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FROM HERITAGE INTERPRETATION TO CULTURAL SYSTEMS: OUTLINE OF AN URBAN SEMIOTICS OF CULTURE

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Urban and social realities have always been marked by researchers as "complex" and on the edge of chaos, with phenomena involving hundreds of thousands of different processes converging towards the dynamics of city life. However, attempts to harness this complexity into the very lines of study have remained relatively modest, with researchers opting for relatively linear explanations, or failing to integrate their findings into theoretical considerations into dynamical models. In this study we focus on the meanings of heritage, their evolution and distribution throughout individuals who experience it, in the city of Tomar, Portugal, as mediated by the presence of specialized information that can be thought of as "imposing" a certain view of the location. We use this as a starting point for multiple lines of inquiry: how to estimate the impact of elements such as information on cultural systems; how to conceptualize the ontology of urban reality with its differential agents and their respective teleologies; how to attempt to visualize different theoretical explanations for such motions with the help of Agent Based Modelling, and possible analytical considerations taken from these models. The study aims to provide theoretical and empirical guidelines for policy-making in the context, with a view to integrate semiotic concerns into the design and management of cities, as well as developing an academic research program articulated by middle-range systems theory.

METACITY

KEY WORDS

Urban Semiotics, ABM, Middle-Range Systems, Urban Complexity, Urban Heritage