

# Diasporic urbanism: concepts, agencies & 'mapping otherwise'

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The University Of Sheffield.

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I would like to thank the two people without whom this would have been impossible. My supervisor, Doina Petrescu & Phil.



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## Diasporic Urbanism: concepts, agencies and ‘mapping otherwise’

The term ‘diasporic urbanism’ addresses the difficulties of operating with diasporic space and of accommodating the material complexities of migrant lives. It proposes displacement and reterritoralisations as methodologies and ‘mapping otherwise’ as a tool for representing and working with migrant spatialities. Diasporic space is theorised as a relational space, whilst diasporic subjectivity is described as ‘nomadic consciousness’. The politics of the diaspora are addressed through the need to accommodate conflict (Mouffe) and through introducing ‘things’ and ‘matters of concern’ (Latour) into the democratic relationship.

These concepts were tested in practice through my research which focuses examples of diasporic agencies in the everyday. From the Turkish and Kurdish kahve to a street whose physicality forces a certain visibility on to those who traverse it, to a park in East London that through being claimed by one diasporic group has come to symbolise wider notions of political representation. The mapping of these particular spaces has addressed the question: within the networked, global condition of the migrant, what objects, subjects and processes can play the role of mediation and translation that is required between ‘here and there’, or between the layers of this multiple subject?

The need for such approaches is apparent in the increasing diversity of European cities. The everyday geographies of people’s lives can easily lose themselves in the enormity of the questions and the complexities of the issues surrounding migration. Yet, it is exactly the specificity of individual lives, the way that geo-political borders and territories inscribe themselves onto the intimate topology of migrant and diasporic bodies, half-here and half-there, that is so difficult to account for. This then is the challenge set down for ‘diasporic urbanism’—how to make the conditions necessary for those other than the privileged to participate in the imagining of our cities.

# 0.0 Introduction



# Diasporic Urbanism

Since the mid-1990s the displacement of people across borders—national, regional or local—has risen exponentially. The accelerated processes of globalisation and neo-liberalism have resulted in economic and political instability that has displaced millions. People caught in transition, often whose freedom to move is curtailed due to economic, political or other reasons, have come to define a generalised (mostly urban) condition of those ‘without home’. Whether described as legal or illegal migrants, *sans papiers* (without papers) or holding refugee status, these are displaced populations that cannot simply ‘go back’. In this thesis, I have focused on one particular type of migrant, the diasporic populations of Europe, who share this condition and have lived this reality for quite some time. Second or third generation migrants do not include the ‘place of origin’ within their description of home, and have been precursors for a new type of global citizen—not placeless yet without ‘home’. Whilst Europe may want to ‘send the immigrants back home’, the populist rhetoric of its politicians fails to answer the simple question—*which home?*<sup>1</sup> The diasporas within these cities and the spaces they inhabit thus form constituent parts of a new global condition, which creates its own subjectivities and new types of spaces within the contemporary metropolis. How to include such populations in the imagining of our cities has been the subject of my research—what kinds of spaces do they produce and what kinds do they desire? Much of my research has been concerned with the Kurdish diaspora, whose situation is paradigmatic since there was never an originary nation-state to call home. Choosing to work with the Kurdish diaspora (and so inevitably also the Turkish), and, for a short period the Bangladeshi diaspora, was also a way for me to move away from identity politics towards an approach based on finding common ground and solidarities.

Being the product of displacements, diasporic subjectivities are precarious and ambivalent, as is the diasporic existence. Earlier versions of post-colonial and diasporic theory have been criticised for emphasising the positive aspects of displacement, but once the initial joy of discovering ‘newness’ has subsided, displacement is seen to be not just about happy hybridities, full of creative potential, but to also be painful - tearing away at ties, relations and ways of thinking and doing. It may leave in its wake something rich but often doesn’t. To understand how and why this happens, of how to facilitate and nurture processes

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1 Arguably it is the French model, which demands total homogeneity and assimilation under the guise of ‘equality’ that has failed its diasporic populations most spectacularly. As a young woman living in one of the notorious estates at the edge of Paris states: ‘*I was born in France but feel totally rejected here, yet when I got back to my parents’ native Tunisia, people say I’m French.*’ Quoted in, Angelique Chrisafis, ‘Immigration: France sees tensions rise five years on from paris riots’, *The Guardian*, 16 November 2010.

of ‘becoming’ whilst also acknowledging the difficulties, and to understand the important role that spatial practitioners (whether architects, artists or urbanists) can claim in this, was also one of my aims for this research. It is of course embedded in my own personal history, having seen both how the experience of displacement enriches, but also how it destroys certain ways and certain people so easily. How to be resilient enough and how to make our cities adaptable enough for their not-quite-so-new awkward populations is an important question for now.

## Local / global | switching scales

Allowing for and facilitating such possibilities is urgent. Mainstream architectural practice remains largely unconcerned with the increasing diversity yet segregation of European cities. Its complicity in the neo-liberal economy and unquestioning faith in rights of property above all others, has rendered it irrelevant in dealing with issues related to the fragmentation and polarisation of neighbourhoods, the decline of communal spaces, the displacement of communities and the privatisation of space and services. But there are a growing number of experimental practices emerging from the interstices of mainstream architecture and the corporate use of space, such as those recounted in some recent publications, *UrbanACT* (2007), *Networked Cultures* (2008) and *Urban Makers* (2008), which contribute towards an imagining of alternative urbanisms that do not ignore these conditions of conflict but use them as a starting point.<sup>2</sup> An architect who explores such strategies whilst specifically dealing with issues related to globalisation and migration is Teddy Cruz, working mostly at the ‘borderzone’ between the US and Mexico, he calls for a different approach to architecture centred around the empowerment of others.

*Finally, in these times of crisis, empowerment also means the production of an expanded notion of practice, new ways of constructing information and conversation among ourselves, the so called ‘experts.’ ... Today, it is essential to reorient our gaze towards the drama embedded in the reality of the everyday and, in so doing, engage the shifting socio-political and economic domains that have been ungraspable by design.<sup>3</sup>*

.....

2 AAA (ed.), *Urban/ACT* (Paris: AAA/Peprav, 2007); Helge Mooshammer and Peter Mörtenböck (eds.), *Networked cultures: Parallel architectures and the politics of space* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2008); Emanuele Guidi (ed.), *Urban makers: Parallel narratives of grassroots practices and tensions* (Berlin: b\_books, 2008). The book *Urban/ACT* was the result of a series of discussions on ways of acting and organising in the city, which took place as part of a European network (see also; [www.peprav.net](http://www.peprav.net)); *Networked Cultures*, examined the cultural transformations of Europe and its emerging spatial practices (see also; [www.networkedcultures.org](http://www.networkedcultures.org)); *Urban Makers* grew out of ‘Cities on the Edge’, a series of collaborative projects spanning the port cities of Bremen, Gdansk, Istanbul, Liverpool, Marseilles and Naples.

3 Teddy Cruz, ‘Mapping non-conformity: Post-bubble urban strategies’, *e-Misférica: Unsettling visuality*, 7(1)(2010).

This call to address larger socio-political issues, which are these days inevitably global in their scope, at the level of the local and from the vantage of everyday experience, is crucial to addressing the diasporic condition. I have translated this in my work through situating much of the research in my own neighbourhood in Hackney, London. **geo-political borders and territories inscribe themselves onto the intimate topology of migrant and diasporic bodies**, half-here and half-there, that is so difficult to account for. No longer just a professionalised concern, contemporary urban practice needs to address the *experience* of the urban as much as its form. The way space is experienced by those who dwell in the city and their **everyday practices** form the basis for a new type of urbanism which acknowledges that just as there is no single urban experience, there can be no single urban practice. Here the city is understood as a layering of different spatialities, and the practice of architecture and urbanism is understood as facilitating the negotiation of space between different actors and the playing out of power relations within it. When a forum for such negotiations is not available, the stratification of space and its coalescing around various factions becomes entrenched. It is here that strategies for understanding not only the production of space but also its representation are indispensable.

## Urbanism

The current approach to the study and practice of cities is encapsulated by the term, 'urban planning', which combines policy concerns with project management to produce strategies of spatial planning. Such empirical approaches result in zoning studies, analyses of vehicle and pedestrian movements, attendance to the concerns of real-estate value and the ordering of the city according to the logics of economic value and a bourgeois image of the city as suburb. Such approaches are embedded in what Deleuze calls a politics of re-presentation, based on ideas of fixed types and typologies, the city is addressed according to the logic of the Same; unable to accommodate any real difference, it is an approach that resorts to the contrasting and comparing of situations, whilst for architecture in particular, keeping the original Modernist assumptions on the workings of cities intact. Even when not in thrall to capital, such an approach proves utterly inadequate for addressing the needs and desires of the displaced diasporic subject.

At a time when cities are undergoing fast and critical change, a practice of urbanism rather than urban planning is required. The limitations of a planning approach that is only ever concerned with the empirical is apparent for cities in general and not just for their diasporic populations; but when attending to the diaspora such problems are magnified. The diasporic subject, always in-between, always becoming and not homogenous, requires an approach to the city based in

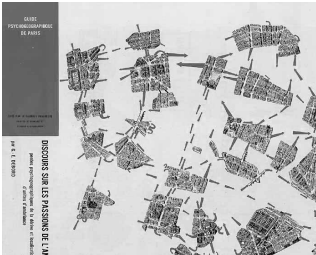
difference. Where the study of cities does not resort to already understood types and metaphors, but takes the real - the city itself - seriously as situation, subject and object of research. Here urbanism is understood not just as the study of buildings and the spaces around them, but rather as the agencies that are played out within the city; the people who occupy these spaces, their gestures and bodily practices, the networks and objects that are located within different spatio-temporalities. It is an approach that considers different scales at the same time, from the intimate scale of the body, to the planetary scale, inflected through localised practices that are often also trans-local.

A number of historical and alternative practices of urbanism help situate this definition of urbanism and point towards what a practice of diasporic urbanism could be like and the questions it would need to address.

## Other urbanisms

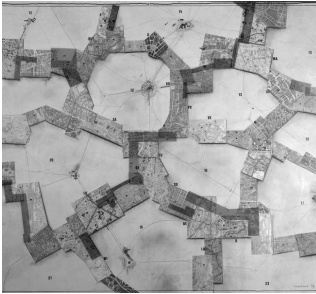
### (a) Unitary Urbanism

There is a specific genealogy of urban thought **provoked by moments of crisis within the capitalist system and mode of development** that offers alternatives for a different kind of urbanism. One of the earliest of these is Unitary Urbanism (UU), proposed by the Situationist International (SI) in the late 1950s, it has since become highly influential in thinking urban practice as including more than physical reality and its empirical analysis. Produced in a dialogue with Henri Lefebvre's forensic analysis of consumerist society, *The Critique of Everyday Life*, the Situationists claimed another mode of operating in the city, stating that "*Unitary Urbanism is not a doctrine of urbanism but a critique of urbanism.*"<sup>4</sup> It aimed at bringing other modes of living and experience to the practice of urbanism, such as chance and play, of wresting control of the planning of cities from technicians and bureaucrats. More broadly, the Situationists were reacting against bourgeois society, which they saw as stifling creativity and turning citizens into passive consumers. What they called '*architectural détournement*' was precisely this critique adapted to the practice of architecture, by learning from



Guy Debord, 1955 (?) *Psychogeographic guide of Paris*, ed. by the Bauhaus Imaginiste, (Denmark: Permild & Rosengreen).

4 Henri Lefebvre, *The critique of everyday life*, trans. by John Moore (London: Verso, 1991). (First published in French in 1947); Unattributed, 'Unitary urbanism at the end of the 1950s', *Internationale situationniste*, 3 (Dec 1959): <http://www.notbored.org/UU.html>.



Symbolische voorstelling van *New Babylon* (detail) (Symbolic Representation of New Babylon), 1969, collage on paper, 55×60”.

and responding playfully to ‘*the current terrain of cities*.’<sup>5</sup> They did this through a **detailed critique and analysis of capitalist urbanism and suggested art/architecture as a way of constructing new forms of life through a new emphasis on relations amongst people.**

This has been a lasting legacy of the Situationist take on the city and one which many contemporary visions of an alternative urbanism also adhere to. But it is Asger Jorn, an important early figure of SI, whose take on Situationist theory has something specific to offer to an urbanism directed at the migrant and diasporic condition. Jorn’s approach, inflected through science and geometry, combined both sides of an increasingly fractious debate that had torn the Situationists, the analytical and more politicised version preferred by the Parisians (and the approach usually attributed to the whole of the Situationist movement through the towering figure of Guy Debord) and the other more artistic and playful approach advocated by the Scandinavians.<sup>6</sup> Jorn writes:

*Here the field of situological experience is divided into two opposed tendencies, the ludic tendency and the analytical tendency. The tendency of art, spinn [sic] and the game, and that of science and its techniques. The creation of variabilities within a unity, and the search for unity amongst the variations. [...] Situology, in its development, gives a decisive push to the two tendencies.*<sup>7</sup>

Jorn’s ‘Situology’ was Jorn’s take on the mathematical concept of ‘topology’, aimed at combining the aesthetical and political with the geometric, the importance of which he traced to the Renaissance where Euclidean geometries directly influenced art and critical thinking through the practice of perspective. Jorn attempted to follow a similar path with contemporary geometry, stating: “*Our goal is to set a plastic and elementary geometry against egalitarian and Euclidean geometry, and with the help of both to go towards a geometry of variables, playful and*

5 Ibid.

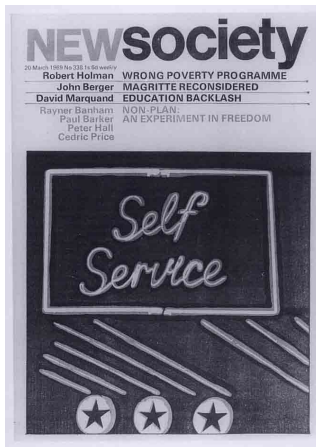
Although originating as an aesthetic strategy, it was one of the lesser known founding members of the SI, Giuseppe Gallizio, who ‘*shifted détournement from the arranging of preexisting aesthetic elements to the arranging of preexisting relationships among people.*’ (McKenzie Wark, *50 years of recuperation of the situationist international* (New York: The Temple Hoyne Buell Center/Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), p. 12). Whilst Gallizio carried this out in the context of painting, Constant Nieuwenhuys brought this concern to the production of cities in his utopian project, *New Babylon*. A city based on total automation and the collective ownership of land, *New Babylon* abolished work freeing citizens for a nomadic existence of play, arranged around the construction of atmospheres and *situations* for social interactions.

6 The Scandinavian Situationists included Ansgar Elde, Jacqueline de Jong, Asger Jorn and Jørgen Nash amongst others.

7 Asger Jorn, ‘Open creation and its enemies’, *Internationale situationniste*, 5 (1960): <http://www.infopool.org.uk/6004.html>.

*differential geometry*.<sup>8</sup> This emphasis on a geometry of difference rather than of equivalence is useful for thinking issues related to the diaspora, where both time and space are stretched and the virtual is folded into the actual. The combining of a critique of urban practice under capitalism with **an emphasis on the non-contiguous nature of space and time** provide a very useful starting point for ‘diasporic urbanism’.

### (b) Non-plan



*New Society*, 20 March 1969, front cover

Whilst the Situationists imagined the city as a field upon which to act, the UK based Non-plan movement of the 1960s addressed the consequences of this thinking on **the specific relations between the users of space and urban planning professionals**. Non-plan was a reaction to the failure of the welfare state, in particular with regard to homelessness and social housing provision. It emerged at the same time as the squatter movement, sharing with them a critique of the legislature surrounding planning, which they believed only exasperated the situation. But, unlike the squatter movement, which was highly radical and politicised, Non-plan’s conservative tendencies of viewing the free-market as value-neutral would curtail its transformative potential. The first exposition of their ideas was in a special issue of the magazine *New Society* (1969), ‘Non-Plan: An experiment in freedom’, whose subtitle both conveyed the attitude and content of the piece: ‘*Town and country planning has today become an unquestioned shibboleth. Yet very few of its procedures and value judgements have any sound basis, except delay. Why not have the courage, where practical, to let people shape their own environment?*’<sup>9</sup> Imagining a planning system that let people build what they wanted, Non-plan anticipated Scott Brown and Venturi’s, *Learning from Las Vegas*, in its valorisation of everyday forms, suburban buildings and signage that were part of life in British suburbia.<sup>10</sup>

Non-Plan may have worked as a polemic, but a practical experiment of the freedom it advocated resulted in Margaret Thatcher’s ‘enterprise zones’ exposing the extreme ambivalence of such an approach.<sup>11</sup> A more politicised version of this critique of overbearing and outdated planning

8 Asger Jorn, ‘Open creation and its enemies’, *Internationale situationniste*, 5 (1960): <http://www.infopool.org.uk/6004.html>. These concepts that in contemporary science and theory are now do prevalent, were quite rare at the time that Jorn was constructing his own theory of ‘sitology’.

9 Reyner Banham and others, ‘Non-plan: An experiment in freedom’, *New society*, 13 (338)(20 March 1969): 435-443.

10 Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour and Robert Venturi, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972).

11 The much maligned Canary Wharf tower and the Gateshead Metro Centre in the North-East were both built in ‘enterprise zones’. The high-rise tower for bankers did nothing to help those living in London’s East-end and neither did the shopping centre solve the endemic problems of a coal mining area with soaring unemployment following the closure of the mines. Non-Plan’s vision without the structures in place for a genuinely participatory process was co-opted to serve the usual suspects.

regulations, can be found in Richard Sennett's call to free urbanism from state regulation and control in *The Uses of Disorder*.<sup>12</sup> Sennett's book imagines control being handed back to citizens, allowing **self-organised processes** to occur, but **crucially paying close attention to the social, political and economic structures that could support this transition of power to the grass-roots**.<sup>13</sup> At the same time it makes room for the inevitable conflicts that a radically participatory approach exposes. The Non-Plan experiment, the squatter movement and the insights of Sennett's analysis serve as a guide for thinking through issues of **user participation**, of how **to ensure that such processes are not co-opted by those in power**. For a diasporic urbanism that addresses those at the margins of society this is a central question.

### (c) Situational urbanism



HIER ENTSTEHT. Strategien partizipativer Architektur und räumlicher Aneignung (UNDER CONSTRUCTION. Strategies of Participatory Architecture and Spatial Appropriation), event in Berlin co-curated by Mathias Heyden and Jesko Fezer (2002) and associated boof (2004).

With their concept of Situational Urbanism (2007) Jesko Fezer and Mathias Heyden emphasise the way in which **progressive approaches to urban development are easily subsumed by hegemonic practices**.<sup>14</sup> Elaborated within the context of Berlin's development after the fall of the Wall, Situational Urbanism critiques the way in which the temporary projects that have come to define the city in recent years, and which began by supporting and initiating alternative and marginal claims to the city, have become just another form of gentrification. The book, *Urban Pioneers*, seems to exemplify this tendency of using temporary projects to supplement real estate development, whilst those projects that may have a more progressive outlook still lack a long-term vision for a caring and supportive urban environment.<sup>15</sup> Fezer and Heyden also cite other examples from Germany where many self-organised initiatives have resulted in the construction of middle-class enclaves with no diversity in income levels, ethnic, social or cultural backgrounds. In learning from these concrete examples Fezer and Heyden underline the ambivalence of Situational Urbanism, whilst dispensing with the naivety and 'shock-value' approach of Non-plan. Instead they are concerned with working out the practicalities of making the "conditions of intervention for a situated urbanism that is

12 Richard Sennett, *The uses of disorder: Personal identity and city life* (London: Penguin Books, 1973).

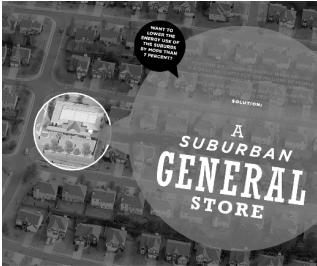
13 A recent publication that explores this issue of 'support' from an art and architecture perspective: Céline Condorelli and Gavin Wade, *Support structures* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2009).

14 See, Jesko Fezer and Mathias Heyden, 'The Ambivalence of Participation and Situational Urbanism' in, AAA (ed.), *Urban/ACT* (Paris: AAA/Peprav, 2007), pp. 329-336.

15 Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung Berlin (ed.), *Urban pioneers: Temporary use and urban development in berlin* (Berlin: Jovis, 2007).

*genuinely pluralist and non-hegemonic*".<sup>16</sup> Their model of urbanity pays close attention to the politics of self-organised, self-managed or self-built communities and acknowledges that **genuine participation is a long and difficult process, especially when addressing diverse populations.**

#### (d) Everyday urbanism



A suburban general store, project by DUB studio. Part of the everyday urbanism projects archive; <http://www.everydayurbanism.com/projects/a-suburban-general-store/>

The translation of Henri Lefebvre's, *The Production of Space* into English in 1991, led to the development of an interest in the everyday in architecture.<sup>17</sup> In the context of an architecture culture that was thoroughly institutionalised and in thrall to formalism, Lefebvre's insights into the intertwined nature of lived experience, the *quotidian* and political struggle proved to be extremely useful in thinking the practice of architecture beyond the building as object.<sup>18</sup> Whilst post-structuralist theory had been (wrongly) interpreted into architectural practice as a purely theoretical exercise supported by complex form-making, the everyday provided a way of bringing back the ignored social and political aspects. The everyday resisted the commodification and consumption that had enveloped architectural production (and still does) and its insistence on beginning from the lived experience of those who inhabit the cities and spaces we design, an insistence on the participation of 'users' in the production of space, are all equally important for a diasporic urbanism that is looking to address and represent new spatial conditions.<sup>19</sup>

In the edited collection, *Everyday Urbanism*, Margaret Crawford and John Kaliski bring together a series of essays that interrogate the consequences of Lefebvre's thinking on western cities (Los Angeles in particular).<sup>20</sup> Crawford comes to the everyday from the informal economies that operate in many such cities and the new types of public space that these practices produce, opposing them to the commodified space of the shopping mall. Deborah Berke in *Architecture of the Everyday*, describes it as a series of qualities:

16 From the abstract of Jesko Fezer and Mathias Heyden, 'L'ambivalence de la participation et l'urbanisme situationnel', *Multitudes*, 31 (Winter 2007): <http://multitudes.samizdat.net/Multitudes-31-Winter-2007>. An English version of this article entitled, 'The Ambivalence of Participation and *Situational Urbanism*' is available in the book: AAA (ed.), *Urban/ACT* (Paris: AAA/Peprav, 2007), pp. 329-336.

17 Henri Lefebvre, *The production of space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991).

18 See, 'Diasporic Space', pp. 48-50.

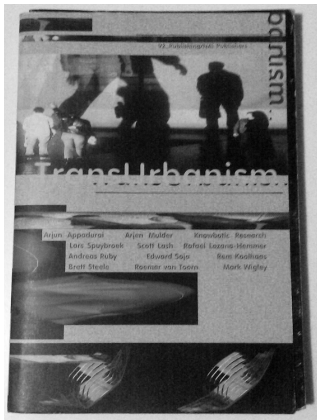
19 Whilst not dealing directly with Everyday Urbanism, this collection is one of the few books to address the history and contemporary relevance of the 'participation' debate in architecture. Peter Blundell-Jones, Doina Petrescu and Jeremy Till (eds.), *Architecture and participation* (London: Spon Press, 2005).

20 John Chase, Margaret Crawford and John Kaliski (eds.), *Everyday urbanism* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2008 (1999)).



'An Architecture of the Everyday May Be Banal or Common' ... 'Quite Ordinary', 'Sensual', 'Vulgar', 'Visceral', 'Acknowledges Domestic Life', 'May Take on Collective and Symbolic Meaning'.<sup>21</sup> Whilst Jeremy Till and Sarah Wigglesworth describe the need for architecture to *respond to everyday life* in order to have relevance *in everyday life*.<sup>22</sup> An approach that tries to decipher **how new types of spaces are produced in the city through everyday practices** is essential for understanding the diasporic existence, combined with **a break from institutionalised and professionalised forms of knowledge and dissemination that inevitably exclude those who dwell at society's margins.**

### (e) TransUrbanism



*Transurbanism* (2002), front cover

The expansion of architecture into other fields that include legislature, economies, politics and social dynamics is a shared quality of all the alternative urbanisms mentioned here, but two contemporary examples focus on the particular consequences of globalisation, including increasing migration. TransUrbanism (2001) as a concept was developed at a symposium of the same name organised by the V2\_Organisation in Rotterdam.<sup>23</sup> Here a number of speakers considered the practice of urbanism and its accompanying design strategies updated for global realities influenced by new technologies of communication and travel. One of the main contributions of TransUrbanism was to emphasise that traditional conceptions of urbanity such as 'walled medieval town' or 'grand industrial city' were no longer adequate and instead different ways of thinking were needed that did not try to emulate the past but learnt from the present. As Arjen Mulder writes: "*The best model for the world is the world itself.*"<sup>24</sup> For Mulder this results in an attitude to research and practice that **does not study the city from a detached perspective but is instead embedded in its context:** "*From the outside, you see only the movements: what stands still, what shifts, what disappears. From the inside, you detect the transformations: what direction things are going in, what is changing and what new things are emerging.*"<sup>25</sup>

21 Deborah Berke, 'Thoughts on the Everyday' in, Deborah Berke and Steven Harris, *Architecture of the everyday* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), pp. 222-226.

22 Jeremy Till and Sarah Wigglesworth, 'The everyday and architecture', *Architectural design*, 68 (7/8)(July/August 1998).

23 The symposium is documented in: Arjen Mulder, Laura Martz and Joke Brouwer (eds.), *Transurbanism*, (Rotterdam: V2\_Publishing/NAI Publishers, 2002).

24 *Ibid.*, p. 6.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

An urban practice that begins by **studying the trajectories and transformations of cities** will be in a privileged position to detect the complexities and highly particular nature of diasporic lives situated at the confluence of various local and global flows. Appadurai provides a framework for thinking cities in these terms, what he calls 'scapes.' Scapes conceptualise the city as a series of horizontal flows, including the flow of technologies across previously impervious borders (*technoscapes*), the flow of global capital (*financescapes*), the unrelenting flow of images and the narratives they produce (*mediascapes*), as well as the ideologies of particular groups and nation-states (*ideoscapes*). And of course it includes the movement of people across national borders, refugees, migrants, guest workers, tourists and travellers of all sorts (*ethnoscapes*). Appadurai uses the suffix '-scapes' to "point to the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscapes" and to "indicate that these are not objectively given relations that look the same from every angle of vision, but rather, that they are deeply perspectival constructs".<sup>26</sup> The concept of 'scapes' also gives seemingly immaterial flows a spatial dimension and emphasises the need for a practice of urbanism that shifts away from considering only buildings and the space between them to the **various 'atmospheres' and 'narratives' of city-life.**

#### (f) Trans-border urbanism



Border fence: a photographic reproduction of the US-Mexico border fence for the 11th Architecture Biennale in Venice (2008). Estudio Teddy Cruz.

The work of architect, Teddy Cruz, could be considered an example of TransUrbanism but with an explicitly political stance. Much of Cruz's work has analysed the Tijuana-San Diego 'borderzone' in terms of the flows that move across it despite its highly militarised character, including the counter-tactics of 'illegal' people moving northwards under cover of darkness, or the various objects, large and small that move southwards, from whole unwanted houses to disused tyres. It is in the context of these flows that Cruz looks for a new type of **urbanism of the everyday that highlights the agency of ordinary people**, whether it is the Tijuana resident who recycles and reuses the debris of US consumer society, or migrants building a new life for themselves in San Diego. As Cruz explains:

*[migrants] construct alternative urbanisms of transgression that infiltrate themselves beyond the property line in the form of non-conforming spatial and entrepreneurial practices. A migrant, small scale activism that alters the rigidity of discriminatory urban planning of the American metropolis, and search [sic] for new modes of social sustainability and affordability.*<sup>27</sup>

26 Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalisation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. 33.

27 Estudio Teddy Cruz, 'Office profile', <http://www.world-architects.com/estudio/>.

Although highly specific to an area, Trans-border Urbanism, offers strategies that can be applied elsewhere such as the lesson that **even issues of a global nature are best tackled at the neighbourhood level.**<sup>28</sup>

Many of the insights of the various urbanisms described above fit within a certain tradition of thinking inspired by French sociology and philosophy and feminist geography. Whether addressed through contemporary mathematics in the productive encounter between Situationism and topology, or through a critical approach towards issues of self-organisation and development, or through the lens of the various local and global flows that constitute place today, these practices share a common thread of foregrounding the relations between people inflected through space. These and other examples throughout the thesis **constitute critical spatial practices that are situated in their context**, they offer models for future urbanisms that are not only equitable in their approach but are also able to address the increasing complexities of the contemporary world.

## Diasporas and migratory practices

I have chosen to use the word ‘diasporic’ rather than ‘migrant’ in the title of this thesis, as it has a more specific meaning and due to its contested nature has been the locus of a number of debates around definitions of ‘identity’, ‘home’ and the concept of ‘hybridity’, all of which are crucial to describing migrant-diasporic subjectivities. The etymology of the word gives clues to its status within contemporary discourse, derived from the Greek *diaspeirō* meaning ‘to distribute’, the word itself is a compound of *speirō*, ‘to sow or scatter’ and *dia-* ‘from one end to the other’. Associated primarily with the Jewish diaspora, the classic description is sometimes extended to dislocated Armenian and Greek communities, but in contemporary understandings the term has been generalised: “*The dispersion of a people from their original homeland.*”<sup>29</sup> It is perhaps this flux in meaning, from the appropriation of a general verb to describe a very particular event to its later expansion to encompass *any* population, that has given the term such a fraught character. It has also led to conceptualisations of diasporas into *ideal*

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28 Teddy Cruz’s practice has addressed these issues for several years and he was awarded the inaugural James Stirling Memorial Lecture on the City, bringing the work to international attention. Teddy Cruz, ‘Border postcards: Chronicles from the edge’, *Stirling lecture*, 28 Oct 2004): <http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/education-events/259-teddy-cruz-border-postcards-chronicles-from-the-edge>.

29 <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Diaspora>. The Oxford English Dictionary ([www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com)) on the other hand still refuses to accept this now generally agreed definition and prefers to refer only to the original Biblical formulation: ‘*The Dispersion; i.e. (among the Hellenistic Jews) the whole body of Jews living dispersed among the Gentiles after the Captivity (John vii. 35); (among the early Jewish Christians) the body of Jewish Christians outside of Palestine (Jas. i. 1, 1 Pet. i. 1).*’

types<sup>30</sup> and categorisations such as ‘*victim diasporas*’, ‘*trade diasporas*’ and ‘*cultural diasporas*’ to name a few.<sup>31</sup> Whilst conceptual clarity is useful, many of these categories and characterisations also run the risk of restricting the potential of the term and often also exclude.<sup>32</sup> I therefore follow a specific genealogy of thinking that **takes a critical position towards fixed categories that rely on notions of ‘identity’ and the relationship to an originary home**, in particular the concept of ‘return’ that has been so prevalent in earlier understandings of diaspora. The contemporary situation of displaced populations and their second or third generation offspring, also complicates the understanding of the original meaning of diasporas as dispersion from an original homeland. **Such people are ‘diasporas without homeland’, where the relationship to an original home is not only contested or refused but is simply not there.** This radicalisation of the meaning of diaspora is especially useful for a contemporary world of increasing migration, displacement and communication, where the fragmenting of fixed communities means that in the end everyone will be ‘without homeland’—a diasporic citizen.

The cultural theorist, Stuart Hall, exemplified this strand of thinking the becomings of a diasporic subjectivity in his influential essay, ‘Cultural Identity and Diaspora’, first published in 1990.<sup>33</sup> For Hall diasporas must be defined in terms of the **production of subjectivities** rather than as fixed identities. Even those diasporic communities that could easily be dismissed as backward-looking are in the process of creating new subjectivities that emerge from a dialogue with their new context. In this sense, diasporas even at their most traditional are contemporary. In many cases it is the construction of a new home elsewhere that is of bigger concern than the nostalgic act of looking backwards, but this construction cannot be based solely around similarities and must include difference. As Avtar Brah writes: “*The concept of diaspora places the discourse of ‘home’ and ‘dispersion’ in creative tension, inscribing a homing desire while simultaneously critiquing discourses of fixed origins.*”<sup>34</sup> Thus a

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30 William Safran, ‘Diasporas in modern societies: Myths of homeland and return’, *Diaspora*, 1 (1)(1991): 83-99.

31 Robin Cohen, *Global diasporas: An introduction* (London: UCL Press, 1997).

32 For a critique of ‘ideal type’ diasporas see, ‘Diasporas’ in, James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and translation in the late twentieth century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 244-278.

33 Stuart Hall, ‘Cultural identity and diaspora’, in Jonathan Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, culture and difference* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), pp. 223-237.

34 Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of diaspora: Contesting identities* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 192-193.

concept of diasporic subjectivity and temporality is required which can mediate between these different registers where “*historical and contemporary elements are understood, not in tandem, but in their dia-synchronic relationality.*”<sup>35</sup> It is in the ambivalence of concepts such as ‘home’ and the insistence on creativity and invention that **diaspora culture guards against essentialised notions of the self**. As Hall describes:

*The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of ‘identity’ which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference.*<sup>36</sup>

The production and reproduction of diaspora culture also guards against other essentialised notions pertinent to the study of cities, concepts such as land ownership and property that are deeply embedded in the way we conceive our cities today. This is the ‘gift’ that diaspora cultures give to urbanism; an emancipatory concept for conceiving the city that goes beyond attending to migrant culture towards the city in general.

The concept of hybridity, highlighted by Hall, is contested within diaspora theory. Whilst Hall’s own readings of the hybridity of Black diasporas were carefully crafted and historically situated accounts, often in other readings the economic, political, social, religious and gendered contexts of diasporic lives were not paid sufficient attention.<sup>37</sup> For this reason some prefer to use the term, ‘transnationalism’, which deals specifically with these other flows related to the contemporary context of globalisation and advanced capitalism.<sup>38</sup> But it is the **situated nature of diasporic theorising, its explicit positioning within the everyday lived experiences of people** that I find useful. Alongside this, its roots in post-colonial theory have meant that diaspora theory is also based around a critique of the narrative of nationalism and the primacy of the nation-state. As the editors of a recent anthology on the subject suggest, “*theorising diaspora offers critical spaces for thinking about the discordant movements of modernity*”, it offers also the space **to imagine the multiple, overlapping and sometimes parallel modernities** in

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35 Ibid., p. 190.

36 Stuart Hall, ‘Cultural identity and diaspora’, in Jonathan Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, culture and difference* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), p. 235.

37 See for example Bruce Robbin’s critique of several US journals publishing on issues related to the diaspora: Bruce Robbins, ‘Some versions of us internationalism’, *Social text*, 45 (1995): 97-123. and a more recent publication that offers a politically inflected critique, John Hutnyk, Virinder S. Kalra and Raminder Kaur (eds.), *Diaspora and hybridity* (London: Sage, 2005).

38 See, Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (London: Routledge, 2009).

which we now live.<sup>39</sup> It is in the representation of and intervention within these multiple modernities and parallel worlds that 'diasporic urbanism' is situated.

#### (a) Kurdish and Turkish diasporas as paradigmatic case

Much of my research is based around the Kurdish and Turkish diasporas in the borough of Hackney, London, and in one street in particular. The Kurds are the largest stateless group in the world, theirs could be considered an impossible homeland, making them a paradigmatic case of a 'diaspora without homeland'. The street that I have chosen is Stoke Newington High Street/Kingsland Road, an everyday shopping street with many Turkish and Kurdish shops and businesses. It is also located in my own neighbourhood, on a street and shops that I see and use everyday; a choice that allowed me to conduct the type of engaged and embedded research that would not have been possible at a distance. Yet, what I have chosen to concentrate on has been selected carefully, for example choosing to interrogate the *kahve* (Turkish coffee houses) was purposeful since they are a phenomenon that are representative of many of the issues I wanted to address in relation to a diasporic inhabitation of the city; questions around the construction of a new home, the mediation between different localities, the way this affected the constitution of diasporic subjectivities and the particular exclusions and politics of gender embedded in these places.

### Diasporic concepts and methodologies

The foregrounding of a politics of knowledge as methodology is an ethical choice that questions the assumptions of particular concepts and knowledge practices. This is especially important for dealing with the excluded or marginal subject, and I have therefore borrowed from the insights feminist standpoint, which provides a useful model for such thinking. For a diasporic knowledge politics in particular the emphasis shifts from the dominant modes of explanation and explication, towards the use of strategies of displacement and reterritorialisations. Both of these ways of addressing the politics of knowledge have emerged from the specific situation of the diaspora. Displacement recalls the situation of diasporic subjects and as knowledge practice it is able to address topics laterally, for example in my own research, the question of the construction of borders is addressed in interviews as personal narratives and stories of journeys, rather than through explicitly interrogating geo-political borders. Reterritorialisation, a concept borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari, is related to the way in which diasporas affect

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39 Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur (eds.), *Theorizing diaspora: A reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003).

space. As knowledge politics it is a way of relinquishing some of the hegemonic methodological practices of architecture and urbanism, and reterritorialising them through adapting to the concerns of the diaspora. The mapping practice I have developed in this thesis does this, through not completely relinquishing architectural methodologies but re-orienting and adding to them from other disciplines.

The research methodologies that I have used here are therefore necessarily interdisciplinary, mixing methods from anthropology and sociology, and in particular ethnographic and visual research methods. These have taken the form of semi-structured and unstructured interviews, interpretative analysis of the texts produced and visual methods of photography and image making. Combined with methodologies from art practice and architecture itself they produce a reterritorialisation of traditional architectural and urban practice towards methodologies appropriate for a diasporic urbanism.

The section of diasporic concepts describes ‘Diasporic spatio-temporalities’ as spaces of everyday life that are also mediatory spaces between times and cultures. It is a way of thinking space beyond the rational container and backdrop of Western philosophy, towards an inhabited and relational construct that attends to the rhythms and modulations of everyday life. Diasporic subjectivity emerges in the ‘in-between; heterogenous and becoming a making and remaking that itself affects the constitution of space as it is deterritorialised and reterritorialised by the displaced diasporic subject. Whilst a diasporic politics is concerned with the construction of community and of a commons, a shared space where the issues important to the diasporic subject can be assembled.

## Diasporic agencies

The question of **agency** is somehow central to the practice of diasporic urbanism that addresses the inhabitants of cities and their everyday concerns and practices. It means that how these inhabitants dwell in their city and imagine its spaces is a key question for the type of urbanism I am interested in. The task of imagining cities has for too long been the preserve of the privileged and the powerful. As the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai writes: *‘Even the poorest of the poor should have the capability, the privilege and the ability to participate in the work of the imagination.’*<sup>40</sup> This then is the challenge set down for ‘diasporic urbanism’—**how to make the conditions necessary for those other than the privileged few to participate in the imagining**

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 40 Arjun Appadurai, ‘The Right to Participate in the Work of the Imagination’ in, Arjen Mulder, Laura Martz and Joke Brouwer (eds.), *Transurbanism* (Rotterdam: V2\_Publishing/NAI Publishers, 2002), p. 46.

**of our cities**, and how to do this in the context of increasing heterogeneity, where there are inevitable dislocations between these different imaginings.

The term 'diasporic urbanism' therefore addresses the difficulties of operating with diasporic space and of accommodating the material complexities of migrant lives, whilst at the same time acknowledging that the everyday inhabiting of space by those in the diaspora challenges traditional modalities of architecture: the conceptualisation of space as rational, ordered, unified and measurable, of subjects as being representative of a whole, or the idea of an exemplary architectural subject. Instead, it is the **everyday nostalgias, replications and transpositions of things and cultures** that are the concerns of 'diasporic urbanism', addressed through conceiving the city as a space made of varied flows whose complex interactions produce specific spatialities and cultures. Whilst attending to these immaterial flows, the challenge for urban practice is to not forget that the city is also an embodied space full of people, things, dirt—matter in all its forms. How can the inevitable frictions and conflicts of increasingly crowded lives be accommodated without looking for a necessary resolution? The political and the cultural intertwine here and following Doreen Massey we can conceptualise the city as a net of relations over space and time.<sup>41</sup> Thinking of time in this way privileges historiography, asking whose version counts or did count in the narrative of the city, thinking of space in this way encompasses overlapping desires and the appropriation and negotiation of space.

There is a need for research to be carried out 'on the ground' that can capture some of the alterity produced by migrant groups within the space of the city. How do power structures, cultural difference and strategies of resistance play out within urban space? What are the spatialities of the diasporic condition and how do these coexist with the spatialities of the 'native' or 'host' population? Current urban planning tools are woefully inadequate for interrogating these realities for a number of reasons: zoning exercises, pedestrian footfall analyses, sun and density studies are all too empirical to take account of what are considered ephemeral processes better left to sociologists and anthropologists. The topics that I am interested in require techniques that can account for time, feelings, flows, networks and relationships. They require speaking to people as if they mattered; they require a type of participation that goes beyond the box-ticking exercises carried out by local authorities intent on fulfilling their criteria for

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<sup>41</sup> See, Doreen Massey, *Space, place and gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).



‘regeneration’. The manipulation of city-space is part of the domain of architects and urban planners and so it is time for us to pay attention to these details.

#### (a) Embodied spatial practices

In addressing those that have been excluded or marginalised from the dominant discourse on, and practice of the city, I have applied the insights of feminist theory, which has a long history of tackling these issues. It provides a model for thinking and methods of research that can **address the excluded subject**, in particular the emphasis on paying close attention to context and the acknowledgement that research begins at the outset with the questions that are asked. My own positioning within the Pakistani diaspora has led to my interest in this topic, whilst the conscious decision to locate the research in my neighbourhood has resulted in a situated practice. Being **‘self-reflexive’** has meant taking a critical approach to my own work and allowing it to be adapted by circumstance, for example I have allowed chance meetings with certain people, such as the founder of a prominent local community centre or a Labour party councillor, to shape the research direction.<sup>42</sup> These meetings were, of course, also a product of my general presence in the neighbourhood—of being a local resident. I have combined this approach with an applied research that specifically addresses the spatial through the use of mappings, through carrying out interviews and going for walks with various people, resulting in a research methodology that is related to a ‘critical spatial practice’. This term is currently in use by a wide group of practitioners: architects, artists, geographers and others, and is described by Jane Rendell as those practices that “*transform rather than describe*” and “*involve social critique, self-reflection and social change*.”<sup>43</sup> They are also **practices that provoke or problematise** rather than the usual mode claimed by professional architects who often situate themselves as problem solvers—‘space planners’, ‘designing out crime’, ‘developing healthy and sound solutions’. Instead of this overwhelming desire to situate architecture and urbanism as a practice that can solve all of our problems, which necessarily leads to a simplification and foreshortening of the complex nature of space, a ‘diasporic spatial practice’ **uses the displacement of the diasporic subject as metonym for an appropriate way of working**. Displacement becomes a methodology that valorises the tactics of looking askance, of not following given methodologies to the letter, of thinking and acting laterally.

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42 See, ‘Agencies and an embodied spatial practice’, pp. 123-124.

43 Jane Rendell, *Art and architecture: A place between* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006). Others using the term include the Research Architecture group at Goldsmiths University, London (<http://roundtable.kein.org/mission>) and the reading group based at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (<http://criticalspatialpractice.blogspot.com/>).

My own research focuses on understanding the many ways of inhabiting, appropriating and even territorialising space that are specific to the diasporic condition. These concerns are addressed in a **'diasporic spatial practice'**, which displaces theory into practice and vice versa. Much of the work has addressed the Kurdish and Turkish community along a single street and its surrounding area, as it runs through Stoke Newington and Dalston in Hackney, London, whilst a small section addresses the Bangladeshi community in Spitalfields. I have mapped diasporic space, its subjectivities and politics at various scales in order to interrogate the different types of belonging they embody: at the intimate and private scale of customised and adapted interiors, at street-level in the guise of the highly personal and mobile territories of diasporic individuals and at the level of public space in a park that at times comes to represent the political agency of the local community. Finally, I have also mapped the imagined territories and landscapes that overlay and interact with each of these other types of spaces. Whilst 'diasporic urbanism' has been developed in these contexts, the aim is to contribute towards an alternative model and tools for urban practice that can also be applied elsewhere. Of course many of the issues are specific to the European context, including the social, political and legal status of migrants, as well as the particular morphology of European cities whose dense urban fabric means that groups who may be separated socially are proximate spatially. In many ways the diasporic subject is paradigmatic, the effects of globalisation mean that the other is always already here and **the multiple belongings and hybrid nature of the diaspora are also radicalised versions of contemporary subjectivities**, giving aspects of 'diasporic urbanism' a much wider appeal and applicability.

### (b) Trans-localities, Territories, Border(ing) Practices

One of the most contested topics within any discussion of diasporas is the notion of 'home'. I have already described the wider diasporic condition as that of being 'without home', but this is meant in the classical sense of home as an originary nation-state or cultural identity. For diasporas 'home' is a deliberate construction that includes nostalgia for the place left behind and the need to replicate some of its customs, traditions and spaces. Knowing that an exact replication is impossible, this hybrid practice aims instead to create similar 'atmospheres', achieved through the deployment of 'souvenirs'.<sup>44</sup> The definition of these souvenirs is addressed at different scales in the chapters, *'Trans- localities/Places'* and *'Border[ing] Practices'*. *'Trans-localities/*

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44 The use of the terms 'souvenirs' and 'atmospheres' to describe migrant space has also been used by Diego Barajas; Diego Barajas, *Dispersion: A study of global mobility and the dynamics of a fictional urbanism* (Rotterdam: episode publishers, 2003); Diego Barajas, 'Borders and mobility', (11 April 2008), University of Sheffield, School of Architecture, <http://linesofflight.wordpress.com/2008/03/20/seminar-05-borders-and-mobility/>.

*Places* discusses the creation of atmospheres at a small scale within interior spaces where the souvenirs are domestic objects—a pack of playing cards or a teapot, which combined with certain practices, rituals and gestures creates a ‘trans-locality’, a space suspended somewhere between ‘here and there’ and ‘then and now’. In *Bordering Practices* there is a jump in scale and site, a move out of the private sphere of the interior to the expression of diasporic urban imaginings in the public space of a park. Here the souvenirs become monumental, expressions of national, religious or other affiliations that represent a different culture and politics to those of the host populations. It is here that diasporic spaces become exoticised on the one hand and vilified on the other, a curry on Brick Lane is on the list of essential experiences for the savvy London tourist, whilst a mosque and its associated minar are too exclusive and appropriate too much public space, symbols of unwanted and inappropriate people and their practices. But at the same time there is a need for open and inclusive spaces that can accommodate different forms of inhabiting, and some diasporic spaces are highly exclusive. How to find a balance between **the need for inclusive spaces and the inability of westernised spaces to accommodate certain traditions and behaviours**, as well as handling the push and pull between the ‘host’ and the ‘home’ cultures that never relate within an easy dialectic is a key question for a diasporic urbanism.

The second aspect of a diasporic imagining of the city stems from the idea that the migrant condition is always already political. The terminology used to describe the people who move across national borders signals this reality, in common English a person moving from the global North to anywhere is described as an ‘expat’, yet those moving from the South to the North are ‘immigrants’. Why the difference? Why aren’t Westerners moving to say, Kenya, called immigrants? The prejudices hidden behind such naming practices may be reason enough to be politicised but combined with the fact that ‘immigrants’ tend to move almost always through necessity, whether economic, social or political, making their existence itself politicised. This condition also brings with it certain ways of inhabiting the city that produce sometimes conflictual spaces, and at other times spaces borne of solidarities. The chapter, *Territories*, addresses these issues through a conceptualisation of diasporic city-space as territorialised through political, religious and other affiliations, as well as being embodied and biological akin to the territories produced by *all* living creatures. Following Deleuze and Guattari, the concept of the ‘refrain’ is used to map territories predicated on notions of appropriation and on the idea that where you go and feel comfortable is dependant on who you are and who you are with. Finally, in the chapter *Borderling Practices*, I explore how regional borders elsewhere are re-created on a micro scale in the European metropolis. Manifesting themselves as enclaves of a certain ethnic or religious grouping, or sometimes erupting into the psyche of those for whom such distinctions may not

be so obvious, for example in the form of marches by those protesting against events occurring in another national space. I have explored the shifting borders produced through such practices through mental and cognitive mappings with Kurds and Turks, which has produced maps of the imagined territory of Kurdistan, revealing how national and regional allegiances cause **topological deformations to city-space through the inhabitation of diasporic populations.**

## Mapping otherwise

Diasporic urbanism is thus concerned with addressing this neglected context from the point of view of architecture, and although I do not enact this urbanism here, I do begin the task of setting up the field and specifically, of researching what methods are required for representing these new subjects and spaces. I identify mapping as an important tool in this initial phase and use it to explore the spaces, subjectivities and politics of the diasporic condition. Here mapping is both the *subject* of the research and a *form* of experimental research. Whilst cartography has traditionally been the preserve of the powerful, used historically to repress populations and to carve out territories, there is also an alternative history of this practice, which I relate here. I use the term ‘mapping’ to make a break from the hegemonic use of cartography towards a practice of ‘counter-mapping’ that often includes non-professional modes and straddles disciplinary boundaries. The term also situates my own work within a wider contemporary concern that uses mapping in non-hegemonic and inclusive ways.

These other ways of mapping also engage with the question of how to map that which is always left out of traditional cartographic practices, to represent that which always gets lost—the less powerful and the marginal. In this, maps take on a new agency; whilst traditional maps are mainly used to identify the territory of intervention (for colonising, for building, for appropriating...) counter-maps take on other roles, they can sometimes be propositional in themselves (the maps *are* the intervention), at others times they take on the task of mediation (they become objects that constitute a *public*), or of imagining alternative possibilities (they *perform* and *enact*). These new roles, too, are powerful but in a subversive and tactical mode, unlike the sovereign power of cartographic practice. They are important for mapping the *metropolis* from within, its power-lines and spaces. Within the task of mapping diasporas, these maps take on very specific roles and ways of ‘being propositional’, ‘creating possibilities’ and ‘of mediating’: through creating connections topologically across cultures and spaces, through allegorical and mimicry-modes, through gestures and embodied performance. They take a feminist approach to thinking and doing, combining politics with poetics, as Rachel Blau duPlessis writes, herself borrowing and adapting from others:

*“What would be a word, not the word ‘marginal’ to describe this? Marginal is a word which asks for, demands, homage to centre” (asked Jeanne Lance)*

*Not ‘otherness’ in a binary system, but ‘otherhow’ as the multiple possibilities of a praxis.*

*Even ‘margins’ decisively written are another text. The margins must multiply.<sup>45</sup>*

Mapping otherness through ‘mapping otherhow’ may produce maps that represent the metropolis ‘otherwise’, maps that displace the subject or the space, maps that explore the multiple possibilities of their praxis. It could be a type of ‘counter-mapping’ that begins from the experiences of the margins not as identity logics but as a way of ‘evacuating the margins’: *‘A writing [mapping] over the edge! That’s it. Satisfying one’s sense of the excessive, indecorous, intense, crazed and desirous. She’s over the edge! And the writing [map] drives off the page, a variegated channel between you and me.’<sup>46</sup>* Whilst in general, as well as in architecture, deconstructing and playing with modes of writing have been a constituent part of feminist modes of thinking and doing, the deconstruction and challenging of dominant practices of (visual) representation (including mapping) have remained under developed. By researching everyday diasporic spaces through new modes of visual representation I also aim at opening up a dialogue between architecture and other fields, social and political anthropology, art and visual sociology, allowing for possibilities of collaboration and contamination.

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The thesis is split into three main sections, **concepts**, **agencies** and **‘mapping otherwise’**, each beginning with an exploration of the methodologies used. The first section explores concepts required for thinking diasporic urbanism and starts with setting up a politics of knowledge, proposing **‘displacement’** and **‘reterritorialisations’** as methodologies for thinking the production of knowledge in the diasporic context. I then explore the three main concepts of diasporic urbanism: **space**, **subjectivity** and **politics**, drawings out aspects useful for thinking heterogenous spaces, multiple subjectivities and non-hegemonic forms of politics.

The second section is an embodied research into the spatial agencies produced through diasporic inhabitations of the city. I begin with defining an **‘embodied spatial practice’** as methodology and through

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45 Rachel Blau DuPlessis, *The pink guitar: Writing as feminist practice* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006), p. 154.

46 Ibid.

the *practicing* of research ‘on the ground’ three topics emerged related to the diasporic experience: ‘**trans-localities/places**’, ‘**border(ing) practices**’ and ‘**diasporic territories**’.

The third section, ‘**mapping otherwise**’, introduces this practice of counter-mapping through an appraisal of a newly emerging contemporary politics of mapping, drawing out those techniques and tactics that are useful for representing diasporas. In the final half of this section, I relate the making of **diasporic diagrams** as **topological, interpretative** and **performative**.

Finally, I end with speculation on a ‘**diasporic urbanism to come**’ that can act as a model for addressing those ‘*without home(land)*’, a practice that emphasises representation and agencies over buildings as objects. The phrase ‘to come’ recalls Giorgio Agamben’s redefining of the notion of belonging itself beyond identity and essence, towards the potentiality of a ‘community to come’.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> See, Giorgio Agamben, *The coming community*, trans. by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). See also, ‘Diasporic politics’, pp. 98-99.



# 1.0 Concepts



## Displacement & reterritorialisations

The subjects to be broached in this section, space, subjectivity, and politics, require a particular politics of knowledge in order to address the diasporic condition. In this chapter, I therefore develop a knowledge politics based on the ethics of research, and it is in this way that I here also address the question of methodology. Through choosing to work across diverse disciplinary backgrounds, including architecture, urbanism, critical theory, sociology, anthropology and geography, I try to apply these insights to my own topic whilst questioning the assumptions of particular concepts. What brings together these various strands is a shared approach that privileges the insights of feminism, providing useful points of view and specific methodologies from which to interrogate and engage critically with their respective disciplines. Feminism's long history of speaking from the position of the marginal and the excluded subject has been especially useful for my research into the diasporic condition, including the pioneering work of feminist geographers and urbanists who have brought this thinking to bear upon space and the city. The insistence on difference and the heterogeneity of their approach has meant that there is no one feminist theory but myriad strands, some more conservative than others; for example, 'feminist empiricism' in sociology or 'feminist liberalism' in political theory, in my view, stop short of fully embracing the potential of a feminist way of thinking.

In this chapter, I therefore turn to a more radical feminism whose genealogy I trace in order to formulate my own methodology as knowledge politics. It is a stance which recognises that the entrenched nature of many of the oppressive structures that feminism works against cannot be rectified by a simple 'adding' of the marginal or minority view, but instead calls for a complete reformulation of our thinking. It is a model of how to deal with the excluded subject, which I here adapt to my own question of conceptualising specific methodologies for representing and intervening in the diasporic condition. Feminists have approached this task from two distinct angles, criticism and representation, both of which if applied affirmatively (as they are in the genealogy I trace) construct new knowledge through the transformation of discourses, intervening in the *dispositif*, through an understanding of our own position within it.<sup>1</sup> For me, it is perhaps the work of feminist theorists more than any others, that has revealed the ways in which 'subtle subversions' are possible within concrete reality through an open dialogue between theory and practice.

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1 For a detailed discussion on the '*dispositif*', see 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', p. 53.

The irreducibility of sexual difference within much of the post-structuralist theory I refer to does not preclude an application of these insights to the diasporic condition. Many are transferable and here I highlight the ways in which feminist theory brings together and proposes methodological approaches for the three topics to be addressed in the following chapters of this section.

**Politics and subjectivity** come together in the feminist trait of not separating the personal from the political and the private from the public. Anthropological feminist approaches provide specific ways of dealing with these issues within diverse communities without objectifying. These are practical methodologies and cautious words for carrying out fieldwork and research that take seriously the power dynamics between academics and their 'subjects'. The material thinking of feminists influenced by Deleuze and Guattari conceptualise **subjectivity and space** through the important yet overlooked role that embodiment and an ontology of difference in continuous variation plays. Feminist architectural and artistic practices use these bodily insights to subvert the highly empirical knowledge of measuring and recording space that is the domain of the traditional architect. Their practices hint at methodologies that make use of other types of subjective, sensual, knowledge based on hunch, intuition, the drawing of connections and negotiations in and of space. Finally, giving value to the details of everyday encounters mixes **space and politics** in a feminist reading of the city, where the claims of the marginalised are given precedence over the powerful.

Finally, through referring to my own research I identify two specific modes in which the feminist knowledge politics I introduce in this chapter can be applied to the diasporic condition: through displacements and reterritorialisations.

## 1. Politics and subjectivity in feminist theory

### (a) The production of knowledge and the practice of power: 'the personal is political'

Central to feminist critical theory has been an analysis of power relations and a working out of the ways in which women have been subordinated within a patriarchal society. One of the most useful insights, adapted from Foucault's analysis, has been the way in which the intricate links between the production of knowledge and the practice of power work to objectify women. This fundamental of feminist thinking has meant that regardless of which discipline it originates from feminist theory is always political. It has also meant that feminist epistemology, or the politics of knowledge, has been one of the most fruitful areas of discussion.

In the 1970s feminist standpoint developed as a theory that argued for the socially constructed nature of all knowledge and claimed that the point of view or 'standpoint' of women needed to be accounted for. Nancy Hartsock's seminal essay first published in 1983, 'The Feminist Standpoint',<sup>2</sup> is generally credited as marking the beginning of the debate. Developed mainly within the discipline of sociology, women scholars argued that theirs and other women's lives did not necessarily fit into the patterns and assumptions that a male point of view expected of them. Instead it required another approach that recognised that where and who you are changes what you do and how you do it. Crucially also, feminist standpoint takes a Marxist approach of privileging the positioning of the oppressed or marginalised through viewing knowledge as a product of the struggle against oppression—through gender bias in this case rather than class-based oppression. They argue that since men wield the greatest power in society, the knowledge they produce not only serves to consolidate their position, but is also directed towards solving their problems. This has resulted in many questions remaining unasked, such as society's willing acceptance of the unwaged work of mothers or the abysmally low rate of conviction in cases of rape. These examples show that the production of knowledge is never value-free or neutral.

In developing this concept of a socially constructed knowledge feminist theory is heavily indebted to Foucault. Although his framing of the relationships between power, the body and sexuality did not contain any explicit references to women and gender, feminist theorists have appropriated his insights. In particular his description of the body and sexuality as socio-cultural constructs rather than natural phenomena, is a distinction that is crucial to the feminist critique of essentialism. The famous feminist slogan 'the personal is political' is claiming exactly this; the title of an article written in 1969 as a response to the labelling of feminist group discussions (around issues of housework, abortion and appearance) as 'personal therapy' sessions. Carol Hanisch's article argued that categorising such topics as private, and therefore only concerning the individuals involved, denied their political nature—denying also their socially and culturally constructed nature. She writes: 'One of the first things we discover in these groups is that personal problems are political problems. There are no personal solutions at this time. There is only collective action for a collective solution.'<sup>3</sup> Foucault's analysis also reveals that political problems and power relations are dispersed through everyday life structures and work through normalising

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2 Nancy Hartsock, 'The feminist standpoint: Developing the ground for a specifically feminist historical materialism', in Sandra Harding (ed.), *The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 35-54.

3 Carol Hanisch, 'The personal is political', (1969), <http://www.carolhanisch.org/CHwritings/PIP.html>.

certain types of behaviour. This means that simply being a woman is not enough for a feminist standpoint, rather it is a 'struggle' (as bell hooks puts it) and an 'achievement' in the words of Sandra Harding.<sup>4</sup> This could be related to the becoming of diasporic subjectivity described in a previous chapter. What kinds of practices can facilitate such a becoming?

Feminism's insistence on founding a collective political project based on everyday life problems can be applied directly to the migrant condition, whether it is the isolation of those who do not know the language of their new country, especially true for women who may be looking after the family and so do not have the chance to go out to work and to develop their language skills. In the UK, the cutting of funding for programmes such as 'Learning English as a Foreign Language', a policy decision at the level of national government, has directly affected the personal lives of many in the diaspora. In my own research, I have encountered time and again the difficulties of those who have moved to a new language at a late stage in life, where the learning of English has been fraught with time-pressure, the need to earn money overwhelming the desire to communicate. In such circumstances where the intersection of economic, social and political circumstance leaves little room to learn, accusations of introversion regularly claimed in the popular media ring hollow. How could the personal embarrassment of a father who cannot speak English and whose children are able to attend college through long hours of work in a kahve, be not also a political and social concern when situated within the difficulties of finding a cheap language course, a job that does not demand extremely long working hours, and a commute to work that just gets longer? Seen from this perspective his problems do become part of interlinking historical and social processes rather than merely an individual problem.

#### (b) Diasporic subjectivity and feminism: critique of the category 'Woman'

One of the major shortcomings of feminist standpoint originated from its privileging of women's experience but not paying sufficient attention to the socially constructed nature of that experience. Rather than seeing women as historically differentiated subjects, standpoint theory became a theory for Woman; all other differences were subsumed by the primary struggle. It was Black American feminists who began to unpick these problems, pointing out that just as Marxism privileged the category of class above all others, so in early standpoint a certain idea of women, white, middle-class etc.

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 4 See, Sandra Harding (ed.), *Feminism and methodology* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1987).

essentialised all others. Differences of race, class and sexual orientation were thus ignored, leading to a rejection of the theory by many who were imagined to be the happy recipients of a way of thinking that valorised the oppressed. Here in their struggle for self-definition the vast majority of women were again marginalised. The early work of Black women writers especially, chose to embrace this marginality and to use it as a source of creativity. bell hooks is perhaps best known for this, in her essay 'Choosing the Margin', she speaks of the great strength she gained through her own and her mother's marginality, which they both embraced and in so doing transformed a site of oppression into a position of strength. She writes: 'I want to speak about the importance of homeplace in the midst of oppression and domination, of homeplace as a site of resistance and liberation struggle.'<sup>5</sup> Other Black writers have also described this process using the notion of sisterhood, a strong sense of community and building a home, ideas that have their origins in the past history of slavery. In her essay, 'The Outsider Within', Patricia Hill Collins speaks of the importance of both 'self-definition' and 'self-valuation' in the struggle for the subjectivity of Black women. The first term defines the fight against established stereotypes of Black women as aggressive, outspoken and so forth, and the second term rather than trying to establish positive stereotypes instead tries to seek an understanding based in reality. This is possible only through acknowledging the relationships between power and the formation of Black female subjectivities: 'The insistence of Black female self-definition reframes the entire dialogue from one of determining the technical accuracy of an image, to one stressing the power dynamics underlying the very process of definition itself.'<sup>6</sup>

A further critique of early feminism came from those variously named 'Third World feminists', 'women of colour', 'multicultural feminists' or 'transnational feminists', who foregrounded the importance of the effects of colonialism, imperialism and capitalism on the lives of women across the world, as well as showing the importance of an intersectional analysis of women's lives that does not de-link the question of gender from these other questions surrounding race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class and especially the highly unequal effects of global capitalism. In her essay, 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses',<sup>7</sup> Chandra Talpade Mohanty writes of the 'Third

5 bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, gender and cultural politics* (London: Turnaround, 1991), p. 43. See also, 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', pp. 55-56.

6 Patricia Hill Collins, 'Learning from the outsider within: The sociological significance of black feminist thought', in Sandra Harding (ed.), *The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 103-126.

7 Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Under western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses', *boundary 2*, 3 (1) (1984).

World Woman' being portrayed as a singular monolithic subject in the writings of certain Western feminists. She uses the example of veiling in Muslim countries, which is often couched within academic discourse solely in terms of the sexual oppression of women and spoken of in the same breath as rape and domestic violence. At the same time the cultural and historical specificity of wearing the veil is elided by equating it in different locations, whether it is Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan or Afghanistan. Clearly the practice is different in each country and Mohanty uses the example of Iranian middle-class women wearing the veil during the Islamic revolution as an example of differences even within the same location. At the time the veil represented the solidarity of these women with their working class counterparts and was also a symbol of protest against the Shah and Western influences. That the veil worn by middle-class women in Iran today represents something different is obvious. Nearly a quarter of a century after this article was first published, the controversy and stereotyped debates around the veil continue in Europe. We would do well to remember Mohanty's advice of striving for a 'context-specific differentiated analysis' through which 'feminist theorising and practice acquire significance.'<sup>8</sup>

In my case study, which addresses Turkish and Kurdish communities in London, the contradictory nature of Turkish culture and society demands such a context-specific approach. It is highlighted in the widening gap between a highly Westernised young, middle-class population and the older or working-class communities. There is also a marked difference between the available opportunities and point of view of Turks and Kurds, as well as between those who had lived in London for a while and those who had only recently arrived. In my own methods, I have tried to privilege these differences by subverting and displacing a professionalised practice (cartography) so that it becomes a situated representation, allowing other peoples' points of view and words to be foregrounded rather than providing a generalised view.

Another important contribution of transnational feminism highlights that similarities in skin colour or a common place of origin should also not be allowed to become a basis for essentialism. Ella Shohat writes: 'The critique of white feminists who speak for all women might be extrapolated to cases in which upper-middle class "Third World" women come to unilaterally represent "other" working class sisters, or to diasporic feminists operating within First World representational practices.'<sup>9</sup> This insight is especially useful in the context of my own research that due to its subject matter and my own positioning within

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8 Ibid., p. 347.

9 Ella Shohat (ed.), *Talking visions: Multicultural feminism in a transnational age* (New York: New York Museum of Contemporary Art, 1998), p. 8.

the Western academy inevitably tries to speak across lines of class and privilege. Choosing to work within the Turkish and Kurdish community rather than the ethnic group I most identify with was a way of guarding against essentialist assumptions. I also resisted my initial impulse of wanting to concentrate on women's spaces and rather decide to use the insights of a feminist approach in trying to understand, for example the space of the kahve, which are almost exclusively male spaces. Cutting across lines of both ethnicity and gender, displacing my own subjectivity, were my way of guarding against the practice of 'speaking for' others.

### (c) Self-reflexivity as a feminist methodology

The central position of politics within feminist theory means that it can be used for collective struggles against oppression and its nature allows for temporary transversal alliances between disparate groups for a common cause. The uncovering and breaking down of the hidden structures of power and the hegemonic processes that produce oppression becomes a main aim. It is thus a 'struggle from below', also characterised as a 'study-up' method and is contrary to the traditional separation of theoretical knowledge from political action. The conceptualisation of the political as inextricably linked to the personal has also meant that feminist knowledge gives value to the everyday, these encounters becoming the basis for a new research methodology. Here it is important to note Sandra Hardings' distinction between method and methodology, two terms that according to her are easily conflated. Whilst method refers to the techniques of gathering evidence for the research, a methodology is an analysis of the research method. A third term, epistemology, refers to the theory and politics of knowledge production.<sup>10</sup> A feminist approach may include standard methods of gathering evidence but what is at stake is the methodology of the research. My own research uses many standard and well-established methods of research, including structured and unstructured interviews, architectural drawing and representational techniques. It is perhaps the mixing of techniques from various disciplines, and sometimes mis-using them for a specific purpose, that constitutes my own research methodology. For example, a large part of this thesis deals with of how to take cartography's birds eye-view and transform it into a more situated and partial way of representing.<sup>11</sup>

Importantly, the use of qualitative information does not necessarily constitute a feminist research methodology, in fact many times it is important to use both qualitative and quantitative information. It is the privileging of individual voices that is important, without a recourse

10 For various positions on this see, Sandra Harding (ed.), *The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies* (London: Routledge, 2004).

11 For a detailed discussion see the section on 'Diasporic diagrams', pp. 233-275.

to easy generalisations or the desire for explanation. A self-reflexive feminist research methodology is therefore required which gives room to respond to other people rather than treating them as 'objects' of research. For example, in an ethnographic study of Spanish gypsies or gitanos in Madrid, Paloma Gay y Blasco started with an idea of researching how historical memory operated within the group. But upon spending time with them realised that this was perhaps not the best topic. Her conversations with the gitanos revealed that they were not particularly interested in the past, and her new research topic of the construction of 'sex' and 'gender' within the gitano community of Madrid came from her conversations with them and her realisation that this played a large part in their relationships with each other, and also crucially with her. Acknowledging her own central position within the research, she writes: 'During the fieldwork it was very difficult to 'observe' from the inside, and I myself—the way in which the gitanos treated me and thought about me—happened to be the instrument through which I have learnt much of what I know about the gitanos.'<sup>12</sup> A feminist research methodology is therefore not only related to how the research is carried out but begins at the outset with the research questions themselves: what are the topics that I am interested in, what are my knowledge politics and what are the questions that I refuse, or am unable to ask? It is also a methodology that tries to be self-reflexive, allowing changes according to situations, letting those involved influence the research. These questions have been addressed in my own work through devising what I am calling a 'close with distance' research methodology. It is a way of working which recognises that a completely embedded research is not always possible, whether through constraints of time or through being unable to overcome the exclusions that are already in place; in my case for example the difficulty of entering the male spaces of the kahve. Working on the surface and making situated connections on that surface were a way of overcoming these problems of time and access.<sup>13</sup>

The feminist, postcolonial film-maker and writer, Trinh T. Min-ha, has also commented on the question of self-reflexivity and has critiqued the desire to explain and explicate especially when dealing with other cultures. Her work asks the question: how is it possible to valorise other knowledges without objectifying and without interpreting—without falling into the safe territory of given techniques and methodologies?<sup>14</sup> Speaking especially of anthropological film-making, she writes of an increasing insecurity in the discipline around its own project, no doubt due to

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12 Paloma Gay Y Blasco, *Gypsies in madrid: Sex, gender and the performance of identity* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), p. 3.

13 For a detailed discussion on 'close with distance', see 'Agencies and an embodied spatial practice', p. 122.

14 See, Trinh T. Min-ha, *When the moon waxes red: Representation, gender and cultural politics* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 46.



its colonising past, but this insecurity leads to a desire to normalise, to set criteria for what is considered anthropological research and what is considered to be the work of mere amateurs. 'Self-reflexivity', a feminist technique of questioning and consciously reconsidering our acts, becomes just another method of upholding the hegemony of the discipline. Min-ha writes:

*No going beyond, no elsewhere-within-here seems possible if the reflection on oneself is not at one and the same time the analysis of established forms of the social that defines one's limits. [...] Left intact in its positionality and its fundamental urge to decree meaning, the self conceived both as key and as transparent mediator, is more often than not likely to turn responsibility into license.*<sup>15</sup>

Self-reflection here becomes just another way of measuring the other against our own assumptions, or the limits of what we can see. As Min-ha points out, it becomes a way of legitimising these assumptions rather than challenging them. Here the continued emphasis on seeing despite the feminist critique of the 'all seeing I/eye' creates its own problems, as if the act of looking will render everything knowable: 'Showing is not showing how I can see you, how you can see me, and how we are both being perceived—the encounter—but how you see yourself and represent your own kind (at best, through conflicts)—the Fact by itself.'<sup>16</sup> This impasse of knowing and knowledge finds its escape in the act of displacement, of looking askance, of not following given methodologies to the letter.

Self-reflexivity therefore must operate on two levels, questioning our own social assumptions and those of our discipline. The latter is important in the case of architecture, a profession that has always sided with the powerful, with those who can pay the fee, the client. What does it mean to question the mores of architectural knowledge embedded within highly unequal power structures, architects working for developers, architects designing yet another privatised, 'public' space? Architects assuming their 'professional, expert' knowledge gives them licence to play fast and loose with other people's lives? Questioning the limits of my own discipline has been a fundamental part of my research methodology, starting with the topic itself, conveniently ignored by architecture as it does not 'pay' and is difficult to account for in the tired old language of traditional architectural representation. The legitimate ground of architectural knowledge is displaced to other 'realms', sometimes occurring through collaborations with others, sometimes through

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15 Ibid., pp. 47-48.

16 Ibid., p. 66.

borrowing their techniques—transdisciplinarity is displacement with a continuous movement, a restless spirit that does not ‘settle’ into known ways.

The other half of the equation of self-reflexivity, the questioning of my own assumptions is perhaps harder to qualify. The difficulties of trying to find a ‘way-in’ to the seemingly secretive world of the kahve was an important step in my research. The realisation that just walking in would not work, that I had to be more respectful of the differences, that my presence itself was offensive to some. I realised quite quickly that I would need a ‘guide’, someone who used the kahve themselves and could act as interlocutor. Once I had found someone who could mediate, the worlds of the kahve were neither as intimidating nor as hidden. Learning from these encounters also meant shifting my research questions, for example the understanding I gained of the importance of the space of the street itself, the threshold between the pavement and the interior of the kahve or various other shops and the routes between them. These insights were gained through interview and walks with different people and I realised that my initial idea of mapping these physical thresholds and routes in standard architectural drawings, perhaps embellished with quotes from our conversations, photos etc. would not be enough. I realised that the mapping of the relations between the different spaces I had observed was the key to understanding how the street functioned as diasporic space.

## 2. Subjectivity and space in feminist theory

### (a) ‘Situated knowledges’: the locatedness of subjectivity in space

The notion of self-reflexivity is also related to the acknowledgement that researchers too are historically located subjects bringing with them their everyday life experiences, their partialities and prejudices. My own positioning as a British-Asian who lived in Pakistan in her early years and now lives a middle-class existence in London must surely colour my thinking, and especially on issues around migration and diaspora. It is for this reason that I have been careful in choosing where to locate my research, trying to keep away from those areas that I may know ‘too well’—it is a way of guarding against easily made assumptions and the pitfalls of identity politics. In acknowledging my own position as a researcher I am able to account for my own judgements and the traditional conception of the researcher as impartial observer is also challenged, what is referred to by Donna Haraway as ‘the god-trick’—that is, the observer has to be located precisely nowhere in order to produce an impartial and thoroughly objective discourse. In her article on ‘Situated Knowledges’, she debunks this myth and calls for a ‘partiality of vision’. Whilst acknowledging the hegemony that vision

has had in Western thinking,<sup>17</sup> she calls for a reappropriation of it by feminists, who have quite rightly been sceptical of its power over all other forms of cognition. Haraway asks for a reclamation of vision as a thoroughly embodied sense that has been detached from the body in modern times and turned into an 'all seeing eye'. Her definition of objectivity relies on a multiplicity of highly located snapshots that together make up a faceted whole. She writes:

*So, not so perversely, objectivity turns out to be about particular and specific embodiment, and definitely not about the false vision promising transcendence of all limits and responsibility. The moral is simple: only partial perspective promises objective vision.*<sup>18</sup>

The question of responsibility also suggests that to start to think from a minority view is better because people who are disadvantaged have less reason to defend the status quo, than those who are leading a privileged life in the unequal distribution of power. But this is not a conclusion, it is merely a good starting point for research. What is required is a roving eye, or a 'mobile positioning' to use Haraway's phrase.<sup>19</sup> This will lead to a knowledge that has far more claim to being an objective reflection of the world than traditional scientific method, which does not acknowledge the subjectivity of either the researcher or the research subject. The charge of relativism that is often made against feminist theory is therefore also untrue, not every point of view is as significant and some are more likely to reveal a deeper insight than others. Sandra Harding claims that the problem with traditional epistemologies is not that they are too objective, but that they are not objective enough. She names a 'strong objectivity' that is rigorous enough to deal with the complex challenges put forward by a feminist critique.<sup>20</sup>

I have tried to address these issues in my own work through generating knowledge with others, whether in the walks together or in interviews where I ask people to draw maps, which produce highly situated accounts from their point of view. My mappings have thus been aimed at developing specific methodologies and tools for architects, establishing ways of working and in one instance the final aim was to develop a tool that could be accessed on-line so that others could add to it. This would hand control away from the architect to the users,

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17 See following section on the role of vision in Western ontology.

18 Donna Jeanne Haraway, *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Donna Haraway, 'Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective', *Feminist Studies*, 3 (1988): pp. 582-583.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 585.

20 'Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is "Strong Objectivity"' in, Sandra Harding (ed.), *The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 127-140.

residents etc. Of course, for this to really work there is a need for a concrete project and would go hand-in-hand with the mappings I have produced.<sup>21</sup>

### (b) Understanding the corporeality of subjectivity

In this thesis, I have tried to establish an ‘embodied spatial practice’ as a research methodology in order to understand the relationships between diasporic inhabitations of space and the becomings of a diasporic subject.<sup>22</sup> This crucial link between space, subjectivity and the body has been theorised by Elizabeth Grosz who argues that it was only the hegemony of a certain trait in Western philosophy that removed all traces of embodiment in favour of consciousness. In her essay, ‘Space, Time and Bodies’, she traces a different genealogy in French feminist philosophy where subjectivity is related to gender. Thus, Julia Kristeva uses Plato’s chora to reveal the missing place of the maternal and the spatial in representation,<sup>23</sup> and Luce Irigaray theorises the possibility of a specifically feminine space. Grosz points out that these ways of bringing the sexed female body to bear upon subjectivity has effects on how we conceptualise both space and time. She writes: ‘If bodies are to be reconceived, not only must their matter and form be rethought, but so too must their environment and spatio-temporal location.’<sup>24</sup>

She uses the example of Caillois’ mimicking insects to speak of this relationship between bodies, the spaces they occupy, and their self-image. Caillois couches mimesis not in terms of the physical survival of the insects, but as a psychological phenomenon that arises from their inability to distinguish themselves from their environment, an impairment that can cost them their lives.<sup>25</sup> Grosz shows how Lacan uses Caillois’ insights to theorise the links between the ego and the way in which a person positions themselves in space. The famous mirror-stage in a child’s development is one of various stages in her/his understanding of space. Through the purely ‘tactile, oral, and auditory sense-perceptions’ to a spatiality ‘based on the primacy of the information provided by sight’, to finally an ordering of these sense-perceptions where the visual becomes the main perception through which all other senses are processed and to which they remain subordinate.<sup>26</sup> There is thus a disjunction between the fragmented image of tactile sensation and the

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21 These mappings are described in detail in ‘Diasporic diagrams’, pp. 233-275.

22 See, ‘Agencies and an embodied spatial practice’, pp. 118-126.

23 See, ‘Diasporic spatio-temporalities’, p. 59.

24 Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, time and perversion: Essays on the politics of bodies* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 84.

25 See, ‘Diasporic subjectivity’, p. 85.

26 Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, time and perversion: Essays on the politics of bodies* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 91.

illusory ideal image of the mirror that accedes the child to the adult world, and as Grosz points out: 'The ego forms itself round the fantasy of a totalised and mastered body, which is precisely the Cartesian fantasy modern philosophy has inherited.'<sup>27</sup>

For architecture, a thoroughly spatial discipline, these insights into the nature of how we construct subjectivity through our understandings of space is invaluable. That moment in Western knowledge when Plato's conception of space as an empty, universal and homogenous container, Euclid's geometry as a measurement of it in three strict dimensions, and Kant's ethics based on reason, all came together, they finally excluded the sensual not only from our conceptions of space but also from our subjectivity. It has been the task of feminist thinking to bring these other perceptions back and in so doing to also reveal the primacy that space has had over time in Western ontology. Architecture too has ignored time, disregarding the programming of spaces over different times of day or the year, unable to accommodate seasonal shifts, or to think the built environment over a longer timespan. Although this is now beginning to change with the emphasis on process over product in architectural education at least, if not in practice. The mappings mentioned earlier try to bring this overlooked domain of time and bodies back into the practice of architecture through developing modes of representation that can account for them. The chapter, 'Agencies and an embodied spatial practice', deals with this topic in detail but here I mention a few: practices such as walking, speaking and drawing have been used in order to develop modes of representation that can account for bodies, time, subjectivity and space.<sup>28</sup>

### (c) Nomadic subjectivity as a feminist methodology

Many of the methods and ways of doing described above, come together in Rosi Braidotti's concept of 'nomadic subjectivity'. She takes the idea of nomadism from Deleuze and Guattari and adds to it the importance of sexual difference and embodiment. In feminist theory, as described above, the body becomes the location where the physical, symbolic and the social overlap. From this material starting point, a critical consciousness is sought that resists exclusionary conceptions of subjectivity. Braidotti writes: 'The nomadic subject is a myth, that is to say a political fiction, that allows me to think through and move across established categories and levels of experience: blurring boundaries without burning bridges.'<sup>29</sup> Nomadic thought thus becomes a template for

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27 Ibid., p. 86.

28 See, 'Agencies and an embodied spatial practice', pp. 118-126.

29 Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic subjects: Embodiment and sexual difference in contemporary feminist theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 4.

a feminist practice that is both creative and critical. This emphasis on creativity is important as it enables a distance from traditional academic thinking and engenders a way of thinking that more affirmative. Here Braidotti emphasises the need for transdisciplinarity and a type of theory-building that uses bricolage, bringing together, concepts and methods from different disciplines; subverting, borrowing and mis-using—these are explicitly feminine tactics that speak from a minority or marginalised position. In fact, feminist thinking has historically developed simultaneously across disciplines and it is this variation that has provided the lively discourse and intellectual rigour that characterises it. It is an approach that is founded in an embracing of Foucault's critique of the arbitrary compartmentalisation of knowledge that results in a regulatory effect.<sup>30</sup>

Mixing different types of voices, giving importance to other people's words, openly acknowledging their influence on our own thinking, this is a feminist mode of writing, scattered in quotations and citations. Derrida's deconstructive manner of telling other stories, other perspectives and narratives in the footnotes and endnotes of his text is also a way of bringing parallel strands into a piece of writing. The way an academic text tries to break out of given conventions is of importance here, Doina Petrescu's book, *Altering Practices: Feminist Politics and Poetics of Space*, visualises this privileging of others' texts; here graphic design becomes a creative way of critiquing the non-acknowledgement of the influence of others in standard academic texts. Petrescu writes that her book 'collectively reconstructs' rather than 'theoretically deconstructs'. It juxtaposes a number of varied essays on the common question of space and creates a rich intertextuality. Most of the contributors are linked through informal networks of friendship; this has produced a book that is an assemblage of 'situated' concepts, practices and voices. The design of the book as object reinforces the network and reveals the way in which 'each contribution negotiates its proximity to the other'. The front cover and introductory page to each essay shows a smattering of circles, which are a representation of the place of each citation within the essay. This introductory page becomes a snapshot of the genealogy of each author's thinking, which emphasises the interconnectedness of the work and the impossibility of 'original' knowledge. The arrangement and order of the essays also reinforces their relation to each other. These pages of the book are for me a visualisation of the nomadic consciousness that Braidotti calls for.

I have tried to follow this example in the form and structure of this thesis, privileging other people's words with notes and references occupying the margins of the same page rather than being shunted to the end; sometimes the margins expand and fill the page and my 'own' words are displaced. Since images, drawings, maps and diagrams hold

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 30 See, Michel Foucault, *The order of things: An archaeology of the human sciences* (London: Tavistock publications, 1970).

as important a place as the text, they are also used sometimes in the main body of the work and sometimes as notes and references, the whole thesis being imagined as a ‘map’ or a ‘diasporic cartography’.

### 3. A diasporic politics of knowledge

This chapter took feminist theory as a basis for constructing a knowledge politics appropriate to the diasporic subject. The insights of feminist theory combined with the diasporic condition itself have highlighted the need to replace the dominant impulses to explain and explicate with the act of displacement. In my own research, this is mobilised through, for example, not looking for causal links between the various inhabitations of space by Kurds and Turks and the geo-political situation that they are a part of. Early in the research, it became obvious that addressing these ‘big’ questions directly would not result in any insights other than the rehearsing of already entrenched positions, or a simple uneasiness with discussing the subject. Instead, in displacing these subjects and inflecting them through the concerns of everyday life, the stories and narratives of journeys made and anecdotes of personal histories, would provide a way to broach difficult topics. This methodology is also useful for foregrounding the ways in which diasporic agencies are played out in the everyday life of ‘ordinary’ people.

Reterritorialisations as a second methodology refers to Deleuze and Guattari’s writings on the twin concepts of deterritorialisation/reterritorialisation, which when addressed from the perspective of diasporas is the adapting and adopting of various cultural and bodily practices, and enacting these performatively to produce specific inhabitations of space.<sup>31</sup> The rhythms of this continual process that is the becomings of the diasporic subject is a central concern for this thesis and as methodology these processes are replicated in my own reterritorialisations of the various disciplines that I work between and across. I have brought the insights of certain strands of sociology, geography and anthropology amongst others to architecture, and transformed them for this overtly spatial discipline, and also for my topic relating to the diaspora. Being self-reflexive and generating knowledge with others have also emerged as key methodologies as they also emphasise the creativity of research practice.

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31 See, ‘Rhizome’ in, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)), pp. 3-28; ‘Politics’ in, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *On the line* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983). See also, ‘Diasporic territories’, pp. 181-200.





## Diasporic spatio-temporalities

Certain specificities of the diasporic condition demand the conceptualisation of a different type of space than that articulated within mainstream architectural discourse and representation. Developed from the Renaissance onwards, this measurable space dominated by the visual **cannot account for the spaces occupied by those whose lives occur 'in-between' countries and cultures.** These relations that are never just of a simple dialectical nature intertwine in complex ways, and the effects of globalisation mean that to varying degrees they also define all our spatial relations. In this sense, these qualities of diasporic space are not exclusive to it but are radicalised in instances of migration. The homogenising tendencies of the dominant way of articulating space also cannot accommodate the difference inherent in diasporic lives, far more important than any aesthetical concern, **diasporic space needs to embody notions of difference and how these are accommodated in everyday life.** How can space be conceptualised as sociable and hospitable, two important qualities on which migrant lives depend and which they also invariably display.

Mediation plays an important part in diasporic lives whether through the communication technologies that connect us 'back home', or through signs and symbols, where ways of inhabiting and things take on meaning and importance. In my case certain ornaments, a lamp brought over from our house in Lahore, plays just as important a part in my experience of space as do the frequent phone calls to my grandfather in Pakistan. In this sense diasporic space is at times incredibly 'thing-orientated', whilst at others times it is dematerialised. How to theorise a space that can accommodate such contradictions is also a concern of this chapter.

Finally, for many in the diaspora the migrant condition is one of precariousness, whether economic, cultural or social, often migrant lives occur at the edges and margins of society. This means that those in the diaspora tend to have a different relation to capitalist modes of production and in particular to the workings of the neo-liberal economy, which regulates and controls access to work, welfare provision etc. Diasporic space therefore also needs to address the way in which space controls and regulates those who do not fit into the norms of society.

French sociology, political theory and concepts of space developed by feminist geographers have all grappled with various aspects of this task of opening up space to include issues of production and consumption, of accommodating the sensual, material and the social. In this chapter, I explore this quite specific genealogy of thinking space and adapt it to the needs of the diaspora.

## Social and everyday spaces

### (a) Rhythmic spaces of everyday life

One of the first to conceptualise the spatiality of social relationships, Henri Lefebvre based his 'sociology of the everyday' on the seemingly simple premise: '(Social) space is a (social) product'.<sup>1</sup> Rather than the idealised empty container of Cartesian logic that served as a mere backdrop to human existence, space simultaneously held within it possibilities of alienation and resistance. Lefebvre asserted that the production of space in capitalist society was intimately related to the rupture between the productive activity of labour and 'the process of reproduction which perpetuated social life'.<sup>2</sup> Extending Marx's analysis of the alienation of capital beyond the economic sphere towards its pervasiveness in all social processes,<sup>3</sup> he pointed to the creation of an homogenous 'abstract space' of capitalism, which was the result of the overwhelming power of economic relations, the consequences of consumerism and over-specialisation. Yet, it was also the homogenising logic of such a space that held within it the possibility of resistance played out in **the social space of everyday life**.

Lefebvre identified three different ways of conceptualising spaces. Firstly, the dominant 'representations of space' based on knowledge that are the result of two illusions working in tandem to hide the important role of space in social relations. The 'illusion of transparency' that rendered space as neutral and measurable, and the 'realistic illusion' that perceived the object to be more real than the subject.<sup>4</sup> Both illusions perpetuated each other—what could be seen, understood and represented rationally was included and everything else ignored. Orthographic drawings or the shiny computer graphics of architect-developers fit well into this category, where modes of representation are deployed as coded knowledge to wield power. That the buildings always look perfect and the people happy, points to what may be missing in such representations. Secondly, 'spatial practice' is what 'secretes that society's space',<sup>5</sup> embodying the production and reproduction contained

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1 Henri Lefebvre, *The production of space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), p. 26.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 49.

3 It was the diagnosis of this alienation that so inspired the Situationists who saw *The critique of everyday life* as an important foundational text despite their antagonistic relationship with Lefebvre. Henri Lefebvre, *The critique of everyday life*, trans. by John Moore (London: Verso, 1991).

4 The subject/object duality and its counterpart nature/culture have also been discussed in the chapter, 'Border(ing) Practices', in the context of Bruno Latours' critique of the 'modern', see pp. 172-173.

5 Henri Lefebvre, *The production of space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), p. 38. 'Spatial practice', as a term has gained wide currency in contemporary art and architectural practice denoting a type of self-reflexive practice that is embedded within its socio-political context.

within social space, including biological reproduction, family, work and the division of labour; and finally, 'representational space', which is the lived space of everyday life embodying knowing rather than knowledge. Lefebvre writes:

*Representational space is alive: it speaks. It has an affective kernel or centre: Ego, bed, bedroom, dwelling, house; or: square, church, graveyard. It embraces the loci of passion, of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implied time. Consequently, it may be qualified in various ways: it may be directional, situational or relational, because it is essentially, qualitative, fluid and dynamic.*<sup>6</sup>



The rhythmic spaces of everyday life

Whilst in the spatial disciplines of architecture, urban studies and geography, this analysis has led to a reifying of Lefebvre as the philosopher of space, as the passage above suggests, he did not privilege space over time.<sup>7</sup> In Lefebvre's schema the spatiality of the lived experience within the social realm is given a strategic place in order to critique the notion of history, of the linear time of modernity. **He privileges lived, cyclical time influenced by memory and recollection,** over time measured by clocks; here again making a

6 Ibid., p. 42.

7 The twin concepts of 'social space' and 'everyday practices' have influenced a wide variety of writers and the geographer, Edward Soja, has described the increasing interest in spatiality across a range of disciplines citing feminist geographers such as Dolores Hayden and Doreen Massey; post-colonial writers such as Edward Said and Homi Bhabha; as well as those that straddle the two categories, writers such as bell hooks, Gayatri Spivak and Trinh T. Min-ha. For Soja, these voices from the margins operate within a 'third' or 'other' space similar to the differential space of Lefebvre. Thirdspace is intimately linked to the relations of power that Michel Foucault has described whose historical analysis or 'genealogy' of the way power operates in society is essential for an understanding of how spaces of resistance might occur at the margins. See, Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and other real-and-imagined places* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996); see also, 'Diasporic Subjectivity', p. 80.

break from classical Marxist thought in its conception of history and causality. In his theory of moments Lefebvre suggests that ‘moments’ have ‘a certain specific duration’,<sup>8</sup> which can be relived and through this repetition they embody the potential to resist the alienating tendencies of capitalism. If the role of ‘abstract space’ is to homogenise, then the element that it does not account for is the living, being, moving, gesturing body, which constantly produces difference through the way it lives in and through moments.

*The enigma of the body—its secret, at once banal and profound—is its ability, beyond ‘subject’ and ‘object’ (and beyond the philosophical difference between them), to produce differences ‘unconsciously’ out of repetitions—out of gestures (linear) or out of rhythms (cyclical). In the misapprehended space of the body, a space that is both close by and distant, this paradoxical junction of repetitive and differential—this most basic form of ‘production’—is forever occurring.*<sup>9</sup>

Certain moments of everyday life play out rhythmically in representational space, creating difference through repetition and with it another kind of space—a ‘**differential space**’. This entwined relationship between space, time and difference is a basis for understanding ‘**diasporic spatio-temporalities**’ that are produced through the **displacement of bodies**. They modulate space and time through memories and recollection and produce the multiple modernities that are the product of the particular spatial consequences of globalisation and non-linear time.<sup>10</sup>

#### (b) Operating tactically in everyday spaces

Whilst Lefebvre provided a way of thinking time and space together and pointed towards ‘moments’ of resistance that produced a differential space, Michel de Certeau shows how to operate with such spaces in his book, *The Practice of Everyday Life*.<sup>11</sup> Through addressing the disjunction in capitalist society where only an elite produce culture and everyone else consumes, de Certeau was one of the first to realise the importance of studying the user. For de Certeau consumption itself is a form of production that ‘does not manifest itself through its own products, but rather through its ways of using the products imposed by

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8 Henri Lefebvre, *The critique of everyday life: Foundations for a sociology of the everyday*, trans. by John Moore (London: Verso, 2002), p. 345.

9 Henri Lefebvre, *The production of space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), p. 395.

10 For more on ‘multiple modernities’ see, ‘Diasporic territories’, p. 189.

11 Michel de Certeau, *The practice of everyday life*, trans. by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

a dominant economic order.<sup>12</sup> This observation allowed him to claim a **creative potential within the everyday**, which is activated through the way we transform that which is presented to us, whether a newspaper article, a utensil or a television programme.

Two terms borrowed from military discourse—strategy and tactic—describe the actions of producers and consumers. A strategy is the domain of the dominant and the powerful because in order to carry out a strategy an autonomous place must first be established. Placing a higher significance on space than time, a long-term vision is required to prepare in advance. Power is therefore a prerequisite for those who operate strategically. A tactic, on the other hand, is based on the absence of power, and it is this lack of power and hence of a space that is a tactic's strength: 'The space of a tactic is the space of the other.'<sup>13</sup> Placing a higher emphasis on time, it is opportunistic in its methods and cannot plan in advance, instead using its deviousness and an element of surprise. Since it does not have a place of its own it cannot accumulate, and yet this is the very reason why a tactic survives—through its mobility. Strategies are the *modus operandi* of the State whilst those who operate tactically, although contained by the state system, are also able to infiltrate its furthest corners, which have expanded far beyond the localities of earlier times. De Certeau contends that in this larger arena of globalisation the strategy's success could also be its downfall since the autonomous place it had once created for itself has now become the whole; there is nothing beyond it. In order to survive this crisis the strategy will have to adapt itself endlessly; whether it can or not remains to be seen.



Tactical appropriation and adaptation of spaces

For de Certeau, it is the spatial practices of everyday life, the acts of dwelling, cooking, walking, reading that are tactical in nature as they are improvised. Whether it is the daily shopping adapted according to

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12 Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.

13 Ibid., p. 37.

what is available or the act of walking that traverses the city-space at its own rhythm. To study these everyday practices the usual route of statistics is inadequate since it only yields abstract information: 'What is counted is what is used, not the ways of using.'<sup>14</sup> Instead de Certeau uses various analogies, such as 'trajectories' that cover space and time, a multiplicity of which may provide a complex enough metaphor for the subtle nuances of everyday life. Or the linguistic concept of enunciation, which is used as a framework for deciphering practices other than speaking. Enunciation is the use of language with an awareness of the circumstances of its use, it therefore requires the speaker to have prior knowledge as well as a level of competence in order to appropriate the language; 'the speech act is at the same time a use of language and an operation performed on it.'<sup>15</sup> An everyday practice such as reading, which is normally perceived as being passive, can also be described enunciatively. The mind of the reader inhabits the text as their eye moves across it at will. The reader appropriates the text with their own interpretations and experiences, but as with all other acts of consumption there is no tangible end product.

De Certeau also analyses walking as an enunciative practice, just as the speaker appropriates language, the walker appropriates the 'topographical system'. It is 'a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language)'.<sup>16</sup> Thus a contract is established during the act of walking, creating a 'here' and a 'there' in relation to the space of the walker. It is just these qualities of walking or speaking or reading that create the multiplying diversity that resists the passive role of the consumer, making everyday practices sites of daily resistance. Walking then, as with the other practices discussed above, is a tactic; it manipulates and takes advantage of the spatial structure of the dominant order. It subverts it with reference to the walkers own personal, social and cultural desires, distorting space by fragmenting it in some places and completely skipping over it in others. These movements, referred to by de Certeau as 'forests of gestures' cannot be documented in an image or text. Yet the act of walking needs the space of the dominant, it cannot exist anywhere else as it does not have a place of its own. De Certeau imagines an extra layer above the existing urban fabric, made of the countless trajectories of walkers across the city; 'a second, poetic geography on top of the geography of the literal, forbidden or permitted meaning.'<sup>17</sup> A good example is how the given name of a place can lose its significance over

.....  
14 Ibid. p. 35.

15 Ibid. p. 33.

16 Ibid. p. 98.

17 Ibid. p. 105.

time or it can take over different meanings for different people. Such a wearing away of the original meaning results in the liberation of space, creating 'local legends' and stories that are another way of knowing the city.

For a diasporic inhabitation of space this analysis of the modes of operating of those without power is crucial. Mobility and temporality are both important aspects of migrant culture, whether it is the original move from the place of origin or being compelled to move from place-to-place in search of better economic or social circumstances. The migrant also resides in the space of the other meaning that even the most banal aspects of living in a way other than the status quo have a subversive potential. In adapting spaces meant for other uses, whether it is the typical Victorian terrace now used as a mosque, or industrial warehouse units converted to Pentecostal churches, the enunciative practices of these inhabitations transform space. For my own purposes, the emphasis on walking as an everyday practice is especially important as it interacts directly with city-space and has a history of being adapted for use as an urban tool. De Certeau's analysis therefore provides both a theoretical framework for resisting the homogenising tendencies of consumer culture and of living in the margins of a dominant society, and also a number of practical tools that can be employed for analysing the production of diasporic spatio-temporalities.

## Spaces of power and resistance at the margins

### (a) Spaces of control and discipline

Whilst the section above discussed the production of space through social relations and everyday practices, here I turn to the specific relations between the production of space, power and knowledge. Michel Foucault has shown how these three elements are intricately linked in his discussion of the *dispositif* (apparatus),<sup>18</sup> which he describes as:

*a thoroughly heterogenous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements.*<sup>19</sup>

.....  
18 A technical term whose English language translation is somewhat contested, it is usually translated as 'apparatus' or 'social apparatus'. Russell West-Pavlov describes it as, "related to 'disposition' (arrangement), but also containing the cognate 'positif' (empirical)." Russell West-Pavlov, *Space in theory: Kristeva, Foucault, Deleuze* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009), p. 149.

19 Michel Foucault, 'The confession of the flesh (interview)', (1977), <http://foucaultblog.wordpress.com/2007/04/01/what-is-the-dispositif/>.

This system of relations is held in space, which is therefore both a producer and a product of the dispositif. 'Power-knowledge' relations rely on space and are immanent within society as 'regimes of truth'. No longer the sovereign power of State systems, power is dispersed throughout society as part of the relations that constitute the dispositif. Foucault's analysis of nineteenth century institutional spaces such as the prison, hospital and school, showed how these regimes of space produced a certain practice of internment, medicine or teaching, which in turn produced a certain type of prisoner, patient or pupil. In his book, *Discipline and Punish*, this analysis revealed how society had changed its modes of governmentality through differences in the way that victims of certain illnesses were treated.<sup>20</sup> Whilst in the eighteenth century lepers were housed in colonies and confined outside the city, the plague required victims to be quarantined within city limits. A system of surveillance and control was established that internalised governmentality as part of the workings of the city. As Giorgio Agamben explains, "whereas leprosy is a paradigm of exclusive society, the plague is a paradigm of disciplinary techniques, technologies that will take society through the transition from the ancient regime to the disciplinary paradigm."<sup>21</sup>

Power no longer had to be wielded through violence but operated by threat alone, as discussed in Foucault's analysis of Jeremy Bentham's 'Panopticon', a prison designed so that prisoners police their own behaviour under the constant gaze of a watchtower that could or could not be occupied. The Panopticon was a 'space of control' par excellence, a diagram of power as idealised space and it spread throughout society as a way of guarding morality, educating and controlling, in order to increase the efficiency of power as discipline. Alongside this disciplinary power, Foucault defined 'bio-power', the control of bodies and behaviour through social norms that legitimate some ways of being whilst deeming others as deviant. Working together, these two types of power control individuals and their subjectivity in ways very different from power exerted as violence and interdiction. Here **power is embodied, social and occurring in everyday relations**. Foucault describes what an analysis of power defined as such would entail:

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 20 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Allen Lane, 1977).

21 Giorgio Agamben, 'Metropolis', (2008), <http://voidmanufacturing.wordpress.com/2008/09/08/giorgio-agamben-the-city-the-plague-foucault-ungovernableness-etc/>.



*One must rather conduct an ascending analysis of power, starting, that is, from its infinitesimal mechanisms, which each have their own history, their own trajectory, their own techniques and tactics, and then see how these mechanisms of power have been—and continue to be—invested, colonised, utilised, involuted, transformed, displaced, extended etc., by ever more general mechanisms and by forms of global domination<sup>22</sup>*



Spaces of resistance in the city

Here agency is constituted in completely different ways, it is not wielded by those in power but instead **agents are themselves constituted within and of the** dispositif. These insights have been especially useful for those writing from marginalised positions, for example for feminists who have pointed out that for women the primary sites of subjection are everyday domestic spaces. Foucault's micro-politics of power are able to accommodate feminist readings of the personal as political, where resistance is both grounded in everyday struggles and is a product of it—the dream of total emancipation is here replaced by concrete, local and embodied struggles against particular manifestations of power.

#### (b) 'Homplace' as the thought of resistance

bell hook's writings on the role of 'home' as a site of resistance within minority politics is exactly located within such understandings of the relation between power, marginality and the personal. In her book, *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*, she writes of home as a place that has to be consciously constructed as a site of resistance and healing.<sup>23</sup> Writing of her own childhood experiences, hooks points to the strength she gained from the love of her mother and the 'homeplace' that she created for her family. It was a place of recovery where the pressures of living as a minority and being subjected to social and

22 Michel Foucault, 'Two lectures', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Critique and power: Recasting the Foucault/Habermas debate* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), p. 37.

23 bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, gender and cultural politics* (London: Turnaround, 1991).

economic hardship could be eased. The strong sense of community within the black population was no accident, it was a necessity for their self-perception, for the affirmation of their own humanity. **Homeplace in this reading is not a neutral zone, it serves a political purpose—it is political.** This places the female, traditionally the keeper of the house, in a strategic position as bell hooks writes: 'I want to speak about the importance of homeplace in the midst of oppression and domination, of homeplace as a site of resistance and liberation struggle. ... For when a people no longer have the space to construct homeplace, we cannot build a meaningful community of resistance.'<sup>24</sup> Homeplace allows for another subjectivity, one that constructs itself outside of the dominant power relations. As Deleuze commented on Foucault's conception of power and resistance:

*the final word on power is that resistance comes first, to the extent that power relations operate completely within the diagram, while resistances necessarily operate in a direct relation with the outside from which diagrams emerge. This means that the social field offers more resistance than strategies, and the thought of the outside is the thought of resistance.'*<sup>25</sup>

**Homeplace is the thought of resistance** and often when people are oppressed it is through an effort to deny them the means of creating a home for themselves, whether through social or economic means. As hooks points out, this is seen clearly in the treatment of Black people over history who have been forced into marginality. In her essay, 'Choosing the Margin', hooks offers a challenge to those who are oppressed, to look at the margin not as an unwanted place that is occupied only through default, but as a symbolic space of resistance; a place to locate home.<sup>26</sup>

## The 'space of flows' and relational places

### (a) Networked spaces of the globalised city

The sociologist, Manuel Castells, updated the debate on spatiality for a globalised world of increased communication, travel and mass consumption. His trilogy on the 'network society', published between 1996 and 1998, charted the transition from an industrial age to an

.....  
24 Ibid., pp. 43, 47.

25 Gregg Lambert, *Who's afraid of Deleuze and Guattari* (London: Continuum, 2006), p. 168; Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. by Sean Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

26 bell hooks, 'Choosing the margin', in *Yearning: Race, gender and cultural politics* (London: Turnaround, 1991), pp. 145-154.

information age.<sup>27</sup> Castells writes that although in this new age the workings of capitalist society remain the same, the means by which they are enacted have changed, from the technological to the informational. In this move the role of communication is key, changing relations between places and the very nature of how we conceive space and time. Whereas in earlier eras, in order to share time a space also had to be shared, with new technologies time can be shared without sharing a physical space, what is often referred to as ‘space-time compression’.<sup>28</sup> Castells writes that these processes occur in a new type of space: ‘The space of flows is the material organisation of time-sharing social practices that work through flows. By flows I understand purposeful, repetitive, programmable sequences of exchange and interaction between physically disjointed positions held by social actors.’<sup>29</sup>

The space of flows may seem ephemeral but it is very real and has material consequences in its interactions with the traditional ‘space of places’, ‘so that the new spatial structure associated with informationalism, is not placeless, but is made up of networks connecting places by information and communication flows...’.<sup>30</sup> Through connecting spaces according to their function rather than proximity space is fragmented, places that are close-by feel separated but interact with other far-flung areas. This type of interaction requires complicated and expensive infrastructure, which through the ubiquity of the Internet has become more available, although the environmental crisis we are facing today makes such energy hungry connections questionable. And there are still many who are not part of the global circuits of information, knowledge and finance—‘subalterneity’ today can also be defined as a lack of access to this ‘space of flows’. As Castells writes:

*For the mass of the world population their primary concern is how to avoid irrelevance, and, instead, to engage in a meaningful relationship, such as the relationship we used to call exploitation. The danger is, rather, for those who become invisible to the programmes commanding the global networks of production, distribution, and valuation.*<sup>31</sup>

.....  
27 Manuel Castells, *The rise of the network society* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1996); Manuel Castells, *The power of identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997); Manuel Castells, *End of millennium* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

28 This property for Castells first emerged in the global financial sector in the second half of the 1980s. See; Manuel Castells, *The rise of the network society* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1996).

29 *Ibid.*, p. 412.

30 Manuel Castells, ‘Informationalism and the network society’ in, *The network society: A cross-cultural perspective* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishers, 2004), , pp. 11-12.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

Castells' conception of the network society and its capitalist space of flows is thus the domain of global finance, relying on a relational understanding of space, where a more horizontal organisation allows power to be diffused and decentralised—it has the characteristics of Foucault's 'space of control'. Yet, as Foucault and others have argued, agency and resistance are also embedded in such structures and recently grass-roots organisations such as the alter-globalisation movement have used similar rhizomatic modes to make alliances and act together across cities and continents. **The diasporic existence also promises other types of relations to far off places that may be mediated through technology but do not reside within the space of flows; instead connections are based on family ties, national or regional affinities and affiliations.**<sup>32</sup> The networked structure theorised in the 'space of flows' is also at play here and emerges as a powerful space within contemporary society where both hegemonic forms and resistances to them are played out.

#### (b) Place as a relational concept

In the book, *Space, Place and Gender*, Doreen Massey conceptualises 'place' using a similarly networked structure.<sup>33</sup> She asserts that it is almost impossible to find a place with an identity, at best a single place can have a series of fluctuating identities—as people move in and out and form different relationships. Even if a place was inhabited by a single community, the experiences of individuals within that community would be very different, leading to a unique sense of place. According to Massey, the essentialist definition of place has been formed due to a misreading of Marx, or rather a mis-response to Marx's idea of the annihilation of space by time. Thus, what is now known as 'time-space compression' is seen as a new phase in the domination of time over space, with the increasing frequency of global travel, easy access to the Internet and a globalised economy. Set against this backdrop is the rose-tinted view of a past community that was homogenous and had shared concerns. As Massey suggests such conceptualisations induce, 'defensive and reactionary responses—certain forms of nationalism, sentimentalised recovering of sanitised "heritages", and outright antagonism to newcomers and "outsiders"'.<sup>34</sup>

Describing a different conceptualisation of place, and one that would be more sympathetic to diasporas, Massey bases it on Lefebvre's concept of social space as the articulation of social relations. Place would be defined as 'particular moments in such intersecting social relations,

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32 See, 'Trans-localities/places', pp. 145-150.

33 Doreen Massey, *Space, place and gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

34 *Ibid.*, p. 147.

nets of which have over time been constructed, laid down, interacted with one another, decayed and renewed.<sup>35</sup> The points of intersection, the 'nodes' at certain moments in time constitute place. The temporal nature and sheer number of relations is what gives places their multiple and layered character and defines their history as a layering of these complex relations. Since these relations do not always remain within the geographical bounds of any particular place, such a conceptualisation breaks down essentialist boundaries for a more open and inviting way of thinking place. Here globalisation, which is often seen as a homogenising force, helps to create the specificity of a place through the intersection of local and global relations. As Massey states: 'The global is in the local in the very process of the formation of the local.'<sup>36</sup>

For diasporas a networked understanding of place offers clear opportunities, especially in London, a global city as defined by Saskia Sassen.<sup>37</sup> Such cities hold an important strategic place within the 'space of flows' and so also become important nodes for those who are excluded from this space: the poor, minorities and others who are marginalised. Through operating tactically in the space of these cities the excluded can claim a presence in relation to those in power and can make alliances with others in similar positions. The density and proximity afforded by larger and more complex cities combined with an understanding of space based on affinities means that migrants are well placed to imagine another type of networked space than that of capital and finance.

## Mediating and differential spaces

### (a) The welcoming space of chora

How to make home in another place is one of the most important tasks for those in the diaspora and this 'home' has to be actively constructed and conceptualised at a number of different levels. Whilst homeplace was imagined as a locus of resistance, home must also perform other functions, it must be open and welcoming, heterogenous and differential—**to be able to invite others to your home is also an important step towards feeling at home.** This need of the diasporic subject to actively construct 'home' is shared with the female subject, whose erasure from the History of philosophy has left her 'without home'.

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35 Ibid., p. 120.

36 Ibid.

37 See, Saskia Sassen, *The global city: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

Elizabeth Grosz, in her essay 'Women, Chora, Dwelling', discusses 'chora' as a concept of space that hides this forgotten link between spatiality and femininity, through referring to a reading of Plato's *Timaeus* by Jacques Derrida.<sup>38</sup> Plato sets up a binary opposition between the intelligible or rational ('Idea') and the material or embodied ('Form'). Whilst one is the originary 'model' the other is a 'copy', a mere simulacrum, and in this unequal partnership between Idea and Form, mind and body, Being and becoming, lies the basis of Western philosophy. Yet, as Derrida's deconstructivist reading has shown, Plato himself acknowledged that a transition from Idea to Form must be possible and needs an intermediary condition which is 'Khôra', meaning receptacle, space or interval. This transitional stage possessing none of the characteristics of either 'Idea' or 'Form' must itself also be completely neutral. This place that nurtures the Form in its becoming, is described by Plato as 'invisible and formless'. Plato is obliged to invent a 'Third Kind' category between the Intelligible and the Sensible which is the category of **PLACE**.

The analogy of birth for the transition from one Form to another is Plato's own. Chora is likened to a mother or a nurse that nurtures the Forms—the material elements that constitute the world. Grosz describes chora as, '...a kind of womb of material existence, the nurse of becoming, an incubator...'.<sup>39</sup> The importance of chora now becomes clear, it is the basis of the material world, without it would the Forms exist at all? In his text 'Khôra,' Derrida shows how this concept has affected all aspects of Plato's work; the paradox being that the state that was supposed to be neutral and have no effect on the Forms, is in fact central to all processes: 'The world of objects, material reality in all its complexity, is in fact infiltrated with the very term whose function is to leave no imprint, no trace. Chora is interwoven throughout the fabric of Plato's writing.'<sup>40</sup> This concept of a third term that disrupts the binary opposition of a given system is also present in Chinese philosophy. The Full of the Yin-Yang needs the space of the Void in order to pass from one state to the other. The Void is equivalent to chora, but unlike Western thought its position is acknowledged. As the film maker and feminist critic, Trinh T. Min-Ha points out, '...without the intervention of the Void, the realm of the Full governed by the Yin and the Yang is bound to remain static and amorphous.'<sup>41</sup> The indeterminate

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 38 Elizabeth Grosz, 'Women, chora, dwelling', in *Space, time and perversion: Essays on the politics of bodies* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 111-124; Jacques Derrida, 'Khôra', in Thomas Dutoit (ed.), *On the name* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), pp. 89-130.

39 Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, time and perversion: Essays on the politics of bodies* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 114.

40 Ibid., p. 117.

41 Trinh T. Min-ha, *When the moon waxes red: Representation, gender and cultural politics* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 233.

Void not only allows the transition from one state to the other, it is also the reason for the separation and autonomy of the Yin and the Yang. It is the mediator and is the third term within a triad which 'tends ceaselessly toward the unitary (the oneness of the Yin-Yang circle).'<sup>42</sup>

Derrida's reading showed the central position that the concept of chora has in Plato's writing and thus also towards what Grosz refers to as 'the very economy of the architectural project itself.'<sup>43</sup> The emphasis on the word 'economy' and its meaning is key to this reading; derived from the Greek word, 'oikos', meaning 'dwelling' or 'home'. In contrast to the traditional concept of space as rationalised, measurable, Cartesian space, ... **chora is space understood as 'receptacle', 'receiver' ... 'home' for the elements [Forms] of the world.** This reading of 'choral space' directly questions the binary oppositions that are the basis of architectural thought, the relationship between form and function, figure and ground, theory and practice. Thus, an 'architectural economy' would not only include the physical attributes that go towards making a building, but also the theoretical discourse around architecture, the bodies that occupy space, the relations that occur within it.

Grosz makes one final claim for chora in reference Luce Irigaray's writings on sexual difference, which reveal the relegation of the female in society. She is defined by what the male is not;

*In a rigid containment or mortification of women's explorations of their own notions of spatiality (and temporality), men place women in the position of being 'guardians' of their bodies and their space, the conditions of both bodies and space without body or space of their own: they become the living representatives of corporeality, of domesticity, of the natural order that men have had to expel from their own self-representations in order to construct themselves above-the-mundane, beyond the merely material.*<sup>44</sup>

The woman becomes a support for the dominant male, a role very similar to that assigned to chora by Plato. She has no authority or space of her own, even the house she dwells in is constructed according to the male economy using the masculine modes of thought. **In effect she is 'without home'.** The enclosure of women within the masculine universe refuses to 'acknowledge that other perspectives, other modes of construction and constitution are

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42 Ibid.

43 Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, time and perversion: Essays on the politics of bodies* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 118.

44 Ibid., p. 122.

possible.<sup>45</sup> **Chora becomes a symbol for the active role of a feminine economy of space** and the challenge is to construct a notion of home other than that assigned by the male, a space ‘conceived in terms other than according to the logic of penetration, colonisation, and domination.’<sup>46</sup> This challenge posed from the margins is also a challenge for those in the diaspora—another kind of margin, another kind of space. Doina Petrescu hints at how a conceptualisation of chora could be heterogenous enough to accommodate such diverse subjects: ‘an invisible moving net, a screen, a filter’ that shakes and scatters producing space and form through chance positionings. ‘The order established by way of trembling, khôra’s shaking, privileges relations, associations, rather than identities.’<sup>47</sup>

(b) spaces of difference and becoming...

A space that privileges relations and associations, that moves away from hegemonies and identity politics may require at its core, a more radical shift in perspective. Whereas Derrida read chora as the third term that upset the balance between binary oppositions, Gilles Deleuze argues that ‘this formula of reversal has the disadvantage of being abstract; it leaves the motivation of Platonism in the shadows.’<sup>48</sup> Deleuze questions the very idea of Being as a basis for thought, arguing instead that there is no determinate foundation for knowledge, instead we should study how languages, cultures, political systems and spaces change or ‘become’, the challenge is to address what Claire Colebrook calls, ‘the diversity of becoming’,<sup>49</sup> concerned with **relationalities, difference and flux** over static, individualised phenomena. Grosz describes the specificity of thinking such difference: ‘In conceptualising a difference in and of itself, a difference which is not subordinated to identity, Deleuze and Guattari invoke notions of becoming and of multiplicity beyond the mere doubling or proliferation of singular, unified subjectivities.’<sup>50</sup> **Difference and becoming are here central concepts that open up possibilities for spatial thinking based on relations and proximity.**

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45 Ibid., p. 123.

46 Ibid. For the role of ‘gold’ in a feminine economy see, ‘Trans-localities/places’, pp. 145-149.

47 Doina Petrescu, ‘Khôra or the impossibility of ‘thinking’ ‘space’: Old paradoxes new strategies in architecture and theory’, (unpublished paper, 2003).

48 Gilles Deleuze, *The logic of sense*, trans. by Charles Stivale Mark Lester (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 253.

49 Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 4.

50 Ibid., p. 164.



Difference, normally defined in relation to what it is not, is here defined affirmatively as the ability to transform, to become. For Deleuze the biggest problem with Plato's project was the suppression of the simulacra because for him they are the embodiment of difference, their unfaithful copy of the Form produces difference. 'If the simulacrum still has a model, it is another model, a model of the Other (l'Autre)...'<sup>51</sup> Unlike the Platonic copy, which still possesses a knowledge (savoir), the simulacrum is outside knowledge.

*...there is in the simulacrum a becoming-mad, or a becoming unlimited...a becoming always other, a becoming subversive of the depths, able to evade the equal, the limit, the Same, or the Similar: always less and more at once, but never equal.*<sup>52</sup>

'Always less and more at once, but never equal' is the definition of difference according to Deleuze. What would a corresponding space of differentiation look like?

Here, I turn to the difference in understanding of space (and time) between Newton and Leibniz, a famous exchange that is one of the underlying concepts for understanding 'differential or relational space'.<sup>53</sup> Whilst for Newton objects exist independently of space and time that provides a backdrop, an absolute frame of reference, for Leibniz, space and time exist only as relations between objects and without these would not exist at all. In simple terms, this would mean that two identical objects in different locations are not identical because of the spatial and temporal relations of which they are a part; swapping them would also change their properties. Deleuze has written extensively on Leibniz's relational understanding of space which he calls a 'Baroque perspective': 'The new status of the object no longer refers its condition to a spatial mould—in other words, to a relation of form-matter—but to a temporal modulation that implies as much the beginnings of a continuous variation of matter as a continuous development of form.'<sup>54</sup> This way of apprehending the world has consequences for how space, time and subjects are conceptualised: 'The Baroque introduces a new kind of story in which, [...] description replaces the object, the concept becomes narrative, and the subject becomes point of view or subject of expression.'<sup>55</sup> For spatial thinking, it is the **privileging of relationalities**

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51 Gilles Deleuze, *The logic of sense*, trans. by Charles Stivale Mark Lester (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 258.

52 Ibid.

53 It is also an underlying concept for Castells 'network society' and its 'space of flows'.

54 Gilles Deleuze, *The fold: Leibniz and the baroque*, trans. by Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 19.

55 Ibid., p. 127.

**over attributes, the topological over the topographic.** Here **differences are of degree and intensity** (continuous variation) and there is no 'ideal' in contrast to which others are set up as different—no ideal 'whiteness' from which to determine others, no ideal space, no outside from which to apprehend the world.

### a space that receives, that welcomes...

Although this chapter primarily deals with space, it is entitled 'diasporic spatio-temporalities', in acknowledgement of the particular way in which space is conceptualised as being inextricably linked to time across the concepts I have followed. The last section in particular pulls out this underlying theme, theorising space and time together with a Leibnizian 'baroque perspective' as Deleuze calls it, or the topological thinking that is presently re-emerging in contemporary theory.

I started this chapter with a number of specific qualities that 'diasporic spatio-temporalities' would have—the ability to accommodate difference in everyday life, to be a mediatory space between times and cultures, to be able to escape forms of control and regulation and to embody a type of marginality whilst not being completely striated. In this the body has emerged as an important locus, from one-to-one exchanges to social spaces, and even on a planetary scale of personal relations that span the globe.

The displacement of bodies produces a special kind of space that is related to the cyclical time of everyday life, of rhythms and modulations. Diasporic spatio-temporalities are therefore non-linear, privileging experience and opening up possibilities to operate tactically within them. The creativity of such approaches lies in the 'how' rather than the 'what' of an action, which has the potential to resist the homogenising tendencies of consumerist society. Whilst migrant subjects may operate in a similarly networked way to capital, these networks are based around familial and friendship relations rather than those of global economic power. Hegemonic relations can also be a part of such networks, but they are of a different nature, being inflected through geo-politics, religion or small-scale economic exchanges. It is the nature of the relations that constitute these networks, hegemonic or otherwise, that opens up the possibility of operating across space through solidarities and affinities rather than competition.

Across the trajectory of this chapter, a relational space emerges as a place where difference can be accommodated through a more feminine mode of becoming, a place that is not constituted through identity politics but through associations. A space that is able to mediate between the symbolic and the real, between the different registers of a diasporic inhabitation that can be 'folded' across time and space. Since

the processes of migration necessarily dislocate subjects and involve narratives that span regions and borders, space becomes a contested domain full of contradictory and conflicting positions. The different concepts outlined in this chapter, allow space to unfurl and expand in order to accommodate these positionings, whilst acknowledging their entirely contingent and interdependent nature. The question that much of the latter part of this thesis deals with is: now that space has been populated, stretched and made complex, how can it be represented?



## Diasporic subjectivity

This chapter traces my own journey through a concern with finding other modes of thinking subjectivity than the hegemonic account of it. Those in the diaspora stretch the dominant narrative of nation-states and their rooted, homogenous subjects. At a time when Europe's borders are solidifying and the call to integrate is getting louder day-by-day, how can diasporic subjectivity escape the twin dangers of a retreat to closely de-limited ethnic communities on the one hand, and the loss of all specificities on the other? What tactics and practices do we need to develop in order to not follow the narrative written for us by those in power? How is it possible to transgress the *dispositif* when it surrounds, envelops and produces us as subjects?<sup>1</sup> What are the sites of this struggle and what is their relationship to space?

As Avtar Brah comments, 'diasporas emerge out of migrations of collectivities', as a description they are always about a community of people and their relations. 'They are contested cultural and political terrains where individual and collective memories collide, reassemble and reconfigure.'<sup>2</sup> This points to a way of theorising diasporic subjectivity as always in relation to others (from the same community or not) and as a kind of mediatory subject that overlaps diverse modalities of life. This chapter traces a trajectory of thinking subjectivities from Michel Foucault's original contribution, through feminist and queer appropriations of it to material and paradoxical thinking.

### Foucault's subjectivation

#### (a) The production of subjectivity

Foucault's conception of power as pervasive within society and constituting those upon which it acts has led to a very particular understanding of the relationship between power and the subject. He distinguished various modes in which humans are transformed into subjects, in the sense of 'being subject to-' an other or to oneself. Of these 'subjectivation', or the production of subjectivity, has emerged as the most important site of struggle and domination in modern society, due to its combination of a particular type of power with a new political form. The traditional European form of 'pastoral power' directed towards the salvation of the soul and exercised individually as well as collectively through the church, had since the 19<sup>th</sup> century combined with a new

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 1 For a description of the *dispositif* see, 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', p. 53.

2 Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of diaspora: Contesting identities* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 193.

form of government to give rise to the modern state and to capitalist society, working in similar ways through knowing its subjects inside out. Foucault writes:

*This form of power that applies itself to immediate everyday life categorises the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognise and others have to recognise in him. It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects.*<sup>3</sup>

With the rise of the modern state pastoral power transformed so that salvation, rather than being addressed to the afterlife, concerned itself with worldly issues of health, security, etc. With a new concern developed a new form of knowledge that could simultaneously address the ‘well-being’ of the general population and that of individuals—power became both individualising and totalising, spreading to all parts of the social body, supported by various institutions and their specialised discourses: medical, educational, familial etc. New discourses produced new normalised subjects, as well as their opposite, those who deviated were variously pathologised as the mentally ill, delinquent or criminal. For Foucault, the struggle against this totalising power is the struggle of our times and it is situated within the production of subjectivity and addresses the question of how power operates and is exercised.

To analyse the production of diasporic subjectivity, it is perhaps useful to begin at the beginning with the way in which a sedentary way of life became the ‘norm’ and so constructed nomadic life as deviant. In the contemporary metropolis, the case is most obviously presented in the way that Europe treats its Roma populations, the French president’s xenophobic measures of last year being only the most recent in a long history of oppression. It is not by accident that the Roma and other traveller populations are always portrayed in the popular press as ‘criminal’ or ‘lazy’, it is linked inextricably to their way of life, to their rejection of the twin concepts upon which capitalist society is based: ‘property’ and ‘work’. ‘Immigrants’ too are variously constructed in the popular media as ‘parasitic’ (upon the state and its hard-working native subjects), ‘uncivilised’, ‘lazy’... The discourses around the construction of nation-states with hard-edged borders pervious only to those with privilege or to the immaterial flows of global capital, combined with the realities of finite resources and shrinking welfare states across Europe, are constituent parts of the construction of ‘immigrant’ as category. Whilst the dictionary definition of the word ‘immigrant’ sounds inoffensive enough, the idea of a permanent move encourages two

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3 James D. Faubion (ed.), *Power: Essential works of Foucault 1954-1984* (London: The New Press, 2000), p. 331.

types of thinking.<sup>4</sup> Firstly, the idea of assimilation is given credence if the break from the other place is considered to be total. It propagates the notion of a fixed subject rather than the multiplicity that is the reality of a diasporic subjectivity. Secondly, through having constructed an artificial ideal those who fail to live up to it can be easily criticised. Recently, the term ‘transmigrants’ is favoured as it is able to express the interconnections and lack of fixity that is a constituent part of the diasporic condition. But, of course, the construction of the migrant as subject is also linked to other discourses such as the dominant practice of categorising migrants in terms of legality, which creates ‘a dialectic between inclusion and exclusion that disciplines transnational migrants by focusing public attention on the degree to which they belong...’<sup>5</sup> Thus, the dominant discourses around the migrant subject in the so called developed world keep open the possibility of ‘sending them back home’.

#### (b) Singularities, becomings and the possibilities of resistance

How to resist such discourses, relations and categorisations, how to imagine new modes of subjectivity is therefore a central question. For Foucault each power relation holds within it the possibility of transgression, due to the strategic nature in which power operates—it has no independent form or content and exists only in relations that are necessarily unstable. Since a power relation is a mode of action that is exercised upon others, it requires a subject that is ‘free’. In capitalist society whilst we each have our freedom, relations of power compel us to act in certain ways. Foucault writes:

*At the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom. Rather than speaking of an essential antagonism, it would be better to speak of an ‘agonism’—of a relationship that is at the same time mutual incitement and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation that paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation.*<sup>6</sup>

Whilst Foucault focused on the analysis of power, the concept of ‘singularisation’ or the transformation of subjectivity, developed by Guattari (with Deleuze) offers a way to think the possibility of resistance. In a Thousand Plateaus, Deleuze and Guattari define the real in a state of flux, where difference is described not as binary opposition but

4 ‘immigrant; a person who migrates to another country, usually for permanent residence.’ Dictionary.com; <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/immigrant> [accessed Jan 2011].

5 Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc, ‘From immigrant to transmigrant: Theorising transnational migration’, *Anthropological quarterly*, 68 (1)(Jan 1995): 59.

6 James D. Faubion (ed.), *Power: Essential works of Foucault 1954-1984* (London: The New Press, 2000), p. 342.

positively as differentiation, or a proliferation of dualities in flux, varying in degrees, oscillating and reversing and in so doing revealing the real. Rather than imagining subjectivity as Being, they describe subjectivities in flux. This continuous variation holds immanent within it the possibility of 'becoming' and therefore of resistance. Subjectivation is the becoming of subjectivity, including the positive processes of 'becoming-woman', 'becoming-animal', 'becoming-minoritarian'. Deleuze and Guattari privilege 'becoming-woman' as a necessary and political process; 'becomings, being minoritarian, always pass through a becoming-woman.'<sup>7</sup> Yet, being a woman or a minority is not enough:

*... in a becoming one is deterritorialised. Even Blacks, as the Black Panthers said, must become-black. Even women must become-woman. [becomings] therefore imply two simultaneous movements, one by which a term (the subject) is withdrawn from the majority, and another by which a term (the medium or agent) rises up from the minority.*<sup>8</sup>

For the diaspora, thinking subjectivity in this way guards against fixed notions of originary cultures and traditions, moving away from identity politics towards subjectivities that are able to make transversal links across cultures and ethnic groups through shared concerns and interests. Migrant or diasporic subjectivity in particular holds the potential for a type of becoming that is especially useful for our times. Guattari and Suely Rolnik in the account of their travels across a recently liberated Brazil commented that in traditional systems, 'subjectivity is manufactured by machines that are more territorialised, on the scale of an ethnic group, a professional association, or a caste. In the capitalist system, however, production is industrial and takes place on an international scale.'<sup>9</sup> They suggest that in capitalist systems subjectivity is deterritorialised, the international business traveller or the cosmopolitan cultural producer move across borders at will, picking and choosing from global culture. Those in the diaspora also make connections across borders but they operate in a different way. Making connections trans-locally, they are embedded within two, maybe more, local cultures - this is not a total deterritorialisation, placeless and rootless, but it is a production of subjectivity that spans borders and results from a process of deterritorialisation that leads to a number of reterritorisations.<sup>10</sup> It is not industrial in scale but is specialised, located and embodied.

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7 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)), p. 321.

8 Ibid.

9 Félix Guattari and Suely Rolnik, *Molecular revolution in Brazil*, trans. by Karel Clapshow and Brian Holmes (Los Angeles CA: Semiotext(e), 2008), p. 35.

10 For more on this see, 'Diasporic territories', p. 198-199.



For Guattari, alongside disruption the processes of singularisation or becoming are the tools of cultural production in everyday life. Perhaps for diasporic subjectivities, displacement could become the mode of disruption, the methodological tool, for imagining (and enacting) the becomings of diasporic subjectivities. Foucault wrote that power relations are especially influenced 'through the production and exchange of signs'.<sup>11</sup> For a diasporic existence in which signs and the symbolic realm hold an exalted position, this type of power relation can become even more influential. Rituals and symbolisms can be manipulated to hold sway over those in the diaspora, whether it is the force of tradition or religion, these power relations can become highly oppressive and destructive. Yet as Foucault also commented, power relations are unstable and through being displaced, paradoxically, rituals and symbolisms also become the most important sites for the becomings of a diasporic subjectivity.

### (c) Collective and nomadic subjectivities

A diasporic subjectivity based on transversal affinities and alliances necessarily needs to account also for the collective; it is therefore important to think through how performative and hybrid subjects are constituted in relation to others and within concrete power relations. For this, I turn to the writings of Rosi Braidotti, who has appropriated Deleuze and Guattari's nomadic philosophy for a feminist politics of location and updated it for contemporary times. Braidotti's figuration of the 'nomadic subject' is concerned with moving away from identity politics to the construction of subjectivities that are multiple, transversal and collective. The 'nomadic subject' incorporates and builds upon other feminist and postmodern figurations, such as the cyborg, a process which Braidotti defines as constructing 'materially embedded cartographies' that 'are self-reflexive and not parasitic upon a process of metaphorisation of "others"'.<sup>12</sup> The starting point of feminism ensures that sexual difference and with it bodies assume a privileged position—being the locus, at the intersection of the physical, symbolic and social realms, and Braidotti in particular focuses on the ethical implications of this.

Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the subject is non-unitary, multiple and based in concrete social relations. Braidotti makes the connection between their way of thinking the subject and that of Luce Irigaray through the shared concept of 'becoming', which describes the constitution of subjectivity. The 'I' or the ego is just an illusion, a

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11 James D. Faubion (ed.), *Power: Essential works of Foucault 1954-1984* (London: The New Press, 2000), p. 38.

12 Rosi Braidotti, 'Between the no longer and the not yet: Nomadic variations on the body', <http://www.women.it/cyberarchive/files/braidotti.htm>.

social necessity, and this process of defining oneself in between the material, embodied and semiotic conditions of everyday life is the formation of subjectivity through 'becoming'.<sup>13</sup> It is an account of the subject necessarily in flux, standing in direct opposition to classical notions of Being and the unitary self. For Deleuze the subject's becoming is linked both to knowing and the desire to know, a stance that overcomes the classical split between the rational and emotional subject or the binary of Sameness/Difference. Instead the thinking subject is part of a continuum of becoming, where desire is the first process in the constitution of the self—subjectivity is thus predicated on desire in the first instance, the desire to know. Within this constitution the various becomings that Deleuze and Guattari name, 'becoming-woman', 'becoming-minoritarian', 'becoming-animal' leading up to a 'becoming-imperceptible', though intertwined deal with different facets of subjectivation: from the subjugation of women within a phallogocentric system, to the domination of various minorities and the anthropomorphic impulses of humanism. Deleuze and Guattari write: 'If becoming-woman is the first quantum, or molecular segment, with the becomings-animal that link up with it coming next, what are they all rushing toward? Without a doubt, toward becoming-imperceptible.'<sup>14</sup> These becomings can also be seen as a liberation of the subject from societal norms, conditioned through capitalist modes of production, tradition, habit etc. Braidotti stresses the fundamental difference between a 'multiplied' and a 'multiple' subject.

*Nomadic subjects are not quantitative pluralities, but rather qualitative multiplicities. The former is merely a multiple of One—multiplied across an extended space. This is the political economy of global capitalism as a system that generates differences for the purpose of commodifying them. Qualitative multiplicities, however, pertain to an altogether different logic. They express changes not of scale, but of intensity, force, or potentia (positive power of expression), which trace patterns of becoming.<sup>15</sup>*

For Braidotti, the central question of Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the subject is based on an alternative theory of desire, beyond Freudian conceptualisations of it as lack and excess, or Lacanian and Derridean concepts of difference based on semiotic models. The becomings traced above are embedded in bodily, intense and sometimes painful experiences, and Braidotti casts psychoanalysis as a discipline that looks for ways of neutralising this experience. Deleuze and Guattari,

13 Braidotti's whole book, *Metamorphoses*, deals with this connection between feminism and nomadology but in particular the chapter, 'Zigzagging through Deleuze and Feminism', in Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a materialist theory of becoming* (London: Polity Press, 2002), pp. 65-116.

14 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)), p. 308.

15 Rosi Braidotti, *Transpositions: On nomadic ethics* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2006), p. 94.

on the other hand, affirm it whilst acknowledging that there are limits to this subversion and stretching of subjectivity. Braidotti's politics are therefore profoundly affirmative, she takes Deleuze and Guattari's insistence that desire and affect should be read as positive in order to re-define affectivity towards a transformative ethics.

The question of ethics is bound to that of subjectivity, since the concept of becoming not only accounts for the various others of classical philosophy, but also imagines a way of including them within the becoming of the dominant subject. This important lesson of nomadology, gives 'priority to the formerly dominant model of subjectivity ... putting on the spot the discourses of the Same, the One: rather than stressing those of the others, it is the Master's discourse that takes the heat.'<sup>16</sup> This approach engenders new accountabilities related to the various positionings and becomings of the multiple subject. It demands a shift in thinking that sees subjects as inter-related, interdependent and affecting each other. A nomadic subjectivity is therefore formed in relation to our own and others' subjectivities. Braidotti writes: 'The subject is but a force among forces, capable of variations of intensities and inter-connections and hence of becomings. These processes are territorially-bound, externally oriented and more than human in span and application.'<sup>17</sup> Whilst becoming-woman is given a privileged position within Deleuze and Guattari's schema, it is one in a series of becomings that do not deal explicitly with sexual difference. Braidotti takes these various becomings and traces her own sexually differentiated trajectory of 'becoming-woman-animal-insect-imperceptible'.<sup>18</sup> For this she highlights the split in western thinking between humans and other forms of life, and instead calls for an affirmation of life in all its forms. The post-human stance of Braidotti and others opens up a way of thinking diasporic subjectivity as related to questions of ecology and of life and living. She writes:

*Life is half-animal, non-human (zoe) and half-political and discursive (bios). Zoe is the poor half of a couple that foregrounds bios as the intelligent half; the relationship between them constitutes one of those qualitative distinctions on which Western culture built its discursive empire. [...] Zoe stands for the mindless vitality of Life carrying on independently of and regardless of rational control.<sup>19</sup>*

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16 Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a materialist theory of becoming* (London: Polity Press, 2002), p. 118.

17 Rosi Braidotti, 'Affirming the affirmative: On nomadic affectivity', *Rhizomes*, 11/12(fall 2005/spring 2006).

18 Through discussing various examples from culture, the arts and literature Braidotti traces the connections that have been made between women and monsters of all sorts: werewolves, vampires, etc., highlighting the sexually differentiated way in which they are defined. See, Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a materialist theory of becoming* (London: Polity Press, 2002).

19 Rosi Braidotti, *Transpositions: On nomadic ethics* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2006), p. 37.

Here a different conception of time also applies, from the historically oriented past of psychoanalysis to the future fixated gaze of modernity, nomadic philosophy calls for attendance to the ‘future anterior’, a Bergsonian version of time as cyclical and situated, similar perhaps to the diasporic spatio-temporalities discussed in the previous chapter. Not the present in thrall to a past or future but a present that is an event in a continuum—‘the carrying on regardless of zoe’.

## Performative subjectivities at the margin

### (a) Subversive re-appropriations and ‘strategic essentialism’ as ethical practices

The question of ethics has also been addressed in postcolonial theory, but from a different angle through foregrounding the role of performativity in the construction of subjectivity. The importance of rituals and the symbolic realm within the construction of diasporic subjectivity highlight the need to think through the performative role of body acts. As the philosopher, Judith Butler points out, repetition of certain ‘stylised acts’ can essentialise them. Butler’s writings on performance in relation to the construction of gender have been theorised in dialogue with Foucault and also Jacques Derrida, who uses concepts such as *différance* and supplement as another way of conceptualising difference from that outlined above in the multiplicities of Deleuzian thinking. Whilst for Deleuze it is the proliferation of binaries in unstable relations that is the basis for difference, for Derrida difference or alterity is a surplus—an excess produced through iterability.<sup>20</sup>

Derrida has also critiqued the dominant Anglo-American thinking on speech and performativity, ‘speech-act theory’, for differentiating between an ‘authentic utterance’ and a ‘parasitic utterance’, where the latter is considered a citational practice, repeating other utterances. But if following Derrida, language is thought of as consisting of ‘chains of significations’ based on iterations, then all speech-acts must be citational. As both speaking and writing are forms of interpreting the world, through this practice of repetition and citationality, the possibility of communication occurs. This way of thinking challenges the notion that speech-acts and therefore subjects are autonomous, instead speech emerges as an entirely contingent practice. Judith Butler has applied these insights to the question of gender, which for her is also

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20 Derrida privileges the text claiming that writing has three qualities: it is iterable, meaning that it can be read over and over again and therefore can be understood and disseminated without the presence of the speaker/author; it is able to remove itself from the context of its original production—in other words, a re-reading imbues it with a different meaning; and finally, the nature of this change in meaning, the rupture, depends on the context, the chain of significations that it is a part of. Cf. Jacques Derrida, ‘Signature event context’, *Glyph*, 1 (1977): 172-197.

an imitative practice, constituted of repeated gestures and bodily acts that create the effect of a gender identity.<sup>21</sup> Butler gives the example of a child being born and the proclamation of the nurse: 'It's a girl!/ It's a boy!' From this very first moment gender becomes constrained, shaped and disciplined by the dominant discourses that are also historically constituted. In this Butler refers to Foucault's subjectivation where historical, institutional and social practices set societal norms and govern our behaviour.<sup>22</sup> Thus performative speech-acts not only describe gendered subjects but constitute them, hence Butler's conclusion that gender itself is performed. The performativity of gender is what allows its limitation and regulation, but it is also what opens up the possibility of resistance through a practice of subversion. Butler uses the example of drag as a subversive practice that plays with these normalised modes, claiming that the 'critical promise of drag does not have to do with the proliferation of genders ... but rather with the exposure of the failure of heterosexual regimes ever fully to legislate or contain their own ideals'.<sup>23</sup> That performative acts can have a subversive potential is a useful lesson for a diasporic subjectivity that is constrained by the norms of tradition on the one hand, whilst resisting assimilation on the other.

Whilst Butler gives a detailed account of the formation of gendered subjects through performativity, it is Gayatri Spivak's concept of 'strategic essentialism' that provides a way of acting that can mobilise such subjects for an emancipatory politics. Spivak's postcolonial and feminist appropriation of Derrida has been credited with constituting an overtly political programme for 'deconstruction' through foregrounding the question of ethics. Spivak states that the reversing and displacing of binary oppositions that is the basis of deconstruction can offer new ways of thinking for the feminist writer, and has described deconstruction as a 'foil' to help guard against essentialism. She claims that 'deconstruction cannot found a political programme',<sup>24</sup> but deploying it strategically means that knowledge is not taken at face value and its conditions of production are always interrogated. This lesson is of course learnt through both deconstruction and a feminist politics of knowledge. In fact, Spivak contrasts the approach of Derrida with Foucault (who has been highly influential in feminist theory) and shows how their work may complement each other. In so doing, she draws an important distinction between a 'critical' and a 'dogmatic' philosophy.

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21 See, Judith Butler, *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity* (London: Routledge, 1990).

22 See, *Diasporic Space*, pp. 6-7. See also, Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Allen Lane, 1977); Michel Foucault, *The birth of the clinic: An archaeology of medical perception*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock Publications, 1973).

23 Judith Butler, 'Critically queer', *GLQ: A journal of lesbian and gay studies*, 1 (1)(1993): 26.

24 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *The postcolonial critic: Interviews, strategies, dialogues* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 104.

Whilst a dogmatic philosophy may be more concerned with an idealistic mode of thinking which generalises in order to create overarching principles, a critical philosophy is less concerned with neat edges and is aware of the limits of theory. The harmful effects of a dogmatic philosophy that generalises political struggle are only too apparent and for Spivak, an obvious example is the non-relevance to the rural poor of the bourgeois nationalist struggle for independence in the Indian Subcontinent. But in order to theorise, an arbitrary closure of some kind is required and this tactical use of an essentialist mode of thinking is described by Spivak as 'strategic essentialism'; although this can never be a long-term strategy and has to be used contextually. Some have critiqued this apparent contradiction but Spivak turns to Foucault to defend such 'paradoxical thinking', his practice of 'nominalism' may hold similar opportunities and dangers but could also be considered a 'methodological necessity' of naming in order to move forward. To name in order to speak is the risk of all endeavour and it is this fine balance that in the end has led Derrida to claim, '...deconstruction, strictly speaking, is impossible though obligatory...'.<sup>25</sup>

#### (b) Naming as a political strategy

Naming deployed performatively becomes a political act, and requires close attention to be paid to the context, or what in deconstructivist language would be called the 'textile' of each situation—the interweaving of the chains of significations. This allows for an understanding of the exclusions and marginalisations that are inherent in any theorising, speaking or positioning. For the postcolonial theorist, it is a warning to go beyond the simple act of claiming a 'marginality' for oneself and to ask what privilege allows us to speak, even if it is from the periphery of the West, and what do we exclude in our own voicing? In an early essay, 'Explanation and Culture: Marginalia',<sup>26</sup> Spivak looks at the relationship between these exclusions and the processes that create the dominant perceptions of culture. She argues that placing oneself in the world in relation to others necessarily creates exclusions and marginalities and is linked to the desire to know. She writes; 'on the general level, the possibility of explanation carries the presupposition of an explainable (even if not fully) universe and an explaining (even if imperfectly) subject. These presuppositions assure our being.'<sup>27</sup> The act of explanation can therefore create the illusion of consensus by assuming that everything is within the general scope of understanding. This move allows for the exclusion of what she calls the 'radically heterogeneous'—Other. On a more specific level she sees explanation as

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25 Derrida quoted in Donna Landry and Gerald Maclean (eds.), *The Spivak reader* (New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 145.

26 'Explanation and Culture: Marginalia' in, *The Spivak Reader*, pp. 29-52.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

a manifestation of a politics—a way of being in the world. Thus each politics must have its own margins and exclusions and is defined by the politics of its margins. For Spivak, deconstruction is the tool used to mediate between the centre and the margin; ‘...the deconstructivist can use herself (assuming that she is at her own disposal) as a shuttle between the centre (inside) and the margin (outside) and thus narrate a displacement.’<sup>28</sup> This is also related to Spivak’s desire for postcolonial intellectuals to realise that part of the process of engaging with those at the margins is to understand that the privilege of a Western education and way of life can alienate. She urges that the task ahead is to, ‘unlearn our privilege as our loss.’<sup>29</sup>

Paying close attention to the margins and to the exclusions that they mark is something that is also advocated in the concept of ‘radical democracy’, where the making of a democratic space is seen to have inherent exclusions and the task of democratic thinking is to constantly question these exclusions and marginalities.<sup>30</sup> What Spivak adds to these discussions is the specific question of how ‘cultural explanations’ or ‘cultural assumptions’ join with questions of value to create the concrete conditions of living. In her case these deal with the most under represented and under privileged populations of the world. I am interested in what this mode of thinking could entail for ideas around democratic space in the European metropolis, but with the proviso of not conflating questions of postcoloniality in the West those in the post-colony; itself a form of colonisation. Therefore, I want to take from her work not universal lessons but a way of working or an ethics of practice that challenges my own assumptions and allows for a mode of thinking and acting based on the conceptualisation of agency as a ‘way of rearranging desires without coercion’.<sup>31</sup> In fact, the trajectory of Spivak’s own work shows a way to begin to speak of these issues from the examples that are available: from the account of a woman from her own family engaged in the independence struggle for India, to accounts of women in the archives of the East India Company, to the commenting on and translation of the Bengali activist-writer, Mahasweta Devi, to finally writing of and engaging with subalternity in contemporary rural India. A way of ‘doing theory’ with the examples and situations at your disposal.

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28 Ibid., p. 35.

29 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, ‘Can the subaltern speak?’, in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 271-313.

30 Whereas Mouffe’s agonistic politics requires as a starting point a shared symbolic space—Spivak asks the question; where do you start when even that space is missing? This has always been a prescient question for those in the former colonies; it has now gained importance in the West as spectres of the radically other haunt the popular imagination in the guise of mullahs and terrorists.

31 Gayatri Spivak, ‘The trajectory of the subaltern in my work’, 2008, <http://www.uctv.tv/search-details.asp?showID=8840>.

## Hybrid subjectivities and their subversive tactics

### (a) 'Hybridity', post-colonial subjectivity and contemporary nationhood

Homi Bhabha's work is also influenced by the textual strategies of Derrida, which he uses to complicate the colonial relationship beyond the traditional binary of power and powerlessness. Instead, Bhabha reads it as a two-way exchange in which both the coloniser and the colonised are implicated. Others have also spoken of the degree of collusion required from elites in the would-be colonies for the colonising process to have been so successful. Stuart Hall points to this same process occurring during decolonisation, where he accuses the colonial elites of colonising the moment of emancipation and dooming it to failure.<sup>32</sup> In this type of reading that engages with the processes of colonisation, and not just its products, the question of enunciation is key and it is also the place from which the possibility of resistance emerges.

For example, Bhabha's concept of 'cultural hybridity' emphasises the role of enunciation through the assumption that culture is produced performatively. This move breaks the monopoly of tradition in diasporic communities, as well as the essentialisation of cultures by dominant groups, pointing towards a more transformative approach that recognises that issues of re-presentation within debates on culture raise many important and awkward questions. Beyond the celebration of 'cultural diversity' and 'multiculturalism', concepts that do nothing to break the duality of 'us and them', Bhabha speaks of a symbolic 'third space' that is situated in-between cultures from which new positions emerge; a space of nurture (in feminist terms) or becoming (in Deleuzian terms).<sup>33</sup> But since this third space is only ever conceptualised as occurring between two limits its potential, something that is addressed in the Deleuzian concepts of 'multiplicity' and 'becoming'. This interstitial space that produces cultural hybridity is by necessity both marginal and political. Bhabha states; 'it is the 'inter'—the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space—that carries the burden of the meaning of culture.'<sup>34</sup> The word 'negotiation' is of importance here; Bhabha's interstitial space is a cultural space of mediation that is able to translate between cultures and so holds a political significance.

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 32 Stuart Hall, 'Representation: Cultural representation and signifying practices', *Dark Matter: Post-colonial Futures*, (1997): <http://www.darkmatter101.org/site/2007/02/28/stuart-hall-globalization-cartographies-of-power/>.

33 See discussion of 'chora' in, 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', pp. 59-62.

34 Homi Bhabha, *The location of culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 38.



The discussion of the hybridisation of cultures shows that cultural difference can be empowering, but it can also be one that causes conflict, whether with the dominant culture or with elements of one's 'own' culture. For instance Bhabha calls it the 'splitting of the subject' or the emergence of the 'unhomely moment'.<sup>35</sup> Both are describing the moment of the formation of culture, which is necessarily unsettling and contains within it an element of alienation. This 'taking place' of culture in the interstitial spaces of society causes disturbances at both ends, meaning that neither of the originary positions are left untouched. The 'unhomely moment' upsets other binaries such as public/private, past/present. Irit Rogoff uses this concept to talk of 'unhomed geographies,' the places where such processes take place.<sup>36</sup> Where new narratives are constructed out of a process of decolonisation whether from gendered or racial ideologies.

All this is in contrast to the traditional view of fixed identities, especially condoned by a colonial discourse that casts the other as constant—constant in difference. This process has a two-fold effect, firstly it serves to normalise and homogenise difference in the service of the dominant; secondly, it fetishises difference by reducing it to spectacle. Whilst there is a rich body of literature on feminist and queer appropriations of Freud's theory of sexual fetishism, there is a shifting of the discourse when applied to questions of race, where the fetish cannot be hidden and is visible to all.<sup>37</sup> Bhabha states:

*Skin, as the key signifier of cultural and racial difference in the stereotype, is the most visible of fetishes, recognised as 'common knowledge' in a range of cultural, political and historical discourses, and plays a public part in the racial drama that is enacted every day in colonial societies.*<sup>38</sup>

Notions of hybridity and performance also inform Bhabha's conceptualisation of the 'nation'. He places an emphasis on its temporal nature and contends that it is in a process of becoming, rather than the traditional emphasis placed on history. A nation for Bhabha can never be a homogenous space but instead is constituted through a 'doubling' and a 'splitting', which is the consequence of the tension between the people as 'object' of the nation (the historically constituted national past) and as 'subject' of the nation (the contemporary notion of the modern nation-state). Bhabha writes: 'The people are not simply

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35 Ibid.

36 Irit Rogoff, *Terra infirma: Geographies visual culture* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 71.

37 See for example, Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile bodies: Towards a corporeal feminism* (1994); Judith Butler, *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity* (London: Routledge, 1990); Teresa de Lauretis, 'The stubborn drive', *Critical inquiry*, 24 (4)(Summer 1998): 851-877.

38 Homi Bhabha, *The location of culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 34.

historical events or part of a patriotic body politic. They are also a complex rhetorical strategy of social reference; their claim to be representative provokes a crisis within the process of signification and discursive address.<sup>39</sup> The multiplicity inherent in the nation's subjects, their sheer variety leads to its crisis. The myth of unitary nationhood that is recalled in the phrase, 'one nation under one flag', is debunked. The people, therefore, occupy the edges and boundaries of the concept of nation and negotiate the complex terrain between the traditional and the modern that is at the heart of the 'narrative of the nation'.<sup>40</sup>

The presence of minorities and diasporic communities stretches this narrative further against the traditional view of history and a continuity in culture. Another thread emerges in the performative mode of minorities and marginalised groups. This second mode disrupts the conception of the nation and its culture as static. But even within the narrative of diasporic communities there is an emphasis on tradition that stunts the processes of hybridisation. It can lead to an alienation of the younger generation that cannot see themselves reflected in the image of the culture performed by their elders. The situation being very similar to that of a minority culture within a dominant culture. The minority in this case becomes the hybrid culture—this is the 'double vision' of the migrant.

The interest in the temporality of nation and culture is coupled with a deep concern with historiography. In his attempt to foreground the spatial in Bhabha's concept of 'third space', the geographer Edward Soja re-appropriates the term as 'thirdspace'.<sup>41</sup> But Bhabha's discussion on the temporality of the narrative of modernity and progress that characterises the Wests' relations to the so-called 'Third world' and its subjects is strategic: 'The discourse of race that I am trying to develop displays the problem of the ambivalent temporality of modernity that is often overlooked in the more "spatial" traditions of some aspects of postmodern theory.'<sup>42</sup> The temporality advocated by Bhabha is certainly an omission in the spatial discipline of architecture. Bhabha asks: 'what is modernity in those colonial conditions where its imposition is itself a denial of historical freedom, civic autonomy and the "ethical" choice of refashioning?'<sup>43</sup> The posing of these questions from within the prism of modernity is a consequence of the dualism of tradition and modernity

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39 Ibid., p. 145.

40 See, Homi Bhabha (ed.), *Nation and narration* (London: Routledge, 1990).

41 See, Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los angeles and other real-and-imagined places* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996).

42 Homi Bhabha, *The location of culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 239.

43 Ibid., p. 241.

that Bhabha is discussing but also of the historical moment at which he writes. Here I would substitute modernity for other words—what is ‘citizenship’ or ‘cultural practice’ under the colonial relations that we all still inhabit in Europe today? What kinds of relations disallow an engagement with this contemporary narrative, how can participatory practices of ‘social art/architecture’ not reproduce the same unequal power relationships? How can we attend to our own problematic relations with the ‘marginal’, ‘minority’ subjects of our research?<sup>44</sup>

### (b) Cyborg and hybrid theories

Related to questions of hybridity is the figure of the ‘cyborg’, first introduced in the 1960s and a staple of science fiction and techno-science discourse, it was given a polemical treatment by Donna Haraway in her 1985 essay first published in *Socialist Review*, ‘A Manifesto for Cyborgs’, and later as ‘A Cyborg Manifesto’.<sup>45</sup> A critique of the radical feminism of the 1970s Haraway was concerned with moving feminism away from ideas of an essential Nature and women associated with a Goddess or Mother Earth figure. The cyborg provided another way of thinking feminism inclusively, whilst at the same time foregrounding the increasingly intertwined and interdependent relations between machines and organisms. Haraway’s thinking is based in the context of techno-science but also located within concrete, material and lived social relations. The cyborg as figure and fiction provides a way of thinking hybridities in an affirmative way, it is as Haraway writes, ‘an argument for pleasure in the confusion of boundaries and for responsibility in their construction.’<sup>46</sup> Contrary to the critique of writers such as John Hutnyk, Haraway’s cyborg is immediately political, but in order to find this politics it helps to not ignore the feminist groundings of her analysis.<sup>47</sup> As Haraway insists: ‘I want to remind me, and us, about the historical specificity of the cyborg figure, as well as the material project of the cyborg.’<sup>48</sup> Haraway cites Ham as an exemplary cyborg figure, who in 1961 became the first primate in space, standing in for humans whilst being hooked up to all manner of electronic monitoring devices. Ham’s

44 The questions raised here are addressed in the context of my own research in ‘Displacements and reterritorialisations’, pp. 31-45.

45 Donna Haraway, ‘Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective’, *Feminist Studies*, 3(1988): 575-599; ‘A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century’ in, Donna Jeanne Haraway, *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

46 ‘A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century’ in, *Ibid.*, p. 150.

47 See, John Hutnyk, ‘Hybridity’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(1)(2005): 79-102.; John Hutnyk, Virinder S. Kalra and Raminder Kaur (eds.), *Diaspora and hybridity* (London: Sage, 2005), pp. 77-78.

48 Donna Haraway, ‘Cyborgs, dogs and companion species’, (2000), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxHIKmi70&feature=channel>.

mixing with technology blurs the lines between what is animal and what is machine, raising ethical and political questions of our relations to animals in specific and Others in general. Another example that Haraway uses is the figure of the Oncomouse™, genetically modified by Dupont for cancer research, the Oncomouse™ is the first creature to be patented, rather than the technique or process of its production. Here the artificial line drawn between humans and animals or culture and nature is exposed, as is the uncritical relationship between an 'objective' science and its anti-science detractors.

Haraway's hybrids ask uncomfortable questions about our relationship to science, animals and machines and take seriously the consequences of these emergent relations, including the threats raised by these new configurations, such as the grid of control and surveillance laid across the planet or the commoditisation of bodies through the industrial science complex. But through foregrounding the situated relationalities that constitute cyborgian subjectivity, she also reveals a politics appropriate to cyborgs: affinity politics over identity politics. Haraway uses the example of the phrase 'women of colour', coined by Chela Sandoval, to elaborate the idea of affinity politics.<sup>49</sup> The ambiguity and oppositional consciousness of the phrasing allowing for solidarities to be constructed beyond nationalities, ethnicities and identities.

*Cyborg imagery [...] means embracing the skilful task of reconstructing the boundaries of daily life, in partial connection with others, in communication with all of our parts. It is not just that science and technology are possible means of great human satisfaction, as well as a matrix of complex dominations. Cyborg imagery can suggest a way out of the maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves. This is a dream not of a common language, but of a powerful infidel heteroglossia. [...] I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess.*<sup>50</sup>

Haraway's call for a politics based on affinities, whether between humans, machines or animals, is especially useful for imagining diasporic subjectivity where identity politics based on shared origins are prevalent. Thinking instead our planetary relations opens up new possibilities for making alliances, and for the diaspora the emphasis on technologies as embodied and situated guards against utopian ideals of a globally connected virtual community. Localised relations made trans-local through technological or other means may be the only way to pay attention both on a planetary scale and also at the level of the body.

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49 Chela Sandoval, 'New sciences: Cyborg feminism and the methodology of the oppressed', in Chris Hables Gray (ed.), *The Cyborg Handbook* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

50 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century' in, Donna Jeanne Haraway, *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 181.

## (c) Mimicry as agency and spatial (dis)location

Performed, hybrid and cyborg subjectivities develop tactics of subversion, whether addressed in the historical context of the colonial legacy, or the feminist struggles against patriarchy, or within the newer realm of techno-science. Luce Irigaray, for example, uses the concept of ‘mimicry’ to describe a feminine strategy of resistance, whilst Butler uses ‘parody’ as a way of revealing the hidden assumptions behind notions of gender identity, and as Haraway points out, it is Lacan not Freud who is the analyst of choice.<sup>51</sup>

Such rhetorical strategies are also used by Bhabha as a way of responding to hegemonic power, he describes the processes of identity formation between the coloniser and the colonised through mimicry, using Lacanian psychoanalysis to determine the effects of one upon the other. Bhabha begins with an analogy of Freud’s theory of ‘sexual fetishism’, where the mimicry implied is transferred onto the colonial experience with its desire for a replication of its own norms and values. This allows for the colonial subject to be cast in the image of the coloniser on the one hand, whilst withholding the possibility of him/her being identical to them on the other. The desire for mimicry can thus never be fulfilled because to allow the oppressed to be identical to the dominant would mean an end to the inequality that hegemonic power rests upon. Here Bhabha uses deconstructivist thinking in the claim that there can be no repetition without alteration, resulting in the implanting of colonial values into the colony only ever being a simulacrum—an unfaithful copy. Thus Derrida’s concept of *différance* opens up the possibility of resistance to the homogenising tendencies of the colonial power.

Although the colonising relationship deploys highly sophisticated and effective strategies of control and domination, what is also required is a safeguarding of the power upon which this control rests. For this, the coloniser needs native allies that have the same way of thinking and behaving as the colonisers; these ‘Mimic Men’ as V. S. Naipaul has named them are the intermediaries that are appointed the role of transmitting power and culture.<sup>52</sup> But the mimetic effect ensures that the intermediaries have much more power than is at first apparent, they are

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51 Irigaray’s use of mimicry has been commented on by many authors, see for example, Toril Moi, *Sexual/textual politics* (New York: Routledge, 2002); ‘A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century’ in, Donna Jeanne Haraway, *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 161.

52 See, V. S. Naipaul, *The mimic men* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).

in fact mediators.<sup>53</sup> In passing knowledge they adapt it; their 'mimicry leads to menace', to borrow Bhabha's phrase. The hybridity produced through mimicry allows for internal resistance, a breaking down of the hegemonic power from within. The reflection of the coloniser that is produced in the colonised is alienating rather than comforting and can lead to aggression through a lack in the perceived self-image. By displacing the coloniser's subjectivity, the very figures that colonial authority cultivates in its self-image to lend it support become the agents of its decline. As Bhabha states; 'The menace of mimicry is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority.'<sup>54</sup> Looking at this relationship from the side of the colonised, Bhabha conceptualises it as an 'ironic compromise'; it is neither the independence that is desired nor total domination. The subversive quality of mimicry creates an excess through its unfaithful copy. 'In this comic turn from the high ideals of the colonial imagination to its low mimetic literary effects mimicry emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge.'<sup>55</sup>

Bhabha's understanding of mimicry is based on Lacan's conceptualisation of it as camouflage, meaning that mimicry is not necessarily about blending harmoniously into the background but of keeping a distinction from it. Lacan gives the example of camouflage used in the military, where the patterned colours are simulations of only one aspect of the environment. The tank therefore does not become a bush simply by being coloured in patches of green and brown and having a few branches thrown over it; it still keeps its form and function as a tank.<sup>56</sup> A slightly different definition of mimicry was put forward by the surrealist anthropologist, Roger Caillois.<sup>57</sup> In his seminal essay on mimicry in animals he questioned the prevalent belief that mimicry was a strategy of survival. He instead chose to conceptualise it as a certain excess in the evolution of animals and insects that had more to do with their relationship to space.

Biologists explain mimicry in insects and animals as ornament or perhaps as coincidental similarity to an environment that is then capitalised upon in the choice of habitat. This is a version of mimicry as camouflage, whilst another type involves timid animals simulating the looks of their more aggressive counterparts in the hope that it will ward

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53 On the role of 'mediators' see for examples, Bruno Latour, *We have never been modern*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993). See also, 'Border(ing) Practices', pp. 175-178.

54 Homi Bhabha, *The location of culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 88.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 85.

56 For an extended discussion on this see, Neil Leach, *Camouflage* (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 2006).

57 Roger Caillois, 'Mimicry and legendary psychasthenia', *October*, 31 (Winter 1984): 16-32.

off predators. But these explanations are unsatisfactory for Caillois who states that even animals who are not edible mimic. In fact there are specific problems associated with mimicry that leads him to suggest that it is a 'dangerous luxury':

*[T]here are cases in which mimicry causes the creature to go from bad to worse: geometer-moth caterpillars simulate shoots of shrubbery so well that gardeners cut them with their pruning shears. The case of the Phyllia is even sadder: they browse among themselves, taking each other for real leaves [...] the simulation of the leaf being a provocation to cannibalism in this kind of totem feast.<sup>58</sup>*

Caillois' explanation of mimicry thus switches the emphasis from survival to the question of an animal's relationship to space and how this produces their own sense of self.<sup>59</sup> He uses the example of schizophrenics who are unable to distinguish themselves from their surroundings and so have a sense of themselves only as one amongst many points in space rather than as a point in space from which they reference everything around them. This failure to distinguish themselves from their environment or to become 'too similar' is what Caillois also sees in insects that mimic. 'It should be noted in any case that in mimetic species the phenomenon is never carried out except in a single direction: the animal mimics the plant, leaf, flower, or thorn, and dissembles or ceases to perform its functions in relation to others. Life takes a step backwards.'<sup>60</sup> Caillois' definition reveals the danger of mimicry; things go wrong when mimesis is the only way of gaining a sense of self. This conceptualisation is very different from the Platonic idea of mimesis as pure imitation. Caillois' reading is closer to Adorno's, for whom mimesis was more than imitation; 'In mimesis imagination is at work, and serves to reconcile the subject with the object',<sup>61</sup> opening the possibility of mimicry as the use of the imagination or creativity in relating to the other.

The various concepts of mimicry outlined above are useful for thinking diasporic subjectivity that inevitably also has to deal with the question of imitation—of the surrounding culture and its habits. Whilst Bhabha's conceptualisation offers a subversive strategy of resistance, Caillois' definition serves as a warning and also provides a crucial link between the construction of subjectivity, the body and its relation to space. Through foregrounding tactics of hybridity and mimicry in diasporic

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58 Ibid.

59 See, Elizabeth Grosz, 'Lived Spatiality' in Elizabeth Grosz, *Architecture from the outside: Essays on virtual and real space* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).

60 Roger Caillois, 'Mimicry and legendary psychasthenia', *October*, 31 (Winter 1984): 16-32.

61 Neil Leach has commented on this: Neil Leach, *Camouflage* (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 2006), p. 22.

subjectivity singularisation becomes a bodily and thoroughly spatial affair related to everyday practices. For diasporas where there is an emphasis on rituals and tradition, how we inhabit space, our bodily gestures can become important sites of emancipation, if related to the imaginative use of mimesis.

## Diasporic subjectivities and the production of desire

I started my exploration of diasporic subjectivity through postcolonial theory, which provided a useful starting point, but its attachment to the semiotic would prove limiting in a spatial discipline such as architecture. In addition, those in the diaspora cannot simply subscribe to a postcolonial view as they are themselves embedded within unequal global power relations, including a position of privilege and exploitation in relation to many in the post-colonies. Yet, an account of diasporic subjectivity also begins at the margins—it just cannot end there.

Through analysing the specific power relations that constitute the marginality of those in the diaspora, the possibility of subversion is revealed. Whether developed in postcolonial or queer accounts, mimicry is an especially important practice that is able to reveal the weaknesses within the dominant order. Caillois' unique take provides an important relation to space and the corporeal highlighting how such tactics are embedded in the messy, material world. He also highlights mimicry as a practice that embodies a creative relating to the other, who could be the migrant but radicalised further could also be animals, machines, things, cyborgs... The question of how to build these relations, of how to relate, is perhaps the central question for all types of subjectivities, including the diasporic.

But it is the displacement of diasporic subjects and their dislocated bodies that produce specific modes of relating—gestures and practices adapted, mimicked and parodied that are able to transgress hegemonic modes of behaviour. Displacement becomes the modality for the singularisation of diasporic subjectivities, the conjunction of the symbolic and corporeal providing important sites of subversion. Brah's underlining of diasporas as collectivities, finds its subjective modalities in the 'becomings' traced by Deleuze and Guattari, whilst also resisting the twin dangers of introversion and assimilation. Practices of naming, speaking, gestures and other bodily performances all enact the becoming of diasporic subjectivities. The production of desire in the diaspora is therefore inextricably related to these important moves of de-subjection, where the space-time is trans-local and the inhabitants are cyborgian.





## Diasporic politics

One of the central questions for a diasporic politics is of how people from different backgrounds and cultures can live together. This 'living together' entails the creation and naming of a collective, the 'we' of the democratic relationship, and it also raises the question of participation within public affairs. How the 'collective' or 'public' is formed has been the subject of continuing debates in disciplines such as art, politics and philosophy and the re-imaginings of the democratic project that they produce are concerned specifically with how to engage citizens in public processes. Historic and contemporary debates on participation in architecture, however, usually take a less critical approach, especially related to the highly contested twin concepts of 'public space' and 'community'. In architectural theory and practice the notion of community is rarely challenged and public space is usually taken uncritically to be a space that is able to welcome all. For a diasporic politics that deals with those who occupy the margins of society, this omission is crucial. I therefore begin with the idea that any collective space needs at first to create the public or community that will inhabit it.

The political philosopher, John Dewey, theorised the construction of publics around 'issues' and insisted on the participation of citizens in the democratic process. He wrote his seminal book on the subject, *The Public and its Problems*,<sup>1</sup> around the time that it was becoming abundantly clear that technological advances would mean that the containment of public issues within the bounds of existing communities was increasingly unlikely. This, of course, is a fundamental issue for contemporary politics and one that gains even greater importance in the diasporic context. Contemporary theory has dealt with this problem of making meaningful democratic relationships at a distance, the issue of scale, in a number of different guises, including how to bring together a 'public' and a 'collective' through 'friendship', hegemony' and 'things'.

### Assembling publics and collectivities ...

#### (a) ... around issues and things

In the context of increasing communication and travel, Dewey addressed the consequences of the complexities of modern society for democratic politics. For some, including his contemporary Walter Lippmann, this translated into the necessity for a minimal democratic process since society was becoming too complex for a lay-person to understand. Lippman thus advocated a reliance on experts who could decipher and

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 1 John Dewey, *The public and its problems* (Chicago: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 1927).

translate aspects of the world; Dewey argued precisely the opposite.<sup>2</sup> The democratic process, even at its most elementary in the form of voting, forces upon us the recognition of common interests. A reliance on experts whose knowledge is compartmentalised would lead to a skewed version of the world. Therefore, a world of increasing complexity where expert views might be needed, demands even greater citizen participation than before. As Dewey writes: *'The man who wears the shoe knows best that it pinches and where it pinches, even if the expert shoemaker is the best judge of how the trouble is to be remedied.'*<sup>3</sup> Thus the constitution of a public cannot be delinked with the everyday issues that concern those people who constitute it. This line of thinking is counter to the idea that democracy must serve a 'general good', instead Dewey contends that people get involved in public discussions precisely when governmental or other processes fail or are deemed inadequate for resolving specific problems. The formation of a public and therefore also the formation of the processes of democracy are necessarily embedded in everyday life, they might be distributed and their effects might be spread-out, but they do not take the form of a generalised, non-specific 'public good'. This radical reformulation of the 'public' and its relation to democracy is based on an associative politics that critiques causal thinking and instead advocates the relations between things. As Dewey writes:

*Singular things act, but they act together. Nothing has been discovered which acts in entire isolation. The action of everything is along with the action of other things. The "along with" is of such a kind that the behaviour of each is modified by its connection with others.*<sup>4</sup>

Dewey's 'along with' could become the basis for a diasporic politics that through being displaced is more open to finding new relationalities. His emphasis on the relationality of everything and the politics of issues that it produces has been re-conceptualised in contemporary theory by Bruno Latour in his call for 'matters of concern'. Beyond this Latour's position is also useful as it broadens the description of who should be included in the the formation of publics, not just humans in all their diversity but also the non-living and the non-human. The inclusion of these others is for Latour the logical consequence of apprehending the world in its entirety rather than perceiving it only from the privileged perspective of the human (eye). In his wide-ranging critique of modernism, Latour traces a history of this view which has allowed a split to occur between

2 For an exploration of the intricacies of the Lippmann-Dewey debate, see: Noortje Marres, 'Issues Spark a Public into Being. A Key But Often Forgotten Point of the Lippmann-Dewey Debate' in, Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), pp. 208-217.

3 John Dewey, *The public and its problems* (Chicago: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 1927), p. 207.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

‘nature and culture’ or ‘subject and object’.<sup>5</sup> In its place he proposes an alternative genealogy that ‘does not let nature bifurcate’ and whose key figures are the process philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead and the sociologist, Gabriel Tarde.<sup>6</sup> They have described ‘experience’ from the perspective of a scientist and that of a sociologist respectively, both conceptualising it as a continuum, a flow that includes matter, particles, humans and organisms, entangled and dependant upon each other.

In the simplest terms, Whitehead argued against the split of body and mind, of reality as it is and how we perceive it. For example, he refused to make a difference between the song of a nightingale heard at dusk and the way in which scientists may choose to describe this same event, as vibrations in the air or sound waves. Reality for Whitehead did not need to be split into the primary qualities that could be measured and represented by scientists, and the secondary qualities that are ‘sensed’<sup>7</sup>. Tarde approaches the problem from the point of view of a sociologist, claiming that not only humans form societies, but so does everything else. The difference between human societies and others, such as a society of particles, was for him a question of scale. Even in an era of a booming world population human societies are far smaller than for example the billions of particles that a pen may contain; they can therefore be studied at a much greater depth and without having a view of the structural relationships between them that can so easily be formed when things are viewed zoomed out at a larger, more strategic scale. For Tarde there is an exact vocabulary and method for explaining how we associate within this continuous flow: ‘repetition’, ‘opposition’ and ‘adaptation’. Latour explains that these three ‘social laws’ are the ways of ‘*the persistence of being through difference*’.<sup>8</sup> That these moves occur at a micro scale and can only be detected through close looking and an embeddedness in the world has been the problem of scientists,

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5 See, ‘Border(ing) practices’, p. 172.

6 The ‘bifurcation of nature’ is Whitehead’s term (Alfred North Whitehead, *Concept of nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920)). Latour uses it frequently, see for example; Spinoza Lecture, GSD Harvard Lecture. David Ray Griffins and Donald W. Sherburne (eds.), *Process and reality: An essay in cosmology* (New York: Free Press, 1978); Bruno Latour, ‘Gabriel tarde and the end of the social’, in Patrick Joyce (ed.), *The social question: New bearings in history and the social sciences* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 117-132.

7 This description of reality as a continuous flow is something that has also influenced Deleuze and he has described it in detail in *The Fold* through the simple metaphor of a ‘line’. Influence on Deleuze of Tarde Taking Leibniz’s definition of a curve as the ‘trace of the same line’ and rereading it through contemporary science Deleuze describes it as an inflection, a line that is in continuous movement. This movement encapsulates the entirety of this way of conceptualising reality—in continual flux, the inflecting line being able to describe matter and relations from the molecular to the molar. The desire to describe everything from the organic to the inorganic and the mechanical to the machinic together is something that all these writers share.

8 Bruno Latour, *What is the style of matters of concern?* (Amsterdam: Spinoza Lectures, University of Amsterdam, 2005), p. 9.

social or otherwise. This movement through difference has ‘trajectories which define what they have been and what they might become if they manage to persist by exploring enough differences.’<sup>9</sup> These trajectories are the networks that Latour writes of, the qualities of repetition, opposition and adaptation that Tarde identified are also ways of describing self-organising network behaviour.

To conceptualise the whole of reality as a continuous flow, or an aggregation of societies or a network, acknowledges that everything is implicated and intertwined and for Latour the answer to the crisis of the political is to be able to assemble these heterogenous concerns. He prefers to use the word ‘collectivities’ rather than societies because for Latour this word is too embedded in the old way of doing things. A collective refers to a process rather than a pre-defined entity and is preferably used in the plural as there can never be just one collective. Latour writes: ‘By taking an interest in the collective, we are going back to square one in considering how to recruit an assembly, without continuing to worry about the ancient titles that sent some to sit in nature’s ranks and others on society’s benches.’<sup>10</sup> The collective brings together all of experience and is the prelude to a shift in attention, a lateral move away from politics in its current state of referring to ‘matters of fact’ towards ‘matters of concern’. These are another way of describing the passions and desires of what Latour prefers to call the ‘collective’. For him the entire debate hinges on the question of representation in all its senses, from the political representation of votes and voting, to the scientific representation of information, to representation as re-presentation.<sup>11</sup> Addressing representation from all three of these angles means dealing with the ‘who’, ‘what’ and ‘how’ of politics. The ‘what’ in particular is something that is found lacking, whilst people and their desires might be involved in the political, things seem to disappear. Thing or the German Ding, needs to be accounted for: ‘Thus, long before designating an object thrown out of the political sphere and standing there objectively and independently, the Ding or Thing has for many centuries meant the issue that brings people together because it divides them.’<sup>12</sup> The difference that Latour makes between a ‘thing’ and an ‘object’ is crucial here, whereas an object is a self-contained entity, detached from the world, a thing is highly contextualised, embedded in the chains of relations and associations that it is a part of; it is the attribute that makes things political. Plotting the

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9 Ibid., p. 17.

10 Bruno Latour, *The politics of nature: How to bring the science into democracy*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 59.

11 See, ‘Border(ing) practices, pp. 170.

12 Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), p. 23.

etymology of the word *demos* to the Indo-European root *da*—to divide, Latour states: *'Hence the people, the demos, are made up of those who share the same space and are divided by the same contradictory worries.'*<sup>13</sup> Beyond the *demos* an assembly needs to be created that can include all beings, each with its own reality and as Latour writes, *'the more realities there are, the more arguments there are. Matters of concern have replaced matters of fact.'*<sup>14</sup>

Both Dewey and Latour foreground difference as a locus from which the democratic process emerges, since 'matters of concern' are necessarily raised when the existing (political) system cannot address the issues at stake. Many of the concerns of the diaspora will necessarily be diverse and diverging from others, therefore defining a politics as starting with these concerns rather than ending at them is crucial. It guards against debates that set an already existing standard to which others must conform. The presence of diasporas can therefore also prompt debate and a questioning of easily held assumptions.

#### (b) ... around hospitality and friendship

Derrida's rethinking of the democratic relationship is based around the deconstruction of the binary opposition between the friend and enemy in Western philosophy. Beyond the Aristotelian idea of a friend being another self, Derrida tries to conceptualise a friendship with the wholly Other through interrogating the role of this distinction within the liberal tradition of democracy. He traces the roots of the modern concept of friendship to the Greek polis where it was conceived in three distinct ways: the virtuous friendship between two men, which was of the highest order; the political friendship, also only possible between two men; and the everyday friendship that could occur between anyone. Although the only type considered to have the ability to create a democratic milieu was the fraternal political friendship, Derrida shows the importance of friendship in all domains of life, not just the public domain favoured within the conception of the 'demos' from Plato onwards. For Derrida the importance of uncovering this lineage lies in its exclusions (of women, the domestic and heterogeneous friendship) and he tries to define a new politics based around another more inclusive definition.

Through not equating the outsider with the enemy, Derrida conceptualises a friendship that relies on alterity and difference rather than sameness and recognition. It is in this that his work becomes useful for a diasporic politics, and in particular for theorising the relations between the host and diasporic cultures. Beyond the close

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13 Ibid., pp. 22-26.

14 Bruno Latour, *The politics of nature: How to bring the science into democracy*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 63.

personal friendship described by Nietzsche, which benefits from proximity, Derrida writes of a different kind of friendship, one that is capable of producing community.<sup>15</sup> A 'teleiopoetic friendship' is a friendship that operates from afar and is conceived within the economy of the gift, offered voluntarily to the stranger it is an act that puts oneself at risk through the danger of hostility. It is also a type of friendship that relies on the possibility of offering 'hospitality' to the other and it is on this concept that Derrida bases his new concept of 'a democracy come'.

He starts with the observation that hospitality relies on power, a degree of ownership and autonomy is required in order to have a space to call your own and so to be in a position to offer it to another. It also requires the host to have some power over the guest to be able to limit their access, otherwise it is simply a case of entry by force. Thus the absolute hospitality that must be extended to all jeopardises itself by making vulnerable that place which is required in order to be hospitable: 'You are welcome as long as you learn our language, our customs, our habits.' As Derrida states: *'The perversion and pervertibility of this law (which is also a law of hospitality) is that one can become virtually xenophobic in order to protect or claim to protect one's own hospitality, the own home that makes possible one's own hospitality.'*<sup>16</sup>

A 'democracy to come' is therefore based on the distant 'teleopoetic friendship', which acknowledges these risks and is able to negotiate the laws of hospitality. Its phrasing indicates a promise to be acted upon yet which can never be fulfilled. The idea of risk mentioned above is also crucial to this new model of democracy, which allows it to negotiate the indeterminate nature of the public sphere. The consequence of leaving things open will necessarily result in an outcome that can go either way, but without it in the absence of a democratic struggle a space is left open for other more dangerous forms of identification. For example, the rise of ultra right wing parties across Europe can be seen as a direct result of the failure of governments to engage in a serious and sustained debate over issues important to their citizens. In the UK specifically, the BNP has gained ground in poorer areas where local government has failed to address the lack of affordable housing resulting in calls for the 'immigrants to go back home'. Thus Derrida's rethinking of the democratic paradigm is also an engagement with the question of the 'we' of democracy.

In direct contrast to the liberal idea of democracy and citizenship, which uses the notion of 'equality for all' to advocate homogeneity, Derrida includes the possibility of being both different and equal. The concept of

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15 Ruth Abbey, 'Circles, ladders and stars: Nietzsche on friendship', in Preston T. King and Heather Devere (eds.), *The challenge to friendship in modernity* (Ilford: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), pp. 50-73.

16 Jacques Derrida, *Of hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle invites Jacques Derrida to respond*, trans. by Rachel Bowlby (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 53.

a 'democracy to come' is able to embrace this apparent contradiction as a utopic ideal that can never be achieved. In this sense a 'democracy to come' does not set conditions or terms of identification, it is simply an engaging with the other, a promise. Derrida describes it as 'spectral' for this reason, for its unknowability and risk.

(c) ... around hegemony and agonism

In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*,<sup>17</sup> a book that had a profound impact on contemporary debates on democracy, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe reimagine the democratic ideal in the explicit desire of making it work across a number of diverse social spaces and cultural systems; the phrase, 'radical democracy' was first coined by them in this book. As the title suggests, their work is an engagement with the role of 'hegemony' or the formation of social consensus within a pluralistic democratic project. Just as a redefined post-colonial politics looks to go beyond identity to an engagement with subjectivity and difference, so Laclau and Mouffe have described a concept of democracy that can begin to accommodate multiple subjects. The prevalent view of democracy in the West is based on ideas of 'us and them', those who are included within the standard conception and practice of the public sphere and those who are excluded—the friend/enemy distinction. Inclusion within this privileged sphere is based on ideas of equality that decimate difference through an appeal to the universal subject. Whilst the public sphere homogenises, the private sphere is where differences are retained, but this private, domestic space of difference, as feminist critics have pointed out, can also become a space of repression and domination that through being kept separate is emptied of all politics. It is perhaps the acknowledgement and requirement of multiple political spaces, private and public, across which the subject is free to move that is most useful as it also allows for multiple subject positions.

Laclau and Mouffe combined the insights of post-structuralist theory with the work of the theorist who for them radicalised classical Marxist thought the furthest, Antonio Gramsci. First published in 1985, for many the book made a case for the socialist project beyond the traditional Marxist approach of defining class as the locus of all antagonism within society, to include diverse social struggles such as race and gender, as well as localised variants and combinations of these and others. They were able to imagine transversal links across these different positions through their definition of 'antagonism', which was based on the notion that a social group or a 'public' does not have a pre-existing identity but that each new configuration reorganises social relations. That these relations are in a continual process of evolution leads to a further

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 17 Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony & socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics* (London: Verso, 1985).



insight: when embryonic social relations are threatened the resulting forms of antagonism within society cannot easily be predicted. Thus the hegemonic struggle is also highly situated and embedded within a given socio-political context, and in order to make transversal links between diverse positionalities, it is important to foreground the role that antagonism plays within a democratic politics. Laclau and Mouffe write of a 'logic of equivalence' that does not look to simply unify diverse struggles but is an attempt to find common ground. A hegemonic struggle for them 'does not simply establish an "alliance" between given interests, but modifies the very identity of the forces engaging in that alliance.'<sup>18</sup> It affects those that take part in it, people's own subjectivity is transformed through being exposed to differing views, varied ways of thinking and doing; the democratic process thus become generative.

and is contingent upon the existence of difference and conflict within society rather than wishing it away. They describe the contradiction inherent in their concept of 'equivalence':

*Hence the ambiguity penetrating every relation of equivalence: two terms, to be equivalent, must be different—otherwise, there would be a simple identity. On the other hand, the equivalence exists only through the act of subverting the differential character of those terms. [...] the contingent subverts the necessary by preventing it from fully constituting itself.<sup>19</sup>*

It is the aporia that Derrida writes of and unlike the prevalent politics of liberal democracy and the 'third way' that take a consensual approach, Laclau and Mouffe acknowledge that antagonism can never be fully eradicated from society. Their concept of 'radical democracy' is a taming and a putting to work of this antagonism as 'agonism'. Mouffe states: 'While antagonism is a we/they relation in which the two sides are enemies who do not share any common ground, agonism is a we/they relation where the conflicting parties recognise the legitimacy of their opponents, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict.'<sup>20</sup>

The idea of total consensus is therefore untenable, in fact it can only ever be parodied in a totalitarian society. In a democratic society, the centre is left empty as there is no transcendental power. This vacant space at the heart of society allows for hegemonic alliances to be made and can become the breathing space for a well-functioning democracy. The temporary meeting of disparate groups in this space

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18 Ibid., p. 184.

19 Ibid., p. 128.

20 Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), p. 805.

creates relationships and associations for a common cause and in so doing affects both parties. It is the temporary and contingent nature of these alliances that is of importance, it means that there is no final democratic solution but instead a continual process of conflict and negotiation in the form of ‘agonism’. It is also important to assert, as Massey does, that this space is made up of concrete social relations and is not an abstract space. It is the lived space of everyday practices and politics, overlaid by varied power geometries that are the consequences of intersecting power/knowledge relations.<sup>21</sup> If the alliances made in this space become permanent and entrenched, they can lead to totalitarian forms of power.

This relational model of democracy that works with the logic of ‘equivalence’ rather than equality is highly useful for a diasporic politics. The condition of the migrant is such that frictions around social, cultural and religious issues, to name only a few, are inevitable. Sometimes these occur around differences in opinion, other times they are the result of misunderstandings of cultural and social codes. These frictions require a space in which they can be discussed without the pressure of a final consensus. In this, the traditional African *palaver* is an interesting model where the object of the discussions is not to impose a certain point of view on people who would not normally share it, but instead it is the providing of a space where everyone’s opinion can be heard and a position constructed that has been contributed to by all.<sup>22</sup> The definition of the word ‘palaver’ is given variously as, ‘talk intended to cajole, flatter, or wheedle; unnecessary, profuse, or idle talk; chatter’ or ‘*a talk, a discussion, a dialogue; (spec. in early use) a conference between African tribespeople and traders or travellers.*’<sup>23</sup> This word although originating in traditional West African practices is steeped in the unequal power dynamics of the colonial encounter. As Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi writes of the palaver, in comparison to European norms perhaps it seemed unnecessarily protracted and the value of time spent not fully appreciated but even so the ‘*palaver emerges as critical discourse—serious as well as trifling, logical and rambling, orderly and haphazard, written and spoken, a celebration of the contradictions of*

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21 Doreen Massey, *For space* (London: Sage, 2005), pp. 165-166.

22 For more on the Palaver (tree) see, Elizabeth Edwards ‘A Palaver at Tutuila Samoa, 1883. Two Photographs by Captain William A.D. Acland’ in, Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), pp. 48-53.. See also, Doina Petrescu, ‘Life Matters Making Place’ in, Katie Lloyd Thomas (ed.), *Material matters: Architecture and material practice* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 225-236.

23 The Oxford English Dictionary (2008).

*life with the principled use of word power for communal good.*<sup>24</sup> At its best, then, the palaver can be all these things but it does not always work this way; if dictated from above, rather than below through self-organising mechanisms, it loses its power. There is therefore no given time or frequency to this event rather it happens as and when needed, mobilised by the collective passions of the people. Traditionally there is a given space for it in every village, a certain tree is known to be the 'palaver tree' under which to gather when the time comes. The tree is thus a sign and a spatial organiser, the presence of a group gathering underneath it could provoke a meeting.<sup>25</sup>

Collective passions are at stake in the palaver, its indeterminate nature meaning that the system can respond to the desires of the group rather than waiting for the political system to reach its cycle for change. To be able to exercise and follow these desires is what Appadurai has called, 'the right to participate in the work of the imagination'.<sup>26</sup> And this is exactly what is missing in the politics of today, where the passions or desires of people do not seem to be engaged and where each political choices seems more or less identical to each other. Mouffe writes of the dangers of such a situation that we are living in the present, especially in the West:

*I have argued that, once passions cannot be mobilised by democratic parties because they privilege a 'consensus at the centre', those passions tend to find other outlets, in diverse fundamentalist movements, around particularistic demands or non-negotiable moral issues.*<sup>27</sup>

The importance of providing a space in which diasporic politics can be played out is reiterated.

## Diasporic (counter) communities and 'common' spaces

To assemble the types of collectivities described and for the democratic process to occur, particular types of spaces are required that can be hospitable enough, can allow for conflict whilst hosting diverse assemblies. It could be argued that one such space is 'public space', but

24 Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi, *Africa wo/man palava: The nigerian novel by women* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 98.

25 In some ways the Shaheed Minar discussed in 'Border(ing) Practices' functions as a contemporary palaver tree; pp. 173-179.

26 Arjun Appadurai, Arjen Mulder (Interview), 'The Right to Participate in the Work of the Imagination' in, Arjen Mulder, Laura Martz and Joke Brouwer (eds.), *Transurbanism* (Rotterdam: V2\_Publishing/NAI Publishers, 2002), pp. 33-47.

27 Chantal Mouffe, 'Some reflections on an agonistic approach to the public', in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy* (Karlsruhe / Cambridge MA: ZKM / MIT Press, 2005), pp. 804-807.

this phrase which has always been highly contested has become more so in recent times. It is romanticised by architects who refer to Italian piazzas as the epitome of urban open space, able to welcome all and being equal for all. In reality the nature of public space is such that it has inherent exclusions, in order to include some, others have to be excluded. Countless examples of the homeless and the deviant being removed from public space bear testament to this, whether it is the ‘cleaning-up’ of New York under mayor Rudy Giuliani or the more recent campaign against street vendors preceding the Beijing Olympics. Of all types of space, it is public space that is the most contested since it has so many opposing claims to it. Frequently it is the claims of those who are powerful that are the most dominant, manifesting themselves in the regulation of space through laws, rules and exclusions, or simply through an underlying expectation of social behaviour. Traditional notions of what a public space may be are also under stress within the neo-liberal city, where space is increasingly commoditised and less available to inhabit without commerce. Therefore in order to conceive of an inclusive and collective space that can accommodate diasporic inhabitations, the notion of public space itself has to be questioned and another type of space imagined.

#### (a) Agamben’s ‘community to come’

One of the main ways in which contemporary theory describes public space is as a utopian ideal that should be sought but may never be achieved. Doreen Massey sees it as, ‘...a continually receding horizon of the open-minded-space-to-come, which will not ever be reached but must constantly be worked towards.’<sup>28</sup> This conceptualisation of public space derives from a very particular definition of ‘community’, also imagined as an impossible construct that must always be worked towards; a reaction to earlier more essentialised versions of community that were characterised by their homogeneity and ability to engender boundaries and exclusions. One of the most influential versions of this within post-colonial theory was Benedict Anderson’s book, *Imagined Communities*.<sup>29</sup> His definition of community was reliant on the nation-state as a cohesive entity that provides the social ‘glue’ holding together disparate people. Since it was first published in 1983, there has been a wide acknowledgement that although Anderson’s concept was useful for providing a framework for thinking community beyond a Eurocentric point of view, it was also deeply embedded in its historical context. The nation as a construct was able to provide a shared cultural and political history for its subjects, especially within the context of the anti-colonial struggles to which Anderson referred to extensively,

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28 Doreen Massey, *For space* (London: Sage, 2005).

29 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities* (London: Verso, 1983).

but he failed to grasp the exclusionary character of this myth of a projected national unity. Countless examples of those not included within the dominant nationalistic struggles for independence have been referred to by post-colonial theorists, for example the non-inclusion of the indigenous peoples of the Indian Subcontinent within either the conception of 'Mother India' or the 'Islamic state of Pakistan'.<sup>30</sup> Feminist theory was also highly important in showing the inadequacy of using the nation-state as a basis from which to build community, especially the work of 'transnational feminists', such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Caren Kaplan and Ella Shohat, whose work unpicked the relationships between the nationalisms borne of the colonial legacy, gender, race and economic exploitation, and how these were affected by global capitalist structures.<sup>31</sup> The contemporary reality of increased migration and the particular context of diasporic politics within Europe that I am interested in, add to the need for a revised thinking on community. French philosophy has offered several alternative conceptualisations such as the 'inoperative community', the 'community to come' or the 'unavowable community'.<sup>32</sup> These more recent ideas begin to describe community beyond essentialist identities, whether these are based around nations, genders, or race, preferring instead to start from a wider political and ethical perspective. Giorgio Agamben for example describes a politics based on what he calls a 'whatever singularity'. This type of community does not take as its basis the condition of belonging, or the mere absence of it as in Blanchot's conception of the 'unavowable community', instead it is a way of redefining belonging itself. In this sense, Agamben's project tries to go beyond the identity/difference dialectic. The word 'whatever' in its common usage signifies a certain indifference, 'being, it does not matter which', but the Latin root of it as Agamben points out has almost an opposite meaning: '*being such that it always matters*'.<sup>33</sup> In this seemingly simple move singularity is replaced by a 'whatever being' and the question of affect is foregrounded; public space becomes a space that is built around differing and opposing

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30 For more on this see, 'Diasporic subjectivity', pp. 78-81.

31 See, Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcón, and Minoq Moallem (eds.), *Between Woman and Nation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Ella Shohat, 'Notes on the "post-colonial"', *Social Text*, 1992-01-01: 99-113; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/466220>; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism without borders: A decolonising theory, practicing solidarity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

32 These are the concepts of Nancy, Agamben and Blanchot respectively, see; Jean-Luc Nancy, *The inoperative community*, trans. by Peter Connor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); Giorgio Agamben, *The coming community*, trans. by Brian Massumi Sandra Buckley et al. , (ed.) (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Maurice Blanchot, *The unavowable community*, trans. by Pierre Joris (Barrytown, NY: Station Hill Press, 2006).

33 Giorgio Agamben, *The coming community*, trans. by Brian Massumi Sandra Buckley et al. , (ed.) (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 1.

desires and at its utopian best it is a space that can accept people for who they are and not because of it—it is public space as ideal hosting a ‘community to come’.

### (b) Inoperative communities and agonistic spaces

Jean-Luc Nancy’s concept of the ‘inoperative community’ has been particularly influential in art theory; his deconstruction of the immanent community of Western philosophy being used to comment on community art practices and public art. Miwon Kwon for example critiqued the assumption of an already existing audience or community for which the community artist sees him/herself as working. Community in these instances has to be ‘unworked’ so that the assumptions of commissioning bodies, the artist’s or even those of the ‘community’ itself can be overcome and a new ‘provisional’ or ‘invented’ community can be brought together around the particular circumstances and conditions of a given situation or art project. Kwon writes: *‘Reckoning with the impossibility of community, and consequently re-defining community-based art as collective artistic praxis [...] may be the only way to imagine past the burden of affirmational siting of community to its critical unsiting.’*<sup>34</sup> Acknowledging that a community or an audience is never already existing means also to acknowledge the inevitability of conflict when a collective is brought together, whether this is around a political demand, an art project or the question of who is included within a ‘public’ space. Certain urban projects have tackled these issues, for example the Ecobox project by atelier d’architecture autogérée (aaa) recognises that conflict will occur in a collective project and so devises strategies to deal with it. The project at first sight looks like a simple gardening surface made of palettes able to temporarily occupy an urban site, but a closer look shows it also to be an appropriation of precious inner city space by marginalised people from low income and mostly migrant groups. What seems like a cheap and efficient way to make a garden on a concrete surface is also a subtle way of making in-between spaces that are shared and have to be negotiated. In a review of the project, Ruth Morrow writes: *‘In framing a plot, communal space is simultaneously created. The aaa sees this as a physical manifestation of the democratic functioning of Ecobox, but it is also a subtle design response to the fact that personal gain often provides the only motivation for collective involvement.’*<sup>35</sup>

Doina Petrescu and Constantin Petcou of aaa describe the project in terms of its ability to not only create space but to alter subjectivities. Over time people who were there only to garden took charge of

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34 Miwon Kwon, *One place after another: Site-specific art and locational identity* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), p. 155.

35 Ruth Morrow, ‘Ecobox. Mobile device and urban tactics’, *Domus*, 908 (Nov 2008): 50-53.

the space, even petitioning the local government for another plot of land when the garden was evicted from its original site. The invented community of the garden made itself visible and found a collective voice at this crucial moment. But with so many different people wanting to use the space conflict is also unavoidable and a way of regulating access to the garden became crucial; from the outset aaa knew that the garden was not an open-to-all utopian public space but instead a 'collective space' created through its users continual investment of time and energy: *'We've come to understand, together with the users of these spaces, that the freedom of each person to act in a mutual space is conditioned by the necessity to not hinder someone else's freedom nor that of the project as a whole.'*<sup>36</sup> Access to the garden was therefore regulated through providing keys to those people who proved themselves to be committed to the project and willing to take responsibility for it.<sup>37</sup>

The Ecobox garden is an example of what Mouffe terms an 'agonistic public space', which is a space that allows diverse desires to exist side-by-side through acknowledging the inherent conflict within the social and political realms. Mouffe states: *'According to the agonistic approach, public spaces are always plural and the agonistic confrontation takes place in a multiplicity of discursive surfaces.'*<sup>38</sup> This model acknowledges that any consensual notion of public space will always be one that is based on the dominant ideals, a space for those with power. What urban practices such as those of aaa achieve is to construct counter-hegemonic spaces that can break the consensus of a commodified capitalist space, a role which Mouffe also attributes to the activist and critical art practices.<sup>39</sup> She also insists upon the need for these struggles to occur at different levels with transversal links being made between them. Thus the more traditional forms of institutional politics such as political parties and trade unions are also given a place in her project of bringing politics back to society. The Ecobox project was capable of moving between these different strata, engaging with the city council as described above, the rail company (SNCF) that owned the original site of the garden, various academic institutions, local residents, activists, students and children.

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36 AAA (ed.), *Urban/ACT* (Paris: AAA/Peprav, 2007), p. 321.

37 For further discussion on Ecobox, 'A contemporary politics of mapping', pp. 216-218.

38 Chantal Mouffe, 'Artistic activism and agonistic spaces', *Art & Research*, 1(2)(Summer 2007): 3.

39 Mouffe has cited the 'Reclaim the streets' campaign and the Yes Men amongst other examples of critical art practices. See; *Ibid.*

## (c) 'Counter-space' for 'counter-publics'

Diaspora politics by its very nature occurs at the margin, on the outside of what is considered the centre. A diasporic public can in this sense be conceptualised as a form of 'counter-public' in the way that Michael Warner has defined it.<sup>40</sup> Of course, within each diasporic community there is also a centre and the margins that it excludes. Warner has written of the contradiction that is at the heart of the very idea of the 'public': although a public only ever convenes itself at the point of address, bringing together strangers around a shared idea, the acclamation that constructs the public presupposes its existence. In their open address to strangers publics put themselves at risk; this idea of risking one's own place in order to invite others is similar to Derrida's way of conceptualising hospitality as a basis for the democratic relationship, but Warner's conceptualisation also foregrounds the performative:

*Public discourse, in other words, is poetic. By this I mean not just that a public is self-organising, a kind of entity created by its own discourse, or even that this space of circulation is taken to be a social entity. Rather, I mean that all discourse or performance addressed to a public must characterise the world in which it attempts to circulate, projecting for that world a concrete and liveable shape, and attempting to realise that world through address.*<sup>41</sup>

Here politics is taken beyond the merely discursive; performativity, the bodily and affect all become a part of the creation of publics. In this sense, 'counter-publics' are important for a diasporic politics where the post-colonial legacy has meant that there has been an over emphasis on domination, losing in some cases, any means of expressing agency. Counter-publics are defined positively by Warner, having their own modes of address and behaviour, they may act in opposition to the dominant forms but are not dictated by them. Whilst counter-publics can never take their space for granted, this uncertainty also gives them their transformative character, creating other meanings and ways of being. Warner's counter-publics have primarily been conceptualised through his reading of queer politics—the gay scene being the archetypal modern counter-scene, using media, parades, carnival and other forms of performative public address to construct a positive space despite dominant prejudice and repression. Warner remarks: '*Counterpublics are spaces of circulation in which it is hoped that the poesis of scene*

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40 See also, 'Diasporic territories', p. 189.

41 Michael Warner, 'Publics and counterpublics', *Public Culture*, 14 (1)(2002): 81.



*making will be transformative, not replicative merely.*<sup>42</sup> Diasporic politics can learn from such a stance, embracing transformativity as a form of agency rather than falling into known ways.

Counter-publics occupy space differently from dominant groups; without the acknowledgement and support of the majority, or sometimes even open hostility, there is a need for space that is hidden from view. In the gay scene for example, public spaces such as parks become places to meet at night-time only, often gay bars although ostensibly open to all, are semi-public spaces to be frequented only by those in the know, and the semi-private interiors of cars or public toilets take on their own uses. This tension between the need for privacy and the desire or necessity to be public has been written on extensively in queer politics and is also true of other counter-publics. It produces particular types of space, many of which are temporary or temporal in nature; they come alive through occupation, challenging the prevalent use or status of private land. Counter-spaces are therefore also a response to the delegitimisation of certain claims to the city's spaces—the claims of the less powerful, the dominated who are most often also the poor. Can and Deniz Altay have written about and analysed such spaces in Turkey, mainly Istanbul. They use the example of the informal occupation of liminal spaces in the city by young people; in-between buildings, streets and public spaces 'Mini-Bar' occurs, both a practice and a type of space. Used by young people to hang-out and drink, they take on an oppositional character. The papermen of Istanbul are another example of people acting against the dominant economic and spatial power; they look through rubbish bins, taking out any paper that can be recycled and selling it on. Although the papermen have nothing to do with the city authorities, their work seems to complement theirs, increasing the recycling rates. The papermen are thus tolerated, unlike their informal working compatriots in urban space: street vendors.<sup>43</sup> They are demonised by the authorities as tax-evading and unemployed and have to develop clever tactics to avoid being caught by inspectors. In all these examples 'counter-space' is created through a subversive use of space, materials or the subversion of a given system. At the same time these tactics allow space to be appropriated, if only for a short while, before being compelled to move on.

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42 Ibid., p. 88.

43 Many papermen are Kurdish and while their work is tolerated their language and culture is not. In the article, a vignette of a conversation between a paperman and a friend of the writers reveals the hidden oppression, the paperman is startled to be addressed in Kurdish and at first responds warily before opening up in a way that he was unable to with those who addressed him in Turkish. Emanuele Guidi (ed.), *Urban makers: Parallel narratives of grassroots practices and tensions* (Berlin: b\_books, 2008).

## (d) The 'commons' and 'commonality'

The concept of the 'commons' is becoming an important contemporary point of discussion in reimagining our society. The commons refers to that which we share, air, water, forests... what belongs to no-one but is the responsibility of all. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt have, through a series of texts, set out the agenda for an alternative to capitalist society that is based around the idea of the commons.<sup>44</sup> They distinguish between two forms of common: 'ecological common' or the earth's resources and 'social and economic common', which are the products of human creativity and labour. The commons for them stands in opposition to a capitalist system of value based on economic exchange: *'the common in both domains confounds the traditional measures of economic value and imposes instead the value of life as the only valid scale of evaluation.'*<sup>45</sup> For ecological common this is an obvious statement, what economic price to put on the biosphere? For social and economic common insisting on the value of life is related to the observation that the modes of production in contemporary society have changed from the material labour of industrial society towards an immaterial labour. This type of labour includes affects, ideas, knowledges, languages etc. and since many of the occupations involved in producing it are those who have precarious working conditions and non-guaranteed forms of labour such as shift work, or modes of work that break down the strict distinctions between work time and non-work time, this type of work is intimately related to social relations and forms of life. For Hardt and Negri this is the link between the two types of common that they define as biopolitical, both are dealing with the production and reproduction of forms of life. They write:

*Whereas the traditional notion poses the common as a natural world outside of society, the biopolitical conception of the common permeates equally all spheres of life referring not only to the earth, the air, the elements, or even plants and animal life but also to the constitutive elements of human society, such as common languages, habits, gestures, affects, codes, and so forth.*<sup>46</sup>

The commons by its very nature exceeds notions of private property since, for example, knowledge and languages stagnate if kept private; they need to be used in order to flourish. Whilst it is true that some populations suffer the effects of climate change much more

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 44 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000); Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and democracy in the age of empire* (London: Penguin Press, 2004); Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Common wealth* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009).

45 Michael Hardt, 'The politics of the common', (ZNet, 2009): <http://www.zcommunications.org/politics-of-the-common-by-michael-hardt>.

46 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Common wealth* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009), p. 171.

devastatingly than others, a damaged planet will in the end affect us all. For Hardt and Negri, this is the contradiction that is emerging at the heart of the capitalist project today, *'between the need for the common in the interest of productivity and the need for the private in the interest of capitalist accumulation.'*<sup>47</sup>

The discussion on commons allows a way of thinking the management of the earth and human resources in ways other than that of capital and beyond economic value. For diasporic communities it also moves beyond identity but without denying the value of identity politics in certain circumstances. For Hardt and Negri in order to establish a commons, it may be necessary to go through identity politics but it is not necessary to end there; *'whereas emancipation strives for the freedom of identity, the freedom to be who you really are, liberation aims at the freedom of self-determination and self-transformation, the freedom to determine what you can become.'*<sup>48</sup> This could start with a territorialisation of identity, an affirmation of it, but it requires a subsequent deterritorialisation, and it is in this movement of deterritorialisation that the commons can be established.<sup>49</sup> This could be through a sharing of what is common, as in the old English meaning of the term to denote bits of land that were a common resource for all, or it could be through establishing affinities and networks of solidarity with others based around 'common' interests and issues.<sup>50</sup>

Hardt and Negri's conceptualisation of the 'common' is based on the foregrounding of affective labour, which they identify as one of three types of immaterial labour that *'involves the production and manipulation of affects and requires (virtual or actual) human contact and proximity.'*<sup>51</sup> Whilst affect is often conflated with emotion, it is a more radical concept, affect denotes a particular strand in philosophy that addresses the potential of bodies to react and relate to each other and to their context. Deleuze defines affect as not just related to the subject but as independent of it, affect is the alteration of our capacity to act, which can occur through engaging with an artwork, in a conversation etc. Unlike a feeling that acts in relation to something that is already experienced, an affect occurs in relation to another body. It therefore

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47 Michael Hardt, 'The politics of the common', (ZNet, 2009): <http://www.zcommunications.org/politics-of-the-common-by-michael-hardt>.

48 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Common wealth* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009), pp. 331-332.

49 Ibid.

50 For a detailed discussion on the English commons see, Céline Condorelli, 'Life always escapes', *e-flux*, 10(2009): <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/92>.

51 Michael Hardt, 'Affective labour', *Boundary 2*, 2 (26)(1999): 89-100; <http://caringlabor.wordpress.com/2010/07/27/hardt-michael-affective-labor/>

has potentiality; the capacity to subjectivate. Whilst machines may have a series of pre-determined responses, bodies are not pre-programmed. Affect therefore moves away from deterministic models of agency to an understanding of how subjectivities emerge in relation; what Guattari called 'collective subjectivities'.

Affect entails that there is a different language to bodies, one that cannot be expressed in words. Massumi writes: *'For affect is synesthetic, implying a participation of the senses in each other: the measure of a living thing's potential interactions is its ability to transform the effects of one sensory mode into those of another.'*<sup>52</sup> The response or agency of bodies is therefore not predetermined but unfolds in time, relationally. Time is considered not as the time taken for an event to happen, but the delay between receiving an affect and the reception of it, or reaction to it. Here affect is a way of thinking dynamically about not just bodies in space but space unfolding around bodies through their relations and encounters of speed and slowness. It is a way of thinking diasporic politics as more generalised and concerning us all.

## Affinity politics in the diaspora

The various theories addressed in this chapter attempt to bring together a public or a community through identifying common concerns. For Dewey and Latour a public is assembled around issues that are not addressed in the current system, and in the process of finding this common ground with others a democratic process is initiated. Certain spaces are more open to such processes than others; rather than the spaces associated with party politics, it is everyday spaces such as the 'palaver tree' that through being part of daily lives are able to function in this way. Other spaces work through subverting the dominant order, creating a place for transgression and subversion; these are usually transitory spaces that are actively created through performative modes of address. For the diaspora such spaces could be important at certain moments when there is a need to claim a position in public, for example the intermittent protests by Kurdish groups on the high street are a way of claiming a space and with it of expressing a right.

The question of politics is also intimately related to that of community, which in the line of thinking I have followed is conceptualised as a utopic ideal but one that must always be worked towards. In this 'working towards' conflict is foregrounded and through opening up to others and to difference, it becomes transformative. For diasporic communities that are often more in thrall to tradition than their counterparts in the 'home' country, this ability of conflict to create

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52 Brian Massumi, *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 35.

difference through exposing oneself to difference is key. Here hospitality plays an important role, of opening up to others and letting them in. It is also an important concept for diasporic communities who not only rely on a certain hospitality towards them, but themselves function on a politics based on it. In certain non-Western cultures hospitality, or the welcoming of strangers and travellers is deeply embedded in social tradition.

Affectivity is a way of thinking transversal relations through foregrounding the role of labour and bodies and affinity is a specifically feminist and queer appropriation of this affective logic. It is one type of affect whose relations are based on the politics of empathy with others, of an accountability to them and a recognition of our various complicities.<sup>53</sup> Affinity politics and the defending of the commons provide a way for diaspora politics to make transversal alliances that could begin with identity but not end there. It is a way of imagining diasporic politics 'within and across' a number of diverse practices, a way in which the generalised condition of being without an originary home(land) can be mobilised for wider challenges related to our living together, to ecology and to life...<sup>54</sup>

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53 See for example, Donna Jeanne Haraway, *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Chela Sandoval, 'New sciences: Cyborg feminism and the methodology of the oppressed', in Chris Hables Gray (ed.), (New York: Routledge, 1995); affinity politics as 'the value of coalition' in, Linda Garber, *Identity poetics: Race, class, and the lesbian-feminist roots of queer theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

54 The phrase 'within and across' is taken from the title of a recent book that 'brings together a series of reflections and practices around issues of local and trans-local cultural production within different contexts in Europe ... is an attempt to create transversal links and connections within and across different local framings'. Doina Petrescu, Constantin Petcou and Nishat Awan (eds.), *Trans-local-act: Cultural practices within and across* (Paris: aaa/peprav, 2011).



## 2.0 Agencies

## Diasporic spatio-temporalities

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rhythmic spaces of everyday life, *Lefebvre* .....  
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the welcoming space of chora, *Derrida, Grosz* .....  
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*a space that receives, that welcomes* .....

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*Diasporic subjectivities and the production of desire* .....

## Diasporic politics

### Assembling publics and collectivities...

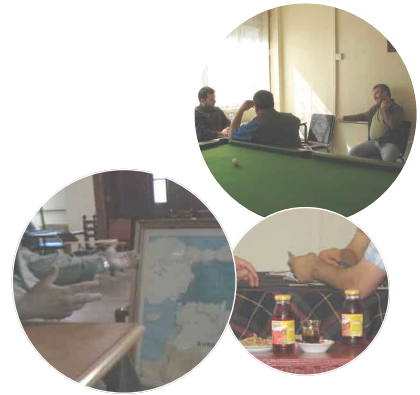
...around issues and things, *Dewey, Latour* .....  
 ...around hospitality and friendship, *Derrida* .....  
 ...around hegemony and agonism, *Laclau, Mouffe* .....

### Diasporic (counter) communities and 'common' spaces

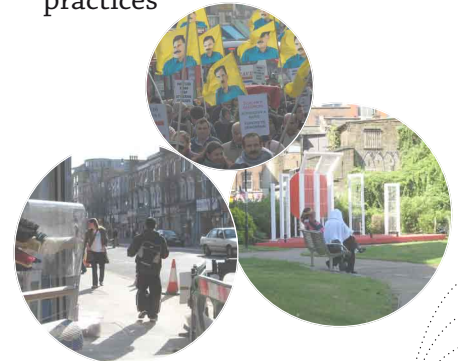
'community to come', *Agamben* .....  
 inoperative communities and agonistic spaces, *Nancy, Mouffe* .....  
 'counter-space' for 'counter-publics', *Foucault, Warner* .....  
 the 'commons' and 'commonality', *Hardt, Negri, Massumi* .....

*Affinity politics in the diaspora* .....

## Trans-localities / places



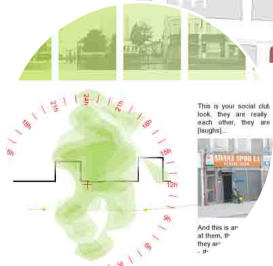
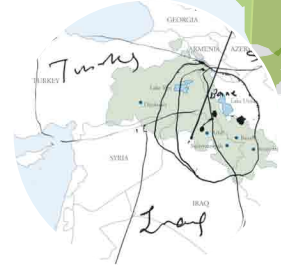
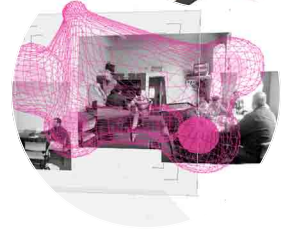
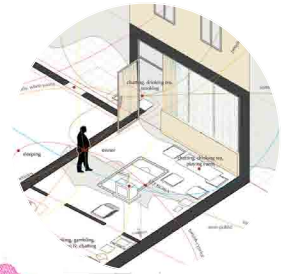
## Border(ing) practices



## Diasporic territories

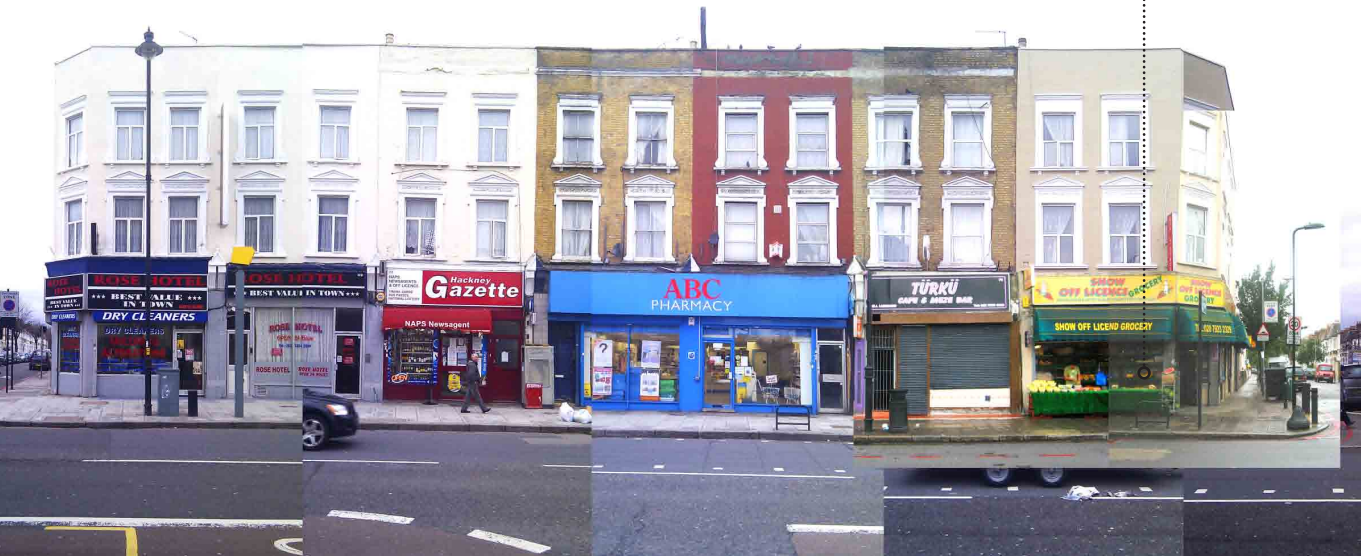


# 'MAPPING OTHERWISE'





A newsagents run by Kurds who are actively involved in the cultural centre next door





Anatolian Cultural Centre where Kurdish activist is based





Pazarick Spor Lokali





Azizye Masjiid  
An important hub for the local community,  
both Turkish and Kurdish





Yusuf's Place



## Agencies and an embodied spatial practice

Whilst the previous section presented theoretical concepts that were appropriated and adapted for the diasporic condition, this section takes a different approach. Here I start with practice and move towards theory, developing a way of thinking and producing in-between the two. One of the main concerns of this section is to understand the specificities of the spatial inhabitations of those in the diaspora; how do they differ from those understood as settled within the current urban approach? In the previous section, I identified displacement and reterritorialisations as the modalities for a diasporic knowledge politics and here again the displacement of the diasporic subject itself, its constitution in movement, becomes a metonym for a way of working.

A certain strand of contemporary discourse in architecture is re-appropriating the term ‘agency’ to speak of spatial processes that are directed by the users and inhabitants of space rather than by external forces.<sup>1</sup> In a forthcoming book dealing with the subject, the authors define ‘spatial agents’ as *‘neither impotent nor all powerful: they are negotiators of existing conditions in order to partially reform them.’*<sup>2</sup> Whilst this comment is made primarily on the role of architects as spatial agents, it could equally be true of the other inhabitants of space who transform it in some way, act in it in another way. Anthony Giddens defines agency as *‘the capability of acting otherwise’*,<sup>3</sup> a definition that opens up the possibility of spatial agency to all those who act in it. To act with agency is to have a degree of power, to be able to articulate and legitimise certain ways of inhabiting space. Doina Petrescu and Teresa Hoskyns develop a related feminist concept of *‘taking place’*, defined as a spatial politics that attends to difference.<sup>4</sup> They write of participation in the processes of architecture and urbanism as no longer aiming *“to be ‘included’ or ‘represented’ but to participate directly from a differential position.”* This way of thinking agencies is useful for my

1 For example, a research group at School of Architecture, University of Sheffield, that I have also been a part of and collaborated with is called, ‘Agency’ and deals with the issue of ‘transformative research into architectural practice and research’; they have also organised a recent conference entitled, Agency (2008). A recent issue of the journal *Footprint*, ‘Agency in Architecture: Reframing Criticality in Theory and Practice’ was arranged around this concept: *Footprint* 4 (Spring 2009); a forthcoming book on alternative architectural praxis is entitled *Spatial Agency* that collates a number of examples where the role of the architect is conceived as an agent acting with, and on behalf of, others. Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider and Jeremy Till, *Spatial agency: Other ways of doing architecture* (London: Routledge, 2011).

2 *Ibid.*, p. 30.

3 Anthony Giddens, *Social theory and modern sociology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), p. 216.

4 This concept could be considered a spatial appropriation of Giorgio Agamben’s writing. See, ‘Taking Place’ in, Giorgio Agamben, *The coming community*, trans. by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), pp. 13-16.



topic of diasporas as it sees difference as “a tool for ‘taking’”<sup>5</sup> and it connects directly to the spatial and to power relations in space. In order to speak of diasporic agencies in this vein as the ‘taking of place’, I here turn to my own research into how place is ‘taken’ and inhabited by those I encountered.

## An embodied spatial practice

The term ‘critical spatial practice’ is currently in use by a number of practitioners and theorists to describe a certain way of working that is more speculative and transformative, that takes the social as its subject matter, its ground and milieu.<sup>6</sup> It denotes a broadening of the scope of architecture and urbanism beyond building and a planning approach to other types of spatial practice, including interventions, mappings, films, activism... In particular it questions the methodologies of architecture and of research as problem-solving, towards a more open-ended approach that privileges the productive relationship between theory and practice. Here I have adapted the term to ‘embodied spatial practice’, in order to foreground the body as an important affective register, linking questions of subjectivity to space. In his book, *Parables for the Virtual*,<sup>7</sup> Brian Massumi takes an example from Michel Serres, a ball in a football game, and uses it (amongst other things) to theorise the relationship between bodies and space.<sup>8</sup> The ball moving around the field arranges the players in space: ‘*The ball is the subject of the play. ... The player is the object of the ball.*’ In the kicking of the ball, ‘*human physicality transduces into the insubstantiality of an event, releasing a potential that reorganises the entire field of potential movement.*’<sup>9</sup> This way of thinking the relationships between the ball, the players and the field conceptualises reality in flux, a field of potentialities. ‘*The player’s subjectivity is disconnected as he enters the field of potential in and as sensation. ... Sensation is the mode in which potential is present in the perceiving body.*’<sup>10</sup>

5 Doina Petrescu (ed.), *Altering practices: Feminist politics and poetics of space* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 23.

6 See, ‘Criticism as Critical Spatial Practice’ in, Jane Rendell, *Art and architecture: A place between* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), pp. 192-194; Research Architecture group at Goldsmiths University, London (<http://roundtable.kein.org/mission>); reading group based at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (<http://criticalspatialpractice.blogspot.com/>).

7 Brian Massumi, *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

8 Serres refers to the ball as a ‘quasi-object’ and both him and Bruno Latour use this concept to explore the relations between the subject and the object. More on ‘quasi-objects’ and ‘quasi-subjects’ in ‘Border(ing) Practices’, p. 172.

9 *Ibid.*, pp. 73, 74.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 75.

Perhaps the phrase should read, sensitive spatial practice... in any case, it is the affective body and its sensations that allow us to access the field of potentiality, not the mind alone. The spatial practices I refer to in this section therefore try to capture this quality of the body as transducer, converting physicality into 'events' or the modification of spatio-temporalities. An 'embodied research' within the practice of diasporic urbanism would therefore acknowledge and emphasise this role that the body plays and would also try to foreground its role in the 'direct participation' and the 'taking of place' that Petrescu and Hoskyns describe as spatial agency. I have translated this in my own research through, for example, going for walks with people in order to explore their spatial inhabitations as a negotiation between us, paying attention to the gestural, certain rituals such as the pouring of tea or seed-eating in the kahve are identified as ways that those in the margins 'take place'.

### Agencies of mapping

In bringing the body to the practice of diasporic urbanism, the question of representation is expanded to include the displacements and reterritorialisations that are the product of diasporic inhabitations of space. How to capture these particularised ways in which diasporic bodies function, their relational nature? In recent years, mapping has emerged as an important representational practice, referred to in the adjective to denote a process over a finished product; these mapping practices developed recently acknowledge the dynamic nature of the world in which we live and the critical changes that cities are undergoing. They attempt to deal with such complexities through showing the same situation or space from many different perspectives and mapping those aspects not previously thought important. *'It is the conceptual glue linking the tangible world of buildings, cities and landscapes with the intangible world of social networks and electronic communications.'*<sup>11</sup> It is in this sense described by Abrams and Hall that I am using mapping as a research tool, and researching it as a potential tool for diasporic urbanism. In this newly emerging practice of mapping, there is a different focus from traditional cartographic practices; rather than re-presenting an already 'known' situation, contemporary maps are taking on new agencies, they are more propositional in nature, imagine other possibilities and play mediatory roles.<sup>12</sup>

.....  
 11 Janet Abrams and Peter Hall (eds.), *Else/where: Mapping new cartographies of networks and territories* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Design Institute, 2006), p. 12.

12 For a full discussion on this see, 'A contemporary politics of mapping', pp. 204-209.

In my own mapping practice I develop ‘diasporic diagrams’, which apply these new agencies of mapping to my research questions. Here I have tried to practice some of what I write about, and since these maps are functioning within a new domain they are experimental in nature. Through using mapping as research methodology I have explored what an urbanism that privileges representation over the built object could consist of. What would be the essential elements of such a practice where buildings, streets and development are not of primary importance, where the constitution of diasporic subjectivity as always becoming is translated into the way in which we conceive cities, beyond essentialised notions of property and land ownership? As will emerge over the course of the rest of the thesis, in this new type of urbanism that foregrounds the question of agency, trans-localities, networks, bodily gestures and postures, borders and territories, emerge as the primary elements. In trying to map beyond the solely physical, I have used techniques that are not associated with traditional cartography and in keeping with the lessons learnt from feminist theory, I have tried to make situated maps that are embodied and performed.<sup>13</sup> Practices such as walking, speaking, drawing have been used, sometimes alone and sometimes together to try to articulate beyond the dominant and easily visible modes of inhabiting space. In my research maps are used as a way of uncovering another narrative in order to understand how diasporic subjectivity ‘takes place’ in the city.

The mappings have exposed layers of diasporic spatiality, which include the political, religious, ethnic, gendered and economic all working in parallel, creating frictions on a personal as well as a collective level. The negotiations and playing out of these sometimes conflicting positions is what I try to map in the following chapters: it is the process of space-making through subjectivation, which embodies the ‘agonistic’ dimension that Mouffe has called for.<sup>14</sup> Within the networked, global condition of the diasporic citizen, what objects, subjects and processes can play the role of mediation that is required between here and there, or between the layers of this multiple subject? Language, personal idioms and gestures all play an important role, are subject to translations and can become mediators. I have carried out my research through mapping small-scale, localised examples of such conditions in the everyday diasporic inhabitation of the city.

.....  
 13 Irit Rogoff, ‘Unbounded’ in, Helge Mooshammer and Peter Mörtenböck (eds.), *Networked cultures: Parallel architectures and the politics of space* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2008), p. 47.

14 See, ‘Diasporic politics’, p. 94-97.

## 'Close within distance' - a diasporic research methodology

### (a) Sites (not subjects) of the research

This embodied research deals with different situations in London, a 'global city' as Saskia Sassen describes it.<sup>15</sup> The main space of research has been a single street in North-east London, Stoke Newington High Street/ Kingsland Road, which is the everyday shopping area for the local neighbourhood and has a concentrated population of Turkish and Kurdish migrants. Although the street has been used as the site for most of the research, this is not an ethnographic study and the Turkish and Kurdish community are not the subjects. Instead they are also the 'site' of the research, the 'subject' being urban practice and specifically the need for defining a new practice of diasporic urbanism. The following three chapters, 'Trans-localities/Places', 'Territories' and 'Border(ing) Practices', all use the street as context. Here I have explored the geopolitics of the 'Kurdish question' and how this affects the highly localised and specific space the street. I look at how the street provides both a conflictual space of protest but also a place for everyday interactions between the two intertwined communities, whilst the private space of the kahve (Turkish and Kurdish social clubs) adds another intimate layer of interaction.

Finally, the chapter 'Border(ing) Practices' uses a different context, the Bangladeshi community of Spitalfields and Whitechapel in East London, but the research question remains the same. Interviews with teenage Bengali girls on the subject of language are combined with an exploration of how certain objects within public space gain a form political agency. This second context was taken up opportunistically, as part of work I was doing elsewhere, but has proven useful in underlining the fact of this work being primarily a research into methods, of mapping and alternative forms of urban practice.

### (b) The paradigmatic nature of the Kurdish situation

The choice of basing my initial and also the majority of the research around the Kurdish and Turkish population was strategic. The Kurdish situation is paradigmatic of the diasporic condition; Kurds are the largest stateless group in the world, their position being a direct consequence of British colonial decisions. The relationship between the Kurds and the Turks can also be said to be similar to the relationship between the people of the nation-states of the Indian Subcontinent or those of the various nations of the African continent. Colonial practices of splitting regions with no understanding of the cultures and histories involved has reproduced a similar situation in many of the post-colonies:

.....  
 15 Saskia Sassen, *The global city: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

much similarity in culture and a shared history, yet the present situation is riven with antagonism played out along nationalistic lines. The notion of conflict is also important, the Kurds have been in an almost constant struggle for a homeland and the prevalence of conflict around the globe, especially in the post-colonies, seems only to be growing. Turkey's geographical and cultural place as the edge of Europe also makes it of interest, as well as its promised inclusion into the European Union. The general relationship of the West with the Muslim world is echoed here as are the dynamics within Muslim communities themselves. The relationship between the migrant culture and the 'home' culture is also at issue and the often quoted observation that the preservation of traditions within migrant communities is far greater than those in the 'home' country is prescient here. Within all these examples the fact of there being no originary homeland for the Kurds upsets the balance and disallows easy generalisations.



The contradictory nature of Turkish society

### (c) Researching in my own neighbourhood, or the importance of 'being-there'

The second reason for choosing this context is that I had very little prior knowledge or engagement with the communities involved. Although it was tempting to choose a group where my language skills could at least be useful and where I could have the promise of some shared ground, it seemed better to guard against easy assumptions. However, this did mean that the initial contact was difficult. Gaining access to a marginalised community is always hard but not knowing the language as well as the fact that some of the spaces I chose were highly gendered, spaces for men only, made this more difficult. One way of the ways in which I tried to gain access was through already existing community facilities, but this was a group for whom the political struggle was very much part of their day-to-day lives and sometimes it was difficult to justify the taking of too much time. I therefore adopted the tactic of just 'being there' and of being patient, which eventually paid off. The urban research group *Stalker* also emphasise this when they write: *'Being "present" is often necessary ... To be present means to*

*observe sympathetically, to suspend judgement, to pay attention to the process.*<sup>16</sup> It also allows a ‘way-in’ that is not demanding and gives that which is hardest to give—time. My way of working therefore actively included the possibility of chance encounters, informal conversations and quiet observation and an acknowledgement of my own positioning. This has also meant that the decision to base the research in my own neighbourhood was crucial, allowing a relationship with the area and inhabitants that is very difficult to replicate otherwise.

#### (d) Topological readings of diasporic agencies

Whilst the street itself is an everyday space that I also used every day, what I have chosen to concentrate on has been selected carefully. The articulation of different scales and the play between public and private has influenced the spaces I chose to study: from the domesticated interiors of Turkish and Kurdish kahve that are highly gendered male spaces, to the publicness of a street whose physicality forces a certain visibility on to those who traverse it (and which also makes it an ideal space of protest), to a park in East London that through being claimed by one diasporic group has come to symbolise wider notions of political representation. All these situations also addressed the question of diasporic agency as the ‘taking of place’ through the specific modalities of inhabitation that diasporic subjects produce. For example, the kahve space revealed how such agencies are constituted through actively constructing a ‘home’ in the city that is the product of certain embodiments and gestures arising from the place of tension in-between tradition, ritual and habit. The mappings of Kurdistan were a way of inscribing diasporic agency as inextricably entwined to wider geo-political concerns. Sometimes remaining in thrall to them:

*...if they create a Kurdish country there, US will want to put all the soldiers there, they are going to have a new base and Kurdish people are going to be rich, day-by-day rich, and one day they want from us the east part from my country. That’s why we never allow that and now it is going to start a war because our soldiers are now in the area but I don’t think it is in the English newspaper...<sup>17</sup>*

At other times trying to find positions of strength from the displacement to another place; positions that could eventually articulate the new emancipatory modes of conceiving our relations to each other, and to the questions of territory, rights and the city:

.....  
16 Stalker, ‘Stalker and the big game of Campo Boario’ in, Peter Blundell-Jones, Doina Petrescu and Jeremy Till (eds.), *Architecture and participation* (London: Spon Press, 2005), p. 231.

17 From interview with a Turkish waiter who worked in a local café on the high street. For full transcript see, Appendix I.

*You know, I am from Turkey but I don't know anything about Turkey except for the system and you know the poverty. We don't know the touristic places because of the poverty. I never go outside of my village and my city because of poverty. I didn't do any holiday in Turkey - nothing. So we don't know what do we have in Turkey except for from the books and on the TV.<sup>18</sup>*

Kurdish, even Turkish people, they came recently, they have been here about 10-15 years, children who are here who have been born in this country, they are mixed, they have like kind of three different identity, Kurdish, Turkish and British identity and sometimes they mix up, some of them they are lost but it is not stable at the moment because Kurdish people, I mean even Turkish, when they came to this country, they were hoping that one day they will go back to their country.<sup>19</sup>

The walks along the high street with Turks and Kurds were a way of thinking the taking of place as reterritorialisations, of inscribing the space of a European metropolis with the regional affinities of elsewhere. This diasporic confidence in taking public space is somehow unique to London in comparison to other European cities, the multicultural politics of Britain that are now so contested, ensured that diasporic agencies here are more pronounced than in the virtual segregation of a city like Paris, or the 'guest worker' status of denying the right to stay that the Turkish population of Berlin were subject to. The methodology of researching diasporic agencies as inhabitations is therefore also particular to London. Finally, the park in East London and the Bengali girls I interviewed also display this confidence in their inhabitation of the city, and the park as political space of assembly and encounter, a place for a politics of proximity, highlights how diasporic agencies unfold outward towards a more generalised notion of the city as emancipatory space. This space mediated through the creative act of mixing languages, bodily practices and appropriating nationalistic symbols for a transversal politics.

The interviews, walks, drawings and conversations that have been the basis for my research have been carried out in proximity to those that I have encountered, but at the same time have kept a distance. In imagining a way for the practice of urbanism to attend to diasporic communities, I have tried to develop a methodology that stays on the surface, so that even with minimal contact, there is the

.....  
18 From an interview carried out as a walk along the high street with a local Kurdish activist. For full transcript see, Appendix I.

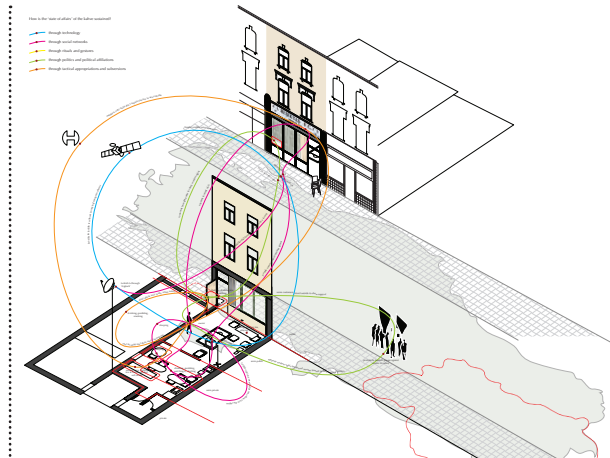
19 From an interview with a Kurdish woman who works at the community and cultural centre, Halkevi, as a mental health worker. For full transcript see, Appendix I.

possibility of engaging with and understanding diasporic inhabitations. This 'superficial' reading that interacts at a distance whilst still remaining close, has the advantage of addressing situations that would otherwise demand a relationship that spans years and a kind of commitment that is not always possible. It is a topological research methodology that stays on the surface of things and makes connections on and with this surface. In this sense, the methodological 'limit' of this way of working could also be considered a choice, and although my accounts and mappings are produced on the surface they are still highly situated. Although the nature of a written text is by definition sequential, this part of the research was cyclical: issues raised through studying the three main concepts described earlier are mixed with other concepts and theories alongside a parallel process of interviews and mappings. Here I have also concentrated on practitioners of space, mostly architects and artists working with similar issues or who are using tools within their practice that I find useful. The aim of this section is also to juxtapose diverse practices and theories to find unexpected links that may trigger new concepts and methodologies for a diasporic urbanism.







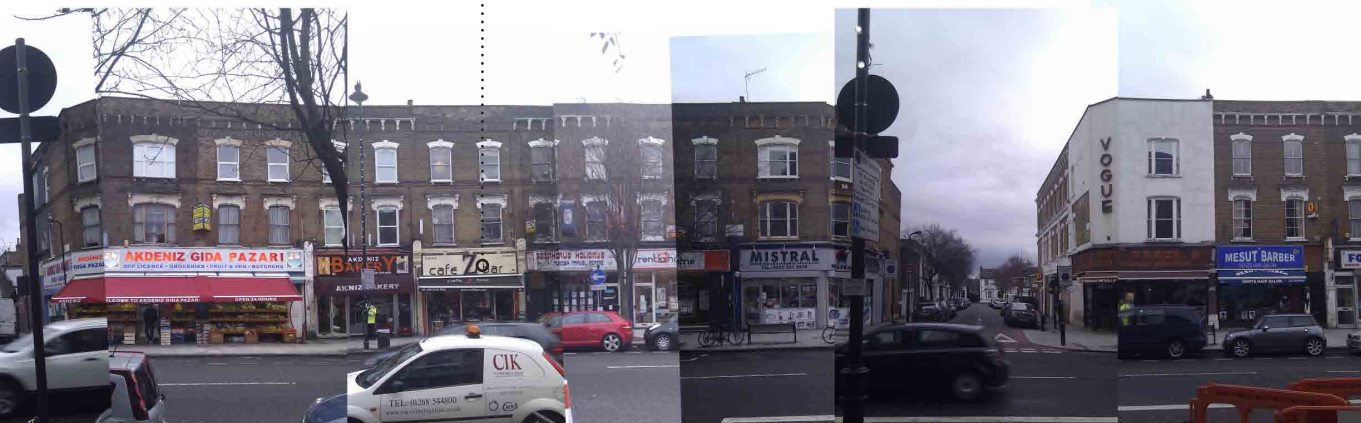
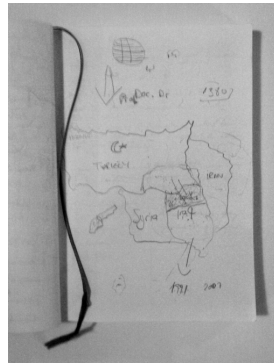


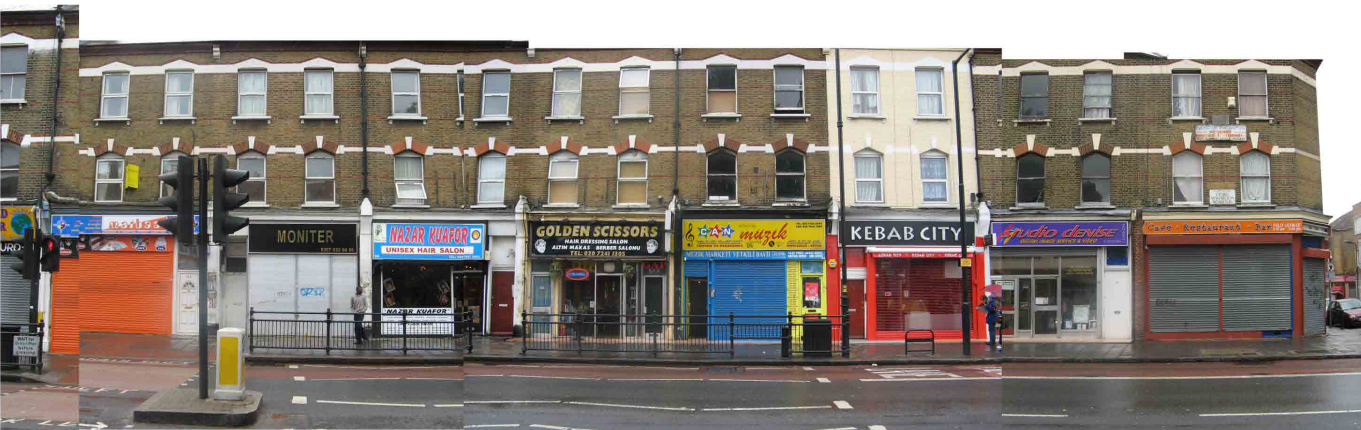
Besiktas





Cafe where one of the interviewees worked







Entrance to a basement *kahve*





Pound plus, an important social hub for Kurds in the area

Recent new development as the area is gentrified







Fenerbaçe sports club





## Trans-localities / places

Certain semi-private spaces, the deployment of particular ‘signs’ and various practices play an important role in the making of a ‘diasporic home’ in the city. In this chapter I construct a figuration of this ‘diasporic home’ through interrogating a series of spaces and practices. In my attempts to understand the role of such spaces, I have tried to move away from the twin caricatures (often found in mainstream discourse) of either portraying such spaces as being too introverted, or of regarding them as exoticised markers of culturally ‘interesting’ neighbourhoods.<sup>1</sup> My interest lies in understanding how they facilitate a living between places and cultures for their diasporic users. How do they function spatially and socially? They are at times a means of support and comfort in their emulation of a place left behind, but at other times they can be restrictive, often becoming places that embody a very specific strand of national culture and value. Although these are social spaces, borne specifically out of the need to be with similar others, they are not public spaces that can make the claim of being open to all. Usually found in private or semi-private locations, they operate sometimes strict exclusions, but what makes them interesting is that very often they host activities that in the place of origin would have occurred in public.<sup>2</sup> They therefore hold a potential for ‘being public’ and this transition towards a more private setting is perhaps inevitable as what were once mainstream activities become marginal.

- .....
- 1 The area around Brick Lane in East London is a perfect example of such reactions towards migrant communities who are told to integrate, but just enough so that London’s hip fashion district can keep its ‘exotic’ feel and the hordes can keep eating curry. The council, never far behind in such matters, is of course only too happy to package the whole thing up for touristic consumption as Bangla Town.



- 2 For example, the drinking of tea or coffee and the playing of board games, the main activities of a Turkish coffeehouse, happen outside on the pavement or square.

## Hospitality and the construction of a 'diasporic home'

### (a) ... in the kahve

The *kahve* as diasporic space are unusual spaces because in terms of a gendered, male space they are dominant (and initially intimidating for me as a woman) but in their positioning within western culture they are marginal. They are versions of the traditional Turkish coffeehouses or *kahve* and they proliferate along the high street and its side streets. The signage, if indeed there is any, announces the presence of 'members only' sports or social clubs, but in reality no-one who uses them calls them by this name. Instead they use the Turkish word for coffeehouse, *kahve* (literally meaning coffee) in informal speech and *kahvehane* in formal speech. Their status as 'members only' clubs is merely a way of negotiating British planning law, as this means they are subject to different and generally more lenient rules than a coffee shop that is assumed to be open to the general public. At first glance the *kahve* seem like nondescript spaces, usually situated in an old shop front with the glass obscured. Their presence on the street is generally quite inconspicuous, and although people are aware of their existence, they tend to fade into the background. Some have been established for ten to fifteen years and have not changed much in the intervening period, whereas others are more contemporary with new backlit signage and satellite television. The juxtaposition of the dominant and the marginal within these spaces is also repeated in their physical relationship to the high street. They occupy what are now considered desirable commercial units but are mostly in a bad state of repair. The area in which I am working is in a state of transition, namely gentrification, and even during the three years I have been researching and mapping the high street many *kahve* have closed down to make way for coffee shops (in the western sense). Others, generally the more popular and younger places, have been refurbished thus reinforcing their presence on the street with new shop fronts and signage.

There is a definite typology to the buildings that the *kahve* occupy, which is linked to the need for cheap space that has a degree of privacy. The majority occupy shop units on the high street and the surrounding area, having the advantage of a prominent location but the disadvantage of being highly visible with transparent façades. A fine balance is sought between the level of obscurity and the traditional open invitation that the *kahve* as guesthouse embody.<sup>3</sup> This is achieved through layers of adjustable screening such as net curtains, whilst the door is usually left ajar—it is always possible to look inside. On one

.....

3 The description of a traditional guest house, which was the precursor to *kahve* in rural Turkey was the social hub of the village: 'No one is denied admittance, but the clientele tends to be regular except when there is a need to conduct special business or to entertain the infrequent visitor in the village.' Brian W. Beeley, 'The Turkish village coffeehouse as a social institution', *Geographical Review*, 60(4)(1970): 479.

of my many trips in and around the high street with my Turkish guide, Burak,<sup>4</sup> I asked him to accompany me to a *kahve* a few streets away from the high street that I had walked past several times. It interested me because the sign announced that it had been established since 1997, over ten years ago, and it always seemed quite busy with men chatting and smoking outside or sitting on chairs outside when the weather permitted. On that day it seemed quiet with no-one outside and although Burak was interested when he saw it at a distance, he did not feel comfortable going inside. He told me there was a social protocol to entering *kahve* that are new to you; the door should be open so you can look in, maybe exchange a greeting or two and then decide whether to go in. Screening and the details of interior decoration may at first seem superficial, but in the economy of sign and bodily gesture they play an important role as mediators between an inside world of the *kahve* and the outside. A number of different methods of screening are used: some just keep their roller shutters halfway down, others use net curtains or obscured glass, whilst others have built a kind of shelf in their window which acts as both a partial screen and a display for various objects from Turkey.



*Kahve* doors are usually kept open and various methods of screening are used for privacy; the location of the *kahve* also determines the level of screening. On a side street, not much is required, basements provide their own screening, whereas on the busy high street fully obscured glass is used.

Since these businesses are not very lucrative businesses the space does need to be cheap and the *kahve* that are located in shop units are generally the older ones that were acquired when the area was less expensive. For newer places there are other options, such as the basements of buildings (usually shops) on the high street. Although the quality of space is lower due to the lack of windows, these spaces have

4 For more on this see, 'Diasporic diagrams', p. 225.

the advantage of being well screened from the busy street whilst also being able to keep their doors open. Only partial views are afforded of the steps leading down to a group of men sitting around a table. Some *kahve* are also located in industrial buildings, but these are quite rare and here they occupy a small out-of-the-way corner.

In many ways the function of the *kahve* in London is similar to those in Turkey, a part of everyday life, they are themselves modernised versions of traditional guesthouses, which were rooms or even a small building in each village associated with an important family. The guesthouses were central to village life and were 'the forum for business transactions, exchanges of gossip, and discussions of communal problems'.<sup>5</sup> They also functioned as short-term lodging for any visitors to the village. Physically the *kahve* in London appear very similar to those in Istanbul, containing similar furniture and objects, but their transposition to another culture has changed their character.<sup>6</sup> Their role as spaces that facilitate a crucial connection 'back home' gives them a special status in the lives of their diasporic users as they function as a place of support; yet they occupy a culturally marginal space in London. As a minority often



A combination of curtains and roller shutters provide privacy; a built-in shelf and curtains provide screening and also a display area.



A coffeehouse in Demre, Anatolia (1970).

- 5 Brian W. Beeley, 'The Turkish village coffeehouse as a social institution', *Geographical Review*, 60(4)(1970): 481.
- 6 A description of coffeehouses in rural Turkey from the early seventies is very similar to the social clubs I visited in London, apart from obvious differences that are the result of technological advances: 'The main part of the room contains wooden tables and chairs, a transistor radio, some decks of cards and a chess or backgammon board, and a lantern (electric light in rare instances). The walls display a variety of posters, pictures, and announcements; included among these might be lists of village men to be drafted into the armed forces, for-sale notices relating to land, farm implements, and animals, and other items of public concern such as the village tax assessment.' *Ibid.*, p. 482.

the spaces we are obliged to rely upon are marginal, but following bell hooks these can also be transformed into a home of sorts, a place of nurture and rejuvenation.<sup>7</sup> This process of the construction of a 'diasporic home' begins with the process of resubjectivation, which for those in the diaspora consists of acknowledging this marginal positioning, and of finding a way of telling our own stories and our own histories. This could be in the form of autobiography, which as Trinh T. Min-ha writes, acts '*both as singularity and as collectivity, a way of making history and of rewriting cultures*'.<sup>8</sup> Autobiography in the collective mode is present in the *kahve*, a space that allows for the recalling of past lives as well as the construction of new ones in dialogue with the other place left behind. The phrase, '*kahve talk*', often used disparagingly to dismiss such discussions is key to its functioning as 'diasporic home'. The *kahve* can therefore sometimes act as surrogate homes, emulating a certain domesticity, whilst at other times they are more public in nature. They operate within the hybrid logic of *chora*, filtering and making relations between a home here and a home there. The multiplicity of the *kahve* space gives an indication of the different functions they perform, of their highly specialised nature, each serving a specific network of people and places. It is this combination of extreme specificity in the atmosphere and detail of the space, combined with what may seem like a highly banal physical space, that makes them so interesting yet overlooked—on the surface they can appear quite boring.

#### (b) ...and the *belhuis*

A research project that is based around spaces that function similarly within diasporas is the subject of the book, *Dispersions*, by Diego Barajas.<sup>9</sup> Focusing on the Cape Verdean community of Rotterdam, he interrogates the specific spatial conditions that their inhabitation of the city produces, arguing that the processes of migration result in a deterritorialisation of the subject. This condition is ameliorated through an artificial reterritorialisation by the migrant population facilitated by spaces such as the *kahve* or in Barajas' example the *belhuis* or telephone shops used to call home. Barajas identifies these types of spaces as being part of an 'infrastructure of reterritorialisation' that produces a territory on a number of different levels, from the city scale measured in tramlines and stops for Cape Verdean areas of Rotterdam,

7 See, 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', pp. 59-62.

8 Trinh T. Min-ha, *When the moon waxes red: Representation, gender and cultural politics* (London: Routledge, 1991), p.191.

9 Diego Barajas, *Dispersion: A study of global mobility and the dynamics of a fictional urbanism* (Rotterdam: episode publishers, 2003).

to the interior details of objects and signs and how these link up to global realities through the *'migration of ideas, finance, techniques, media, and people.'*<sup>10</sup>



Internal atmospheres of the *belhuis*. Image: Diego Barajas.

Barajas notes that the *belhuis* thrive even though they are more expensive than using calling cards on a mobile phone, which the vast majority of people who use the *belhuis* own. Since no business can thrive whilst charging too much he concludes that they must be providing some other service for which their customers are willing to pay. This something other is a virtual territory which he describes as *'a sort of gas contained in the interior by a particular customer service, by meeting other people, by the light and the spatial decoration and ethnic programmes.'*<sup>11</sup> It creates a different atmosphere to that of the street in Rotterdam and is a simulation of Cape Verde. The micro-environment of the *belhuis* is therefore created through specific architectural devices such as decoration, broadcast and proximity.<sup>12</sup> To an extent such spaces operate by maintaining a separation from their immediate surroundings, as Barajas himself alludes to in his reference to the 'gas' contained within the *belhuis*. But, since the *belhuis* as business are fragile and not very profitable they provide other services as well, such as selling CDs, having a small café and subletting space to hairdressers, travel agencies etc. This overlapping of functions serves to open up the space of the *belhuis* again to people from diverse backgrounds.

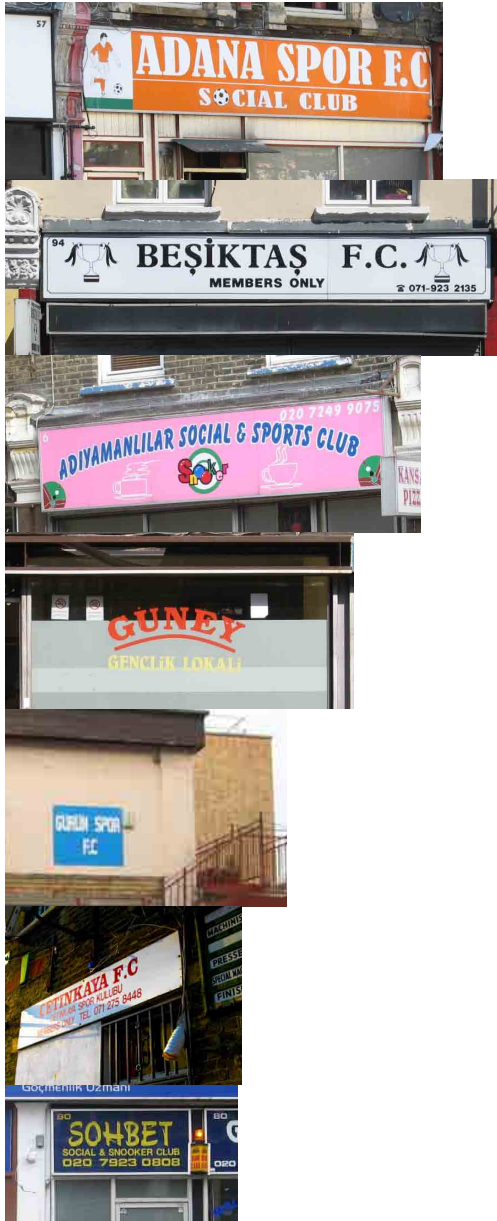
This tension between the necessity to somehow 'seal off' a space in order to create an atmosphere of 'home' and the necessity to open up the *belhuis* to other potential customers is crucial to its functioning. Making a space hospitable for the Cape Verdeans runs the risk of it becoming too exclusive, but both the *belhuis* and the *kahve* do hold the potential for creating links through the multiplicity of their space the overlapping of functions. They are both also spaces of commerce, operating within an economic logic but one that is tempered through other types of exchange that allow such spaces to operate in a different value system than that of simple monetary exchange. In this sense, they are models for a space that could operate counter to the dominant capitalist value system.

10 Ibid. These different mobilities listed by Barajas are based around the conceptual structure of Appadurai's 'scapes'. See also, 'Diasporic urbanism', p. 15.

11 Diego Barajas, 'Borders and mobility', (11 April 2008), University of Sheffield, School of Architecture, <http://linesofflight.wordpress.com/2008/03/20/seminar-05-borders-and-mobility/>.

12 See, Diego Barajas, *Dispersion: A study of global mobility and the dynamics of a fictional urbanism* (Rotterdam: episode publishers, 2003), p. 54.



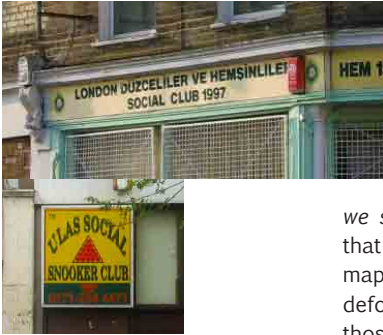


### (c) Parallel worlds and allegorical maps

The *kahve* on the high street are said to mimic the map of Turkey, each place being affiliated to a certain area or a regional football team. Their names give an indication to their loyalties, which are usually those of the owner. In the space of the street there is an overlapping of the physical location of the *kahve* with their toponymic distribution that alludes to regional affinities elsewhere. It forms an allegorical map of Turkey, which is performed daily in the everyday comings and goings of the *kahve*'s diasporic users. The names of the *kahve* therefore function as symbols or metaphors for particular, sometimes highly specific regions or places. I have written earlier on the role of naming as a political strategy that marks the shift or rupture between the particular and the general.<sup>13</sup> This role is also played out in the naming of the *kahve* that take a highly localised space in north-east London, and link it to the regional and political conflicts, solidarities and nostalgias of another place.

Whilst not all *kahve* are named after areas or regions of Turkey, having heard the claim of the existence of this other map from a number of different people, I was intrigued to test it. I therefore sketched a map of the street and overlaid it with a Turkey that is deformed according to the names (and regional affinities) and locations of the *kahve*. But, whether described in words or drawings this map is always already a step behind at the moment of being made present, because the allegorical map I have alluded to is not static, it is in constant flux, shifting and changing as the *kahve* open and close, change names or proprietors. It operates through the physicality of the signs that name the *kahve*, the colours they use, the objects that are displayed, but also through the mode of gossip and word-of-mouth. Irit Rogoff has written of the importance of gossip within a feminist practice of counter-narration as '*gossip turns the tables on conventions of "history" and "truth" by externalising and making overt its relations to subjectivity, voyeuristic pleasure and the communicative circularity of story-*

13 See, 'Diasporic subjectivity', p. 76-77.



telling.<sup>14</sup> It perhaps does not matter that the map of Turkey that is overlaid on top of the *kahve* locations won't fit properly or that a lot of the *kahve* are named otherwise; as long as there is a general perception and the emotional ties and behaviour of those who use them is linked to such affinities. Rogoff again, writes: *'Thus gossip serves as an area for the cathexis of phantasmic projections by audiences which can alert us to the way in which we shape narratives through our own desire.'*<sup>15</sup> Here I would also add that it alerts us to the way in which we shape space, because this other map overlays the physical structure of the street and causes topological deformations to the actual, lived space. This may well be intangible to those who have no knowledge of Turkey, but for others it can range from a background low-level reality to a kind of territory that has to be negotiated daily.



One of the frequent protests on the high street organised by Kurdish groups (2008).

Of course, this 'parallel world'<sup>16</sup> or 'other reality' that is latent does sometimes burst forth into the consciousness of the other users of the street. A major event in Turkey, whether it is the incursion of Turkish forces into the Kurdish controlled areas of Iraq or a hunger strike by Kurdish political prisoners in Turkey, usually means the organisation of a protest along the street. At those moments the two worlds collide, if only for a voyeuristic ten minutes or so, as the protesters walk past whatever shop or café. The manipulation of space whether it is through the subtle, sometimes subversive naming practice of the *kahve* and its associated gossip, or the eruption of the protest into peoples' daily reality happens through the interplay of signs and subjectivity. But these are either subversive or isolated moments, at all other times these worlds tend to pass each other by. Mooshammer and Mörtenböck have written on the potential of architectural and artistic practices to create bridges between such worlds, through creating a platform for social and cultural exchange that works outside the logic of the neo-liberal economy. Only one of the *kahve* I visited was able to create such a bridge, 'Yusuf's place' is located next to a popular pub on the high street and I have walked past it countless times, never quite being aware of its existence. A side door of the pub leads upstairs to the *kahve*, which has an inviting atmosphere. On certain days when a football match is not being played in the pub, people will go upstairs to the *kahve* to see if they are playing it and in this case football becomes a means for an encounter between parallel worlds.

14 Irit Rogoff, 'Gossip as testimony: A postmodern signature', in Amelia Jones (ed.), *The feminism and visual culture reader* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 268.

15 Ibid., p. 273.

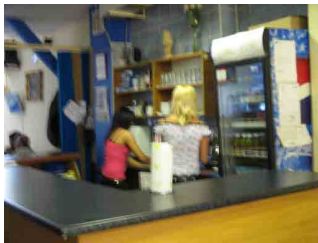
16 I am using this phrase in the sense that Mooshammer and Mörtenböck use it to describe the different realities that operate within the space of Europe. See; Helge Mooshammer and Peter Mörtenböck (eds.), *Networked cultures: Parallel architectures and the politics of space* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2008).



Whilst some *kahve* names refer to Turkey, others like Yusuf's place do not have a formal name and no signage to announce their presence. The names given to these places and their very existence functions through word-of-mouth (and gossip). Other places take on the signage and so by default the names of the business from which they have taken over their premises; for example the signage of one of the places I visited read 'Guben' and it also proclaimed the existence of an internet café – neither was true. The place had a number of different names, some called it 'Guben' but most used the name of the proprietor. This localised way of naming a place is passed on from person to person and can be seen as a collective performance of social and cultural knowledge. The lack of signage or the use of old signage is also a kind of camouflage that allows these places to recede from the everyday experience of those users of the street who will never visit a *kahve*.

## 2. Reciprocal economies and affinity networks

### (a) symbolic value of gold (parties)



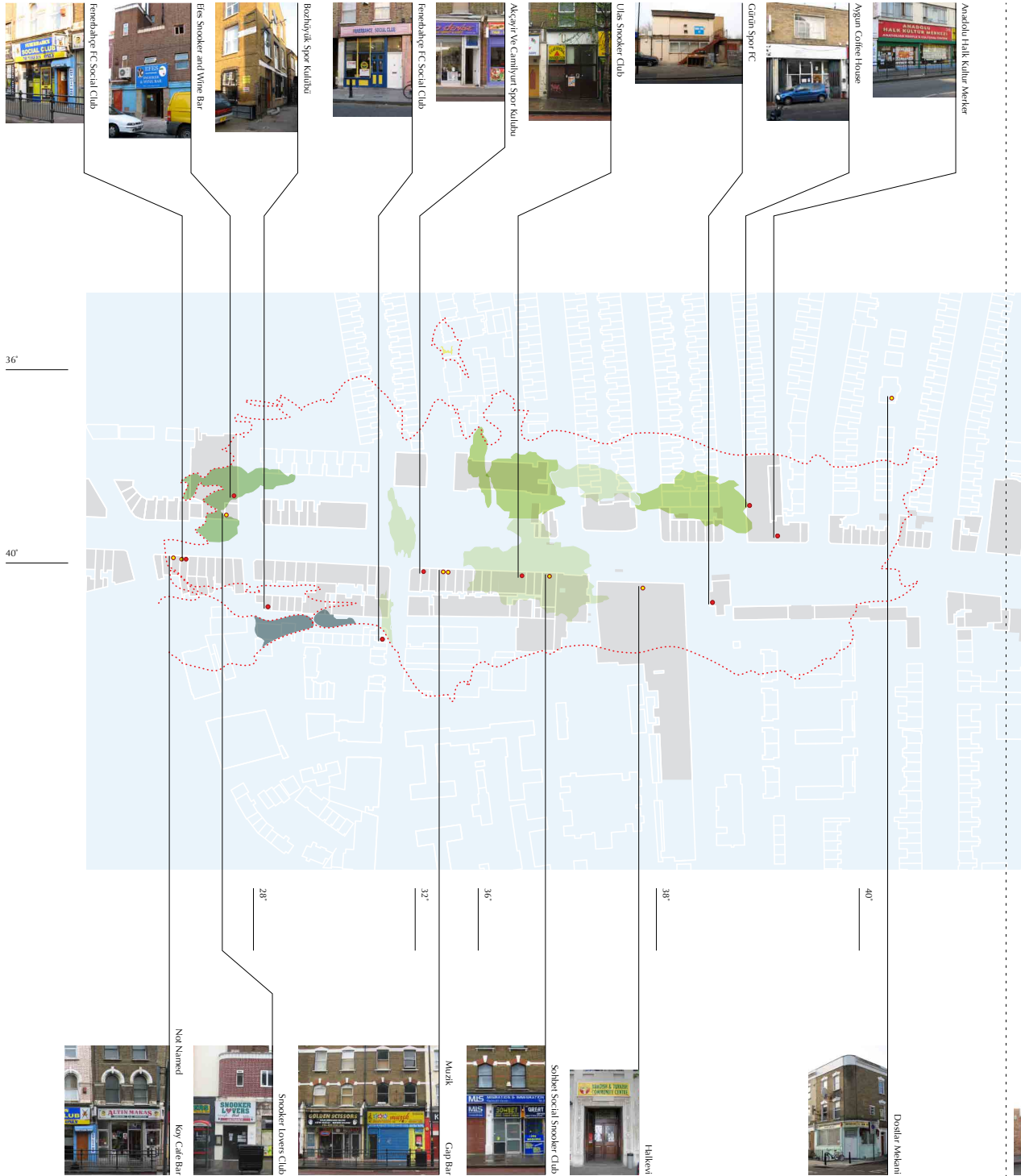
The unequal gender relationships of the *kahve*.

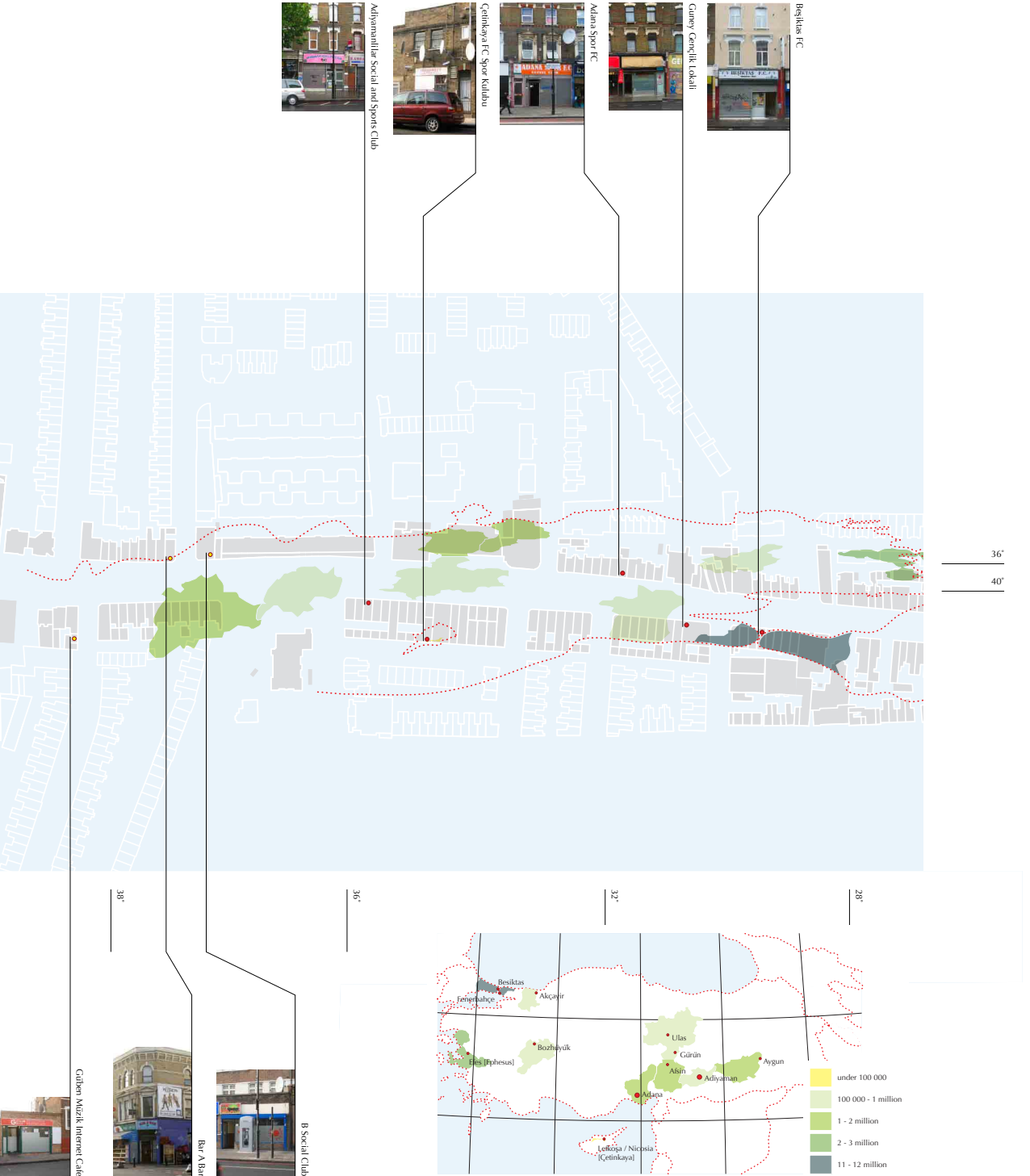
The *kahve* are undoubtedly gendered, these are male spaces where women enter rarely and then mostly as waitresses. Corresponding spaces in Turkey, especially in and around Istanbul are becoming mixed but this is a fairly new phenomenon, although women are never stopped from entering they rarely do. Social life for men revolves around the *kahve* whereas for women it circulates within domestic space, in the homes of friends and family. A recent, largely middle-class alternative to the *kahve* for women is 'gold parties', gatherings organised in turn by different members of the social group where women eat, chat and play board games.<sup>17</sup> Since these are organised at a large scale they can become quite expensive, so the hostess is presented with a piece of gold as a way of thanking her for her effort, as well as contributing financially towards the gathering. The important role that gold plays in Turkish daily life and economy is apparent through the presence of gold-merchants in the bazaars of even the smallest towns in Turkey, and similarly in the presence of jewellers who also trade in small quantities of gold in the Turkish neighbourhoods of London.<sup>18</sup> But gold is also crucial in a feminine everyday economy both in contemporary Turkish society and traditionally: women accumulate gold on marriage, at the

17 From a casual conversation with Burak.

18 'The importance of gold in the economy of daily life can be seen in the markets. The bazaars of even small Turkish towns contain large numbers of gold-merchants. Gold coins and jewellery are bought and sold there at a daily fluctuating rate which relates to the international gold market. Certain objects are of standard quality and weight - bracelets, for example, are manufactured and sold in this way so that they carry regular and known values within marriage exchanges. The customers in the gold markets are almost exclusively women, all of whom have some knowledge of the qualities, weights and age of gold. The predominantly male goldsmith's guild is a large and powerful commercial organisation and in the seventeenth century it was the same.' Julie Marcus, 'History, anthropology and gender: Turkish women past and present', *Gender and History*, 4 (2)(1992): 157.

Topological deformations of the street through diffused migrant territories  
 mapping of *kahve* according to name and regional affiliations







There are several jewellers on the high street. This one closed down soon after this photography was taken and became a *kahve*.



The backrooms of the *kahve* are private spaces, which I could not always access.

birth of their children and other special occasions. As Julie Marcus notes: *'This gold is not consumed except in emergencies; instead, it is a durable asset in a fluctuating economic world, an asset which is both portable and convertible on demand.'*<sup>19</sup> The tiny bits of gold and gold jewellery are accumulated and passed down from mother-to-daughter and is a form of social exchange that creates a small saving for women who may not be in a position to have a pension or a savings account. It is also a traditional mechanism for passing wealth through the maternal line of the family.

Gold mediates between two different value systems, economic and symbolic, giving women a way of entering an economic system to which they may not have easy access. The *kahve* also operate within this other sphere, the activities and exchange they sustain is predicated on their value within a symbolic realm that mediates between cultures, places and economies. A large proportion of the men who use the *kahve* moved to London on their own, whether as asylum seekers (in the case of the Kurds in particular) or as economic migrants whose families are still in Turkey. In these cases the *kahve* perform a vital function of support and sociability, especially for those who cannot speak English. Some of the *kahve* even re-appropriate the traditional role of the guesthouse as a place of informal lodging for visitors. The logic of visitors from other villages who are connected through kinship ties works here too and there is an exchange of favours that can span distance and cross generations. One of the *kahve* I visited, called 'Besiktas' after a Turkish football team, seems to be used as lodging from time-to-time. The owner, with some irony, likened it to a 'community service' that took people in if they were having difficulties. These were people with whom he had some link, usually through a convoluted social network of acquaintances with some connection back to his village in the Turkish part of Cyprus. This practice of hosting visitors in places that are perceived as private social clubs is supported neither legally nor culturally in Britain and combined with the sometimes dubious immigration status of the visitors, gives these activities a clandestine nature. Although I met one of the people staying over at Besiktas, I was not allowed to take any photos or given too much detailed information.

There are in fact conflicting accounts of why people stay in the *kahve* overnight. A young Kurdish woman who runs a local cultural centre for Kurds and is very active locally, views the *kahve* with disdain, which in her view are no more than illegal gambling dens and as far as she is concerned the men who stay there do so after arguments with their families. She alludes to the high incidence of domestic violence in the

.....  
19 Ibid.



The *kahve* are spaces animated by strong male friendships.

lives of the people she deals with day-to-day. Others have spoken of the *kahve* as places where 'illegal immigrants' stay and others still view them as crucibles of 'anti-Turkish' activities. I have no way of knowing for sure why the man I met was sleeping in Besiktas and perhaps it is not so important for this discussion. It is possible that there is a degree of truth in at least some of these accounts, but what does remain true is that the *kahve* can act as places of support that are accessed through social networks of family, kinship and strong male friendships. What I find interesting is the way in which the *kahve* creates an atmosphere of 'diasporic domesticity', activities that usually take place in the home, like sleeping, eating and chatting are transposed here to create

something close to a domestic atmosphere. A living room of sorts that for at least some of the users of the *kahve* is as close as they are going to get to a 'home life' in the near future.

#### (b) diasporic domesticity in the *kahve*

Since the *kahve* operate within dispersed, informal networks that sometimes span large distances they require constant work to sustain and nurture them. Much of this work can be carried out through face-to-face interactions but some have to be mediated through technological means. As with any other network the distance between nodes, people, places collapses within the *kahve*'s networks whilst anyone or any place outside can seem infinitely far.<sup>20</sup> The parallel worlds described earlier are also a consequence of this 'trick' of network logic that also makes the *kahve* extremely difficult to 'just walk into'. None of the places I visited had any passing trade, customers were friends of friends and the regulars brought their family, friends and acquaintances. In fact, one of the *kahve* owners I interviewed spoke about having to wait a couple of years after he moved to London to open his place. Although he knew this was the business he wanted to run, he needed to build up a network of people who would become his first customers. This reliance on a close network is based on a pattern of reciprocal exchange, for example Paula Holmes-Eber describes such an exchange within her study of women in Tunis, where visits to each other's houses played a crucial role in maintaining the network of support that the women relied on. She remarks that this is '*serious and costly work: creating and maintaining the critical ties of exchange and support [...] upon*

.....  
20 See 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', pp. 56-58.

which they can count to survive in an increasingly impersonal and unpredictable urbanising nation.<sup>21</sup> This reliance on close networks means that the *kahve* are thoroughly embroiled in the politics of Turkey and the particular region that they are associated with. In fact, 'Kahve talk' also refers to this essential function of the *kahve* as a place where politics is played out through discussion, sometimes heated, sometimes earnest, sometimes detached, replenished these days through the news and atmosphere facilitated by satellite television, in particular 'DigiTurk', the satellite provider of choice in the *kahve* I visited.



One of the most obvious distinctions between the various *kahve* is that of generation. The more established places, which also have the least intrusive presence on the street seemed to be occupied by the older generation, Turkish or Turkish-Cypriots who moved to London in the 1970s and mostly worked in the garment factories of this area of East London. These tend to have positions on the street that are quite desirable now as commercial units, but of course when they first opened this was not the case. These older *kahve* are quieter places and are regional in nature. Although most do have satellite television now, they do not advertise the fact and the television occupies an inconspicuous corner. These *kahve* call themselves 'social clubs' in English. Another *kahve* type is the 'sports club', which are younger places that are normally named after a football team that the owner supports. The presence of DigiTurk is advertised and seen as an asset and the television occupies a privileged position. They are also louder places, the young men who use these types of *kahve* are a mixture of first and second generation migrants and the majority have strong ties to Turkey. The last type call themselves 'sports and social clubs', such as Yusuf's place, and they seem to have a more family oriented atmosphere, where fathers bring their teenage sons.



Television makes plays a crucial role in the trans-local space of the *kahve*.

21 Paula Holmes-Eber, *Daughters of Tunis: Women, family, and networks in a muslim city* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2003), p. 33.



## The bodily production of trans-localities

The *kahve* can be described as a type of trans-local space that mediates in the two-way flow between the local and the global, or between a number of distinct localities.<sup>22</sup> Each type of flow produces its own space with distinct characteristics and the space of the *kahve* is most obviously a product of local-to-global flows that are the result of migration, making connections across large distances to other geographies. In this sense the *kahve* are a type of 'mobile space', each one being a node in a net of relations over space and time,<sup>23</sup> the diasporic sensibility of its users collapsing distance and bringing the local and the global closer together. In this sense the *kahve* space is paradoxical, these are highly contemporary spaces that are the product of large-scale migration whilst at the same time being traditional spaces that emulate the form and function of their counterparts in Turkey. Another reason for describing the *kahve* as 'mobile spaces' is because of the way they interact with Castells' 'space of flows', where the elite with power and wealth are globally connected whilst the majority are rooted in concrete places.<sup>24</sup> Diasporic populations complicate this picture, especially in a city like London, a global financial capital. Here the elite's power and wealth is tangible on a localised level in the cost of living for example, but the global is experienced as the 'home' left behind, which does not usually play a large part in the global circuits of power and wealth, and which is very often also the reason for migration. Thus Castells classic description of the 'space of flows', first elaborated in the 1970s, is challenged in contemporary societies as the rise of mobility through greater inequalities has meant that new relationships have formed between the local and the global that are specific to diasporas and which are described by Appadurai in his definition of 'locality'.<sup>25</sup> The *kahve* as node in a diasporic network is essential in the production of locality for its users. Appadurai has written on the inadequacy of the original definition of locality (used to

22 A well known example of a global-to-local flow is the process of 'McDonaldisation': the imposition of a set of hegemonic and stabilised spatial practices to a new location that crosses national and cultural boundaries. Examples of local-to-global flows are migrations across borders or cultural tourism; in both cases localised and marginal practices take on a global dimension through the movement of people across national borders but the circumstances and means of movement in the two examples could not be more different. Another major difference in these two versions of local-to-global flow is the networks that they produce. Whilst migration produces dispersed diasporic networks that hold great importance in the lives of those who are a part of them, cultural tourism does not usually sustain such interaction, it takes the form of serial exchanges. The last type of flow is between distinct localities and usually takes the form of subculture, where a number of localities across the globe are connected through a shared interest in a particular cultural or religious practice.

23 Doreen Massey, *Space, place and gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

24 See, 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', pp. 56-58.

25 Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalisation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

describe people's living beyond the closed concept of community) for a rapidly globalising world. His reworking of locality takes the lessons of anthropology, the notion that locality in indigenous communities was not a given but was instead the product of hard work—material labour that constituted 'complex social techniques for the inscription of locality onto bodies.' He describes naming, circumcision and segregation as 'ways to embody locality as well as to locate bodies in socially and spatially defined communities.'<sup>26</sup> Thus in older societies locality is not seen as a given but is viewed as the result of 'hard and regular work' which enables it to 'maintain its materiality.'<sup>27</sup>

(a) transposing home(place) through bodily postures and gestures

A contemporary example of this embodied production of locality that also leaves a concrete physical residue is the subject of a video installation by Mieke Bal and Shahram Entekhabi called, *Glub*.<sup>28</sup> The work is based around the everyday ritual of seed-eating that is prevalent in most Arabic societies; the word 'glub' means 'heart' or 'kernel' and is used to denote the seeds as well as the act of consuming them. The video is an example of what Bal calls 'cultural analysis', a way of viewing the subject from different angles and perspectives without claiming authority or reducing it to an instance.<sup>29</sup> The video investigates the habit of eating seeds in public as a performative inhabiting of the city that produces its own locality through the bodily postures of eating: the gesture of hand-to-bag, the shaping of the mouth just so to extricate the seed from its shell, the waste that is produced and shed on to the street. Bal writes about this unconscious act of eating that is at the heart of the project: 'This function of seed as unofficial food connects seed to invisibility and formlessness, but its constant



Stills from *Glub* (hearts), Mieke Bal and Shahram Entekhabi (dir.)

.....  
26 Ibid., p. 179.

27 Ibid., pp. 180-181.

28 Mieke Bal and Shahram Entekhabi (curator), *Glub* (hearts), mixed media & video + photo installation, 29:00 min (Fine Arts Unternehmen: 2003-2004).

29 See 'Introduction' in, Mieke Bal, *Double exposures: The subject of cultural analysis* (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 1-12.

*consumption, which produces cracking sounds, smells of roasting, and waste that changes the feel of the street and the sound of walking, makes it at the same time hyper-visible.*<sup>30</sup>

The eating of glub on the streets of Kreuzberg in Berlin has changed them, making them dirtier and giving them a special atmosphere that derives from the act of communal, convivial eating. The seed-eating habit has also passed on from the migrants to some of the local population, and Bal contrasts this to the touristic consumption of food in exoticised 'ethnic' restaurants. The smallest gesture that recurs and multiplies in the everyday practice of the 'guest workers' of Berlin creates a continuous territory of sorts from the Middle-East through Turkey to Berlin. The establishing of this territory occurs through the bodily inscription of locality as described by Appadurai. The poignancy of the work reveals itself in the context of the conditions that the guest workers had to endure in Germany as hired workforce never allowed to settle and create a home. Murat Aydemir, commenting on *Glub*, writes: *'The images of people consuming the seeds on the streets of Berlin can be seen to portray guest workers and their descendants enjoying a leisure time that they were never supposed to have in the first place, and inhabiting a public sphere in which their presence should have been temporary and ephemeral.'*<sup>31</sup> bell hooks writes on the establishment of hegemonic power through a refusal to allow people to create a 'homeplace' for themselves, a place of nurture where they can regain their sense of self.<sup>32</sup> The practice described in *Glub* is one way of making homeplace through a simple everyday act carried out in difficult conditions that becomes a form of resistance.



Seed-eating also occurs in the *kahve* but here always combined with the drinking of tea or coffee and the playing of cards. Although it is a communal activity, it is not yet a public activity and these semi-private gestures and rituals contained physically within the *kahve* and its immediate vicinity make connections globally. The specific way of making Turkish or Kurdish tea in a samovar, the playing of certain card games and seed-eating itself are all ways in which diasporic communities carry out the work of producing locality because it is only the host society that is able to adopt an easy attitude towards it.

30 Mieke Bal, 'Glub (hearts)', *Transit*, 1(1)(2005): 2; <http://repositories.cdlib.org/ucbgerman/transit/vol1/iss1/art50913>.

31 Murat Aydemir, 'Piecemeal translation', *Art History*, 30(3)(2007): 316.

32 For more on 'homeplace' see, 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', pp. 55-56.

That bodily postures somehow manage to shift the homeplace to another location is also the subject of an installation and article by the artist Simon Leung, 'Squatting through Violence'.<sup>33</sup> However, he addresses the topic from the other side, of how a homeplace or locality is purged from unwanted, foreign bodies through a process of assimilation. Using the example of the Vietnamese 'boat people' of the 1980s who waited at a bus stop squatting, or that of the Latin American migrant workers who squat daily, waiting for work in San Jose, Leung remarks that squatting as a bodily posture is not considered acceptable in suburban California. Referring to Marcel Mauss' observation from the 1930s that 'humanity can be divided into those who squat and those who sit', Leung writes that Mauss was describing *'the ways in which bodies are themselves instruments used in an acculturated, mechanical process, constrained by social traditions and utility.'*<sup>34</sup> p. 308 Bodily postures, gestures and techniques are thus continually learnt and relearned, breaking and remaking habits, but problems arise when just one type of technique is considered acceptable over others, interfering in the important work of the production of locality and the making of homeplace.



Squatting through violence. Simon Leung

### (ii) Mapping trans-localities as performative networks

In trying to understand these different habits and gestures that produce the locality of the *kahve*, I have used the technique of mapping as it privileges the spatial, whilst acknowledging that a number of intricate and overlapping processes play themselves out in this one place. The interpretative maps that I have produced describe the different networks that the *kahve* are a part of and also inscribe these within physical space. This tracing of networks in order to describe a 'state of affairs' takes its reference from Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as a method of revealing the relations and associations between people, objects and

33 Sylvie Desroches Zeigam Azizov, Dean Inkster, Adrian Laubscher, Alejandra Riera, Caecilia Tripp (ed.), *Radio temporeira* (Grenoble: National Centre for Contemporary Arts, 1998), pp. 307-318.

34 Simon Leung, 'Squatting Through Violence' in, *Ibid.*, p. 308.

places.<sup>35</sup> Whilst ANT is very good at tracing these relations, it has been criticised for being less specific about the nature of those relations. How are they constituted and what mode do they operate in? Seen in this way it is perhaps the performative dimensions of network behaviour and its consequent tracing that ANT neglects. The work of French psychoanalyst, Fernand Deligny, also uses the mode of tracing to somehow discover hidden relations and associations. At his residential centre Deligny and his colleagues lived alongside autistic children who were deemed 'too difficult' by mainstream practice. Whilst the children could not communicate in language, Deligny and his colleagues followed them, their movements and gestures, producing a series of overlaid tracings. The act of making the tracings is what Deligny describes as sharing a place, which could also be described as a practiced or a performed space. In her commentary on Deligny's drawing practice as a new mode of mapping for architecture and urbanism, Doina Petrescu writes:

*This geo-analysis is not merely pedagogy or therapy but an attempt to invent through mapping ways of being and sharing with 'the other', the radically other, the one who does not live in the same manner, who does not have the same means of communication, the same logics, the same gestures: the autistic, the idiot, the fool ... There where nothing is common, instead of language, what is shared is the 'place' and its occupation – and this place together with its different activities, gestures, incidents and presences is drawn on the map with different lines and signs. The drawing act is a 'tracing', tracer.<sup>36</sup>*

The performative dimension that Deligny brings to the act of tracing fits with Deleuze and Guattari's description of a map, which they distinguish from the trace:<sup>37</sup> 'A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back "to the same." The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged "competence."' But as Deleuze and Guattari remind us: 'It is a question of method: the tracing should always be put back on the map.'<sup>38</sup> The drawings of the *kahve* space try to create multiple ways of apprehending the same space through overlaying a number of different attributes: physical space, trans-local connections, mental spaces and their affects.

.....  
35 See, Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); John Law and John Hassard, *Actor-network theory and after* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

36 Doina Petrescu, 'The indeterminate mapping of the common', *field*: 1 (1)(2007): 90-91.

37 Here a clash of terminology creates confusion but in my understanding Deligny's work and the resulting drawings have the properties of mapping as described by Deleuze and Guattari. For an extended discussion on this see, Beijing Critical reading group, 'Critical, mapping, tracing', (2008), <http://www.homeshopbeijing.org/blog/?p=173>.

38 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)), pp. 13-14.

Whilst such a method of representation is useful for any space, in the context of the in-betweenness of diasporic subjects and the multiplicity of the spaces they produce, it is a necessity.

#### 4. The (taking) place of diasporic space

The starting point for this chapter was my own experience of viewing certain types of places, rituals and ways of inhabiting as essential to a diasporic existence; beyond the triggering of memories they enable the construction of a place that could be called home. This seemingly simple understanding that even a child of eleven has (the time of my own move from Pakistan to England) is complicated as soon as the construction of the homeplace is moved out of the confines of domestic interior spaces, and into the public and semi-public realm. What were comforting smells and familiar gestures become part of another discussion altogether, around exoticised locales, assimilated bodies and introverted gazes. Of course this contrast is stark for its oversimplification, decades of social science and anthropological research into diasporas, has at least taught us that the clear-cut lines and simple dichotomies between the host and home culture are misleading, and that domestic and familiar spaces are not always as comforting as they might at first seem. But starting with this binary is an acknowledgment of the position from which I started and much of this chapter has in fact been a complicating and testing of this easy assumption for a better understanding of what I felt myself and have seen in others.

This essential work of creating homeplace that I mention, is described by Appadurai as the 'bodily construction of locality', and I have explored a number of different instances of this related to the Turkish and Kurdish *kahve*: from bodily postures to affinity networks and the role of gossip and word-of-mouth. Derrida's aporia of hospitality is present here in the workings of the *kahve*, many of whom are thoroughly embroiled in the regional politics of Turkey, making them inviting places for some and excluding others. But these 'parallel worlds', easily condemned for their introspection, also hold out a promise of another kind of space through their functioning within a value system alien to capitalist logic. Operating within sprawling networks of kinship and friendship they engage within a reciprocal economy based on symbolic rather than monetary value. The role that gold plays is telling, sitting between these two value systems, it can be used subversively as women across the East have done and known for centuries. Gold, upon whose value the wealth of nations is based, also teaches us about another kind of value system, and about the merits of subverting the dominant order from within.

Bodily gestures and subversions of one kind or another and a networked logic reveal the crucial role of performativity within the construction of diasporic space. This chapter ends with speculation on how such a space could be represented through a practice of mapping that privileges the sharing of a place over tracing as abstraction.

This way of approaching the question of representation also has repercussions for the way in which the original question of 'living together' is framed. The negotiation of a place together moves the discussion away from questions around public and private space towards the sharing of a space that is the taking place of diasporic space.





## Border(ing) practices

Borders are constituted by the diasporic subject in the form of diffused border zones and effects. The flows that characterise globalisation and the neo-liberal economy also produce borders, meaning that they not only describe the edges of nations and regions but are dispersed throughout, wherever there is an overlapping of flows of people, goods, data, capital. Yet the word 'border' still brings with it images of physical barriers, the vast fence built at the US/Mexico border, the Berlin wall, or the more recent walls in Baghdad and those still being built in Palestine. Whilst these sites are paradigmatic of the conflicts and struggles at the border, there are vast stretches of territorial borders that go unmarked, barely manifesting themselves in the physical landscape, a checkpoint here and a road marker there. But even these unremarkable borders produce many border-effects and the question of how borders are assigned value, both territorially and symbolically, is one of the concerns of this chapter, including the different ways in which they are represented. How do borders manifest themselves in people's lives and psyches far from territory's edges? 'Border-struggles', 'borderzones' and 'border-lines' all somehow map themselves onto the intimate topology of bodies no longer at the border.

Contemporary conceptualisations of the border vary from an artificial divide that only manifests itself in the act of crossing, to a 'borderzone' as a thickening of the area around the border, where its influence ranges. The 'border' in relation to the 'boundary' is seen as less rigid, allowing for some permeability and exchange, turning the site of division and containment into a fertile plain where subjectivities can slip and new cultures form. But there is always a degree of danger at the border, which may have rich potential but it is a potential mediated by the risk of transgression whether spatial, cultural, political or otherwise. The border can also function as a set of internalised limits. My work seeks to explore these limits and opportunities of the border, not on a national or continental scale, but rather on how they are reproduced at a local or micro-scale in the city by its diasporic subjects. What are the shifts that occur in this switching of scales and what are the consequences of the prominence of these artificial sites in the lives of an increasing number of people?

### Topographic, symbolic and psychic borders

#### (a) Borderlands (Anzaldúa)

Any conceptualisation of borders also needs to address their affects far from their physical location at territories' edges. These are psychic borders, where the effects of the physical border are internalised by those whose lives are profoundly affected by them. The writer,

Gloria Anzaldúa, in particular has theorised these within the context of Chicana culture; people caught between different cultures, lives, places, having some attachment to all but not belonging to any. She describes it as a place in-between and as a result on the margins—what she calls ‘borderlands’. Although there is little choice associated with this positionality, many do not to acknowledge it fully as it is an uncomfortable place, full of contradictions. For Anzaldúa, the affirmation of such a place is rewarded in the birth of a new culture, a new consciousness that embodies some of the spirit of the border. Here there is much overlap with bell hook’s conceptualisation of the margin as a limit that leads to a new place borne of resistance. As hooks writes: “*For me this space of radical openness is a margin—a profound edge.*”<sup>1</sup>

Irit Rogoff discusses the role of such psychic borders in her appraisal of the life and works of Ana Mendieta, the Cuban-American performance artist whose work interrogates space and culture through the prism of her own body. In the *Siluetas* series, produced just before her untimely death, she used her body to trace its silhouettes in the landscape with earth, leaves and water. The works were fleeting and ephemeral, not at all of the type that would fit into the New York gallery scene of the 1980s. Rogoff’s reading tries to free Mendieta’s work from its categorisation in the dominant discourse as ‘feminine, immigrant art’ by emphasising its role in interrogating the relationship between the appropriation of space, the body and cultural norms. She draws on the essential role that the body played in Roman law, where the drawing of a line, of manipulating the earth was the basis on which land was possessed and cultivated. Mendieta’s work can thus be seen as a negation of this way of drawing boundaries by using her own body to draw different lines, not ones of division and possession (‘lines of segmentation’), but another kind of line that has the power to break down divisions, to go beyond cultural and social norms—a ‘line of flight’.<sup>2</sup> Mendieta’s own positioning in the USA and her knowledge of the religions and rituals of Latin American culture allowed her to articulate this critique from the ‘borderlands’. In her reading Rogoff *‘understand[s]*



Ana Mendieta, *Imagen de Yagul*, from the series *Siluetas Works in Mexico 1973-1977*

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- 1 bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, gender and cultural politics* (London: Turnaround, 1991), p. 149. See also, ‘Diasporic spatio-temporalities’, p. 55-56.
  - 2 The conceptualisation of the two types of lines, ‘lines of segmentation’ and ‘lines of flight’ are taken from the work of Deleuze and Guattari on the workings of desire and power and are also referred to by Rogoff in her discussion of Mendieta’s work and throughout the chapter, ‘Borders’ in, Irit Rogoff, *Terra infirma: Geographies visual culture* (London: Routledge, 2000); Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)).



Ana Mendieta, *Isla*, 1981/1994

*Mendieta not as a producer of borders, or as the artist who had been set outside of the border, but as the actual border itself, demarcating and embodying the actual lines of difference.*<sup>3</sup>

In the spatial disciplines of architecture and urbanism borders are usually understood as physical edges; these examples from other disciplines such as art practice or literature, show a way of thinking borders as cultural constructs. They relate them to the production of migrant subjectivity, which also has an effect on city-space, but these are very different from borders understood as the physical demarcation of walls and fences. These other types of borders are diffused and in flux, resulting from the deterritorialisations and reterritorialisations of space by diasporic subjects.

#### (b) Diffused 'borderzones'

The contemporary characterisation of the border as line has also been contested at other times and in other cultures where the border was always seen as a zone, not as the buffer zone or wilderness of contemporary geo-politics (for example the borderzone along the eastern edge of Finland, marking the edge of Europe with Russia) but as a productive zone, a shared area used by those on either side as a resource rather than constituting a divide.<sup>4</sup> In his book, *Siam Mapped*,<sup>5</sup> Thongchai Winichakul has traced the misunderstandings that arose from this difference in attitude between the Siamese and the British, who in the first half of the C19 were busy annexing parts of present-day Burma. Whilst the British were keen to adopt a border line, for the Siamese the question of the border was far more complex. Each town had jurisdiction over the areas around it but these did not always meet, there could be neutral zones in between. The Siamese concept of territory was of a heterogeneous patchwork rather than a continuous appropriated territory. It meant that the patrolling of the boundary was a local affair and the border itself was not a line but a place, or *places*. Whilst watchtowers marked the boundary it was the patrol and the inhabitants that demarcated the locally maintained and negotiated borders. The concept of the border functioned much like a set of nested dolls, boundaries

3 Irit Rogoff, *Terra infirma: Geographies visual culture* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 136.

4 In European history, 'the commons' were also borderzones at the edges of settlements and perceived as a shared resource, used for collecting firewood or foraging. There is a growing contemporary interest in the recuperation of the commons as a model for a sustainable politics. See for examples the recent special issue of the on-line journal, *Re-Public*, Thodoros Karounos and Paulina Lampsa, 'The promise of the commons', *Re-public* (no date): <http://www.re-public.gr/en/?cat=4>.

5 Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam mapped: A history of the geo-body of a nation* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1994). For a discussion of the book and how it maps a 'nation' see, *Lines of Flight*, 'Mapping as a tool and representational device in architecture', (14 March 2007), University of Sheffield, School of Architecture, <http://linesofflight.wordpress.com/2008/03/17/seminar-01-mapping-as-a-tool-and-representational-device-in-architecture-march-14th-2007/>.

sat within boundaries, having different levels of sovereignty, together constituting a 'border'. As Winichakul points out: '*Sovereignty and borders were not coterminous.*'<sup>6</sup> Thus there was not only an indeterminacy in the concept of the border, but also discrepancies within the actual physical borders whose edges in reality were fuzzy and imprecise. Of course this was also related to the question of scale and how space was conceptualised differently: for the Siamese it was still related to experience and lived reality, whereas for the British it had already been abstracted into the flattened representations of maps made of lines and marks on paper. But the conceptualisation of the border as zone is not completely alien to Western thinking, instead it has been systematically expunged from it. As Richard Sennett's description of the Athenian agora shows, there were spaces within it that blurred the notion of the border and created a kind of liminal zone between public and private—a zone of possibility rather than a line of complete separation.<sup>7</sup>

Separation and partition have since not only been adopted by the West but also bequeathed to its former subjects as colonial exports (the Siamese too eventually had to acquiesce to British demands for demarcating strict borders as lines). For my younger self living in Pakistan, one part of the now partitioned Indian Subcontinent, the line was the India/Pakistan border, drawn sixty years ago and maintained ever since in violence or the threat of it. I lived in Lahore, the historical heart of the once unified Punjab province and for me the border manifested itself only when transgressed, for example in the very occasional sighting of a Sikh turban (the Punjab is an area of many important Sikh shrines, and pilgrims of Sikh and Sufi faith were the only ones allowed to cross the border on a strict quota system. For a child not yet fully aware of History, the turban signified the not-quite-other). The border also manifested itself in the radio waves and television signals that managed to melt through physical barriers and deployed armies, although we did not watch Indian television in my



Until recently, the Wagah border crossing was the only road link between India and Pakistan. The 'lowering of the flags' ceremony has become a spectacle; its elaborate nature matching the level of hostility between the two countries.

6 Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam mapped: A history of the geo-body of a nation* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1994), p. 77.

7 Richard Sennett, 'Democratic spaces', *Hunch*, 9 (Autumn 2005): 40-47.

home, Bollywood songs were always a background humming presence at my aunt's house that reminded us of our shared histories across the border. These dispersed presences were perhaps more poignant for us (the younger generation) who had not lived through partition than the Grand Trunk Road that leads from the heart of old Lahore to Amritsar—images travelling effortlessly. In contrast to the way in which the border permeates into the very fabric of life around it, the actual physical border, the line in the sand does not always exist. If it does it seems inconsequential, or in the wrong place, insulting in the lack of effort required to sustain it. Rebecca Solnit describes her experience of the US/Mexico border whilst floating down the Rio Grande, the stated location of the border. She writes: *'Yet rivers are capricious, and this one has a habit of throwing out oxbows that put some bewildered farmers and their land in a new country.'*<sup>8</sup> Of course, there are places along that particular border that are much heavily fortified and the desert itself creates its own deadly barrier.



Stills from *Performing the border*, Ursula Biemann (dir.)

Ursula Biemann has researched one particular thickening of the same border, in the phenomenon of the *maquiladoras*, the factories that have flourished at the place where the US and Mexico meet. They take advantage of the very particular conditions available to them—proximity to the US and an abundance of easily exploited, cheap labour. In her exploration of these factories and the self-built settlements that have sprung up in the desert around them, Biemann speaks of how the border is materialised, not just physically but also socially. In this case it is highly gendered, the young female workforce of the *maquiladoras* embody and perform the border that keeps them literally tied to their workplace (discharge needles are worn on the wrist and attached to the work bench for protection against the electromagnetic charge) as well as economically and socially tied, unable to leave or struggle against their appalling work conditions. The women workers of these factories are on the edge of both societies and they embody the 'borderzone'. Although they are highly vulnerable and exploited, the shifting in societal norms that this particular border engenders, means that they are also evolving

8 Rebecca Solnit, *Storming the gates of paradise: Landscapes for politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), p. 86.

new subjectivities, these women who are the principle wage-earners in their family suddenly have a degree of power that was not afforded them previously.<sup>9</sup>

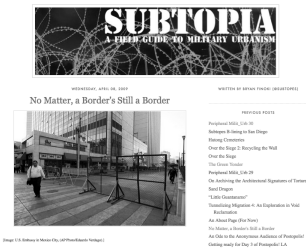
(c) Border-effects: line, channel, funnel

The above shows that the modern western conceptualisation of the border as line, wall or fence—a demarcation that limits, contains and bounds has been questioned consistently by those who live near the border or those whose lives are affected by it. Yet, the physical manifestation of the border as exactly this device of division between ‘us and them’ has proliferated everywhere. From that most famous border wall of all, the vast US/Mexico line of separation described by Anzaldúa as the place where ‘*the Third World grates against the first and bleeds*’,<sup>10</sup> to the walls that create the open-air prison that is Gaza, the border is a highly contested place borne of colonialisms past and present. And yet there is something more, a certain intensity and productivity that the conditions of the border engender and which have made it a privileged site of study within the arts, social sciences and humanities. The etymology of the word hints at this; in contrast to the ‘boundary’ which speaks of limits, of the place where something ends, the ‘border’ is the edge where two realities meet.<sup>11</sup> The border is always in-between and it is perhaps this quality that gives not only the term but also the sites associated with a generative quality.



Stills from *Performing the border*, Ursula Biemann (dir.)

- .....
- 9 Ursula Biemann (dir.), *Performing the border*, Video Essay, 45 mins (1999), English; see also, Ursula Biemann ‘Performing the Border’, (1999), [http://www.geobodies.org/01\\_art\\_and\\_videos/1999\\_performing\\_the\\_border/](http://www.geobodies.org/01_art_and_videos/1999_performing_the_border/).
- 10 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/la frontera: The new mestiza* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute Book Company, 1987), p. 3.
- 11 ‘boundary’ 1. a. That which serves to indicate the bounds or limits of anything whether material or immaterial; also the limit itself; *border*, n. 1. A side, edge, brink, or margin.’ Oxford English dictionary. Richard Sennett also makes this distinction between the border and the boundary in; Richard Sennett, ‘Democratic spaces’, *Hunch*, 9 (Autumn 2005): 40-47.



Subtopia blog by Bryan Finoki records the contemporary proliferation of borders and militarised urbanism

The assertion of the geo-political border as a physical barrier always seems to be accompanied by conflict that more often than not erupts in violence; these barriers may have been built in the name of security but they practice separation. The division and containment of people that once lived side-by-side only serves to increase misunderstandings and resentments. The fortification of enclaves within cities has also its parallel at the international border, which is increasingly militarised for the sake of ‘security’ and the relaxation of border controls within the closely defined extents of the West.<sup>12</sup> The creation of the modern nation-state also gave birth to the idea of ‘secure’ and impermeable borders that would protect the state’s sovereignty, but each limit creates with it also the possibility of transgression. It was precisely the practicing of the border as a strict line that also gave birth to the many counter-practices that subvert its power, such as those of smugglers. The geographer, Bryan Finoki has tracked the recent eruption of border walls and fortifications across the world in his *Subtopia* blog, which he identifies as part of what he has termed the ‘nomadic fortress’ or the ‘pervasive border’.<sup>13</sup> Technologies of control and surveillance that are deployed not only at nations’ edges but dispersed throughout, creating an ‘archipelago’ of territories. Finoki comments:

*No longer just a question of contested territory, hard boundary lines, and stricter border enforcement between two nations, but a space that functions more ubiquitously on several paradoxes around global mobility and a rise in detention markets, detention politics, national security as the new global architecture.*<sup>14</sup>

The architecture of national security consists of detention centres, the no-man’s land of international airports that are physically within national borders, technically without, the militarisation of the ocean as in the case of the Straits of Gibraltar and the unprecedented power of immigration officials in the countries of the global North.<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, Finoki’s description of the border also includes the various events, actions and legislations that affect the way the border functions.

The language of migration studies and political theory has begun to classify borders according to the different filtration effects they produce beyond that of a simple barrier. Perhaps the most worrying trend today is the effect of borders as funnels, where security has been tightened around easily accessed areas, compelling migrants to attempt

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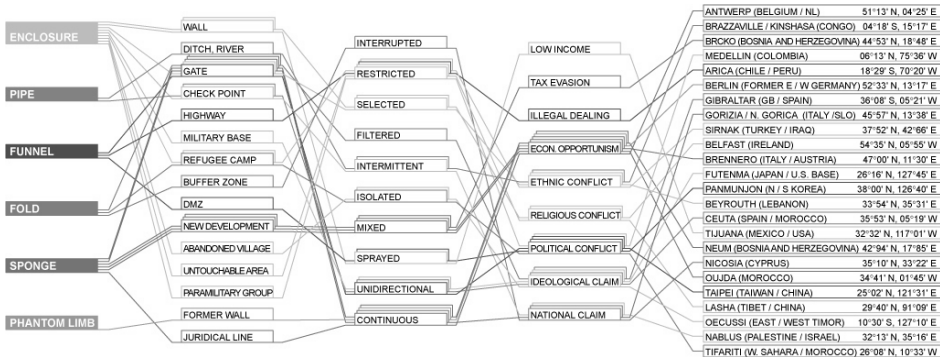
12 See, ‘Diasporic territories’, p. 185-186.

13 See, Bryan Finoki, ‘Subtopia’, (2010), <http://subtopia.blogspot.com/>.

14 Bryan Finoki, ‘Towards a nomadic fortress [refuge/refugee]’, (25.01.09), <http://subtopia.blogspot.com/>.

15 For a discussion of Hackitectura’s *Fadaiat* project that deals with the militarised border at the Straits of Gibraltar see, ‘A contemporary politics of mapping’, p. 224.

increasingly dangerous crossings. The other side of this particular security regime is a funnelling mechanism that continually redirects and deposits refugees and migrants through a maze of checkpoints and bureaucracy, through holding areas and waiting zones. Ursula Biemann's video, *Sahara Chronicles*, charts this process in sub-Saharan Africa, where the nomadic Tuareg tribes have adapted to the realities of the contemporary world by becoming guides who ferry people to and from the Maghreb—those on their way to Europe and those who have been turned back.<sup>16</sup> Another type of border filtering is its effect as a 'pipe', enclosed routes that are accessed through privilege, such as the many bypass roads built by Israel to transport its population between settlements in the West Bank. Others write of 'channels' worn into the fabric of global security by the routes of migrants and people smugglers creating paths along which others follow, in much the same way as a flow of water will create its own channels. These and various other effects of the border have been documented and analysed by Multiplicity in their diagram, 'Border Matrix', part of the project, *Borderdevice*, an exploration of the functioning of borders and boundaries in the contemporary world, defending privileges, controlling territories and regulating exchanges.<sup>17</sup>



*Bordermatrix* by Multiplicity

A second aspect of *Borderdevice* explores some of these functionings of the border in the context of Israel/Palestine and its architecture of numerous borders and checkpoints, including their effects on the lives of both Palestinians and Israelis who negotiate them daily. Whilst the Israelis sail past on elevated bypass roads, the travel time for Palestinians is tripled, having to weave in and out of the various checkpoints. Multiplicity's project, displayed as a double screen video projection of the two journeys with accompanying maps, exposes the

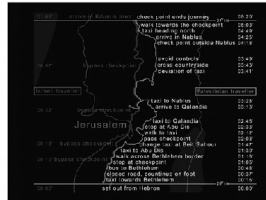
16 See, Ursula Biemann and Brian Holmes (eds.), *The Maghreb connection: Movements of life across north Africa* (Barcelona: Actar, 2006).

17 Stefano Boeri, 'Border device(s)', *Archis*, 5 (2003): 72-73.; see also, 'border device(s)', (2003), [www.multiplicity.it](http://www.multiplicity.it).





Borderdevice by Mutiplicity

Israeli Traveler:  
By-pass road A60 South.Palestinian Traveler:  
The old city of Hebron.

selectiveness of contemporary border regimes, the reality of the border as a highly specialised kind of filter. Whilst such borders do act as limits, they also ask to be transgressed, always already incorporating a means of passing through or across; as Mutiplicity's project highlights even the strictest of borders are porous.

## Bodies and border practices

### (a) Transgressing the border

The tension between these two functions gives borders a paradoxical nature, but it is also the place from which their generative qualities emerges. In 'nature' the border is also selective, from the microscopic scale of cell walls that are semi-permeable allowing only certain molecules and proteins to pass through, to the scale of landscapes. The gardener and landscape architect Gilles Clément, writes of the productive nature of the margin, a place where different types of environments overlap and life flourishes.<sup>18</sup> For Clément it is the diversity of the border that makes it a generative place, and in a similar vein, Richard Sennett describes the border as a social space of diversity that also allows it to become a politically active zone. The overlapping functions of such spaces bring diverse people together, not in consensus but through a desire to be around those who are different. Using examples from ancient Greece, Sennett relates the theatre of the *Pnyx* to deliberative democracy, practiced through majority consensus, whereas the *Agora* typified by the *Stoa* that border it on three sides, is a place for associative democracy. The *Stoa* were places of trade, politics and sexual encounter, their positioning at the edge of the busy square allowing all these functions to overlap each other.<sup>19</sup> These spaces reveal that even for the Western imaginary the border as strict line is only a recent construct and for Sennett, these spaces highlight the importance of a politics of proximity over a politics by proxy; the spatial dimension revealing an important role for architecture and urbanism:

18 See, Gilles Clément, Philippe Rahm and Giovanna Borasi, *Environ(ment): Approaches for tomorrow* (Milan: Skira Editore, 2007).

19 See, Richard Sennett, 'Democratic spaces', *Hunch*, 9 (Autumn 2005): 40-47.

*Do we find it (democracy) in those spaces or places where the word recedes in importance? A different democratic model would be a place where it does not matter whether people understand each other verbally, but they understand each other by their bodies. They can only do that through the form of association in which they are both together, aroused by each other's presence, but still kept distinct. That is the democracy with the living edge. And that is what I believe in, and I think it is something that architects and planners can make.<sup>20</sup>*

In this description of the border as a productive, political edge the closeness of bodies is crucial. The movement of diasporic bodies itself constitutes borders as the politics of elsewhere are brought to another city-space. This act can transform the borders internalised by the migrant into interstices—places of possibility, much like the border but not at the border. The concerns of the migrant can here also become the concerns of the other, and in becoming involved in these other struggles that may seem far away and disconnected, the politics of the border and the interstice can fulfil their emancipatory potential.

#### (b) Manifestation of borders as protest



Protests by Kurdish groups along the high street (2008)

A kind of physical manifestation of the borders produced by diasporic subjects occurs intermittently in the space of the high street as protest. Whilst walking together is a negotiation, walking together in large numbers can carry the weight of a protest, it is the point at which a walk becomes a march. Michael Hirsch categorises a protest as having three elements, of contestation and a resistance to power, of community or a being together and the element of public space—the street. He writes: *'The most important aspect is the de-functionalisation of urban space: the interruption of the usual order of business, transport, work and specialisation. But it is also the interruption of the stratified, hierarchical order of a class society: the positions individuals inhabit in the social order are suspended.'*<sup>21</sup> Organised as and when needed, these protests do have a spontaneity, but this is tempered through the need to gain permissions. They are organised by a number of cultural and community centres together; the reason for the march governing which groups will or won't participate. The community has an understanding with the police who allow their applications to be processed quickly in order to grant them licences for marches when there is only a short notice. The size of the protest is considered small – insignificantly small as one councillor laughed off my description of the marches as protest;

20 Richard Sennett quoted in, Alejandro Zaera Polo, 'The politics of the envelope: A political critique of materialism', *Volume, 17* (Content Management)(2008): 76-105 (81).

21 Michael Hirsch, 'The Space of Community: Between Culture and Politics' in, Markus Miessen and Shumon Basar (eds.), *Did someone say participate?: An atlas of spatial practice* (London: MIT Press, 2006), p. 291.



The Kurdish activist who organises the protests on the high street also attends many other marches. She told me that their group had made plain red banners so that they could be used on any occasion. This image is from a protest against the war in Gaza (2008-2009).

'they just have a few banners'.<sup>22</sup> But perhaps the significance of this act is lost on him, it is not the size of the marches that gives them importance nor even the disruption and de-functionalisation of space they result in – after all the protest covers a relatively small stretch of street and it occupies only a small portion of a wide street, allowing traffic to flow beside it – what makes the impact is of course, as always, the audience. These marches, the ones that happen on a local, neighbourhood level, aren't directed at a government or state – they are instead directed at the other users of the street.

The protest is called a 'peace march' by the woman who organises many of them, as another way of limiting the antagonistic dimension of the act. Yet the 'protest' or 'march' actively increases the territory of the group within public space. It creates a kind of corridor that at those moments of protest embodies the idea of 'Kurdistan' and becomes a territorial and symbolic figuration of it. The form of the street, its linearity and the proximity of Kurds and Turks working, shopping and living along it means that it is an ideal space of protest. The way the space changes around this dynamic corridor, such as the pavement occupied by various people, some of whom are inevitably Turkish, has its own effects. People turn around to watch the march; there are blank faces from those who cannot read the banners, those that can are Turkish or Kurdish. I cannot read most of the banners but I do recognise the name and face of Ocalan on a number of them. The remarkable thing about these protests is that they are generally very quiet, they have none of the loudness, music and chatter of other protests I have witnessed, such as those carried out by anti-globalisation protesters or even people protesting outside various embassies in Central London. Perhaps it is the small size of the protest that makes it quiet, to me it seems that the quiet protest has become a part of everyday life for many and not really the moment of a spontaneous expression, as protest is sometimes characterised. It is instead a way of claiming space and with it an identity—they are claiming the right to exist.

In the years that I have been carrying out this research, these marches, which at first were very regular, became infrequent and eventually seemed to stop. The area and the high street in particular have been subject to 'redevelopment' and the accompanying gentrification and there are less *kahve* on the street now, whilst many of the smaller Turkish and Kurdish businesses have closed down, making way for yet another coffee shop or trendy bar. The protests of course have not stopped, just as the oppression of Kurds has not stopped, they have simply moved to an adjacent neighbourhood, where the Turkish and Kurdish

22 This comment was made in an informal conversation, following a chance meeting with a Labour party councillor of Hackney, London.

migrants now seem to move to when they first arrive in London. Whilst there are still very many Turkish and Kurdish businesses and people on the high street, they are those that are already well-established and so with it perhaps a little less associated with the politics of the place left behind. I have very few images of the protests that took place on the high street, the voyeuristic tendencies of the camera meant that taking photographs did not seem appropriate. This uneasiness combined with the mappings of Kurdistan produced in the interviews, which revealed intimate details of lives sometimes unheeded, led to an exploration of the nature of representation. Of how to represent whilst not giving everything away and still staying faithful to what was recounted and what I could not record; of how to represent beyond the dominant narrative and in an economy other than that of the dominant (visual) language?

### (c) 'Presencing' and languages of practice

Much of the discussion on the politics of representation has centred around the two different interpretations of this term, for example Spivak explores this distinction in her essay, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?'<sup>23</sup> The text, which has been at the centre of a controversy borne of a misunderstanding, starts from the specific question of how to represent in a context where the very act of representation silences. For Spivak a good first step is to distinguish between the two types of representation that for her are made explicit in Marx but are merged together in interpretations of him in contemporary philosophy. This she attributes to the existence of two separate words in German for the two meanings of representation, which are not present in other languages.

*Two senses of representation are being run together: representation as "speaking for," as in politics [vertreten], and representation as "re-presentation," as in art or philosophy [darstellung ...] they are related, but running them together, especially in order to say that beyond both is where oppressed subjects speak, act, and know for themselves, leads to an essentialist, utopian politics.*<sup>24</sup>

A version of this easily overlooked distinction is also found in Bruno Latour's description of the fallacy at the heart of what he calls the 'modern condition'. He distinguishes between political representation, *vertreten* for Spivak, and scientific representation. The former is the highly visible representation of citizens through proxies within political systems, and the latter is the hidden world of representations where scientists interpret and represent nature's forces/objects. The scientific representation is less familiar, it is the taking of 'facts' from their

.....  
 23 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the subaltern speak?', in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 271-313.

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 275-276.

context, of re-presenting them, *darstellung*, and making them into proxies of the 'natural' world. Representation then, in one sense is a 'speaking for' and in another is a 'portraying of', and Latour also claims that in contemporary Western understandings of how the world functions the two are confused together.

This misunderstanding of representation is an especially fraught question in the visual disciplines of art, film and architecture. Hito Steyerl points out that documentary theory in particular has been rendered impotent through the constant debate around questions of representation. As a way out of this impasse she uses the concept of 'presencing', by way of an early article by Walter Benjamin that introduces the idea of a 'language of things'.<sup>25</sup> When speaking of language in this article, Benjamin is not referring to the spoken languages of humans but to the silent languages of objects. This seemingly strange concept is re-interpreted by Steyerl to provide a way of thinking about translation that goes beyond language into practice. She writes: *'Instead of national languages, which are only mentioned passingly in this text, he focuses on what I would call languages of practice: the language of law, technology, art, the language of music and sculpture. And more importantly: translation doesn't take place between them, but within them.'*<sup>26</sup> Benjamin emphasises this idea of communication between things and between practices by advising us to, *'recall the material community of things in their communication.'*<sup>27</sup> The consequence of this is two-fold, it relates to the way in which we perceive things, they become more than passive receptacles to be filled with human desire, instead the situation is reversed. Things affect humans, their language or communication changes the way we behave. This is elaborated upon in Benjamin's theory of mimesis and its echo is heard in this earlier essay on language and objects. If things are not passive, then the second consequence is the need to take account of them and here the emphasis shifts from the original question of representation.

*It is not about representation at all, but about actualising whatever the things have to say in the present. And to do so is not a matter of realism, but rather of relationalism – it is a matter of presencing and thus transforming the social, historical and also material relations, which determine things.*<sup>28</sup>

.....  
 25 See, Hito Steyerl, 'The language of things', (2006), <http://translate.eipcp.net/transversal/0606/steyerl/en>; Walter Benjamin, 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man' in, Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (eds.), *Walter Benjamin: Selected writings, 1913-1926* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 62-78.

26 Hito Steyerl, 'The language of things', (2006), <http://translate.eipcp.net/transversal/0606/steyerl/en>.

27 Walter Benjamin, *Walter Benjamin: Selected writings, 1913-1926* Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings, (eds.) (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 73.

28 Hito Steyerl, 'The language of things', (2006), <http://translate.eipcp.net/transversal/0606/steyerl/en>

The shift in emphasis from representation to relations makes for a reciprocal politics of associations.<sup>29</sup> Without knowing and without realising at the time, the mappings of Kurdistan and our conversations were also produced in a language of practice; of bodily gestures and personal idioms. Whilst the efficacy of the protest is also based on the affects it produces in public space mediated through bodily practices that intervene in a democratic process based on the politics of associations. With this in mind, I want to turn to the work of Bruno Latour who has recently made a call for a mode of democracy based around such relations, in what he calls a 'Parliament of Things'.

### 'Quasi-subjects' in the 'borderlands'

Latour's conception of politics is based around a critique of the modern condition and here I use some of the insights of his analysis to interpret a small park in Spitalfields, East London as an example of a 'diasporic public space'.<sup>30</sup> Latour bases his critique around an exposition of the false separation between Nature and Culture that is the modernist assumption, and which such modes of thinking also deploy as the distinction that separates the West from the Rest. The edifice is constructed through two sets of interlocking practices, which are named 'the work of translation' and 'the work of purification'. The work of translation creates hybrids of nature and culture, while the work of purification separates them – the two practices working in tandem to create the modern illusion of the total separation of nature from culture, whilst producing lots of amalgamations of the two in the form of 'natures-cultures'. What this process does not take into account is 'the work of mediation' that takes place between the two poles of Nature and Culture, this is the role of what Latour calls, 'quasi-objects/quasi-subjects'. He states the modern position on this:

.....

29 The concept of 'presencing' is also related to Deleuze's way of thinking representation, which in classical philosophy only ever reproduces the Same. For Deleuze, difference is internalised and is not predicated on comparisons such as resemblance, opposition, analogy. 'Difference-in-itself' takes the world seriously as its own model. Representation is therefore not a re-representation (of the Same) but focuses on what is singular, the specificities of each thing and situation. As Deleuze writes: '*Difference is not and cannot be thought in itself, so long as it is subject to the requirements of representation.*' Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and repetition*, trans. by Paul Patton (London: The Athlone Press, 1994), p. 262.

30 This subject has been addressed in detail in, Bruno Latour, *We have never been modern*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

*On the contrary, they [the Modernists] recognised their existence but emptied it of any relevance by turning full-blown mediators into mere intermediaries. An intermediary — although recognised as necessary simply transports, transfers, transmits energy from one of the poles of the Constitution. It is void in itself and can only be less faithful or more or less opaque. A mediator, however, is an original event and creates what it translates as well as the entities between which it plays the mediating role.<sup>31</sup>*

Similar to Derrida's critique of Plato's chora or the importance of the Void in Chinese philosophy, the mediators leave their mark on all aspects of life, politics, the body or the polis.<sup>32</sup> What are these strange hybrids that have such power that are in fact the effaced products and producers of our world, and how do we begin to account for them? What Latour calls for is a representation for these 'quasi-objects' and a taking account of and following of the intricate networks that they are a part of. I would like to make an architectural representation of one such 'quasi-object'.

#### (a) Altab Ali Park and the Shaheed Minar



Altab Ali Park, Whitechapel, London

When I was working with the art and architecture practice, muf, we were invited to participate in an exhibition in Linz that re-presented public spaces in London.<sup>33</sup> Each participant was asked to choose a space that they liked or which had particular significance for them and interpret it in a 'new' way for the exhibition. The space that I looked at was a small urban park in East London, which was chosen by an anthropologist from the local Bengali community. He dropped out at the last

moment leaving me to come up with a reading of a space that I knew vaguely from my visits to the Whitechapel Art Gallery and Brick Lane. The history of the park revealed that it was the site of 'the White Chapel' after which the area was named and which was destroyed in the Second World War. Its current name, Altab Ali Park, revealed another strand in its history; the park was named after a local Bengali resident who had been killed in a racist attack in the 1970s, around the time of

31 Ibid., pp. 77-78. Latour's use of 'quasi-objects/quasi-subjects' is influenced by the work of Michel Serres. See, Michel Serres, *The parasite*, trans. by Lawrence R. Schehr (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1982).

32 See, 'Diasporic spatio-temporalities', p. 60.

33 Peter Arlt, muf and public works (curators), *Revisit: Urbanism made in london*, (2007-2008), Architekturforum Oberosterreich, Linz, Haus der Architektur, Graz, Austria. muf architecture/art is a London based feminist practice, see; [www.muf.co.uk](http://www.muf.co.uk).

the notorious race riots in that area of London.<sup>34</sup> But I was also aware of the park's role in recent politics; a large demonstration against the war in Iraq had started at the park and marched to Whitehall.



The original Shaheed Minar, destroyed in the Language Movement Day riots (1952)



Shaheed Minar in Altab Ali Park, London

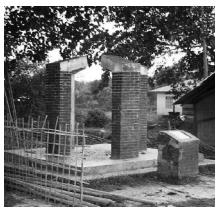
I began to think of the connection between this small inconspicuous pocket of land and the agency of the local community. This thinking was reinforced by my conversation with a local community leader who told me about the significance of what looked to me like a strange sculpture in one corner of the park.<sup>35</sup> The Shaheed Minar or 'Martyr's Monument' was built in commemoration of the students killed in the Language Movement Day riots in Bangladesh, fighting for the right to have Bengali as a national language alongside Urdu in what was then East Pakistan. The original Shaheed Minar was a small stone monument that was destroyed by the army in the Bangladeshi independence struggle; it was later replaced by a large-scale monument designed by the famous Bangladeshi sculptor, Hamidur Rahman. The cubist sculpture, made of white marble denotes a mother protecting her children with a red disc in the background representing the blood that was spilled during the independence/language struggles. What stands in Altab Ali Park is a 1:5 scale replica of that monument—and it is not the only one. There is another Shaheed Minar in the UK in Oldham, others in Tokyo, in Sydney and one planned for Toronto, as well as several different versions in Bangladesh itself. What did this proliferation of monuments, wherever there was a critical mass of the Bangladeshi population, tell me about the public space I was trying to interpret?

One of my colleagues found the whole idea of the monument difficult. He was disturbed by the claiming of public space by a single group around a nationalistic struggle for independence. But to me there was something more interesting at stake here in

34 "In September 1978, just a few months after Margaret Thatcher claimed to understand why English men and women might feel their country was being 'swamped' by Commonwealth immigrants, the National Front moved its central offices from Teddington in West London to Great Eastern Street, a few minutes walk from Brick Lane. Their intention was to provoke more trouble following an incident four months earlier in which Altab Ali, a young clothing worker from Wapping, had been set upon and murdered by three men in nearby Adler Street. A photograph from the period shows a swastika scrawled on a wall above the message 'We're back.'" Sukhdev Sandhu, 'Come hungry, leave edgy', London Review of Books, 25(19)(9 Oct 2003): 10-13; <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v25/n19/sukhdev-sandhu/come-hungry-leave-edgy>.

35 Interview with Nurul Islam, General Secretary of the Bangaldeshi Welfare Association, on Tuesday 7th November 2006 at the park. He is involved in organising the annual Language Day commemorations that start at the monument in the park.





Shaheed Minar in Sydney, Ijijatpur, Chittagong, Tokyo, Dhaka

the repetition at different scales of the same monument. Displaced from its original location, the iteration of the Shaheed Minar produces alterity through surplus in an echo of the subjectivity of its diasporic audience; from the variation in construction material, the adaptations that responded to specific site conditions, to the personalised interpretations of the design.<sup>36</sup> Whilst the original monument was made of white marble, the one in the park was made of mild steel, others were constructed in concrete or etched in stone. I wondered what these differing monuments would reveal if viewed, following Latour and Serres, as ‘quasi-objects’ that could also hold a politics, affected by their changing context? And of course the dimension of appropriation is always latent in public space, the problem occurs when things become static—‘staking a claim’ is not inherently bad. In UK, and especially London, where people have grown used to the idea of a ‘semi-private public realm’ this might be a detail that is sometimes overlooked. De Certeau’s everyday practices are a reminder that *everyone* appropriates space.<sup>37</sup>

#### (b) Shaheed Minar as ‘quasi-object’, the postcolonial ‘quasi-subject’

Interrogating the Shaheed Minar not as a mute object that at best represented the nostalgia for ‘home’ or a commemoration of past struggles, but as a ‘quasi-object’, opened a number of avenues from which I could speak of both the Minar itself and also of the park. It also contributed towards articulating a critique of the standard academic research that has proliferated around the Bangladeshi community in this area of East London. Spitalfields has a long history of hosting migrant populations, from the early Huguenot refugees to the current Bengali community. The area and its residents have been subject to many an ethnographic study, focusing on topics such as ‘ethnicity and political representation’ or ‘family and kinship’.<sup>38</sup> These have always made me feel uncomfortable as although they may have been meant well, the sheer number of studies conducted from the position of the expert researcher focusing in on one specific aspect has resulted in the objectification of the community as a whole. But I am well aware of how difficult it is to carry out such research without such accusations, so what then could be the answer? Let me turn again to Latour for some clarification. How does his articulation of the ‘Great Divide’, the separation of Nature/Culture, Subject/Object, of the West from the Rest, translate in conceptualising the hybrid subjectivities of those in the diaspora? A ‘quasi-subject’ perhaps? This would place the diasporic subject in a

36 See, ‘Diasporic subjectivity’, p. 78.

37 See, ‘Diasporic spatio-temporalities’, pp. 50.

38 See for example, John Eade, *The politics of community: The Bangladeshi community in east London* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1989).

privileged position that remains unrecognised, being able to mediate between here and there, the local and the global. Latour again on the role of these mediators:

*There are no more naked truths, but there are no more naked citizens, either. The mediators have the whole space to themselves. [...] The imbroglios and networks that had no place now have the whole place to themselves. They are the ones that have to be represented; it is around them that the Parliament of Things gathers henceforth.*<sup>39</sup>

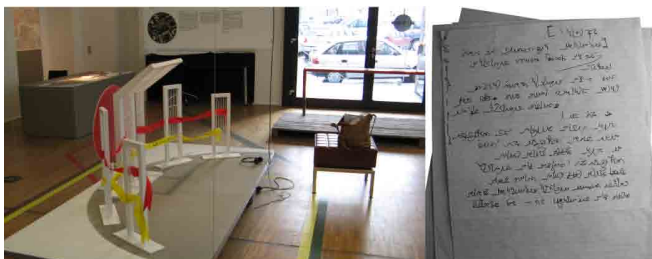
Returning to the exhibition itself, I was aware that there was a lot of interest in the language that Bengali teenagers were speaking, mixing English and Sylheti. I arranged to meet with a group of teenage girls at a local youth centre.<sup>40</sup> Immediately I was struck by their acute self-awareness. They had lived through almost constant interest in their community, both from academia and governmental institutions – in short they were used to the ‘limelight’. They could ‘perform’ for their audience, in this case myself as the naïve researcher. ‘*Was I not aware that there was a name for the way they spoke, “Benglish” they were calling it and no it wasn’t making new words, just mixing English and Sylheti phrases.*’ They looked at me pityingly, ‘*do you not speak your own language, what is it anyway?*’ ‘Urdu’, I say guiltily and ‘*yes I do speak it*’, acutely aware of my country’s diabolical past regarding language and the fate of East Pakistan. They proceed to tell me of how they speak another language, ‘b-language’ or ‘back-slang’, the practice of adding a letter in this case ‘b’ after every letter you speak – something that I remember trying to do in Pakistan but never quite managing. In England, this same practice is of course associated with girls at boarding school – a very different place altogether.



The girl's words and the way they were displayed in the exhibition; printed on ribbons in the language they were spoken. The ribbons recall the way in which the minar in Dhaka is decorated on days of celebration.

39 Bruno Latour, *We have never been modern*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 144.

40 New Avenues community centre is based in Brick Lane and is a charity that works with local Bangladeshi and Somali families, including evening sessions for Bangladeshi girls where I carried out interviews in December 2006. All quotes are from these interviews.



In my conversation with the girls I was aware of the long networks that they were a part of and the places that they were mediating between. Their conversation skipped from talk of events in their locality, a murder of a young woman and her children, the father who had disappeared, perhaps to Bangladesh, their articulation of UK politics and the role of the police.

Would they bother going after the man if he had fled ‘back home’? Then teenage talk of boys, the ‘b-language’, discussions of school, another research project they were involved in, this time an oral history project, giggling amongst each other, talking about friends and then about politics in Bangladesh and visiting there. It occurred to me that this was exactly what was so difficult to represent, this skipping from one place to the other, the networks these girls were tracing, the merry dance their subjectivity was leading you through. Where were they going, where did their loyalty really lie, who would they support in a cricket match between England and Bangladesh? The ultimate question for people of a certain ilk.<sup>41</sup> In Latour’s terms the girls are quasi-subjects, able to mediate between here and there, not just ‘belonging’ to one place or another. Their subjectivities allowing for new forms of culture to emerge, whether it is the b-language or some other ‘way of doing’ that I was not witness to.

To come back to the Shaheed Minar and the park; the Shaheed Minar as ‘quasi-object’ can be used to interrogate the network of relations that make this a ‘diasporic public space’. The park has been used as a gathering place for a demonstration against the Iraq war, as I mentioned earlier, a protest that included not only Bengalis but also others from the surrounding areas. The Bengali community also gathered there when rallying together for help during the collapse of the First Solution money transfer business.<sup>42</sup> As such the park represents not only the agency



Rally following the collapse of First solution (in front of Shaheed Minar in London)

41 The Conservative politician Norman Tebitt proposed the ‘cricket test’ as a way of judging the loyalties of the ‘immigrant’ population of Britain: “A large proportion of Britain’s Asian population fail to pass the cricket test. Which side do they cheer for? It’s an interesting test. Are you still harking back to where you came from or where you are?” Quoted in, John Carvel, ‘Tebbit’s cricket loyalty test hit for six’, *The Guardian*, 8 January 2004.

42 In June 2007, the First Solution money transfer business collapsed. It had a branch in East London, which was used almost exclusively by Bangladeshis sending money back home to relatives. Most of these people are not very well off themselves and some lost their life savings. A rally was held in Altab Ali Park at which the local MP George Galloway spoke, in an effort to persuade the government to offer compensation.

of the Bangladeshi community but is also becoming an active place of protest, of meeting, of gathering, for all sorts of people. At these moments the park includes the dimension of ‘agonism’ that Chantal Mouffe has called for and it is due to the agency that the Shaheed Minar and its intricate network have brought to this inconspicuous pocket of land.<sup>43</sup> Most people who gather in the park aren’t really aware of the exact history of the Minar; they just know it is somewhere you come to when something needs to be said or acted out. An account of the Minar in Toronto or Sydney could tell a completely different story; in certain areas of Bangladesh, for example, it has become a point of conflict in the struggle of indigenous communities against State oppression. But in East London, the Minar has meant that the park could indeed become a site, alongside many others for a ‘Parliament of Things’, as Latour calls it.<sup>44</sup>



Various protests in Altab Ali Park

For the practice of diasporic urbanism spaces such as Altab Ali Park are important sites to be nurtured and protected. At a time when party politics has so failed to address the concerns of Muslim diasporic communities in particular, such sites offer a place for a ‘politics of proximity’; a process that is mediated by the reterritorialisation of space by diasporas.

43 See, Chantal Mouffe, *The democratic paradox* (London: Verso, 2000); Chantal Mouffe, ‘Some reflections on an agonistic approach to the public’, in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy* (Karlsruhe/Cambridge MA: ZKM/MIT Press, 2005), pp. 804-807. See also, ‘Diasporic politics’, p. 94.

44 But this potential is now being tempered by the council’s attempts (supported by parts of the local community including those who live in the newly-built flats behind the park) to rid it of ‘unwanted’ people; it is one of the few remaining places in London where homeless people can lie down as it is not gated at night. Surrounded by a low wall that is a remnant of the old church, a fence cannot be built for conservation reasons. The particular spatial configurations of the space and its functioning as trans-locality mean that conflict is somehow inherent within it and only adds to its importance and the need to preserve its indeterminate nature.

### ‘The Parliament of Things’ within ‘diasporic public space’

This chapter’s title, ‘Border(ing) Practices’, refers to the way in which geo-political borders affect the lives of those in the diaspora through influencing their spatial practices. Through contemporary conceptualisations of the border and my own research, border(ing) practices are defined as being intimately connected to the body and in opposition to the modern description of the border as separating device. Instead diasporic bodies constitute borders as diffused and dispersed, at times neutralising their harsh effects, as happened in Altab Ali Park, at other times magnifying them, as does the intermittent protest on the high street. Bryan Finoki challenges architectural practice to attend to the border, writing:

*The border represents a vital opportunity because it offers both the potential for architecture to assist in a geopolitical mending—a spatial suture of international conflict—as well as providing the therapeutic space for architecture to self-reflect and treat the relevance of its own internal hierarchies and misguided social legacy. It might also help architecture rediscover its own political identity.<sup>45</sup>*

This comment also applies to the definition of the border as cultural and social construct, and in imagining the mediatory role of border(ing) practices, perhaps a way can be found for architecture’s involvement in healing those other phantom borders that reproduce themselves in the public spaces of Europe.

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45 Bryan Finoki, ‘Subversive border suture’, *Volume/Archis*, 14 (4)(2007): p. 112.



## Diasporic territories

In this chapter I use the concept of ‘territories’ to describe the production of diasporic space. In so doing, I approach the figuring of diasporic territories from two distinct angles, from the geopolitical perspective of territories seen as the product of the interplay of politics, power and space, and from the biological perspective of territories seen as the primal need of all animals, including humans, for space and a certain distinction from their environment and from others. Theoretically, the notion of ‘territory’ is constructed as *‘umwelt’* and ‘the refrain’, as well as through referring to contemporary art and spatial practices.<sup>1</sup> This chapter was written in close conjunction with the mapping of diasporic territories along the high street (which I relate in the following section), and in this sense it is also about the relationship between power, bodies and the diasporic experience of urban space. The theoretical understandings of this chapter are therefore supplemented with the embodied spatial practice of walking in order to understand how our bodily practices affect the local space of a city, creating ‘micro-territories’ related to the social, the political or to everyday life.

‘Territory’ as a concept has a number of overlapping meanings, from a geo-political construct relating to the power and influence of sovereign states, to territoriality as a social phenomenon that describes the relationships between societies and their understandings of space and time. Delaney describes the contemporary role that the concept plays; *‘... territory is commonly understood as a device for simplifying and clarifying something else, such as political authority, cultural identity, individual autonomy, or rights. In order to have this effect territory itself has to be taken as a relatively simple and clear phenomenon.’*<sup>2</sup> Yet, ‘territory’ is anything but simple. The common etymology of the word links it to *‘territorium’*, but going further back it relates to both *‘terra’*, meaning earth or *‘terrere’*, meaning to terrorise or frighten.<sup>3</sup> This contradiction in the meaning of the word is still present in its use today, where territory is either constructed as a natural urge, a way of connecting back to Nature, or as a patch of land to defend against

1 For *‘umwelt’* see, Jakob von Uexküll, *Theoretical biology*, trans. by D.L. Mackinnon (London: Kegan Paul, 1926).; for ‘the refrain’ see, ‘1837: Of the Refrain’ in, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)), pp. 342-386.

2 David Delaney, *Territory: A short introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. 9.

3 *‘territory. early 15c., “land under the jurisdiction of a town, state, etc.,” probably from L. territorium “land around a town, domain, district,” from terra “earth, land” (see terrain) + -orium, suffix denoting place. An alternative theory, somewhat supported by the vowels of the original Latin word, suggests derivation from terrere “to frighten” (see terrible); thus territorium would mean “a place from which people are warned off.” Sense of “any tract of land, district, region” is first attested c.1600. Specific U.S. sense of “organized self-governing region not yet a state” is from 1799.’* Online Etymology Dictionary, <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=territory>.

outsiders. Whilst these definitions relate to human ideas of territories, territoriality is also a powerful construct for animals, but the classic geographical text on the subject, *Human Territoriality*, made a sharp distinction between what territoriality could mean for humans and animals: 'For humans, territoriality is not an instinct or drive, but rather a complex strategy to affect, influence, and control access to people, things, and relationships.'<sup>4</sup> In this chapter, I argue that this distinction between conceptualising territory as human or animal is restrictive and through looking for overlaps, the prevalence of territory as violence in human history could be countered towards a more emancipatory conception. It could also provide important ways of thinking our long-term relationships to the planet—to imagining our planetary future.

For those in the diaspora, geo-political territories as violence have played a central role, from the struggles against colonisation to the incarnation of colonialism as imperialism; for the Kurds of course the struggle for self-determination continues today. The non-anthropocentric perspective of territories that I develop here is thus a way of breaking out of the cycle of violence that territories as geo-political concept inhabit. Instead, a richer and more intense conceptualisation of territories is possible; one that is perhaps also more hopeful.

## Political Territories

The migrant is by condition political, both due to past events and present realities. Any figuration of diasporic territory therefore needs to engage with the ways in which the geopolitical realities of other places are inscribed on to the bodily practices of the migrant. In this section, I therefore look at a number of contemporary territorial projects within art and architectural practice that seek to interrogate the relationships between power, politics and space. They reveal how the representation of space motivated by politics is used as a means of exerting power and hint at the possibility of counter-power, of how a counter production of space could also be possible.<sup>5</sup>

On a global and political scale territory cannot be uncoupled from the representation of it, and this point has been made especially successfully and dramatically in the context of Palestine/Israel in the work of Eyal Weizman and Rafi Segal. The need for territorial research within the discipline of architecture seems to be fundamentally connected with and to some extent contingent on 'conflict' as a base

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4 Robert David Sack, *Human territoriality: Its theory and history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 216.

5 For more on the concept of 'counter-spatialisation' see, Can Altay and Deniz Altay, 'Counter-Spatialization' [of power] [in Istanbul] in, Emanuele Guidi (ed.), *Urban makers: Parallel narratives of grassroots practices and tensions* (Berlin: b\_books, 2008).



condition. That in many cases this conflict has been borne out as violence serves to make the research paradigmatic. Much of the work is predicated on the fragmentation of the notion of 'territory'—with the slow demise of the nation-state, globalised power structures and the state of constant war in which we now live, territory as a self-contained, discrete entity has fragmented into what Anselm Franke refers to as an 'archipelago' or in the plural as 'territories'.<sup>6</sup> The analogy of the archipelago is useful as it keeps the notion of a level of containment and isolation (which is certainly true for a large proportion of those living within these territories), whilst adding to it connections and relations that are the result of exterior power applied from above without the knowledge or consent of the majority. The 'archipelago' as a territory of modernity includes instances such as refugee camps, prisons, the factory and all sorts of other spaces which are not under the control and therefore jurisdiction of sovereign states but are usually serving private corporate interests. Archipelago thus refers to a dual condition, the fragmentation of sovereign power and the rise of extra-territorial powers. Whilst classic geo-political territories relied on the policing of strict borders, these fragmented islands of territory have fluid and temporal boundaries.

(a) Empirical spatial territories and the 'politics of verticality':  
Eyal Weizman

The work of Segal and Weizman conducted in collaboration with the Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem,<sup>7</sup> is an example of empirical territorial research in an environment where space is highly contested, and the practice of cartography has been used overtly and consistently as a political bargaining chip and as a means of changing the 'facts on the ground'. As Weizman writes: '*Whatever the nature of Palestinian spatiality, it was subordinated to Israeli cartography. Whatever was unnamed on the map ceased to exist as a part of the political realm.*'<sup>8</sup> In this context the mapping of the numerous Palestinian villages left unrecorded in Israeli maps was imperative, but Weizman et al. also mapped Israel's territorial strategy of the deployment of settlements, as well as the network of bypass roads and tunnels that were constructed in parallel. This mapping tells a very different story from the official Israeli line. The map reveals the role of infrastructure in not only connecting the settlements to the rest of Israel but also their strategic

6 Anselm Franke, Thomas Keenan and Eyal Weizman, 'Archipelago of exception: Sovereignities of extraterritoriality', *Centre for Contemporary Culture*, 10-11 November 2005).

7 Rafi Segal and Eyal Weizman (eds.), *A civilian occupation: The politics of israeli architecture* (Tel Aviv, London: Babel Verso, 2003).

8 Klaus Biesenbach and Anselm Franke (eds.), *Territories: Islands, camps and other states of utopia* (Berlin: KW Berlin, Buchhandlung, 2003), p. 65.



'Jewish settlements in the West Bank built up areas and land reserves'. Produced jointly by B'Tselem and Eyal Weizman. Aerial view of settlements. Images from *A Civilian Occupation*, Rafi Segal and Eyal Weizman.

placement as a means of fragmenting Palestinian territory, creating isolated pockets of land. Added to this already complex situation is the presence of precious underground water sources and Israel's desire to keep control of the skies above the whole of the West Bank. This has meant that unlike a normal territorial map where the lines and boundaries drawn on the horizontal plane can be extended above and below ground, in the West Bank the control over these artificially separated planes does not correspond. This three-dimensional Israeli strategy of control has been named the 'politics of verticality' by Weizman.<sup>9</sup>

One of the major consequences of conducting research on geopolitical territories is that it creates opportunities for intervention at a regional and sometimes national level by non-governmental actors, and allows for some power to be shifted from the state. Its success relies on dealing not with the source of power, which in the end is too powerful anyway, but instead by intervening in localised power relations it leads to an understanding of the processes through which power functions. This way of operating relates to Foucault's description of power as being dispersed through society through space.<sup>10</sup> In order to understand how these territories operate there is a need to understand the shifting power relations that constitute them. Foucault describes power as something 'beyond interdiction', he calls it a performative act that takes place in the everyday interactions of society. As Segal and Weizman have commented, in the case of the West Bank these dispersed forms of power are exercised through the act of building itself that is used to fragment Palestinian territory, or through the strategic placement of settlements on hilltops that act as fortresses to survey the Palestinian villages below. Through such moves the practice of architecture itself is deployed as a weapon. The strategic occupation of land reveals the need to conceptualise space as territorialised within such situations of conflict.

The 'archipelago' and the 'politics of verticality' provide a typology for the construction of diasporic territories through foregrounding the relationship between the representation of space and the exertion of power. The work of Weizman and Segal shows how even in the fraught geo-political context of Israel/Palestine power is exercised through concrete and localised power relations, opening up the possibility of a space of resistance at the local level. Whilst the fragmentation of territory is being used as a powerful device of oppression, diasporic territories could also be conceptualised as fragmented and extra-territorial in their spanning across national spaces. Just as diasporic

9 Eyal Weizman, 'The politics of verticality', (24 March 2002), [www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-politicsverticality/issue.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-politicsverticality/issue.jsp).

10 See, 'Diasporic subjectivity', pp. 67-69.

spatio-temporalities have the potential to subvert the workings of the 'network society' through making connections across the network based on affinity rather than capital, diasporic territories could imagine the fluidity and temporality of territory beyond the exertion of power, towards making connections of solidarity at the same local level where hegemonic power operates.<sup>11</sup>

(b) Bodily networked territories in the 'Sahara Chronicle':  
Ursula Biemann

The importance of territories as a concept also reveals itself in other situations where conflict is present, but where it does not necessarily manifest itself in the violence of war. The video artist, Ursula Biemann, has carried out a large body of research on such extraterritorial spaces that are the products of wars, militarised borders and free trade agreements. In particular her work focuses on gender and mobility, places of transit, border areas, refugee camps, free trade zones and along the routes of major infrastructure.<sup>12</sup> This type of research and artistic practice is especially useful for this discussion as it focuses on the biopolitics of these territories and networks, and on how their production is performed socially through the politics of labour, gender and mobility. In her work the question of territory is explicitly linked to the corporeal, a quality that is less apparent in the empirical mappings discussed above. The location of most of the sites outside of or on the edge of Europe is also important, as is her description of her work as a 'postcolonial representative practice' as it foregrounds the role of colonial attitudes and practices within these situations.<sup>13</sup>

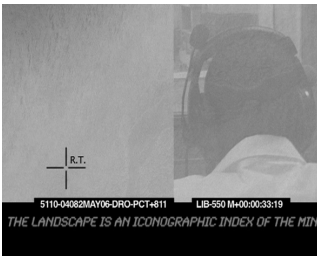
Biemann's video essay, *Sahara Chronicle*, is part of a wider project curated by her called, *The Maghreb Connection*.<sup>14</sup> In the video she follows the journey that thousands of Africans take through sub-Saharan Africa to the Maghreb in the hope of a passage to Europe. Biemann has commented that her work is an attempt to show the other side of this journey than the usual story seen in Europe of failed passage and capsized boats. In contrast, the beginning of the journey is full of hope and a sense of excitement. Her video traces the network of people and places that allow this passage to occur, and Biemann describes her work as a recasting of Castells' concept of the 'network society'

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11 For discussion on affinity networks in the diaspora see, 'Trans-localities/places', pp. 145-150.

12 Ursula Biemann and Jan-Erik Lundström (eds.), *Mission reports, artistic practice in the field: Ursula biemann video works 1998-2008* (Bristol: Arnolfini, 2008).

13 These issues were discussed at: Ursula Biemann, 'The Mahgreb connection', *Zones of conflict: Rethinking contemporary art during global crisis*, (29.11.08).

14 Ursula Biemann and Brian Holmes (eds.), *The Maghreb connection: Movements of life across north Africa* (Barcelona: Actar, 2006).



Stills from *Sahara Chronicle*, Ursula Biemann (dir.)

from the capitalistic world of global finance to the tribal structures of the nomadic Tuareg of the Sahara.<sup>15</sup> It is also a reaction against the isolated event-based take of the popular media to an understanding of the condition of migration.

The video reveals the different ways of conceptualising territory, from the boundedness it is afforded in the West, to the right to pan-African mobility that the continent's inhabitants enjoyed until recently. Biemann makes the point that the Schengen agreement that made possible a Europe without borders was also what curtailed free movement in Africa by outsourcing European border security to the Maghreb.<sup>16</sup> The construction of territory in Africa is therefore intimately connected to European power, but this power is also subverted and deterritorialised to a certain extent by the mobility of the Tuareg. They have historically been the natural passage providers between the southern and northern parts of Africa, and the artificial split of their territory across four different countries by the former colonial powers has left them in a state of limbo. As Biemann points out, they are by condition transnational and this makes their position ideal for facilitating the transit across the Sahara. In the clandestine movement of people crisscrossing the vast desert political territories are made and remade, and the unsympathetic borders drawn by the receding European powers are rendered at least momentarily ineffectual. Biemann relates the deals that are struck for this passage, whether it is the money handed over to the Tuareg by the would-be migrants, or the diesel bought by local authorities in exchange for returning the unsuccessful migrants back across the desert. There is a parallel economic network shadowing the movement of bodies across distances, and together these different networks constitute what could be characterised as a shifting migrant territory.

Biemann's particular take on territories as intimately related to social constructions of gender and to bodily practices provides an important point of departure for thinking diasporic territories. The localised power relations on which diasporic territories are constructed are played out in everyday relations of regional politics and gender, for example in the male *kahve* space that also excludes according to political affiliation. The highlighting of other completely different ways of imagining territory than the dominant account of it, such as those of the Tuareg whose

15 For a discussion of the 'network society' see, 'Diasporic Spatio-temporalities', pp. 56-58.

16 'The term Schengen Agreement is used for two international treaties concluded among certain European states in 1985 and 1990 dealing with cross-border legal arrangements and the abolition of systematic border controls among the participating countries.' Wikipedia, 'Schengen Agreement', (2009) <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen\\_Agreement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen_Agreement)>.

conception of territory is related to acts of transit and passage, are also useful for thinking diasporic territories as related to movement and the becomings of the diasporic subject.

### (c) Political territories within the diaspora

How can these two very different ways of mapping political territories become useful in my own mapping of a rather nondescript London street? Whilst it is easy to see the formidable workings of political power in places like Palestine, it is harder to imagine its work in a placid street where everyone seems to be able to go quietly about their business. It is therefore a matter of trying to unravel the intricate network of people and places that lead to power and the formation of political territories. Biemann's approach is useful here as it emphasises the way in which state and extraterritorial powers can affect the lives of those caught in their wake. In my walks with Kurds and Turks along the street I became acutely aware of how different their experiences of the street were, where one saw a building that housed a community organisation another saw a hotbed of 'terrorist activity'.<sup>17</sup> Both these people worked yards away from each other, had almost definitely passed by each other, each walking a different street. In this way, the concept of the fragmentation of territories becomes useful within my context of the street.

This fragmentation of territories is often described in contemporary theory as a return to 'pre-Westphalian' realities, which is a reference to the Peace of Westphalia that in 1648 through a series of peace treaties ended decades of war in central Europe. Crucially for this discussion, it is regarded as the birth of the modern (European) nation-state and the concept of 'sovereignty' that it rests upon.<sup>18</sup> So, whilst trying to conceptualise these fragmented territories and the return to 'pre-Westphalian' realities as this process has been described within the art



17 Halkevi Kurdish and Turkish community centre has been a place of political and cultural solidarity between Kurds and left-wing Turks since it was established in 1984. It was founded by Yashar Ismailoglu, an interview with whom is related in the chapter, 'Diasporic diagrams', pp. 15-16; for the transcript see, 'Appendix 1'. Some Turkish nationalists view the centre as a place from which the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) is organised and supported through the Kurdish diaspora.

18 For a detailed discussion of the Peace of Westphalia see, Wikipedia, 'Peace of Westphalia' (2009), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace\\_of\\_Westphalia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_of_Westphalia). The concept of 'sovereignty' is described in the *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* as: 'Sovereignty, though its meanings have varied across history, also has a core meaning, supreme authority within a territory. It is a modern notion of political authority. Historical variants can be understood along three dimensions — the holder of sovereignty, the absoluteness of sovereignty, and the internal and external dimensions of sovereignty. The state is the political institution in which sovereignty is embodied. An assemblage of states forms a sovereign states system.' *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 'Sovereignty' (2003), <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sovereignty/>.

and architectural disciplines, I keep in mind Spivak's comment on the formation of modern nation-states: *'Westphalia belongs to European history. In the 18th century it was thought that it opened a world for Europe, but we are now in the 21st century. It's just an incident in European history.'*<sup>19</sup> The post-colonies in fact owe their nationhood not to Westphalia but the politics of decolonisation and the partitioning of territories. Therefore, I want to think fragmented territories not as something new but as the state of being for many of the people and situations that I write about (including myself). This altered perspective has real consequences when the discourse on territories is moved back to the European city-space as I intend it to. In particular it has consequences for the way in which the shadows of these fragmented territories are cast upon Europe and the way that they are interpreted differently by those who could claim Westphalia within their historical perspective and those who could not. In fact, the way political territories affect the personal territories of those in the diaspora is through this always already fragmented point of view. The place from which the Kurds especially spoke was never a bounded, secure place, never a nation-state, and so I am aware that my attempts to conceptualise diasporic territory should account for this other perspective. In this attempt, my mapping of diasporic space as territories uses the body itself as a tool to try to narrativise the walks. It is therefore a corporeal mapping of what could be called personal territories, a kind of space or 'sphere' in which we all live and that is affected by our surroundings, our politics, our sociability.

## 'Scapes', 'spheres' and 'plateaus'

### (a) Habermas' public sphere theory and its critique

The three interrelated concepts of 'scapes', 'spheres' and 'plateaus' are useful for describing diasporic territories as containing all the elements mentioned earlier, from territories seen as geo-political entities to territories of everyday encounters. The twin concepts of 'scapes' and 'spheres' are described in this section, whilst Deleuze and Guattari's 'plateaus' are referred to later. I start with the concept of 'sphere' and trace its frequent use in cultural theory and contemporary philosophy, both have some relevance to my way of describing 'diasporic territories'.

The concept of 'public spheres' was introduced by Jürgen Habermas in his influential but controversial book, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, first published in 1962.<sup>20</sup> Based around a liberal

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 19 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Varieties of transculture', *Borders, nations, translations: The political limits of cultural trans-nationalism*, (14–15 March 2008.)

20 Jürgen Habermas, *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*, trans. by Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity, 1989).

bourgeois notion of democracy, the 'public sphere' for Habermas is the space of communication for the citizens of a sovereign (Westphalian) state where they can discuss issues around politics and social life. That these discussions may *only* take place in the national language, with the help of the national media, and for the reproduction of the imagined community of the nation-state has been criticised by many, as well as the conspicuous exclusion of women.<sup>21</sup> Public sphere theory has since been re-formulated numerous times in order to take account of its exclusion of the marginal, and for being based exclusively around the fundamental organising principle of an all encompassing nation-state. It should therefore come as no surprise that those interested in globalisation and its effects should find this theory lacking, and many of these critiques have emerged from the influential Center for Transcultural Studies based in Chicago, where a working group set up in the early 1980s brought together a number of theorists with close links to *Public Culture* journal, in which much of this discourse has been elaborated.<sup>22</sup>

A large strand of their research describes the birth of 'multiple modernities' that are the product of the new realities of globalisation such as mass migration and mediation. It is the uneven spread of the spoils of 'modernity' (from industrialisation to bureaucratisation and secularisation) and their encounter with different cultural forms, as well as the legacy of colonialism and the contemporary reality of imperialism that produces these 'multiple modernities'.<sup>23</sup> Michael Warner's recent formulation of 'counterpublics' is based on a number of founding assumptions that differ in important ways from those of Habermas, but it is Appadurai's concept of 'diasporic public spheres' that is most useful for my discussion, describing one particular version of these multiple modernities that are the result of the processes of migration.

### (b) Diasporic public spheres

Most major cities around the world proliferate with spaces that could be described as being a part of a 'diasporic public sphere', springing up to fulfil particular cultural and social functions. That these spaces mainly cater for a need derived from cultural configurations is true, but through bringing together people who are not necessarily from a similar

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21 Feminist and postcolonial theorists have been at the forefront of articulating these discrepancies, which are detailed in Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy', in Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), published on the occasion of a major conference on Habermas' work, which coincided with the first English translation of the text. See for example: *Ibid.*

22 *Public Culture*, Duke University Press, 1-22 (1988-).

23 These topics have been discussed at length in a special issue of the journal: Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, Benjamin Lee and Guest Editors, 'Special issue: New imaginaries', *Public Culture*, 14 (1)(Winter 2002).

social or class background, they also serve important political functions that can easily be overlooked. They therefore serve not only to reinforce ideas of culture, religion and politics but can also contest them. Appadurai sees these spaces as being formed when ‘moving images meet deterritorialised viewers’ and calls them ‘the crucibles of a post national political order’,<sup>24</sup> citing examples such as guestworkers from Turkey watching Turkish films in Germany, or Pakistani cab drivers in Chicago listening to sermons recorded in mosques in Pakistan and Iran. Through these examples Appadurai places an emphasis on the effects of modernity and globalisation and the role of technology in the production of space. But in order to think through their effects on urban space, it is important to note that all the examples described above happen in enclosed spaces, whether this is the domestic space of the home or its extension within the private car. How can these same types of spaces be re-conceptualised in the space of the street beyond enclosed walls, where there is the opportunity for an active overlapping of appropriated space? What possibilities for interaction between diverse groups can this provide? I would suggest that the word ‘sphere’ could perform this shift, but only if approached from a very different angle that loosens its ties to the nation-state. I will stay with German philosophy but from a different source, phenomenology leading to theoretical biology.

### (c) Sloterdijk’s ‘spherology’

The German philosopher, Peter Sloterdijk, in his *Sphären* (Spheres) trilogy uses the term ‘spheres’, stating that his aim in writing the books was to counteract an over emphasis on time and duration in the theoretical writings of that period leading up to the early 1990s.<sup>25</sup> Using Lacanian psychoanalysis as a starting point, he traces a Heideggerian ‘Being in the world’ that concentrates on the exact nature of the ‘in’ within that phrase; a concern that is traced at different scales in his trilogy, from the pre-natal to the global. The final volume of the trilogy, *Foam*, is a kind of treatise for the post-human non-modern world described in the first two books, an account of a world of spatial multiplicities. Sloterdijk’s stance puts him in direct opposition to Habermas, because in his way of conceptualising the human experience it is impossible to describe a human without describing what it takes to live as a human, what environment, atmosphere or sphere is required—what support systems? ‘Being *in* the world’ here becomes an engagement with materiality and matter as the condition of our being human, and this stance has lead Latour to describe Sloterdijk as ‘THE philosopher of design’: ‘For him, adding materiality to a site, is making explicit another

24 Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalisation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. 24.

25 Peter Sloterdijk, *Sphären: Blasen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998); Peter Sloterdijk, *Sphären: Globen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999); Peter Sloterdijk, *Sphären: Schäume* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2004).



*fragile envelope in which we are even more entangled: this is true of biotechnology as well as of space stations.*<sup>26</sup> Space stations are the metaphor that Sloterdijk uses to describe our relation to the world in which we live. Since the destruction of 'Mother Earth' both physically and symbolically, the figure of the 'space station' provides a way of thinking ecology in the sorts of relations that Donna Haraway's cyborg anticipated.<sup>27</sup> In the artificially generated atmosphere of the space station *nothing* is taken for granted, extreme care is required due to the fragility of the system. Sloterdijk speaks of the space station as, 'a model for being in a world condemned to artificiality.'<sup>28</sup>

Imagining 'spheres' in this way as connected to our planetary relations rather than an abstract realm of communication proves useful for imagining 'diasporic spheres' (territories) as not only related to another national space, its cultures and politics, but enriches it with other concerns such as those related to ecology and the environment. The 'fragile envelopes' that envelop us are concerned to and overlap with environmental concerns, bodily concerns, as well as the cultural 'double vision' that Bhabha describes.<sup>29</sup> Sloterdijk's *dyad*, a coupling that is at the heart of his philosophy, the absolute figure that replaces the individual, is just a coupling made of two but several, and it is this important detail that allows diasporic thinking to extend beyond an 'us and them' or a 'here and there' dialectic, offering a way of thinking across a multiplicity of relations and concerns. Alongside his insistence on the 'insurmountable spatiality' of our existence, 'microsphereology' provides a way of interrogating both the political and the biological dimensions of diasporic territories, whilst also interrogating these issues on both a global(ised) planetary scale as well as at the level of the body and personal relations. What are the 'spatial envelopes' peculiar to the diasporic condition?

## Bio-territories

### (a) 'Umwelt' as territory

Both Sloterdijk and Latour foreground the way in which the modern narrative has created an artificial divide between nature and culture, but for many in the global South and its diaspora this divide is not always so easily accepted or obvious. Here the role of science and technology

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26 Bruno Latour, 'A cautious promethea? A few steps toward a philosophy of design (with special attention to peter sloterdijk)', *Networks of Design, History of Design Society*, (3rd September 2008).

27 Donna Jeanne Haraway, *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

28 Peter Sloterdijk, 'Foreword to a theory of spheres', in M. Ohanian and J. C. Royoux (eds.), *Cosmograms* (New York: Lukas and Sternberg, 2005), p. 236.

29 See, 'Diasporic subjectivity', p. 78.

also changes, and it becomes clear that for example the rural farming idylls of England so highly cherished by many, are also artificial landscapes engineered through hundreds of years of manipulating the earth.<sup>30</sup> After our move from Pakistan and various trips around the UK, my father brought up in a farming family in the Punjab on both sides of the border, would often point out to us the regimented nature of the English countryside, with a mixture of mischievousness and admiration (at how the British couldn't even leave nature alone to do what it wanted), being caught up as we all were in the promises and false dreams of modernity's progress. I only found out later that what we took to be our slightly superior position in our closer connection to 'nature', was perceived by others as our complete lack of understanding of that very same 'nature'; apparently, *'the Asians don't understand the bucolic English countryside'*—I guess we don't.<sup>31</sup>

Accepting the artificial divide between nature and culture also means that in conceptualising and representing diasporic territories relations other than those between humans need to be accounted for. I have already interrogated this in relation to 'quasi-objects' in the previous chapter, and here I explore this non-anthropocentric line of thinking by discussing what the subjective worlds of trees, ticks and pigeons could contribute towards a theorising of diasporic territories. They hint at diasporic territories conceived as ecological constructs related to forms of expression and foreground the need for a certain appropriation of space and a distinction from the environment. Diasporic territories also demand a concept that can encapsulate the differences in the way space is perceived and mediated through our particular subjective understandings.

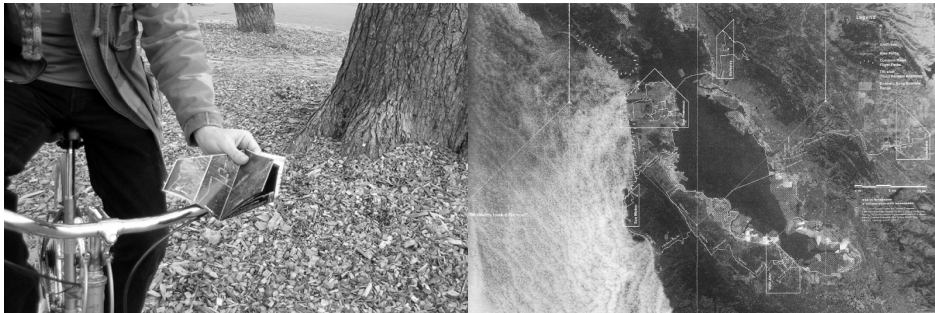
The project *OneTrees* project by Natalie Jeremijenko foregrounds the relationships between the construction of territories and ecological concerns and is also useful for thinking through questions of representation in relation to territories.<sup>32</sup> Cloned trees were propagated in the laboratory and later planted at various sites across the Bay Area

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30 I have explored these issues in a project called *FarmPark* carried out as part of my postgraduate studies in Architecture at University of Sheffield. See, [www.shef.ac.uk/architecture/main/gallery/gal/diploma/studio2/stud2web/projects/09nishat.htm](http://www.shef.ac.uk/architecture/main/gallery/gal/diploma/studio2/stud2web/projects/09nishat.htm).

31 This is a comment from a conversation about an art project with primary school children in Derby, a city in the Midlands with a large Asian population. The artist when speaking of her initial thoughts on the project was articulating her desire to engage the children with the surrounding countryside. I've heard the sentiment repeated several times in other situations, where the lack of Asian people living in the countryside is given as proof of the validity of this view. Whilst the assumption in itself is problematic, I need not go into the myriad socio-economic reasons that would be more useful in explaining this 'trend'.

32 Natalie Jeremijenko, 'Onetrees: An information environment', <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/xdesign/onetrees/>.

in California. These artificially grown, genetically identical trees become living tools for mapping. Their progress over the years not only indicates the environmental quality of their habitat but they also become social indicators; the trees have been assigned stewards who look after their welfare. Combined with a paper leaflet that gives locations for the trees, information on wildlife in the area, flight paths of birds and other data, the trees become part of a large-scale map that involves the local community in their environment, and as Jeremijenko comments the map itself becomes, *'an instrument that collects information as much as it disseminates it.'*<sup>33</sup> These mappings could be seen as a way of representing the overlapping 'spatial envelopes' of the trees and of the people looking after them, whilst also creating an affinity network around the trees and their welfare. Jeremijenko's trees are treated as 'quasi-subjects', they mediate just as the Bengali girls did in the previous chapter, and her practice stands out for taking plants and animals seriously as actors in our world. She does not anthropomorphise them but instead tries to understand reality according to them, the trees are in fact mapping their own 'bio-territory'. How could I map the 'bio-territory' of diasporic quasi-subjects whose spatio-temporalities also have a global scale? Whilst it is easy to conceptualise trees as being affected by various global conditions, air pollution, acid-rain etc., it is harder to think of ourselves and our actions in a similarly interdependent way, proven by the wilful non-understanding of how our actions in the global North affect the lives of those in other parts of the globe. Yet, foregrounding such ecological relations is fundamental to my understanding of diasporic territories.



*OneTrees* map to visit planting sites across the Bay area, San Francisco

33 Natalie Jeremijenko quoted in, Alice Twemlow, 'Bark to bytes', in Janet Abrams and Peter Hall (eds.), *Else/where: Mapping new cartographies of networks and territories* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Design Institute, 2006), p. 256.

The concept of a territory based on the subjective worlds of non-humans, alluded to above, is taken from the work of the theoretical biologist, Jakob von Uexküll.<sup>34</sup> He proposed his biological theory of sphere, *Umwelt*, in the 1920s as the first description of living organisms other than humans as subjective beings, whose experience of the world was seen not only as being very different from humans but as constituting a different 'world'. This way of conceptualising different worlds or realities in fact foresaw many of the contemporary advances in quantum physics as well as in theory, for example Deleuze and Guattari's materialist philosophy that attempts to theorise animals through non-anthropomorphic means owes much to the work of Uexküll.<sup>35</sup> But Uexküll's work also bears the mark of its time and as some contemporary commentators have remarked, his emphasis on a Kantian metaphysics that makes a complete separation between the mental and material realms, limits the possibilities of his thought.<sup>36</sup>

Uexküll used the term *Umwelt* to describe a world beyond the merely empirical scientific description of it as *Welt*.<sup>37</sup> In so doing he traced a path 'between science and the humanities', which accounts for the popularity of his ideas in contemporary theory.<sup>38</sup> His most famous example comes from his description of the *Umwelt* (territory) of the tick—the simplest of insects whose world in comparison to that of the human seems so 'poor'.<sup>39</sup> Described as blind and deaf, the female tick's life is dominated by the reproductive urge and she has only three sense signals: a particular smell, a sensitivity to a precise temperature and a sense of touch. She requires warm blood for her eggs to mature and so needs to find a warm blooded mammal to act as host. Since she cannot see her sense of smell guides her: as a mammal approaches

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34 Jakob von Uexküll, *Theoretical biology*, trans. by D.L. Mackinnon (London: Kegan Paul, 1926).

35 A definition of quantum mechanics: 'In other terms, according to Bohr and Heisenberg, quantum mechanics is the paradigm of a theory which does not describe intrinsic properties, but rather anticipates probabilistically the outcome of possible experimental relations.' Michel Bitbol, 'Non-representationalist theories of knowledge and quantum mechanics', *SATS: Nordic Journal of Philosophy*, 2(2001): 37-61.

36 For a discussion on this see, 'Special issue: Jakob von Uexküll: A paradigm for biology and semiotics', *Semiotica*, 134(1/4)(2001). Giorgio Agamben in particular has traced an alternative genealogy on the relationship between man and animal, from the ancient Greeks to Uexküll, Heidegger and finally to his own concept of 'bare life' that stands in opposition to twentieth century humanism. See: Giorgio Agamben, *Homo sacer: Sovereign power and bare life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Giorgio Agamben, *The open: Man and animal*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University, 2004).

37 Literally meaning 'world' in German.

38 Following the pioneering work of Isabelle Stengers, Donna Haraway and those from the still small discipline of Science Studies, the interest in the relationship between science and the humanities has grown exponentially.

39 Here I am referring to Heidegger's appropriation of Uexküll's concepts, where he distinguishes between man, animal and the inanimate as 'world-forming', 'poor in the world' and 'worldless', respectively.

giving off the scent of butyric acid, which our sweat contains, the tick senses her chance and drops from her elevated position. If she has indeed managed to land on a mammal, she will know this through her sensitivity to the exact 37 degrees temperature of mammalian blood and her sense of touch will guide her to a suitable place in which to burrow into the skin. Uexküll prefaces this account of the tick's world with a description of the same place as us humans would perceive it, an idyllic meadow full of colour and smell and sound. In comparison the tick's world seems so meagre. But as Agamben points out, in ways that us humans couldn't come close to understanding, the tick's world is full of richness: *'Yet the tick is immediately united to these three elements in an intense and passionate relationship the likes of it we might never find in the relationships that bind man to his apparently much richer world. The tick is this relationship; she lives only in it and for it.'*<sup>40</sup>

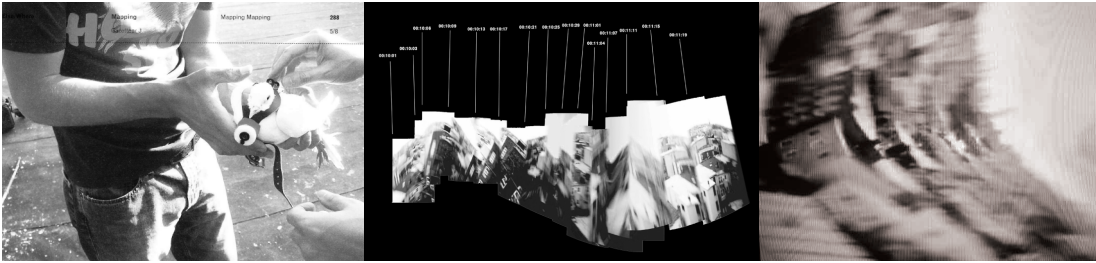
What would a map of this world of the tick look like? Would it have three colours only, one for each of its three senses? Is it possible to map the subjective world of an animal? Or, perhaps a better question would be: why map the subjective worlds of animals? The posthuman perspective of theorists such as Haraway, Braidotti and others is not only a radicalisation of the critique of the universal subject of western philosophy, and so entirely relevant to my study on diasporas, but it is also a non-anthropocentric stance, essential for the new challenges we face today related to the environment, and the planetary scale on which we are now obliged to think. To be able to create affinity networks that include not only animals, but rivers, ecosystems and people from varied cultures is crucial. And what the tick in particular could teach us is that intensity of relations is perhaps more important than an abundance of them. In our digitally connected worlds of constant media streams, blogs, and twitter, the importance place of intense, corporeal relations needs to be asserted once more.

A pair of architects from New York, Terraswarm, have attempted such a mapping of the visual world of a pigeon.<sup>41</sup> The harnessing of pigeon flight for the use of humans has a long history, but Terraswarm are attempting something different. They try to apprehend the city from the pigeon's point of view as part of a flock in flight, technologically an ambitious undertaking, which is not yet perfected. A tiny camera is strapped to the pigeons' chest and they are set free. The mapping is carried out in the context of the 'Brooklyn Pigeon Wars', where the birds are trained to fly high above the rooftops, their encounter in the sky merging rival flocks in an intricate performance that results in

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40 Ibid., p. 47.

41 See, 'Flight Paths' in, Janet Abrams and Peter Hall (eds.), *Else/where: Mapping new cartographies of networks and territories* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Design Institute, 2006), pp. 280-289.



Images captured by birds in flight as part of the Brooklyn pigeon project, Terraswarm

‘disoriented’ birds joining opposing flocks. The pigeon owners clearly have an understanding of flock behaviour, planning strategies to win birds. Terraswarm also try to understand flock behaviour using computer models developed by the games designer Craig Reynolds, but it seems they do not draw on the observational knowledge of the pigeon coop owners gained through years of experience.<sup>42</sup> The desire to use science and technology fails to valorise other ways of knowing and in some ways Terraswarm do not manage to explore the pigeons’ relationship to their context. This context does of course consist of all the environmental mappings that Terraswarm made: wind direction, local flight paths, the Earth’s magnetic field, but it also includes the humans that must have formed some sort of relationship with the birds and what of the relations the birds may make in the sky? Does flock behaviour only ever consist of the kinetics of ‘separation, alignment and cohesion’, what of the reasons for these movements?<sup>43</sup> Homing pigeons are also highly territorial birds, ready to defend their ‘patch’, this urge to territory is not constant, it waxes and wanes according to the pigeon’s life cycle, affected by age, season etc. All these factors form part of the subjective world, the *Umwelt* of the pigeons and this endeavour to see the world from another point of view, whether of the tick or trees, is a way of imagining how to live with the radically other, of establishing a common territory with them.<sup>44</sup>

### (b) The refrain as ecological territory

Terraswarm’s difficulty in explaining the relationships that animals have to each other and to their environment without, reducing them to physical properties is in some ways also shared by Uexküll. He put forward a theory derived from music, of ‘counterpoint’ and ‘transposition’; a composition made of tonal qualities, rhythm and melody that is able

42 Craig Reynolds, ‘Boids: Flocks, herds and schools—a distributed behavioural model’, [www.red3d.com/cwr/boids](http://www.red3d.com/cwr/boids).

43 These are the three behavioural properties given to each ‘boid’ or flock member by Reynolds. See, *Ibid*.

44 For more on this concept see, Doina Petrescu, ‘The indeterminate mapping of the common’, *field*: 1 (1)(2007): 88-96. Petrescu relates the mapping produced by Fernand Deligny of the movements of autistic children as the ‘sharing of a place’. See also, ‘A contemporary politics of mapping’, pp. 220.

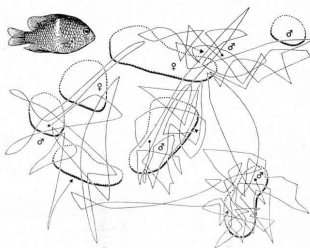


Figure 189. Territories of four male damselfishes *Amblyeleotris bicolorata* (top left) can be recognized by the marked paths which the animal swims. It can be seen that the fish remain in a small area. Longer excursions came about during pursuit of entering neighbors. Each fish was observed for 5 minutes. (From I. Eads & Uexküll [1984].)

Diagram of fish territories from *Theoretical Biology*, Jakob von Uexküll

to describe the concordant relationship between the design of one animal and another. He used the example of a spider, its web and a fly. Although the spider can know nothing of the dimensions of the fly it is trying to catch, its web is gauged in strength and flexibility to the exact size and speed of the fly. Even the radius of the web strings are of such a diameter that the fly cannot perceive them and so flies blindly into its trap.<sup>45</sup> Through a close study of how the spider weaves its web, much could be learnt about producing highly flexible and strong structures, but we are unlikely to come to any real understanding of the spiders' behaviour and its *Umwelt* without engaging with the fly. Deleuze and Guattari also recount this example: 'It has often been noted that the spider web implies that there are sequences of the fly's own code in the spider's code; it is as though the spider had a fly in its head, a fly "motif," a fly "refrain."' <sup>46</sup> Deleuze and Guattari thus stress the relational nature of reality, of how something is mapped onto another. The non-causal relationship between the fly and the spider's web is completely contrary to the received wisdom of solving problems or understanding situations through relations of cause and effect.

Uexküll's musical analogy is used by Deleuze and Guattari not only for explaining natural phenomena but also for a general conceptualisation of reality, of how it is formed and perceived. It provides a vocabulary for thinking territory as both (socio-) political and ecological. For Deleuze and Guattari everything, the natural, social and mechanic is continuous and in constant flux, this fluid reality being aggregated or layered in what they term 'strata'.<sup>47</sup> The folded 'strata' have intensities and rhythms, in much the same way as Uexküll describes it and the relations they create produce possibilities, multiplicities and events that constitute a reality through being practised. The practising or 'becoming-expressive' of rhythm is what creates territory or the 'refrain'. The refrain shifts questions of territory in animals from a sign of aggression to expression, or an art form. This relationship between expression and territory is most obvious in birdsong, whilst the homing pigeons mentioned above may not use sound to mark territory many birds do, the quality of their

45 Jakob von Uexküll, 'Between science and humanities', *Semiotica*, 134 (1/4)(2001): 107-123.

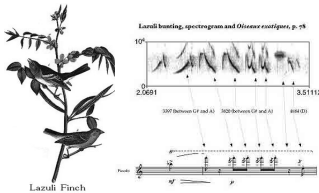
46 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)), p. 346.

47 In fact, their seminal work *A Thousand Plateaus*, *ibid.* can be seen as a description of this reality at multiple scales (from the molar to the molecular) and an account of how desire and power act within it. *Ibid.*

song ensuring rights over space.<sup>48</sup> The refrain thus links the creation of territories to modes of habitual expression or behaviours in the everyday, whether a bird singing or a person humming.<sup>49</sup> The example of seed-eating by Turkish migrants in Berlin described in a previous chapter is an example of how diasporic territories are constructed as refrains through the repetition of certain acts. The territories produced in this way are very different from the geopolitical version of territory as sovereign power; here they are constructed as temporal, contested, overlapping and in flux.

### (c) Deterritorialisations / reterritorialisations

For Deleuze and Guattari territory is an act consisting of deterritorialisations and reterritorialisations and the agents of these processes could be humans or animals, but also the earth, planets, minerals... They use various examples, including how the sun territorialises the earth through its gravitational pull, or how capital deterritorialises products into commodities. They write: *'To begin with, the territory itself is inseparable from vectors of deterritorialisation working it from within: either because the territoriality is supple and "marginal," in other words itinerant, or because the territorial assemblage itself opens onto and is carried off by other types of assemblages.'*<sup>50</sup> This description of what they also call 'lines of flight' means that even the most entrenched of regimes (or territories) has the potential of resistance inscribed within it; from the perspective of diasporas it is the adapting and adopting of various cultural and bodily practices, the rhythms of these social and political processes that are capable of both deterritorialising the dominant practices and of its consequent reterritorialisations.



48 Birdsong is of course territorial, it is a springtime event of *'nuptial parades, plumage displays, or feats of flight'* and yet there is birdsong with no specific social function, what are called 'free songs'. The composer Olivier Messiaen, whose work Deleuze and Guattari have referenced throughout their writings on the refrain, recalls a particular song thrush whose song matches the beauty of the sunset. Others are called 'calls' rather than songs—they are a musical language for Messiaen. Olivier Messiaen, *Music and colour: Conversations with Olivier Messiaen*, trans. by E. Thomas Glasow (Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1994), p. 86.

49 See, 'The Refrain' in, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)); see also, J. M. Wise, 'Home: Territory and identity', *Cultural Studies*, 14(2000): 295-310.

50 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)), p. 560.



Diasporic territories can thus be thought of as a series of overlapping spatial envelopes made of many subjective spheres that continually deterritorialise and reterritorialise, producing a multiplicity of spheres. These spheres could be related to stratifications of class, gender, ethnicity, but also ecology and the environment; sometimes fragile envelopes, other times entrenched positions, they can be challenged in the becomings of the diasporic subject that deterritorialises essentialised notions of the self, or of property, land ownership and the dominant ways of conceiving nature and culture. In this sense diasporic territories are directly related to questions of how life takes place and gets developed, urgent questions related to our survival on the planet.

### Intensity of relations and ‘common territories’

The starting point for this chapter was a desire to understand the ways in which politics and the concerns of elsewhere are an essential part of the diasporic experience. At the same time, I wanted to counter the tendency of writing about diasporas and migrants through a single lens, the intersection of religion and politics in the case of Muslim diasporas. Knowing that this was not the sum of my own experience, I was interested in conceptualising diasporic spatiality as a multiplicity of overlapping subjective spheres of sometimes highly conflicting positionings, related to politics, culture, religion, gender... for this, the concept of territories proved useful. Whilst territories are imagined differently across cultures and species, one aspect remains consistent, they are made up of appropriated space; sometimes bounded, militarised and ‘secure’, at other times, temporal, indeterminate and contested. The nature of territories as appropriated also means that they are necessarily about bodily exchange, about the movement of bodies, deterritorialising and reterritorialising; bodies have always been at stake where territories are concerned.

In order to conceptualise territories as both political *and* biological, I imagined them as ‘spheres’ or ‘spatial envelopes’ that surround us all, overlapping and interacting with each other. This way of thinking also foregrounds the question of our relationship to the environment and to other species and I have explored this aspect through the experiential worlds of ticks, pigeons and trees. This non-anthropocentric perspective is not only a radicalisation of the non-unitary subject that has been so useful for post-colonial theory, but it also fits well with non-Western imaginaries that do not always subscribe to the modern division between nature and culture. The subjective world of the tick especially, shows the importance of an intensity of relations over quantity. In human terms this intensity is seen to be the product of sharing time and sharing space, the establishing of ‘common territories’ across cultures and sometimes species.

The conceptualisation of 'diasporic territories' thus takes from this non-anthropocentric line of thinking the importance of the subjective nature of reality and counter to traditional architectural knowledge practices, moves away from looking for and always describing causal relations. Instead more open representations are sought that can accommodate the intricate interdependencies of the world in which we live, which is not really separated as nature and culture, subject and object. These insights are applied in the next section where I use walking as an embodied practice for mapping the spheres and spatial envelopes that 'diasporic territories' consist of, and look for new types of representational practices for these multiple and fluctuating realities. Different types of territories are encountered and played out within the space of the high street, from social and political territories to those of everyday life, gendered and religious territories. Woven within this fabric is the possibility of deterritorialisation, the 'lines of flight' that are possible precisely because of the interaction between this multiplicity of spheres.

## 3.0 Mapping otherwise

# A contemporary politics of mapping

## Mapping as a tactic in diasporic urbanism

In the History of map-making the dominant maps have been those produced in the West according to a logic that privileges topographic representations above all others. Whilst the grid as a device for measuring and representing space was being used by the Chinese since around the 1st century AD, it is the European conventions of map making, such as the adoption of longitude and latitude, that have had such a profound effect on what we consider to be a map. These maps have a long history of oppression. Whether enacted through the deployment of geometry, or the colonial mapping practices that literally carve up the land, or Israel's facts on the ground in the Occupied Territories, or the development maps that refuse to acknowledge the existence of whole communities, it is clear that both historically and in the present maps have been used to control and to wield power. In the present, mapping has become almost commonplace, it is no longer a specialised activity and this democratisation of mapping has occurred in large part through the tools of mapping being made available. But **by being given the choice of what to map, and how to map, map making reveals its emancipatory potential.** Rather than being instruments that create and serve ideologies, producing borders that contain and divide populations, the power of maps can be used in other ways, to **support marginal claims, to reveal that which is hidden.** These maps take a different approach, they try to chart the voids and spaces that power hides. It is an alternative history of maps, made by artists and 'amateurs', all sorts of minor episodes in the history of this practice that has captivated many, and which now seems to be having a renaissance.

The tropes of Western map-making leave out much: scale, colour-coding, longitude and latitude, do not account for temporality, touch, memory, relations, stories and narratives—in fact **it is experience that is altogether removed.** But there are many other points of departure for an alternative practice of mapping, there are instances from other cultures that apprehend the world beyond the norms of the rationalised western model; there is a counter project of 'critical cartography'; there are older maps that were made before the normalisation of the practice of cartography, whilst the critic Brian Holmes, distinguishes between 'dominant' and 'dissenting' maps.<sup>1</sup> The commonality of these practices is that they all try to map something other than the 'earth' and its 'geography', **some map events and organisations, others**

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 1 Brian Holmes, 'Counter Cartographies', in Janet Abrams and Peter Hall (eds.), *Else/where: Mapping new cartographies of networks and territories* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Design Institute, 2006), p. 20.

**map emotions and narratives**, and the results are often very different from what we would usually consider a map. It is this other tradition of representation that can prove useful for a diasporic urbanism that needs to account for the city seen as an aggregate of people, buildings and infrastructure, but also for the immaterial flows that are an integral part of city-space: localities, atmospheres, networks, territories, borders. This changing and dynamic nature of the contemporary city, requires a practice of mapping that is able also to represent such transformations.

In the following discussion on maps I try to address, through looking at a series of different mapping practices, how mapping can be used to represent a diasporic knowledge of space, and how it can help in its navigation. Mapping is here regarded as constitutive of the domain of knowledge I am constructing as diasporic urbanism. In this chapter, I address the question of how can mapping be used to represent the effects of the **nostalgias, replications and transpositions** that are an integral part of a diasporic experience of space. In previous chapters I have discussed the formation of 'trans-localities' as the bodily production of space that bridges the gap between disparate places, times and cultures. How can this **ephemeral space** that is as much related to feelings and emotions as it is to particular objects and technologies be represented? Here the unique ability of mapping to represent space beyond the physical, to make relations between what might seem unconnected events, and its ability to handle complex information are all useful. This new practice of mapping also needs to address questions of scale beyond a simple understanding of it as distance. How can scale and relations be accounted for topologically rather than topographically? A requirement perhaps for a type of mapping that can account for continuity in relations rather than adjacencies in space. For architecture it could be a question of understanding the transformations and effects that occur due to political and cultural events in places that may be far apart in terms of distance, yet are topologically proximate. For mapping to be used as **a tactic within a diasporic urbanism**, it is this requirement of understanding and representing **space as striated, a layering of different experiences**, that is of importance. It is also a way of representing space that transforms map-making into an overtly politicised activity. Whilst any map bears some kind of politics, in a mapping practice useful for diasporic urbanism, this quality is enhanced and made visible as a constitutive part of the diasporic experience of space.

In this new practice the function of maps also changes, whilst traditional maps made certain truth claims about the world, attempting to represent it in a two-dimensional format—usually on paper—the maps that I am referring to have a different agency. By not claiming complete authority, **these mapping practices implicate themselves in the world around them**; mapping thus becomes an embedded activity and for me also an activity that is inherently feminist—in its politics and its

methods. The politics of representation are key to this understanding of mapping and encompass questions relating to the relationships between power and knowledge, access to knowledge, **who makes the maps and with whom, how and where are they made available?** These are all important questions in understanding the new agency of maps.

## The new agency of maps

The term ‘agency’ is significant for having a resonance with the contemporary discourse on architecture. At University of Sheffield for example, it is the name of an architectural humanities research group and also of a conference organised by them, whilst a recent issue of the journal *Footprint*, ‘Agency in Architecture: Reframing Criticality in Theory and Practice’ was arranged around this concept. In their introduction the editors, Isabelle Doucet and Kenny Cupers, couch the question of agency in relation to architecture in three main ways: first, ‘*the agency of what?*’ or the question of multiplicity and relationality; second, ‘*how does it work?*’, a question referring to location, mode and vehicle; and third, ‘*to what effect?*’, bringing up the notion of intentionality.<sup>2</sup> These questions can just as easily be asked of the practice of mapping. For Scott Lash, agency is thought through non-European conceptualisations, specifically Chinese, and he suggests that an emphasis on the individual in western thinking coupled with a stance that is goal-directed remains problematic. Instead, Lash suggests the notion of ‘activity’: ‘*Activity is much less goal-directed, it is much more situational. It’s like situationism in a way: you put yourself down anywhere, and see where it takes you.*’<sup>3</sup> For this concept of agency to fit within the practice of mapping, conversations and everyday encounters would be just as legitimate a form of representation as making diagrams or archiving knowledge. Simply doing is sometimes enough, an indirect mode that is at once spatial, temporal and relational, contrasting with the dominant western mode of ‘subject-object-verb’ that is normally used to describe the intentional, agential subject.

In the diagram called ‘agencies of mapping’ I have arranged these maps according to their materiality, or what Cupers and Doucet refer to as location; the functors, which they call vehicle and mode; and finally according to their qualities or effects. What becomes clear in this diagram is that all these maps share a kind of lateral sensibility that performs subtle shifts in thinking through the politics of representation. Whilst some have been referred to elsewhere as examples of a ‘counter’ or ‘radical’ cartography, I prefer to use the

2 Kenny Cupers and Isabelle Doucet, ‘Agency in architecture: Reframing criticality in theory and practice’, *Footprint*, 4 (Spring 2009): 2-3.

3 Scott Lash and others, ‘Agency and architecture: How to be critical?’, *Footprint*, 4 (Spring 2009): 8.

term 'otherwise' as some are part of a different tradition of mapping than the dominant western mode, and others do not explicitly stake out their professional or political ground, preferring instead to make small changes that could have a large effect. This way of doing also sits well within a postcolonial, diasporic sensibility, which rather than attempting open confrontations that would surely result in failure, looks for subtle subversions, practices of mimicry and marginality. The use of the word 'otherwise' also recalls the feminist groundings of my work, the side-step that feminists often take to extricate themselves from hegemonic norms.<sup>4</sup> Finally, I chose 'mapping' over 'cartography' to make a break from the professionalised world of cartographers and to valorise instead the amateur knowledge of the non-professional specialist. This reveals a different ethics of mapping, one that neither takes the position of the powerful and the elite nor an explicitly oppositional stance, preferring instead a mode of sharing and reciprocity where the politics of representation allows others to be included in the mapping process, as well as acknowledging the map makers' own positionings. Above all in the practice of mapping otherwise experience is re-introduced through mixing the real, the imaginary and the symbolic and thus reveals maps that make propositions, act as mediators and create possibilities for change.

#### (a) Maps as propositions

Traditionally maps are used to convey information, a knowledge of the world already understood and known by the map maker is represented in a form in which it can be disseminated. Conversely, when maps are propositions, it is the *process* of map making itself that generates new knowledge. In being explicit about how knowledge is produced, these are situated maps that rather than making truth-claims about the world, propose versions of it. Embedded in a certain point of view, certain knowledges and part of a certain tradition can often mean that these are specialised maps, the knowledge they contain is certainly authoritative but not authoritarian. These maps tend to take material form perhaps because they retain the traditional impulse of mapping to disseminate. As diagrams or objects they acknowledge the positioning of the map user as someone who interacts with the map as object, as well as that of the map-maker who may be included in the map. These maps have a common purpose of making relations, to somehow connect things, places and people, in order to reveal organisational structures or the way in which a certain space or project is working. What differs

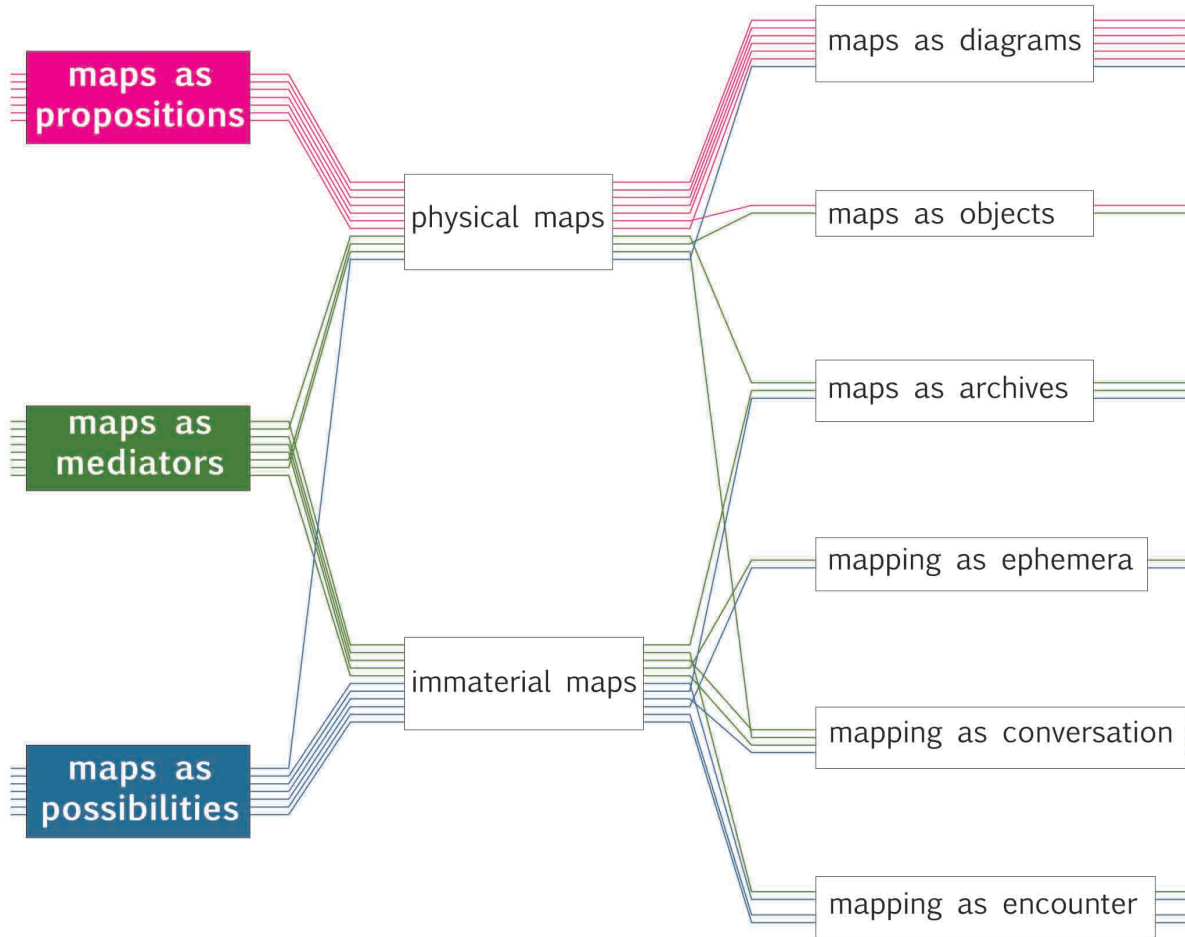
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4 'Otherwise' invokes the 'otherhow', a term used by Blau DuPlessis to describe a multiplicity of possibilities over the binaries evoked by the word, 'otherness'. See, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, *The pink guitar: Writing as feminist practice* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006), p. 154. Architect, Katie Lloyd Thomas writes of 'drawing otherhow'. See, 'Building While Being in it: Notes on Drawing "otherhow"', in Doina Petrescu (ed.), *Altering practices: Feminist politics and poetics of space* (London: Routledge, 2006). See also, 'Diasporic urbanism', pp. 26-27.

AGENCY

MATERIALITY

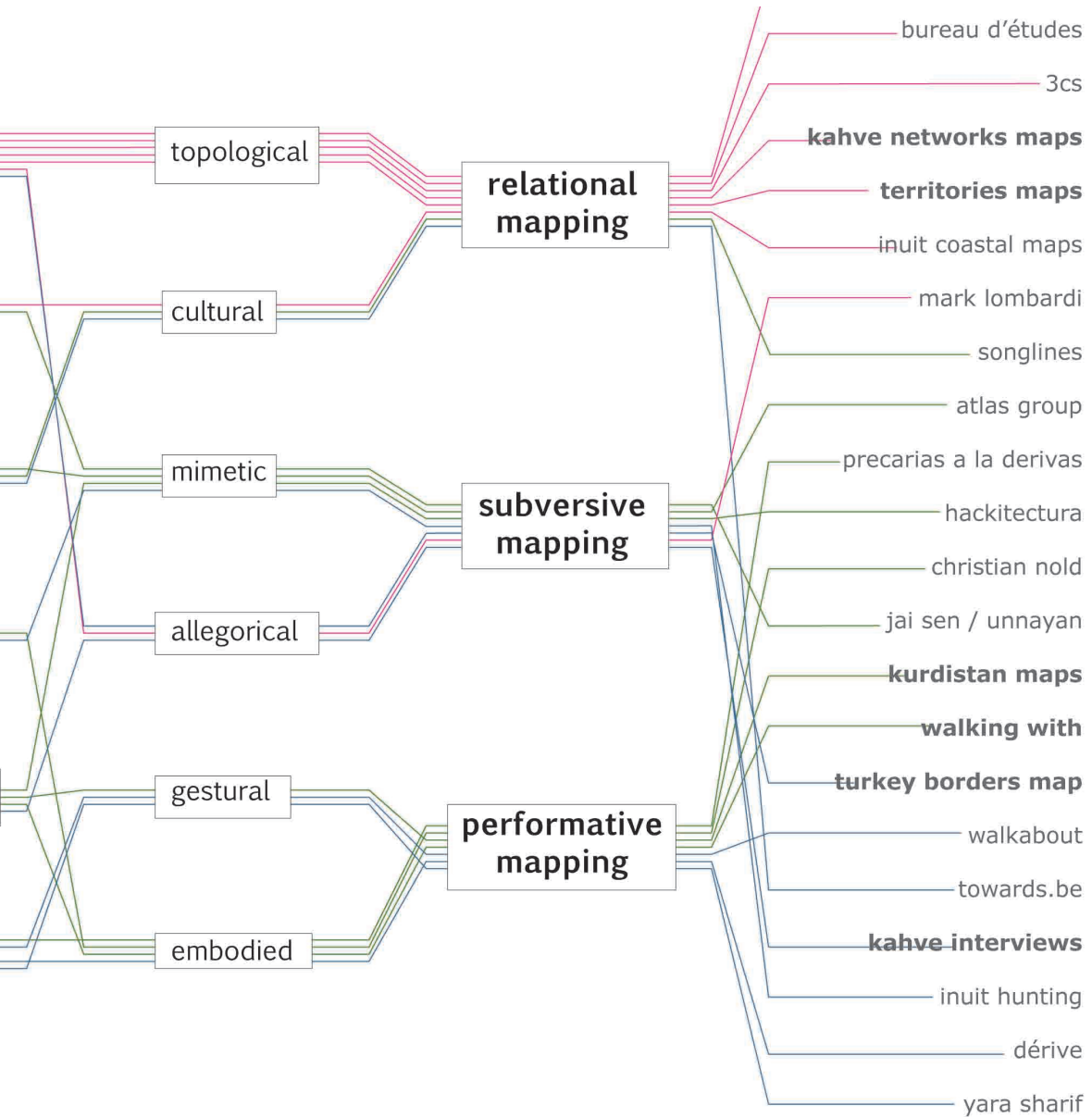
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FORMS -----

QUALITIES



is the mode in which these connections are made, some connect topologically across space whilst others make connections according to cultural or social criteria. Often they are on-going productions where new relations and forms are added as they are learnt. This can involve a collecting and collating of information, or could employ the act of drawing and making. The agency of these maps is in their ability to propose a different way of apprehending the world.

#### (b) Maps as mediators

Maps as mediators have a very different function to traditional maps—they do not try to disseminate anything—instead their role is to translate and to act as go-between. They do this tactically through becoming an excuse to bring people together who would not normally meet, by acting as ‘prompts’ for conversations or as catalysts for action. The mediation they enable can be between people or places, and it can also be between the real and the imaginary, between fact and fiction. In all cases they create transformations through multiplying difference; sometimes they modulate space, through the bodily act of walking or through the deployment of technologies that create a ‘mediatory space’, a passageway or a channel worked through the striated, surveilled space of international borders. From the migratory routes of transhumance to the elusive paths of asylum seekers, here maps are seen as tactics in the passing-through to another place. These maps can be physical or immaterial, their ‘assembling of collectivities’ meaning that they are subversive and performative. They can mediate in the realm of culture, at the level of the gesture, through mimetic and performed practices. Creating and collecting information, performing it through conversation or bodily acts, they tend to have the most diverse forms of representation.

#### (c) Maps as possibilities

Maps as possibilities share many similarities with maps that are propositions. They also produce and disseminate knowledge, imagining other ways of being in the world, but they differ in one important aspect, they are almost never physical maps, remaining instead at the level of the immaterial. For this reason they are normally performative and embodied constructions but the performative nature of these maps is very different from the usual definition of performativity in mapping, which tends to cite examples from indigenous practices where mapping is said to be part of a ‘a social tradition’, where it is ‘*performed, by telling a story, recalling a dream, performing a dance, singing a song, or enacting a ritual*’;<sup>5</sup> or as an artistic practice that seeks to map

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 5 Chris Perkins, ‘Performative and embodied mapping’, in Rob Kitchin and Nigel Thrift (eds.), *The international encyclopedia of human geography* (Oxford: Elsevier Inc, 2009), pp. 126-132.

emotions and chart feelings, perhaps as part of an urban installation. Whilst it could include these, performativity here also resides in everyday gestures, in mimetic practices and in the realm of the allegory. These are subtle, subversive and ephemeral practices where the map is a process rather than a product.

## Ways of mapping otherwise

### (a) Naming, narrative: Aboriginal songlines

The Australian Aboriginal songlines are a form of mapping from a completely different tradition to our own, where the relationship to the environment, the way of apprehending the world and representing it are all different. The question of mediation is tied to that of responsibility and rights over territory in the Australian aboriginals' relationship to their environment. Known for their intensity of relation, they view the bush as home, making camp through the simple act of sitting down. What is referred to in English as the 'walkabout' and 'songlines' expresses aspects of the same and most fundamental concept of their way of apprehending the world: *djalkiri* (in one of their many dialects). The walkabout is a system of routes that criss-cross Australia through which the Aboriginal people have mapped the entire continent. Yet it is much more than a simple map, it is **a song, a story, a narrative** of a journey and the making of worlds. The songlines tell the history of the 'Dream Time', of the origins of the world when the Ancestral Beings made journeys that named every thing and place along their way, literally making the world; each shrub, stone, hill and ditch were named. The traces of these journeys are left in the landscape, they circumscribe routes that tell stories: the songlines *are* the world as well as a way of being *in* the world. Taken as such, *djalkiri* can be seen to embody Lefebvre's insight of **place as a socialised space**, it is in fact at the core of the Aboriginal way of seeing their world. First the ancestors socialised the world, making places through their journeys, literally sculpting the landscape, and now humans are maintaining these same places through their own **negotiation, intervention and actions**.

This way of describing the world changes everything, including the status of knowledge, territory and space. Here the 'songlines' take on another extremely important quality, they are valuable in the sense of a commodity and they can be traded as such. Since the walkabout is a series of routes that cross and overlap, they do not define space as a bounded entity but as an open, overlapping system; having a knowledge of the song gives rights over territory, very similar in this sense to the way in which birds use song to mark their territory.<sup>6</sup> The points at which songs meet are the places of negotiation, where songs are exchanged,

.....  
6 See, 'Diasporic territories', pp. 196-198.

territory could be extended and questions of responsibility raised; in this sense the songs as techniques of mapping are **mediators of territory**. In what seems an aporia to the western mind, the songlines *are* the landscape, the territory, and maps of it; one of their many functions being that of a navigational device, used to cross vast stretches of land that to us would seem completely featureless. The question of detail is present here too, giving importance to the smallest of things, the way a stone lies on the ground, the relationship of a shrub to a mound in the land. This privileging of indiscernible features, of the infra-small, makes use of two qualities that are missing from the dominant practices of mapping: **the representation of time** and **an explicit practice of naming**. In some ways these two aspects are intertwined, when the world is laid out flat for us to view in its entirety, the time it takes to understand and represent it in parts, partially and subjectively, from our own perspective, is not accounted for. Narrative and naming are both elided.

The Aboriginal songlines hint at the type of mapping practice required for migrant lives, it is also a question considered by Doina Petrescu in her article on Romanian ‘transmigrants’ who move back and forth across old and new Europe in pursuit of material wealth.<sup>7</sup> Living in the interstices of the French capital, with semi-legal status, they return home to build large villas with the fruits of their travels. In her discussion of their active seeking out of marginality for economic profit through a practice of transmigration, Petrescu notes that **new spaces are created in the city** which sit within an invisible network of economic value that the migrants are able to exploit. This and other networks made through mobility create another map of Europe that is, “*crossed over by meandering lines that go around and around, making detours and deviations from country to country, looking for ‘something that attracts.’*”<sup>8</sup> The movement of the Aborigines thus has its echoes in the detours of migrants across Europe, the tactical and subversive moves of those without power, gaining advantage through the wily use of time and space.

One of the most common ways in which space is reterritorialised by those in the diaspora is through a naming practice. Whether this is actual signage or through naming in conversation. For example, a friend

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7 Doina Petrescu, ‘Pl(a)ys of Marginality: Transmigrants in Paris’ in, Neil Leach (ed.), *The hieroglyphics of space: Reading and experiencing the modern metropolis* (London: Routledge, 2000).

8 *Ibid.*, 262.

of mine always calls a busy shopping place, a *meena bazaar*, but she has never been to Pakistan where such bazaars are common; she acquired this naming practice from the stories her parents retold.<sup>9</sup>

(b) Walking, wandering: walks, 'dérives', 'erratic paths'...

The mobility described above could take many forms, but in the everyday practice of walking it is at its most radical; for de Certeau it was a revolutionary act.<sup>10</sup> The radicalisation of this everyday practice occurs differently and for different reasons, it has its roots in the purposeless nature of the stroll, a rejection of work and the knowing waste of time. Or, it can be a highly purposeful act; the walk as march, a deliberate means of protest. Rebecca Solnit, in her extensive history of walking writes: '*Paris is the great city of walkers. And it is the great city of revolution. Those two facts are often written about as though they are unrelated, but they are vitally linked.*'<sup>11</sup> The history of walk as revolutionary act is Parisian, from Baudelaire's *flâneurs* of the nineteenth century, to Benjamin's appropriation of it within the arcades of Paris, to the Surrealists' stroll and the Situationists' *dérive*. In contrast, in the US for instance, walking is considered almost perverse, the morphology of the city as sprawl and suburb extending far too far to be covered by foot alone. But with the ubiquity of motorised forms of travel the economy of walking radicalises further, a practice without use-value, taking too much time, slowing time—at once playful and critical.

The figure of the *flâneur* where this story of walking starts is perhaps outdated for the twenty-first century, the bourgeois male's experience of the city sits uneasily with feminist critiques of the aloofness with which he surveyed the city, being in it but not always a part of it. Yet Benjamin's writings on the newness of the crowd, the contrast between walking in the city and his childhood walks in the Alps reveal a contrasting attitude to walking in the city as opposed to the countryside.<sup>12</sup> In England where historically the countryside belonged to the landed gentry, its fall-out in the present is the still homogenous nature of country villages. In the nineteenth century, the strangeness of the crowd bestowed radicality on the *flâneur* who walked in an unknown city, discovering its pleasures; in the twenty-first century these



9 *Meena bazaar* describes a phenomena unique to Pakistan, where mobile stalls selling jewellery, house decorations etc. are set up in community centres, schools, colleges. The profit made from these travelling markets goes to the local mosque that distributes the money to those who need it the most.

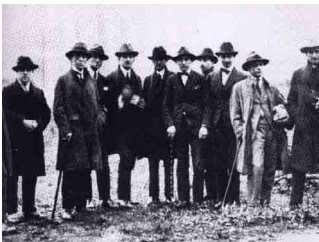
10 Michel de Certeau, *The practice of everyday life*, trans. by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

11 Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A history of walking* (London: Verso, 2002), p. 218.

12 See, Walter Benjamin, *The arcades project*, trans. by Kevin McLaughlin Howard Eiland (London: Bellnap Press, 1999).

are no longer new worlds. Although, a getting lost in the city has been theorised by many, perhaps what is interesting for the practice of walking is to no longer marvel at its strangeness (which only ever translates itself in the exoticisation of places and cultures) but to find again the familiar through a shared and collaborative practice—walking alone is no longer the ‘radical gesture’ it once was, ‘walking with’ or a collective walking does manage to retain that potential.

Starting with the ‘visit-excursions’ of the Dada walking did become a collective activity, usually carried out in groups walking was part of a series of actions, from the handing out of gifts to passers-by to the reading of passages from books, but finally it was the conceptualisation of the act of inhabiting space as an aesthetic practice that mattered.<sup>13</sup> The Surrealists took this further from a single visit to an unconscious journey, they explored the countryside but also those areas not part of the bourgeois city that escaped the dominant modes of planning and control. The Situationist’s *dérive* is an explicit extension of these earlier explorations, using a specific way of walking, the drift, to explore the city through following their passions. As Guy Debord writes:



*In a dérive 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. [...] from a dérive point of view cities have psychogeographical contours, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes...*<sup>14</sup>



Excursions & visites dada / premiere visite (1921). André Breton & Tristan Tzara

With the publication of the *Theory of the Dérive* in 1956 these ideas on walking were concretised.<sup>15</sup> In the *dérive* there is an explicit rejection of utilitarian time for free time and playing—a time that is inherently creative. Yet getting lost in the city has its own rules and sometimes the *dérive* seems bizarrely prescriptive, ‘the objective passionate terrain of the *dérive* must be defined’, ‘the average duration of a *dérive* is one day’ etc.<sup>16</sup> The Situationist *dérive*, a walking practice that is played out within the sphere of the bourgeois male also stands accused of sexism, and as Mary McLeod has pointed out, ‘their visions of pleasure are permeated with sexism, a sexism inextricably entwined with their revulsion against bourgeois family life. They categorically ignore issues such as domesticity, childcare, reproduction—indeed, all aspects of women’s

13 For a detailed discussion and history of walking see, Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes: Walking as an aesthetic practice*, trans. by Steve Piccolo and Paul Hammond (Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2003).

14 Guy-Ernest Debord, ‘Theory of the *dérive*’, *Internationale Situationniste*, 2(1958): <http://library.nothingness.org/articles/all/all/display/314>.

15 Ibid. An earlier version of this article was published in the Belgian surrealist journal *Les Lèvres Nues* #9 (November 1956) along with accounts of two *dérives*.

16 Ibid.

situation in society...<sup>17</sup>. The artist Helen Scalway salvages a walking practice for women from the debris of this gendered critique; in her essay 'The Contemporary Flaneuse', she writes of a walking practice that is specifically borne of the situation of a woman in the city, afraid at times, wanting to explore, yet having to protect herself whilst doing so. Referring to Steve Pile's definition of walking as a lack of place, she turns the situation to her own advantage; '...because I cannot easily stand in the city street—so walking is what enables me to look round, while precisely, not occupying any space.'<sup>18</sup> Although de Certeau never mentioned women explicitly in his writings, this walking could be characterised as an enunciative practice carried out in the idiom of the weak.

The collective walking mentioned earlier could also be a useful tactic for a women's walking practice, walking together with someone else or as part of a group bestows a sense of security in numbers. But walking together also transforms this simple act into a negotiation or a collaboration. A group of women from Madrid, Precarias a la deriva, have used walking in exactly such a way; walking with other women who like them were employed in a range of 'precarious' employment, from working in universities as technicians or research assistants, to working in cafés or doing domestic work—they all had jobs that were not guaranteed, being either temporary, part-time or consisting of shift work. Precarias acknowledged that this situation did bring certain advantages but also many disadvantages, for example the unions that called the general strike of June 2002 in Spain, did not take this type of informal work into consideration. The project started on the day of the strike with the women carrying out interviews with workers at the picket line, asking questions about their work conditions, reasons for striking etc. From these initial conversations, the project of the walks came into being, as a way of 'mapping the metropolis from within'.<sup>19</sup>

Precarias carried out walks with workers through the city of Madrid and beyond, having conversations and recording interviews. They took the Situationist *dérive* and made it more purposeful, attempting to record the everyday lives of the people that they were walking with, their routes from home to work and back again. They mapped the subjective trajectories of multiple women, walking together with them also meant that they acknowledged their own positioning and the

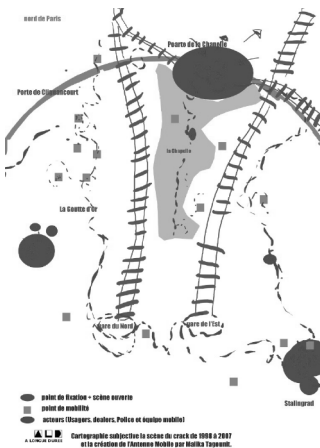


17 Mary McLeod, 'Everyday and "other" spaces', in Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze and Carol Henderson (eds.), *Architecture and feminism* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), p. 16.

18 Sylvie Desroches Zeigam Azizov, Dean Inkster, Adrian Laubscher, Alejandra Riera, Caecilia Tripp (ed.), *Radio temporaire* (Grenoble: National Centre for Contemporary Arts, 1998).

19 This is how they describe their own practice. See, Precarias a la deriva, 'A drift through the circuits of feminised precarious work', *Feminist Review*, 77 (1)(2004): 161.

drift itself started to create solidarities between disparate women. In this sense, the walks were an excuse, a **mediation** that allowed the women to spend time together, knowing that the duration between destinations was often the only time available for such conversations in lives that were already busy. The mapping process was therefore both embodied and performative, describing its publicness Precarias write; *'if we want to break social atomisation, we have to intervene with strength in the public sphere, circulate other utterances.'*<sup>20</sup> Here mapping is an encounter between women that also empowers those who inhabit 'other' geographies through a **material and embodied engagement**. It is a way of addressing the issues raised by the women's lives not as employment issues alone but as the result of the intersection of many different social realities: gender, class, ethnicity, education, and to analyse these realities as social *and* spatial. Although Precarias also produced standard maps showing the routes that they took, it was at the level of the **walks** themselves that their mapping practice actually occurred, these **immaterial maps** being the basis for those produced later.



Drug users map. Anne Lise Dehée, a Long Durée

The artist Anne-Lise Dehée also uses the mode of 'walking with' as part of her artistic practice but here it is enunciated differently as a 'therapeutic practice'. Her walks are carried out with women who live on the streets, homeless women, drug addicts and sex workers. On the pretext of her research and art practice, Dehée takes the women out of their usual neighbourhood, the exploitative *milieu* of pimps, drug dealers, and others. The change of scene, along with their conversation and the unconscious activity of walking, combine to give a little psychological space to the women; **a space for them to imagine other possibilities**, other ways of living. **An embodied practice, walking here becomes both subversive and nurturing.** To view unconscious, embodied gestures as therapeutic is to place an emphasis on their mechanical and shared qualities, the lover's stroll shares time and space, saying nothing and doing nothing, its pleasure in time spent together. Deligny's work with autistic children also uses this particular quality of spending time as therapy. Following the children in their daily routines, tracing their movements, he produced maps that were a layering of the children's walking, movements and gestures. Commenting on this mapping practice, Doina Petrescu writes; *'There where nothing is common, instead of language, what is shared is the 'place' and its occupation – and this place together with its different activities, gestures, incidents and presences is drawn on the map with different lines and signs.'*<sup>21</sup> These sensitive maps of those who are vulnerable and yet whose experiences need to be engaged, open up important questions about the politics of

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>21</sup> Doina Petrescu, 'The indeterminate mapping of the common', *field*: 1 (1)(2007): 90-91.



representation. Giving away information about where the women are to be found is dangerous as they operate through their ability to remain hidden, whilst the children's maps also need to be protected. For Deh e, it is crucial to find a subtle balance between what is shown and what is not. Whilst the women's privacy must be respected, their experiences also need to be related, they may operate through remaining in the background but for many people those living on the streets are invisible, easily ignored and walked past.



Transurbance. Stalker

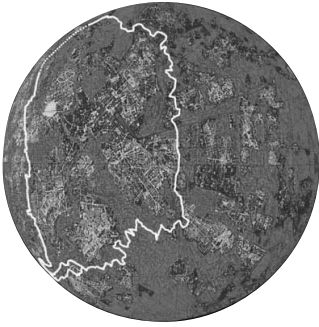
The urbanists Stalker use walking in an explicitly Situationist tradition as a way of rediscovering people and places forgotten by the neo-liberal metropolis. They started out using the method of collective walking to explore these territories in the indeterminate or void spaces of the city that have long been disregarded or considered a problem for traditional architectural practice. Stalker refer to their walking practice as 'transurbance', a collective mode of expression and a tool for mapping the city and its transformations.<sup>22</sup> Since the mid 1990s they have explored the indeterminate zones of various cities starting with the edges of the Tiber river on the outskirts of Rome, and later in Milan, Paris, Berlin and Turin amongst others. In describing the purpose of their walking they write: "*The idea is to rediscover, in the metropolitan territory, a sense that springs from the experience of the present state of things with all its contradictions, from an unopinionated perspective, free of reassuring and at the same time frustrating historical or functional justifications.*"<sup>23</sup> It is a way of engaging freely with whatever they find in these places; in Rome they met individuals and communities living along the riverbanks forgotten by the general public and ignored by the city authorities. In response to that particular situation they decided to produce an atlas of the riverbanks, describing the excluded places, the urban voids in the 'fractal archipelago' they had observed; a figure of the contemporary city not as having an easily understood spatial configuration but a fractured space inhabiting the cracks of the ordered consumerist city.<sup>24</sup> Through their transurbance Stalker discovered the voids to not be empty after all but filled with the city's forgotten inhabitants, migrants, the homeless, the Roma population and others.

Since then Stalker's emphasis has shifted and they set up projects that address those they have encountered on their walks. For this they have changed their way of operating, setting up a trans-local

22 Stalker, 'Stalker: Laboratorio d'arte urbana', <http://digilander.libero.it/stalkerlab/tarkowsky/tarko.html>.

23 Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes: Walking as an aesthetic practice*, trans. by Steve Piccolo and Paul Hammond (Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2003), p. 178; see also [www.stalkerlab.it](http://www.stalkerlab.it)

24 This conceptualisation is very similar to Jai Sen's concept of the 'unintended city' that inhabits the cracks and voids of the 'legitimate' city in India and other countries of the global South. See; Jai Sen, 'The unintended city', *Life and Living Seminar 200*, (April 1976), <http://www.india-seminar.com/2001/500/500%20jai%20sen.htm>.



Through actual territories. Stalker

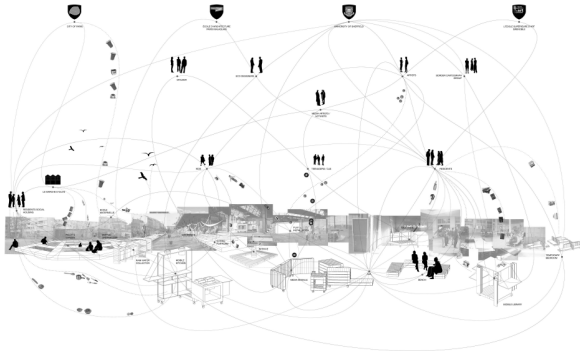
network of practitioners, researchers, artists, and architects; Osservatorio Nomade, is a platform that allows Stalker to engage in long-term projects in collaboration with others. Via Egnatia is the first and longest running of such projects, following the route of the ancient Roman road between Rome and Istanbul along which migrants and displaced people have travelled between East and West for centuries. It is also a highly contested territory with the nationalistic claims of Macedonian Greeks, Turks, Kurds and Albanians overlapping and across which the Ottoman Empire's long shadow still falls. Osservatorio Nomade's project carried out in collaboration with Oxymoron from Athens and atelier d'architecture autogérée (aaa) from Paris, gathered stories along this route of past and present displacements and migrations. Their practice is one of mediation, making the conditions necessary for informal meetings and encounters between disparate people. Stalker's Lorenzo Romito defines their practice and themselves: "*Stalker is a desiring community where no one belongs and where individuals encounter each other. It is an unstable entity, a temporary community, which is founded on possibilities, on desire, on intention, on promise and waiting.*"<sup>25</sup> Taken as such, the whole of Stalker's practice whether carried out through walking or as part of a larger curatorial project that arranges encounters and meetings, is a striving for the elusive 'coming community' through a mediatory practice of mapping.

The various practices of walking described here allow space to be experienced as it is lived, and they bring a degree of chance into what is encountered. It is a way of mapping that is able to discover the marginal and interstitial spaces of the city, which are often occupied by diasporas.

(c) Tracing, drawing: atelier d'architecture autogérée, Yara Sharif

The group atelier d'architecture autogérée (aaa) have developed a highly specialised practice of mapping to gain a **relational understanding of the spatial politics** at play in their project, 'Ecobox'. In it gardening acts as a catalyst for urban change in La Chapelle, an area of Paris with high unemployment and a large proportion of migrants. Ecobox consists of a series of temporary, self-managed spaces that take advantage of underused and leftover pockets of land with the aim of encouraging residents to take greater control of their city. Here aaa have used mapping as both a **representational device** and as a way of **understanding the 'agencies, subjectivities and relationalities'** that operate within their project. Used at each stage mapping and diagramming are a fundamental part of their methodology, used

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 25 Romito quoted in; Nikos Papastergiadis, 'Glimpses of cosmopolitanism in the hospitality of art', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 10 (1)(2007): 139-152.



Trans-local networks of Ecobox. aaa

to identify potential sites, to map local residents' groups, to record the progress of the project, and finally deployed as a means of understanding their own and other people's actions and involvement. In aaa's practice, mapping is **propositional** for its usefulness in understanding the relationships between everyday practices, the formation of desire in the social field and how these are affected by spatial configurations that encourage or discourage certain ways of inhabiting space. Mapping thus becomes a powerful tool in their architectural and urban practice.

In one map loops are drawn between people, places and objects that represent the different networks operating within Ecobox. They show how certain people become more and more 'embedded' within the project as they make new relationships, involve themselves in more activities. Doina Petrescu, one of the founding members of aaa, writes: *'The role of this mapping was not only to 'represent' or 'conceive' but to enhance experience.'*<sup>26</sup> This is an important distinction as the enhancing of experience means that the mapping is not carried out as an afterthought at the end of the project but is considered a part of it. The map also shows the role of 'tactical devices' in the project, mobile units for cooking, a library and a dj station become infrastructural nodes in the network, their position in space as well as the social *milieu* of the project providing insights into the workings of Ecobox.

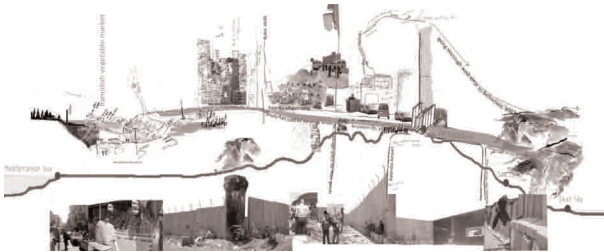
Petrescu also refers to their maps as 'tactical devices' that the collective use to represent social and subjective processes, such as how people's involvement in the project changed over time according to which groups and activities they were a part of. One example that aaa often cite is the change in a number of families who came to garden each week but did not take part in any of the other related cultural and social events. But when the garden was threatened with eviction these passive users who had never before involved themselves in politics became urban activists, petitioning the town hall for a new space. In aaa's intricate and highly detailed maps this process of 'subjectivation' is visible as coloured lines whose trajectory changes gradually or suddenly, either in the day-to-day-ness of the project or in moments of crisis. aaa have not forgotten their own important role, their activities are also included charting the transition from a project initiated and run by themselves to one that is taken over and managed by others. Petrescu

26 Doina Petrescu, 'Relationscapes: Mapping agencies of relational practice in architecture', in A Kurtila (ed.), *Mindscales* (Swedish Museum of Architecture, 2009).

characterises their mapping of these processes or ‘*agencements*’ as drawing ‘*the evolving portrait of the fluid and elusive socio-cultural and spatial entity made by informal and temporary relationships.*’<sup>27</sup> In aaa’s practice, as part of an activist project, mapping becomes a way of creating ‘agencies’ within their projects, **mapping affects and making urban actions.**

The tactical drawings of aaa trace the different spatial and temporal possibilities within their project envisaged as a growing trans-local network. This method of **mapping that traces the social and spatial possibilities** in a given situation has also been used by Yara Sharif, whose work is situated in Palestine. Here she uses mapping as a tool to imagine the ‘spaces of possibility’ within the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. In a context where architecture and urbanism stand accused of being used as ‘*weapons in a war by other means*’, her work re-imagines these practices as tools that can bridge the gaps between fragmented communities.<sup>28</sup> **Walking is used performatively** as a way of creating subjective maps, mixing narrative, sketches and photos, a journey is related from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. Sharif traces the trajectories of people living and working in the West Bank, her **encounters** with different people allowing her to relate the tactics that allow them to pass through borders. In this unique context that has been characterised as a ‘laboratory of urban transformations’, space itself reconfigures continuously with checkpoints being relocated daily. For Sharif this fluctuating landscape creates restrictions and blockages, but also **moments of opportunity where everyday practices are**

**able to transgress the regimes of surveillance and control.** Even the minutes and hours spent waiting to go through checkpoints or for crossings to open become opportunities where everyday life re-forms and continues; a whole host of small-scale, informal economies emerge, such as vendors selling food and drink.<sup>29</sup> Sharif names these mobile practices that are able



Spaces of possibility in Gaza. Yara Sharif

27 Ibid.

28 Eyal Weizman, *Hollow land: Israel's architecture of occupation* (London: Verso, 2007); Eyal Weizman, ‘The politics of verticality’, (24 March 2002), [www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-politics/verticality/issue.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-politics/verticality/issue.jsp).

29 These are exactly the sorts of processes described by Nabeel Hamdi in his book *Small Change* which describes the role that informality plays in urban life. It sets out a way of thinking on cities that gives precedence to small-scale, incremental change over large-scale projects. He shows how the trickle-down effect advocated by conservatives everywhere does not produce the sort of large-scale changes that are predicted. It is instead the trickle-up effect of self-organised systems that produce the biggest changes. Nabeel Hamdi, *Small change: About the art of practice and the limits of planning in cities* (London: Earthscan, 2004).

to adapt and negotiate the changing daily reality as ‘social calligraphy’ and through her mapping she creates an architecture that can imagine counter-strategies of resistance.

There is a sensitivity to her drawings, that map the empty spaces of Ramallah and overlay them with the movement of people. The voids and empty blocks are overlaid with the routes of people characterised as ‘floating social clusters’ of migrants, refugees, the unemployed and street vendors. Thin fragile lines demarcate the routes whilst fuzzy patches of colour indicate the places that are empty, the overlaying of this information produces a beautiful map entitled ‘absence and the will to survive’, it reveals the places of possibility for another narrative within the harsh and changing urban environment. These ambiguous maps reveal some things but not all, their ability to be read in a number of different ways protecting the sensitive information contained within them. In this sense, these maps are **allegorical**, revealing a hidden meaning to those that know what to look for, **subversively relating the ‘will to survive’**. It is interesting to compare them to those maps produced by Esther Polak and the Waag Society in the project ‘RealTime’. Here people with GPS trackers are linked to a screen that creates a map of their movements as they go about their daily lives in Amsterdam. Their movements in real time create lines in light on a black background that overlay each other and fade with time. The maps are beautiful



RealTime. Waag society

and aesthetically similar to those produced by Sharif but they raise questions of security and surveillance here individual movements are traced and recorded, exposed for all to see.<sup>30</sup> Doina Petrescu comments on the use of GPS technology for such mappings:

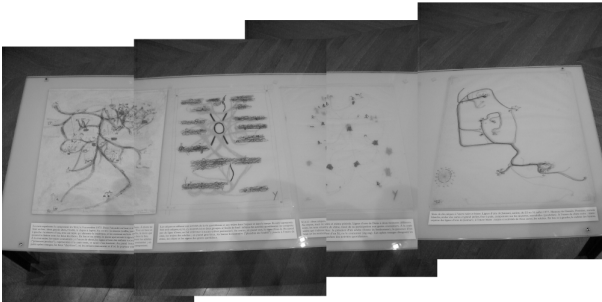
*With these tools that are always traceable by global satellites and are dependent on global temporalities, there is no common and possible community between the tracers and the traced. Global time is not a ‘common time’ and the satellite is not a ‘close presence’. The lines traced by locative technology are always ‘exposed’ and could never be secret, hidden, like the lignes d’erre.<sup>31</sup>*

30 Brian Holmes has commented on this in: Brian Holmes, ‘Drifting through the grid: Psychogeography and imperial infrastructure’, 3, (2004), [http://www.springerlin.at/dyn/heft\\_text.php?textid=1523&lang=en](http://www.springerlin.at/dyn/heft_text.php?textid=1523&lang=en;).; See also: Doina Petrescu, ‘The indeterminate mapping of the common’, *field*: 1 (1)(2007): 88-96.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 92.

These *lignes d'erre* or 'meandering lines' refer to the tracings made by Deligny of the movements of autistic children who had been deemed unmanageable by the psychiatric system. Deligny's mapping of their movements, his spending time with the children, was a way of creating a 'common language' between them and a therapeutic practice of mapping.<sup>32</sup> Petrescu compares this tracing to the tracing carried out with the help of GPS; it is the exposure, the lack of proximity and time that mean that GPS maps can never create the 'places of possibility',

full of potential, that Sharif's maps are able to. Her time spent on the ground with those going about their daily lives, her own presence in the maps means that they are able to answer the challenge articulated by Petrescu towards architectural practice: '*how to operate with a space which is traced at the same time as it is lived and how to use this tracing to understand and eventually create more relationships between those who inhabit it.*'<sup>33</sup>



Deligny's tracings

Tracing and drawing as mapping techniques are a way of representing trans-local connections and experiences spatially. Whilst such processes have been described verbally in other disciplines such as sociology, for architecture and urbanism making the connection to spatiality is crucial.

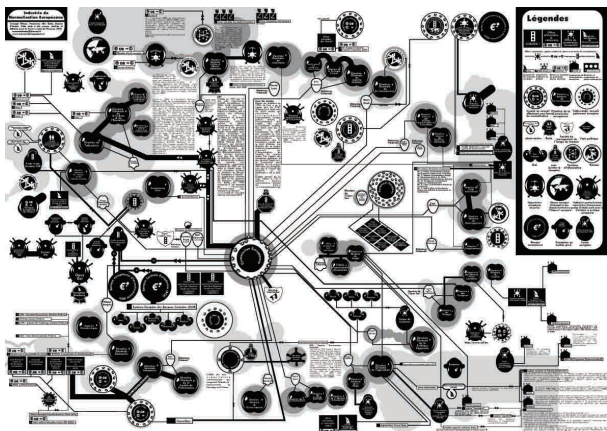
#### (d) Collecting, collating: Bureau d'études, Atlas Group

Bureau d'études are a group of artists and graphic designers whose maps address the growing role of networks in our everyday lives, from the vast corporate, consumerist and military networks that are an integral part of the workings of capital, to the diffuse cultural and social networks that resist their power and offer other possibilities. The maps and accompanying texts are available freely on their website, *Université Tangente* (Tangential University) which is an integral part of their project for autonomous knowledge production.<sup>34</sup> In the 'archives of capitalism' their maps display meticulous compositions that chart the links between think tanks, governmental organisations, financial firms, regulatory bodies, intelligence agencies, media groups, weapons makers, satellite companies... in effect they chart the complex workings of the neo-liberal **economy of knowledge and power**. Over the past ten years, Bureau d'études have developed an extensive iconographic

.....  
32 For a further discussion of the maps drawn by Deligny see, 'Translocalities/places', p. 155.

33 Ibid., p. 96.

34 Bureau d'études, 'Autonomous knowledge and power in a society without affects', (2002), <http://utangente.free.fr/anewpages/holmes.html>.



European norms of world production.  
Bureau d'études

language to represent this highly detailed and complex information. Set alongside their collaborations with the critic Brian Holmes, it has produced an ongoing discourse on the possibilities of using cartography to promote social movements. Holmes describes their maps as 'subjective shocks', remarking: *'There's a wager here: paint a totalitarian picture, crystal clear, and people will look for the cracks into some other dimension.'*<sup>35</sup> In this sense described by Holmes the maps produced by bureau d'études have a **propositional potential**, but this potential is stunted by the complex graphic language, which produces maps that are very dense and difficult to read. Yet, the information

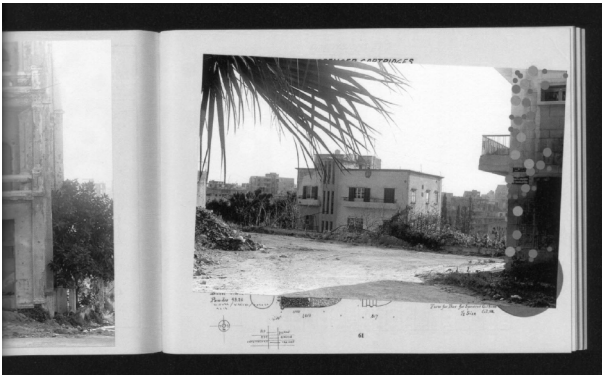
they hold is extremely useful and has the potential to empower citizens if deployed correctly. For example, their map 'European Norms of World Production', shows the organisational and power structures behind the European Commission, revealing the dominant sources of power to be the Court of Justice, the European Roundtable of Industrialists and the rather obscure, Burston Marsteller. The existence and power of this private company, which promises to navigate you through the maze of bureaucracy that is the EC—at a price—shows the use-value of bureau d'études' map. It crucially has the potential to act as a **navigational device**, as all good maps do, allowing the ordinary EU citizen to grasp the relations between the hundreds of lobby groups associated with the EC and whatever issue they are interested in. These, and other maps like it, are produced in large print runs to be handed out free at activist events, such as the European Social Forum or the No Border Camp, or to be found at various social centres.



The other side of Bureau d'études' work explores anarchist positions, dissident knowledge producers, squats—the diffuse networks that embody various forms of non-capitalist exchange. Here again the question of **access to knowledge** is paramount; they collaborate with the unemployed, squatter communities and the *sans papiers* through the self-organised space in Strasbourg, the *Syndicat Potentiel*, that they are part of. The space was set up in frustration with the art world in order to produce and disseminate work collectively, outside the institutionalised space of the art gallery. Bureau d'études write of the importance of these other types of groups, practices and spaces: *'These manifestations of autonomous knowledge/power provoke a crisis in the monopoly of access to possibilities held by the productive organisations*

35 Brian Holmes, 'Cartographies of excess (bureau d'études, multiplicity)', (2003), <http://www.metamute.org/en/node/6243>.

of consumer society.<sup>36</sup> Bureau d'études describe the actual production of their maps as 'artisanal' and have written recently on the insufficiency of such an approach, which is extremely time consuming. Instead they hint at a new collaborative project that will produce a 'map generator', an on-line tool to which bits of information can be uploaded—about a company someone may work for, an administration they know about etc. The accumulated knowledge of a potentially large number of people could produce quickly maps that would take the collective months to research. This new approach of a map produced collaboratively, also allows for a **mechanism of exchange**, solving the problem of a lack of dialogue within the original maps; the **relational connections** made by these maps are now not only those described by the map itself but also those created through its production.



Atlas group files. Walid Raad

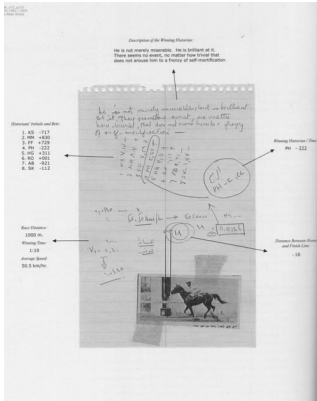
Whilst Bureau d'études produce their maps through a meticulous collecting and collating of facts, the Atlas Group do the same but with *potential* facts. The group is a fictitious foundation set up by the artist, Walid Raad, to record the contemporary history of Lebanon, in particular the period of civil war between 1975–1991. The project consists of documents 'produced' by them and presented in exhibitions as images, videos and artefacts, or in lecture performances by the artist. Although Raad explicitly highlights the imaginary nature of his project, it is telling that at many of his lectures

people forget this detail, assuming that the work is claiming complete authenticity. In one part of the archive entitled, 'Let's be honest, the weather helped', Raad puts together a series of photographs of buildings peppered with bullet holes. The photos are attached in a notebook with coloured dots indicating each hole, the colour apparently corresponding to the tips of the bullets, a categorisation system for the country of manufacture. Part of the description accompanying these files, which are attributed to the artist, reads: *'It took me 25 years to realise that my notebooks had all along catalogued the 23 countries that armed or sold ammunitions to the various militias and armies fighting the Lebanese wars, including the US, UK, Saudi Arabia, Israel, France, Switzerland, and China.'*<sup>37</sup>

36 For an account of Université Tangente see, Bureau d'études, 'Autonomous knowledge and power in a society without affects', (2002), <http://utangente.free.fr/newpages/holmes.html>

37 Cassandra Nakas and Britta Schmitz (eds.), *The Atlas group (1989-2004): A project by Walid Raad* (Köln: Walther König, 2006), p. 126.





Dr Fadl Fakouri's notebook. Walid Raad

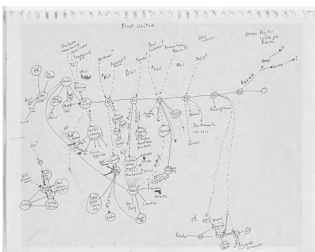
Another part of the archive is a collection of notebooks, photographs and videos donated to the Atlas Group by Dr Fadl Fakhouri, who is identified as 'a famous Lebanese historian of the Civil War'. It includes notebooks that contain a photograph of a racehorse near the finish line, the accompanying text relating the story of Lebanese civil war historians' penchant for gambling. They had persuaded the race official to take only one photo of the winning horse, betting on the distance between the finish line and the horse in the photograph. The notebooks include the photographed image cut-out from the following day's newspaper annotated with descriptions of the winning historian and details of the bets placed. The 'photo-finish', a supposedly authoritative record of the winning horse, could of course never be completely accurate, a detail the historians were well aware of, choosing instead to bet on the margin of inevitable error.

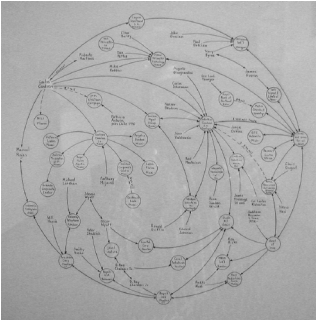
The work of the Atlas Group questions the thin line between fact and fiction, in their work mapping is an **archival** project that collects and collates the versions of history that circulate, inflected through the subjectivity of the narrator and the continual work of constructing collective memory. Through their **subversive, mimetic practice** these mappings play with the politics of representation, of authenticity and authorship. The fabricated history they relate is nonetheless grounded in serious research and actual events that were broadcast around the world on television sets and radios. In this Raad's practice serves to highlight the subjectivity inherent in individual accounts of history, and the workings of collective memory.

Collecting, collating and informing whether carried out in an empirical, organisational manner, or as an interpretative practice that plays with ideas of fact and fiction, are useful for a diasporic urbanism that seeks to address marginal ways of inhabiting and the making visible of other histories.

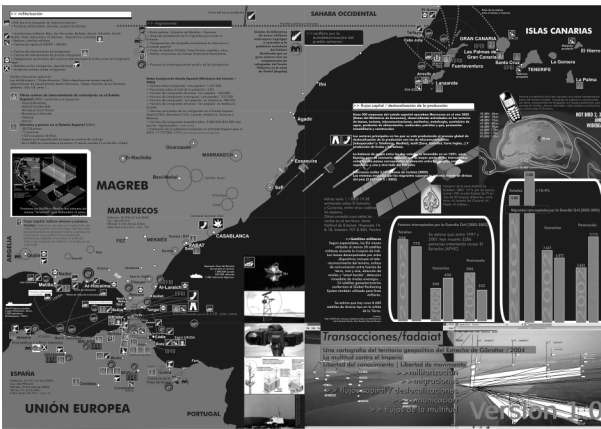
#### (e) Telling, transmitting: Hackitectura, Mark Lombardi

Mark Lombardi's drawings can be seen as an early precursor to the maps produced by Bureau d'études. Using information publicly available on news wires or the internet he produced intricate drawings, most often in pencil or pen. Thin lines make connections between different types of actors—people, organisations, groups—relating a narrative of corporate fraud or the secret deals of governments. Lombardi worked alone, initially making diagrams to aid his writing and later realising the value of his compositions that managed to distill and relate complex events. Whilst his work has been critiqued for not sufficiently representing the strength of relations or distinguishing between the different types of relations, his drawings follow another logic. In what are static images made without the use of computers, Lombardi succeeds in relating an impression of the speed and rhythm of connections, their intensities.





The artist called his drawings, 'Narrative Structures', and as is the case with narrations these are **situated representations of events** based on facts, but arranged according to the account that Lombardi wanted to relate. Displayed in galleries, Lombardi's maps are able to tell their sometimes explosive stories in a quiet way, the gallery setting allowing certain connections and leaps to be made which in the context of a news story would be immediately questioned as conjecture. The neo-liberal machine that is often exposed in these 'narrative structures' would be set in motion to discredit any rumours before they could become claims. It is perhaps of no surprise that Lombardi, whose drawings were having an increasing impact, committed suicide in circumstances that have aroused suspicion.



Hackitectura is a group of architects, artists, computer specialists and activists based in Seville, whose practice uses new technologies to create temporary spaces that can escape the formal structures of control and surveillance in contemporary society. Inspired by hacker culture, they use free software and communication technologies to subvert established power structures through bottom-up organisation and by creating alternative connections between disparate spaces. The group often works collaboratively carrying out research into the effects of communication and technology on physical spaces, the formation of social networks

and how these can be put to work for an activist agenda. They have collaborated with Indymedia Estrecho in creating links across the Straits of Gibraltar or *Madiaq*, the highly militarised zone that is the shortest distance between Africa and Europe.<sup>38</sup> As part of a series of projects they established a network link that became a free public interface between the two continents creating an 'alternative cross-border communication space'. They also produced maps that chart a geography of the Straits and describing the role of these representational spaces within their work they write: *'Making a cartography of an "Other-territory"—a border zone of high strategic importance co-inhabited by social processes of great intensity and violence—became a necessary tool to orient ourselves and our practices/praxis.'*<sup>39</sup> One side of the map charts the security and surveillance regimes of the border that 'protect' Fortress Europe, whilst the other side charts the resistances to it, groups of activists and NGOs that work against and across the border,

38 *Madiaq* is the Arabic name for the Straits of Gibraltar.

39 Hackitectura and Indymedia Estrecho, *Fadaiat* (Observatorio Tecnológico del estrecho, 2006).



constructing networks of collaboration. The maps are a way of getting to know the territory but also a way of reinventing it; here the border is not a militarised line but an inhabited space filled with other desires and counter-spaces. The project also included a series of regular events that took place on either side of the Straits. Called *Fada'iat* or 'through spaces' the events included workshops, actions, and seminars bringing together migration, labour rights, gender and communication activists, political theorists, hackers, union organisers, architects and artists in a temporary media-lab that could become a permanent public interface between Tarifa and Tangiers. Combined with direct actions against the detention of migrants, for a time the event created a network of communication, action and solidarity between the two continents. Hackitectura's mapping practice thus consists not only of the maps they produced but also the transmitting of signals across the Straits. Alongside the events they organised, this created a mediatory space, a channel through the striated, surveilled space of international borders.

The mediatory spaces created through practices of transmission hold an important place in diasporic culture. These could be constituted through satellite television, popular music and press, or the internet that is now perhaps the most important medium.

#### (f) Observing, being present: Inuit maps, Unnayan, Diwan



Inuit 'touch maps' carved from wood

In the context of what they choose to represent, the coastal maps of the Greenland Inuit are fairly standard, recording aspects of the landscape for seafarers, much the same as that other more famous map that Mercator produced. But the Inuit maps vary in the way they map the landscape, whilst sight and scale may take precedence in the maps that we are used to, these use different senses. Pieces of driftwood are carved in the shape of a coastline with separate pieces that could represent off shore islands. Kept in the pockets of sea farers, they can be used without looking and without exposing your hands to the cold. It is a radically different way of conceiving the map, making no use of vision—these are 'touch maps'. Being objects rather than lines drawn on paper they demand a different relationship to us. They are everyday objects that can be thrown in a kayak, left on the side, or kept in a pocket, whilst fragile paper maps containing their expensive and professionalised knowledge need to be stored straightened and smooth for next time. But to understand just how these and other maps produced by the Inuits function, it is important to place them within their wider culture. The anthropologist, Robert Rundstrom, writes that map-making is not a specialist exercise but something that everyone participates in; the nomadic lifestyle and the long journeys necessary for hunting in a landscape that would look completely homogenous to us, means that mapping is a necessity and men, women and children all take part in it regardless of social status. Thus maps are not precious objects, in fact some are 'ephemeral maps' made in the snow, air or

sand, they last only a while—what is cherished is the detailed knowledge behind the maps rather than the map itself.<sup>40</sup> The rugged coastal maps work in conjunction with these other temporary maps and show an attitude to knowledge that is very different from that encapsulated in western maps; an everyday knowledge that is a generated through continual exchange as people move across the terrain. In this important sense, the Inuit maps are propositions for a collective cross-generational map of the landscape.

Early European explorers to the Arctic were indebted to this detailed knowledge and the Inuit's ability to transmit the information to them in a way that they could comprehend. Rundstrom points out that what makes the Inuits 'good map-makers' was not that they necessarily used similar conventions to the Europeans, as some early anthropologists suggest, but that they deliberately tried to present information in a way the Europeans could understand, using their ability to mimic in order to communicate.<sup>41</sup> Rundstrom explains the role that mimicry plays in Inuit culture in general and how this informs their approach to mapping. Whilst hunting caribou in a landscape that lacks cover or camouflage, the Inuit stalk their prey through '**gestural mimicry**', bending down, moving their arms and legs together, they imitate the gait of the caribou allowing them to get close enough to their prey. The hunting of seals



FIG. 3—An Eskimaux Watching a Seal, a lithograph depicting *utog* hunting, from original drawing by Captain Lyon of the second Parry expedition. Source: Parry 1824, opposite 171.

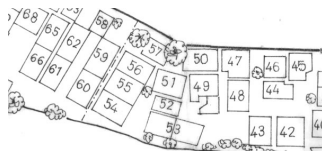
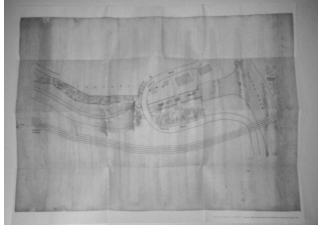
uses a similar technique, this time lying on the ground and rolling as the seals do. The Inuit's believe that **humans and animals had a much closer relationship in the past, being able to speak to each other**; good hunters recall this lost ability and converse with their prey, imitating their sounds. But this is not just a way of fooling the animal it is also an '*appeasement of the soul of the highly respected animal*'.<sup>42</sup> Through a practice of mimicry, the Inuit can be said to be **remaking these connections topologically across time and space**, a cultural inscription onto the bodies of animals and humans alike. It is an integral part of everyday life, used not only in hunting, but as an art form and to relate stories of journeys, it also gave the Inuit a special relationship to their environment, they

40 R. A. Rundstrom, 'A cultural interpretation of Inuit map accuracy', *Geographical review*, 80(1990): 155-168.

41 On the alleged use of hachuring to show topographic features in maps produced by the Eskimo see; John Spink and D. W. Moodie, *Eskimo maps from the Canadian eastern Arctic* (Toronto: York University Press, 1972).

42 R. A. Rundstrom, 'A cultural interpretation of Inuit map accuracy', *Geographical review*, 80(1990): 163.

imitated it, enveloped themselves in it, wearing animal skins, living in igloos, but most of all they *knew* it, completely **immersing themselves in their environment**.<sup>43</sup>



One of a handful of surviving drawings by Unnayan

Another example where mimicry proved to be a powerful tool is in the mapping practice of the organisation, Unnayan, which worked with the urban poor on housing and dwelling rights in the 1980s in Kolkata. Set up by Jai Sen and a number of other professionals, their work was based around Sen's 1974 essay, *The Unintended City*, which critiqued the use of western planning ideals in India and other developing nations.<sup>44</sup> The essay argued that whilst in industrialised western cities most of the population led an urban existence, in India this was not the case; the vast majority of the population led a rural existence, unnoticed within the interstices of the urban and 'legitimate' city. It was for the dwelling rights of these people that Unnayan worked, helping them to gain legitimacy and to find a voice within the planning system through community organisation, help with documentation and advocacy work. Although as Sen himself later writes, mapping started out as a peripheral activity within the organisation, its impact was large when used as part of their overall campaign.

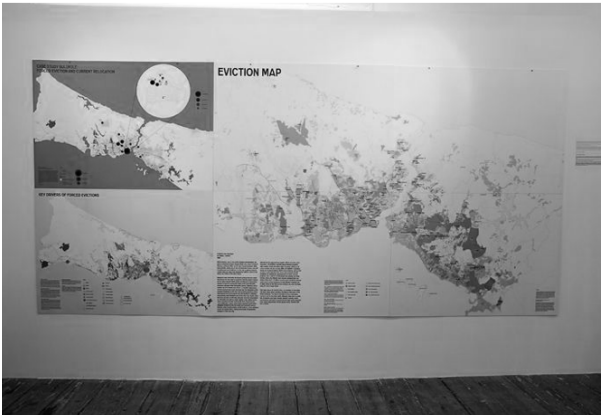
The informal settlements that Unnayan worked with were not marked in any official map, meaning that bypasses, flyovers, infrastructure of all sorts could be drawn by city planners in ostensibly empty space passing through these 'invisible' settlements. Conversely and for the same reasons, the sort of infrastructure that these communities desperately needed, drainage, electricity, water, never made it there. Although the mappings produced by Unnayan may look unexciting, they use the same representational techniques as official maps, they also work for this exact reason. Through **mimicking official maps** Unnayan's maps legitimised the squatter settlements, no longer just a blank on a piece of paper, visibility in the official representation bestowing a visibility and acknowledgment in real life, with the status of the maps as '**official objects**' mediating this shift. Here again it is *what* is mapped and *how* this mapping is deployed that creates agency. Sen writes of the large-scale map that they produced through visiting the settlements and painstakingly measuring them, creating an image that was slowly filled through their collective effort. '*The collage that loomed over the Action Room in our office always reminded us of the realities of the city.*'<sup>45</sup>

43 This relationship is akin to Uexküll's description of the tick's relationship to its world, a level of intensity that modern society is unable to replicate. See, 'Diasporic territories', p. 194-195.

44 Jai Sen, '*The unintended city*', *Life and Living Seminar 200*, (April 1976), <http://www.india-seminar.com/2001/500/500%20jai%20sen.htm>.

45 Jai Sen, 'Other Worlds, Other Maps: Mapping the Unintended City', in: Liz Mogel and Alexis Bhagat (eds.), *An atlas of radical cartography* (LA: The Journal of Aesthetics and Protest Press, 2007), p. 20.

Almost all of the maps and documentation produced by Unnayan were destroyed in floods and a fire at their office, leaving behind very little trace of 18 years' worth of work and effectively ending the organisation. Despite this, Unnayan's mappings helped a number of communities who were either saved from being evicted or compensated for it. In a later essay, Sen has commented on what else these maps could have achieved had the mappings been carried out more collaboratively and performatively with the communities concerned, and whether a bigger legacy in the form of memories and learnt skill would have survived the destruction of paper.



Istanbul eviction map. Diwan

In Istanbul right now a similar struggle is taking place between informal communities and officials. With the pressure of development, many older communities have been evicted or are facing eviction and in the ensuing struggle mapping is increasingly playing an important role. The research and curatorial platform, Diwan, initiated by Can Altay and Philipp Misselwitz, brings together practitioners, researchers and inhabitants in order to provoke a discourse on the urban transformations occurring in Istanbul and further afield in the Middle East.<sup>46</sup> In Istanbul, Diwan are trying to understand the processes of eviction by creating a

collaborative map that documents the reasons or drivers for eviction, such as the development projects that are planned as replacements, the places where people are being 'relocated' to and the resistance to such moves. Alongside this they also map the rise in gated communities and the relationships between these voluntarily gated enclaves and the mass social housing being built for those who are being evicted and relocated to the suburbs. This eviction map of Istanbul thus shows both the potential sites of forced eviction as well as those where it has already occurred. Diwan have set up a discussion platform around these maps for the different parties involved, including neighbourhood and residents organisations, planners who work for the municipalities and the wider regional representatives and the architects who are designing the new developments. These people whose moves affect each others so profoundly would never normally share the same table and it is here that the maps takes on their role as mediators, assembling collectivities around them and ensuring that people from *gecekondu*s will be seen and heard by those who are working towards evicting them from their

46 For more on the work of Diwan see, *Can Altay*, 'In search of spatial practice', (16 Dec 2009), University of Sheffield, School of Architecture, <http://linesofflight.wordpress.com/2009/12/14/seminar-12-in-search-of-spatial-practice/>.

homes. As in Unnayan's maps, the maps of Diwan make visible a certain occupation of space and in so doing take a first step towards legitimising those claims. The map was exhibited at the Rotterdam Biennale and the discussion platform was also moved there for a while, tactically reinforcing the relations between the group by ensuring they spent time together; for the officials it also served to highlight the fact that their moves were on show to a potentially global audience. The project is ongoing and though the delegation is not affiliated to any institution, it is slowly becoming the forum for a discussion of the eviction process in Istanbul. Here and in the maps of Unnayan, the mapping techniques include close-looking and observation and the maps as objects act as witnesses to the wanton destruction of homes and lives.

Since diasporic urbanism deals with a new urban condition simply being present and observing are just as important ways of representing than the other more interpretative techniques described here. To be present and to witness those events, conversations and acts that mainstream practice chooses to ignore or thinks unimportant is also a useful technique.

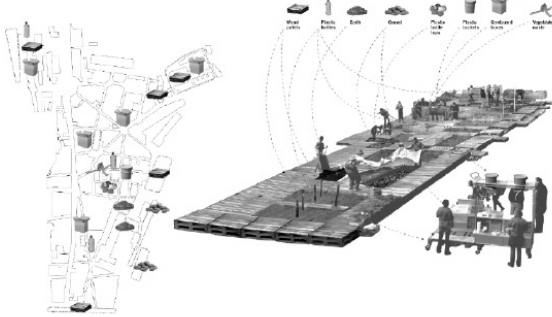
(g) Photographing, analysing: atelier d'architecture autogérée,  
Paul Halliday

Whilst the use of images and photography is widespread in the visual discipline of architecture, its critical use goes beyond a simple recording towards analysis. Disciplines such as sociology, ethnography and anthropology, all use such methods but its use is contested.<sup>47</sup> The use of photography as evidence has particularly been questioned, and Susan Sontag has written on the problematic use of glossy images in documentary practice to portray suffering.<sup>48</sup> The critical use of photography therefore needs to be situated, acknowledging the place of the photographer and when used as a methodology within urban practice, images must be referenced in much the same way as text or other more technical types of architectural representation are.

The analysis of photographs in order to highlight certain aspects also makes explicit the intention of the image maker. aaa use the distinction between colour and greyscale in their images to highlight important aspects of a photograph. In this way the photograph becomes more

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47 For a discussion on the use of visual methods in sociology see, Jon Prosser and Andrew Loxley, 'Introducing visual methods', *National Centre for Research Methods Review Papers*, NCRM/010 (October 2008): <http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/research/outputs/publications/methods.php>. See also, J. G. Knowles and A. L. Cole (eds.), *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research* (London: Sage, 2008); V. Caldarola, 'Visual contexts: A photographic research method in anthropology', *Studies in visual communication*, 11(1985): 33-53.

48 Susan Sontag, *On photography* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979).



Ecobox, aaa



The London project, Paul Halliday

than just a re-presentation, the 'truth' portrayed through the camera lens; it is instead a way of being explicit about what is being shown. They combine photographs with drawings, using text and lines to annotate photographs, or vice versa using photographs to annotate drawings. Their image practice also raises the question of technology, most images are taken with a simple point-and-shoot camera, during events and to record the day-to-day life in their projects. The recording of everyday life requires everyday tools, a small camera that

can be kept in the pocket and used whenever. The technique of drawing over photographs and adding to them means also that any aspects that were not recorded in a perfect image can still be represented. This is an important detail for my own context, where for example in the *kahve*, I was asked not to take photographs of certain areas, or some of the people I interviewed did not want to be photographed. In these situations, finding a way to represent whilst adhering to the wishes of those I was interviewing required a more creative approach to the question of image-making through photography.

Others, such as the photographer, Paul Halliday, do not post-produce their images in the way aaa do, but the images are composed to show off a certain trait. Halliday combines photography with a walking practice that addresses the everydayness of the city through the lens of the camera, and so ameliorating the distancing effect that images can sometimes produce. Commenting on his twenty-year project photographing the streets of London, he writes: *'Dialogue is at the heart of what this visual project is about - an archaeology of seeing, a cultural geography of walking, a visual poem concerned with the fluid, chaotic, impossible spatial and cultural mass that we call 'the city'.*<sup>49</sup> Halliday's way of combining walking and photography works well for diasporic urbanism, which is embedded in the everyday and combined with the analytical techniques of aaa, photography can become a powerful tool for a critical urbanism, diasporic or otherwise.

49 Paul Halliday, 'Urban detours', *London independent photography*, 4-9 (Summer 2006): <http://www.paulhalliday.org>.



## A diasporic mapping practice

The practices described in this chapter provide a vocabulary and a toolkit for 'mapping otherwise', the titles for each sub-section relating their techniques or ways of doing. But this vocabulary changes somewhat when transposed to the specific context of my research: 'diasporic urbanism' and the street where I live.

Once this move is made the practices of mapping take on a surprisingly everyday quality. **Narratives** and **naming** are in the end the *relating of stories, snatched conversations and snippets of gossip*. **Touch** and **relations** form our *everyday sensual worlds of gestures, ways of inhabiting and movements* that remind us of another place, of another world. In the diaspora the workings of memory become so important and the ability to recall without nostalgia, or to at least compensate for it, is a necessity and almost always a failure. The practice of **naming** becomes crucial to this *negotiating of memory* in the city. I recently visited a restaurant named, 'Moti Jheel', the shock of these two words that I had not seen or heard together since I lived in Pakistan was bittersweet. How do you map that emotion? I'm not sure I know how and perhaps its not so useful anyway, what is useful is to map the *affects of these emotions*, the way in which space is changed for those who can read these signs. Here the role of **performativity** and the practice of **mimicry** are important and in particular the ways in which they are able to transform mapping into a practice that can *connect and relate disparate groups and places*. It is an approach to mapping that is embedded within its context, a site-specific activity that happens whilst **walking** with others, speaking to them, through observing and being present, it *reveals the workings of power, collects ways of seeing and creates agency*.

A diasporic mapping practice would also somehow represent people moving back and forth across nation-states and borders, or the movement of ideas, technologies and images. But the movement traced by these lines invariably detours in the manner described above, tactical ways for those without power to inhabit the world making use of time and space.



## Diasporic diagrams

The new agency of maps described in the previous section as the practice of 'mapping otherwise', is here developed as a tool in the practice of 'diasporic urbanism'. This way of mapping borrows from these other practices but also adds to them with theoretical insights and conceptual understandings from the rest of the thesis, and through addressing questions related to space, subjectivity, temporalities and politics. The mappings are carried out at different scales and addresses different spaces from the public to the semi-private to mental spaces. The topics identified earlier, 'trans-localities', 'places', 'territories', 'borders', 'quasi-subjects', are mapped in an embodied spatial practice that valorises the everyday, the bodily and the material in an attempt to represent diasporic agencies. The practice of mapping (or perhaps diagramming) becomes a way of uncovering narratives, making relations and actuating potentialities. The unique ability of maps and diagrams to create relational ecologies that combine the real, the imaginary and the symbolic means that they have been an integral part of the research and have been developed parallel to the reading and writing and in dialogue with them. This section relates how and why the maps were created, including the specific methodologies used.

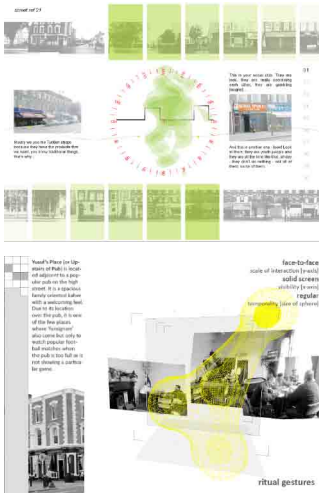
### Mapping topologies, relations, symbols, spaces, gestures, embodiments...

#### (a) Digital mappings of topological connections between data

A recent conference entitled, *Cultures of Change*, addressed the central question of 'how to engage the multiple' based on a topological understanding of spatio-temporalities.<sup>1</sup> This change in the way space is conceptualised has its basis in the study of topology in mathematics that goes beyond Euclidean notions to a move that Deleuze and Guattari have described as the transition from the multiple to 'multiplicity'.<sup>2</sup> Here the two properties conflated in Euclidean mathematics, order and value, are brought together in relation to each other as described by sociologist, Celia Lury:

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- 1 A Topological Approach to Cultural Dynamics, 'Changing cultures: Cultures of change', (10-12 Dec 2009), University of Barcelona, Barcelona, [http://www.atacd.net/index.php%3Foption=com\\_content&task=view&id=174&Itemid=78.html](http://www.atacd.net/index.php%3Foption=com_content&task=view&id=174&Itemid=78.html).
  - 2 See, 'Introduction: Rhizome' in, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004 (1987)), pp. 3-28.

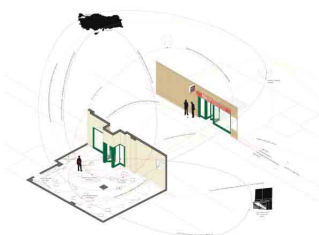
*In the topological thinking of multiplicity, however, ordering and value are brought together without reference to an external measure, but rather by — or in — relations in which the performative capacities of number to order and value are locally combined in different ways to produce spaces more general than those described by Euclid.<sup>3</sup>*



Digital mappings of spheres and *kahve* space

It is this move to ‘general’ spaces that is of importance in the attempt to map space topologically and to understand the consequences of thinking multiplicity in urbanism. Here space is *n*-dimensional or manifold, and inherently performative, it is the ‘socialised space’ of the Aborigines or the ‘lived space’ of Lefebvre.<sup>4</sup> Topological relations are represented in all the maps produced but two sets use digital techniques to make these connections across data. These have been developed in collaboration with the computational designer, Phillip Langley. The mapping of bodily territories as ‘spheres’ and ‘spatial envelopes’ use the walks as input in order to represent the fluctuating territories of different people as manifold, lived and performed, whilst trying to foreground the relational nature of this type of space. Here one of our central questions was how to represent complexity without losing the inherent subjective, social and political qualities of the original walks—put simply, how to map using the powerful capabilities of the computer without the ‘coldness’ of representation that can come with this tool? We also applied a similar approach to the mapping of the *kahve*, this time our aim was to map each of these individual spaces in relation to each other, to try to represent what was essential in constituting them as place. Of all the networks in which the *kahve* operated and which constituted it as place, which were the most important and what relationships did they have with each other? Again the notion of space as being produced through rituals, habits and gestures, was the basis from which we carried out our mappings.

### (b) Interpretative mappings of relations, symbols and spaces



Interpretative mappings of *kahve* (loop drawing)

A second set of maps interpret certain spaces or situations by representing relations and symbolic meanings that reveal how city-space is transformed through diasporic inhabitations. The map based on the naming of the *kahve* describes the reterritorialisations of the street by its displaced diasporic users. They produce another geography that remains hidden from those who do not know how to read the signs: the objects, colours and words that relate to allegiances elsewhere in the guise of decorations and graphics. The network (loop) maps of the individual *kahve* highlight the ways in which these spaces function through representing the various networks that they are a part of. Here

3 Celia Lury, ‘From One to Multiplicity’, in A Ascione, C Massip and J Perello (eds.), *Cultures of change: Social atoms and electronic lives* (Barcelona: Actar, 2009), p. 80.

4 For Lefebvre see, ‘Diasporic spatio-temporalities’, pp. 48-50; for Aboriginal space see, ‘A contemporary politics of mapping’, pp. 209-210.

space is at first deterritorialised, the shop fronts of Victorian terraces now inhabited very differently from how they were imagined, and then reterritorialised in an attempt to mimic practices from various regions of Turkey. Both these types of maps attempt to represent diasporic agency by interpreting how place is 'taken' through the deployment of symbols, through bodily postures, rituals and gestures.

### (c) Performative mappings of gestures and embodiments



Performative mappings of Kurdistan

Nearly all the mappings were produced using data collected through interviews and walks with various people. These occurred in a performative mode, either through being situated in public, or through consciously using techniques such as drawing as part of the interview process. In the walks especially, the body itself was the transducer, used as a means of mapping, and whilst some drawings mapped gestures, others were maps made of gestures. A set of mappings were produced in interviews where I asked various people to draw Kurdistan, the act of drawing itself creating a space for the recalling of journeys and the imagining of other possibilities. In the Kurdistan maps, a person's words, their hand that drew, facial or linguistic expressions were all part of the map, along with the final 'product'. These were also ephemeral maps, difficult to represent but they foregrounded the importance of the body in diasporic agency, communicating in its own language the becomings of diasporic subjectivity as affect. The chameleon-like Shaheed Minar changing according to location, enunciated in the mimetic mode, an object that stands-in for the passions of nation-states, for the failures of them and for the segue into language—language as words, languages of practices and gestures, all ways of mapping performatively.

## Mapping diasporic territories...

### (a) ... through walks

In a previous chapter I described the production of diasporic space using the concept of dispersed and overlapping 'territories' that cause topological deformations to the actual lived space. Here I experiment with ways to represent these deformations through focusing on the micro-scale and the everyday and mapping as 'spheres' and 'spatial envelopes'. The mappings foreground an understanding of diasporic space as a series of reterritoralisations and deterritorialisations that occur through our bodily practices in the local space of a city, and in this section I discuss how these can be mapped in a dynamic manner that foregrounds the importance of the body in producing territories and actuating potentialities. I started to map at the level of the detail using various techniques, photographing, conversations, walking, and then finally collaborating in the use of digital methods to map the topological relations of and between these diasporic territories. In

doing so, the aim was to keep the poetic and political dimensions of the original walks and conversations, to try not to lose their subjective qualities.

The walks occurred along a stretch of the high street that extends from Stoke Newington to Dalston in Hackney. It is an area that has already been, and continues to be, the subject of much mapping. Significant ‘regeneration’ is underway, including the demolition of prominent existing buildings and the construction of new residential towers, as well as new transport infrastructure. Such private/public regeneration



Walking and speaking. A walk with a Kurdish activist who organises many of the protests on the high street.

is accompanied with maps—development plans indicating opportunities, constraints, zones and phases. These mappings represent a bureaucratic exercise intended to create a formal record of a developmental process rather than encouraging a situation in which any kind of participation is possible. They do not describe an urban condition at that particular moment, nor even an idealised situation in the future that could be realised, instead they are merely a pre-determined stage in the process of ‘regeneration’. It is within this context that my mappings propose an alternative tool more situated in the local condition, which attempts to represent diasporic agencies as they are constituted in the public space of the high street. Here mapping is considered a critical practice rather than as a means of legitimising development; it questions the use and

value of city-space. Hard won communal spaces, whether they take the form of the semi-private *kahve* or the community centres set-up in disused buildings, are all pushed out once the area becomes ‘desirable’ again.<sup>5</sup> The type of walking and mapping practice that I am describing is therefore a political act that through a performed inhabitation seeks to valorise agencies of those who do not fit into the local council’s idea of regeneration and so is conceived in opposition to the developmental maps described above. The mappings therefore aim to become tools that could be used within a diasporic urbanism that is part of an alternative and participatory planning process.



In the desire to map territories as both political and biological the everyday practice of walking seemed most apt, as reality is never the same for two people and the street on which I walk is very different from the one others may walk and experience. Both the act of walking itself, and its later mapping and analysis, were a way of trying to discover how the reality of a space that I was highly familiar with differed from person-to-person. The use of walking also seemed appropriate as the street is the site of a series of marches by Kurdish

5 Halkevi, an important Kurdish and Turkish community centre was situated on the same street. It has been forced out of its premises through large-scale rent increases and the building itself converted to ‘loft-style’ apartments. Ironically, the parts of the building that Halkevi occupied remain empty; it seems the plans have fallen victim to the recession that is now affecting the UK.

groups in the area; it is already a highly charged activity, being used regularly to mark out and traverse territories. In my walks with Kurds and Turks I became acutely aware of how different their experiences of the street were, where one saw a building that housed a community organisation, another saw a hotbed of 'terrorist activity'.<sup>6</sup> I realised that the way political territories affect the personal territories of those in the diaspora is through this always already fragmented point of view, and my attempt at mapping diasporic space as territories needed to account for this deformation of space through regional, political and other affiliations.

Using walking as a technique allowed for the privileging of the personal and political, a kind of mapping of 'micro-territories' that form, dissolve and overlap around us all, influenced by our specific circumstances and spatial politics. This conceptualisation owes something to the artist Helen Scalway, who in her own artistic practice elaborates an idea of what I

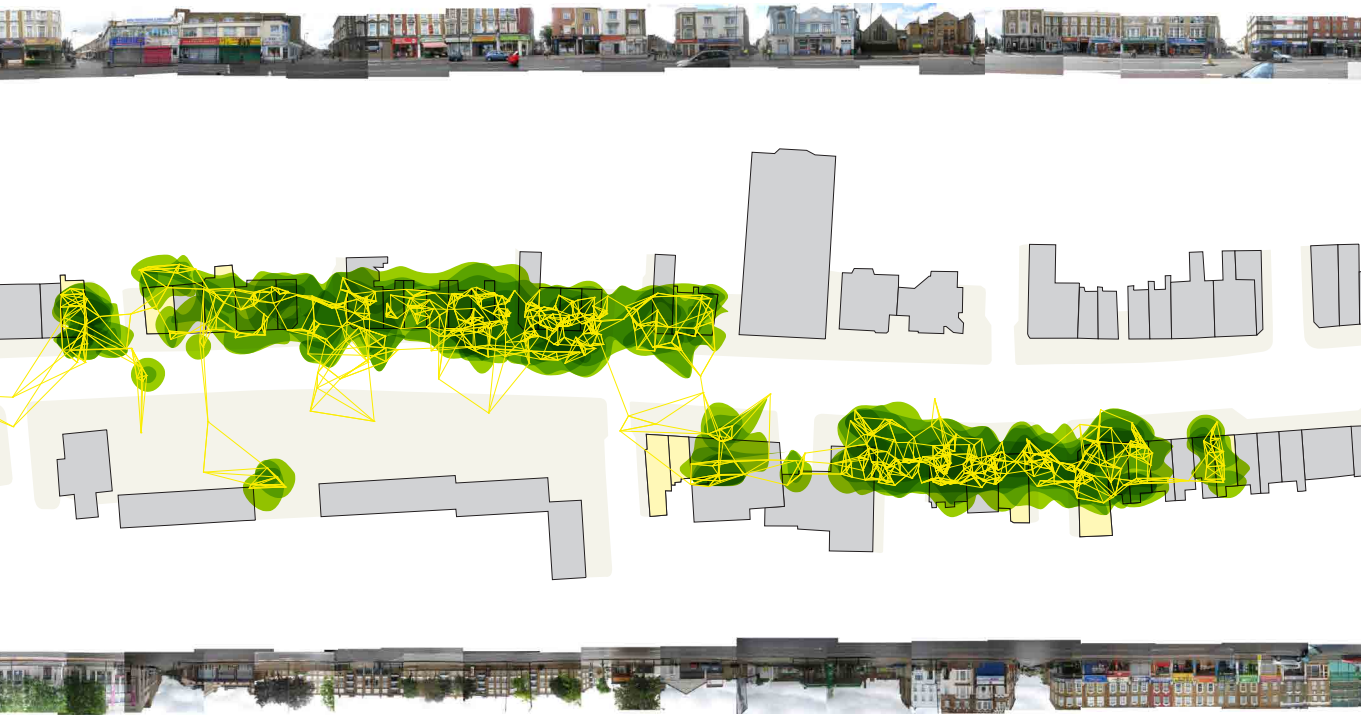


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6 Halkevi: Kurdish and Turkish community centre has been a place of political and cultural solidarity between Kurds and left-wing Turks since it was established in 1984. It was founded by Yashar Ismailoglu, an interview with whom is related in the chapter: 'Border(ing) practices', p. xx and transcript on p. xx. Some Turkish nationalists view the centre as a place from which the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) is organised and supported through the Kurdish diaspora.



call 'personal territory'. In her essay, 'The Contemporary Flaneuse', she speaks of the only photographs that she is able to take in certain parts of the city, as being those of the backs of people's heads, as she felt uncomfortable taking them face-to-face.<sup>7</sup> This then, is a kind of personal micro-territory, one whose edges are defined by the camera, the body of the person holding the camera and their relation to a particular place and person. How far it extends depends on the immediate context, for Scalway it only extended to another person if they were facing away from her, as soon as they turned around it shrank back. The intangible nature of such personal territories that are in constant flux and highly relational requires new ways of mapping and analysing. The concept of 'spheres' and 'spatial envelops' are useful here for the representation of the walks as a kind of field of influence around us all, overlapping, constricting and merging as we encounter different people and places.<sup>8</sup>



The walk represented as neural network tracing the use and occupation as intensities and rhythms

7 Helen Scalway, 'The Contemporary Flaneuse' in, Sylvie Desroches Zeigam Azizov, Dean Inkster, Adrian Laubscher, Alejandra Riera, Caecilia Tripp (ed.), *Radio tempore* (Grenoble: National Centre for Contemporary Arts, 1998).

8 See, 'Diasporic territories', p. 190.

The mapping of these fluctuating and overlapping diasporic territories was carried out by walking with people who have differing, sometimes highly opposing political views, and through this a mapping of the street was created as a series of 'milieu-effects' that reterritorialise and deterritorialise. The walks were also a way of taking what was a highly individual point of view, the mapping of personal or bio-territories, and representing them collectively by juxtaposing and overlaying in order to map affiliative or political territories. Through walking and speaking together I carried out informal interviews along the individualised trajectories of those I walked with. We spoke together about the neighbourhood, but in particular about the street, exchanging experiences about the different places we frequented. The walks were performative and mediatory, acted out within the public space of the street and any representation of them needed to convey their spatial, durational and experiential qualities.

#### (b) New tools for representing diasporic territories

The walks privileged small-scale details and events, and these were represented through mixing this close-looking with traditional architectural representations and digital methods. The question of technology interests me—how is it possible to use new technologies without fetishising the technique and without losing the personalised quality of a method of working that privileges agencies and subjectivities. The use of computational methods was a response to multiplicity and complexity of the data, whilst trying avoid the flattening that sometimes occurs through such representational practices; the nature of these mappings is therefore experimental. It was also an aim to transform walking, which is viewed within a certain tradition as an artistic practice, into a specific architectural tool that could be reused in another setting. The use of digital techniques allowed for a level of generality and repetition to be inserted into what was a highly subjective process so that the methodology for mapping territories could become a potential tool within, specifically diasporic urbanism, and more generally within an alternative and participatory planning process. Proposed as both a methodology and a resource, our maps are intended to be an open, web-based archive where simple bits of information can be added and readily translated. Currently the software, which is scripted in the open source platform *Processing*, is at the level of an interface for exploring the territories as visualisations and as a means of reconnecting these abstracted representations back into the context of the street.<sup>9</sup> The photographic elevations at the top and bottom of the screen act as a navigational device allowing the user to explore the maps in 'section'. Future iterations of the software would incorporate the scripts that

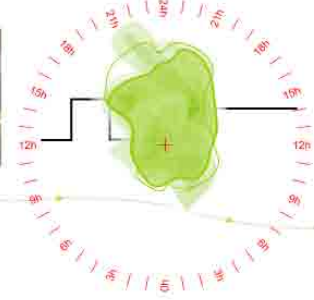

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 9 'Processing is an open source programming language and environment for people who want to create images, animations, and interactions.' For more information see, Processing, <http://processing.org/>.

generate the maps themselves, allowing users to directly create and store their own maps. Here we were interested in creating a mapping tool where the architect is no longer essential to the process of mapping. Acceding responsibility for mapping to others raises the possibility of a long-term and participatory mapping process and here it is useful to compare our method with another group that is attempting to create collective subjective maps, also through the development of proprietary, open source software. Towards.be, a Belgian collective of media activists, artists and others, are designing a piece of on-line software that allows as many people as possible to contribute towards representing their own area. The map is a collage of icons, sounds, photos, videos, which would usually be placed on a static and 'given' base map such as the Google map that is in widespread use. The innovation that towards.be are working towards is to create a mapping software that even allows the initial base map to be created subjectively through the users' inputs so that the locality is mapped in flux as continual negotiation. In this sense, towards.be aim to produce a map that delinks the relationship between 'space' and its Cartesian representation in three-dimensions, a concern that we are also engaged in through trying to create a map of the walks that is primarily relational.


### (c) The shift from three to n- dimensions

To map in a way that emphasised the relations between different people's territories required a shift in thinking from the Euclidean space of normative architectural practice to a different kind of space, heterogenous, multiple and communicating. Starting in Euclidean space with a representation of the street as a standard map, our walking practice provided spatial 'inputs': what shop do you use, which cafe do you go to? In addition, this simple information was enriched with time—when do you use that shop, when do you go for coffee? This small step already introducing a temporal dimension that is usually absent. However, the question here is not simply about how to map 4D information, instead the dimension of time implies an overlapping and intersecting of spatial occupancy and appropriation. In order to map the fluctuations of someone's territory, the map needed to move away from ideas around 3D or even 4D systems into a relational or topological space. This can also be understood as the removal of the Euclidean metric, instances are no longer defined through orders of magnitude (1, 2, 3...) but through 'relations' (convergence, continuity, connectedness...). For the map, this means that it is no longer simply a question of which shop someone went to and when, instead it is starting to show a field of influence, how certain events or the presence and absence of certain people and places changes the mapped territory. In this sense, the mappings move into a topological space of possibilities and the mapping tool becomes propositional. For example, in a walk with a Turkish waiter from one of the local cafés, we passed the community centre Halkevi;

street ref 11




What is that poster there, you know the 18th May one?





Oh, that one. There's a cultural centre in here and that belongs to them, they make a kind of remembrance day for him. He's one of the political leaders in Turkey but has been killed years ago by Turkish government.

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This is a pound shop but they are liars, not everything is a pound (laughs at shopkeeper). They sell good things, my auntie's shop actually, kind of auntie, not really close but ...



street ref 14



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street ref 20



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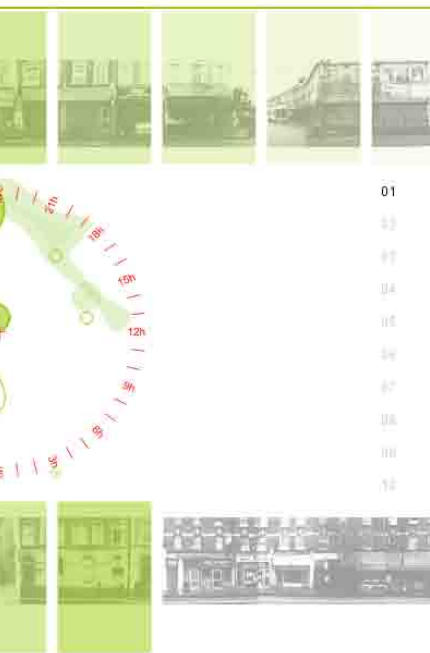
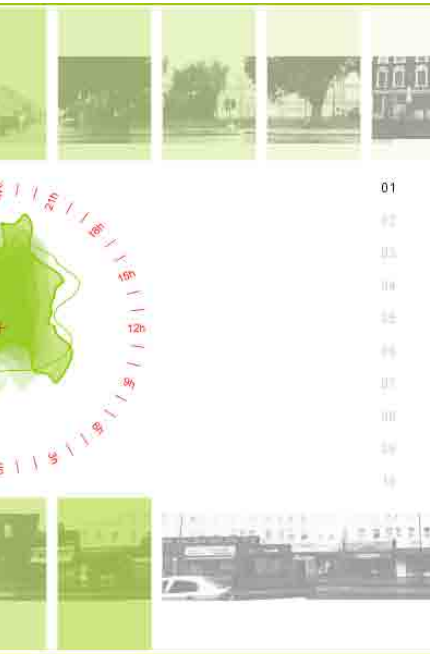
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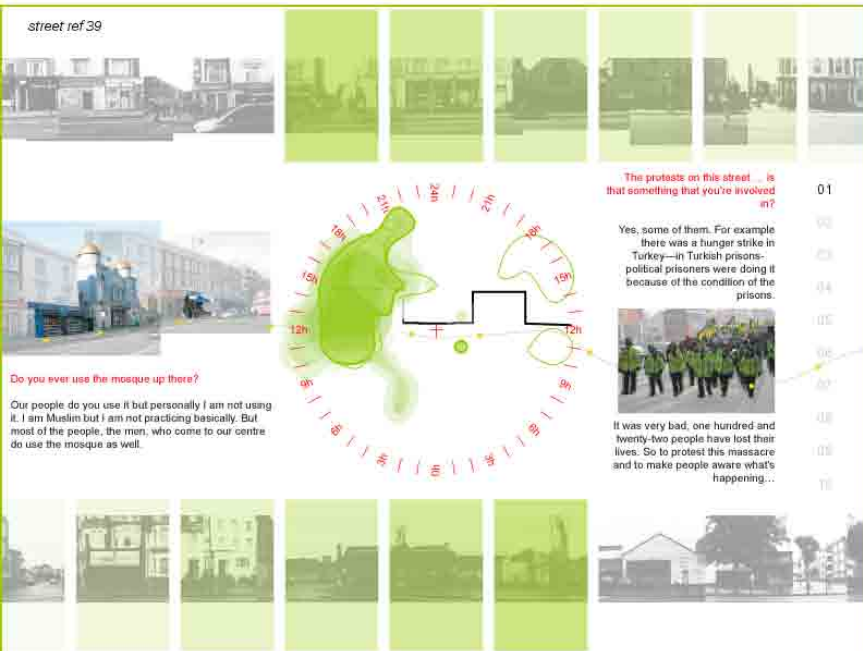


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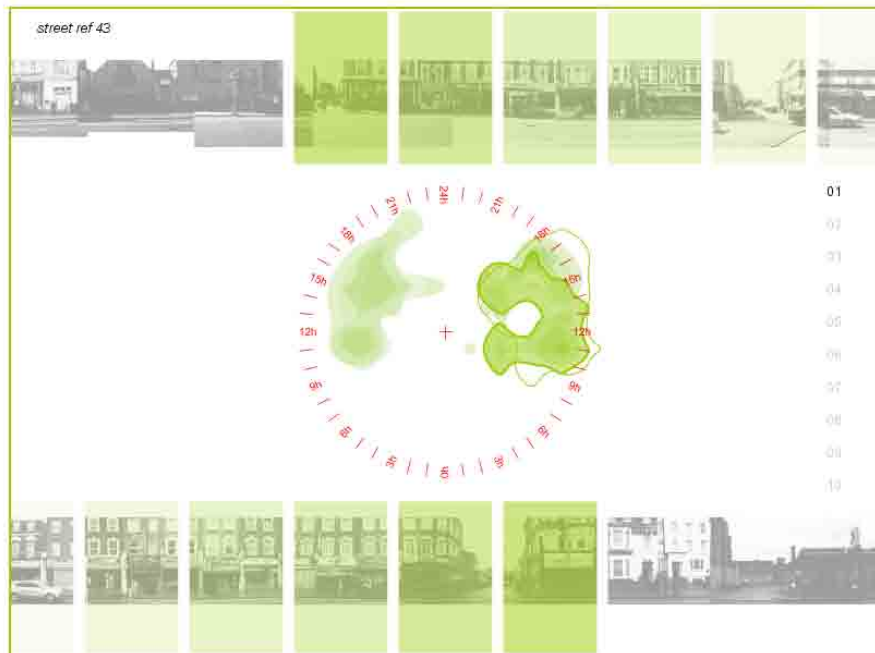
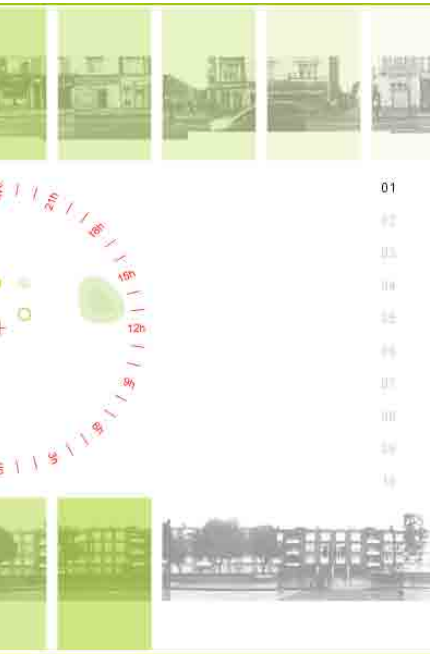


Screenshots from the web interface designed to explore each walk in section with the ability to overlay walks





Screenshots from the web interface designed to explore each walk in section with the ability to overlay walks



he told me that he did not like walking on the same side of the street as this place, saying that he had heard the Turkish secret police were operating there and refusing my offer to go inside and have a look. In another walk with a Kurdish woman, the mosque was a place to go into only on certain specified days. It was clear that both these places and various others reterritorialise the street and have their own field of influence that affects certain people in certain ways, and that they not only act independently but also influence each other.

(d) 'A Baroque perspective'

In the re-situation of the walks as territories, there is a move beyond a simple arrangement of data to what Deleuze named a 'Baroque perspective'. In *The Fold*, Deleuze takes Leibniz's definition of a curve as the 'trace of the same line', and rereading it through contemporary mathematics describes it as an inflection, a line that is in continuous movement.<sup>10</sup> This movement encapsulates Deleuze's way of conceptualising reality—in continual flux, the inflecting line being able to describe matter and relations from the molecular to the molar. The line as Doina Petrescu has written, '*constitutes an abstract and complex enough metaphor to map the entire social field in terms of affects, politics, desire, power*'.<sup>11</sup> The line as opposed to the point describes movement, and an inflecting line moves towards concavity and hence a certain inclusivity. Rather than producing an essential reality, it describes a temporal variation or modulation—it becomes *objectile*: '*The object here is manneristic, not essentialising: it becomes an event*'.<sup>12</sup> If the object becomes *objectile*, then the subject (that which apprehends the object) is also in modulation and Deleuze describes this as '*point of view*' rather than point—'*a place, a position, a site*'. This changes everything, the place defines the subject rather than the subject defining the place. '*It is not a variation of truth according to the subject, but the condition in which the truth of a variation appears to the subject. This is the very idea of Baroque perspective*'.<sup>13</sup>

Deleuze goes on further to say that, '*what is folded is the included, the inherent*' and in the walks something is immanent.<sup>14</sup> The maps or spatial enveloped of each walk when sliced through in section reveals

.....  
10 Gilles Deleuze, *The fold: Leibniz and the baroque*, trans. by Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

11 Doina Petrescu, 'The indeterminate mapping of the common', *field*: 1 (1)(2007): 90.

12 Gilles Deleuze, *The fold: Leibniz and the baroque*, trans. by Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 19.

13 Ibid., p. 20.

14 Ibid.



intensities and rhythm—two qualities of the territory as refrain that describe ‘topological events’. The normal causal relationship between the subject and the object also shifts in the new Baroque perspective whose continuous flux has the same relationship of rhythm and harmony as that described in the ‘refrain’.<sup>15</sup> In the mappings we attempted to describe diasporic territory as purely relational, a representation where the connections between spaces frequented by people show up as intensities and scalar distance is collapsed through occupation and use. We have tried to visualise the subjective worlds of different people and how they interact on the street, the lines they draw in their daily movements to and fro. Deleuze’s lines thus return in our mappings along with his concept of the *fold*.<sup>16</sup> The difference that Deleuze and others make from the Leibnizian monad is to not confine differential relations to compossible worlds alone. Divergent series can also be related but this relation is one of *folding*. A popular and simple example used to illustrate this point through the perception of dimensions describes a two-dimensional ant living on a two-dimensional plane, who has no way of knowing of the existence of the third dimension. Yet, if the plane on which the ant crawls is folded, the ant ‘jumps’ between two seemingly disconnected points on the plane—it has travelled through the third dimension without realising it.<sup>17</sup> This gesture of folding is translated as feedback loops in computing and biology, in fact it was Uexküll who first described feedback in nature, giving the example of a bull finch whose newly learnt tune will be forgotten if it cannot hear itself sing.<sup>18</sup> Through incorporating feedback mechanisms within systems impossible worlds can be included as differential relations. They take the form of complex adaptive systems or networks that are self-organised. These models were created through the study of the human brain and the computational technique derived from them is aptly named ‘artificial neural networks’. This is the technique that we have used to map diasporic territories as relations, because its self-organising behaviour and *folding* tries to emulate how reality is conceptualised as a series of events occurring within a space that does not adhere to Cartesian rules. It allows ‘point of view’ to be a place or a position—to have a Baroque perspective. It is therefore a mode of representation that foregrounds differences and agencies since ‘point of view’ results from the ‘taking of place’.

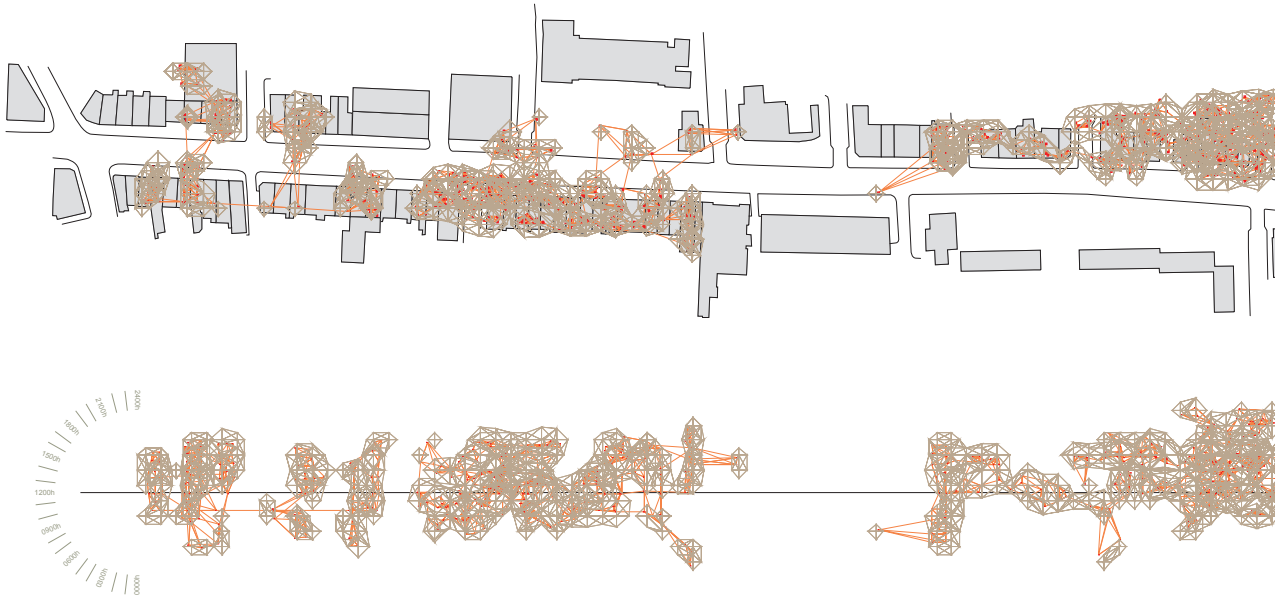
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15 See, ‘Diasporic territories’, pp. 196-198.

16 Deleuze’s ‘fold’ takes the Leibnizian ‘monad’ as a starting point—the idea that each being carries the whole universe within it and describes the *fold* as the opening up of the monad to the world. Although each monad carries the whole world within it, ‘point of view’ ensures that a certain part of it is clearer for each monad.

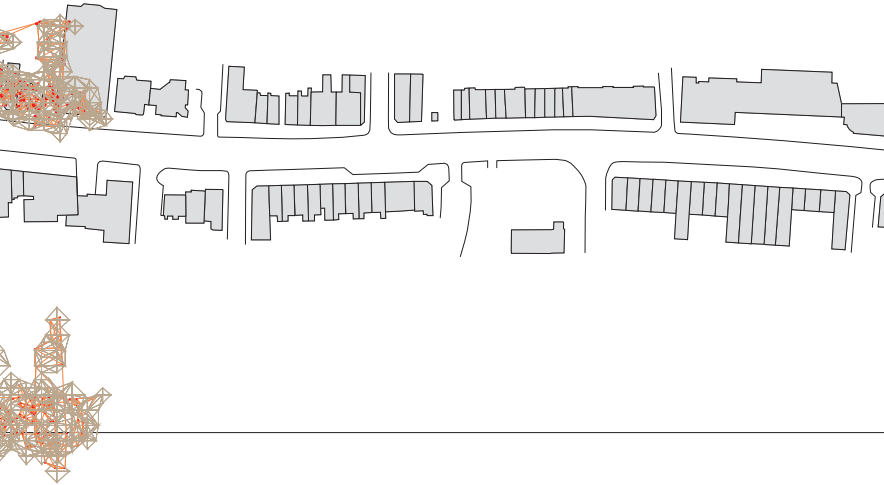
17 See, Rob Bryanton, ‘Imagining the tenth dimension’, (2006), [www.tenthdimension.com](http://www.tenthdimension.com).

18 Jakob von Uexküll, *Theoretical biology*, trans. by D.L. Mackinnon (London: Kegan Paul, 1926).

A walk with a Kurdish man who was working in one of the local social clubs, helping out a friend who was ill. Although he lives quite far away, he comes to the area quite often to go to the social clubs, where he knows a lot of people and also to visit the mosque.

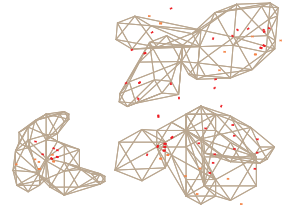


A walk encoded as self-organising map



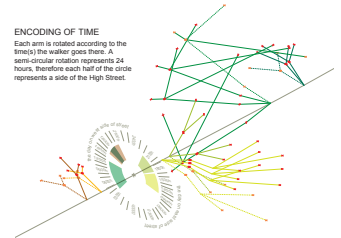
**SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL REPRESENTATION OF THE TERRITORY**

A volume is created through an approximation of the points generated through the walk, creating a 3-dimensional representation of the territory.



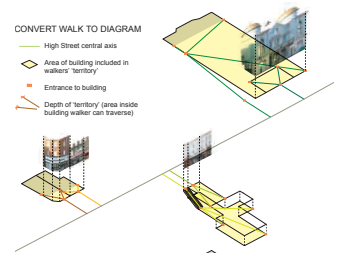
**ENCODING OF TIME**

Each arm is rotated according to the time(s) the walker goes there. A semi-circular rotation represents 24 hours, therefore each half of the circle represents a side of the High Street.



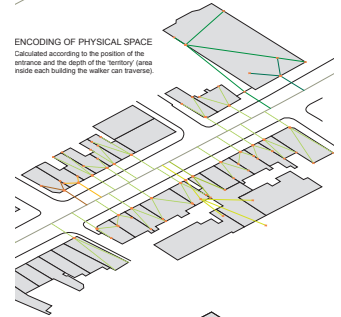
**CONVERT WALK TO DIAGRAM**

- High Street central axis
- ◊ Area of building included in walkers' territory
- Entrance to building
- Depth of territory (area inside building walker can traverse)



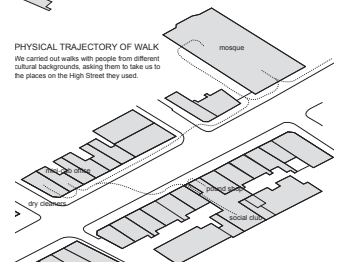
**ENCODING OF PHYSICAL SPACE**

Calculated according to the position of the entrance and the depth of the territory (area inside each building the walker can traverse).

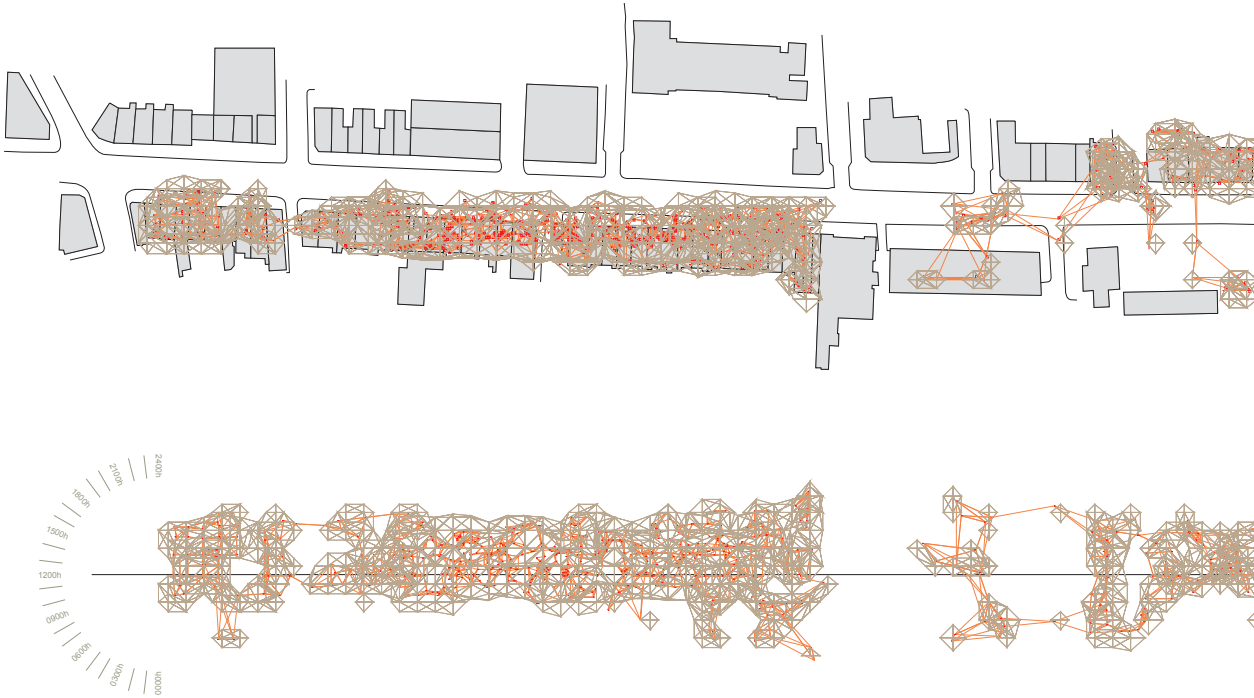


**PHYSICAL TRAJECTORY OF WALK**

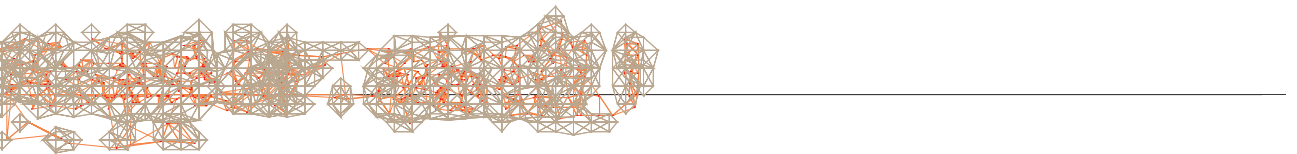
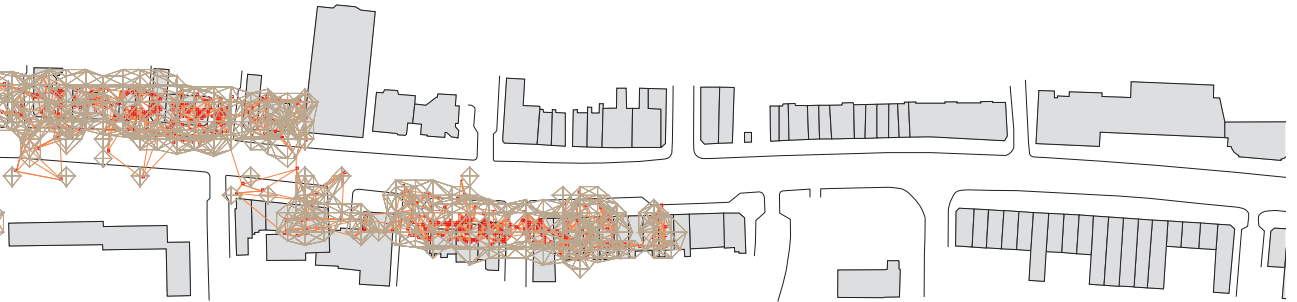
We carried out walks with people from different cultural backgrounds, asking them to take us to the places on the High Street they used.



A walk with a Kurdish woman from the south-eastern area of Turkey, who has lived and worked in the locality for seven years. She is active in mobilising the local Kurdish community; '... to make people aware of what's happening in Turkey, you know and to take attention from the government, so we were doing peace demonstrations here, just from the centre to the graveyard.'



A walk encoded as self-organising map



## (e) Neural networks and self-organising maps

Our aim was to create a map that could represent the diversity of diasporic inhabitations of space, and to be able to use such a representation to identify moments of conflict and opportunity that were the result of the overlapping and negotiations of diasporic territories. We used one of the earliest types of artificial neural network, ‘The Self-Organising map’,<sup>19</sup> to organise the data from the walks. In cognitive and computational science, it is used as a tool for categorisation, resting on the notion that *everything* can be catalogued and apportioned a place. We took a different approach, based on the observation that just as in real life the relations between people, objects and spaces are altered as soon as something ‘extra’ is added or someone else arrives, so the same is also true for a neural network, which is in essence a map of relations. It is solely a representation of the original inputs—there is no other essential criteria according to which they are distributed and therefore there can be no categories, *only* relations. The advantage of self-organising maps lies in their ability to provide approximations of data, they produce topological relationships rather than topographic descriptions. There is a certain fallacy of precision when using such digital methods, which can be very precise in handling the given data but this level of precision is misleading. Typically, it is the precision of the original inputs that will govern the end result—the translation from the physical reality to the virtual reality of the computer having its own transforming effects. Although a self-organising map is computationally very precise, the distributed network it produces is quite imprecise—it is, in fact, an attempt to map complex yet imprecise inputs.<sup>20</sup>



The ‘territory’. 2m of a Victorian pavement in London

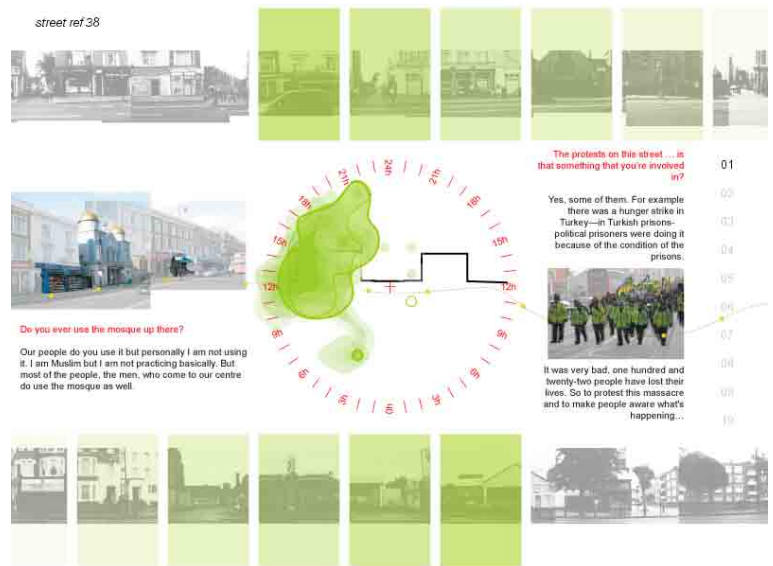
Using the walks as input meant that there was a level of lived accuracy and proximity to the original information. Unlike the recent use of technologies such as GPS tracking, this way of gathering information is grounded in experience. Most GPS systems map to a 2–1.5m accuracy and in the space of the street, for example in London where Victorian pavements are generally two metres wide, it is the difference between being inside or outside – this is the territory. The politics and poetics of those two meters is what we are trying to map. Each person’s mapping describes the topological deformation of space by their personal territory and when different mappings are overlaid, a trajectory can be traced from one person’s territory to another. The tracing of these deformations produces an understanding of the reterritorialisations of space by the diaspora beyond simple physical

19 The specific type of ANN used is a ‘Self-Organising Map’ [SOM], based on the algorithms developed by Teuvo Kohonen Teuvo Kohonen, *Self-organizing maps* (Berlin: Springer, 2001(1995)). Typically, such algorithms are used for pattern recognition in images or language.

20 For details on the types of neural networks used see, Phillip Langley, *Meta cognitive mappings: growing neural networks for a generative urbanism* (UEL Unpublished thesis, 2007).

descriptions of space. Since the mappings represent a dynamic record of someone's spatial inhabitation within a fluid spatio-temporal context, they are also a method for determining interventions within such a context, as well as a means of tracing their consequences. The maps are therefore both 'possibilities and propositions', they act as tactics for understanding diasporic spatiality as including layers of the political, religious, cultural, gendered and the economic, each causing deformations to the actual lived space of a local street in the city.

The eventual overlaying and combination of different walks were a way of somehow relating each person's territory to others, whilst at the same time being able to emphasise the point of view and perspective of the individual walkers. I wanted to find out what personal and subjective narratives produced through an embodied spatial practice could tell me about the nature of diasporic agency in the city. Could the mappings reveal how individualities become singularities through finding moments of opportunity where desires meet and needs overlap? In my mappings of diasporic territories I have tried to represent these processes of reterritoralisations and deterritorialisations as having the potential to bring together 'impossible' worlds.



Screenshot of web interface for navigating 'diasporic territories'

## Mapping trans-localities and places

From a mapping of walks on the high street, I now turn to mapping the *kahve* on and around the same street. These mappings are two-fold, first I mapped the actual physical locations of the *kahve* on the street and then I mapped the interiors of these spaces. The map of the various *kahve* on the high street is certainly not definitive and is out-of-date already. It attempts to represent an other geography of the street overlaid onto physical space. This map uses the most conventionally architectural mapping techniques, a visual survey of the buildings, marking them on an ordinance survey map, but it is the content of the map that is unusual, the layering of it with information related to the names of the *kahve*, making connections with the way they allude to regional affinities in Turkey. Maps of Turkey are overlaid and deformed according to the places that the *kahve* themselves relate to. It is a mapping of how the street could be read for someone who knows the names of the various places and for whom the politics of that region are a lived and felt reality. It is another way of representing the reterritorialisation of the street through diasporic inhabitations, and specifically the border effects that are produced by the everyday comings and goings of those in the diaspora.

### (a) Mapping *kahve* space as the servicing of networks

The mapping of the *kahve* interiors was based on a number of interviews I carried out with the owners and their customers. I wanted to discover how these places functioned as diasporic space, what purposes they served for their migrant users and whether they took part in the 'fictional urbanism' that Barajas has conceptualised. Describing this kind of urbanism within the context of his project on the *belhuis* of Rotterdam Barajas writes, *'it is based on mental but tangible constructions - that is manifested in the city as fragments, micro-environments of global circuits, each of which establishes its own identity, time, rules, and aesthetics - its own atmospheres.'*<sup>21</sup> What is the 'atmosphere' that the *kahve* strive for and how is it maintained? I had been observing them for a while and was aware that many of the businesses were short-lived, easily opened and closed, and one of the first casualties of the slowly encroaching gentrification, from the city moving north along the high street. I had already attempted to trace a pattern of dispersal of the *kahve*, a mapping of location and regional allegiance signalled through a naming practice, I now wanted to go inside and discover what type of space these unassuming façades hid—a space that was undoubtedly traditional but with a promise of another more contemporary space that overlapped it.

.....  
 21 Diego Barajas, *Dispersion: A study of global mobility and the dynamics of a fictional urbanism* (Rotterdam: episode publishers, 2003), p. 1. See also, 'Trans-localities/places', pp. 141-142.



It was difficult to gain access to the *kahve* as they are places for Turkish men only. Language was also a barrier, most *kahve* are opened by people who cannot speak English and therefore have difficulty finding jobs. I made several attempts to just walk inside to have a chat but soon realised that I needed a translator and hopefully someone who knew and used the *kahve*. Not being able to find anyone through friends and acquaintances, I eventually put up a sign in local shops and met Burak, a Turkish man in his mid-thirties who used to live in Istanbul and was happy to act as my guide. We visited a number of *kahve* together, he took me to his favourite haunts, and I realised that even after what I thought was a thorough and intensive mapping of *kahve* locations I had missed many. Occupying first floors of buildings, hidden behind façades that claimed a different function, they were easy to miss. I had prepared a number of questions for the interviews, practical in nature that asked when the *kahve* was opened, who were their customers, which products and objects were essential to have or serve, whether it was a good business to be involved in, how were the decorations and furniture chosen, were the *kahve* modelled after those in Turkey etc.<sup>22</sup> The idea was to gain an understanding of how these places functioned and to find out what was essential to transform usually drab and nondescript shop units into a *kahve*.

Alongside the interviews I also took photos, although in some places they preferred that I did not take too many. The images are therefore sparse but are added to with my own observations and notes. Using this information, I later drew maps which tried to show both the spatial configuration of the *kahve* and also their organisational structures, the networks in which these spaces operated, the ways in which they maintained connections to Turkey, how they involved themselves (if at all) in regional politics. Through creating the mappings I realised that these processes whilst crossing long distances and having an

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22 Some questions for *kahve* owners:

- When did you move to UK / London?
- When did you open the *kahve*?
- What was the reason for opening the *kahve*?
- *Kahve* open and close quite often – what is the reason for this?
- Do Kurds and Turks mix in the clubs?
- How did you decide on the name of the *kahve*?
- Are all your customers from the same region/area of Turkey - did you know any of them before coming to London?
- Why did you choose this name for the club?
- What do the colours/patterns in the sign/decorations signify?
- What products/drinks/food do you sell? Where do you source it?
- How do you maintain the connection to home? Is satellite TV important? Do you call Turkey very often?
- How do you organise the club? Do you employ any people? Are you always here?
- Are the clubs here very similar to the coffee houses back home? What are the similarities and differences?
- Do you have a lot of regular customers?



Appropriating the pavement outside with a chair

air of ephemerality about them, were actually embedded in certain physical locations, in certain objects, and in certain practices. It was the combination of these highly material and located practices with the deterritorialised condition of migration that constituted the *kahve* as place.

The networks were grouped in order to answer the question: How are the 'state of affairs' of the *kahve* sustained? There were a number of different types of networks and in the maps these were colour-coded according to their function. The first type of network, **technology**, was perhaps the most obvious and it also corresponds to one of Appadurai's 'scapes', as well as being identified by Barajas in his exploration of the *belhuis* of Rotterdam. In the diaspora technology is used to maintain connections and relations across large distances and in the specific case of the *kahve* this technology took the form of satellite dishes and mobile phones, transmitting images, messages and voices from another place. Many *kahve* have satellite television, especially 'Digiturk', which is popular with younger audiences as it mainly shows football matches and music videos. But this technology was also made immediately material for me through Burak's observation that most of the satellite dishes were not bought in the UK but in Turkey, meaning cheaper rental as you pay the Turkish tariff and receive advertisements from Turkey rather than from Germany, *'which are much better and make you feel as if you are still at home and the Turkish accent is right too.'*<sup>23</sup> This alerted me to another type of network that dealt with **tactics of appropriation and subversion**. Subversion of laws and regulations in the form of the satellite dish purchases or in planning regulations, where the status of 'members only' clubs allowed the *kahve* to operate under different regulations to a standard café. Appropriation of space also seemed common with a slow encroachment onto the pavement or into adjoining shops, where clandestine activity such as illegal gambling or the provision of a 'hostel' of sorts could take place. There were also other more subtle networks at work, **social networks** which were the main source of custom for the *kahve* and networks that were maintained primarily through **rituals and gestures**, the use of the samovar for tea, a certain way of pouring it, playing certain card games, the relation of the games to the drinking of tea etc. The enactment of these gestures connects the *kahve* to another place, and the mapping of them needed to somehow keep their performative quality, actively creating another 'world'. Through observation and encounters, I came to know these bodily movements, which inform the maps that I have produced. And finally there were **political networks** of solidarity and conflict that also determined who could be a customer and who could not. Some *kahve* were more overtly political than others but they were all involved in the

23 From a casual conversation with a Burak on the *kahve* and their use of satellite dishes.

politics of the region, some places being exclusively Kurdish others for Turks only, whilst one was self-consciously apolitical, its owner having banned such talk from his premises.

In the chapter 'Trans-localities/places' I write of the *kahve* as a place where the bodily production of locality occurs through its positioning within a trans-local network that is serviced through regular, material 'work'. How can this production of locality within the *kahve* space be mapped? My mapping of the *kahve* is influenced by atelier d'architecture autogérée whose techniques represent networks, which can sometimes feel intangible and ephemeral, by paying close attention to the very precise physical locations in which they operate. The translocal networks are mapped as embedded in the social interactions that occurred within the physical space of the project. This mapping technique reveals the importance of the way space is organised and its influence on the workings of trans-local networks. Certain spatial interfaces were important in the functioning of the *kahve*, for example the threshold and the manipulation of the layers of screening, as well as the importance of the small strip of pavement in front, an area that becomes a place to meet, chat and observe. In the case of Besiktas, the shopfront is used to display posters for discussions, regarding for example the worker's struggle at the Tuzla shipyard in Istanbul, one node in a network that stretches from the Victorian pavement of London to Turkey. Through mapping the *kahve* as networks the multiplicity of its space is revealed and the specific ways in which diasporic inhabitations transform a nondescript physical space into a kind of surrogate 'home' through a process of reterritorialisation. These spaces, hidden from the view of the other users of the high street are hubs of diasporic agency and the representations somehow try to show this.

How is the 'state of affairs' of the kahve sustained?

- through technology
- through social networks
- through rituals and gestures
- through politics and political affiliations
- through tactical appropriations and subversions



(b) *Kahve* talk

The phrase '*kahve talk*' refers to the prominent activity that takes place there, sometimes used derisively, other times with affection, for some it is the 'essence' of the place. Here I describe some of the *kahve* I visited, including one in Istanbul, Turkey.

**Besiktas** is one of the 'sports club' type *kahve*, it is a small place on the high street in a typical shop unit that is fairly run-down but serviceable. The owner, a Turkish-Cypriot told me it used to be a branch of the Wimpys franchise in the 1970s, then an independent burger bar and finally he decided to open a *kahve*, which had the advantage of being easy to manage. It is named after an Istanbul football team that the owner supports, but the customers are mostly Turkish-Cypriots and are older first generation migrants.



Different levels of privacy operate inside, from the publicness of the chairs placed on the pavement to the area behind the bar and the outside space at the back that are completely private. The shop unit next door is also owned by the same person and since he had not been able to let it for a while, he sometimes lets the *kahve* spill into this space. I was not allowed inside this part and the roller shutter of that shop unit is rarely opened except on a few warm, sunny days.



Besiktas carries out the normal functions associated with *kahves* but there was a sense that it was an overtly political place where the '*kahve talk*' revolved more around politics than sports. This may well be due to the owners' own support of workers' rights, which he promotes through advertising and sometimes helping to arrange meetings and talks.







**Guben** is located on a side street just off the high street and is a *kahve* with a young clientele. It takes its name from the internet café that occupied the premises before it and although established for a number of years it has not been renamed. The owner used to run a *kahve* in Turkey and so decided to open one here too.

It provides all the usual services and has a relaxed atmosphere, customers make their own tea and serve themselves snacks. The owner tells me that he stops people from discussing politics too much as he does not want it to spoil the atmosphere. He was derisive of '*kahve* talk', which he claimed was idle chit-chat that only started arguments. Although most of the people who come to the *kahve* are from Osmaniye, where he is also from, he tried to encourage people from all over Turkey to come to his place and hopes that Guben will become a 'cosmopolitan' *kahve*, much like those found in the more fashionable parts of Istanbul.

How is the 'state of affairs' of the *kahve* sustained?

- through technology
- through social networks
- through rituals and gestures
- through politics and political affiliations
- through tactical appropriations and subversions

How is the 'state of affairs' of the kahve sustained?

- through technology
- through social networks
- through rituals and gestures
- through politics and political affiliations
- through tactical appropriations and subversions







**Yusuf's Place** (or **Upstairs of Pub**) is located next to and above a popular pub on the high street, it is a spacious family-oriented *kahve* with a welcoming feel. The current owner took over the business from a friend eight years ago. Everyone seems to know each other and the owner confirmed that customers are relatives of relatives, meaning that it is associated with one particular region of Turkey, Gaziantep in the south-east. Due to its location over the pub, it is one of the few places where 'foreigners' sometimes come, but only to watch popular football matches when the pub is too full or is not showing a particular game.

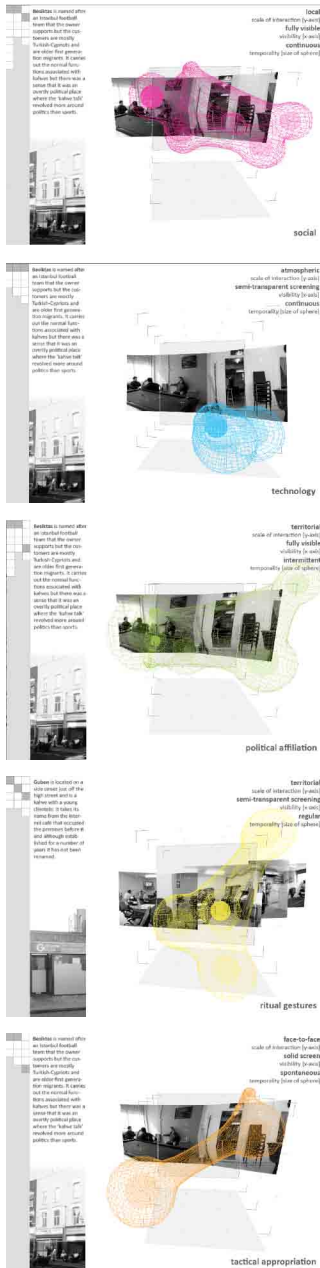


There is a photo of Abdullah Ocalan over the serving hatch and there is strong support for the Kurdish cause here, people from the *kahve* try to attend the protest marches or at least go out on the street to show their support when it passes by. The '*kahve* talk' here revolves as much around regional politics as it does around family politics. The presence of the Turkish samovar for tea, the drinking of it whilst playing the '101 card game' and the reading of newspapers and chatting are all ways of initiating the younger generation into the cultural ways. The people who attend this *kahve* are settled in London with their families and although they are deeply embroiled in the politics of Turkey, they generally do not anticipate moving back.



The *kahve* in **Gülensu** is located in a *gecekondu* neighbourhood of Istanbul, which has had a strong tradition of local activism since the 1970s and is currently mobilising against the attempts to evict residents in order to develop the land. The *kahve* is one of many nodes in the neighbourhood for discussing and organising the fractious local politics. Having arrived there after completing my interviews in the *kahve* in London, I was struck by how similar the place looked and felt. Of course, there was one major difference, this *kahve* was not a marginal space, it was deeply embedded in its immediate locality and in fact held a position of considerable power. The men who meet in the *kahve* affect local lives and politics to a great degree, although they are connected to other spaces through mainly political networks, these are not necessarily trans-local. There is also one conspicuous absence here: the television set whether small or large, in a remote corner or taking pride of place in the London *kahve*, is missing here. There is no need for the constant humming presence that is so important for those other spaces that need the connection back to Turkey.



(c) Representing *kahve* relationally

Screenshot of web interface for navigating the various networks of operating in the *kahve*

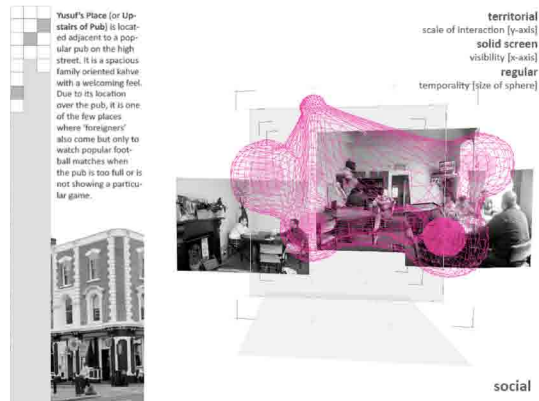
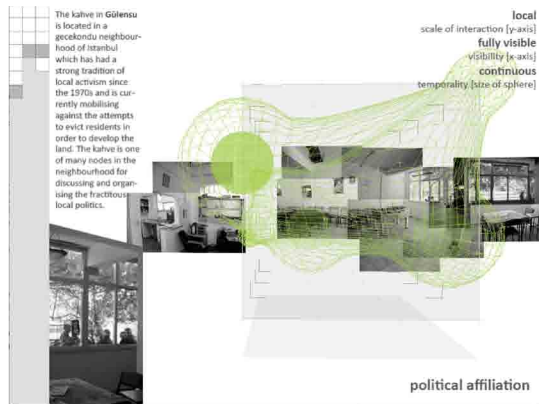
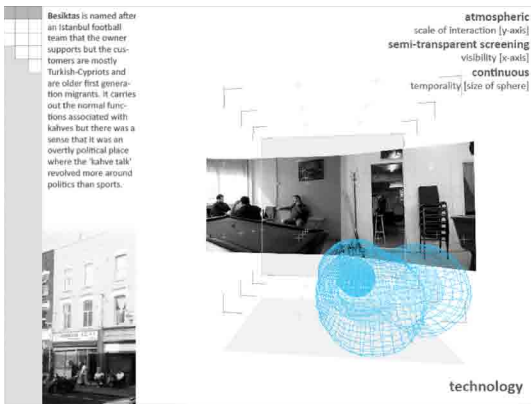
Whilst the drawings above show the operation of the individual *kahve*, I also wanted to represent them in relation to each other, in a similar way to the mapping of diasporic territories. The navigational tool for exploring the *kahve* space was also developed in collaboration with Phillip Langley and the idea was to create a way of exploring the different networks of the *kahve* through multiple entry points. Unlike the interface developed for the walks, where there is a pre-determined way to navigate the information, here the navigation is left up to the user.

The *kahve* networks (the loops of the above diagrams) are displayed as spheres in a virtual environment that is described according to set criteria. The size of the spheres represents the **temporality of the network** being described. From a spontaneous act or a chance meeting, to intermittent events such as the meeting organised at Besiktas to discuss the worker's situation at Tuzla shipyard, to regular encounters or actions such as a weekly card-game organised by a group of friends at the Guben *kahve*, to finally those functions or workings related to the *kahve* that happen on a regular basis, such as the serving of tea. The y-axis describes the **scale of interaction** of the network, from the intimate scale of face-to-face encounters between people, to local interactions at the neighbourhood level, to territorial connections that could be regional or national in scale and finally, atmospheric interactions refer to those that are usually mediated through technology or are somehow planetary in scale. The x-axis describes the most physical aspect of the networks, their **location and visibility**, from being fully visible in the space of the street or on the *kahve* threshold, to being situated just inside the *kahve* space but visible from the street as views through, to being located behind semi-transparent screening, to finally being completely invisible in a back room or behind some kind of solid screening device. The z-axis describes each of the **individual kahve** so that the networks for each are located in a single plane and can be viewed individually, if desired. Finally, the colours of each of the spheres indicate the network type and correspond to those used in the 'loop drawings'.

The *kahve* diagram can be navigated in a number of different ways, the navigational panel at the side contains three strips of buttons, the first cycles through all the different networks, the second strip corresponds to each of the four *kahve*, and the third to the network types. This last view adds a mesh around networks of the same type, which map a topological space arranged according to the type of network being described. Whilst the mapping of the diasporic territories kept a topographic quality through always being viewed in relation to the street, here the maps are not placed on a physical ground. Since the physical space being described is an interior that is overlaid with other connections, interactions and atmospheres, it seemed more appropriate

to create a navigational tool that foregrounded these relations. Panoramic photographs are displayed behind the map to give an idea of the interior space but act as backdrops only.

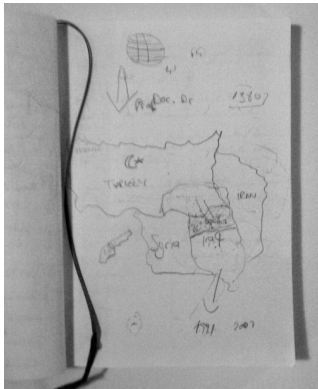
Finally, the maps are designed to be easy to use and are extendable. Coding the network data according to fairly simple criteria of scales of interaction, visibility, temporality and type, allows information from casual conversations and interviews to be translated into a representation of the *kahve* space (in this instance, although it could be any number of other spaces) as networked and relational. In comparison to the drawn representations these diagrams are quick to produce and therefore can be added to and amended easily. They could be used to show how the networks operating in the *kahve* may change over time and crucially, they can be used to analyse dynamically rather than in the static fashion of a standard drawing.



## Mapping border(ing) practices

### (a) Mapping Kurdistan

Whereas in the mapping of the *kahve* space there is an attempt to map gestures, in this second example, the gesture itself is the map. Over the course of my research, I have conducted a series of interviews with Kurds and Turks from very different political and social backgrounds, people from different parts of what could be a future Kurdish state, or Turks who completely oppose the idea. I have focused on the particular constructions of Kurdistan as a country, an idea, a home, or a threat within their imagination, because the state itself does not yet exist, and perhaps never will. I wanted to understand how Kurdistan as an ‘imagined home’ is constructed in the psyche of the Kurdish people strewn across national borders, but also in the psyche of those who are opposing their desire for an independent state. For the Kurdish people, Kurdistan is a demand for another politics and with it also another way of representing (in both senses of the word). How do you map such border struggles without resorting to the dominant narratives of those in power? Where contested borders are not even allowed the ambiguity of dotted lines on official pieces of paper, where the ‘line of control’ or the ‘line of ceasefire’ never came to be named as such—how do you map the experience of those whose lives are touched by the phantom line that is always a thick line, a zone, a borderland?<sup>24</sup> These were questions I wanted to address in my mappings of Kurdistan.

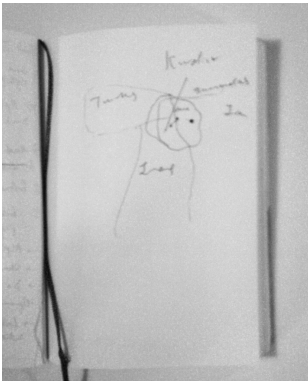


'Kurdistan' drawn by a Turkish waiter at a local café

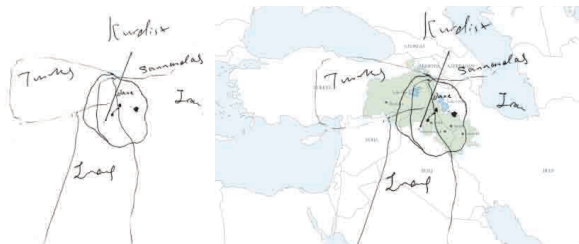
During the interviews I asked people to draw a map of 'Kurdistan' as they saw it in their mind. The conversations together whilst drawing the maps revealed how their experience of urban space in London is inflected through the way in which they conceptualise Kurdistan, whether as a geographic location, a concept, a hope, a person (Ocalan, the PKK leader) or an ideology. Drawing and speaking thus become a tactic for mapping borders and the interviews reveal how these highly contentious borders are inscribed onto the subjectivity of those I spoke to. The maps also explored ways of representing affects, of a person embodying and diffusing the border, of somehow internalising it. How do feelings of nostalgia, exile and the relationships with the host community affect the construction of this imagined space? These issues are all prevalent in the diaspora but for the Kurdish community they are somehow doubled, a nostalgia for a place that does not quite exist.

24 The term Line of Control (LOC) refers to the military control line between the Indian- and Pakistani-controlled parts of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir—a line which, to this day, does not constitute a legally recognised international boundary but is the de facto border. See, 'Line of Control', *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Line\\_of\\_Control](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Line_of_Control).

During the interviews, I used the method of making ‘mental maps’, asking people to draw Kurdistan as they saw it in their minds, what would its shape be, where exactly would it be situated, and what are its extents? The method of mental mapping is well established in the discipline of geography where maps are used as a way of visualising spatial knowledge and how this is used to aid, for example, navigation. The term cognitive maps is closely related but with a stronger connection to psychology, and here it can also allude to non-spatial knowledge related to memory and understanding.<sup>25</sup> The artist, Helen Scalway, has produced mental maps of the London underground, asking passengers to draw their London Underground network. Scalway writes that she was interested in ‘*the personal geographies of Tube travellers whose private copings with city’s space might mingle strangely with the authoritative suggestions of official maps.*’<sup>26</sup> My own maps were drawn similarly to those of Scalway but unlike hers, which established a dialogue with official maps, in the case of the Kurdistan maps it was exactly the absence of official maps that was being represented. Drawing and speaking together, these maps were mental constructions of what was not represented in the hegemonic accounts of those on power, and so the maps also asked the question: does where you are affect what you draw? In this case it certainly did. The maps that were produced during these sessions varied enormously, and the way they were drawn was also very different. Mapping here functioned as a mediatory practice, a tactic and a ruse to speak about difficult journeys and personal stories. The gesture of hand-to-paper, which began as a self-conscious, deliberate stroke slowly became a non-articulated movement—sometimes almost an auto-drawing, tracing maps that are gestures.



‘Kurdistan’ drawn by Diana



‘Kurdistan’ as drawn by Diana (director of Iranian Kurdish women’s rights organisation)

‘Different people have a different view, of course it’s a dream for all Kurdish people to have their own country, you know, one day. They are very proud, for example, of Iraqi Kurdistan now many of them, but still there is lots of conflict still between Kurdish groups.’

So I think that the nationalism is very strong within Kurdish people and because of that they try to keep even the criminal issues in the community, like honour killing, as a part of the culture and the tradition, so that it is their identity ... Kurdish women have to be modest, to be an angel.’

25 For a general overview of cognitive and mental maps see, Robert M. Kitchin, ‘Cognitive maps: What are they and why study them?’, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 14 (1)(March 1994): 1-19. Mental maps have been used widely, for example in geography, architecture and in art practice. See, Kevin Lynch, *The image of the city* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1960); Katherine Harmon, *Personal geographies and other maps of the imagination* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004).

26 Helen Scalway, ‘Travelling Blind’ in, Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift (eds.), *City A-Z: Urban fragments* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. xvi.



Founder of Halkevi (Turkish and Kurdish cultural centre on the high street)  
drawing 'Kurdistan'



'I came in first January 1972 and I was a university graduate from Turkey but I'm Cypriot myself - I'm Turkish-Cypriot but my first wife was Kurdish. I fell in love with a woman and then I turned out to be in love with a community – with a nation ...'

'The Kurdistan in mine, it is ... the Kurdistan is in the minds and hearts of the Kurdish people. It might be a little bit small but this is Van Lake, Ararat etc. Azerbaijan, then Armenia, Iran, Iraq, Syria.'

'Kurdistan' drawn by a young Kurdish woman who works in the local area



'I was born in actually the south-east called K. Marsh - I'm sure that you don't know. Most of the Kurdish people are from K. Marsh, Elbistan. I was born there and then we had to move to Istanbul and then from Istanbul to London.'





'But this is a very offensive map for the Turkish .  
err for Turkey's purpose because it shows an  
aspiration of people taking, splitting Turkey and  
we need to be very careful what we say ...'



'I - in a way have grown up in this country; how I see  
myself as a Kurdish, Turkish and British and I mix all three  
different identities, whatever I like I just chose and I kept ...'

'I really don't know how I would feel, how I would think about  
it. But as an educated person I might think about that but I  
never actually thought that one day we will have Kurdistan ... at  
the moment I am happy to live in London, to be in England.'

the area brought over by one of the interviewees to make his point. Deleuze writes on mapping: *'The trajectory merges not only with the subjectivity of those who travel through a milieu, but also with the subjectivity of the milieu itself, insofar as it is reflected in those who travel through it. The map expresses the identity of the journey and what one journeys through.'*<sup>27</sup> In this sense, the maps that were drawn in the interviews superimposed reality with the imagined, they mapped both 'trajectories and affects'.

### (b) The Shaheed Minar as map



Installation of Shaheed Minar and Bangladeshi girls' conversations at 'Revisit: urbanism made in London', exhibition at Architektur Forum, Linz.

In some ways the mapping of the Shaheed Minar is the least like a traditional map, but it acted as a map in the exhibition it was a part of. Here the monument was replicated to stand in for a place (the park) and the interviews with the teenage girls around questions of language and subjectivity could be listened to. The model of the minar was decorated with ribbons, as it often is on days of celebration. On the ribbons extracts from the girls' conversation was inscribed, in the script of the language they spoke in. Together the ensemble could be said to constitute a map, but the map is also formed by the monuments dotted around the globe, wherever there is a

Bangladeshi population. Here the Shaheed Minar itself is an allegorical map, somehow mapping the amorphous borders of 'Bangladesh' and in each new location it is different: shiny and bright in Tokyo, made of concrete in a schoolyard of the small town of Ijvatpur in Bangladesh itself. Whereas in London the Minar became a more general symbol of political struggle, in Dhaka on the site of the original monument, it is proto-nationalistic. In contrast, a minar in the area of Chittagong in Bangladesh has become a place to commemorate the atrocities of a State that turns a blind eye to violence against its ethnic minorities and indigenous groups. Here the laying of flowers is forbidden, whilst in Dhaka the monument is continually decked out. The adaptability of the Shaheed Minar, its mimicry of the original monument, adapted and readapted to local conditions makes a powerful diasporic diagram.

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 27 'What Children Say' in, Gilles Deleuze, *Essays critical and clinical*, trans. by Michael A. Greco and Danile W. Smith (London: Verso, 1998), p. 61.

## Diasporic diagrams

I have decided to call my maps ‘diasporic diagrams’ because they attempt to represent beyond physical space (although they do this too), to include the other concepts that were identified as being crucial to the practice of diasporic urbanism: spatio-temporalities, subjectivity and politics. In this sense, the diagrams map those qualities often left out of traditional mappings and operate in the registers described in the previous chapter: mediating, being propositional, creating possibilities. Through representing the relationship between the production of space and subjectivity the diagrams relate how diasporic agencies are constituted in an urban metropolis like London.

The diagrams mapped space at three different scales and in different guises: from the exterior public spaces of a street or a park; to the interior trans-local space of the *kahve*; to mental or psychic spaces overlaid on top of all these. The walks were represented as spheres and spatial envelopes, the *kahve* were mapped as networks and as topological envelopes mapped onto physical space. Kurdistan and Bangladesh were mapped as imagined mental spaces, and also as reterritorialisations of lived space causing topological deformations to the space of the street or the park. All these mappings are dynamic reflecting the nature of diasporic subjectivity as unsettled, and they highlight the importance of this quality in constituting diasporic agencies. The taking place of, or the various inhabitations of space that I have tried to represent in this chapter mark a beginning—the place from which diasporic urbanism could be enacted.

In this sense, the specific tools that were created are also addressed to different audiences. The specialised digital maps are imagined as tools for architects and urbanists to expand their understanding of how space is affected by non-homogenous subjects, and with it the need to represent space beyond the traditional methods of orthographic drawing. Whilst the diasporic condition prompted these tools they are also more general; they can be applied in other situations through the acknowledgement of the heterogeneity, of the being without (home) land that we all tend towards. The complexity of spaces produced through such inhabitations collapses the notion of scale through making topological connections across spaces and times, and so requires the type of digital methods that I have initiated here. It also requires an approach to our activities based in collaboration, through engaging other expert knowledges, such as those of computational design. The use of digital methods also foregrounds the question of ‘commons’ in the sense of creative labour; we have therefore used the open-source platform, *Processing*, and have made available the computer scripts for each of the mappings in order to perpetuate this knowledge and allow others

to make future iterations and adaptations.<sup>28</sup> The web interface for the diagrams of diasporic territories could eventually allow others to upload their own walks; the data required to add to the *kahve* interface is a simple spreadsheet that can also easily be made available on a website.

Digital techniques were chosen over other means of representation due to the complexity of the information. The walks for example not only indicated the places that were visited but also the times at which they were frequented; in addition what we discussed, our conversations also needed to be represented alongside images of the street itself. In the *kahve* the overlapping networks and the way they interacted with each other demanded a mode of representation that would not 'flatten' the information. For both these maps the digital method was also generative creating new relations between data, or highlighting those that would not be visible otherwise.

The interpretative maps are more generally accessible, designed to give an overview of each of the spatial situations they represent. They can be reproduced easily for other spaces and could be used in participative processes with users and inhabitants. Discussing such maps together transforms them into a mediatory tool, they facilitate a conversation through bringing up issues, and so could be used as a starting point for an urban project. They could be used as a means of finally addressing the diasporic in urban practice and of working alongside those who are the users of these spaces. These maps highlight the important role of symbolic spaces that are too often not recognised as such and are therefore not accounted for. The performative maps also function in this way, they use methods derived from other disciplines, such as sociology and anthropology, to produce representations that can be used in urban practice. These maps that start as encounters, conversations and walks have to be processed in such a way that they can foreground the relationships between subjectivities, politics and spaces. These types of mappings were therefore chosen because they are able to combine the ethnographic methods from other disciplines, but add to them an explicitly spatial dimension in order to have a use-value in urban practice.

Methodologically, I have viewed my mapping practice as inseparable from the understanding of diasporic agencies and the embodied spatial practices described previously. In this sense, the mappings have not only produced the diagrams but have simultaneously produced 'space'. This is important for describing my research as it is difficult to give a sense of the reciprocal relation between the different sections in a linearly organised thesis. The techniques of representation, or the discovering of 'diasporic diagrams' have been an integral part of this thesis, being

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 28 The scripts used in the mapping of the walks and the *kahve* are reproduced in 'Appendix 2'.

not only the method of research, but also the subject of it. They have been experiments in ways of working that could be in the future become constituent part of a diasporic urbanism.

## 4.0 Conclusion

## Concepts, agencies & ‘mapping otherwise’

In this thesis I identify a new urban condition and set up the possibility of ‘diasporic urbanism’ as a response to it. Throughout I have used the specificities of my own situation as an architect, a woman and of being positioned within a diaspora as an important source for thinking creatively, often referencing back to my own experiences. Applying these insights to diasporic communities other than the one I immediately identify with has ensured a certain transferability to my approach, but was primarily a way of moving beyond identity politics. Since architecture as discipline has been slow to engage with the diasporic, a subject that goes beyond migration towards a more paradigmatic condition that addresses diversity in general, I have borrowed from feminist methodologies and politics of knowledge that begin with difference and the excluded subject. Ways of thinking and doing between disciplines, an insistence on difference and self-reflexivity have all been modes of working I have adopted. Working in my own neighbourhood and acknowledging the importance, sometimes, of just being around resulted in a slow process of research that took advantage of my own situation of starting this work part-time.

The new subject of urbanism that I identify, the diasporic or more generally those without ‘home(land)’, require the practice of urbanism to be expanded outwards to not only include the planning of spaces, but to also deal with the social and political aspects of the production of space. For this a number of key concepts were identified that must be included in the conceptualisation and practice of urbanism, including a different way of conceiving space than that previously thought adequate, and the inclusion of subjectivities and politics. The marginal positionings of those in the diaspora mean that the question of representation has been central to this thesis, and in any case, a new condition needs at first to be represented, to be given a constituency. This representation has taken place through researching the particular inhabitations of the city by its diasporic subjects and the different spatial agencies they embody.

### Concepts

#### (a) Displacements and reterritorialisations

Theoretically and methodologically ‘displacement’ and ‘reterritorialisation’ are identified as modes of thinking and working. These not only inform the concepts I work with, but also the representational practices that I have developed, which are conceived as tools that empower. As politics of knowledge displacement is a lateral move that moves away from essentialised positions and hegemonic knowledge practices towards a valorising of everyday knowledges and ways of looking askance that

emphasise creativity in research. As methodology I have tried to use displacement as a way of broaching subjects and dealing with issues that were sometimes difficult to address head-on, for example discussing the politics surrounding Kurdistan was not always easy and arriving at it from the act of drawing a map made it possible to discuss. These methodologies were developed in response to those I encountered and so are related to the displacement and hybridity of the diasporic subject itself being constituted across places and practices.

Reterritorialisations, a concept borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari, refer to one of the main ways in which diasporic agencies are constituted within urban space. It also refers to my own practice of deterritorialising the dominant knowledge of distinct disciplines, and reterritorialising it for use in my own research, adapted to the spatial concerns of urbanism. This has resulted in a trans-disciplinarity that also tries to make knowledge accessible through employing representational techniques that do not always require expert knowledge. However, I have not taken the approach of simplifying knowledge through the desire to make it accessible. Instead, different representational practices are developed for different audiences, for example the *kahve* space is mapped digitally for the use of spatial practitioners, whilst the network maps of the same spaces are more easily accessible to the lay person. The digital mappings were developed in collaboration with a computational expert and they use open-source software with the computer scripts being made available for others to use appropriate.

#### (b) Diasporic spatio-temporalities, subjectivities, politics

For the displaced diasporic subject space and time are folded through living between places and cultures. Whilst the critique of space as being much more than a static, timeless backdrop has been well-rehearsed in architectural theory as social space, what is perhaps less developed is the relationship with time. This is especially true for the practice of architecture, where we lack representational tools that can account for the passing of time. When the linear, clock time of history is replaced by the cyclical, lived time of everyday life, and the folding of time in diasporic inhabitations, traditional architectural representations become increasingly redundant. One of the most important aspects left unaccounted for is the relationship between these fluctuating spatio-temporalities and the production of subjectivity, a connection that is brought back to architecture through the forgotten place of matter, materiality and the body. The specific inhabitations of space by displaced and dislocated diasporic bodies are therefore crucial to the understanding of diasporic urbanism.

Displacement constitutes the modality in which diasporic subjects singularise, whether through a heightened awareness of political issues, or those related to cultural difference, or through merely having



witnessed another way of living. Since the illusion of the 'I' as a fully formed homogenous subject is less successful in diasporic subjectivities, they can be considered radicalised versions of contemporary subjectivities—the other being always already present in our own self-constructions. The partial perspectives of such a hybrid positioning raise specific problems for a politics that is only ever concerned with a singular, homogenous point of view. In this sense, diasporas will never fit easily into national constructions of fixed borders and fixed ways of thinking, an increasingly common problem in contemporary politics that is usually addressed in mainstream discourse as a lack of integration into the cultures and politics of the host society. But the problem can, of course, be addressed differently as the failure of the usual means of doing politics. As Dewey and Latour suggest, publics are only constituted through a lack in the current system; when the modes of democratic functioning cannot address the issues at stake, the place of politics itself has to be displaced out of the usual systems of governance and participation to another site. The contemporary crisis of politics can also be thought of in this way, and the hybrid nature of diasporas can offer a mode of performing politics useful for an increasingly interdependent world. Enacting such a politics would require space, time and subjectivity to be brought together in difference rather than sameness, an inherently political endeavour that fits well with politicised diasporic subjectivities.

## Diasporic agencies

### (a) an embodied spatial practice

What I am calling an 'embodied spatial practice' is a corporeally mediated representation that has taken place with those who are part of the Kurdish, Turkish or Bengali diaspora. In this practice I have tried to 'push' the subject of urbanism in another direction, away from solely empirical concerns relating to physical spaces towards the inclusion of diasporic agencies. These are conceptualised as the inhabitations of space by diasporic subjects as a 'taking of place', following Hoskyns and Petrescu, a move that empowers this heterogenous subject. This taking of place can be oppositional, as in the example of the street protests, or it can be subversive, as in the *kahve* inhabitations. In both cases, they express the 'lack' in traditional representations of urban space that do not account for or accommodate these multiple spatial agencies.

One of the most important questions for this thesis has been how to represent these agencies in a way that is useful for addressing urban situations. I have done this through insisting on an *embodied* spatial practice. Such a practice builds on the 'critical spatial practice'

defined by a number of contemporary architects and artists by including sensation and the corporeal, two aspects always removed from the representational practices of architecture and urbanism. In this move, the body emerges as an important locus for understanding diasporic spatio-temporalities, connecting disparate places and times, replacing the linear time of History with a cyclical time. Enunciated as the future anterior it is sensed in the transposing of bodily gestures, in 'languages of practice', in the mediation performed by diasporic 'quasi-subjects' and in the creation of diasporic territories and trans-localities. Whilst the connections between movement, the body and temporalities have been made by a number of theorists, they have not been applied consistently to architecture and urbanism. In this, topological thinking has emerged as an approach that is able to address the displacements and reterritorialisations performed by bodies that is the diasporic condition, as well as being the mode in which the methodologies of research and representation are developed. It reveals how representational practices can move beyond the static and hegemonic modalities of traditional architectural practice, towards a more open approach based in difference. Here subjectivation, or the transformation of subjectivity, is regarded as a constituent part of spatial relations and vice versa.

Much of the thesis has been concerned with investigating the types of spaces produced by those in the diaspora, and through researching and mapping them to understand the role that spatial practitioners may have in making cities more suited to these new populations. I have mapped different kinds of spaces that have been chosen carefully for their different qualities: mental, private, semi-private and public spaces that all bring up important issues of scale. In the fluidity that these spaces display, the traditional architectural concept of scale collapses, as does the dichotomy between subjects and spaces, between the personal and the political. These intermingled spaces are the stuff of diasporic life and they have been ignored consistently by urban practice. Perhaps it takes the paradigmatic nature of diasporic inhabitations, of their stretching of these categories to breaking point, for the practices of architecture and urbanism to finally realise that today almost *all* spaces and inhabitations operate in this way.

#### (b) Trans-localities/places, border(ing) practices, diasporic territories

One such inhabitation that I have identified is the construction of a 'diasporic home' in the city, a place of resistance to the homogenising effects of the dominant culture, it creates a link back and provides important functions of support. But, just as the notion of 'home' is contradictory, sometimes comforting at other times uncanny, so too is a 'diasporic home'. It may provide support but can also reinforce traditional ways of thinking and doing related to striations of culture, class and political affiliation. The *kahve* space exemplifies such

ambivalence, it does play an important role of support, especially for those who cannot speak English, but it also rehearses the conflicts and strained politics of Turkish-Kurdish relations. When diasporic subjectivities manage to resist, it is in the performative mode, where the language of signs and rituals that is usually thought of as maintaining tradition also becomes the site of its unravelling. The displaced diasporic subject is therefore able to transgress hegemonic power through subversive modes of acting such as mimicry, played out in bodily gestures relating everyday practices to space.

The conceptualisation of the *kahve* as 'diasporic home' is also related to its decidedly domestic atmosphere: tea is served, the tablecloths and fabrics are of traditional pattern, but these are male spaces and the woman who would traditionally run the household is not represented here in these simulacras of 'home'. This difference that always creeps into any copy, no matter how faithfully constructed, also allows for the possibility of newness to emerge. The *kahve* may try to emulate Turkish or Kurdish culture down to the last detail, but they are different, they are contemporary spaces that produce their own trans-local connections and their own unique culture.

The investigation of the *kahve* also set up the possibility of a type of diasporic space that operates in a logic counter to that of capital. Occupying the interstices of capitalist society, in spatial and social terms, the *kahve* space uses the same structure as the network society but according to a different value system based on kinship, familial and friendship ties. Whilst such structures can be stifling in their own way, as described above, they do also hold within them the promise of another way of making relations across distances. Networks based on affinity, which could be familial but could also be based on other solidarities and shared interests, are kept alive and nurtured through the transposing of bodily gestures and postures in the case of the *kahve*. Certain modes of behaviour and ways of doing make connections across the network and this performativity is crucial to the way in which such affinity networks operate. How to represent these networks both spatially and as relations is key to understanding their role in the workings of cities.

The concept of diasporic territories, and the mapping of them both discursively and figuratively, began as a way of understanding how politics and the concerns of elsewhere are an essential part of the diasporic experience. At the same time, I wanted to counter the tendency of writing about diasporas through a single lens, the intersection of religion and politics in the case of Muslim diasporas. Instead, I was interested in conceptualising diasporic spatiality as being made up of a series of overlapping and sometimes highly conflicting positionings, related to politics, culture, religion, gender, economies and everyday life... for this, the concept of territories proved useful. Whilst

territories are imagined differently across cultures (and species), one aspect remains consistent, they are made up of appropriated space; sometimes bounded, militarised and ‘secure’, at other times, temporal, indeterminate and contested. The nature of territories as appropriated also means that they are necessarily about bodily exchange, about the movement of bodies, making and re-making territories; bodies have always been at stake where territories are concerned. Sloterdijk’s ‘spheres’ or spatial envelopes provide a way of conceptualising territories as both political *and* biological, surrounding us all, overlapping and interacting with each other. This way of thinking also foregrounds the question of our relationship to the environment and to other species, and I have explored this aspect through the experiential worlds of ticks, pigeons and trees. Through exploring non-anthropocentric, non-human, as well as autistic perspectives, I have attempted to move away from the standards and conventions of representation. These other perspectives are not included as comparison, but in order to facilitate more radical conceptions of space and representation, which allow for a richer and more intense conceptualisation of territories, but also one that is more hopeful.

What I have called border(ing) practices are modes of inhabiting at the margins and interstices of European city-space, where geo-political borders manifest themselves in the movement of diasporic bodies. They subvert the modern ideal of the border as demarcating a solid line or wall, through reterritorialisations of space that fold in on themselves and disperse across the lived space of the city. The border mediated through diasporic bodies is expressed as a fuzzy borderzone—in the act of protest as it manifests itself on a street or in the reminiscences of those who have left somewhere behind. Through displacement a person may come to embody the border, to enact it, and in the case of the Kurdish diaspora where the actual border does not really exist, these border(ing) practices are somehow radicalised. The mappings of Kurdistan reveal the way in which that particular geo-political situation inscribes itself onto the lives of those who imagine it as home. Here the acts of drawing and mapping become mediatory practices for discussing issues otherwise difficult to broach, and they are enunciated in languages of practice where presencing, or the actualisation of whatever is to be said in the present, allows a way out of the impasse of a politics of representation caught in the circular argument of who speaks and for whom.

Mediation, a term borrowed from Actor-network theory, is also key for thinking the roles that could be performed by diasporic quasi-subjects, positioned within sprawling networks that cross cultures and places. In this certain objects can assist in their ability to take on new meanings. The Shaheed Minar being a case in point; from a nationalistic monument that in certain places still denotes the oppression of the

indigenous populations of Bangladesh, it takes on another meaning in its London context, becoming a symbol for political agency that is able to cut across nationalistic lines.

## Mapping otherwise

Finally, 'mapping otherwise' is conceived as 'a tool for taking place' through identifying new agencies for the practice of mapping. Beyond the tropes of Western map-making, these maps take on new roles and represent those qualities normally left out of traditional maps; the agency of mapping is therefore also located in the representing of these other qualities of experience and affect. These maps do not just relate a 'known' situation but are themselves propositional, such as the maps produced by bureau d'études, who through exposing knowledge of organisations suggest ways of acting. Other maps imagine possibilities, such as those related to the Situationist *dérive*, which are performed and embodied constructions. A final type of map acts as a mediatory device such as those produced by precarias a la derivas, which were a way of sharing time and experiences with others in a similarly precarious working condition to them. Through analysing a wide and varied selection of mapping practices, I identified the different ways of mapping employed, from practices of naming and the construction of narratives, to walking and wandering as a way of negotiating the terrain, to tracing and drawing as explicit ways of making relations and connections, to collecting, collating and informing others in a move that empowers, to the act of observation and of just being present, of witnessing, to finally the use of imaging and photography as critical practice.

### (a) Diasporic diagrams

I have deployed these ways of 'mapping otherwise' in my own research that displaces the dominant practice of mapping through the inclusion of diasporic agencies. Starting with qualitative information, from interviews, walks etc. makes these representations specialised. Using the body as the means with which to map and including the temporal dimension means that diasporic diagrams describe qualitative transformations. It is no coincidence that topology, described by Massumi as '*the science of self-varying deformation*',<sup>1</sup> is useful as a way of thinking qualitative transformation in subjects *and* for thinking and representing space differentially. It allows for a representation of the diasporic experience of space and time as folded and for subjectivity and politics to be included. These diasporic diagrams are conceived as experiments in a practice of representation, which begins with the embodied spatial practices described above and tries to not only speak about them,

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 1 Brian Massumi, *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 134.

but to also imagine ways of working with them. I have done this through developing my own representational practices that are also re-presentations; they take three different guises: digital mappings of topological connections between data; interpretative mappings of relations, symbols and spaces; and performative mappings of gestures and embodiments. These practices, which represent the various spatial instances I have researched in this thesis (trans-localities, places, border(ing) practices and territories), are very different from the 'modern' approach in what they choose to represent, and for each instance the type of mapping chosen is related to the content.

The *kahve* were mapped in two different ways. The drawings of the networks as loops showed the scale of their interactions, highlighting the important role that the symbolic and gestural plays in these spaces. These maps were conceived as being easily accessible to the lay person and so could be used in a participatory process as a mediatory tool to initiate conversations. The interactive application, on the other hand, is imagined as a tool for spatial practitioners, one that can easily be loaded with information on other situations and to produce maps quickly. They provide a way of viewing the spatial situations in different ways, highlighting the importance of different types of networks and their influence. In these mappings I have foregrounded the relations that each of these spaces are a part of, and which contribute towards the collapsing of scalar distance and other binaries that a traditional approach to mapping relies upon: figure/ground, public/private, interior/exterior and so forth, and the other types of dichotomies that are implicit within these representations, such as personal/political, us/them etc.

Diasporic territories were mapped using the bodily practice of walking, in the first instance, and then using neural networks, a computational technique that allows the analogue to be introduced to the binary world of scripting. This method represented the walks of individual people as spheres and spatial envelopes that interact with each other and produced maps that were self-referential, only describing their own relations. These maps of territories folded in on themselves, describing the intensities of diasporic inhabitations of the city. The maps are presented as a web interface that can eventually be used by others to upload their own walks. Through overlaying different people's territories a mapping of the street is produced, full of potentialities where overlapping spatial situations can be sensed and addressed. Here again the difference from the 'modern' approach to mapping is in what is chosen to be represented; not the physicality of the street but the agency of its users.

## A diasporic urbanism to come...

Since diasporic urbanism has only been represented and not yet enacted, the question remains of what relationship, if any, it has to traditional architectural practice. Diasporic urbanism, similar to the other urbanisms sketched out in the introductory chapter, moves beyond the description of architecture as building towards other forms of production that could include buildings but could also include much more. Bodily exchanges, collaboration, social networking and organisation are all included in a practice that expands the role of the architect. Moving away from viewing ourselves as sole authors means that we can acknowledge a skill we already have and use daily, that of mediation. But, this mediation has to be carried out in a more ethical register, rather than mediating on behalf of those who pay the fees, architecture's responsibility is widened out towards its true public—those who inhabit the spaces we work with. For diasporic urbanism the question of responsibility is intimately linked to the dislocation of diasporic subjects and their multiple belongings. Only those ways of practicing architecture that can address heterogenous desires will be able to produce spaces suitable for such subjects. Therefore, one of the pre-requisites for practicing diasporic urbanism is a dispersal of power to the users of diasporic spaces, and this thesis begins this task by bringing those experiences to the practice of architecture.

The broader relevance of this research is based in the identification of a new urban condition, of increasing numbers of people being dislocated from a fixed or originary idea of home—a being 'without home(land)'. For the Kurdish diaspora the situation is radicalised as the nation-state that could be called home may never exist. This lack of fixity is becoming an increasingly generalised condition, making diasporas, those populations usually thought of as traditional, quite the opposite—they are contemporary, being forebearers of a new way of living. Being partially deterritorialised but also highly located makes the diasporic condition paradoxical, but at the same time paradigmatic. It also brings with it certain opportunities for alliances and solidarities across distances, but also, and specifically for the practice of urbanism in the proximate environments of the European metropolis, it brings new challenges as those from varied backgrounds live closer together. If we decide that the response to this does not reside in the building of more barriers and border walls, of segregating whole continents, and failing that whole neighbourhoods, then architecture must step beyond its sacred role of 'client's agent' to practice in a more ethical and transformative manner. The context in which we now live brings urgency to these discussions; the global environmental and economic crises are also embedded in a wider social malaise, the foundations upon which capitalist society has been constructed are being slowly worn away and there is a general

acknowledgement that a change needs to occur. A change in the way we live, in the way we imagine our relations to each other, in the way we imagine the city itself.

The practice of diasporic urbanism for which this thesis sets up the ground and the possibility, takes up this challenge, and, alongside other modes of imagining our cities is one potential response based in an acknowledgement and addressing of diversity. But, rather than a straightforward critique of existing practice, diasporic urbanism is also propositional; it offers tools, methodologies and hopefully a vision for another way of practicing architecture. As Brian Massumi, following the line of thinking developed by Deleuze and Guattari writes: *'The balance has to shift to affirmative methods: techniques which embrace their own inventiveness and are not afraid to own up to the fact that they add (if so meagerly) to reality.'*<sup>2</sup> In this process of 'adding to reality' creativity is key and art and cultural practice become important sites of action. Architects, whose cultural practice is inherently spatial may find that we have much to offer in imagining our planetary future if we were to embrace Massumi's call for making 'meagre contributions' over wholesale 'solutions'.

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2 Ibid., pp. 12-13.



## 4.0 Appendices

# Appendix 1

## Transcript of interview

With owner of the *kahve*, 'Upstairs of pub', Yusuf (translated from Turkish by Burak)

I first wanted to know when this place was opened, when he came here...

Eight years, it was open before that, he bought it from someone eight years ago.

What kinds of services does he provide?

LigTV and DigiTurk. They are like sky tv, the equivalent to. People come here to watch the Turkish football games. And then also the English Premier League.

Was really busy here then when Turkey was in the Euro cup?

It was busy a bit

Has it been like this since he bought it? Has he changed much?

He got rid of the paper walls and plastered and lightened the walls. He changed the colours of the place and then there was no carpets on the floor and he made some decorations.

Does he lease the place?

Yes, he rents

Are the rents going up here? Because the shops from Church street are spilling here now.

It didn't affect him so much, not as much as it affected the area. Because he has been here like he said for eight years. And he is doing all the decorations himself and he doesn't let the landlord do anything - he pays for everything that's why his landlord gives him a better deal.

The people who come here - have they been the same, does he have lots of regular customers?

It's like a family sort of social club, so everybody knows each other and all the relatives - they are relatives of relatives. Not so much the irregular customers, it's more or less the same customers. Apart from the people who have gone back, it's always the same people, they keep coming and they bring new people. From the same community I suppose. Sometimes, just because he has got a neighbour as a pub downstairs when they don't want to watch the games over there, because they show the English premier league here as well, they come from downstairs and they prefer to watch the match with them. He gets some foreign - as we can say - customers. They are foreign to us.

And what's the name of the place?

He never called it a name. You can call it 'Yusuf's place' - like we say, 'where are you? I'm in Yusuf's place'.

Or some customer say, 'upstairs of pub'

So, the people who come here. You say they are a network of friends, are they all from the same region of Turkey?

Of course, all of them from the same region, or village, or same city you can say.

Which one?

Gaziantep.

So, what kinds of food and drinks do they serve?

It's just drinks, like soft drinks, hot drinks, tea and coffee - no food at all.

What about the smoking ban - how did that affect him?

It's like fifty percent.

Do people just not come then?

It's affected him like this. We play these games and its for the drinks, whoever loses buys the drinks. But when we used to sit, we used to smoke cigarettes continuously, but now what is happening now, we play one party of games and then we give up, we go downstairs, smoke a cigarette and so it affects the business.

Meanwhile, when you go down, the atmosphere breaks and somebody says I don't want to play anymore. That's why it affected his business, it's not because people refused to come.

Eventhough he smokes, he likes that nobody smokes inside - better atmosphere and better for his health, so he like it.

Is there anything that he gets especially from Turkey?

Nothing special, everything is available here in London.

What are the opening times, when does it get busy?

Opens at 11am till midnight. This time of the year it is less busy because people go away but at the moment, the economic crisis affects his business as well - the recession.

It seems like quite a mix of people here.

Yes, its always like this, it's just a mixture of people. It doesn't matter if they are twenty years old or seventy years old, they can still sit in the same place.

Do people come together as family?

Yes, some come with their father, some come with their niece.

So, how long has he been here in England?

Around nine years.

Did he have a kahve in Turkey?

No

So, is it quite easy to open a kahve in England, is it why he chose to do it?

He was here, and he wasn't doing anything at the time. He was coming to the club and the ex-owner was his friend and he offered him a partnership and over time he went away and he stayed here.

I guess because of the language thing as well...

Yes, language is the biggest barrier, why he started but now it has a negative effect. Even though he understands bits and pieces what we are talking about but in nine years he could have learnt more but he is always dealing with Turkish people here. But of course with his children, as they grow up, his English is improving. One of his daughters goes to college, one goes to university, so he has to make an effort to learn.

With owner of the *kahve*, 'Guben', (translated from Turkish by Burak)

What was the reason for choosing to open a kahve?

For work, he knew something about this business already and wanted to carry on doing it in England as well. He used to own a kahve in Turkey.

So, when did he move here and how long afterwards did he open the club? How easy is it to open one?

After one year, he decided to open a kahve. For a small amount of money you can open such a place, and more than money it is the people you're going to deal with - you need your customers. It's why he opened after a year.

Do these places have a short life span? Once they are established do they remain open a long time?

Usually they stay open for a long time.

What is the place named after?

He bought the business from somebody else, so he didn't change the name or anything. The name was not important. He didn't change very much here. Painted the walls - they weren't like that, there was no carpet on the floor, he changed the carpet. He has added office chairs as they are more comfortable.

What are the opening hours and when does it get busy?

Usually club opens at 11am until midnight, but after 7pm lots of people come.

Do women ever come to the club?

No

Is there any other way of making money here - other related businesses, services?

No, just the selling of drinks, snacks and machines. People can serve themselves and pay.

Do both Kurdish and Turkish people come here?

Yes, they can both some, there is no discrimination here. He doesn't even allow them to say anything political. He wants people to come here, relax and mix nicely. But many of the people that come here are from Osmaniye, where he is from.

So, is this place quite similar to kahve in Turkey - is he trying to create the same atmosphere.

Apart from the gambling machines, everything is exactly the same.

Where do you get them from?

Bought in Turkish shops in London

Do you have a lot of regular customers?

It is always the regular customers, a passer-by only comes once a week maybe.

With a customer at Guben and Burak

How often do you come here?

Nearly every day - a couple of times a day.

Do you always come to this one?

Yeah, because I have a shop on the corner so I come here.

Do you come on your own, or do you come with friends?

I have friends here, I come by my own - they're always people here, friends.

What do you do here?

Talking to people, some card game, boardgames...

what are they playing at the moment?

It's called 101 I think, yeah we call it 101 -

It's a game where you try to make the same suit of cards and if you can't then you get penalty points and if your penalty points are 101, you are dead.

And do you come at the weekend as well, or is weeked more family time?

I come at weekends as well.

And what about women? Do they have a kind of equivalent?

No, they don't. They go to each other's house.

They go for shopping I suppose.

I've noticed the hairdressers, they seem to be quite popular. They seem like places where women socialise.

Yeah, when women go to hairdresser - like my wife - when she goes to hairdresser, it takes her six, seven hours.

wow!

Yeah, they take a long time, don't they?

So, does your wife mind that you come here so often, or does she not care?

She doesn't mind, because normally I work eight to late, so I come between the working hours you see, so there won't be any problem.

Ah I see, clever.

## Casual conversations

### With Burak about *kahve*

In Turkey I never went to social clubs like this because my life in Turkey was much more different than my life is here. In this country you can say that I am just another foreign person but Istanbul I am not. Because the life I led, or the people I know, everybody if they see me in a social club like this, they would think 'what is he doing there?'

In Turkey they would think that?

In Turkey, in Istanbul they would think that way. But, there is a difference nowadays because in the sea-sides of Istanbul or in the nice places of Istanbul, they started to open up social clubs just like these. Not just for men. Young ladies and young men go over there just to socialise and they play card games and board games and they mix with their friends. They don't go just the ladies, or just the men, it's mixed people go there. I like this sort of places, because in those places we

get a bit more relaxed atmosphere. If its just for men, think about it, when they are watching football, they keep swearing and shouting - if they're women around, they quite down a little bit and they control themselves.

And there is another thing in our culture what we call, kahve talk. Which means you talk a lot but it doesn't mean anything. Like they talk about football a lot, they talk about politics a lot and when they talk with people who knows about it, politics or something - anything like that - and if any of use say something really serious we say, stop this kahve yalk and make sense.

So, like in these social clubs here. Everybody knows everything, everybody knows everything - they are the best manager of football club, they are the best political party leaders, they are the best businessmen and everything. If you are that much the best, what are you doing in a social club all day long? Just go and do something with your life.

That's why I don't like the idea of going to social club every single day. It is nice to go to social places time-to-time so you can socialise with people, but if you are wasting your time, like ten hours a day in here then that's bad. And the one beauty of it is the smoking ban, because even if you don't smoke yourself, you spend a few hours in there, you go home and your partner can say, 'oh my god you've been smoking' and you never even touched a cigarette.

That was the negative point, but the positive point of it: you can really meet people. I came from Crawley and I lived in Crawley for years, and I didn't know anybody in London and I got bored so much for the first couple of months. After I started to go to social clubs, I started to meet people and by meeting these people, I met some really nice people and I can make business with them. With one of them, I am trying to open up a business at the moment.

So there is a big class difference between who goes to social club and who doesn't.

Yes, but if you are Turkish and if you are in a so-called higher society, you won't come here. You'll think, why should I go to social club, what am I going to do there? After a few months, when they realise they are not the same people as they were in Turkey, they start coming to these places.

with Burak about 'gold parties'

Like I was saying to you about the gold day. Everytime when its somebody else's turn, we give the gold to the hostess. Basically, instead of saving your money by yourself, there is a group of women who save together and every few months or whatever, however big your circle is, so you get your money. And so your are helping each other and you are saving together - you are encouraging each other to save some. And plus, once a week you socialise with your friends. Like my mum, her friends sort of people, they go to each other's houses and they take some card games to each other's house. The point is not so much a game of cards, the point is solely to socialise. And you should see that day, my mother she wakes me up early, 'come on get up, you need to go!' And I'm like, 'where am I going?' 'my friends and are coming'. And i'm like 'ok'. And she gives me the list - from couple of days before of course, she starts to bake pastries and cakes and this and that. There's a festival in the house. Why? Because her friends are coming. What are they going to do? They are just going to play cards. It's always like that. Every Saturday they go to one person's house because they work during the week. So, that's one way how women socialise.

And like you mentioned, the women they go to hairdressers. They spend hours in the hairdressers. And the ladies hairdressers, they are usually men and they are a bit more feminine because they socialise with them all the time I suppose. And you can always spot - oh, he must be a ladies haridresser.

Yeah, I guess you could say that this is women's equivalent to social club.



## Transcript of interview

'Drawing Kurdistan': A young Kurdish woman working in the local area

I am going to start with a question about when you first moved to England and when you first moved to London.

It was October 1992...

Was that to London?

Yes, to London.

And you mentioned earlier that you went to University?

Yes, I went to University in Luton.

And do your family live in London too, or are you on your own?

When I came to England, I mean London, I joined my, actually mum, because I was young, I was sixteen, so I didn't know anything about London, so I lived here with my mum and sisters.

It's a hard age to move isn't it?

It was, actually I mean because its not, how can I say, it wasn't easy because its not your choice and you had to because your mum left you behind...

So you just had to follow?

Yes, and two or three years later, we had to come and join mum because we were young, I mean my sisters, two young sisters and myself, so it wasn't our decision and we didn't have any other choice, no option at all, that's why we had to come.

So then you went to University after you moved to London? So you moved to London and then you went to University in Luton, is that right?

Yes, I mean yes, I learnt first English and then I took courses and then I moved to Luton yes.

So where did you used to live before you moved to London?

Actually, when I first came to London, it was in Stoke Newington and I lived in Stoke Newington till I went to University and after finishing university I lived in Stoke Newington, so now I work in Stoke Newington / Dalston, it's almost fifteen years but I, myself I live in Islington.

And so where did you used to live before you came to London?

Well, I lived, before I came to London, I was living in Istanbul.

And are you Turkish or are you Kurdish?

M: I'm Kurdish.

N: And do you speak Kurdish?

Yes I do, I do speak Kurdish but I am not literate in Kurdish because of oppression in Turkey but I can speak, I can communicate in Kurdish.

So when people move from Turkey, do they always know Kurdish or is it more a learnt thing over here?

Lots of people from Turkey or Kurdish from Turkey, when they come here or to other European countries, they do speak a different dialect of Kurdish language, because I am talking about Turkey, I am not talking about ... in Turkey it is illegal to speak Kurdish and lots of people they were assimilated to Turkish culture and generally, I mean young generation, especially who lived in western cities of Turkey, they can't most of them they can't speak or understand Kurdish.

Because, isn't it true that the first wave of Kurdish immigrants were less interested in their culture, but now they are more interested? Now they are more aware of their identity, cultural, religion and national identity. Before it was, because they had to run away from persecution and when they came to this country, any other European country, they tried to hide their identity, especially Kurdish identity and when people, they started talking about themselves and then I think they become aware of their identity, it's not a shame, it's not a ... to reveal their identity, maybe that's when you're just like – it helps actually, the British system to Kurdish people to express themselves because of the Human Rights Act and all these things. At the beginning they didn't know, they thought that they would be persecuted and all these things so after they realise, when they started adapting to this culture, even hundred percent they are not but even in some way they've learnt, they've learnt so they started to talk about their identity or cultural issues or whatever.

And so their must be now a new generation that has always been brought up in England, is that happening with the Kurdish community yet?

Kurdish, even Turkish people, they came recently, they have been here about 10-15 years, children who are here who have been born in this country, they are mixed, they have like kind of three different identity, Kurdish, Turkish and British identity and sometimes they mix up, some of them they are lost but it is not stable at the moment because Kurdish people, I mean even Turkish, when they came to this country, they were hoping that one day they will go back to their country.

Do you still wish, or hope that you will?

I'm not, no.

Do you consider this home now?

Yes, maybe because I as a teenage person I came to this country, I don't want to go back to Turkey.

What about if there was a Kurdistan, would you want to live there?

It depends, I mean I really don't know how I would feel, how I would think about but as an educated person I might think about that but I never even thought actually the idea that one day we will have Kurdistan but at the moment I am happy to live in London, to be in England.

And you know there is obviously this map of Kurdistan that everyone has in their minds, I mean I saw there is one in the centre. Do you have a map that you think of, that you consider to be Kurdistan – can you maybe draw it for me?

I'm very very bad ...

Doesn't matter, just to mark on where you are from, where you know people, so if you still have family living back there.

Well actually, my father's side, erm elderly people, my uncle, aunties they are still living in err ... I don't want to call Kurdistan because where I was born it is the south-east of Turkey, it does not belong to Kurdistan. We have apricots, a farm and I don't know because its between - I'm really terrible with ...

Just maybe start with where you were.

Just let me draw the Turkish – I don't know, I'm awful.

It doesn't matter, it doesn't have to be accurate.

STARTS TO DRAW MAP

Yes, north, south, east, west, I should be about here.

Is that Istanbul?

No, I was born in actually the south-east called K. Marsh, I'm sure that you don't know. K. Marsh, yes, most of the Kurdish people are from K. Marsh, Elbistan. I was born there and then we had to move to Istanbul and then from Istanbul to London. So ... and then just to London. (as she draws it on map)

And is there any part of that map that you would consider Kurdistan?

Should be around this area, because predominantly Kurdish people live and the first language is Kurdish. I have never been to the Kurdish land, to the east of Turkey.

And do you have anyone, any relatives or friends living there?

Yes, actually my cousin, he's a doctor, he lives in and is working, its I think, Van and no Ararat and Turkey border ... (draws)

Where was it, sorry?

It is I think it is called Sirit Betman and he's a doctor and his wife a teacher and the Diyabakir (draws it on) and my cousin, another cousin, she lives in Diyabakir.

And so most of your relatives are in the Turkish area, not in Iran, Iraq or Syria?

No, no I mean actually my mother, my other side generally they are living in Istanbul and father's side, the first generation live in Irbistan, K.Marsh. Young generation, all my cousins from my father's side, they live in European countries, because of persecution, they had to leave.

Which countries, Germany ... ?

Germany, France, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway ... and another country I can't remember.

Is it a Scandinavian country?

Yes.

Hmm, I can't think of any at the moment - Denmark?

Denmark, yes!

So what else? When I came last time, a while ago now, there was a fashion show that was organised, did that happen? At the other community centre I think.

Yes, Kurdish community centre in Haringey. They do have, they do it once a year. They started actually, when was it, first fashion show was last year.

And is that quite popular, I mean I haven't noticed anybody wearing traditional dress.

I mean even in Turkey Kurdish people did not wear traditional dress and I think, I am not sure but in the east, the Diyabakir, for example they call the city of Kurdistan, the capital city and the borders between Iran, Iraq and Turkey, most of the people, the women, they wear traditional clothes that you see, I mean you were there.

Can you buy them in England?

No, not in England, I mean generally Kurdish women, they are more western, westernised in a way.

And so you say you are a mental health worker?

Actually I have several jobs, I am working as a Refugee Support Outreach Worker, SureStart Outreach Worker and Mental Health Support Worker.

And is that all based in...

No, actually I am working in SureStart, Social Action for Health and Halkevi Kurdish and Turkish community and I work with mainly Kurdish and Turkish.

And are there a lot of mental health problems in the community because of...

Yes, unfortunately yes we have, especially men, young single men. And last few years, because of loneliness, isolation and women they have – but women they erm compared to men they are more open to get help or ask for help, not like men, men are more closed till the last stage, they will keep quite till the last stage.

And would they find it difficult to even come to a place like this generally?

They do, I mean it depends on the person actually because especially in Kurdish, even Turkish community, people they are always suspicious about each other because of where they come from, I mean I am talking about politically Kurdish people. And they become suspicious because they worked out, they were under surveillance from the authorities back home so they don't trust people easily and it takes ages to get, you know, to get their trust and convince them.

And do the political views that they held back home, do they translate here. Is there a conflict with that? I mean within the Kurdish community, because there are lots of groups aren't there?

It is possible, I mean it can be but in my experience maybe I am lucky because I came at the age of sixteen, I didn't have any political view or extremely right or left. And I in a way have grown up in this country, I took, how I see myself as a Kurdish, Turkish and British and I mix all three different identities, whatever I like I just chose and I kept and I ... with the community, I find it very easy to work with people and the people they trust me easily than the other people. I don't know why, maybe because I wasn't involved with any group or anything,

So you're fairly neutral in a way.

Yes, that's it. I mean it depends because we have so many groups and organisations and sometimes they don't like each other but sometimes they support each other. It just depends on the person and on top of that, they live in foreign country and they don't know language, they don't know culture, they don't know anything.

Is there a lot of support for learning English, or not really?

It was but at the moment I don't think so that it is enough and the other problem with Kurdish people, why Kurdish from Turkey can't speak, can't learn English comparing to Kurdish from Iraq and Iran is because they were forced to learn Turkish and they couldn't learn their own language. When they came to this country they were bombarded

with sold classes and this and that, they didn't learn, they wouldn't – maybe young people they are learning quickly, fast but like we have those that came at the age of thirty or twenty-five, they didn't learn and they wouldn't learn. And the other point is because most of the people are illiterate, they don't even know their own language, especially the woman, thirty, forty percent. So, they wouldn't be able, I mean Irani and Iraqi Kurds they, whenever they came to this country, within one year they learn English and Kurdish people from Turkey they have been here for ten, fifteen years, still they don't know, they can't learn English.

That's difficult ...

Yes, its just that it depends on country, it depends you know, I don't want to say its just because of persecution, I really don't know. Or it maybe that most of the people who are her, Kurdish and Turkish, they are not educated, they are illiterate.

Yes, I think that if you don't know how to write in your own language then it is very difficult to learn a new language.

Yes.

Well, thank you very much, that was perfect. Sorry it went on a bit longer.

## Transcript of interview

‘Drawing Kurdistan’: Founder of Halkevi, Turkish and Kurdish cultural centre on the high street

I came in first January 1972 and I was a university graduate from Turkey but I'm Cypriot myself and I came from a very small island and when I came here of course it was amazing to see huge buildings etc. and of course I was brought up as a child of colonial history because Cyprus was under British Empire as the Cinderella of British Empire. And I always had this utopia that one day I would come to London and see all the Victorian buildings etc. And I end up in Wood Green, it was 22 Earlham Grove, it was just next door to a Catholic School, girls school and it was the first time I had ever seen a school full of girls and it was a big building, now that building has turned to be the Haringey Cypriot Community Centre, its just opposite the police station.  
[I think I might have been there recently.](#)

Yes, it's the Cypriot Centre and of course in those years there was the GLC and I was with my wife and a little son and they offer us a flat in Copenhagen Street and that was 76. During 1974, end of 74 / 75, if you remember the economic crisis, the energy crisis. When I came I applied to LSE for a Masters degree in International Relations and they accept me subject that I get a reference from my Professors from Turkish University but at the time there was a military junta that took over and my two Professors that I have named them to be my referees, they were all in prison – so my references didn't come and I lost the ... Then I was working in garment trading as a presser, machinist etc.

[Was that in Hackney?](#)

In Hackney yes and my first job it was just opposite Halkevi near the Rose Hotel, on the first floor as a presser. And then end of, no beginning of 75 I took employment, in Palmers Green there was a very big factory, Metal Box, and they were doing Coca Cola tins and other Heinz tins and then I became in charge of the cleaning crew, cleaning the floors, cleaning the machines and then I become the floor head of the trade union and then I start conflicting, fighting with the management and then I apply to my Masters degree at SOAS, I was accepted but then the employer wanted an excuse to get rid of me anyway and because it was shift work I asked them if I could do only afternoon or only evening shifts – they refused. Then I continued my Masters degree, Master of Science at SOAS, I was doing International Politics and then I took employment in a restaurant in the evening, I was a waiter. And after the Masters degree I returned back to do an MA in Birbeck College in Imperial History and then I completed all my studies or I gave up 77, end of 77.

And then from the first day that I came, I was the chairperson of a Cypriot University Students Union and I was a Marxist-Leninist, very active and when I came here, I try with my other friends – because at that time when we were returning back to Cyprus, there was no work for us and when you are labelled as a Marxist-Leninist, a Communist no job at all. This is why I came otherwise I didn't want to. Although I had a utopia in my mind to come to London, maybe just for a visit, not to come and live here. But unfortunately the circumstances changed and...

[Do you ever think about going back?](#)

Yes, I am returning back within a couple of years.

[Oh really, to live?](#)

Yes, I have built a house now in Cyprus and I will be returning, I am 61 now and I want to retire. But of course from 1972 until now I worked with Hackney Council as Homeless People's councillor, I move to Islington, I become a Race Relations Advisor to the council, I become Assisstant Neighbourhood Officer, Archway Neighbourhood Office. I was involved in decentralisation of local authority services. Then I was employed by Haringey Council to builld the Marcus ... Library and to build the Tottenham Leisure Centre, so I was the Centre Manager and I had a little retirement in 96 but I couldn't do it and I returned back to work and I now work with Waltham Forest Council as an advisor but I also run this centre.

[But you are not Kurdish...?](#)

No, I am Turkish-Cypriot but my first wife was Kurdish, I fell in love with a woman and then I turned out to be in love with a community – with a nation.

[Can you speak Kurdish?](#)

No, no I speak very good Greek. I understand a little bit Kurdish, I speak a little bit, very very little but not in the amount that you could communicate. I have been involved in the setting up of many Kurdish and Turkish organisations. I am one of the founders of Halkevi in 1984. I was invloved in setting up the Turkish Youth Sports Organisation, I was their Chair for 14 years and I set up a community newspaper and its still going one, over 100 000 readers now, its well organised now, nothing to do with me now but they are in the 25th year, they have given me a plaque and put my picture on the wall.

[That's very nice.](#)

That was good. I have helped in the formation of the Haringey Cypriot Centre and the Hackney Cypriot Centre.



### Where is the Hackney one?

Number 5 Balls Pond Road, its just on Dalston Junction. Until recently I was still their Chair but I gave up, I am still on the Management Committee. Its two organisations, its Greeks and Turkish together. I have this idea of bringing the fighting groups together, like Kurds and Turks, Greeks and Turks – so that I have been working on peace. I have lost during 1974, I have lost my brother in Cyprus, the Greeks killed him, twelve of my family were massacred and still I work on peace.

### That's quite amazing.

Yes. I have written about 26 books, 8 of them are poetry and there was one, a research on small businesses, comparing the Turkish-Cypriots, Turks and Kurds and their entrepreneurial skills and their taking risks.

### What do you think about the fact that Turkish and Kurdish people live quite close together in London – it's the same areas isn't it?

That's right. The only problem the Kurds and Turks could have is the political aspirations. If they are very right-wing Turkish, they will hate the Kurdish people but the Kurds and Turks have been living, inter-marriages for thousands of years.

### Its quite a similar culture in some ways isn't it?

Exactly. Similar culture, they affected each other, they built the Republic together. Its very very difficult, even when in 1986 the Kurdish uprising started, the PKK, they have never had inter-communal fighting - it was the army and the PKK. It never become like Cyprus, Greek and Turkish inter-communal fighting, there is nothing inter-communal about the Kurds and the Turks. So for example, this organisation is mixed – Turkish and Kurds together. But they are, they are not very religious, religion it comes to the end of the ... there could be religious but religion cannot rule their activities.

### Is this Kurdish people you're talking about?

Yes, it's a free consciousness and they could be Christian, because some of them Kurds are Christians, Soranis etc. and therefore here I have no problem at all, as a Cypriot I have no problem at all with them.

### So do a lot of Turkish and Kurdish people both use this centre or is it mostly ...

Yes, we have got 21 000 members and about 60-62% is Kurdish and then we have got maybe 2-3% Cypriot, recently started to come and the rest is Turkish. We had some Somali, Chinese people as well.

### Oh really?

Yes and of course we don't believe in assimilation, we believe in integration with architecture, with hospitality, with relationship. We believe that we should carry on with our traditions, cultural values – review those like honour killings, remove them or what I say, reject

them, reject these kinds of things and then continue with the good ones and also try to learn from other host communities. So this is how, all of our services here is geared to soft integration with the Isold classes, arts, filming ...

I noticed the library with the music.

We have got the library music, we have a radio that we broadcast in Nightingale Estate - ? Sound Radio, from 1-3 o'clock, that's Monday to Saturday and then we broadcast Turkish and Kurdish, two languages and what else do you want to know?

Just that do you think that the idea of Kurdistan as a country existing, do you think that's viable or...

I don't think that Kurdistan - Kurdistan is in the minds and the hearts of the Kurdish people, I could repeat to say that Kurdistan might be a reality when the Kurdish people unite. At the moment, as you know, the Kurdistan which is in the mind etc. or where the majority of the people are Kurds, it is split in four countries, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. And then of course you have Talabani, Barzani and then you have other small groups fighting.

And do you have a map of Kurdistan in your mind, that you think, an area that you think could be Kurdistan.

Yes.

Can you draw it for me?

OK.

And is this map similar in all people's mind do you think?

Yes, I am just going to draw an existing. Say this is Greece, ?, Turkey and then. Say this is the current borders that is like, Azerbaijan, then Armenia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, yes? Now the Kurdistan in mine it is...

So in the end, it only goes over Turkey...

Yes, this is Van Lake, Ararat etc. and it goes up to, it might be a little bit small. We had a map, here we are.

BRINGS OVER LARGE MAP OF KURDISH AREAS

Can you hold that? Ok this is Kurdistan, the blue, in the minds of the Kurdish people and recently I heard that the same map was in Talabani, Barzani's offices as well and because of the objection of Turkey has they removed it. That (points to map) has the, err - implication - it's a complicated situation where it is, it it err shows an aspiration of splitting Turkey and of taking all that territory and Turkey strongly objects that.

Of course. And have these borders of Kurdistan been set for quite a while. When people talk about Kurdistan, has it always been this area or has it changed over time?

No, that was, I think sometime just after the First World War or Second World War, there was for a short time, no I think it was after the First World War, when they break the Ottoman Empire, there was a Kurdistan republic for 40, 20 days or something and that was then called Maharabat, Republic of Maharabat and of course as you can see it takes Iran in Eastern Kurdistan and Western Kurdistan it takes a little bit from Syria but most of it is... Turkey.

This is – there are not much Kurds living in this area.

So is it mostly below the Lake?

That's right yes, around here, the Bothan area which is the Dijabikur and this is, this is err very offensive map for the Turkish, for Turkey, for Turkey's purpose because it shows an aspiration of people taking, of splitting Turkey and so we need to be very careful what we say.

So could you mark on the Lake for me?

Van, Lake Van is here and Ararat is here.

Thank you very much.

Its more or less (points to map) ...

Its quite similar, yes.

I only give them a little bit, to the Kurds (laughs).

Yes (laughs)...

But they took more (laughs) ...

Perfect, thank you very much, that was really interesting.

You're welcome, welcome. I honestly, err, I don't believe that in a short time there will be a, maybe err ... as I see it, Iraq will be split.

Yes, I think so.

It will definitely be split and there will be, Northern Iraq will be Kurdistan and that's it. I don't think that under current situation Turkey ... Turkey is one of the strongest countries at the moment - at the moment but you never know what will happen in the future, so I can't, don't want to make any comments but in the near future I don't see any realisation of the that map.

Yes, I agree – thank you very much.

You're welcome.

## Transcript of interview

Walk: with Kurdish activist based at a local cultural centre

Have you been living in this area for a long time?

Yes, about seven years.

And you live around here?

Yes, hackney.

So what exactly is your role in the centre?

We are all working voluntarily. I am doing the network, community development worker ... yes we do sometimes buy brown bread [PAK BUTCHERS]

And do you normally use it during the day?

I use it once a week maybe because mostly we use the Turkish shops because they have the products that we want, you know traditional things, that's why.

This is a turkish shop, they put some free local newspapers, turkish, so I come here every week maybe to get some newspapers from here - *laughs* - people are looking at us. [EFE EXPRESS TICARET]

And this shop, we get turkish lahmachun from here, just eat it an hour ago, this is our traditional thing. [UFRA SOFRASI]

And are you kurdish or turkish?

I am kurdish but I speak both languages.

You do? because not very many people speak Kurdish, do they?

I don't use this shop. I do sometimes use here, hairdressers for eyebrows and this - they are really good there. [HAYDAR'S HAIRDRESSERS]

This shop, one of our friend was working here and it get burnt, it is closed for redecoration at the moment but it was a turkish restaurant. [OZ GAZI ANTEP]

Oh, was it an accident?

Yes, it was accident.

Do you ever use the mosque up there?

Our people do you use it but personally I am not using it. I am muslim but I am not practicing basically.

We're the same then.

*Laughs.* But most of the people, the men, who come to our centre do use the mosque as well.

This one is a Turkish market again. [FAIRWAY]

You don't really use it?

I do use it sometimes

So, I am also interested in the protest that happens on this street, I noticed there were quite a few a while ago but now there haven't been very many. Is that something that you are involved in?

Yes, some of them, for example there was a hunger strike in Turkey, in Turkish prisons, political prisoners were doing it because of the condition of the prisons. It was very bad, still very bad, so they do hunger strike for about seven years, one hundred and twenty-two people have lost their lives. So to protest this massacre and to make people aware what's happening in Turkey, you know and to take attention from the government, so we were doing peace demonstrations here, just from the centre to the graveyard - there is a cemetery - so its finished i think, just this, they say it is best... (*points to Best Turkish Kebab*)

And do you think it is best?

No not really, I don't see a very big difference. So there is a turkish cafe and market.

Do you use them?

Yes, i do - the METOLIN and ANATOLIA as well. And turkish market, this is Turkish as well.

You mean the COSTCUTTER?

Yes, I mean Turkish people run it. And this people get tickets here - but I can't go to Turkey anyway - but usually I get from internet anyway, its cheaper. [TULIP HOLIDAYS]

So did you used to live in Turkey before?

Yes.

And when did you move to England?

1999. Shall we cross the road?

Yes - so what was your reason for coming?

Illegal ways! illegally, unfortunately.

But you're able to stay now?

Yes, but if I had known it was very difficult - it was that much difficult, I wouldn't do it.

Really...

No never ever. it was a very bad journey - very bad. its dangerous.

Was it on a lorry?

Yes, on a lorry and you don't - you have to stay with people you don't know.

And can you stay now?

Yes, i can stay now. I have indefinite leave to remain now. I did apply for British passport but I am looking for a decision - no, I am waiting for it!

They are quite mean these days with it unfortunately.

Yes, there are lots of applications.

You don't know anyone who lives here do you, maybe some of the people who come to the centre?

Yes, I am making letters, filling the forms in for people and yes some of them do live in these flats. That one the next shop of the community centre, we are just like a family, they always go down there or we come, drink tea, you know cup of tea together. [SHOW OFF LICENCE] where are you from?  
Pakistan.

Which university do you go to?

Sheffield - it is in the north but i live very close to here.

This bench, people do use it a lot - I observe them - yes, i just check them.

So you must know a lot of people in the area.

I do, most of them i do.

And there are a lot of social and sports clubs ...

Yes, but they are not really social and sports clubs. gambling, you know - they are not really social clubs. [ULAS]

So you never go to any of them?

We do go sometimes with leaflets and you know magazines, free magazines to give to them.

But not to socialise?

No, its not that kind of place actually.

I have noticed its only men in there actually.

Men, yes men - who don't want to work or who can't find work, so they go and sit down there, some of them do domestic violence at their homes, unfortunately, so they just go and sleep there, spend the night in the social club - some of them.

And is this your way to work? do you live in that direction?

Yes from there.

And when you do the protests, peace marches, is there a lot of paper work involved - how do you go about it?

Firstly we need to get permission from Stoke Newington police station - this minicab office we sometimes use it - first we need to get permission and then - social club, we go there sometimes, I don't go there to sit down, for conversation or, its for men.

You go there to put the leaflets...

Yes, or inform them about something, this is turkish market, we do use them quite often. [BASAK]

Are there very many Kurdish businesses here?

If I say Turkish, I mean from Turkey but most of them are Kurdish. He's Kurdish. [BLUE DOTS]

You were saying you had to get permission from Stoke Newington police station?

Yes and then do the march. this is a print and design centre. [MATBAA]

You don't use it?

No.

How do you get the posters and stuff done, do you do them in house?

No, there is another one that is bigger, we do with them. if there are big things we do there, for example we had a music concert last month - it was quite big.

This, i don't use it but friends use it - for men again. This is new. [KEBAB CITY]

What were we talking about?

We were talking about what it takes to do the march?

Oh yes.

Is it a long process?

Long process, what do you mean?

After filling in the form, how long does it take?

This is a coffee shop there - they just underground, you know. The protest - what was your question again? [CRAZY HORSE]

After the form, how long does it take?

The police officer says that we need need to apply beforehand, two or at least one week - it doesn't take long. Sometimes if we need to do something urgently, we just go there and say please let us do that and they say no this is not enough, we just make a negotiation. This is housing office, I do come sometimes - this is, do you anything about ARCOLA THEATRE? This is a very famous theatre, famous because our people in our community, didn't go to this kind of thing go to theatre

or cinemas - they are not socialising - but this one, they are really doing a good job, they are bringing Turkish plays as well so our people start to go there as well - that's really good.

Yes, i've heard about it.

Kebab shop, lots of kebab. There are some social clubs in here as well.

MEETS A WOMAN IN THE STREET

So the posters you have seem to be all in Turkish?

Some of them are in English.

Are they? Do you think the march is generally directed at Turkish people or is it everyone?

For the important day, for example for May Day, we do do it in English as well. This is a pub, Turkish people run it. [MARQUIS OF LANDSDOWNE]

Do you have family here?

Yes, I do, I've got sisters and brothers and we do live together. This is a pound shop but they are liars, not everything is a pound - *laughs at shopkeeper*

They sell good things, my auntie's shop actually, kind of auntie, not really close but. We do use this one as well, its Turkish restaurant. [POUND PLUS, 19 NUMARA BOS CIRRIK]

Do you use this one? [OZ ANTIPILLER]

Yes, sometimes, its quite expensive, if you have special days, if you want to visit a family, so traditionally, you get some of them and you get flowers and go there.

What is that poster there, you know the 18th May one, I always wondered.

Oh, that one. There's a cultural centre in here and that belongs to them, they make a kind of remembrance day for him.

Who is he?

He's one of the political kind of leader in Turkey but has been killed years ago by Turkish government.

Internet cafe, I do sometimes use here. Turkish restaurant as you see, again. There are lots of, this is coffee shop. [CHEAP INT. CALLS, HASAN, LEO'S]

A greasy spoon.

Yes, greasy spoon - it is good. This is your social club. They are look, they are really socialising each other, they are gambling. *laughs* And this is another one - look! Look at them, they are youth people and they are all the time like that, all day - they don't do nothing. Not all of them, some of them. [KOY CAFE BAR]



Do any of them come to your centre.

Yes, I think so, yes. There are some nightclubs there, I don't go there, I don't have nightlife. So its finished. That's a Turkish restaurant, it is quite famous. [ISTANBUL ISKEMBECISI]  
And hairdressers is full of men. [CLASS HAIRDRESSERS]

So have you been back to Turkey since you came? do you miss it?

No - my parents do come here every winter, they do stay with us for three months or so. I do miss but not a lot because my parents are here. You know, I am from Turkey but I don't know anything about Turkey except for the system and you know the poverty. We don't know the touristic places because of the poverty. I never go outside of my village and my city because of poverty. I didn't do any holiday in Turkey - nothing. So we don't know what do we have in Turkey except for from the books and on the TV.

And where is your village?

Its in the middle of Turkey.

What's it called?

Civas.

And when you came to England, you didn't come through Istanbul?

I did go through Istanbul, I had to stay with my grandmother.

That's supposed to be a beautiful city.

I stayed there about three months, I was working so I just know how to go to work and come back, that's it. But the city in which I live I do know very well, very well.

And how do you like England?

Good.

Have you always lived in Hackney?

Yes, but I do go to the museums and to the river, Thames. I do, I do know England quite well.

Ever buy jewellery from there?

Yes, my niece bought a bracelet for her father from here the other day. [ERBILLER]

## Transcript of interview

Walk and 'drawing Kurdistan': Turkish waiter working at a local café

So we were talking about that community centre

No - we were talking about Turkish culture and Kurdish culture

Yes, what is the difference?

You know the Kurdish people still, still in this day, they are for example you are Kurdish, I am Turkish and I want to get married with you - your father and mother they want from me money you know, like they sell you...

Yes they do that sometimes in Pakistan too.

Yes, but you are living in Turkey ... and they have not education and how can I say, human rights is not so improved in his culture (pause) look they are saying we are not human rights but 20 years ago our president was Kurdish you know, but they are saying that in Turkey there is not human rights.

And when the president was Kurdish, were people allowed to speak Kurdish?

They didn't speak Kurdish but everyone knows Kurdish - but sometimes he was going in the east to the villages and sometimes he was speaking with the people you know but in general they didn't speak Kurdish. Look here's one place, that is Turkish.

The barbers? Have you had your haircut there? [PASHA BARBERS]

No - that's my place. [DEM CAFE]

That's Turkish too?

No, no it's Kurdish.

What does dem mean - is it just a name?

You know Turkish tea? If you make Turkish tea you have to leave it 20 mins and they say the tea is dem.

Oh ok, dum - we call it dum in Urdu.

OK, in your country as well? and what does it mean 'nishat'

I think it means happiness.

And what about your family, are they here?

They are in the north of England.

I would like to go one day to Newcastle and Nottingham, everybody is saying it's nice there.

Yes, its friendlier. Do you want to get a coffee over there? [CAFE Z] Is this ok? I didn't think you would want to go where you are working.

Actually its crowded there, I was there before I meet you and there is Ali, the owner, his child was there. Look Turkish breakfast - oh my god, its cheaper.

It's nicer there though, I used to come here and now I go there. Anyway who was that person you nodded at?

Oh yes, he is working in the barber.

Oh, that means you can introduce me to him, I can interview him too.

No, that is not a good idea, not for you - they are not so nice. They didn't have education.

So you were telling me about the community centre - you wouldn't go there but they say its for Kurdish and Turkish people.

Look it is written, Kurdish and Turkish community but the administration and the people are Kurdish. What is the reason to open the building is not to bring Kurdish and Turkish people together. Because there is this picture of this man, do you know this man?

Abdullah Ocalan?

Abdullah Ocalan, yes. And he was working with US maybe 20 years you know and that was the reason in my country there was killed 30 000 people, this man was the reason and he's on the wall and how can I go there?

Yes, but some Turkish people do.

Yes, I know and some Turkish people, some of them they are from secret service. That's why they are going there. They are taking a picture of you and the people. *laughs*

So how long have you been working at the cafe?

Two weeks.

And how did you get that job?

I get my job, my first job I get I am walking on the street and I ask do you need any staff and they say ok. First I was here, I ask if you need any staff and leave my cv here and I go to dem and they tell me straight ok you can work here. Before that I was working in a restaurant and they were Kurdish people you know and I see just how everything is there but I was not surprised because I knew these people. You have no tips, no service charge, you work for £3 per hour. And I have one friend from Russia, you should speak with him, his English is very good and he can speak as well French and he knows everything about the Kurdish people?

Does he? And has he been living in England for a long time?

Not a long time, maybe nine months but he's really good, he is my room mate as well and he is working so hard you know and he couldn't get one month off and in the night he see a nightmare and i wake up

from my sleep and i saw he was trying to enter into the wardrobe and I say what are you doing? He says I was seeing a nightmare, my owner caught me. They are working like that.

And where does he work?

Do you know Southgate Road? There is a restaurant there, it is Bavo restaurant and they are really rich but you know some people they are doing only for money. And you told me you were making doctor, how long does it take?

It takes 3-4 years.

And you can work in university now if you want?

You can get some teaching work, yes.

And you? You can teach in our country as well. Have you been there?

No, but I'd like to go.

You should, and there is a technical University, its very nice you know, Middle East Technical University, it is a famous university.

Yes, I would like to go. So have you used any of the shops here?

Yes AKDENIZ, akdeniz market - when i finish my job i take from there one beer and my newspaper and I sit on the bus, that's my good time you know, in the night - I love this time when i get the beer and my newspaper, it is good... because it is restricted from our religion you know?

Yes, I know.

But did you ever think about or talked about why it is restricted? because maybe when you drink so much you lose your mind or you lost your own control, maybe that's the reason.

Yes, i think so.

Well that means that we can drink a little bit...

So you know these social clubs, do you ever go to any - like that one over there, the orange one.

No I didn't go there. I spend my time with internet sometimes when I have free time or i go, i try to go more to south London because there are good places. But I plan to go to Newcastle, is it near your place?

No, it is more north.

.....

So do you think even a small Kurdistan is a good idea? What are your feelings about it?

It is a difficult question. I don't want any but I can understand when in my country Kurdish people go to north Iraq, ok they can but now it is not possible because if they create a Kurdish country there, US will want to put all the soldiers there, they are going to have a new base and Kurdish people are going to be rich, day by day rich, and one day they want from us the east part from my country. That's why we never allow that and now it is going to start a war because our soldiers are now in the area but I don't think it is in the english newspaper - did you ever read?

That there are troops on the border? Yes, I read about it.

Really? which newspaper is it?

The Guardian. So you don't think even the north of iraq should be separate?

There should be a country, its name should be Iraq, not Kurdistan, not Erbistan. What about your country - have you such a problem?

Well Kashmir is a bit of a problem, but we don't have most of it anyway so.

But Indian people they have good technology as well I think, software is good and I thought you are from india as well you know, you look like so.

Can you tell the difference though between Pakistani and Indian?

No. And your University is in North England, but you are staying here.

Yes, because I am doing my work here

.....

So do you normally take the bus?

Yes, only one bus is enough from Seven Sisters and you are staying here in the back?

Yes back there. So how long are you going to stay here?

I don't know. My plan is one year but the life you know, maybe more maybe little, I don't know.

Are you enjoying it?

Sometimes, sometimes not.

Its too early to know, two weeks is nothing.

Two weeks for the job, i have been here four months. You see you are working maybe five days, six days and all the people they are, how can I say, they are having a good time and you are seeing that and you think my god what are you doing, you think i make service, sugar...

Yes, but you are also studying, you're here to learn aren't you?

Yes, but you didn't do it like my job ever?

I have done some weird jobs, when you are a student and you need money you do these kinds of jobs. When I was at university, in the summer I would work.

And you worked in the summer?

Yes, I didn't do waitering but I used to work in a call centre.

Call centre, yes i know call centre.

Yes, it was horrible.

Yes it is very difficult you know, I was working one time like you. You explain everything and he cannot understand, again again, again. Its very difficult.

Yes and people get annoyed with you.

What kind of call centre was it? i mean what was your?

Who were we calling?

.....

So when I do an interview with people I ask them to draw a map of Turkey and the area and ask them to mark on it any part that they think could or should be Kurdistan.

Do you mean when I say what has happened to Kurdish people, that one?

Yes.

Not good things - DRAWS MAP

Do you know what is that, its an island, Cyprus, that is Turkey. Ok and in 1991 US make here - he restrict that one at latitude - he says no-one can come here, even Saddam Hussain;s soldiers and Turkey of course. US was here soldiers and they put food, they put gun to Kurdish people, he supported them from 1991 until 2007 and do you know World Trade Centre - and he crashed and the time was ready 2007, the government is ready, all the planes is ready and crash boom, WTC and US and everything was here ready and came here and told to Turkish governmetn, look is it possible to open here, to allow us our soldiers to go from here to Basra from here but my govt told them no its not possible, you cannot use this border - ok? And US come from here and from air and he, do you know what he first did, US, when he first cam here? Do you know the population dept, like Pentagon, do you know Pentagon - its defence. There is population, defence and another one. He destroyed the population part all the documents because here live as well Turkish people - they destroy the documents that was written maybe he has lived 1 million Turkish people and they destroy.

Who destroyed it?

American people. And now he can say, in this area there are no Turkish people. How can you prove it, you cannot prove it because they destroy all the evidence. And now they are in this area and they want to create the Kurdish country and he has oil, a lot of oil. And Turkish people don't allow it. And here in our, my part, is living as well Kurdish people and US, he wants to take that part and that part and a little bit from here and he will create and that is gonna be a base in the Middle East, one more base, so two bases and he can administrate from here the Middle East, Iran maybe, he can press from here Iran, Russia, understand? And we don't want to give this part from our Turkey, that is the reason. And look here in Cyprus, here is two different peoples, Greek and Turkish people, but US says here is only Greek people

but here is living Turkish people and he says no only Kurdish people. Understand? They can say everything because the press, the newspapers are American.

And if you had your way none of it would be? If you could decide, would any of it be Kurdistan?

No, no, no.

It would remain as it is?

Yes, ok, look - Iraq it was a country, it could be again a country and the people can live together and in my country they can speak Kurdish in the street, nobody say to them anything.

I thought they weren't allowed to.

No, no, who told you that - it is not true. I told you, in 98 it was a Kurdish president in my country, can you imagine that? he is Kurdish and he can become president - and they can speak Kurdish, they can listen Kurdish, they can watch TV in Kurdish, nobody can say anything but now Turkish people, all the Turkish people are a little bit angry because the Kurdish people are working with American soldiers and they are killing my soldiers.

Is there fighting going on here?

Yes, but you know how they are fighting with us, they don't take the gun, no not like that, they make the ambush, they leave a bomb under the car and you know like that they are in society and that is the way - that is not good. If they take a gun, it is very easy for us - laughs. And do you know what Turkey thinks? Pakistan I think is here - and Turkey thinks only Pakistan is really friend to us, others Iran, Iraq, Greek is not our friend. And yes the story is so and I am here - Istanbul. And when you go there you will never want to leave this place.

No, I would love to go.

.....

Do you know Ottoman Empire?

Yes.

We were administrator of all area here, Iran, Pakistan - your country, Russia, European...

And do you wish those days were still here? *laughs*

Yes, yes, because in the past time we administrated also a part of the Arabian island and in this time everybody was living in the peace, you know. Now in the Middle East every day dying maybe one hundred people, thats why you know we should get again the administrator but US my god, they are good at technology you know.

## Transcript of interview

### 'Drawing Kurdistan': Iranian & Kurdish womens rights organisation

Iranian and Iraqi Kurds, they are fleeing their own country due to the war and other problems. Of course most of the Kurdish Turkish, they come as an immigrant, and they are coming for having a work or for job because of economical issues they are coming. And when they are coming, they start usually their own business and they are working here. But mainly the other Kurdish people from Iraq or Iran, they are coming here, fleeing their own country, because of their safety - and mainly they seek asylum based on the political situation of their country. I tried to find actually, because we need a statistic for our work - it is very difficult to get numbers of Kurdish or Iranians because when they ... on the monitoring forms, it is not mentioned at all, not Kurdish not Iranian - it is under the category of 'others' so it can be lots of 'others', different groups of people. So it is very difficult, we couldn't find a good statistic for numbers.

#### What about things like the Refugee Council?

They haven't got it, I looked at the Refugee Council, Home Office and even government and it doesn't say a lot about those two groups, Kurdish or Iranian people. But you know that there is lots of Iranian people, at least, living in the UK, most of them came after the Revolution and after that there was lots of up and down political situation so a lot of people came to the UK and to other European countries.

#### And whereabouts in London is there a concentration of Iranian people?

In London, mainly in North London actually, like Barnet, there is a large Iranian population there. And also around Chelsea and Kensington, in West London. So there are two areas in London with the majority of the Iranians living there. Kurdish people from Iran or Iraq are mostly actually dispersed, in London or even other places due to their dispersal - they send them to other cities.

#### Is there still a lot of affinity between Kurdish people from Turkey and Iran and Iraq, because of the culture or is it now quite separate because of the different countries?

The culture is not very different, it is quite close, they are neighbouring countries, they have been affected of course by the main political group in the country or the main national group. Like Kurdish people in Iraq, they have adapted somewhat the Arab culture, in Iran, the Kurdish



people from Iran, they adapted the Persian culture and in Turkey it is the same. But still I believe that all of them they kept their own culture and tradition.

[And what about the language - it has been suppressed.](#)

There are two main languages, or dialects, one is Komanji and the other is Sorani, which we don't understand each other at all, they are two really separate languages. But when we, the Kurdish people, when they are listening to each other quite a lot, so they would understand because they - the root of the words are the same but the pronunciation makes it very very different - so we don't understand each other.

[And your work specifically, is it concentrated on Iranian and Kurdish women in England or do you try to do work in Iran as well?](#)

Mainly our focus is on women, Iranian and Kurdish - Kurdish from different parts of Kurdistan, Actually, we extend our services for Arab women too. Because there are no Arab women organisation to provide the services that we are doing, so there is a lack of resources for those women and they need help. But we are mainly providing help for Farsi speaking and Kurdish speaking women. Of course, as I say, sometimes because of the language we will have difficulty with Turkish Kurdish and there we refer them to a group like Imege. Because all the Kurdish from Turkey, they are speaking Turkish and we don't have any Turkish speaking people in our office, but we have lots of Kurdish Sorani speaking, Farsi speaking and Arabic speaking.

[So, you are only working at a local level?](#)

We have a campaign called International Campaign Against Honour Killing and through that campaign actually we do lots of activity around the world, especially we are focusing on violence against women in the Middle East and other countries as well. We could I think at least make a high profile about honour killing around the world, and I have to say proudly that our organisation is a leading organisation against honour killing.

[And it is still a big issue in the population over here as well?](#)

It is. It is. Especially within Kurdish people from all different parts of Kurdistan.

[You don't hear much about it apart from some high profile cases that the media picks up.](#)

Yes, but due to the work we are doing, and many organisations are doing, we could save lots of lives. Otherwise it would be like B??? or many other people who could have been killed, but we saved them, we saved them but still there are high profile cases - we have to

change everything about them, their name, their address, their identity, everything, their job. I mean, it is a lot of work but we saved them and the most important point is that, that we did not let them to be killed.

**And how do you get in touch with people. Do people hear about you from friends?**

Most of them actually are self-referrals or they have work friends, or you know through word of mouth, but we have had lots of referrals from other organisations, like police, solicitors, social services, which is really good. And mainly those referrals are all about honour killing, they are at risk of honour killing. And it is very important for the women, you know many of them they tried other organisations before they come to us. And some of them they also tried to do mediating between the family and them, which is not safe at all. So they are very happy that they are coming here, they trust us, because they know that we have a different approach, for their safety - we have an understanding - we don't tell them that your family is right, we always mention their rights - rights to choose, rights to leave, there are ways to help them.

**And how are you funded? Is it through the council or is it voluntary, donations?**

Of course donations are always welcome and coming but it is not the main thing that we can rely on. We have got a good fund from Tudor Trust for one paid staff but of course we are ten volunteers here, ten or eleven. And just recently we have got a fund for paid staff - just one. So it's quite a struggle for us. This year we tried to just take emergency cases actually, due to the lack of resources and especially in the case of honour killing and in case of other violence, it is a lot of work. And those case are never going to be finished anyway, there is always a new case, we had cases where we had to change their address for more than eight times, just imagine, it is a huge amount of work for each case. So actually the funding situation is very, very bad and you are struggling, we are struggling.

**And so the council don't help you at all?**

Council do help a little bit but it is not enough. We have got a small fund from Islington Community Chest but it is very small anyway. And we had good support from Trust for London, for this year.

**And you have to renew it every year? Must be a lot of work.**

Every year, it's lots of work. And it is a very stressful situation and if we don't get money for our volunteers, we will be in a very difficult situation actually, because some of them are working for two or three years here without any money and it is a very difficult situation for all of us. If we lose them, they are very well experienced, very well trained volunteers and very well informed - they are people from the same community, from the same culture, they have a very high level of

understanding of the issues for women in those communities. If we lose them it is devastating for our organisation, but we cannot keep them for so long without pay - more than three or four years.

And is the Olympics affecting your funding, because I know that in Hackney people are saying that.

It may be actually, but not only Olympics, actually it can be because the Lottery refused our application but it is not only them, it's the government. We applied for funding from the Home Office and they rejected it. They themselves asked us to apply for a fund and they rejected it. I mean the government should acknowledge our work, because what we are doing is a part of their work actually, saving people, preventing the crime in the community.

Yes, the police and social services should be in fact be doing this anyway.

Yes. So they don't even pay attention, to give an organisation a few thousand, with a large number of clients, a good reputation and you know we have made big changes in the UK and other European countries. Actually on the basis of our work, we have managed to get the government to consider honour killing as a crime and to change the whole situation about cultural sensitivity - they should really appreciate our work.

Yes, they should be grateful.

I don't know how to make a big complaint about government but I have to do something serious about it. Maybe I have to criticise them in the newspaper, I will speak to a good journalist that I know.

And the last thing I wanted to talk to you about was, what are the attitudes of the Iranian Kurds to the idea of Kurdistan?

Different people have a different view, of course it's a dream for all Kurdish people to have their own country, you know, one day. They are very proud, for example, of Iraqi Kurdistan now many of them, but still there is lots of conflict still between Kurdish groups. So I think that the nationalism is very strong within Kurdish people and because of that they try to keep even the criminal issues in the community, like honour killing, as a part of the culture and the tradition, so that it is their identity. Kurdish women have to be modest, to be an angel.

It is strange because I thought that Kurdish people were less religious than other Muslim people. And usually people use the religion as an excuse for honour killing. In Kurds is it more the culture rather than the religion that is used?

Yes, it is difficult to say because if you remember B's case, her uncle you know - and they say, we are Kurdish and we are Muslim, and we will not allow our daughters to have a boyfriend or to live the way that women are living here. So the nationalism and religion are coming

together and they are supporting each other because in both of them, women is not considered as an equal citizen within the community - it is always second or third, so both of them are very man dominated, both religion and nationalism and both of them believe that woman is just a position of man. So against women, both religion and nationalism are I believe, working together. Kurdish people used to not be very religious but due to fundamentalism and the growing of lots of Muslim political groups in the area, it affected Kurdish people too. We never had a Muslim group, I remember the only Muslim group in Kurdistan was Muftizada, they were during the Revolution and after that they finished. But now there are lots of, Ansar-e-Islam in Kurdistan and Al-Qaida and many others, Muslim fundamental and terrorist groups. And even recently, if you heard, they had bombed, suicide bombers in Kirkuk and Irbil and especially Iranian government had lots of activity in Iraqi Kurdistan, which made the situation more unsafe and they even do some activities themselves, the Iranian government, under the name of Al-Qaida or Kurdish Ansar-e-Islam. And they make the situation very bad for Kurdish people.

And when I do these interviews, I normally ask people to draw a map of Kurdistan and to mark on it where they are from and to mark on it the area that they might think would or could be Kurdistan.

DRAWS A MAP

So it is Iran - I have to draw a big map in that case - for example it is Iran, ok it is Turkey - I am not very good at drawing - I forget a bit. And this is Iraq. Kurdistan is that part, a bit bigger, I am Kurdish I need a big country. This is Iran, Turkey, Iraq and this is Kurdistan. I am from here, this town is called Senander and this is the largest, if we can say the centre of the, like the capital city of the Iranian Kurdistan. In Iraq it is Sulemanyi, in Turkey I don't know exactly, but I grow up in a small town in the border, I have grown up here but I used live there, it is called Bane and it is very close to Sulemanyi maybe half hour, one hour.

And when did you come to England?

Oh, in 1996. So I used to live in Sulemanyi, in Irbil and in Turkey as well, so I have been in all parts of Kurdistan

Just one last question, you mention that Kurdish people are more conservative now - are they more conservative when they move to England rather than when they are back home? Because I know that is very true in the Pakistani community.

I think that when they move to England, they are going to be more conservative. They are more open-minded when they are over there because they are against the whole situation. But when they are coming here, I believe that they feel, first of all to keep their identity, which they also keep all the worst part as well. They want to show that they are against the racists in the UK and so they bring out a very strong

national part. When they are back home they are more open and even about religion they are not as conservative - it is like that. I have to say that the Kurdish people have a different culture depending on where they are. I believe that the Iranian Kurds are more open-minded, they socialise, than Turkish. Maybe due to the situation that they have been in during the Shah time, it was a much open situation in Iran and a very modern country, I think it affect the Kurdish people. And Kurdish people in Iran they have been very much integrated within the Iranian community.

Whereas in Turkey they are the poorest people.

Kurdistan in all of them is the poorest part of the country because the government they didn't let their economy into that part, they didn't let it grow - I don't know everything and to develop the economical and the political situation. Because all of them in those countries, were afraid that Kurdish people would go for independence. But even with those things, Kurdish people were very integrated into Iranian society and were much more open-minded and there are even left-wing parties and although most of them are, the majority are Muslim, they are not very conservative. They never use any hijab- never. Even in Iraq during the Sultan, the women did not wear hijab and the Kurdish people were very integrated actually but still the tribal culture was very strong within Iraqi Kurdish - the tribal were not very strong in Iran, in Irani Kurds, and it is still very strong in Arab community - that part has been kept for ages.

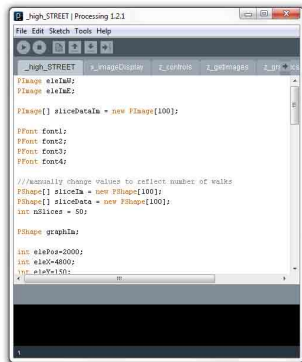
Thank you very much.



# Appendix 2

## Processing code

### High street mapping



```

PImage eleImW;
PImage eleImE;

PImage[] sliceDataIm = new PImage[100];

PFont font1;
PFont font2;
PFont font3;
PFont font4;

//manually change values to reflect number of walks
PShape[] sliceIm = new PShape[100];
PShape[] sliceData = new PShape[100];
int nSlices = 50;

PShape graphIm;

int elePos=2000;
int eleX=4800;
int eleY=150;

int sliceRef=25;
int prevSliceRef=24;
int sliceDir=1;
int ratio;
int liveWalk;

int mPos;
int mPosPrev;

//manually change values to reflect number of walks
int numWalks=2;
boolean[] dispWalk = new boolean[10];
boolean dispDistantSlices=false;
boolean dispGraph=true;

void setup() {

  size(800,600);
  smooth();

  font1 = loadFont("CordiaNew-20.vlw");
  font2 = loadFont("CordiaNew-Bold-20.vlw");
  font3 = loadFont("CordiaNew-Italic-20.vlw");
  font4 = loadFont("CordiaNew-BoldItalic-20.vlw");

  ratio = (eleX/width);
  elePos = (eleX/2)+(width/2);

  ////////////////GET IMAGES.....
  eleImW = loadImage("eleImageW.png");
  eleImE = loadImage("eleImageE.png");

  getSliceImData();

  getSlices();
  getGraph();
}

void draw() {

  cursor(ARROW);
  background(255,255,255);

  selectSlice();
  dispEle();
  displayImData();
  
```

```

//////////////////////////////////SELECT DISPLAY STYLE, detailed view or overlaid walks.....
if (dispDistantSlices==false) {
  dispCurrentSlice();
}
if (dispDistantSlices==true) {
  dispDistSlices();
}

headUpDisp();

if (dispGraph==true) {
  showGraph();
}

showCounter();
}

for (int i=0; i<numWalks; i++) {
  if (dispWalk[i]==true) {
    fill(255,200,0,150);
    stroke(255,130,0);
    strokeWeight(1);
    shape(sliceIm[sliceRef+(nSlices*i)], 0, 150);
  }
}
strokeWeight(10);
stroke(255);
fill(255,200,0,150);
rect(352,0,96,150);
rect(352,450,96,150);
}

//////////////////////////////////

void dispDistSlices() {

  int tempsSliceRef=0;

  for (int i=0; i<numWalks; i++) {
    if (dispWalk[i]==true) {
      tempsSliceRef=sliceRef+(nSlices*i);
      liveWalk=i+1;
    }
  }

  if (liveWalk!=0) {

    ////////////////////////////////////DISPLAY UP TO 5 SLICES INFRONT

    if (sliceDir>0) {
      int k = (49-sliceRef);
      if (k>4) {
        k=5;
      }
      for (int i=0; i<k; i++) {

        fill(150,200,60,125-(i*10));
        strokeWeight(20);
        stroke(255,100-(i*10));
        shape(sliceIm[tempsSliceRef+i],0,150);

        stroke(255);
        strokeWeight(10);
        // fill(0,150,255,100-(i*20));
        fill(153,204,0,75-(i*20));
        rect(352-(96*(i+1)),0,96,150);
        rect(352+(96*(i+1)),450,96,150);
      }
    }
    else {
      int k = sliceRef;
      if (k>4) {
        k=5;
      }
      for (int i=0; i<k; i++) {
        fill(150,200,60,125-(i*10));
        . . . . .
      }
    }
  }
}

```



```

        strokeWeight(20);
        stroke(255,100-(i*10));
        shape(sliceIm[tempsSliceRef-i],0,150);

        stroke(255);
        strokeWeight(10);
        //          fill(0,150,255,100-(i*20));
        fill(153,204,0,75-(i*20));
        rect(352-(96*(i+1)),450,96,150);
        rect(352+(96*(i+1)),0,96,150);
    }
}

//////////////////////////////////DISPLAY SELECTED SLICE
fill(153,204,0,100);
stroke(153,204,0);

strokeWeight(2);
shape(sliceIm[tempsSliceRef], 0, 150);

stroke(255);
strokeWeight(10);
fill(153,204,0,100);
rect(352,0,96,150);
rect(352,450,96,150);

//////////////////////////////////DISPLAY SLICE BEHIND
if ((sliceRef>0) && (sliceRef<49)) {
    noFill();
    stroke(153,204,0);
    strokeWeight(1);
    shape(sliceIm[tempsSliceRef-sliceDir],0,150);

    strokeWeight(10);
    stroke(255);
    fill(153,204,0,125);
    rect(352+((96*sliceDir)),0,96,150);
    rect(352-((96*sliceDir)),450,96,150);
}
}
}

void displayImData() {

for (int i=0; i<numWalks; i++) {
    if (dispWalk[i]==true) {
        if (dispDistantSlices==true) {
            noTint();
            if (dispWalk[0]==true) { ////image data limited to walk 1 only////////
                image(sliceDataIm[sliceRef], 0,0);
            }
        }
    }
}
}

void selectSlice() {

prevSliceRef = sliceRef;

if(mouseY>height-eleY) {
    sliceRef=nSlices-(mouseX/(width/nSlices))-1;
    elePos=0-mouseX*(ratio)+(width/2);
    cursor(HAND);
}
if(mouseY<eleY) {
    sliceRef=nSlices-(mouseX/(width/nSlices))-1;
    elePos=0-mouseX*(ratio)+(width/2);
    cursor(HAND);
}

//////////////////////////////////CALCULATE DIRECTION BASED ON CURRENT AND PREVIOUS SLICES
if (sliceRef != prevSliceRef) {
    sliceDir= sliceRef-prevSliceRef;
}
}

```

```

    if (sliceDir>0) {
        sliceDir = 1;
    }
    else {
        sliceDir = -1;
    }
}

void keyReleased() {
    if(key=='1') {
        if (dispWalk[0]==false) {
            dispWalk[0]=true;
            if (dispDistantSlices==true) {
                dispWalk[1]=false;
            }
        }
        else {
            dispWalk[0]=false;
            if (dispDistantSlices==true) {
                dispWalk[0]=true;
            }
        }
    }
    if(key=='2') {
        if (dispWalk[1]==false) {
            dispWalk[1]=true;
            if (dispDistantSlices==true) {
                dispWalk[0]=false;
            }
        }
        else {
            dispWalk[1]=false;
            if (dispDistantSlices==true) {
                dispWalk[1]=true;
            }
        }
    }
}

if (key=='d') {
    if(dispDistantSlices==true) {
        dispDistantSlices=false;
    }
    else {
        dispDistantSlices=true;
        dispWalk[0]=true;

        for (int i=1;i<10;i++) {
            dispWalk[i]=false;
        }
    }
}

if (key=='g') {
    if (dispGraph==false) {
        dispGraph=true;
    }
    else {
        dispGraph=false;
    }
}
}

void dispEle() {
    //bottom image
    tint(255, 100);
    image(eleImE, elePos, height-eleY);
    //top image
    int nElePos=(elePos*-1)-4000;
    tint(255, 100);
    image(eleImW, nElePos, 0);
}

```

```
void dispEle() {
  //bottom image
  tint(255, 100);
  image(eleImE, elePos, height-eleV);
  //top image
  int nElePos=(elePos*-1)-4000;
  tint(255, 100);
  image(eleImW, nElePos, 0);
}

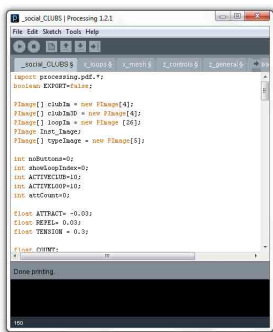
void headUpDisp() {
  for (int i=0; i<10; i++) {
    if (i<3) {
      if (dispWalk[i]==true) {
        fill(0);
      }
      else {
        fill(200);
      }
    }
    int k=i+1;
    textFont(font1);
    if (k<10) {
      text("0"+k, 750, (175+(i*30)));
    }
    else {
      text(k, 750, (175+(i*30)));
    }
  }
}

void showGraph() {
  shape(graphIm, 0, 150);
}

void showCounter() {
  int count = sliceRef+1;
  fill(0);
  textFont(font3);
  text("street ref " + count, 25,25);
}
```

## Processing code

### Social club mapping



```

import processing.pdf.*;
boolean EXPORT=false;

PImage[] clubIm = new PImage[4];
PImage[] clubIm3D = new PImage[4];
PImage[] loopIm = new PImage [26];
PImage Inst_Image;
PImage[] typeImage = new PImage[5];

int noButtons=0;
int showLoopIndex=0;
int ACTIVECLUB=10;
int ACTIVELOOP=10;
int attCount=0;

float ATTRACT= -0.03;
float REPEL= 0.03;
float TENSION = 0.3;

float COUNT;

boolean attRepOn=false;
boolean mReset=false;
boolean envirOn=true;
boolean meshOn=false;
boolean disInst = false;

PFont font01;

String textLine;
String dataString[];
BufferedReader reader;

int exIn=0;

int H=600;
int W=800;

float ROTX=-0.9;
float ROTY=-0.5;
float VSCALE;
float XTRANSLATE;
float YTRANSLATE;

//////////////////////MUST BE UPDATED MANUALLY-----
int noLoopsType = 25;
loopsType[] loops = new loopsType[noLoopsType];
//////////////////////MUST BE UPDATED MANUALLY-----

int mMax = 20;
int spaceDim = (H+500)/(mMax-1);
int offSet = (H+500)/2;
int noMeshNodes = ((mMax-2)*(mMax-2))*6;

meshNodeType[] mNode = new meshNodeType[noMeshNodes];
meshMemNodeType[] memNode = new meshMemNodeType[noMeshNodes];

void setup() {

    size(W,H, P3D);
    //frameRate(30);
    cursor(CROSS);

    textureMode(IMAGE);

```



```

if (EXPORT==true) {
    endRaw();
    EXPORT=false;
}

if (ACTIVELOOP<10) {
    image(typeImage[ACTIVELOOP],200,0, 600,600);
}

COUNT++;
}

void initializeLoops () {

    readDatabase();

    int len = dataString.length;
    int inputs[] = new int[len];

    for (int i=0; i< len; i++) {
        int temp = int(dataString[i]);
        inputs[i] = temp;
    }

    int k=0;
    for(int i=0; i<noLoopsType; i++) {
        loops[i]=new loopsType(inputs[k],inputs[k+1],inputs[k+2],inputs[k+3],inputs[k+4], i);
        k=k+5;
    }
}

class loopsType {

    PVector pv;
    PVector colRef = new PVector(0,0,0);

    int clu; //CLUB
    int vis; //VISIBILITY
    int tem; //TEMPORALITY
    int sca; //SCALE
    int typ; //TYPE
    String data;
    boolean show=true;
    boolean highlight=false;

    loopsType(int cl, int vi, int te, int si, int ty, int ind) {

        vis = vi*200-(H/2); //position in x
        sca = si*200-(H/2); //position in y
        clu = (cl-1)*200-(H/2); //position in z

        club = cl-1; // use this as the index of the social club

        tem = (te+1)*20; //size of sphere

        pv = new PVector(vis,sca,clu);

        typ = ty;

        switch(ty) {
        case 0:
            colRef.set(0,174,239);
            break;
        case 1:
            colRef.set(236,0,140);
            break;
        case 2:
            colRef.set(255,242,0);
            break;
        case 3:
            colRef.set(154,202,60);
            break;
        case 4:
            colRef.set(247,148,30);
            break;
        }
    }
}

```

```

}

void display() {
  translate (pv.x,pv.y,pv.z);
  if (highlight==false) {
    fill(colRef.x, colRef.y, colRef.z,50);
  }
  else {
    fill(colRef.x, colRef.y, colRef.z,200);
  }
  noStroke();
  sphere(tem);
  fill(colRef.x, colRef.y, colRef.z);
  sphere(3);
  translate (-pv.x,-pv.y,-pv.z);
}
}

void initializeMesh() {

  int n= 0;
  int faceVal=0;

  for (int i=0; i<mMax; i++) {
    for (int j=0; j<mMax; j++) {
      for (int k=0; k<mMax; k++) {

        float xPos=0;
        float yPos=0;
        float zPos=0;
        boolean edgeNode=false;

        //////////////////////////////////////////////////choose pts on the cube face
        if ((i==0) || (i==mMax-1) || (j==0) || (j==mMax-1) || (k==0) || (k==mMax-1)) {

          //////////////////////////////////////////////////find edge nodes
          if ((i==0) && (j==0)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((i==0) && (j==mMax-1)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((i==mMax-1) && (j==0)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((i==mMax-1) && (j==mMax-1)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          //////////////////////////////////////////////////
          if ((i==0) && (k==0)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((i==0) && (k==mMax-1)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((i==mMax-1) && (k==0)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((i==mMax-1) && (k==mMax-1)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          //////////////////////////////////////////////////
          if ((j==0) && (k==0)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((j==0) && (k==mMax-1)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((j==mMax-1) && (k==0)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
          if ((j==mMax-1) && (k==mMax-1)) {
            edgeNode=true;
          }
        }
      }
    }
  }
}

```

```

.
//////////////////////////////////// record cube face to create neighbours
if (i==0) {
    faceVal=1;
}
if (i==mMax-1) {
    faceVal=6;
}
if (j==0) {
    faceVal=2;
}
if (j==mMax-1) {
    faceVal=5;
}
if (k==0) {
    faceVal=3;
}
if (k==mMax-1) {
    faceVal=4;
}

xPos = (i*spaceDim)-offSet;
yPos = (j*spaceDim)-offSet;
zPos = (k*spaceDim)-offSet;

if (edgeNode==false) {
    if (mReset== false) {
        mNode[n]=new meshNodeType(xPos, yPos, zPos,faceVal);
        memNode[n]=new meshMemNodeType(xPos, yPos, zPos);
    }
    else {
        mNode[n].pos.x = xPos;
        mNode[n].pos.y = yPos;
        mNode[n].pos.z = zPos;
        mNode[n].posLimbo = mNode[n].pos;
    }
    n=n+1;
}
}
}
}

void meshDefine() {
int k=0;
for (int i =0; i <noMeshNodes; i++) {
    for (int j=0; j <noMeshNodes; j++) {
        float dis = checkDist(mNode[i].pos, mNode[j].pos);
        if (dis == sqrt(sq(spaceDim)*2)) {
            if ( mNode[i].cubeFace != mNode[j].cubeFace) {
                mNode[i].neigh[k]=j;
                k=k+1;
            }
        }
        if (dis==spaceDim) {
            mNode[i].neigh[k]=j;
            k=k+1;
        }
    }
    k=0;
}
}

void meshDraw() {
for (int i =0; i <noMeshNodes; i++) {
    mNode[i].display();
}
}
}

```



```

class meshNodeType {

    PVector pos;
    PVector posLimbo;
    int cubeFace;
    int target;

    int[] neigh = new int [4];

    meshNodeType(float posX, float posY, float posZ, int faceVal) {
        pos = new PVector(posX,posY,posZ);
        cubeFace = faceVal;
    }

    void display() {

        float cRef=COUNT/5;
        if (cRef<0) {
            cRef=0;
        }
        if (cRef>70) {
            cRef=70;
        }

        PVector colRef = new PVector(0,0,0);

        if (meshOn==true) {
            switch(ACTIVELOOP) {
                case 0:
                    colRef.set(0,174,239);
                    break;
                case 1:
                    colRef.set(236,0,140);
                    break;
                case 2:
                    colRef.set(255,242,0);
                    break;
                case 3:
                    colRef.set(154,202,60);
                    break;
                case 4:
                    colRef.set(247,148,30);
                    break;
            }

            stroke(colRef.x,colRef.y,colRef.z,cRef);

            for (int i=0; i<4; i++) {
                line(pos.x, pos.y, pos.z, mNode[neigh[i]].pos.x, mNode[neigh[i]].pos.y, mNode[neigh[i]].pos.z);
            }
        }

        void attract() {

            posLimbo=pos;
            float minDis=100000;
            ////////////////////////////////////select nearest loop only for attract repel////////////////////////////////////
            for (int i=0; i<nLoopsType; i++) {
                if (loops[i].show==true) {
                    float tempDis=pos.dist(loops[i].pv);
                    if (tempDis<minDis) {
                        minDis=tempDis;
                        target=i;
                    }
                }
            }
            ////////////////////////////////////
            PVector tVec = PVector.sub(pos,loops[target].pv);
            float dis = pos.dist(loops[target].pv);

            if (dis>(loops[target].tem * 2)) {
                tVec.mult(ATTRACT);
            }
            else {
                tVec.mult(REPEL);
            }
        }
    }
}

```

```

    posLimbo.add(tVec);
}

void tension() {
    PVector cVec = PVector.add(mNode[neigh[0]].pos,mNode[neigh[1]].pos);
    cVec.add(mNode[neigh[2]].pos);
    cVec.add(mNode[neigh[3]].pos);

    cVec.div(4);

    PVector tempVec = PVector.sub(cVec, pos);

    tempVec.mult(TENSION);
    posLimbo.add(tempVec);

    float dis = posLimbo.dist(tempVec);
}
}

//////////////////////////////////////record the initial position of the mesh

class meshMemNodeType {
    PVector pos;

    meshMemNodeType(float posX, float posY, float posZ) {
        pos = new PVector(posX,posY,posZ);
    }
}

void mouseDragged() {

    if (keyPressed != true) {
        ROTX += (mouseX - pmouseX) * 0.01;
        ROTY -= (mouseY - pmouseY) * 0.01;
        redraw();
    }

    if (keyPressed == true) {
        VSCALE = VSCALE + (pmouseY - mouseY);
        if (VSCALE<1) {
            VSCALE=1;
        }
        redraw();
    }

    if (mouseButton == RIGHT) {
        XTRANSLATE += (mouseX - pmouseX) * 100;
        YTRANSLATE += (mouseY - pmouseY) * 100;
        redraw();
    }
}

void mouseReleased() {
    ////////////////////////////////////////select active loop index
    if (mouseX<=20) {
        if (mouseY<(noButtons*20)) {
            for (int i=0; i<noButtons;i++) {
                if (mouseY<=((i+1)*20) && mouseY>=(i*20) ) {
                    showLoopIndex=i+1;
                }
            }
        }
        else {
            showLoopIndex=0;
        }
    }

    int findLoop=0;

    if (showLoopIndex!=0) {
        for (int i=0; i<noLoopsType; i++) {
            if (loops[i].show==true) {
                loops[i].highlight=false;
                findLoop=findLoop+1;
                if (findLoop==showLoopIndex) {

```

```

        loops[i].highlight=true;
        ACTIVECLUB=loops[i].club;
        ACTIVELOOP=loops[i].typ;
    }
}
}

////////////////////////////////////select active club
if (mouseX>=20 && mouseX<=40) {
    if (mouseY<80) {
        for (int i=0; i<4;i++) {
            if (mouseY<=((i+1)*20) && mouseY>=(i*20) ) {
                for (int j=0; j<noLoopsType; j++) {
                    loops[j].highlight=false;
                }
                ACTIVECLUB=i;
            }
        }
    }
    else {
        ACTIVECLUB=10;
    }
    println(ACTIVECLUB);
}

////////////////////////////////////select active network type
if (mouseX>=40 && mouseX<=60) {
    if (mouseY<100) {
        for (int i=0; i<4;i++) {
            if (mouseY<=((i+1)*20) && mouseY>=(i*20) ) {
                meshOn=true;
                mReset=true;
                attRepOn=true;
                COUNT=0;

                for (int j=0; j<noLoopsType; j++) {
                    if (loops[j].typ==i) {
                        loops[j].show=true;
                    }
                    else {
                        loops[j].show=false;
                    }
                }

                ACTIVECLUB=10;
                ACTIVELOOP=i;
                attCount=0;
            }
        }
    }
}

void keyPressed() {

    if (key=='p' || key=='P') {
        EXPORT=true;
    }

    //////////////////////////////////////show environment
    if (key=='g' || key=='b') {
        if (envirOn==true) {
            envirOn=false;
        }
        else {
            envirOn=true;
        }
    }

    //////////////////////////////////////show mesh
    if (key=='m' || key=='M') {
        if (meshOn==true) {
            meshOn=false;
        }
        else {

```

```

        meshOn=true;
    }
}

////////////////////////////////////reset network
if (key=='n' || key=='N') {
    mReset=true;
}

////////////////////////////////////display network types individually
if (key=='1') {
    meshOn=true;
    mReset=true;
    attRepOn=true;
    COUNT=0;
    for (int i=0; i<nLoopsType; i++) {
        if (loops[i].typ==0) {
            loops[i].show=true;
        }
        else {
            loops[i].show=false;
        }
    }
}
if (key=='2') {
    meshOn=true;
    mReset=true;
    attRepOn=true;
    COUNT=0;
    for (int i=0; i<nLoopsType; i++) {
        if (loops[i].typ==1) {
            loops[i].show=true;
        }
        else {
            loops[i].show=false;
        }
    }
}
if (key=='3') {
    meshOn=true;
    mReset=true;
    attRepOn=true;
    COUNT=0;
    for (int i=0; i<nLoopsType; i++) {
        if (loops[i].typ==2) {
            loops[i].show=true;
        }
        else {
            loops[i].show=false;
        }
    }
}
if (key=='4') {
    meshOn=true;
    mReset=true;
    attRepOn=true;
    COUNT=0;
    for (int i=0; i<nLoopsType; i++) {
        if (loops[i].typ==3) {
            loops[i].show=true;
        }
        else {
            loops[i].show=false;
        }
    }
}
if (key=='5') {
    meshOn=true;
    mReset=true;
    attRepOn=true;
    COUNT=0;
    for (int i=0; i<nLoopsType; i++) {
        if (loops[i].typ==4) {
            loops[i].show=true;
        }
        else {
            loops[i].show=false;
        }
    }
}

```

```

    }
  }
  if (key=='0') {
    meshOn=false;
    mReset=true;
    attRepOn=false;
    for (int i=0; i<nLoopsType; i++) {
      loops[i].show=true;
      loops[i].highlight=false;
    }
  }

  //ATTRACT_REPEL////////////////////////////////////
  if (key=='a' || key=='A') {
    if (attRepOn==false) {
      attRepOn=true;
    }
    else {
      attRepOn=false;
    }
  }

  if (key=='i' || key=='I') {
    if (disInst==false) {
      disInst=true ;
    }
    else {
      disInst=false;
    }
  }
}

void enviroDraw() {

  noStroke();
  fill(200,70);
  beginShape(QUADS);
  vertex(-300,400,-300);
  vertex(300,400,-300);
  vertex(300,400,300);
  vertex(-300,400,300);
  endShape(CLOSE);

  PVector v1, v2, v3, v4, v5, v6;
  strokeWeight(1);
  noFill();
  stroke(200);

  int x, y, z;
  strokeWeight(1);
  noFill();

  //////////////////////////////////////corner markers
  for (int i=0;i<4;i++) {

    strokeWeight(1);
    noFill();
    stroke(10,100);

    line((H/2), (H/2), (H/2)-i*200, ((H/12)*5), (H/2), (H/2)-i*200);
    line((H/2), (H/2), (H/2)-i*200, (H/2), ((H/12)*5), (H/2)-i*200);

    line((H/2), (H/-2), (H/2)-i*200, ((H/12)*5), (H/-2), (H/2)-i*200);
    line((H/2), (H/-2), (H/2)-i*200, (H/2), ((H/-12)*5), (H/2)-i*200);

    line((H/-2), (H/2), (H/2)-i*200, ((H/-12)*5), (H/2), (H/2)-i*200);
    line((H/-2), (H/2), (H/2)-i*200, (H/-2), ((H/12)*5), (H/2)-i*200);

    line((H/-2), (H/-2), (H/2)-i*200, ((H/-12)*5), (H/-2), (H/2)-i*200);
    line((H/-2), (H/-2), (H/2)-i*200, (H/-2), ((H/-12)*5), (H/2)-i*200);
  }

  //////////////////////////////////////faces

  for (int i=0;i<4;i++) {
    if (ACTIVECLUB==1) {
      stroke(200);
      fill(0, 20);
    }
  }
}

```

```

        translate(0,0,(ACTIVECLUB*200-300));
        image(clubIm3D[ACTIVECLUB],-600,-300,1200,600);
        translate (0,0,-(ACTIVECLUB*200-300));
    }
    else {
        noStroke();
        noFill();
    }
}

beginShape(QUADS);
vertex((H/2),(H/2),((H/2)+i*200)-600);
vertex((H/-2),(H/2),((H/2)+i*200)-600);
vertex((H/-2),(H/-2),((H/2)+i*200)-600);
vertex((H/2),(H/-2),((H/2)+i*200)-600);
endShape(CLOSE);
}

////////////////////////////////////graph points
stroke(200,100);
for (int i=0; i<4; i++) {
    for (int j = 0; j<4; j++) {
        for (int k=0; k<4; k++) {
            x=(i*200)-300;
            y=(j*200)-300;
            z=(k*200)-300;
            v1 = new PVector(-10+x,0+y,0+z);
            v2 = new PVector(10+x,0+y,0+z);
            v3 = new PVector(0+x,-10+y,0+z);
            v4 = new PVector(0+x,10+y,0+z);
            v5 = new PVector(0+x,0+y,-10+z);
            v6 = new PVector(0+x,0+y,10+z);
            line(v1.x,v1.y,v1.z, v2.x,v2.y,v2.z);
            line(v3.x,v3.y,v3.z, v4.x,v4.y,v4.z);
            line(v5.x,v5.y,v5.z, v6.x,v6.y,v6.z);
        }
    }
}

void uiDisplay() {

    //////////////////////////////////////flash white panel
    float colRef=255;
    if (COUNT==0) {
        colRef=0;
    }
    else {
        colRef=255-COUNT*50;
    }
    fill(255,colRef);
    rect(W/4,0,((W/4)*3),H);

    //////////////////////////////////////draw loop buttons and loop data
    int butPosX=0;
    int butPosY=0;
    // strokeWeight(1);
    noStroke();
    fill(150,100);
    rect(butPosX,butPosY,20,800);

    for (int i=0; i<noLoopsType; i++) {
        if (loops[i].show==true) {
            if (loops[i].highlight==true) {
                fill(100,100);
                stroke(50,50);
            }
            else {
                fill(255);
                stroke(100,100);
            }
            rect(butPosX,butPosY,20,20);
            butPosY=butPosY + 20;
        }
    }
    noButtons=butPosY/20;
}

```

```

for (int i=0; i<noLoopsType; i++) {
  if (loops[i].show==true) {
    if (loops[i].highlight==true) {
      image(loopIm[i],200,0,600,600);
    }
  }
}

////////////////////////////////////draw club buttons and club data
butPosX=20;
butPosY=0;
noStroke();
fill(150,100);
rect(butPosX,butPosY,20,800);

for (int i=0; i<4; i++) {
  if (ACTIVECLUB==i) {
    fill(100,100);
    stroke(50,50);
  }
  else {
    fill(255);
    stroke(100,100);
  }
  rect(butPosX,butPosY,20,20);
  butPosY=butPosY + 20;
}

////////////////////////////////////draw club data
if (ACTIVECLUB<10) {
  println(ACTIVECLUB);
  image(clubIm[ACTIVECLUB],60,0,140,600);
}

////////////////////////////////////activate network type
butPosX=40;
butPosY=0;
noStroke();
fill(150,100);
rect(butPosX,butPosY,20,800);

for (int i=0; i<5; i++) {
  if (ACTIVELOOP==i) {
    fill(100,100);
    stroke(50,50);
  }
  else {
    fill(255);
    stroke(100,100);
  }
  rect(butPosX,butPosY,20,20);
  butPosY=butPosY + 20;
}

if (disInst==true) {
  fill(255,220);
  rect(60,0,740,600);
  fill(255,50);
  rect(0,0,60,600);
  image (Inst_Image, 0,0, 800, 600);
}

float checkDist(PVector sp, PVector ep) {
  float a = sq(sp.x-ep.x);
  float b = sq(sp.y-ep.y);
  float c = sq(sp.z-ep.z);
  float cDis = sqrt(a+b+c);
  return cDis;
}

```

```

void readDatabase() {
    reader = createReader("database.txt");
    try {
        textLine = reader.readLine();
    }
    catch (IOException e) {
        e.printStackTrace();
        textLine = null;
    }

    if (textLine == null) {
        noLoop();
    }
    else {
        String[] d= split(textLine, ',');
        dataString = d;
    }
}

void getImages() {

    clubIm[0]=loadImage("image_01.png");
    clubIm[1]=loadImage("image_02.png");
    clubIm[2]=loadImage("image_03.png");
    clubIm[3]=loadImage("image_04.png");

    clubIm3D[0]=loadImage("3Dimage_01.png");
    clubIm3D[1]=loadImage("3Dimage_02.png");
    clubIm3D[2]=loadImage("3Dimage_03.png");
    clubIm3D[3]=loadImage("3Dimage_04.png");

    loopIm[0]=loadImage("loop_DET_01.png");
    loopIm[1]=loadImage("loop_DET_02.png");
    loopIm[2]=loadImage("loop_DET_03.png");
    loopIm[3]=loadImage("loop_DET_04.png");
    loopIm[4]=loadImage("loop_DET_05.png");
    loopIm[5]=loadImage("loop_DET_06.png");
    loopIm[6]=loadImage("loop_DET_07.png");
    loopIm[7]=loadImage("loop_DET_08.png");
    loopIm[8]=loadImage("loop_DET_09.png");
    loopIm[9]=loadImage("loop_DET_10.png");
    loopIm[10]=loadImage("loop_DET_11.png");
    loopIm[11]=loadImage("loop_DET_12.png");
    loopIm[12]=loadImage("loop_DET_13.png");
    loopIm[13]=loadImage("loop_DET_14.png");
    loopIm[14]=loadImage("loop_DET_15.png");
    loopIm[15]=loadImage("loop_DET_16.png");
    loopIm[16]=loadImage("loop_DET_17.png");
    loopIm[17]=loadImage("loop_DET_18.png");
    loopIm[18]=loadImage("loop_DET_19.png");
    loopIm[19]=loadImage("loop_DET_20.png");
    loopIm[20]=loadImage("loop_DET_21.png");
    loopIm[21]=loadImage("loop_DET_22.png");
    loopIm[22]=loadImage("loop_DET_23.png");
    loopIm[23]=loadImage("loop_DET_24.png");
    loopIm[24]=loadImage("loop_DET_25.png");
    loopIm[25]=loadImage("loop_DET_26.png");

    Inst_Image=loadImage("Instructions.png");

    typeImage[0]=loadImage("type_00.png");
    typeImage[1]=loadImage("type_01.png");
    typeImage[2]=loadImage("type_02.png");
    typeImage[3]=loadImage("type_03.png");
    typeImage[4]=loadImage("type_04.png");
}

```





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