

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: “SENTIENT” CITY — AN ATONAL LANDSCAPE

NOTA INTRODUTÓRIA: CIDADE “SENTIENTE” — UMA PAISAGEM ATONAL

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The body is part of our ontology. We are not partly body, but all body (Ihde, 2002) In feeling, in thinking, in acting. Maybe this condition sets us apart from other forms of being that, as the organic (the animal being, the vegetable), they are endowed with a body, but not with such a pressing need to inhabit, to relate to a place. We are being-there (*Dasein*; Heidegger, 1986/2004, 1986/2005) and our ontology is relational. The body protects itself, the body (un)settles permanently, the body moves, ploughing the territory it crosses, while drawing an inner geography. E-motion (Bruno, 2007) — emotion and movement — sets the doubly dynamic tone of our historiography. One might say that the genesis of the city (Mumford, 1961/2004) goes back to the imperative of protection and survival of the body, a function to which the calling of myth and *décor* (myth-function-*décor*) (Pimenta, 1989) is added. The shelter-city, the temple-city, the garden-city. Many feelings can be accommodated (or disturbed) in a single place. Fear (Bauman, 1999/2001, 2001/2003; Kovadloff, 1998), the beautiful (Han, 2015/2016a; Kant, 2020), the nature-landscape (Cauquelin, 1989; Simmel, 1913/2011), the principle of happiness or *inter-est* (Arendt, 1958/2001). And so many others. Yet also multiple (*already*) felt (Perniola, 1991/1993). The body becomes a *sentient* (non)place. Unstable in its (un)limits, mixed with all kinds of technological devices, the post-body interacts (we wonder, still or more than ever?) with the material-virtual architecture, with the mediascapes (McQuire, 2008) planted in the space it travels through, it immerses itself in the humidity, in the promiscuity of smells, in the chaotic orchestration of tones and acoustic landscapes, it lets itself be led by the haptic and cinematic experience (Friedberg, 2002, 2006) and also by the “scent of time” (Han, 2014/2016b).

Is the city today a signifier with no signification or a pure imaginary production (Domingues, 2009)? Its “possible side” is still, perhaps, an excess. The perennial luminosity makes the objects and details invisible and threatens the vision of celestial landscapes. The polyphony of tones and the variability of frequencies inspire artistic and acoustic creations (see the case of concrete music), and colonise inner time. More recently, the body has contracted radically, and in a particular way in the urban spaces,

closing itself within walls and restraining itself from touching, smelling, breathing, and from dialogic interaction. Meta-landscapes and technological extensions of feeling have become inter-trans-places less risky and more inviting as communicative forms of inhabiting. We are witnessing the beginning of the end of the urban experience (Felice, 2009/2012)? How do organicity and post-urban landscapes still resist? Is there a deaf chant mourning the death of the sentient body-city awaiting us? Although the "escape" from nature originally motivated the construction of the city, as well as its rescue, in the form of a hybrid idea that holds both harmony in its utopian form and the terrifying vision of an untamed, pre-human universe, today we are troubled by the (im)possibility of the body-place and its "fulfilment in becoming" (Henry, 2001).

Taking the risk of tempering this paper by appealing to an organicist vision of the (post)city, the challenge was set to write about the urgency of (re)feeling the (post)body–(post)place, without disregarding the scent of temporalities and routes, the kinaesthetic landscapes, the (in)visible disruptions in the territory over which the "body–without–organs" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/2001) stretches, the being itself blended with that of the inhabited place.

Taking dodecaphonism as a reference which inspires a certain boldness that we seek to impress here, we would like to flatten out the dominance of sight in our culture, by placing it on an equal scale (though rich in infinite diversity) of senses, claiming for each sensory record — which we artificially confuse (excessively concerned about discerning) with smell, hearing, touch — the same requirement and tonic gradation, inextricable as a whole. The debate on the significance of the senses in the urban experience calls for contributions from cultural studies, from communication at large, intersecting disciplinary boundaries, methodological approaches and geographies, so as to (re) constitute the concreteness of this experience and the conditions that both foster it and make it possible.

From an etymological point of view, the term "sentient", which in this issue leads the underlying problematic adopted, somehow underpinning the different articles/contents, derives from Latin *sentiens*, the present participle of *sentire*, to perceive by the senses (definition retrieved from a Portuguese dictionary; Porto Editora, n.d.). The word is used in its connection to the city (sentient city), thus imposing a perspective on the "sensible forms of the social life" (Sansot, 1986) that emerge in the urban space-body, giving rise to feelings and sentiments (*Stimmung*) that catapult a certain (kinaesthetic) vision, preferably phenomenological in nature, on the contemporary world, as experienced in everyday life. This experience compromises subjectivities, the material instances of the relational exercise that defines (and *stresses*) social and cultural identities, but also the expansion of the being about its composite, hybrid, post-human character (Hayles, 1999). The city of flesh that is to be explained unfolds, therefore, in multiple gradations of feeling, going beyond the common sense that the word "sensitive", also in this context, emanates. *Sentient*—city is an expression, in short, "trajective", in the words of Berque (2000), in its moving sense between the subjectivity of the *flanêur* and the object that, within the urban drift, co-forms and challenges it.

Through a diverse set of texts, which we briefly introduce below, we wander through the territorial–imaginary, geographical–virtual, real–surreal, body–performance, space–movement city, the listened-to city, the city–light, among others. This issue explores various departure stations towards the production of sensitive knowledge: the ontology of being and space in their correlation, the urban atmospheres, ambiances and tonalities, the sensations and emotions; the music, the sound walks and the poetics connected to the place, the urban echo-acoustic experience; the festivities and the street performances; the skin and the transitive (sub)liminal; the (dis)occupations, the proximity-distancing; the light made flesh of control, surveillance and resistance; the dissonant body, the cyborg body; the reinvention of mobilities and the counter-movement of the non-place...

In "Biopolitics of Light in the Modern and Contemporary Cities: From a Disciplinary Light's Eye to the Operational Lights of Control", Antoine Nicolas Gonod d'Artemare explores how the implementation of public lighting has been part of the quest for greater efficiency in surveillance and control of the population in urban space, on the example of modern Paris. He argues that Parisian street lighting was part and parcel of the dark art of light and the visible, triggered by disciplinary power. And as there is no power without resistance, the author, in his attempt to denaturalise the relationship that Western cultures have with light, shows possible opposition paths of counter-light to the total and pan-optic visibility provided by contemporary lights, drawing from the video-installation *Gegen-Musik* (Counter-Music), by Harun Farocki.

In a reflection on the current situation of the Rio city-brand, Ana Teresa Gotardo and Ricardo Ferreira Freitas in "Dissonant Bodies and the Struggles Over Urban Space: Narratives About Rio de Janeiro in International Documentaries" set out to break the imaginary of the perfect body ascribed to the brand Rio in the construction of the "Olympic city". Based on elements of film and narrative analysis, they highlight in the documentaries under review the movements in search of representation of both trans and transvestite women, black and poor people and people with disabilities, which, in their view, interfere in the struggle for the right to the city and the right to narrate oneself, by showing other possibilities of existence. Ligia Dias and Julieta Leite, still on the reflection about the politics of bodies in urban space, in the paper "City and Performativity: Normative Ruptures in the Informal Public Space — A Case Study in the City of Recife", introduce the concept of disruptive performative space. The research includes historical contextualisation and field observation of the surroundings of the São José Market in the city of Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil and approaches to the appropriation of this public space by informal trade workers. The authors characterise the relations of spatial appropriation by performative bodies and highlight how bodies and their performativities, through their everyday experiences, are intrinsically linked to multiple space-usages, which, in their view, should be part of the reflections that underpin urban practices.

The following article derives from a broader research conducted in the Lavapiés neighbourhood in central Madrid, Spain, by Regiane Miranda de Oliveira Nakagawa. In "Nelson Mandela Square: Spatialities in a Frontier", the author chooses Nelson Mandela Square, a meeting point for Senegalese and other ethnic groups, to explore how, in this

square, distinct spatialities are formed through the diversity of interactions and connections between the different groups that frequent the space. The idea of the semiotic frontier in Lotman underpins the fieldwork undertaken, which was inspired by the situationist drift and conducted under the principles of participant observation. The result of an ethnographic work, Lucas Durr Missau's article, "Communication and Mobility: Mobile-Mediated Displacement Experiences in Buenos Aires", describes how narratives about the experiences of migration and the daily flows of displacement are articulated with the mediation of transportation applications. The focus is on the specificities of the urban mobility experience of inhabitants who use transportation apps to move around the city, to understand how the use of these apps is part of people's daily lives and to explore the role they play in social inclusion.

In "Inventory Space, Invented Space", Frederico Augusto Vianna de Assis Pessoa privileges listening or the opening of the ears in an approach to the city that aims at understanding social relations and the urban structure that reveals them. The Brazilian city of Belmonte, in the south of Bahia, provides his listening territory, from which he maps out a territory of sensations and thoughts that run through the listener, adding to what the listener captures, what is experienced, perceived and understood. This territory is presented to the reader in an essay that combines literary aesthetics with rational reflection on what the experience of the world, mediated by listening, reveals about a city.

The two articles that follow have as a common backdrop the covid-19 pandemic experienced around the world since 2020. In "Sonorous Windows in Times of Pandemic", Micael Herschmann and Felipe Trotta analyse the way in which windows were temporarily used by actors in cities as a means of intermediation between private and public spaces, with the purpose of establishing, through the emission of sounds, relevant social-communicational links. The authors used audiovisual material and narratives collected during an exploratory research carried out in the media and social networks on the behaviour and reactions of actors during the covid-19 quarantines that occurred in 2020 and 2021 in several locations around the globe (with emphasis not only on the contexts of Brazil and the United States of America, but also on the countries of the European continent). They highlight, in this movement of turning to the windows and balconies, a double flow of approximations, through sound experiences of solidarity; and of distancing, via sound experiences of protest and social disruption. The confined cities have awakened other needs and desires in those who inhabit them, namely the desire to walk. "On Walking While Confined", an article by Rui Filipe Antunes and Sílvia Pinto Coelho, explores, building on the experience of walking during the confinements decreed in Portugal, the relationship between walking and confinement. To this end, they draw on the experience of walking in artistic performance, examples of enclosure as opposed to the civic duty of confinement, to reflect on the relationships of movement in confined cities, by suggesting relationships of body–space–movement.

The urban surfaces of Athens during the years of economic crisis are the source of Panagiotis Ferentinos' article "The Derma of Crisis Imagining Athens in Crisis as an Urban Collage", in which he sets out to read the crisis and to understand how the public

sphere responded and reacted to this period of decline and recession. Understanding these surfaces as being the skin of Athens, with which citizens interact, the author focuses on the study of various dimensions of this skin and how they contribute to the formulation of an urban collage and an assemblage of coexisting visual elements, making Athens a unique case of an *over-marked* city.

The article "The Carnivalized Metropolis: The Street Carnival Groups as Surrealists and Situacionists Performances in Rio de Janeiro" by André Videira de Figueiredo addresses the unofficial *blocos de rua* (street carnival groups) of Rio de Janeiro, represented by the *Cordão do Boi Tolo*. Combining literary analysis, sociological reflection and "ethnographic *flânerie*", the paper explores this street carnival as an update of the surrealist and situationist proposals. It sees it, from the aesthetic and cultural point of view, as a creative experience of *performatization* of bodies and, from the political perspective, as a form of political and cultural resistance that embodies new ambiances and experiences that lend new meanings to urban space.

To complete the issue, still on Carnival in Brazil, but in Maceió-AL, we propose the article by Ernani Viana da Silva Neto and Susana A. Gastal, "Tourism and Culture: Carnival in the City of Maceió-AL (Brazil)". The aim is to understand how Carnival in Maceió has been historically organised and to highlight its relations with the cultural and tourism sectors in urban areas, using data provided by interviews with local actors in these areas, which reveal the intentions associated with the festivities. The authors point out the contradictions between the promotion of a popular and inclusive local Carnival and the discomfort caused by the carnival momentum, reinforcing social and cultural stereotypes and the exclusion of the lower classes from the festivities due to their ethnic origin.

In the next two sections, the issue features an interview with Hildegard Westerkamp, "Interview With Hildegard Westerkamp: 'Once you Start Listening to the World You Are Dealing With All of Life'" by Madalena Oliveira and Cláudia Martinho, and one book review by Tathiana Veronez, on Fabio La Roca's book, *A Cidade em Todas as Suas Formas* (The City in All Its Forms), published in Portuguese in 2018 by Editora Sulina.

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