists organize regular visits to hidden places in a kind of "playful anarchy" (O'Rourke, 2013: 12) (Fluxus).

Specifically integrating the action of walking in artwork, a walk may become the ecstatic insight that it is the end of art (Tony Smith); the durée of walks becomes documented matter (Richard Long); a woman walks across the city dressed in strangely smelling clothes (Adrian Piper) in an action decidedly avoiding to be labelled as art[257], another woman walks barefoot on a busy sidewalk, with a military-style boot tied to each ankle by the shoelaces (Mona Hatoum), a man walks around New York City for a whole year, only with a sleeping bag and a few other belongings (Tehching Hsieh)… and so on. In many ways, these practices have a cartographic dimension. "As personal as a fingerprint" (O'Rourke, 2013: xvii), such embodied experience is an expression of the broad activity of wayfaring life (Ingold, 2011).

Related to this cartographic dimension of walking are the Stalker group's errant transurbances since the 90's. Realized as a dialogue between architecture, urbanism, political action and aesthetic-artistic practice, they were based on an actualization of vagabondage – "andar a zonzo" (Careri, 2017: 173) –, with an international network of people engaged in activating urban voids (*terrain* vagues) and other nomad spaces. A main outcome of these overtly tactical, participatory urbanistic practices is that the city's morphologies appear as not necessarily fixed.

[257] "She did not want her actions to be labeled guerrilla theater, streetworks, or happenings. To call them art would reduce their effect. For *Catalysis I*, she soaked her clothes I a mixture of vinegar, eggs, milk, and cod liver oil for a week and wore them on the subway during evening rush hour and in a bookstore on Saturday night" (O'Rourke, 2013: 16)

It is no less a way to deliver the good (social inclusion): "Using tactical and playful interventions, they [Stalker/ON] aim at creating spatial transformations through engaging in social relations, because as they have observed, the built environment takes too long to respond to the needs and desires of those who inhabit it."[258] If one relates all this to other insights in literature – say, Bruce Chatwin's *Songlines* (a tribute to nomad thought) (Tiberghieri 2013, 9) – and of course coming from the social sciences, one may speak of a wide aesthetical cultural paradigm with expanding limits.

All these iconic gestures, some individual, some collective, echo not only ancient fundamental symbolic practices (Ibid. 15)[259] but also a cosmopolitan Situationist slogan – *To inhabit is to feel at home everywhere*.[260] Isn't it what happens in urban aesthetics such as guerrilla gardening or parkour? In most of such activities the city is a playground (Coates, 2017: 30), which is another way to say that who is in charge is the contemporary *homo ludens*.

Before coming to a conclusion on this point, it is important to list a few more recent iconic moments in the history of art as walking (and vice versa), only to make sure some images shall remain as important visual references– as urban moments that one may not have lived but certainly might feel drawn to for their cultural meaning.

One could think here of Francis Alys *Walking a painting* (2002) – the object being taken… for a walk; or of the same artist waking fast along the streets of Mexico City, ostensibly carrying in his hand a gun, putting the social order to a test (Davila, 2002: 79). For Kagan (and Medina), "Alÿs does not develop his walks into a psycho-geographic form of action-research with the aim of revolutionizing urbanism. Rather, "his walks were conceived on the assumption that they would be read, thought, seen, imagined and retold by others, and that

[258] https://www.spatialagency.net/database/why/political/stalkerosservatorio.nomade
[259] Tiberghieri mentions that walking is the simple act from which developed the most important relations than Humankind would establish with the territory. (Tiberghieri 2013, 15)
[260] In "Comments Against Urbanism", Raoul Vaneigen writes: "Habitation is the 'drink Coca-Cola' of urbanism. The necessity of drinking is replaced by Coca-Cola. To inhabit is to be at home everywhere, says Kiesler, but such a prophetic truth grabs nobody by the throat: it is a scarf against the increasing cold, even if it evokes a noose. We are inhabited; it is from this point that one should begin." (Vaneigen 1961)

their agency would depend on their dissemination as stories" (Medina in eds. Medina, Ferguson and Fisher, 2007: 78).

One could look as well closely at Gabriel Orozco's *Island Within an Island'* (1993) as an extraordinary urban moment, not only echoing Duchamp's urban ready-made, and playing with objecthood[261], but finally producing a sort of *ultra-thin* imaginary city not exactly of this (or another, for that matter) world. To be noted, Orozco's work (as sculptural assemblage) is realized with materials found in the place, in an example of how engaged and conscious bodily movement may reveal the urban unconscious[262] in the very stage of the dirty city pavements. It is not about instantiating the dream, and rather about crystalizing a sense of obscurity, mystery (Davila, 2002: 61), at the same time that the usual image of the city is swiftly *detoured* by the *flâneur*'s 1:1 scale gesture. Concerning its circulation as visual icon, it is interesting to understand how, maybe because one photography is circulating – a highly individual experience of a place manages to become an artistic myth.

For Kagan, such practices are related:

> […] to the dialogic proposed by Edgar Morin in his *method*, more in accord with the insights of the ecological sciences which revealed the importance of autopoïesis, contextuality and systemic emergence and creativity in an understanding of nature's co-evolutions and eco-evolution. (Kagan, 2010: 28)

Indeed, Régis Perray – who acknowledges the influence of Robert Smithson[263] – is a fine example of contemporary *flânerie*, bearing the characteristics of an individual spiritual adventure. It manifests itself in action(s) like conscious walking, cleaning[264], sweeping, polishing, testifying or collecting, always as a result of preparatory urban walks that happen all around the world.

> As a passionate and involved foreigner, he goes through places, where every time, each place is put into perspective with his experience of such a demarcated territory. Paved,

[261] In a comment to Davila's work on the **imperceptible in art, Kramer writes:** "By forever teetering on the tight wire between presence and absence, these works derive their strength far from emphatic and stentorian flashings, in their capacity to relaunch aesthetic discernment, the art of nuance". (Kramer-Mallordy 2012)
[262] "There is a growing body of research investigating the significance of unconscious dimensions of mobile experiences […] that might be drawn upon in enhancing understandings of everyday pedestrian practices and how walking could be promoted more effectively" (Middleton, 2011: 96)
[263] http://www.regisperray.eu/textes/JM_huitorel_en.php
[264] "Cleaning is also in effect the moving away of that which is not desired. The artist did so by removing rubbish from the old Jewish cemetery in Lublin or from around the Gizeh pyramids." Jean-Marc Huitorel in http://www.regisperray.eu/textes/JM_huitorel_en.php

> concrete, stony, dusty, tiled or inlaid wooden floorings. Each one of them determines his reaction to the site he is about to probe.[265]

These actions are done with very basic tools, or with the artist's bare hands[266], they are a hard labour of love, where the cyclic repetition of the same tasks – in a reference to Benjamin's notion of boredom – express an "outstanding disproportion between the efforts produced and the very ephemeral aspect of the realizations" (Ibid.) On the other hand, they are the outcome of a methodology of intense practice.[267]

Huitorel adds, regarding Perray's para-religiosity: "It is perhaps in this immanent aspect of Régis Perray's life and practice, which is also impregnated by the transcendental, that we can find the heart of a work entirely dedicated to the maintenance of the world and the gestures that this implies."[268] In this kind of work, where everyday actions are successively (and literally) translated into phenomenological experience, the absurd meets the absolute and an alternative time appears.

In one of the artist's most exhausting works, *Training Centre to go back to Pilat and Saqqara* (2000), "What counts, above all, is time. Time spent, the time of art superimposed on the time of life, time repeating itself, like a ritual, forevermore. It is an act therefore, perhaps an act of senseless love ("To love is to act" wrote Victor Hugo at the end of Things Seen). There can be no doubt: "We must imagine Sisyphus happy". (Ibid.) In the end, the work is the… work, in the sense that the *oeuvre*, happening in the real time of its elaboration (performance

[265] Lise Viseux complements: "If ever there is a fundamental idea around which the work of Regis Perray articulates, it must be the question of space and consequently the notions of nomadism linked to it. Many art critics have given a large chronological account of scientific researches on the cause/effect connection between the process of walking and the moulding of thought, thus explaining the fundamental importance of the process of moving in artistic creation. If, unlike contemporary artists such as Francis Alÿs, Stalker, Gabriel Orozco and other "planetary pedestrians", movement is not a motif in Regis's works, in that he does not form an artistic action in itself featured by traces of its own taking place; it is all the same the basis on which these traces are made up." In http://www.regisperray.eu/textes/Lise_Viseux_Les_travaux_en.php

[266] As exemplarily in video work "Acariciar Lisboa / Carresser Lisbonne]", commissioned by PTdE in 2013 for VICENTE. See https://vimeo.com/83776104.

[267] "He [Perray] approaches the realization of actions involving sustained physical efforts, as an athlete would do. The longlasting actions undertaken on the spot of the exhibitions actually start before the opening, the period of training and the apprehension of the space being part of the work, as well as the periods of rest that stress it. Repeating, doing again and again untiringly in order to integrate progressively the rhythm created by the process itself and also to prepare physically the body to the realization of later pieces of work." (Ibid.)

[268] In http://www.regisperray.eu/textes/JM_huitorel_en.php

toward performatic), is no less than an intimate moment in the flow of the artist's life (as) project.

Finally, the sense of grace in Perray's work is something "affirmative, celebratory even, and something that works on an intensive rather than a signifying register" (O'Sullivan, 2006: 73). On the other hand, it is minor also because it is a take on the wider social milieu (Ibid. 74). And finally it might be minor because it involves – although in a less obvious way than, say, typical participatory/collaborative art – "collective enunciation, the production of collaborations and indeed the calling forth of new kinds of collectivities" (Ibid. 74) that avoid what Negri calls the "logic of gathering". (Ibid. 78)

In describing in more detail this artist's work, one tries nevertheless to allow other artists who associate art and walking to appear in the fleeting picture[269]. In the specific case of this research, there was the constant need to meet artists that are ready to participate in the initiative. This is the case of LUCE, a Valencian street artist who is continuously writing his name – which means 'Light' in Spanish – in all sorts of materials across this Spanish city's cityscape (Text), Santiago Reyes who explores his processes of subjectivation by means of performance protocols that are repeated in diverse places (Body) or Christian Nold (Process), who with his participatory mapping projects – a collective update of art as cartography[270], aiming for the production of spatial awareness through various technological devices, is clearly translating common experiences into collectively produced cartographies.

Today this emergent *corpus* – art imbued by the spirit of *flânerie* and the practice of walking – is being acknowledged in art history and the art field; but, more importantly, many diverse fresh takes on the legacy that is consciously or unconsciously behind it, sprouting everywhere, resonate also echoes of these practices by people who did possibly not

[269] It furthermore aims to demonstrate that through a single genuine artistic position, any other positions become possible. Each artist is a portal.

[270] See Karen O'Rourke's *Walking and Mapping. Artists as Cartographers* 2013. Concerning the wider context of mapping practices in the digital age, "mapping has emerged in the information age as a means to make the complex accessible, the hidden visible, the unmappable mappable." (Hall and Abrams 2006, 12, in Barns 2018, 204) Barns furthermore states that "The application of hyperlocal, multiscalar, and real-time mapping techniques, it is argued, presents opportunities to expose "hidden" or hitherto invisible relationships, including the relationships between center and periphery, power and influence (see Sassen 2008; Boyer 2006)" (In Barns 2018, 205) Consequently, Hill believes that these technological practices contribute to "iterative, responsive field of 'urban acupunctures'" (in Ibid.)

necessarily heard of them before – which even more proves the universal pulsion behind all this aesthetic-political drive. Such arts are possibly taking us to "divine places" (Nancy, 1991): "Divine places, without gods, with no god […] ourselves, alone, out to meet that which we are not, and which the gods for their have never been […] other tracks, other ways, other places for all who are there." (Ibid. 50)

These would be the immanent and lived image for the belief in the/this world (which is not contradictory to the revelation of its illusory character):

> If you believe in the world you precipitate events, however inconspicuous, that elude control, you engender new space-times, however small their surface or volume . . . Our ability to resist control, or our submission to it, has to be assessed at the level of our every move. (Deleuze, 1995: 176)

A crucial point to keep in mind is then if or how all these diverse path phenomenologies, might (or not) allow generate processes of "transferability" (Vaz-Pinheiro, 2013)[271] – for instance motivating translations to urban planning or cultural policies.

In sum, a cultural project's immediate message could be the *flâneur* is a medium. (Kantorowicz, 1957)[272] A *nu-flâneur* is the materialization of the idea/concept, thus belonging to this material reality. But it is also "a spiritualization of the material, it partakes of the spiritual world". (Vandenberghe, 2007: 31)

When facing the expended fields of sculpture and performance, and also of text art and a wide variety of walking practices, one might imagine that there is a translocal public for such sort of nomad performativity, where experimental forms of action and non-action, of activity and contemplation, and even of tradition (crafts) and innovation (urban concepts) might get together in a non-exclusive and non-competitive way.

Concluding, Contemporary Walking Arts (Davila) offer attentive dwellers and nomads a panoply of solutions for one' exploratory involvement in the urb. Streets are thus envisaged here as specific walkscapes (Carreri), as well as stages for walking practices – and notably

[271] "I take some linguistic license by pushing the noun *transferability* from the idea of transference. The word is intended to introduce a sense of movable meaning to the work of art produced for a particular location." (Vaz-Pinheiro, 2003)
[272] "Conceived as a vector of transmission, the medium has, like Jesus and the King of France, a 'double body.'" (Kantorowicz, 1957).

artistic gestures involving the act of walking – to become transnationally visible as a global movement toward the appropriation of urban space.

7. From narrative (back) to locality: European street(s) as material and social opportunities

> *Decades are defined by culture. Culture is defined by what happens on our streets. And our streets are defined not by the people who dream, but the people who do. These are the people, who define the decade.*
> **#spaceforideas**

The European street is the spatial context for this research. "Now, the only way of defining a context is, as we have said, through its limits, and the only way of defining those limits is to point out what is beyond them."[273] (Laclau, 2007: 52) In fact, "the impossibility of a universal ground does not eliminate its need: it just transforms the ground into an empty place which can be partially filled in a variety of ways (the strategies of this filling is what politics is about)." (Ibid. 59) One thus tries here to read, interpret and reinvent streets beyond their strict geographical definition, while taking the latter strongly in consideration, as a material fact. The theoretical issues addressed before will remain in the backdrop of this next approximation to this research's geographical territory.

What do we know about streets? Among a multiplicity of perspectives, we shall start with retaining that, in terms of etymology, *Street* comes from the Latin *sternere,* 'to pave.' The word points to the idea of structured and stratified construction; the etymology of 'road' [from the Anglo-Saxon *ride*] denotes the idea of passage from one place to another, as in the idea of movement, transport, connectivity, connection between origins and destinies. (Rykwert, 1978: 15) In this duality – street vs. road – a productive tension is expressed: between separation and connection, finiteness and continuity, address and path, place and itinerary. A vast field for reflexivity is opened here, if one deals with this tension creatively, for (all) streets lead somewhere, while each and each of them is a place with its own *genus*.

The streets are here thus an urban element and context. As crucial identity factors, "On the history of the city, streets have accomplished several roles for cities – spiritual, religious, political, social, economic, health, and aesthetic." (Mehta, in Zavestosk and Agyeman, 2015:

[273] "But what is beyond the limits can only be other differences, and in that case – given the constitutive character of all differences – it is impossible to establish whether these new differences are internal or external to the context". (Laclau, 2007: 52)

95) Mehta underlines, significantly, that today it is important to address streets "as ecology" – the way to holistically fathom their deeper meaning (Ibid. 94).

For millennia, streets are "major organizing principles" (Mehta 2013, 27) of cities and towns, translating to each new age basic patterns of movement (Ibid.). Indeed, "Movement along a set way, and even, the delimitation of the way as an extended public space, are very deeply embedded in human experience" (Rykwert, 1978: 22).

Again, it is helpful to explore etymology: "The very word street, as its etymology suggests, denotes a delimited surface – part of an urban texture, characterized by an extended area lined with buildings on either side. But the manner in which the notion of road or street is embedded in human experience suggests that it has reference to ideas and patterns of behavior more archaic than city building." (Ibid. 16)

Toponomy plays an important part in their urban identity. Rykwert (1978) considers three generic groups of names, considering the role of streets in the urban patters: those which suggest how the street is physically constituted by its urban context (terrace, row, arcade, embankment or gallery); those which suggest a walking path (path, parade, promenade or mall); and finally those which suggest car use and/or related legal and technical aspects (highway, artery or throughfare) (Proença, 2016: 102). For example, "travessa" – as in Travessa do Marta Pinto / Projecto Travessa da Ermida – stands for a narrow or short street establishing the communication between two hierarchically superior streets (Proença 2015, 10)[274]. Notes Proença furthermore that the very term "rua" – the Portuguese word for "street" – has possibly its origin in the Latin *ruga*, meaning "groove"; although Rykwert believes there is a more direct link to the Ido-European *vahâmi* – which indeed is the etymological origin of the Italian "via".

As materially built objects, the infrastructure – channel, corridor (Ibid. 101) for a range of activities and of course the stage of collective experiences, streets are without a doubt a basic element of the urban form, maybe a sort of music sheet of the urban form, which in its turn

[274] There are in Lisbon 364 "travessas" (Proença 2015, 10), integrated in a wider system of "ruas-travessas" [street-travessas], an urban model that evolved mainly in the 19th century and eventually led to an orthogonal model composed of main and secondary (shorter and narrower) streets (Proença, 2015: 112)

allows for the music of the experienced city to be performed. Methodic readings of the fabric of the city shall in any case go beyond the consolidated (Coelho, 2015: 14), and no less pay attention to urban phenomena at large – a recent development is the concept of "incomplete streets" (Zavestosk and Agyeman, 2014), which in the name of livability resists to the neoliberal programme to generate inequality and inequity.

This said, while no two streets can be equal, a certain set of streets might, at some level, translate to each other a specific atmospheric mood – not the least because of the resonances that it might be possible to establish between their streetscapes seduction power.

The street is a fundamental element of the city, in the sense that if offers the stage for the non-predictable, while structuring the two main functions of the city: information and accessibility (Proença, 2016: 102). The street is indeed the recognizable image of the collectivity and at the same time the passage of all the services for its maintenance (Ibid.). This is related to the morphological, geo-toponomical and in the end identitary dimensions of the streets. Some streets, more than others, are recognized as intelligible elements of the city by dwellers. (Ibid. 103) In sum, a street's rhetorical function in the urban form may lead the community to ground not only aesthetic experience, but as well alternative futures, in that territorial fragment. In other words, some streets somehow invite progressive, sustained change, while others don't have that visible rhetorical arguments.

Streets' patterns, along with squares', are of great impact in the city's form. For hundreds or thousands of years, the street underwent many changes, according to the evolution of many factors: "values, philosophy, systems of government, population size, artistic sensibility, design techniques, building methods, paving techniques, and transport technology, sewage and waste disposal, and energy supply. These factors affect the topology, geometry, and width of the streets"[275] (Crawford, 2005)

[275] "I use "topology" in the mathematical sense, having to do most importantly with the network of streets – the places at which they connect to one another. By "geometry," I mean the shape of the streets, as would be recorded by a surveyor." (Crawford, 2005)

In this study, what became clear after the initial intuitions concerning the streets to involve, is that to acknowledge the urban patterns is fundamental. One may therefore learn on street's formal properties for instance, when one recognizes a centuries' old pattern's sense.[276] So when one walks across a foreign streetscape, maybe its formal qualities are to a high degree unconscious – otherness remaining coded in issues of, for instance, the balance between planning and organicity, and of course, spatial composition.

The fact is that, in terms of the meaning of the street in the spatial experience of the street, "the past 500 years have brought us poorer, not richer environments" than the millennia before – in terms of the typologies of urban arrangements. (Ibid.)

In *Experiencing European Streets*, each street plays in fact its specific role in the exploration of a grammar that for Crawford, evolves between two poles: the gridiron (Calle Josep Benliure in the Modernist area of El Cabanyal, in Valencia) and the loosely radial (Via Santa Marta in the 5Vie district, the Medieval heart of Milan). If the first represents in this narrative "the regular geometric street patterns widely used since the Renaissance" (Ibid.), the second represents something of the "irregular arrangements of medieval times" remain (Ibid.). Needless to say, in the first, the memory of the moment "the path turned into a street"[277] (Ibid.) is less felt than in the second; at the same time, the second is less the result of an abstract plan than the first.

This kind of awareness carries out significant processes of urban form reading. For instance:

> "It is often claimed that the grid is in some way democratic, that it is an egalitarian form. However, given the extensive application of the grid form by absolute rulers, Spiro Kostof found little merit in this argument and cites numerous examples of absolute rulers establishing towns on a grid plan. (Kostof, 1991: 99-100)" (Ibid.)

[276] "Why do we so often find close approaches to a perfect grid in cities more than about 500 years old? One likely answer is simply the desire to create a sense of enclosure; slight articulations of narrow streets are sufficient to create full enclosure, as can be seen [here] on the Via Garibaldi in the medieval quarter of Ferrara." (Crawford, 2005)

[277] "Beaten paths usually take interesting and pleasant shapes. The course of a beaten path is almost never straight but is by no means random." (Crawford, 2005)

This to say that one's choices of streets, in this research, tries to demonstrate the richness not only of diverse social contexts, but of the very European urban fabric.

Nevertheless, as Judith Butler puts it:

> [...] the street is not always the site that we can take for granted as the public ground for certain kinds of public assemblies; the street as a public space and thoroughfare, is also a public good for which people fight – an infrastructural necessity that forms one of the demands of certain forms of popular mobilization. (2015: 126)

In this spirit, there is a possibility that a certain set of streets might be specifically inspiring for artistic, cultural and social activities, as well as for networking. This implies looking at the potential creative streets closely, considering their urban form, their architecture, their stories, their artistic potential and most of all trying to understand how a group of cultural agents can *use* and *serve* their streets simultaneously, in all their multidimensionality, between, but also beyond, issues of vulnerability and/in resistance (See Butler, Gambetti and Sabsay, 2016). There is certainly a new way of understanding the potential streets' localities, in sum, a new vision for streets to enter in relation with each other and their public conscience.

In this mindset, to seize the relative potentiality of each place's character but also its broader cultural potential, implies from the start the notion that the curatorial gaze is already at work. On the other hand, in a seductively inclusive cultural project, there can be as many contributions to the emergence of the curatorial of the project as many members of the community involved.

7.1 Initial fieldwork: a territory of sensescapes

> *The more we know, the less self-contained living [human] beings become.*
> **Timothy Morton**

The initial fieldwork for a search of streets with potential of joining the *Experiencing European Streets* research started back in 2013. It was initiated on behalf of (and almost always accompanied by) the founder and director of the Projecto Travessa da Ermida in Lisbon[278]. The process hasn't been exactly planned and there were no specific objectives in visiting each particular street and institution. As a matter of fact, there was no precise strategy besides the improvised travelling to cities and cultural entities, restaurants, festivals or artists that could *one day* be part of the emerging dynamics of connectivity. This attitude led to a variety of spontaneous meetings and serendipitous discoveries, leading one to another until the moment that all elements seem to fit – as if the semblance of a self-evident mix of atmosphere, people and site.

Below are brief impressions of each street, as captured in those first contacts, accompanied by episodes lived in the sites whose significance comes from the fact that they remained for long as memories. This chapter works out as an anamnesis of travel experience, trying to localize defining moments where it *made sense* to pursue the very research. The work that follows is thus fundamentally descriptive, trying to be as accurate as possible concerning the usage of adjectives and adverbs.

The very first visit was to Lübeck, in Germany (September 2013), the capital town of the iconic Hanseatic League, which lasted between the 14th and 17th Century. There we discovered by chance *Der Kolk*. The street's name bears a complex etymology (possibly of Dutch origin) of which one managed to retain a few meanings: 'vortex', 'maelstrom', 'a drain that is part of a sewer system', 'a small waterway connected to one or several windmills that control the water level in a polder, serving as a conduit to remove surplus water', 'a dyke besides such a waterway' or – our favorite, because of its geological origin (Russ, 1994: 269), 'a pothole in a river or glacier'.

[278] Dr. Eduardo Fernandes.

What captured our attention was the medieval architecture, the cobbled streets, the red brick walls, but above all the charming silence of the peaceful atmosphere. In the surroundings, our *flânerie* led us to discover picturesque alleyways – *Gänge* – narrow and low passages leading to inhabited courtyards.

We were extremely impressed by Lübeck's unpretentious and immaculately clean environment, which (we were explained) is typical of the Northern Germany urbanity. One of the days was characterized by a very festive spirit: at some point, in the crowded streets, we saw a youngster dressed as a 'traditional' housemaid or cleaning lady, swiping thousands of bottle caps scattered on the pavement; passers-by we kicking them continuously and he would restart his efforts over and over again. I also kicked the caps, imagining it was an artistic performance. Hours later, coming back to the hotel through that same street, the same youngster was still there, notoriously more tired. Approaching to kick again the caps, I was stopped by his colleagues. They asked me not to do it because he was doing it since early morning. I asked: — Why is he doing it? They explained it is a local tradition. Every youngster who is not married until a certain age (can't remember which exactly) is 'obliged' to realize this specific performative in public space. I asked then: — And how is it with girls? His response says all about Lübeck: – *They clean and polish all the door handles in the street…*

One story in Lübeck is particularly striking: the 250 miles long walk Bach took to the city, aged 20, from Arnstad in the heart of Germany, in order to meet Lübeck's famous organist Dietrich Buxtehude.

In September 2012 we would head east to Gdansk, Poland, which is another former city of the Hanseatic League, famous as well for its monumental red brick gothic architecture and elegant geometric urban planning. In the Old Town (for a great part impecably reconstructed after WWII), Ulica Mariacka Street attracted our attention because it is regularly traversed by passersby enjoying its intimate scale. The terraces (called *stoops*), the flower beds, the stands selling amber gems, all define a cosy feel, although, when cloudy and dark, the place acquires a slightly gloomy and mysterious image. Nevertheless, when the sun is shining the

tourists from all around the world overrun the space, not all aware of the richness of the local cultural layers and political episodes.

Fig. 1. Kolk, Lübeck Museum of Theatre Puppets

Fig. 2. Poetry evening in Mariacka Street, Gdansk

In fact, soon we were having a preliminary dialogue with a most important local institution, the Gdansk Shakespeare Theatre. The building is an extraordinary example of architectural genius (and ingenuity). Designed by Renato Rizzi, its dark-bricked materiality has a simultaneously strong – almost menacing – presence in the urban fabric, representing in the local culture scene high standards of artistic quality and cosmopolitan and civic values. The architecture indeed renders the form of a sort of small city, including a freely accessible pedestrian passage inside. But more, it is a powerful spatial medium for narratives – and not only because it hosts the iconic Shakespeare Festival. Its materials and technology came from diverse points of Europe and the world it is absolutely unique: "a mirror of the city, a maze of narrow corridors (streets), squares (courtyards) and a complex world of different functions"[279], its retractable roof is an extraordinary cultural gesture, regularly "flung open to the elements"[280].

[279] https://brickarchitecture.com/projects/the-gdansk-shakespeare-theatre-renato-rizzi
[280] https://www.architectural-review.com/today/shakespeare-theatre-gdansk-poland-by-renato- rizzi/8681555 .article

The next place researched was Valencia in Spain (February 2014). We visited El Cabanyal (Cabanyal-Canyamelar), a neighbourhood located on the Mediterranean coast, part of the sea village. It was impressive for its sensuous picturesque vibe where rows of vivid *art nouveau* façades are the scenery for both creative endeavours and threads of urban conflict. Despite experiencing first-hand the place's more than a decade long bad reputation (partly due to drug trafficking), we were impressed by the consistence and regularity of the creative urban practices of the community[281].

The main meeting was held there was at Casa Montaña, a highly praised Tapas bar since 1836, and located in the street Calle Josep de Benliure. The owner's explained us in detail the cultural and artistic histories of the place, enthusiastically contextualizing a rich heritage. The conversation was naturally one more opportunity for our local contacts to extensively explain their civic decade-long fight with (ate the time) ruling conservative mayor Rita Barberà, who had proposed a new urbanistic plan which included the destruction of 1500 houses in El Cabanyal in order to prolong a wide avenue from the city port until the beach.[282]

In terms of the experience atmosphere, the proximity of the beach side gives the space a relaxed, breezy, 'Californian' feeling, which establishes with the theatrical ruined walls and empty spaces a very specific tension. There were plenty of people exercising different sports, reading, drinking, laughing, playing with kids and dogs.

Later that same day, back to the busy, gentrified center of Valencia, we came up to a magnificent art installation that consisted of a sum of wooden black cubes composing/decomposing the word LUCE. Lots of children were having great fun, creatively recreating compositions, and jumping over or climbing on them in a beautifully informal appropriation of public space. Soon we discovered that LUCE was the name of a very active street art artist in Valencia, who creates site specific pieces through the materialization of his tag in a variety of materialities. Indeed, that sane evening we entered an elegant-hipster space offering food, drinks and art and there they were, a couple of 'LUCE's on walls…

[281] Curiously enough after a couple of years, in February 2020 El Cabanyal was chosen as the third coolest neighbourhood in Europe (by newspaper The Guardian) https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2020/feb/08/10-of-the-coolest-neighbourhoods-in-europe-paris-berlin-rome

[282] Later we would acknowledge that the 'Salvem el Cabanyal' movement would be successful in winning the neighbourhood back to the local population, in 2015.

Fig. 3. Valencia downtown. Children play with/in interactive installation by LUCE.

In March 2014, we travelled to the south of France. Marseille was chosen as the meeting point with the artist Régis Perray[283]. We visited the impressive MuCEM and enjoyed its highly original architecture and strolled along the luminous bay, where we encountered the new public space icon of the city: the Port Vieux Pavillion, designed by Foster + Partners. It is a giant mirrored canopy where people gathered more to see (themselves) than to be seen. In one of the evenings, strolling in some non-touristical street, we noticed loud live music playing and we dared to enter the building. What I recall is that it was extremely pleasant to participate in some Spanish-speaking community's celebration – which quite directly and remarkably reminded us of the cultural (Mediterranean) strata Marseille is historically (and mythically) made of.

[283] Regis Perray was exhibiting in Gallery Gourvennec-Ogor one of the works created and presented in Lisbon ("Acariciar Lisboa" 2013).

Fig. 4. Marseille's hill of Le Panier neighborhood

Next, we were taken to the historic quarter Le Panier, located just above the port. Rue du Panier is a centerline of old Marseille, which gives a very accurate impression of how it looked ages ago. The intimate and relaxed atmosphere slows down one's mind after climbing uphill and leaving the hustle and bustle of city life. Even though sometimes one has to pick up his/her table and chair and let a car pass through and the presence of the palimpsests graffiti and street art feels here and there excessive, in the sense of dirty and noisy.

In the place, we felt it was already pretty much celebrated and we set off inland in search of more remote (less obvious and monothematic) gems. Arles, the city located at the Rhône river and famous for being the scenery of Vincent van Gogh's most famous paintings. Our *flâneur* stroll took us to Le Magasin des Jouets run by Nicolas Havette, an artist and curator. This art space seemed to have the right scale and location. Neighbouring with unique, exquisite restaurants, small grocery shops, all seed to come together at the curvy Rue de la Liberté. Indeed, you can learn a lot from a craftful cheesemonger around the corner or spend the afternoon in a contemplative mood, enjoying the village-spirited-small-scale centrality in the terrace of the 'Cafe La Nuit', portrayed by Van Gogh in "Cafe Terrace at Night" (1888).

Fig. 5. Elegant, stone facades of Rue de la Liberté in Arles

By this time, one acknowledged how certain architectonic elements or details in the very materiality of urban space are indeed defining its haptic quality, if not stimulating its multisensorial appeal. For instance, in Arles the Roman ruins definitely were speaking a different (formal) language than the El Cabanyals (warlike) ruins, while in immaculate Lübeck there were no ruins at all to find in the proximity. Arles was thus a defining moment, since it became then clear that diversity could accumulate in such precise complementary ways, that is, realizing multiplicity (of place-worlds) and mobilizing cumplicity (of cultural agents) across geographical, spatial, social, visual identities.

In September 2014 we visit Tallinn, Estonia. In the very heart of Tallinn's Old Town we were introduced to Katariina käik, a pedestrian lane hidden between ancient walls and where Gothic stone arches are prominent features. Despite the fact that it is already considered as one of the most picturesque sites in the Estonian capital (and a UNESCO Heritage site), the social life of the street is not that satisfying for local cultural agents and that raised our attention in the terms communitarian could be fostered. Tallinn was – like Lübeck, but with way more intensity in terms of intercultural contact – something of a mystic experience.

Italy was an absolute priority. So, we went to Milan to acknowledge the work being done at the 5VIE district. Again, there was an urban area, located very centrally, near Duomo, but still not yet overcrowded and keeping its unique personality. Winding streets, mysterious inner yards, modern art studios and classic *osterie*, exquisite design companies and shops, laid-back street style *aperitivo* spots and solid, dignified architecture (the home of wealthy families). 5VIE is not only the district's name but also a well-organized non-profit association, who's line of work was cultural and territorial marketing. Their goal was to join tradition with innovation basing on its original assets.

A major dimension Milano's apparently governance and communication model can contribute to the to cluster streets was its European centrality and its vibrant – constant – cultural life, of which the Design Week or the Art Week were referential symbols. It is also important to mention that 5VIE – which is named after the geometry of the confluence of five very old (Roman) *vias* – was felt by us as 'the place to be' in Italy. Not only because it was considered as "one of Milan's least tourist populated areas" despite being one of the richest districts of the city in cultural heritage" but because its professional take on locality and connectedness was pretty much part anchored in a translocal vision.[284]

That same month we visited Edinburgh, Scotland. There was an organized meeting with a Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop and its then director Irene Kernan. Thistle street was the one seeming most accurate. It has a very interesting red brick architecture (Georgian, neoclassical) and urban form (it includes two parallel side streets). The reference there was a studio and shop of Howie Nicholsby, who one could call one of the street's ambassadors. He is designing and creating "XXI century kilts".

Thistle street feels very inviting though not 'cute', it has a practical, almost sombre, stony vibe, and it is rather monochrome. One can snuggle in a variety of bars, one that seemed the most inviting and genuine was Thistle Street Bar, gracefully stuck in time, with a very low light that doesn't disturb vivid conversations.

[284] https://www.milandesignagenda.com/milan-design-week-2019-5vie-district-worth-visiting/

Fig. 6. Side line of Thistle Street at night, Edinburgh

To establish a translocal articulation between the (European) street as urban form and social reality being our goal, we started to understand that change would be the only constant. Everything is fluid, especially a lived environment. In order to maintain the creative flow of our concept we understood than that it was time to dive deeper in the experience, in order to create an operative dynamic for connectedness.

7.2 Place, atmosphere, opportunities, expectations

In this chapter one acknowledges and accesses a range of dimensions of a set of six streets, which eventually agreed on developing connected tactics for a translocal narrative in experiencing European streets along the lines of the lenses and concepts presented in this thesis. A general impression of each place's atmosphere is briefly reflected upon, but more important is to analyze a series of other aspects of place.

Firstly, one deepens their image as lived spaces, in the spirit of Helen Liggett's notion of "situation awareness".[285] The complementarity of original photographic work is here key, in order to support the accompanying reflections on the social consistency of each street.

Unlike in the previous, the focus is now in objectifying aspects such as location ('absolute'[286] and relative), urban context, urban image and urban code. Notes on region/area/neighbourhood frame a more detailed account on the built environment's sensory identity and its relation to the urban form.

These traits are enriched by references to local narratives, as encoded in space or in discourse at large, and/or concretely communicated to us by our local partners. Finally, of each street one lists concrete expectations as formulated by the latter, some of the including specific themes and objectives generated by their action plans. These two elements – between cultural horizons and strategic actions[287] are helpful to seize the fundamental cultural situation of each 'street'.

Two overlapping possible perspectives, based on a very wide range of sources were outlined: Critical mass, Identity & distinctiveness, Innovative capacity, Diversity & accessibility, Security & safety, Linkage & synergy, Competitiveness, Organizational capacity, Leadership; Understanding the use of iconic communication, Embedding design consciousness, Eco-awareness, Recognition of the power of artistic thinking, The level of cultural depth in a place, The quality of its overall atmospherics & experience, The associational richness of the city, Communication & language skills.

[285] "These [first] encounters are based in urban experience without pretending to tell the truth or even to construct a narrative about the city. Rather than assessing the city as a site of economic production or as an object of governance, this work seeks out cities as places of life." (Liggett, 2003: ix.)
[286] Absolute location is naturally a form of relative location, since coordinates just offer a site's position relative to the Equator (latitude) and prime meridian (longitude).
[287] Obtained through questionnaires and interviews.

7.2.1 Travessa do Marta Pinto, in Belém, Lisbon

The street is located in the Belém neighbourhood, an historic area of Lisbon, Portugal, with quite significant touristical appeal. The 16th Century Jerónimos Monastery, the iconic Pastéis de Belém (custard pies), the CCB art center, the Museu Nacional dos Coches or the new MAAT Museum all attract hords of tourists. The street itself is very narrow, almost with no inhabitants, being at the time of the beginning of the project an active creative and experiential environment, the result of the entrepreneurialism of the Travessa da Ermida Project (comprising a reknowned wine bar, a jewellery workshop and the artistic space Projecto Travessa da Ermida, regularly presenting artworks and installations in a small 18th century chapel.

As previously explained, 'Ermida' has been the driving force ot the inititatie, with an open agenda but a general idea in its core: to add European-scale layer to its usual programme (internationalization). What the street offered a such was a peculiar cultural mix: architectural character (the haptic feeing of Old Lisbon's surfaces, with derelict walls and the centuries old pavement), gourmet food experience, original craft knowledge and a quality contemporary art programme. Travessa had regular yearly participation in Lisbon's important urban festival Lisboa na Rua / Com'Out Lisbon, which helped to establish the street's reputation is a 'venue' with personality.

Besides wanting to explore its 'back' catalogue of artistic productions (a collection of Contemporary Art being available for itinerancy), the street was interested in valorizing its space by means of workshops and exhibitions, and as well in stimulating its already significant gastronomical reputation – be it through the concept of art catering or the collaboration with other wine bars and restaurants. As the original promoter, its agenda was indeed very much open: humanist, convivial, cross-cultural experimentation was at its ethic-aesthetic core.

Fig. 7. Travessa do Marta Pinto, Lisboa. Toponymy and urban artwork's detail


Fig. 8. Travessa do Marta Pinto, Lisboa. Exhibition's opening night

Fig. 9. Street installation by XANA at Projecto Travessa da Ermida, Lisbon

7.2.2 Katariina käik, in the Old Town of Tallinn

In the Estonia capital the partner was MTÜ Valgusfestival (NGO), represented by Indrek Leht, who proposed a program for Katariina käik, an urban gem in the heart of the Latin Quarter. The 13th Century stony passage is 150 meters long and around 3,5m wide, including a spacious square, which was at the time in the process of becoming a car-free zone. Leht's professional experience says that it might be a challenging space, though desired, for public art.

Indrek's – a cultural activist with a large experience in organizing events – wish for this space was to establish a fresh vibe cluster that could add new layers of urban meaning and generate a variety of forms of profit, anchored in the value of the architecture and history. There is a sensational potential for multisensoriality in Katariina käik, says Indrek Leht:

> To see: picturesque scenery
> To hear: birds
> To taste: two good quality restaurants also with terrace in summertime

To feel: concerts in church and culture club, theatre
To tell about: local handicraft, rich history of the Monastery (1200's).[288]

The main objectives of the Estonia Street were to have more art outdoors and organize cultural-culinary events. One of the ideas (that indeed would come true later, in 2015) was the street to host a Boutique Light Festival (it was eventually named LUXMATRIX)[289]. Being different from most existing light festivals for more territory-based and specifically inspired by local narratives to be re-read by the strolling public. The goal of Leht is to direct both the local people and visitors of the town to the less discovered courtyards, enlightening by light festival and showcases historically and culturally valuable places. Art's capacity renders new and actual sense to old facts.

The way that Valguusfestival wishes to approach the issue is mainly through light art, as it perfectly promotes innovative atmosphere design solutions while gently highlighting "the old". Light, as a phenomenon, plays also an important role in this part of Europe, where Autumn and Winter nights are significantly longer than elsewhere. Leht was willing to take out tradition and heritage out of museums and… "take them for a walk, meeting people." The participants has possibility to form a new group, but the focus point would be the historical legacy, as long as savoured through modern and contemporary content. Remembering Tallinn's Hanseatic League past was another very clear idea, for which European cooperation could be key. This has ability to have impact on the perception of locality, in this case, of an intersection (and roots point) of European culture, the awareness of which giving a reason to perceive it as a common and collective value. Katariina käik is thus seen as the perfect place for cosmopolitanism, communication and motivation.

[288] Source: questionnaire.
[289] www.luxmatrixtallinn.wordpress.com

Fig. 10. Toponymy and Gothic ornamental detail of Katariina käik


Fig. 11. Katariina käik, Tallinn. Medieval tombstones (left), Italian restaurant (right).

Fig. 12. Square at the Kloostri Ait Theatre Café, Tallinn

7.2.3 Via Santa Marta in the 5 Vie neighbourhood, Milan

In the historic heart of the city of Milan, five streets converge: via Santa Marta, via Santa Maria Podone, via Santa Maria Fulcorina, via Bocchetto and via del Bollo. The district they are part (and the center) of IS though way larger than that. The area comprises around 1 square kilometre, between the subway stations of Cadorna, Sant'Ambrogio and Cordusio.

The goals of the local organization 5VIE, are clear: cultural valorization, the preservation of crafts traditions, discovery and access to hidden treasures, commercial relaunch of the area, promotion of the 'Made in Italy' concept and the participation to national and international networks. (Ibid.) On the other hand, Milan is also very keen in valorizing its important heritage, their portfolio including two thematic cultural itineraries: ART AND FAITH and LEONARDO AT 5VIE. Both connecting the district's most important cultural venues, in order to promote the discovery of the Milan Old Town's secrets and narrow streets and foster cultural tourism. (Ibid.) As a matter of fact, Milan is one of the world's cultural capitals,

with very relevant movable and immovable cultural heritage. A major problem the city faces could indeed be the excess, not the lack, of cultural offer. That is a 'price' to pay when so important urban milestones are in the surroundings: monuments, churches, archeological sites and, of course, museums (Basilica di Sant'Ambrogio, Circo Romano, Teatro Romano, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Civico Museo Archeologico, La Vigna di Leonardo)

Many cultural events characterize Milan's busy creative culture, like Milano Design Week, the Furniture Trade Fair or, in a more 'intimate' scale, the Journée Européennes des metiers d'art. This is why they the 5VIE territory is consistently used and shared by diverse publics.

Fig. 13. Corner of Via Santa Marta and Via Bagnera hosting installation by portuguese artista XANA.

Fig. 14. Via Santa Marta, Milan. Busy late afternoon.

7.2.4 Calle Josep de Benliure in El Cabanyal

Valencia's Calle de Josep Benlliure is 1350 m long and 7,3 m wide. You need 11' to walk to the closest beach, across the unique El Cabanyal's district. For more than twenty years, the activist community of Salven El Cabanyal, an urban movement with connection to the University (Universitat Politècnica de València) has fought against a neoliberal political decision to destroy part of the historical neighborhood in order to fulfill a contested urban renewal plan.[290] In the spirit of Lefebvre's Right to the City, Salven el Cabanyal

The area has been for years intensely animated by the internationally reknowned activities of the Portes Obertes art project, highly involved in the urban renewal of the district since 1998. The Valencian street represents, on one hand overtly artivist sensibility; on the other,

[290] Having attained their objective, the Platform was dissolved in 2019. see https://valenciaplaza.com/salvem-el-cabanyal-se-disuelve

in a moment the activities of Salven El Cabanyal transmute into other forms of cultural and political collectivisms, it is a street where one could experience the capacity of culture to address the "transformative opportunity" (Ibid.) that any conflict offers.

"Valencian Gastronomy" has been proposed as the core of a movable cultural heritage, while "Traditional Valencian Ceramic Tiles" and "Modernist Houses and small buildings" are the focus in terms the immovable cultural heritage. Concerning the intangible dimension of heritage, a straigpoint of Valencia's culture to be explored could be the Semana Santa Marinera (Holy Week of the Maritim district of Valencia which was declared as of International Tourist Interest) and the famous Fallas, a Valencian Festival declared Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Fig. 15. El Cabanyal, Valencia. Partially demolished area.

Fig.16. One of the traditional hearts of El Cabanyal, Casa Montaña restaurant

Fig. 17. A classic street in geometric urbanistic grid in El Cabanyal

7.2.5 Oude/Nieuwe Oosterstraat in Leeuwarden, The Netherlands

In The Netherlands, in the city of Leeuwarden, Oude Oosterstraat and Nieuwe Oosterstraat were the chosen streets. The city had been elected as European Capital of Culture 2018, mainly because of what they called 'the Mienskip approach'. The word *Mienskip* stands for Community with a bottom-up sense. For the program, put forward by the Province of Fryslan, 45 projects were defined under six themes.

The province of Fryslan is a regional body in the Northern part of the Netherlands. The province is responsible for responsible for several issues like economics and Culture. In cooperation with the city of Leeuwarden the body was helping the foundation Kultural City 2018 to execute the plans.

The two streets, Old and New East Streets are separated by the Tweebaksmarkt. The Tweebaksmarkt is the street where the province hall is housed and ends at the former jail The Blokhuispoort, nowadays a large creative hub, which plays an important role in the official cultural activities in the city. The Old and New Oosterstraat is a relatively narrow street that has always been locally acknowledged in the urban community as the place for groceries and this is still what makes it quite unique today. In the Old Oosterstraat – one of the oldest shopping streets of the Netherlands –, the social design label It Erfskip has a workshop/gallery that could become the local embassy for the Connecting Streets project. The label organises a range of co-creation events in order to develop connections between citizens and souvenir products (they indeed were producing souvenirs for Leeuwarden 2018). All that can be somehow a way to engage the inner-city community at large, with a cultural economy vision: "Innovation and new business can attract young entrepreneurs. International exposure can develop in demand for more local business?"[291]

The street's urban image is plain, neat, very much conveying a typical Dutch environment (of which the typical bicycles are of course very evident). Of all the researched streets it might be the less picturesque, lacking in Mediterranean touch what it has in Protestant design philosophy.

[291] In 'Streets-Summary-Eileen-Inout-Partners' draft document.

In Leeuwarden, the generation of critical mass for the project can be ensured by an official cultural institution which cares for the place's identity. If there is a distinctiveness one argues that it lies here in the way social innovation is clearly a socio-political endeavor, supported by local urban policies. As a public space, the streets are comfortable, accessible, secure and safe, but a lot could be improved concerning synergetic links across borders. Leeuwarden's leadership has clearly the organizational capacity to put forward the place's (and the city's) image and discourse – where the presence of topics 'design' or 'technology' (more than art or culture) can be obvious and typically involved with the eco-awareness of Central European culture.

Fig. 18. Pedestrian path in Oude Oosterstraat, Leeuwarden

Fig. 19. Ooude (Old) and Nieuwe (New) Oosterstraat — an open space at the crossing

Fig. 20. Ornamental detail in Nieuwe Oosterstraat

7.3 Theoretical lenses and their practical aspects

At this point, it is important to reflect on the articulation between the theoretical and the practical aspects of this work, that could be translated into cultural actions (and their action plans) and to be developed in the framework of a range of cultural initiatives. In other words, it is now the moment to write on how the concrete streets analyzed here might accommodate the lenses and concepts presented until this point.

Since those (seven) lenses define aspect to be explored by whoever might become interested in caring for these streets, each place is indeed first and foremost regarded as an assemblage of simultaneously creative and civic opportunities. That is what the tactics proposed here respond to, as a model for cultural appropriation of urban space. An open, participatory, narrative of encounter and spatial co-production thus intends to draw the attention of a potential cultural public to the contemporary issues the project suggests. The cluster of concepts approached frames the very reconceptualization of streets as places as stages for (the urban) experience (to make sense). As the result of a cartography of sorts of the visited sites, it mirrors a both critical and constructive attitude toward the research field.

On 'rhythm'

The vision behind such tactics is grounded on the awareness of urban everyday rhythms, in a process where dromologic principles relate to the philosophy of walking. In this framework, the drive to explore the distinctive qualities of each street (comparatively, through similarities, contrasts, parallelisms, etc.) opens up the possibility of that urban moments might be curated. In this mindset, methodologies such as rhythmanalysis deal with tensions such as the one between normative and authoritative ones.

The point is to develop forms of knowledge of rhythm (personal, collective) that might be coopted as critical takes on the urban capitalist experience. The outcome: the street becoming an opportunity, to experiment with its rhythmic patterns (in a both continuous a non-invasive way). The project highlights the possibility that, through observation, creativity and care, diverse rhythmic patterns, representing indeed Europe's diversity – enter the same rhythmic

vision (vision of rhythm): the polyrhythms of a citizenship more aware of the necessity of space to be lived according to diverse forms of experiential inclusivity beyond capitalisms hectic pace.

A main issue the tactics tackles is to articulate the rhythms of seasons, festivals and festivities, social life, and the very dromology defined cultural programming. This is where for instance the rhythm of writing (for example in writers' residences) might be translated to the one of literature (edition, launching, performative walks); or performance action (short or long, subtle or shocking) might symbiotically integrate, or simply counteract, a place's event culture (say the Milano Design Week in Milano or *las Fallas* in Valencia); not forgetting about the rhythm of living and perceiving new situation and objects.

Therefore, each street has its climatic characteristics, festivals, idiosyncratic cultures, etc., and all that diversity is somehow put to work together for a narrative of cultural contact and informal exchange. Notably, another point is that some cultural events in the streets have clearly similar traits as others in the network: for example, Milano's Design Week offers similar chances for work as the Tallin Design Festival. Thus, a wide range of activities continually offers places new angles on local urban reality, where the original theoretical framework of the project (lenses) is out to test. The main character in the process is naturally the *flâneur* (in the public) that, stimulated by these experiences, will tend to share them and contribute to them with his/her own spectatorship. This leads to the issue of 'network'.

On 'network'

In this research singled-out streets are envisaged as nodes in an urban network (see p. 84). On the other hand, networked cultural programming (p. 3) is to be achieved through constant local and transnational collaboration opportunities. A first step in that direction possibly has to be to design is a database. That database considers, for instance, local schedules, relevant people and institutions, etc. The progressive fine tuning of the database information is a crucial tool to ensure the role of locality in an overall vision/narrative of change.

Concerning the emergence of original modes (see p. 12) of cooperation and communication, a very open-ended and relative database provokes processes of original takes on creative citizenship (immanence-driven activity). Example: in the database, the information on the pavements' materials can be inspiring motif for creative urban art. But how to ensure that the database remains open-ended and dynamic and inclusive? Making it from the outstart open to the community. The intention is to generate a creative public for the streets' everyday (p. 39) – it is as much creative as it is grounded on practices (see Stavrides, p. 41). So, the very existence of a symbolic network is what renders those practices – existing, emerging, or latent – the transnational scale, a sense of belonging beyond borders and the streets' immediate perimeter. Each street gains a new image and an additional dimension, fostered by cultural communication.

Of course, a main issue is how to find in each node (place) who is willing to share objectives, visions, missions, and so on. In this research, this was made possible through personal contacts of the team; but the moment the concept is accepted as a challenge by more cultural agents, the initial scope will immediately grow, organically. Crucially, the point is that the network fosters deeper interpersonal and interinstitutional understanding (see Bookspan, p. 52). In practical terms, this goes beyond the database, leading to a both formal and informal cultural programming context, with tangible and intangible outcomes in sight. In terms of organizational and institutional partnerships, the point is that each street becomes a stage for strategic cooperation.

Europe's cultural fabric is varied, but at the same time, thousands of organizations, institutions, informal groups and individuals share specific values (see p. 62); as a symbolic network, a set of streets are the 'content' under a sort of cultural umbrella, that diverse agents may enjoy being a part of, according to various scale and rhythms of cultural *praxis*… indeed, the main initial challenge in this research's take on tactics is to render the network visibility, namely spatially and locally. So, for example, a Graphic Design project may work on the legibility of the network in terms of urban signage. Or a Food Design project may explore contrasts between gastronomies, enriching the local offer by means of, for instance, a pop-up restaurant.

On 'locality'

In this research, 'locality' is most strategically articulated with 'network' and 'portal' (see p. 13).
Since the main goal of the tactics behind it (and forwarded by it) is to promote the value of locality, its centrality, a way to translate the territories at stake is to deal with them as with a living organism whose well-being is boosted by the very participation in the network. For example, through the acknowledgement of a programme based on, for instance 'Secrets' (to learn about), 'Moments' (to feel) and 'Treasures' (to see), locality's assets become a pretext for cultural appropriation, and furthermore, innovation: for instance exceptional stories known only to local communities, hidden layers concerning the urban assemblage, particular and even exceptional architectural features, and so on. What is available, locally, is a magma of information that may be activated at any moment in the framework of the network.

In word, territorial and spatial features (see p. 50) frame locality as the essence of the various streets as stages for cultural production, interaction, collaboration. So, each street is acknowledged, locally, as an extraordinary urban asset (an urban opportunity). It becomes visible for a transnational public as more than a physical infrastructure.

Furthermore, a conscious interpretation of specific dimensions of place – such as authenticity, or *genius loci* – may be what a place has to offer to the global narrative – which is related to ideas such as the fragment becoming able to have impact on the whole (see Nawratek, p. 50). Curiously, these fragments – streets – are by their very essence connected (physically), which leads to the importance of conscious walking practices as a take in locality. Indeed, various modalities of walking practice are fundamental options to appropriate the local (artistic, performative, research-driven, experimental, and so on), in an always changing context.

Acknowledging locality through a tactical approach of urban culture (in the framework of a an open-narrative) allows for the formation of fleeting communities, developed around specific issues or interests, communities that for some period activate a street's potential (for instance, a performance art festival, a crafts fair, a gastronomy event, and so on). In other

words, for specific periods, the spotlights point to local realities in a creative way (applying artistic modalities to place branding, for instance). And this leads to each place's participation in the global narrative of the city (see p. 51). It is about letting local images contribute, with awareness, to the global circulations of imaginaries (see p. 52) For example, the way a certain urban phenomenon is seen and felt in one place (for instance, Design in Milano), travels to another context, and is translated during interesting exchange process (see case study of Lux Matrix UNO event, in Tallinn).

Events, which may be understood as the setting of the aforementioned specific walking practices are lived ways of practical knowledge (p. 73) on locality. More, they generate a renewal of the sense of locality (see p. 245), beyond current brand image. Crucially, what is at stake is to generate locally a community of interest on this approach of locality (things like think-tanks, do-tanks, etc.). Through this lens, as entangled with the one of the network, people get more aware of the ways individual character may have value for a broader urban context (neighbourhood, city, country, world). The streets become in this sense, a transnational exercise on limits and borders.

On 'connectivity'

The sense of connectivity (see p. 13) in this thesis is mainly tackled and stimulated by means of a narrative. The first step in this process is each street to enter the narrative, that means, certain local agents to open up to that creative horizon. The acceptance of this challenge by a series of opinion-makers, creative agents, artists, etc. renders the sense of connectivity a pragmatical dimension. This allows for instance local dynamics to be fine-tuned to enter specific parts of narrative (for example, a walking area becomes the stage for a Situationst-inspired walkshop). Connectivity is what allows locality to be felt by the population, both local and mobile, as something behind borders. Cultural translation and exchange (see p. 15) are significantly boosted by this perspective.

The urban public is here invited to be aware of an immaterial dimension of cultural contact, for each streetscape becomes through this process less a reified material fact than a

possibility to articulate aesthetical involvement. In architectural terms, for instance, an urban element – say, a construction technique – is acknowledged both in its specificity and the way it resonates, or not, diverse construction techniques from other places. Again, cultural contact and its immaterial results are to a great extent to be grounded in each place's immanent. So, each member of the public is invited through these tactics to be more ware of immaterial qualities of place.

In sum, and in the spirit of Simmel (see p. 53), each explores its identity through pragmatical actions along time (public art or literature-based performative walks, as well as all sorts of engaging conversation) are particularly efficient models to address this point). To select a few symbolic streets is about cartographing a first series of places that somehow deserve to keep their identity but are eager to explore some possibilities through cultural connectivity. Social connectivity (see p. 57) contributes to the affirmation of contrasting, nevertheless more and more connected, urban fabrics. In other words, social contact driven by aesthetics elevates the intercultural vibration and the potentially creative energy of each place.

On 'interface'

Each street (as a physical entity, with material limits) is an interface for cultural agents to produce something new cooperatively. In this thesis, the notion of narrative interface (see p. 3) drives a vision of the present and future of a set of streets. One believes narrative makes a difference, while only an open narrative allows for places to explore their locality (and local identities) in an emerging translocal network. In other words, the ground for a new vision of connectivity is the very notion that a concrete economy of (diverse) places is in itself a both local and translocal interface (see p. 62). The fragmentation inherent to the notion of disperse streets is productively resolved across the pollination allowed by specific mechanisms of cultural cooperation and even-co-creation. Each street, in this sense, becomes more aware of its fragmentary status, while becoming an interface – in the sense that, locally, all sorts of relations (see p. 63) become potentially an asset.

In its abstraction, the notion of interface asks the urban public to become aware of the possibility that diverse interfaces – necessarily not all visible, or acknowledged – are political tools for aesthetic engagement. Interfacial politics, though a certain tactical approach of streetscapes, sensescapes, and so on, becomes a lived possibility. The latter is the more a political fact the more it generates mediation (see p. 65) phenomena (beyond existing urban policies and cultures, some deliberately hegemonic).

This said, the whole tactics is in itself a first meta-interface; promoting the emergence of mediating interfaces in each street. It all becomes visible, progressively, as the work of whoever enters the narrative, which implies the progressive acknowledgement of a discourse on the city (the narrative interface's outcome). Once a series of tactical aspects of streets' appropriation becomes a fact, the whole (a set of streets) is a sort of empty entity (see p. 65) that may generate the emergence of a range of smaller scale interfaces that render the broader one alive (dynamic, useful, actual, and so on). The mental space (see p. 79) of an emerging tactic community is the major outcome of the effective translation of these notions to the urban communities (at large) involved.

One thus concludes that a specific cluster of places, in order to work out as a translocal/transnational interface, grounds its strength on the possibility of play with similarities and complementarities. In a symbiotic way, what each place has to offer is articulated with what is it is willing to receive.

On 'assemblage'

Assemblages are crucial to form the real (see p. 65), and in this context it is a key notion to, first of all, de-re/construct the whole materiality of the urban environment. Streets' assemblages (see p. 66), are observed, analyzed and finally cared for and creatively explored by a range of cultural and creative agents. The notion of assemblage is what allows the urban reality to be appropriated in its wholeness – holistically – while remaining the object of specific actions that are the more conscious the more the notion of assemblage is kept in

mind. Concrete atmospheres (see p. 95) are through these tactics to be enriched through walking practices that are ways to keep attention a valid cultural fact.

It is the notion of assemblage that allows the urban public at large – locally, translocally – to become aware of the political meaning of the urban experience. Through those processes, aspects of the urban everyday become themselves the elements under scrutiny of citizen awareness (across processes of conscious observation, comparison, etc.). For instance, laws, mores, traditions, specific challenges or political decisions that are present in one city will not necessarily apply to another, and this is an opportunity for a new generation of *flâneurs* to engage in relevant cultural critique, production, mutual support, exchange and eventually social change. When the urban experience is acknowledged as the immaterial outcome of such a range of processes, one learns more from a distant reality than from a close one: this set of streets exemplifies contrasting ways of integrating heritage, urbanism, mobility, commerce or entrepreneurialism. Thus, that is the point: its cartographic *ethos* is an original way to ground cosmopolitanism in the critical appropriation of the atmosphere of places.

Needless to say, not only the individuals involved in this tactic, but organizations, have their expectations and objectives concerning these streets' ambiences. The point is here to manage to generate a sense of co-operative take on these localities – going beyond specific organizations' and institutions' activities to embrace users' –, that might spread as a broader narrative of urban empowerment in a win-win situation with metapolitical undertones (that are fostered by the role of art and literature in the city). On the other hand, this diversity of stages for the 'traveling' art and literature (and other activities) and the very circulation of people is the more relevant the more the choice of streets demonstrates that one same European value depends on interdependent diversity. Milano may share with Tallinn the 'appetite' for Design, but with Lisbon something else: urban art.

In very straightforward terms, the following line of reasoning (considering the relation between spatial characteristics and atmosphere) might be a good example of how the different streets shed light on each other when seen form the perspective of shared and compared experience. Travessa do Marta Pinto, a tiny alley, represents a picturesque urban scape typical of an anachronic Europe, where Contemporary Art is the living element in an

almost dead scenography. Lisbon's spatial traits are not much different from Tallinn's, in the sense that in both urban heritage is an unavoidable fact and the friendly urban scale is adequate for delicate interventionism. But what does it mean to be 'picturesque', for two cities that have both a strong touristic strategy? And might it be related to the capacity of place to welcome innovation (an issue which comes to mind when one compares the small jewelry studio of Travessa da Ermida with the powerful crafts guild in Katariina Käiik).

For instance, in Lisbon, one may speak of a small urban laboratory in an important European capital. The local leader (a private gallery) has full autonomy, which ensures the continuity of a year-long programme in the vicinity of a highly touristic circuit (Belém). In Tallinn's Latin quarter, the leadership is more diffuse, since diverse organizations may compete (or cooperate) to define the actions and events to be realized. In Milano's large 5Vie area, one finds a more complex organization as leader, an association which is way more dependent of locality's dynamics (compromises with political and economic agendas) and whose legitimacy to lead the cluster is every year at stake. In Valencia, the local activists are connected to the Academia – a stable institution –, and their commitment to place led them to become important players in the political life of the whole Municipality. In Leeuwarden, the organization is also powerful, but in the more conventional sense (top-down) that it manages to advocate for the street in a very strategic way. In sum, the chosen places epitomize a wide range of potentially operative creative tensions. Private/public, mainstream/alternative, functional/artistic, just to name the most important ones.

Acknowledging how atmospheres work, the tactical approach of urban space addressed in this research is a relevant model to expand the political realm, where aesthetics meets the urban, when for instance sensescapes are reworked to accommodate new ideas (in this case coming frequently from 'partner' streets). Engaging a nomad urban public, interested in and/or critical of existing atmospheres, powerfully demonstrates that mobility and shared experience are crucial for every local atmosphere to continually monitor its evolution.

On 'portal'

'Portal' is the main lens that ensures that the whole theoretical framework presented here becomes manifest. This is a very fundamental aspect of cultural tactics as reflected upon here: "Theory is a geography of portals through which any reader might enter a dialogue of ideas and cultural experiments" (see p. 4). So streets – since places – (see p. 13) are not only themselves portals but every single aspect in them may become a portal for tactical appropriation. One of art's role in the city is in this sense to offer opportunities for attunement (see Morton, p. 72), while implying a cognitive dimension (see p. 81). In this mindset, to engage in mindful cultural programming concerns the acknowledgement of how important it is to produce artistic practices where a sense of belonging to place is fostered.

Space – urban space – is so to say the 'material' expression of the portal's openings. (see p. 81) This is the conceptual context that allows the ungraspable to manifest itself as socio-cultural opportunity. Spatial features, say the way the past has 'carved' a place, may for example open up a radical possibility: the city's history may be rewritten. And in that process, knowledge transfer is as much crucial as creative experimentation. This leads streets to be more willing to accept the interplay of a range of activities – from arts practice to research, from entrepreneurialism to political work. All these dimensions of social life become more common – in the sense of shared – precisely because of the centrality of the notion of portal in urban tactics. That leads to processes where reification – of ideas, ways of doing, ideologies… – is counterbalanced with individual phenomenological insight. 'Portal' is indeed a key-word to address the importance of letting urban space resonate the will for liberation and creation (see p. 229), necessary for creative citizenship to have a go at challenging the *status quo* of urban strategies, many of them leading the urban narrative to a civilizational dead end.

In sum, a tactics like suggested in this thesis is a way for sensitive communities to avoid to be completely overwritten by very strong global dynamics – from the smart cities or gentrification, mass tourism or hyperconsummerism – in a way that indirectly promotes autarky.

A fleeting, more or less informal, community of sensitive new *flâneurs* being very much aware of the value of alterity and ultimately lead diverse streets' social groups to engage in processes leading to a more self-sufficient acknowledgement of the role of streets atmospheres in urban life. Ultimately such tactics can allow a new layer of Europe to appear, clearly detached from the established political structures.

8. Conclusions: An empirical approach of locality, toward a translocal tactics' insights

> *Commentary is also literature, just as writing history can be creative, the question is to what extent the creativity involved follows the understanding of the term creativity in the arts or its accountancy.*
> **Malcolm Miles**

Words by Malcom Miles in his latest book – *Cities and Literature* (2019) – resonate the spirit of this investigation and of its tentative procedures. "In which way is it relevant to develop across diverse urban contexts a new narrative relating values and experiences by means of an inspiring, inclusive and participatory cultural concept?" This has been my key-question. Looking in retrospect, how has it been addressed in this research? Arguably, by producing a cartography of key-concepts and theories (a territory of enquiry); generating a mediation/communication model (open narrative); and relating it to the principles of a vision of art (curatorial programme). The way these three main levels of realized work operatively overlap, allowed for a tactical sensibility to become visible. In other terms, I design a conceptual sketch that runs like a script.

In a specifically loose and hybrid aesthetic production field, I hope to have developed an inspirational form of urban-cultural tactics, especially relevant in the current times, when mobility is in question[292] and translocal/intercultural cooperation is a critical imperative.[293]

Within this research's case study, one may speak of the visibilization of places – streets – as an exemplary interfaces/infrastructures of cultural mobility network, where a narrative thread might become attractive for a nomad community to come. The task at hand is to relate place and agency through a conceptual and narrative structure that explores diversity, complementarity, mobility and cooperation.

[292] With the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in beginning of 2020, many thinkers comment we are living what it seems to be a new age in society and culture, if not civilization.
[293] "[…] it could be said that a project is just one step away from the diagnosis." (Nawratek, 2018:33)

I tried indeed to briefly extrapolate, from the diverse segmentary information gathered during an anamnesis process, a sense of unity and universality, albeit keeping in mind the notion that 'cultural streets' are, more than the accumulation of strata, dynamic assemblages fostering the possibility of a wide range of transversal connections.

In other words, I tried here to understand, based on a few streets' 'portraits' the dynamics of similarity and contrast, as well as of cultural positionings and in doing so explore a consistent narrative take on glocality. The focus has been less on the architectural features and urban character of places and more on their potential for mediation and communication.

I may say that, with this cultural connectivity narrative, geographically 'distant' issues might become shared and debated in a way that offers the image of a fleeting European Public, for whom the diverse experiences involved are called to define subtle modes of awareness-production. In this framework, the *flâneur/nu-flânerie* articulation is the model to produce creative citizenship. What is at stake is a creative take on mobility and social interaction.

Against this backdrop, Ingold's philosophy of the line is particularly productive (Ingold, 2016: 106), Experiencing European Streets being a specific contribution to such "art of movement" (Ingold, 2016: 133).

Eventually, the writing (down) of the thesis indeed ran the 'risk' of re-stratifying many lived open processes during the research and within the case study's processuality. However, to pin down the essence of what might one day become a dynamic cultural project implies not only the "creative mapping of our connections and potentialities" but also to pay attention to "trajectories of future becomings, as well as to those already delineated continents of representation and signification" (O'Sullivan, 2006: 36).

In this research, civic and artistic *flâneries* and the artist as *flâneur* are key elements in the creation of an original cultural concept, aimed to render the city a new gaze and a specific set of streets a new kind of visibility. Streets were approached here as social infrastructures, nodes in a network and atmospheric assemblages – as lived places – that shall welcome a holistic (narrative) model to specifically relate urban walking practices with the built

environment. As an immediate consequence, this has an ability to paradoxically constitute a rarely visible both earthly and spiritual approach of urban reality, where the ethical take on the architectural and spatial everyday – and on streets as autopoietic contexts – becomes a viable thing. (Morton, 2018) Virtually connecting a few streets may be no more than a gesture, but: "The revolutionary way is down and under, not bigger and over the top. […] New art and new architecture is possible, we haven't reached the end". (Ibid.)

In the process of visiting and choosing streets to consider as case-studies, aspects of their materiality, atmosphere and social life became literally as many gates for future closer encounters with those particular localities. Through the liberating (and creative) notion of portal (Morton, 2016) – in the epicenter of a wide range of transversal issues that sustain a *truthfelt* (Morton, 2018) narrative, it is possible to rethink places and their interrelation operatively, as well as their experiential potential for a community of cultural "partisans" (Nawratek, 2018).

Remaining closer to notions of counter-hegemonic aesthetic resilience than to reified issues of cultural management, in this call for a *nu-flânerie* there are diverse agents involved, whose identity is necessarily fluid: the artist, the stroller and the engaged stranger, each more or less involved in forms of collectivism or community: a stroller may experience the practice of art, the artist the wonders of strolling, managers the spirit of co-creativity, and so on; all embodying experiences of creative citizenship.

In these tactic circularities, each event of a future events programme aim to offer/produce urban moments, within an open narrative of vision-meditation-action (Buddhist inspired) – in sum, of consciously sought (ex)change – and spiritual insight emanating from a dromological nomadology.

What follows is, first, a set of critical articulations the research proposes, general in kind; second, a personal, empirical account of a variety of conclusions related to my work in the case study.

A territory of disciplines and issues – critical articulations

In the positioning of my research within Culture Studies, several areas of work or disciplines were convened.[294] These crossing and overlapping fields and methodologies of enquiry allowed me to address the complexity of the lived experience of the city – in the proximity of urban cultural studies[295] – through a specific multi-dimentional grid that tries to broaden the traditional scope of urban theory in order to address actual aspects of the urban question (Castells 1977). They defined an economy of research frameworks or perspectives which I see as necessary and sufficient to tackle this thesis' Research Question.

Before advancing to the more empirical conclusions, I briefly recall the main overlapping theoretical articulations addressed.

(New) Urbanism(s) as cultural perspectivation

What is at stake in urbanism, at the level of the very materiality of the city, is to build "humanely-informed" (Gold, 2011: 297) environments.[296] This said, "Culture is the software of cities just as the built environment is its hardware." (Peter Calthorpe in Meyer, 2014: 16) An ecological nano-constructivism of street cultures, departing from the lived recognition of patterns of urban life and leading to urbanistic care – from mobile (Harris and Moore, 2013) to comparative (Robinson, 2016) – is a process that imagines the city as made of

[294] Urban studies, urbanism and architectural theory, political thought and human geography, social semiotics and photographic practice, phenomenology and affect theory, complexity theory and mediology, philosophy and finally cultural theory.

[295] "From the outset it is necessary to point out that any definition of "urban cultural studies" is likely to be as polemical as those of its two constituent parts – "cultural studies" and "urban studies." The meanings and significance of these terms themselves have been and continue to be hotly and widely debated within and across a number of increasingly interdisciplinary fields. And yet, taking a moment to sketch out the nature of the debates – even if briefly and in general terms—is necessary if we are to understand the current need for an urban cultural studies method, a method that might bridge both humanities and social science scholarship on the culture(s) of cities. (Fraser 2015, 19)

[296] One thing is certain: "[…] buildings are more than just buildings, factories and offices are more than just factories and offices, infrastructure is more than just infrastructure. The relations between people, objects, and spaces that they realize is the medium through which capitalism makes and reproduces itself." (Gold, 2011: 185)

"metabolic circulatory process" (Swyngedouw, 2006: 106) Spiritual Urbanism (Bermudez, 2016) is an emergent adequate framework to address "the unprecedented magnitude and speed of the challenges we are facing." (Ibid. 105) As an "inevitably a cultural operation" (Ibid. 109) it conveys a "sacramental view of the world." (Ibid.)

This is a fresh contribution to the debate on assemblage, for "Why not also take religion, or science, or the force of tradition, or nationalism, or even biology and evolution and other similar entities seriously"? (Ibid.) And why not add the dimensions of "temperature, or weather, or atmosphere to the equation? Inviting passers-by and tourists, dwellers and the very academic community to reengage with the city implies to reckon "all sorts of surprising agencies" (Ibid. 186). Matters of scale and of organization are crucial here, which explains a new interest for "a more topological diagramming of the materiality of cities" (Amin and Thrift, 2002).

Architectural insight as sensescape awareness

Architecture is a cultural medium. (Robinson, 2006: 4) Architecture and the built environment – "architectural space" (Baxter, 2017: 35) – in all its materiality, symbolism and atmosphere – is important to be rethought through practices such as walking which implies resonances with the urban environment (as landscape) and the engagement with streets (as atmospheres and assemblages).

An architecture-based ethics – across the notion of affective infrastructure/interface – might fuel a take on otherwise unconscious sensescapes (Landry, 2012a) or hidden dimensions (Capra, 2002) of urban life. Topophilia (Bachelard, 1994) shall meet philosophy of architecture (Pallasmaa, 2010) – and of urban life – through the praise of practices of immersion. This is where phenomenological thought's critique of the scopic regime engages with the ideas that streets have a spirit (Norberg-Schultz, 1979) to be un-, dis- or recovered. If not re-invented.

On the political, toward citizenship

Cultural (as well as aesthetic) moments imply revisi(ti)ng/surpassing exhausted political narratives and their jargons, in the favor of a more 'back-to-basics' and face-to-face (convivial, conversational) approach of shared urban space, where it is operative to differentiate between ‘politics’ and the ‘political’ (Mouffe, 2013).

In this framework, the notion of time is key – for Virilio, “collocation of time and conflict is the essence of the political” (Doherty, 1993: 19), which demonstrates how valid it is, to promote forms of urban resilience based on alternative forms of mobility and experience of place – if not governance. Beyond managerialism (Harvey, 1989), *nu-flâneries* are forms of performative citizenship (Hildebrandt, Evert, Peters, Schaub, Wildner and Ziemer, 2019), retaining a transformative power that is a legacy of creative bohemia (Miles, 2019: 5).

Hyperseductive society vs. heightened living aesthetic

Seduction hides the truth and reality, but also, and more fundamentally, stimulates and ‘builds’ the very reality of desire (Lipovetsky, 2019) in a world which is the result not only of neoliberalism, technoscientific derives and globalization but the expression of a superlative principle of seduction (Lipovetsky, 2019: 28) – which in turn produces not only the degradation of ecosystems but also the development of a universe of human autonomy, full of creativity and self-invention (as the current panoply of start-ups demonstrates).

Within what Serroy named *artist capitalism* (In Ibid.) culture has the task to reject infantilization (Lipovetsky, 2019: 382) – a pathologic aspect of hypnotic consumption. When generating a community of readers/writers of places that might escape the consumerist prison (Lipovetsky, 2019: 432), streets may become a social matrix (Butler, 2012: 42) with the *basic form* of the *flâneur* allowing for a not reified urban experience.

The city (of connectivity) beyond consumption

De Certeau saw "consumption not as an end point or afterthought to producing urban spaces and service, but as an active process" (Crang, 2011: 109). Yet, "Consumption lies in the very heart of the contemporary city" (Miles, 2017: 99), with neoliberal visions of economy influencing (creatively destroying) the progressive potential of the urban sustainable development narrative. A cultural urban project might have the responsibility to tackle the "creative moments" (Rossi, 2017: 207) of neoliberalism – both "urban neoliberalism and neoliberal urbanism" (Ibid. 211) in a productive take on multidimensional cultural connectivity, maybe a way to counteract, both locally and transnationally, the entrepreneurialization of the governance of society as whole (Ibid.).

Our cultural streets, since traversing diverse degrees of uncertainty, may well depart from the continuous reinvention of governance through learning to generate an original form of translocal urban experience-based pedagogy. To be sure, as long as a certain balance between non-expert knowledge and technical expertise is ensured, and as soon as a specifically Human re-conceptualization of space-time is embodied. This leads to the conviction that urban space is the stage for performativity and an inventive and ultimately redeeming take on urban life's everyday rhythms, necessarily anchored in the non-human agents (infrastructure) with which one shares spatial constitution.

The city as learning machine

The city is a machine for tactical learning (McFarlane, 2010) "a political and practical domain through which the city is assembled, lived and contested" (Ibid. 360). The learning process implies "domain shifts" (Ibid.) – "reformatting" (Sennett, 2008: 210) – and "multiple translations". (McFarlane 2010, 364) Streets may be reimagined as pedagogical translation-coordination centres, where complex "calculations" (Latour, 1999) are realized in order to ensure the learning network's pedagogic vitality.

Just like Deleuze's "nomad thought" (Clarke and Doel, 2011: 144) betrays a "fondness for becoming, transformation, and shape-shifting," (Ibid.) learning is like "wayfinding" (Ingold, 2000: 155), a "journey" (Ibid.). The German word *Building* offers a rich metaphorical framework for such apprenticeship focused on self-awareness in the urban environment, which demands a take on social reality and co-existence: "people need to practice their relations with one another, learn the skills of anticipation and revision in order to improve these relations" (Sennett, 2008: 289).

Consciousness in cultural work

Human organizations are living systems (Capra, 2002: xii). Streets have their DNA (heritage, character, form, communities…), just like cells, but the foundation of cellular identity are the membranes – "always active, opening and closing continually, keeping certain substances out and letting others in" (Capra, 2002: 7). A street is a life system that does not need to be (genetically) predetermined (when, for instance, it loses diversity or becomes alienated from the process of self-becoming).

To become an active element in such a cultural vision of urbanism, the street shall assume the character of a dissipative structure (Capra, 2002: 12) where joint and collaborative efforts in communitarian agency, political assembly or common aesthetic generate *provisionally stable* urban identities fostered by the formal and informal connectivity among a range of actors (Capra, 2002: 192). In such collective search for dynamic balance, one learns from the tradition of the I Ching that it is continuity that which moves things from their torpor. Likewise, the Dao encapsulates the way a 'cultural street' might become a powerfully conscious tool for social resilience.

Media(tion) (vs. communication)

Debray – an intellectual *flâneur*[297] invites the user of the city to become a *medialogist*. For any ideology – or idea – to become a material force, one has to "collectivise and materialise" (Debray, 2000: 27), through the management of its diffusion logistics. The urb is a magma of 'texts' to be edited and specific streets are counterhegemonic/heterotopic subjectivation platforms. In this vision of communication *as* mediation (Debray, 1996: 5)[298] "Sender and receiver are modified from the inside by the message they exchange, and the message itself is modifies by its circulation." (Ibid. 44)

An important task is here outlined: "It makes little sense to re-mechanize culture; but to de-sanctify *technè*, does" (Ibid.). And to do this, negotiating (cultural) biodiversity is an imperative (Ibid. 128). The process implies a "*reflective*" (Ibid.) relation to all sorts of tools around us in the everyday, so that placial assemblages might transmit culture while generating new "socialized operators of transmission" (Ibid. 16) interested in producing the very matter of myth, narrative and cultural horizons. "To transmit is to organize, and to organize to hierarchize" (Ibid.) and with this mindset urban values are to be less 'communicated' than properly 'mediated'.

Community (at) work

Exceeding the horizon of signification (Fynsk, in Nancy, 1991: xxv), community "escapes representation" and "any theoretical grasp" (Ibid.) "Perhaps we should not seek a word or a concept for it, but rather recognize in the thought of a community a theoretical excess (or more precisely an excess in relation to the theoretical) that would oblige us to adopt another *praxis* of discourse and community."(Nancy, 1991: 26)[299] A cultural project is then about a

[297] For Vandenbergue, "It is true that his style" – like Timothy Morton's – "is not scientific." (Vandenbergue 2007, 38.)
[298] For instance, "the text as ideal unity is less pertinent than the book as object, and the object in its turn less so than its metamorphoses". (Debray 1996, 11)
[299] "But we should at least try to say this, because "language alone indicates, at the limit, the sovereign moment where it is no longer current." Which means here that only a discourse of community, exhausting itself, can indicate to the community the sovereignty of its sharing". (Nancy 1991, 26)

fleeting “cultural politics”, seeking to offer the “experience of community as difference.” (Fynsk, in Nancy, 1991: xxvi) Nancy proposes community *as communication*, a task whose openness and emergence implies performed incompleteness: “It is not a matter of making, producing, or instituting a community; nor is it a matter of venerating or fearing within it a sacred power – it is a matter of uncompleting its sharing” (Nancy, 1991: 35).

Such a process is the very fuel of “active citizenship” (Schwarzmantel, 2007: 460) through which citizens interpret, debate, negotiate, contest, communicate and certainly *feel* and *share* their very differences and of course divergencies. Without involving “the denial of difference or diversity”, “such an idea of positive political community [is] stronger than the mere fact of living under common political institutions (Mason, 2000 in Ibid.), since it builds legitimate “links of mutual respect and shared understanding between citizens with their distinct particular affiliations”. (Schwarzmantel, 2007: 460) It is in this precise sense that the whole Experiencing European Streets project – as a gesture toward a more democratic society – involves the affirmation of values. It is a script (Bruner, 1991: 11) where endless narratives are to be more anonymously ‘rewritten’ by a nomad community of sorts.

(Futurant) Heritage

A task of every generation is to make sense of the desire for a balance between the unstoppable flux of life and the historical forms of cultural expression. Heritage offers an endless repertoire of ideas, experiences and forms, available for the activity of cultural innovation. To perform the civic and cosmopolitan appropriation of heritage (Fortuna, 2013: 120) is a political affair (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000, in Kelly, 2005). Invited to reject nostalgia (Fortuna, 2017: 7), new urbanity is characterized by hybridity and cosmopolitanism, and thus poses the problem of how to enunciate the future heritage of present communities. As a matter of fact, writer Amin Maalouf’s distinction between horizontal heritage – “transmitted to us by our contemporaries and by the age we live in” and vertical heritage – “one that comes from our ancestors, our religious community and our popular traditions” (Maalouf, 2003: 102-103) – is very useful here. It is a model to allow every new generation

to understand what to do with the tension between classical and vernacular heritage (Dallow, 2008: 109).

Heritage is widely regarded as something lasting and important for the community (as long as it is perceived as capable of orienting change). Consequently, the streets this generation has inherited maybe deserve to be inhabited by the power of curatorial and artistic gestures. The heritage of a specific street may become the driving force for its glocal differentiation strategy – as polity (Mason, 2000, in Schwartzmantel, 2007: 460) – not the least because heritage shapes feelings – like when *pâtine* moves us.[300] This perspective allows an urban public to acknowledge its own role in *de-patrimonializing* the built environment, precisely in order to reinvent urban functions and iconographies. The tourism industry and its 'packages' proceedings is in these terms not culturally productive at local level. In other words, a "*futurante*" understanding of heritage (Ibid. 12) is key for creative urban palimpsests to reinvent sceneries (and scenarios) of urban life. Indeed, walking practices might lead citizens to acknowledge themselves "unexpected heritages" (Ibid. 13) and furthermore engage with the counter-hegemonic nano-touristical gaze.

Europe is our playground[301]

Europe is a "cultural matrix".[302] For Steiner in *The Idea of Europe* (2015), there are a few elements that *define* Europe (spatially): a network of places within walking distances (no huge canyons, great lakes or oceans in between its parts...), a collection of public spaces – the Cafés – where the interchange of the ideas, political and cultural, have made Europe's History come to light, and Europe's memory, its people and their achievements – the history

[300] As Morton reminds us: "The nineteenth-century writer John Ruskin was a great scholar of architecture who argued that the modern tendency to want to clean old buildings, very much in effect today, was a sacrilegious erasure of what he liked to call *the stain of time*. In a sense Ruskin was aiming at something like an ontological re-description of things: to remove the time stain is to harm the actual thing, because a thing *actually is* this temporal staining (Morton 2018, 169) For Mary Jane Jacobs, one thing is true: "Cities need old buildings so badly it is probably impossible for vigorous streets and districts to grow without them". (Jacobs 1961, 187)

[301] This is the name of a song by British pop group Suede. The lyrics state: "Europe is our playground / London is our town."

[302] GOFLANEUR Complete, p. 28.

and collective memory that pinpoint every street and square in the continent, unlike anywhere in the world. On the other hand,

> Unlike one's mother culture, which is acquired by socialization during early childhood, self-identification as European usually appears much later, after some sort of political socialization, and usually through a process of research and discovering of one's self-identity and references. (Rocabert 2011)

After all, just like it has been the landscape what turned the Americans *American*, to relate to the European streetscape at large, beyond "mainstream déjà-vus" (Caeiro, 2015), implies to create *new mithogenenetic* zones (as J. Campbell calls).

To understand a European matrix in this research, nothing better than to follow (in negative) Baudrillard's post-modernist sharpness in his account on… America, where aesthetics seems to have had an ending (Baudrillard, in Leach, 1997: 213): "No desire: the desert. […] No charm, no seduction in all this." (Ibid.) One is in this sense well aware that what is at stake is an inwardly European reflexivity. It is this sense, that, precisely like with de Certeau – who uses himself, significantly, the word "desert" to describe the meaningless metropolis (de Certeau, 1988: 103) –, practices of neighbourhood life and tactical walking the streets presuppose "an imaginary of urbane life that is located in a European intellectual culture that may not reflect all urban lifestyles" (Crang, 2011: 111).

(Mis)using Creativity

In the figure of the creative class[303] one senses a weakening of social ties, while experts 'take over' the field of creativity. But usage[304] opens up a tactical space-time in what is otherwise the prescribed (Roy, 2017: 42): "usership is not beyond gaming; indeed, it's just gaming – but playing for real" (Wright, 2013: 39)[305]. When compared with the abstract space of the

[303] This is a terminology that might be put in parallel to Druckers' "knowledge workers (1959) to the "knowledge class (Bell, 1973) or Barbrooks's (1969) concept of 'produsumers' (later 'prosumer' or 'produser') (in Hartley, Potts, Cunnigham, Flew, Keane and Banks, 2013: 48)

[304] "It is expert culture – whether the editors, the urban planners, the curators – which is most hostile to usership: from the perspective of expertise, *use* is invariably *misuse*. But from the perspective of users, everywhere, so-called misuse is simply... use. In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre points out a fundamental difference between the cognitive space of usership and the epistemological chauvinism of expert culture." (Wright, 2013: 26)

[305] "A generation ago, the work of Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau persuasively analysed the goings-on, inventiveness and usership of what has come to be called 'the everyday.' But Wright explains, translating

experts (architects, urbanists, planners), the pragmatism of usership is an aspect of radical creative citizenship. On the other hand, if creativity can be seen as imagination put into practice, it is the greatest editor par excellence (Didi-Huberman, 2016: 150).

A major cultural shift to be done is thus to rearrange the very pragmatical meaning of the term 'creative', unworking the ideological stress on originality the term carries (Williams 1976, 19)[306] In other words, the creative industries narrative 'sells' novelty but is, like any other social and socio-economic activity made of practices and occupations – where routine, standardization and derivative actions stand in stark contrast to the creative act – which is 'un-manageable'. In this context, it is indeed fundamental to demistify a concept that has been mis-used by the likes of Richard Florida, who epitomizes Neoliberalism's stress on obedience and performance.

Going further

Escapology (at work)

Looking back, the research has been carried out firstly as a cartography of possible entries into the topic. The point was that initial *corpus* of theoretical approaches to enter in resonance with the researcher's participation in the creation of a co-creative/collaborative cultural concept. It gathered theoretical positions from a variety of scientific texts. Also, many personal encounters determined the flow of the work, leading to a conversational tone that echoes the way a range of authors are mentioned and quoted.

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the notion to our times: "I couldn't quite figure out what the right concept and the right word might be to name usership's sphere of engagement. I never did figure it out; that's not how language use works. I overheard it one day. A regular stepped up to the bar, exchanged a quick glance with the barman who asked, invitingly, as if confident in what he already knew, '*the usual'?*" (Wright, 2013: 65)

[306] "The assumption that originality and novelty are fundamental to the creative industries is to some extent ideological". (Hartley, Potts, Cunningham, Flew, Keane and Banks, 2013: 67)

Through the general structure, a succession of lenses has been outlined, themes and topics overlapping (as if responding to inter- and transdisciplinary polinisation) in order to understand how an emergent cultural project might be assessed in its processual foundations.

The list of authors which in this sense anchored the research's argument is eclectic.[307] It tries to mirror a sense of balance between critical thought and philosophical insights with mainstream sensibility and a spiritual mindset, reflecting the research's original drive, which is to link cultural management to self-work.[308] In this sense, the research acknowledges "the fact that we simply can't be on the outside looking in" (Morton, 2018: 61), especially when going for "escapology" (Wright, 2013: 23).

> Escapology, broadly speaking, refers to the rapidly growing field of empirical enquiry and speculative research into the ways and means, tactics and strategies of escaping capture. Not so much Houdini-style escape from physical bonds (though his methodologies hold metaphorical appeal for both researchers and practitioners as well as for popular culture), as from the more insidious forms of capture in contemporary society that hobble action, desire and thought by cloaking them in often invisible overcodes. (Ibid.)[309]

The whole *argumentarium* is indeed intended to allow for each component to specifically contribute to an emergent theoretical score. It demonstrates the intrinsic value of a tactical approach of cultural connectivity, arguably capable of redeeming the critical meaning of activities such as walking or travelling in contemporaneity.

The final structure – one cannot escape *that* – appeared when the theoretical cross-readings finally defined a concrete propositional territory. The point has been to define a series of

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[307] From Judith Butler to Regis Debray, from Timothy Morton to Stephen Wright, from Krzsysztof Nawratek to Malcolm Miles. Nawratek and Miles were indeed key-note speakers in the conference 'Building Narratives', whose presentation read: "In very concrete terms, the key question of the meeting is how to create a theoretical and ethical framework for emergent spaces and spatial practices where artistic, architectural and curatorial scopes engage in a dialogue in which the urban realms may become a more conceptually integrated and socially participated aesthetical experience."

[308] Foucault calls indeed spirituality "[…] the set of these researches, practices, and experiences, which may be purifications, ascetic exercises, renunciations, conversions of looking, modifications of existence, etc., which are not for knowledge but for the subject, for the subject's very being, the price to be paid for access to the truth (Foucault, 2005: 15).

[309] "Capture may be ideological, encouraging agents to think in terms of categories whose mere existence is their sole merit. Or it may be institutional, framing practices into a sphere of action that determines their specific visibility and forecloses their potential deployment. Ever increasingly, both in the general economy and in the symbolic economies of art and activism, capture may be logistical, subsuming human decision-making and rationality itself into algorithms. Capture may be epistemic, terminological, but whatever its configuration, escapology is about fleeing its normative clutches." (Wright: 23)

linkages, check their legitimation and validity and eventually express them. A cultural concept gained in these terms its theoretical mindset, maybe a conceptual toolbox. Many portals were sensed (even if mostly not traversed, for lack of skills and… time), and bridges were built, across diverse theoretical constructs and pragmatical endeavors.

From speech act to (carrying on a) basic form)

In the very beginning of this research project there has been an idea: to connect cultural streets across Europe. In the development process, the figure of the *flâneur* appeared as a productive "anachronism" (Bal, 2016: 50). The following cultural analysis of the *flâneur* and other elements of this Modern(ist) narrative have been set in motion at the same time that my own travels started to be the translation of my own personal and critical engagement with geographical places (and people) I started to visit more and more within the research's project's framework.

The research project progressively shaped my travels and vice-versa, what would indeed be a way to test what were be my own assumptions on the target public of a cultural concept and the experiences that an emerging community can be invited to have. At some point all came together as a naming process, a speech act and a linguistic gesture — it became GOFLANEUR. The figure of the *flâneur* was explored as a particularly productive anachronic image. It is possible that the whole work became itself a material dialectics of urban images, precisely in the spirit of Benjamin's "critique of available modes of historical interpretation" (Pensky, 2004: 179).

Benjamin's dialectical image[310] indeed fosters lived personal engagements with one's very sense of discovery. And in such project, to think "in images rather than concepts" (Ibid.) is certainly an important aspect of this study. Streets (existing) and *nu-flâneurs* (emerging) became in the process themselves semiotic resources. (Leeuwen, 2005: 5)[311]

[310] "[…] the methodological cornerstone of the *Arcades Project*". (Pensky 2004. 178)
[311] "Studying the semiotic potential of a given semiotic resource is studying how that resource has been, is, and can be used for purposes of communication, it is drawing up an inventory of past and present and maybe also future resources and their uses. By nature, such inventories are never complete, because they tend to be made for specific purposes." (Leeuwen, 2005: 5)

But one question remains unanswered: how to to imagine ways to allow an idea – born out of a specific context – to grow, while *framing* its topological identity in consecutive moments through different contextual imperatives and momentary challenges?

It is important here to understand the operative meaning of 'frame': it is less about capturing something (photographic sense) or editing (pictorial sense) and more about the production of a multidimensional framework – a conceptual narrative's experiential 'perimeter', whose dynamic limits are impossible to capture in a single or full cartography.

On the other hand, an idea, after its semblance, might demand to be 'translated' in the sense of translocated to concrete actions, to relate to cultural organizations' strategic visions, actions, plans and even immediate issues. In fact, the conceptual complexities this Project arose are a good part of the idea's expanding field – a "complex structure" (Lovink and Spehr, 2007: 84)[312].

In this sense, the processes of translation – etymologically, 'to carry on' – carried on by the spectator-wanderer, imply a two-fold encounter: each 'arrival' stands for both an encounter with oneself and with the other; as António de Castro Caeiro puts it *the other happening to me*[313]. The other is here the figure to be materialized as the encounter with fellow-wanderers, persons, but also a thing, a building, a myth or an organization. All is experienced as an actualization – not necessarily to be verbalized – of a personal event.

[312] ""A complex structure is one with a high density of information, a great range of reactions and options without being really random, something that cannot be brought down to a formula, cannot be exactly predicted. […] We are only just beginning to understand how complex structures work or are generated. Variety, feedback, interaction play a great role. We have come to see complex structures everywhere: life, nature, history, is like that. So, while we think we would give orders, realize plans, understand processes, what we really do is a labour of managing complexity, with more or less satisfying results." (Lovink and Spehr, 2007: 84)

[313] In the original: "Este modo de os outros nos acontecerem é um encontro." António de Castro Caeiro, in *Vicente. Símbolo de Lisboa. Mito Contemporâneo* (2019: 461)

Long-term relational communication (in place)

Endogenous cultural development is here a challenge to be attained by means of an inspiring narrative model designed to offer possibilities for lasting social interaction and participation, capable of boosting dweller's resilience to universalizing conceptions of Europe, the world or 'culture'.

The intention was here to understand that the ongoing promotion of creative talent could go along with the creation of a conscious and assertive public, in this case a community of citizens engaged in feeling spaces, stories, hidden aspects of Europe, in a particular *passive way:* "The passive soul is thus precondition to all sorts of change, whether religious or secular" (Gross, 2006: 108).

The immediate *puncta* for this gaze are the urban form, the urban image, the urban image, the urban fabric, the urban atmosphere, the urban sensescape (and so on), in sum, the urban as both semiotic and phenomenological complex reality. All the process has been presented as a opportunity for (self-)narration, to be ultimately developed across diverse media(tions). It is argued that this is a response to phenomena like over-tourism or urban alienation, seen as symptoms of an urban disease: lack of contemplative attention to the surrounding atmosphere.

This is where the intuitive work on a new cultural concept, addressed progressively and multidimensionally – may help to overcome exhausted tensions – elitism vs. populism, heritage vs. innovation, and so on – maybe inscribing the pleasure of discovering the city by means of a *middle way* where engagement and a phenomenological drive fuel creative and aesthetic citizenship (itinerant art, nomad practices, curating localities, travelling between places, comparing experiences, developing connectivity, or simply… walking. A cultural idea may in this sense develop into a long-term relational technology (Stiegler).

In sum, what's at stake is to create a public for the European street in very specific communicative terms: the idea is to let communication and participation anchor the very formation of a nomad community of spectators for a chosen set of streets (and eventually

others to come), while imagining the communicative framework that might foster such social mobility in the first place. One is arguably not far from Dewey's creative pragmatism, with conversation in the core of common construction (Babo, 2015: 100).

Operating revolutions, translating possibility

Cultural objects have a translational character in the very sense that complexity and a non-holistic structure characterizes them (Bachmann-Medick: 181) In other words, what turns an object cultural is mediation. Just like claims of identity imply some sort of rejection of otherness. This is where translational thinking implies the rejection of "identity thinking" in favour of "border-thinking" (Maranhão and Streck, 2003: xvii).

This explains why translation steps in as a medium for cross-cultural contact (Bachmann-Medick, 2016: 189). Especially when one tries to remain in an empirical framework, this implies a continuous move from "abstract systematic units of comparison" to "specific problem fields and practices" (Ibid. 190) – which is naturally the case of the very 'subject' of streets, or 'cultural streets', or 'a network of streets'.

Against this backdrop, it becomes clear the kind of difficulties a new cultural concept has to endure to integrate agency in a diversity of cultural planes, particularly dense and paradoxical when based on contingent localities.

In any case, the diversity of culture(s) in the European city can contribute by feeding in the dialectical thoughts provoked by challenging ideas, old and new. This is a reminder of the value of philosophy also for the organic and informal drive for community, to be performed within the confines of the urban fabric and alongside aesthetic experiences and experiments.

Speaking in streets

This has led me to valorize the revolutionary possibility of the invention of a non-reductive discourse on urban cooperation, to be anchored in an emergent prototype-communities of

actors, to be engaged in "a logic of exchange beyond capitalist accumulation and social-democratic redistribution" (Nawratek, 2018: 67). Experiencing European Streest, indeed, has to face the issue of a differentiating language?[314]

Nevertheless, "implicit and explicit 'poetic' approaches to the understanding of everyday life have found themselves easily dismissed as simply aestheticizing social life" (Highmore, 2001: 20). In this aspect, the critically creative attitude of such a project, overtly resonates aspects of life as a literary-artistic experiment. This at the core of the virtual articulation of the *flâneur* as from within (and against) the Grand Narrative(s) of the present age.

To curate places' art or literary programmes is anyway less to simply accept existing discourses and more about generating conditions – symbolical and infrastructural – for new layers of meaning in the participating streets' narratives to emerge. This is related to the notion of city as a medium for (cultural) expression,

In a sort of grassroots social process, a task at hand might be then to generate shared opinions and exchange situations, in order to generate renewed images of locality, aware of their communicational potential in the global stage, where brand image plays a part in places' processes of subjectivation. The image of places is in any case always earned (Anholt, 2010: 6) in the sense socially recognized –, not artificially constructed by marketing or advertisement. And, of course, places become specifically recognized when a community embraces their character, atmosphere or role in the (global) urban fabric's narrative.

In industrialized countries, there is a variety of industriousness processes surrounding us – from the Creative Industries and Cultural Tourism to City Marketing, from Contemporary Art to the Creative City. In this 'industrial mesh' a cultural project, instead of just adding something – products and services –, might better translate to the materiality of places a bold approach of moral values, *industriously* articulating politics and economy, entrepreneurship and citizenship, ethics and spirituality, artistic insight and aesthetical pleasure. How?

[314] When one looks at the way whole urban areas are redefined spatially by global finance, we must at the same time not forget that "international banking networks were shown to be the very human products of business executives enmeshed in culturally-specific webs of meaning". (Thrift, in Warf 2011, 411)

> "Meta-disciplinary value enquiry, as a highly theoretical activity that would have us take basic conceptual problems found in all fields of enquiry, seems far removed from practical moral problems. Yet if the practical problems require from us a sound, comprehensive moral theory, and that it poses meta-disciplinarity questions of value, the importance of meta-disciplinary value enquiry can be hardly exaggerated" (Magnell, 1997: 10).

Narrative of (ex)change

A cultural project as reflected upon here has ultimately the responsibility not only of grasping its socio-cultural and socioeconomic contextualization, but specifically of promoting – in its own terms – true cultural (ex)change by means of an appealing narrative. It shall articulate cultural management issues with a focus on communication based on a logic of crossing target publics: 'wanna-be flâneurs' becoming 'researchers', dwellers becoming 'flâneurs', artists becoming 'citizens', and so on, endlessly.[315]

By means of a reflective pause in a process of creative citizenship – the duration of the development of this thesis – it is hoped that conventional academic discourse is 'bothered' with a personal series of insights, anchored in what might be considered a reasonable ensemble of threads of thought.

Streets are a fine example of an infrastructure (currently) with all conditions to become a stage for world-ness. The word suggests less union, than wholeness and this is crucial when a major challenge facing citizens is to understand how to perform the *now*.

What is at stake is then also the ways the urban selves – the atoms of citizenship – may evolve: "Culture is thus a matter of self-overcoming as much as self-realization. If it celebrates the self, it also disciplines it, aesthetic and ascetic together" (Nawratek, 2018: 6). In such processes of self-shaping one's life culture, places shall be seen as the actual *pretexts* for change, and citizens – dwellers, travelers – both active and passive agents of urban concepts.

[315] "We wish to retrieve self-valorisation as a productive concept that grants legitimacy and possible stability to collaborative practice. Such a move is necessary, particularly in an institutional environment that shows few signs of departing from the script of modern governance struggling to engage the complexities of knowledge and information economies" (Lovink and Rossiter, 2007: 14)

In this framework, a cultural concept is to both frame local cultures and open them up to others, and specifically to each other. Up to each agent, collectively or individually, to build on differences and similarities, as if cultural work is to be about generating successive experiences of critical nodes concerning the relation with, say, the passing of time, the arrival of others, the mythical layers defining a narrative or whatever elements, physical or imaginary, which define the urban fabric.

In the context of the current research, culture might then become better understood, by the communities involved, as "the implicit knowledge of the world by which people negotiate appropriate ways of acting in specific contexts" (Ibid. 34-35). It is in this sense that streets may be specific urban devices and nodes in networks – while their 'content' is always possible to investigate and renegotiate. The urban text is in this sense open to interactions that precisely might lead to the rethinking – and redesigning – of the boundaries between cultures and Culture.

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