

# URBAN MORPHOLOGY

## RELATIONAL-MATERIAL APPROACH



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# PREFACE

| Sabine Knierbein, Tihomir Viderman

With this publication the *Interdisciplinary Centre for Urban Culture and Public Space* based at the *Faculty of Architecture and Planning of Technische Universität Wien* in Austria has sought to summarize the results of explorative research on urban morphology which engaged in a dual mission: an empirical inquiry into entanglements between built urban form and (meaningful) experiences in everyday life; and a reflection on the research and design practice as a means for curbing or fostering people's social, cultural and political agency to transform urban form. This collaboratively edited collection is of an open and inclusive character, with the ambition to conceive of urban morphology studies from the perspective of public space research which includes aspects of 'emergence' of new urban forms. We have coined this evolving theorization a relational-material approach. The reader's plural formats mirror the fact that in the perspective of public space research the study of urban form is about the systematic inclusion of difference. Various formats, including essays, storylines, visualisations, as well as documentation of research projects, depict diverse and engaging exploration paths towards a relational-material approach.

The foundations of this work were laid in the summer term 2018 within the Master Course in Spatial Planning *Innovative perspectives on urban morphology: A relational-material approach*, which was developed as part of the Erasmus+ international research project titled "EPUM Emerging Perspectives on Urban Morphologies" and has been recognized by the vice rector of TU Wien for its innovative educational concept in urban planning and architecture. The course has

reached across disciplines and cultures with the aim of establishing productive linkages between analytical approaches of design and planning disciplines and qualitative research practices of social sciences. Insights from the course have further been discussed and reflected on as part of preparatory work and during the Porto Intensive Workshop taking place in September 2018 at *Faculdade de Engenharia da Universidade do Porto*, within the framework of the same research project. The workshop served as a platform for theoretical discussions and practice-based explorations of a range of already set and newly emerging approaches to the study of urban morphology, providing an opportunity to expand on the knowledge about a relational-material approach in a dialectical relation with the historical-geographical approach, processual-typological approach, space syntax as well as integrative approach of University of Cyprus.

A relational-material way of studying urban morphology aims to engage with the built form of the city as well as the social, cultural and political processes of its production. While the existing research approaches to urban morphology are largely based on visual analysis and behavioural methodologies while assuming rational objectivity, our approach draws from action-oriented and praxis-based theories of relational space, and engages with a renewed critique of everyday life with a focus on lived space. In this perspective the study of urban morphology allows for researching everyday routines, struggles, planning practices and design intentions. In that sense, we are interested in urban form as (1) the product (an idea about the physical form of a

city, considered as a situational snapshot of the socio-historic process of urbanization) and (2) as a social production process (conceiving of agency, interests and resources that come into play in continuous processes of socially producing urban form). A perspective inspired by the field of public space research in international urban studies sheds a light on the social potentials shaping urban form, while particularly being concerned with shortcomings and aporias regarding societal processes: poverty, selective mobility, social oppression and precarisation alongside spatial fragmentation, urban segregation and spatial enclosure. Inspired by the tradition of critical pedagogy and based on observations, surveys and action research in Vienna and Porto, we have expanded the domain of the study of urban morphology from the built urban form to social, cultural and political considerations of the material production of space. The questions that guide our work are:

How can urban morphology analysis become more self-reflexive of social consequences that any change in the urban form might bear as regards the ordinary lives of the inhabitants?

How can we democratize the teaching in the field of urban morphology studies to include, for instance, feminist, non-western and post-colonial perspectives?

How does the capacity of individuals and social groups to improvise and invent in everyday life contest structural inequalities and constraints and shape the urban form in a democratic and hence meaningful way?

A relational-material approach introduces into research on urban morphology ethics that is mindful of lived, cultural, as well as social and material differences in urban space, and thus includes recent insights from feminist and post-colonial theories of urbanization. Contents included in this publication reaffirm spatial practice as point of departure and final purpose

of research and design endeavours in urban morphology. The focus has been put on experience-based methods with which the course participants sought to engage in spatial dynamics at various localities and reflect on own positionality in the production of knowledge on urban morphology. We here follow a Humboldtian model of academic didactics enriched by Paulo Freire's and Fals Borda's approaches to action research and critical pedagogy which aim at empowering the students to speak for themselves, articulate own interests, motivations and resources; develop constructive critique and engage in an eye-level-exchange with the teachers in order to test new forms of horizontality. Embodied, intuitive and affective dimensions of engaging in dialogue need to be practiced already in the classroom in order to prepare for later research and teaching engagement regarding public space. We, however, do not neglect rational, strategic and pragmatic aspects of public space. We understand an affective approach to the pedagogy of urban morphology as combining actions and passions, doings and sayings, discourse and praxis.



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# RELATIONAL- MATERIAL APPROACH

## AN INTRODUCTION

| Tihomir Viderman, Sabine Knierbein

The study of urban morphology engages with the built urban form as well as social, cultural and political processes of its production. This epistemology anchors abstract conceptual and analytical thinking about space to a tangible form of visual representations (such as maps, ground plans and diagrams). While enabling even the most complex forms and processes to be encapsulated by visualisation strategies, such approaches also tend to streamline and homogenize space, largely disregarding asymmetries in power relations within hierarchically produced lived space. A relational-material approach shifts the focus beyond Euclidean representations to engage with urban morphology as a political arena and lived social space, which can be explained by its social, cultural and political context as well as by dynamic and diverse relations between human and non-human bodies and objects, both at a given moment of time and in the course of history (cf. Tornaghi and Knierbein 2015).

A relational-material perspective on urban morphology does not yet constitute a school of thought or a settled approach. It was outlined in 2018 at Interdisciplinary Centre for Urban Culture and Public Space of TU Wien with the goal of introducing knowledge about lived social space into conceptualizations and methodological considerations of built urban fabric. It engages with urban morphology as an epistemological opportunity to track down and understand the complexity and the many contingencies of socially produced urban space. Its conceptual and empirical framework links the transformations of built environment to social change within lived space. In view of this approach, the urban fabric is shaped by and shapes the lives of people who produce it.

### **Inquiry into entanglements between built urban form and (meaningful) experiences in everyday life**

The enchanting lure of cities may be attributed to their symbolic places and iconic skylines, to a dense fabric of streets and squares and houses. Owing to an evocative play of sensations - lights, sounds, scents - cities are perceived as more than sequenc-

es of static images. Spatial practices and bodily encounters render cities meaningful places. What about the emotions, expectations and aspirations that people connect to cities? The fact that places inspire excitement in some, but fear in others can be explained by bodily experiences. Urban morphology is obviously not only tangible materiality. It is both extant and possible. It is continuously remade and perpetually imagined in countless ways. It contains sediments of past social struggles and desires. It also occupies a prominent position in negotiations on the current urban conditions as both a matter of concern and an aestheticized imaginary of desired future. A whole range of affects is inherent to knowledge and perception of urban morphology. To paraphrase Sophie Watson (2006), the enchantment of dense public space of difference that provides encounter and strangeness is coupled with the disenchantment of dense experience of difference fuelled by a fearful bias towards the Other. A density of interactions and unexpected encounters in lived space of everyday life also entails notions of social constraints and structures of oppression, exploitation and struggle, which often go unnoticed.

Vienna's dense blocks, spreading radially from the city's core, enclosed by the Ring and Gürtel serve as ubiquitous references for discussing histories of urban morphology. Vienna's spatial quality can indeed, in good part, be attributed to its dense fabric, the harmonious continuity of its facades blending historical and modern features. Yet, almost any reference to Vienna's morphology includes representations of the city's equally multifaceted social space. The fame of Vienna's street markets, coffee houses, or public housing estates is associated with daily routines of Vienna's inhabitants and visitors, bodily encounters as well as symbolic meanings, rather than the features of the physical space. However, beyond celebrated dimensions of everyday life and symbolic dimensions of lived space, the focus on bodily experiences and spatial practices allows for grasping transformations of urban fabric

in a more nuanced manner which acknowledges structural conditions of exclusion and inequality as well as people's social, cultural and political agency to emancipate from such structural constraints.

In light of the goal to shift the focus of the studies of urban morphologies away from urban dominants to mundane built structures where everyday life unfolds, a qualitative engagement with bodily experience and spatial practices provides an insight into the capacity of individuals and social groups to appropriate, transform and create such mundane spaces in a meaningful way by improvising and inventing in everyday life. With regard to feminist perspective such mundane urban morphology can be interpreted as a materialization of dynamic, diverse and essentially political relationships between human and non-human bodies and spatial artefacts, where structural inequalities take on the material form (Amin and Thrift 2002). Urban morphology therefore offers a fruitful ground for exploring the interdependencies of the urban form and the many contingencies of socially produced urban space with regard to social differences such as gender, class, race, religion, ethnicity, forms of disabilities and impairments. In this understanding urban morphology is a process which encompasses designed and constructed space, a domain of mental production of abstract space and practices of everyday life, including bodily appropriations of space, encounters and experiences.

Urban fabric, and in a broader sense, spatial arrangements, are structured by and are structuring social hegemonies, hierarchies and power structures. Friedmann (1999: 7) reminds that "in most cities around the world, the 'official story' is the story of men in power". The entanglements between built urban form and (meaningful) experiences in everyday life thus emerge as a field of a political and ethical concern, within which the categories of difference are institutionalized, contested, negotiated, discriminated against, marginalized or rather rendered invisible. Not only is knowledge about urban form organized so as to reflect structures of

actual urban fabric, but knowledge, in turn, defines how society understands and wishes to pursue development of an urban form. Conceptually this understanding of urban morphology can be closely related to Setha Low's concept of 'embodied space', which is defined as "the location where human experience, consciousness and political subjectivity take on material and spatial form" and which therefore "can communicate, transform and contest existing social structures" (2017: 94-95). A relational-material epistemology draws conceptual connections between lived space and spatial praxis embedded in daily urban struggles, routines and experiences and thus includes into the analysis of urban morphology notions of affect, passion and dissent alongside with reason, arguments and consent. It draws from theories on action-based relational space, and engages with spatial practices in lived space in pursuit of a dual goal: to develop a dialectics between people's unequal experiences of urban form and the spatial dynamics of constituting, negotiating and mobilizing difference, and to reflect on the research practice as a means for curbing or fostering people's social, cultural and political agency to transform spatial form.

#### **A relational-material approach informing a socio-historical analysis**

"At no point can there be a final shape of the city", states Madanipour (2010: 12) and thus explains that the morphology of a city is constantly produced and reproduced and that we can only take visual snapshots of this socio-historic process, while never being able to fully and completely grasp its morphology. A relational-material epistemology drops naturalized considerations of urban space as a container with clearly determinable coordinates within which social life (eventually) unfolds in favour of its relational conceptualizations as a material process of social production (Goonewardena 2012 referring to Lefebvre 1991). In this perspective urban space is an endlessly emergent materiality of social relations, constellations and configurations. Material urban form is not simply a neutral

background against which social life develops, but rather a continuously emergent materiality of social relations. As Hiernaux-Nicolas (2004: 15) has asserted: "Social relations (...) only gain real existence in and for space. Their support is material" (own translation). Thereby the human body is emphasized as a key reference point for understanding dynamics of mutually formative relations between the material urban form and urban cultures through which lived space of a city materializes, including routines, actions, cultural expressions and design processes (cf. Lefebvre 2014 [1947]). According to this rationale, urban space is embodied and enacted, is appropriated and co-organized, and is given through symbolic and affective encounters in everyday life.

Endeavours in the study of urban morphology to understand the linkages between social space and the built environment generally draw a reference research and activist accounts from the 1960s, such as Kevin Lynch's examinations of interactions between urban dwellers and urban forms, Jane Jacobs's activism mobilized around the metaphor of the 'sidewalk ballet', or Werner Durth's reflections on the relation between everyday life and urban design. These accounts inspired a large body of work that has situated space at the heart of any social interpretation not a background to it (Hillier and Hanson 1984; Murdoch 2006). Jean-François Augoyard's (2007 [1979]) ethnographic study of social life in a Grenoble's residential neighbourhood constructed on modernist principles is an influential contribution to the methodological toolkit for researching individuals' lived experiences of and within urban form. Not only did he introduce qualitative (ethnographic) research methods into a professional field largely relying on quantitative data and visual representations, but he has also articulated knowledge of everyday life as a necessary means for understanding the logic behind the transformation of urban form. For Porta et al. (2010) the concept of 'informal participation' is central to understanding the situated position of

human agency within morphological changes in an evolutionary perspective, as well as for translating the knowledge about dynamics of the production of centrality into processes of direct and collective design. Action- and praxis-based theories of the spatiality of social relations (relational space) have also echoed in artistic practices. Joseph Beuys' 7000 oak trees, each paired with a basalt stone, were planted throughout Kassel, Germany, with the help of volunteers and sponsors taking over the costs for the planting. Trees remain a lasting reminder of the agency of an artist and people to appropriate and transform space by small acts.

People's social, cultural and political agency to transform spatial form have been at the core Jeffrey Hou's work, even though not explicitly situated in the field of urban morphology. Hou (2010) describes how the urban fabric is shaped by and shapes the lives of people who produce it, emphasizing the acts of appropriation of space as a means of fostering the community's agency. He argues that public space is created or enacted by people who engage in countless actions of spatial performance and encounter. Sunday picnics by Filipino domestic workers who on a weekly basis occupy the atrium of Norman Foster's HSBC Hong Kong building create a convivial public space of meeting and exchange at the most extraordinary place, the entrance to the headquarters of a global financial institution. Both individual and public agency are entangled in this process of producing places that empower cross-cultural learning and exchange (Hou 2010).

A relational-material approach suggests relations and practices of everyday life as a productive analytical framework for a socio-historical analysis of urban form. This analytical framework draws from Lefebvre's (2014 [1946]) 'Critique of Everyday Life' to scrutinize how capitalist modes of production and consumption shape structural and spatial inequalities and perpetuate them as real in (alienated) conditions of everyday life. The same epistemology, in turn, provides conceptual and empirical means for understanding how qualitative social relationships

based on meaningful experiences of everyday spatialized struggles, bodily encounters, interaction and exchange create a lived space of capacity building to deliver meaningful change concerning socio-spatial inequalities. This means that the fabric of lived space, while loaded with class and gendered structures of oppression, exploitation and struggle (Federici 2011) is also the site of affective encounters where meaningful resistance may be nurtured. In such a view, the human body is both a key reference point for studies of urban perception (as in traditional schools of urban morphology), as well as for the practice of social relations (as in qualitative research practices engaging in social space). Spatial practice is therefore a point of departure and final purpose of a relational-material approach, a means for a qualitative understanding of a transient and fluid nature of urban space. In regard to this, a relational-material approach is concerned with both, a reflection on the access of (emancipated) urban dwellers to public and lived urban space, which Lefebvre defines as 'social centrality', as well as a reflection on the research and design practice as a means for curbing or fostering people's social, cultural and political agency to transform urban form.

Social dimensions of space, such as everyday struggles related to the capitalist system of production, revolutions in political life, quests for dominance and their oppositions in political, social, economic, ecological or cultural domains, simultaneously challenge and nourish a variety of idea(l)s of the city as an inclusive place of liberation, cooperation, equal opportunities and shared (better) futures. A socio-historical analysis understands that built urban form materializes not only by design and construction in various degrees of (de)regulation and (in)formality, but also through the settling of plural dimensions of mundane everyday life, political struggle, as well as social, political and economic practices. While similar notions have infiltrated, albeit implicitly, the traditional schools of urban morphology, a relational-material approach aims

for a methodological engagement into lived social space as a means for scrutinizing and interpreting unbalanced patterns of built urban form. The scope of this approach extends beyond celebrated dimensions of lived experience such as density and idiosyncrasy that make the experience of cities attractive. It is concerned with structural inequalities and asymmetries in power relations which are ingrained in urban morphologies at many levels; in discourse on space (the way how space is conceived through plans and maps), in the politics of space (defining and challenging the processes of urban transformation), and in the practice of everyday life (routinized practices of production, consumption and administering preserving socio-spatial hierarchies).

In order to comprehend the relationship between categories of difference and structural inequalities in spaces of everyday life, feminist geographies contextualize personal bodily experiences in relation to discursive knowledge on space as being produced through and reproducing asymmetries in power relations (Schurr and Strüver 2016). Drawing from this tradition, a relational material approach does not consider only an ethnographic dimension of bodily experiences but situates it in the context of structural processes to understand how social differences are experienced, lived and negotiated. In this perspective the study of urban morphology allows for researching everyday routines, struggles, planning practices and design intentions as both

the material manifestation and agents of poverty, selective mobility, social oppression and exploitation. These lived spaces are (partly) interweaving and overlapping, antagonistic and contrasting. The relational material approach does not only acknowledge the fact that morphologies are contested, accepted, appropriated or co-created, but rather takes on the challenge to reflect on the research and design practice as a means for curbing or fostering people's social, cultural and political agency to transform urban form.

Hypotopia, October 2014: Morphology is not only a materiality of social relations, it is also a means of anchoring abstract figures and processes (of capital accumulation) in tangible space, as well as a medium of resistance and negotiating possible futures. A group of self-organized students of TU Wien created a model of a city which visualizes a possible architecture that could have been built with the money that the state used to bail out one of Austria's troubled banks. The students used concrete and wooden building blocks to translate abstract financial figures into a tangible model of a city, which was designed and quantified to industrial standards. While €19bn was the figure too abstract to grasp, by visualizing it as a possible morphology the students made this figure comprehensible to a larger number of people, and brought to public scrutiny previously uncontested finances of Austria's government.



### **Urban morphology as a process of spatialization and an epistemological opportunity**

A plurality of lived practices shape urban morphology, thus, social relations already materialize before architects sketch a draft, before planners draft a map. Urban morphology, in this sense, is always in flux. In the post-disciplinary field of urban studies, we use urban morphology as an analytical entry perspective to track down social change through transitions of the built environment. This allows to scrutinize qualitative shifts as regards societal change: changes in the social, cultural and political dimensions of processes of urbanization. It also enables to analyse urbanization in relation to the recent modes of capitalism, and to revisit approaches to deep space, but also to uneven development of space (Smith 2008 (1984)).

In a relational-material perspective urban morphology is an epistemological opportunity to track down and understand social change through researching transformations of the built environment. Empirical enquiries into palpable materiality of everyday life can be productively connected to abstract theories and processes. In this understanding, a more recent history of homogenizing morphological transformations of many European historical cities in terms of form and function sheds light on intangible modes of regulation and accumulation of finance capitalism which have turned urban environments into fields for real estate speculation. The way capitalist forces have enhanced the exchange value of places at the price of the lost use value is palpable precisely in the materiality of everyday life, where mundane practices seem to give way to a more curated forms of experiencing and using space, and where alternative (insurgent) practices and visions get a foothold. It is everyday life where nuances in different character of the same urban form or a spatial practice can be grasped, such as a difference in meaning of a piece of art when displayed in public space, a publicly owned museum, as part of a private collection in a historical building recently acquired by one of the global corporations or in a

shop window of a luxury retailer.

A plurality of interests, identities and lived practices shape urban morphology. This finding, in turn, is central to past experiences and anticipation of future developments. Urban morphology is therefore both a means of modelling and an essential object of inquiry into asymmetries that shape power relations (and the spaces they interweave) within socially produced urban space. It is also a medium for making a meaningful difference in spaces of socially concerned architects, designers and planners. As the work on lived space deals with the ambivalent relations between majority and minority society which are materialized in practices and spaces of inclusion and exclusion, it is our aim to tackle silences and absences of those whose voices are not heard and who seem not to have social, cultural or economic capital to execute power over space. Two traditions of thought are central to positioning our approach to urban morphology: conceptualizations of space as a material process of capitalist urbanization (spatial dialectics drawing on Henri Lefebvre's oeuvre) and emancipatory education formulated by Paulo Freire (1996 [1970]), alongside with Ali Madanipour's feminist-inspired approach to the urban design of public spaces (2003), both in theory and praxis.

A critical insight into the political, economic and social practices of both institutional and non-institutional actors uncovers their tendency towards producing the 'other'. Emancipatory education and critical pedagogy formulated by Freire (1996 [1970]) provide a methodological framework for planners and designers to engage in the politics of urban morphology by building on the achievements of past emancipatory struggles. It allows for creating change by empowering marginalized social groups and multiple publics to undertake actions which are embedded in the local context and are attentive to lived cultural differences.

Tornaghi and Knierbein (2015) introduce various methodological approaches for engaging with the social relations that unfold in and through

public space, and for translating insights from public space into representations of space. Knierbein and Viderman (2018) further discuss methodologies for enhancing the capacity of research and planning to engage in emancipatory potentials of lived space, and stimulate positive changes in urban form through professional involvement with communities and their spaces. This contribution underlines the political dimension of urban form, discussing different degrees of power people have in shaping their lived space and urban experience, concerning the categories of difference and structural inequalities. Public space is articulated as lived space of a plurality of particular memories, cultures and experiences, which might be institutionalized, contested, discriminated against, marginalized or rather invisible. Differences are constituted and mobilized in cities. They are reflected in urban morphologies and user conflicts over its transformations (Tonkiss 2013).

#### **Methodological challenges: experiential learning about the city**

Under the dictate of neoliberal economic doctrines asymmetries in power relations within socially produced urban space are often disregarded, while socio-spatial divisions and exclusionary spatial configurations are reinforced. A relational-material approach reflects on the capacity of planning and design professionals to enact an inclusive design process as lived space which connects to people's experiences, aspirations, needs and expectations, and thus to their multiple lived spaces. Such a research endeavour replaces an overarching narrative with approaches that allow for multiple stories to be told and unfold.

The study of urban morphology mainly contributes interpretative tools and skills for analysing configurations of physical space. Beyond this, a relational-material morphological analysis targets particular snapshots (in terms of time) of social relations that materialize in the lived geographies of our cities. Lived space is introduced as a key sphere for exploring, conceptualizing and shaping the emerging patterns and materialities of urban

morphology. A relational-material approach builds on the analysis and reflection on the situational occurrence of public space (e.g. everyday routines, protest, planning practice, design of spaces) by taking into consideration often 'hidden' structural processes, such as poverty, exclusion, mobility or spatial displacement. In regard to this it takes on the challenge of going beyond the notions of rationality and reason to include affect and bodily experiences as very parts of structural determination of urban morphology. Such an approach calls for explorative research practices that are open in terms of result. It simultaneously engages with the spontaneous, intuitive and affective dimensions of social relations as much as their rational, strategic and pragmatic aspects.

Methods are usually centred on qualitative socio-empirical case study research, which rests on the triangulation of methods from different disciplinary fields (sociology, ethnography, political science, critical pedagogy, urban geography, cultural studies, the arts, planning, architecture, landscape architecture, etc.). Through an interaction with research subjects on the themes of urban morphology, such as prevailing patterns, forms or symbols that shape lived space, the aim is to reflect on urban morphology as a medium and means for maintaining and challenging power relations. Such an approach is both sensitive to different social, political and cultural realities and capable of building bridges between them. It calls for a collaborative work which benefits the community. This also means that researchers must continuously reflect on their own relationship with the researched subjects and partners, including the motivation to engage with their issues. In view of this approach, urban morphology can be understood as a never completed learning environment that blurs the boundaries between designers and users, while carrying the capacity to perpetually involve affect and political passions towards the inclusive and democratic city.

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# EMBODIED SPACE(S)

| Setha M. Low

*“Embodied space is the location where human experience and consciousness takes on material and spatial form. After identifying the inherent difficulties in defining the body, body space, and cultural explanations of body experience, the author traces the evolution of approaches to embodied space including proxemics, phenomenological understandings, spatial orientation, and linguistic dimensions. Embodied space is presented as a model for understanding the creation of place through spatial orientation, movement, and language.” p.9*

## PROXEMICS

*phenomenological understandings*

## BODY/SPACE/CULTURE

*LINGUISTIC DIMENSIONS*

*spatial orientation*

*We invite you to join us on a walk through Vienna while reading through the theoretical framework of the relational-material approach.*

#

*A mosaic of everyday life: p. 48*

*Affective morphology: p. 52*

*by Katrin Hofer* | The paper “Embodied Space(s)” provides a short overview of the various theories on the relationship between people and their built environment, focused on the body and its impact on architecture and planning. The anthropological theories refer to a wide range of philosophical and epistemological traditions and the scientists are able to develop their own grounded sense of a mobile spatial field with combining and utilizing a number of theories from other fields.

Embodied space provides a material grounding and an understanding of the intersection and interpretation of body, space and culture. The theories define the body as inherently social and cultural, which is definitely underestimated when it’s often treated just as an empty container without consciousness or intention. However, the body should be seen and used as a tool in the production of cultural forms like the importance of movement in the creation of place, as mentioned by Miles Richardson in his studies about the embodied space.

The anthropological theories also research the relationship between the psyche and built spaces and how body symbolism is transformed into spaces within the home and neighborhood. Especially the proxemics scholar has a focus on the interaction of the body, as a site of spatial orientation with multiple screens, with others and the environment. Furthermore, there are also theories and studies about the relation between language and embodied space and how language is used in different situations and places.

To summarize, this paper tries to outline the variety of different scholars of anthropological theories about the interaction of body and space and the relevance for communication. Embodied space includes a constant transformation of the perceived space, therefore reflects society and contests existing social structures.



by *Rafaela Chistodoulou* | According to the paper, embodied space is the location where human experience and consciousness take on material and spatial form. The concept of embodied spaces can be used to understand the creation of space through geographical orientation, movement and language. All theories related to embodied spaces include therefore phenomenological understandings of orientation as well as linguistic dimensions. There is no doubt, that anthropological theories of body, space and culture apply a number of theories from other fields to complete their methods and theoretical approaches. It is a fact that a body in space can communicate, transform, and contest existing social structures, by making at the same time spatial practices in spaces.

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Low, S. M. (2003) Embodied Space(s): Anthropological Theories of Body, Space, and Culture. *Space and Culture* 6(1): 9-18.



# TAKING UP SPACE

Anthropology and embodied protest | Sheehan Moore

*" Politics [...] allows for contention within certain given parameters; the political, on the other hand, challenges the very foundations of those parameters. [...] the body is central to the work occupations do in shifting from 'politics' to the 'political.' " (p. 12)*

## (STUDENT) OCCUPATION SPATIAL PERSISTENCE

Politics vs. the political

**bodily dimension of protest**

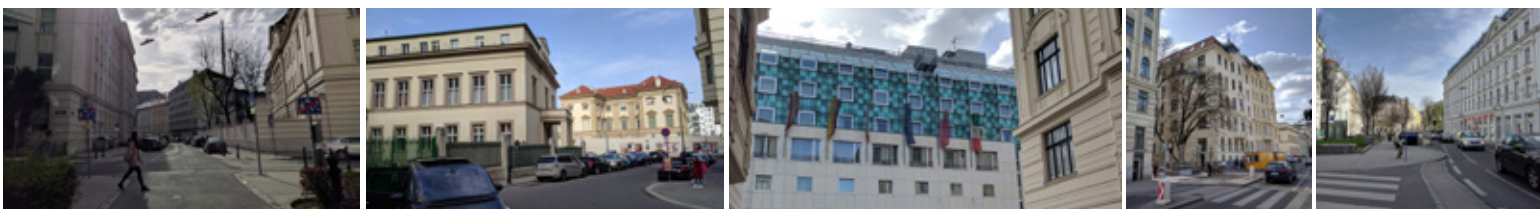
by Tamara Bajic | In this article, Moore talks about the occupation of McGill University which happened on the 10th of November, 2011, when students blocked doors with their bodies and occupied the administrative offices for eight minutes before being removed by McGill Security. A few months later, in February, similar occupations occurred. The difference between occupation and other kinds of protests is primarily in the temporal and spatial persistence, and the fact that they are not only focused on goals and demands.

This kind of protests at universities have a long history which dates back to the early 1960s. The first modern occupation as a means of political protest happened on the 2nd of December, 1964, when students and other supporters of the Free Speech Movement entered Sproul Hall at Berkeley University. This kind of university protest resembles the first sit-down strikes organized by workers unionized under the IWW, in the US at the beginning of the twentieth century. The post-war student protests were connected to broader social movements beyond the campus gates – anti-war movements, civil rights, labor,.. They were not seen anymore as harmless pranks.

Recent university occupations don't try so hard anymore to define specific demands and conditions to end the protest. Instead, the students gather under the slogan, 'Occupy everything, demand nothing'. Moore talks about the power of physically occupying a space without demanding anything. Through this act, protesters block the institutions (fabrics, universities) from operating and create new ways of communication and participation. They change the public character of the space and create conflict over it.

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Unfolding an invisible social dimension: p. 40



by Jonathan Spaldan Paljor | In 'Taking up Space: Anthropology and embodied Protest', Sheehan Moore discusses the act and importance of occupation as an act of protest and how the occupation of a space initiates political discussion, and suggests that an anthropology of embodiment might approach occupations theoretically and methodologically, so that the way occupiers talk about bodies can provide a reading of occupation as a bodily practice rather than merely a political discourse. The paper defines how occupation is different from other form of protest such as marches and rallies, in that their temporal and spatial persistence in itself brings into question various political ideologies and priorities. It claims that the majority of literature on the subject "tends to foreground the discursive dimensions of protest and occupations, focusing almost exclusively on demands and goals as the only 'whys' for protest" and that this loses sight of the bodily dimension of protest that can exceed the stated or assumed politics of occupation.

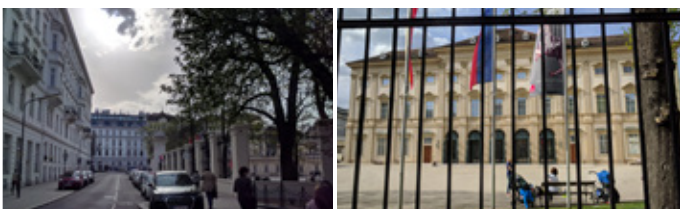
Moore looks specifically into a series of occupation protests that took place at McGill university, which were part of a tradition of similar university protests dating back to the 1960's and came during a time when occupation was a great part of the public consciousness, which emerged from the first sit-down strikes of the early twentieth century that were initiated by unionized workers under the International workers of the world. He further discusses the means by which occupation has had a recent upsurge due to austerity measures and the decreased interest in the formation of demands, instead rallying under 'Occupy everything, demand nothing'. While looking into the McGill occupations Moore discusses how although the occupations initiated constant negotiations and plenty of media coverage, what the occupiers tend to remember over a year later was the act itself and not the motives behind it, reasoning that the feelings occupiers have towards the act and its significance can be meaningful and that the

physical embodiment action is essential to this.

Looking at the works of Ghassan Hage and Miriam Ticktin, Moore defines the difference between the 'anti' political and the 'alternative' political, suggesting that by approaching the spaces through anthropological inquiry allows for an understanding of the alternative, the two sides becoming a means of understanding the alternative physical and political realities. With Miriam Ticktin's distinction between politics and the political, politics is a contention of the system that is allowed within a set of parameters while the political challenges the foundation of the parameters. Therefore the act of occupation without issuing demands allows the protest to not intervene through the means of politics, but rather it provides a free space for communication and participation. The act therefore through its physical nature allows them to intervene against the failures of an immaterial machinery, where an understanding of occupation as both spatial and bodily practice is not simply a declaration of an opposing position. Moore thus suggest that bodies, by gathering together and claiming space, publicly and collectively, 'open up political possibilities for the future at the same time as oppose the politics of the present' .

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Moore, S. (2013) Taking Up Space: Anthropology and Embodied Protest. *Radical Anthropology* 7: 6-16.



# URBAN LANDSCAPES AND THE ATMOSPHERE OF PLACE

Exploring subjective experience in the study of urban form | Phil Jones, Arshad Isakjee, Chris Jam, Colin Lorne and Saskia Warren

*“Material forms are not simply a backdrop against which subjective individual lives play out. They can be reshaped as people seek to alter the atmosphere of those places. This might be something as simple as a change of façade when demographic shifts mean the population no longer values the services offered by a pub. But it can also be something more radical.” (p. 39)*

## AMBIENCE

Birmingham, UK

## ATMOSPHERE

## ETHNOGRAPHY

*subjective human experience*

by Clara Rosc | This text points out that, even though social aspects like human activity, individual emotional perception and built forms are central in urban morphology studies, they are neglected most of the time. The authors claim that it is vital to include these aspects as they show how “built forms are created, animated and known by those who interact with them every day (...)” (Jones et al. 2017, p. 29). The concept of “atmosphere” is used to explore all issues of urban morphology. Urban morphological methods like map series analysis are combined with an ethnographic approach of residents marking important locations for redevelopment, interviews and shooting a short movie.

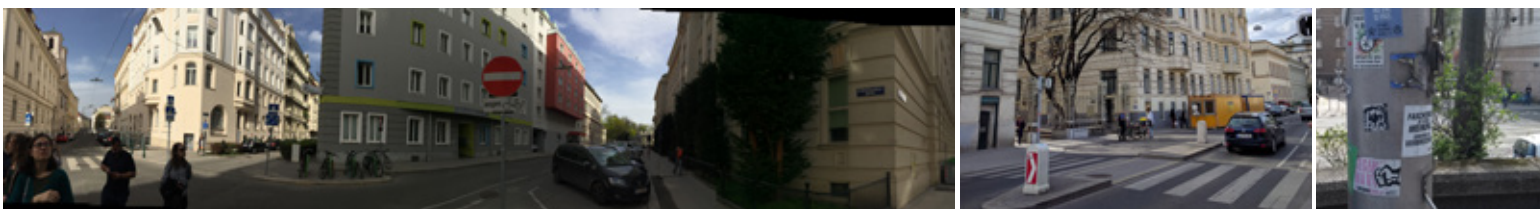
The case study of this paper is the Balsall Health district of Birmingham. About half of the area experienced a redevelopment “slum clearance” and subsequent redevelopment after WWII. The other half still consists of nineteenth-century buildings. Until now, the Balsall Health district has been popular for migrants with its large amount of privately-rented housing, mostly in a state of disrepair. Interestingly, the area is both known for its high measures of social and economic deprivation as well as for its number of engaged organizations, its famous arts scene and the local cuisine.

### The interplay of built form and personal experience in Balsall Health

The relationship between the built environment and the perception of the individuals in Balsall Health can be shown in multiple ways. Sex work, for example, boomed as the structure of the houses allowed for a more secluded feeling and even resulted in changes of the material form of the district by turning a street into a cul-de-sac to provide a better atmosphere. Although sex work has disappeared, it is still present in the minds of the residents. A similar example is the closing of some pubs, still “forming an absent

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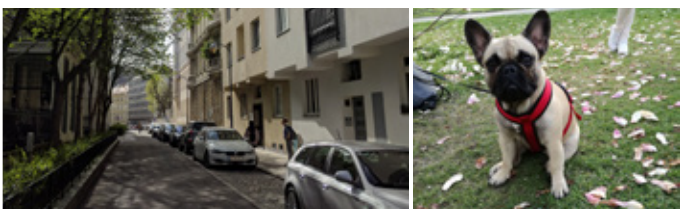
A mosaic of everyday life: p. 48



presence” while at the same time revealing different feelings (ibid., 35-36). Generally, the change of use is connected to a change in atmosphere in the district. “These boundaries exist as much in the perception of the individual as they do in the built environment, but they are no less real” (ibid., 38). Here, at the end of the paper, the authors emphasize the differing atmospheres of two neighborhoods with different social backgrounds. The built environment itself can be similar in both of them, but the atmosphere is different, depending on the social groups that live there.

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Jones, P. et al. (2017) Urban landscapes and the atmosphere of place: exploring subjective experience in the study of urban form. *Urban Morphology* 21(1): 29-40.



# (NOT) YOUR EVERYDAY PUBLIC SPACE

| Jeffrey Hou

*"As streets, neighbourhoods, and parks become malls, gated communities, and corporate venues, public space becomes subjected to new forms of ownership, commodification, and control." (p. 6).*

*„Not only does this increasing investment change towns, it also changes the political sphere and limits a multi-layered public life, as it is dominated by consumption." (p. 6-7).*

## SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTROL

everyday resistance

## PUBLIC REALM

PUBLIC SPACE

publicity of the public

by Clara Rosc | The first chapter of Jeffrey Hou's book concerns acts of resistance in public spaces, altering the uses of public spaces, and giving them 'new functions and meanings'. The first example he gives is an almost two and a half meter tall metal pig standing on the sidewalk in Fremont in Seattle, questioning consumerism and the official 'Pigs on Parade' art and fundraising event. Apart from setting a marker, the artists also provoked the norms valid in public space and subsequently found their way into the dialogue in the public through their installation: "Through the space it occupied and the debate it engendered among neighbours, citizens, and the media, the pig renewed the discursive instrumentality of public space as a forum for open discussion" (ibid.).

### Public space: democracy, exclusion and political control

The author poses the question as to what can be learned from acts of resistance in public space. First, he discusses the characteristics of public space as centers of urban life in cities. However, not only the built environment should be seen as public space, but also its meaning for social networks, public and political discourse. Of course, the meaning of public space has to be viewed in relation to the society of interest. Hou illustrates these differences by referring to Asian cities, as in these, public space has been connected closely to the state's control. Because of that, everyday life tends to unfold in secluded areas, in back streets and alleyways. In the United States, however, the structure of public parks points to an 'anti-urban ideal', later implementing so called reform parks that had different social aims like keeping people away from the streets in deprived neighbourhoods or helping with the integration of migrants.

### Erosion of public space and urban life

The deterioration and decay of public space and life is a central theme in the literature, documented by civic engagement. However, the increasing privatiza-

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Unfolding an invisible social dimension: p. 40



tion of public space can also be seen as a threat to public space: “As streets, neighbourhoods, and parks become malls, gated communities, and corporate venues, public space becomes subjected to new forms of ownership, commodification, and control” (Hou 2010, p. 6). Not only does this increasing investment change towns, it also changes the political sphere and limits a multi-layered public life, as it is dominated by consumption.

### **Insurgent public space: momentary ruptures and everyday struggles**

Is a completely “open and inclusive” public space imaginable? Hou argues for the importance of struggle when it comes to the “right to public space”. Examples for this struggle can be groups of cyclists demonstrating on the streets or protest camps that can be observed in different contexts. According to Hou, new technologies both decrease the importance of “place-based public space” and at the same time allow for new or different forms of actions by facilitating the organization of protests. The author also underlines the importance of initiatives and informal activities which create new functions of public space, as they shape public space immensely. Different kinds of “alternative park systems” have come into existence “through personal and collective uses that provide both private and public benefits”, therefore creating hybrid public spaces (ibid., 9-10). However, it is important to note that most of the time, informal dynamics and challenges are the basis for these kinds of happenings.

*by Teresa Tonndorf* | In the first chapter of his book ‘Insurgent Public Space’ Jeffrey Hou introduces the topic of everyday and ‘not-so-everyday’ making of public space that defies existing conventions, rules and regulations. Public space doesn’t only set material boundaries, it is also an important fuel for social relationships, public discussions and political expressions. Although it is associated with openness and inclusiveness, the reality of making and using of

public space is shaped by conflictive political and social circumstances. The tendency towards ever more surveillance additionally challenges the openness of public space.

In fact, over the last decades the private sphere has gained importance and eclipses the public sphere, which results in less lively public spaces. Moreover, because of the increasing privatization of public space, public functions have become less accessible.

In this context, acts of urban insurgency represent challenges against these increasing regulations, mirroring social settings and pressing social issues worldwide. This kind of struggle is important for achieving social justice because public space is always contested and requires constant vigilance as well as frequent actions. Everyday activities have the potential to transform urban space into a more open, inclusive space, where encounters between different people are possible and desired. Unintended uses of public space are common and contribute to shape contemporary cities. New technologies and new forms of media have made new types of public protest possible. Urban insurgency acts can have different purposes and function in different ways. Appropriating, reclaiming, pluralizing, transgressing, uncovering and contesting are examples of insurgency acts mentioned by Hou.

To engage in the making of public space there is no need for large investments or specific infrastructure, almost anyone can participate in urban insurgency acts which enable individuals/groups to effect changes in otherwise hegemonic urban landscapes. The process of making alternative public space is more participatory and spontaneous and therefore more open and inclusive than conventional production of public space, especially because of the smaller scale of urban insurgency acts.

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Hou, J. (2010) (Not) your everyday public space. In J. Hou (ed.) *Insurgent Public Space. Guerrilla urbanism and the remaking of contemporary cities*. London: Routledge, pp.1-17.





# PLACE AND SPACE

A Lefebvrian Reconciliation  
| Andrew Merrifield

*" [...] physical and social landscape emerges through processes that are simultaneously operative over varying spatial and temporal scales and may have a broader significance within the whole - that is, they are operative over the domain of space. "*  
(Merrifield 1993, p.520)

## SPATIAL THEORY

Henri Lefèbvre

## PLACE

## ONTOLOGY

dialectics

by Viktoriya Tudzharova | The text 'Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation' of Andrew Merrifield discusses a dialectical interpretation of place and is based on Henry Lefebvre's work 'Production of Space', Entrikin's 'Betweenness of Place' and Karl Marx's concept of 'totality in space'.

The emphasis in the term of geographical landscape in place shifts from the narrow Cartesian geography to the dialectical worldview of place and space. The basic concept relates to the proposition of space and place being different aspects of a unit. Just like the wave and particle aspect of matter, it describes the space being the process and place being the particles in a moment of the process. Furthermore, explained by the writing 'The Survival of Capitalism' the means of capital growth are occupying space and producing a space. This leads to the political and social aspects of space theory, so Lefebvre introduces his triad – Representations of space, Representational space and spatial practices. This theory offers a reconciliation between the conceptualized space created by professionals, the lived space by its everyday actors and the production of space. Following Lefebvre's dialectical method of defining the space as a social and political phenomenon, the author strives to create a unified theory of space.

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Affective morphology: p. 52

Unfolding an invisible social dimension: p. 40



by Jonathan Spaldan Paljor | In the paper 'Space and Place: A Lefebvrian reconciliation' by Andrew Merrifield, a dialectical interpretation of place is offered, as failure to engage in the ontological nature of place has led to much research to accept a restrictive Cartesian view of socio-spatial reality. Merrifield proposes that the problematic nature of place and its relationship to space can be resolved through a dialectical mode of argumentation. Merrifield goes on to define the dialectical worldview whereby it is both a statement about what the world is as well as a method of organizing the world for the purpose of study. By comparing the dialectical view, which looks at the interrelation between parts of a whole, to the Cartesian-inspired conceptions of breaking out the parts into individual aspects, Merrifield confirms the limitations of the Cartesian conceptions that is often present in much of geographical literature. To elaborate on this Merrifield looks at the work of J. N. Entrikin, 'The Betweenness of Place', where although Entrikin looks at human experience and the meaning given to place by conscious individuals, his argument falls apart due to its implicit Cartesian foundation.

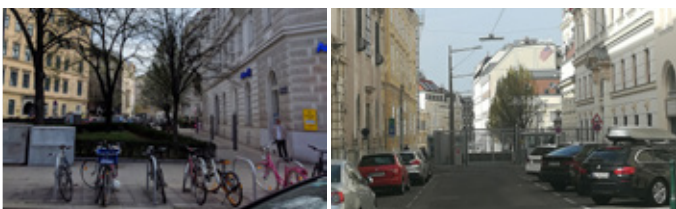
Merrifield goes on to further clarify how dialectic thought remains distinctly non Cartesian using Marx's conception of the 'fetishism of commodities', where the money form tends to mask the underlying social processes of a commodity once the commodity enters daily life. Thus the processes appear in the form of things and so places too are imbued with meaning in everyday place-bound social practices and "physical and social landscape emerges through processes that are simultaneously operative over varying spatial and temporal scales and may have a broader significance within the whole - that is, they are operative over the domain of space." (Merrifield 1993, p.520).

Using Lefebvre's spatialized dialectic as a framework Merrifield aims to reconcile the interaction between space and place as striving to overcome

the dualistic conceptions of capitalist spatiality. Through Lefebvre's 'conceptual triad': representations of space, representational space and spatial practices, he makes clear the complex interplay between different aspects in the production of space. He further argues that capitalism demands a conceived space of homogenization, which makes lived experience insignificant and therefore crushes the social space of lived experience. Lefebvre therefore prioritizes the lived and perceived over the conceived. Thus Merrifield suggests Lefebvre's dialectical approach provides a "realization that the struggle for empowerment, emancipation and the 'right to difference' (for the spatial and social body) is an intensely geographical project: nothing and no one, he implores, can ever avoid a 'trial by space'" (ibid.).

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Merrifield, A. (1993). Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 18: 516-531.



# PARTICIPATION AS A FORM OF POWER.

Rethorising empowerment and spatialising Participatory Action Research  
| Mike Kesby, Sara Kindon and Rachel Pain

*"... While the resources of participation can and do produce negative effects in some circumstances, these same resources can be deployed to achieve quite different effects. Thus, the effects of institutions like the World Bank deploying PAR are not necessarily the same as those sought or achieved by radical academics, or community activists" [p. 20]*

## POSTSTRUCTURALISM POWER RELATIONS

**POWER-FREE MODE OF RESEARCH**

*participatory action research*

by Tamara Bajic | The authors talk about PAR (Participatory Action Research) and poststructuralist critique that point out the negative effects of PAR. They acknowledge these critiques and through dealing with them, talk also about the 'heart' of PAR – power.

Poststructuralists see power as an effect, rather than a commodity. So the question emerges – what are the effects that the resources of participation (equity, democracy, collective action...) produce? The focus of the critique is, of course, on the negative effects such as de-legitimization of the research methods that are not participatory, re-authorization of researchers as experts in participatory approaches, legitimization of elite local knowledge simply because it is produced through participatory processes, and others. On the other hand, authors, while not denying that the resources of participation can and do produce some negative effects, also explain how the same resources can be used to produce and achieve very positive and different effects like negotiation between participants, persuasion by strong argumentation in the atmosphere of equality, or authority among participants.

Empowerment also has positive (productivity and enabling) and negative (closing down possibilities, constraining and causing people to behave in particular way) effects. That is why the authors suggest setting the 'ground rules' which would guarantee a respectful interaction and negotiation between unequal parties. Re-theorizing the empowerment as an effect that comes from redistribution of certain resources means that it is perceived as unstable.

We can no longer look at PAR without acknowledging its embroilment with power. It is a structured and defined approach to urban space, with emphasize towards collective effort to change something.

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A mosaic of everyday life: p. 48  
The Space Researchers: p. 60



by Teresa Tonndorf | In the text 'Participation as a form of power. Retheorising empowerment and spatializing Participatory Action Research' Kesby et al. use poststructuralist critique to re-conceptualize participatory approaches.

In Poststructuralism, no method or theory has a universal claim on the right form of knowledge and thus, as participatory researchers constitute a form of power, they should be resisted. Poststructuralists see power as an effect which is generated from the interaction of resources in a specific context. Among others, the resources of participatory research are equity, democracy, collective action, self-reflection and dialogue. By effecting governance, PAR produces effects that can be both negative and positive, however the critique has centered exclusively on its negative effects.

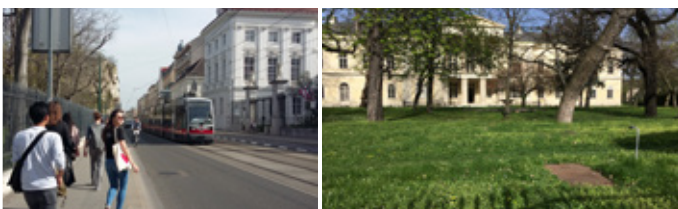
By using John Allen's definition of power modalities, modalities that produce positive as well as those producing negative effects can be recognized. Like power, empowerment can also have negative effects and must therefore be reconceptualized as an effect of a form of governance that can have positive outcomes. By considering the modalities and effects of power and empowerment as entangled, a more constructive critique of PAR can be achieved. Common notions of empowerment do not consider its dependence on available resources, but by embracing poststructuralist critique, empowerment can be reconsidered by examining its spatiality and similarity with power. Also, if empowerment is reconceptualized as an effect of certain resources, researchers might expect it to be unstable. The authors suggest that instead of trying to distance PAR from power, poststructuralism should be applied in service of PAR: by effecting governance, PAR effects empowerment and thus helps radical transformation. Moreover, PAR provides mechanisms to reflect its own situatedness and potentially dominating effects, which makes it a valuable method.

However, limits that result from PAR's spatiality should be considered such as the interference on empowerment effects by neighbouring spaces or the difficulty of some individuals to express their own opinion out of fear of the consequences that might await them elsewhere. Also, the socio-spatial arenas originated with PAR are produced in different kinds of historic context that are already invested with meaning and therefore the applicability of participatory resources varies greatly. In order to avoid producing isolated projects, the issue of the possibility to reconstitute the resources of empowerment to help open the way for a reperformance of empowerment is crucial.

In conclusion, it can be said that PAR can learn theoretically from poststructuralism and in turn PAR offers poststructuralism the practical means to achieve radical projects. From their considerations the authors deduce that PAR is a situated, contestable work in process which should not necessarily strive to be power-free.

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Kesby, M. et al. (2010) Participation as a form of power. Retheorising empowerments and spatialising Participatory Action Research. In S. Kindon et al. (eds.) Participatory Action Research Approaches and Methods. Gloucestershire: Routledge, pp. 19-25.



# PARTICIPATION, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE & EMPOWERMENT

Researching Public Space with Young  
People | Eleanor Jupp

*"[...] how far power is actually transferred to participants through such processes, either within the setting of the participatory encounter or within the wider context of global inequalities." (p. 2833)*

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

youth

PARTICIPATION

EMPOWERMENT

public space

by Tamara Bajic | In this paper, which consists of six chapters, Eleanor discusses some everyday difficulties in using participatory methods. Her subject groups are young people from community groups on two housing estates in Stoke-on-Trent, England, which participated in a wider research project exploring public space. She wanted to uncover some connections between participation, knowledge and empowerment which form the conceptual basis of participatory research, and furthermore to enable research subjects to "project their own voices and positions".

She used an ethnographic methodological approach, where the line between covert and overt research may be unclear, as well as interviews and discussion groups of various kinds. On each estate she spent time with local people who were engaged with the community groups, one of which was a group of teenagers on Riverlands. They had a 'youth forum', which was viewed locally as highly successful. Jupp was interested in how young people use and understand the space in their neighborhoods. When she set up the meeting with them, she wanted to do a participatory 'mapping' exercise, to understand their geographies. Instead, the group gave monosyllabic and extremely negative responses to all of her questions. She did not develop a trust and connection with them. Rather than accepting that the answer to these problems might simply be more time or slightly different methods; she suggests that such refusals and silences should be taken more seriously.

She also says that 'research'; constitutes a context, which is not necessarily any more or less valid than any other, and that we need to consider 'how subjects themselves perceive that context', and their positions within it and that any participatory research context limits 'what is deemed to constitute possible knowledge at that moment in time and space'.

As time went, she spent more time with the community and bonded (at least temporary) with the

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A mosaic of everyday life: p. 48  
The Space Researchers: p. 60



people, while working as a volunteer. She refers to this kind of connection as “partial identification” (Jupp 2007, p. 2838). For the adults involved with the Riverlands group, the nature of interaction and participation enabled by the group was in strong contrast to the formal structures set up by the local authority and agencies to encourage residents to get involved in local issues. At a group discussion with committee members from Riverlands, participants talked about the official forms and policies they were obliged to produce as “a necessary evil”, or “hoops” they had to “jump through” (ibid., 2838). Official initiatives around participation were often experienced as highly problematic and tended to exclude many local people.

*by Virginia Lui* | Participatory research approaches generate knowledge that is generally speaking not accessible without empirical studies and active engagements with participants. Participation is always political and intertwined with power relations. To “empower” someone creates the distinction between those who are empowering and those who need to be empowered. This may generate tensions related to expectations between the “empowerer” and the “empowered” and the amount of community involvement demanded. Oftentimes, real concerns by participants are not being addressed. A way to overcome presupposed power relations, participatory research should start with the question: how does my research bring value to the participants or what value can I create during the process of my research?

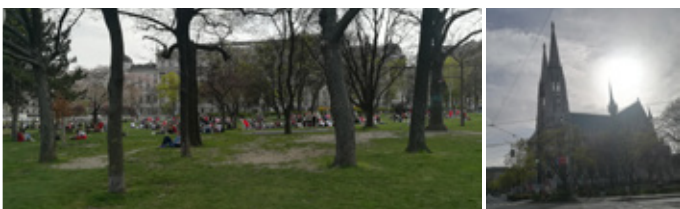
The mapping exercises did not speak the languages of the youth and therefore failed to relate to the participants of the project. First of all, there seems to be a huge divide between the knowledge of the researcher and what is being researched and the knowledge of the participants. Methods of research can either be subjecting or facilitating – it can facilitate the imagination of future scenarios but at the same

time subject the participants to particular modes of thought, design or process. Research should always be sensitized to the participants. We don’t understand space through maps, instead with our bodies, our senses and experience. Performative urbanism could be a method to research public space through participation. The researchers used very hierarchal methods that patronized the youth. Qualitative research should be approached by embedding oneself into the field and by observing and engaging with the environment and people. “Paying attention to experiences ‘beyond the limits of representability’ has important methodological implications” (ibid., 2838). Performing common ground activities such as planting or hobbies create shared memories and builds trust. Anthropological or psychological dimensions of participatory design should be acknowledged.

Knowledge generated through participatory methods is not linear and straightforward but rather complex and requires the reconditioning of our modes of thought learned in our disciplines. While typical structures of sociological research encompass a research question followed by methodology and results, many participatory research projects fail to meet these standardized expectations. Instead, what should be focused on is the unpredictable processes of research. By “paying attention to experiences beyond the limits of representability”, one might be able to understand more the “feelings and embodied practices” (ibid.).

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Jupp, E. (2007) Participation, Local Knowledge and Empowerment: Researching Public Space with Young People. *Environment and Planning A* 39(12): 2832-44.



# HOW TO RECLAIM MAFIA-CONTROLLED TERRITORY?

An Emancipatory Experience in Naples  
| Gabriella Esposito de Vita

*“ Could government and insurgent publics form coalitions for redemocratization against the common Mafia enemy via place-based regeneration processes? Could this reaction to Mafia control and hegemony be considered an emancipatory process? ” (p. 4)*

## PUBLIC SPACE

bottom-up organizations

## POWER RELATION emancipatory experience

Affective Morphology: p. 52

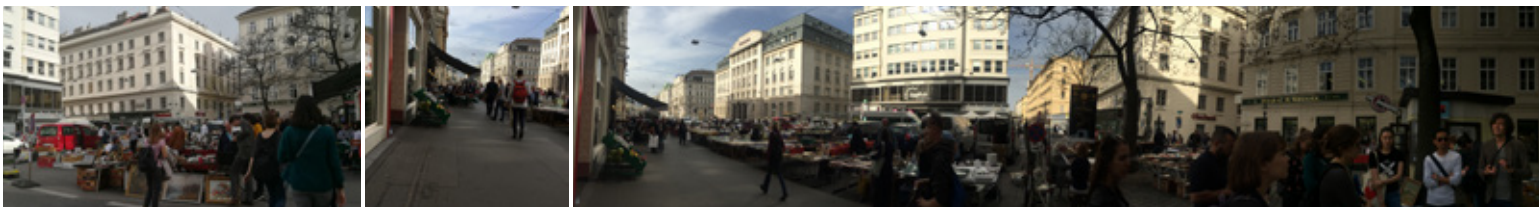
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by *Katrin Hofer* | The paper *How to Reclaim Mafia-Controlled Territory? An Emancipatory Experience in Naples*, written by Gabriella Esposito De Vita, gives an insight into the Italian urban planning system in Mafia- Controlled Territory. Furthermore, the study explains how emancipatory cooperation between the stakeholders and the civil society are built under the distorted influence of organized crime, which used to operate in isolation from and intermixed with the official government.

The Italian approach for minimizing the influence of crime organizations aims to strengthen the local communities by increasing their capacity to react to organized crime in everyday life. Therefore, urban planning supports bottom up emancipatory initiatives because decriminalizing ‘crime zones’ is more likely to succeed, if the civil society reuses the Mafia’s former property with a project for the local people. Social and urban studies describe the concept of community in Southern Italy as a local- based network in which people interact and cut across the social classes, but the permeability still opens it up for Mafia influence. Especially in disadvantaged areas planning processes have to deal with the omnipresence of criminal clans in economic activities and daily life of inhabitants.

The study contains an emancipatory experience in Naples, where the process of political, economic and spatial decriminalization implies rebuilding public perception in the precarious areas of Naples. Furthermore, the research shows that property of the mafia clans is also demonstrated in official and hidden buildings, which are representing their reputation and strengthens their local roots. The aim of opening those gated lands and providing services and opportunities for redemption is to inspire the people for other honorable projects and to affect the whole urban system in the end.

However, urban planning in these clan areas is a great piece of work because the mafia also owns



building companies, which are of course operating outside the rules without requesting any permission.

All in all, the study about decriminalizing mafia controlled territory with urban planning, shows that the emancipation of civil society is more a form of broader (self)empowerment. There are more and more bottom up organizations, which are reusing the former mafia property with projects providing social services for the inhabitants especially to cover the needs of underprivileged groups and in addition it should also destroy the mafia's reputation.

*by Milica Ugrinov* | I find this text very provocative, because of a very intriguing topic. The connection between space and mafia, control and domination. The core idea is conceptualizing community as a place-based *modus operandi* against organized crime. The Camorra in Naples as an example of how to reclaim mafia-controlled territory is described in this text. The study abounds with statistic data (e.g. correlation between the confiscation of Mafia's goods metropolitan area of Naples in a regional context), photos and tables. There are chapters about laws and regulations.

It was very interesting for me to imagine how all this kitsch-design and luxury can be used for another purpose. Another important thing is the structure of an organization. The initiatives are managed by associations and volunteers which are well connected and have a capacity for community engagement.

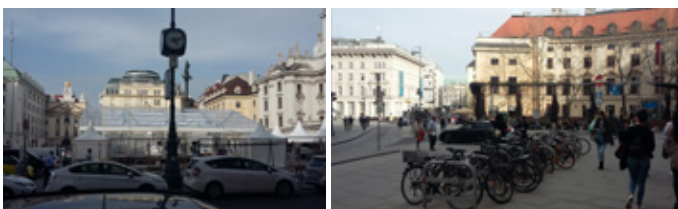
The main goal of the La Gloriette Multipurpose Centre (now managed by a nonprofit organization) is to build a track of autonomy for fragile subjects involved in a social inclusion program and to promote a culture of legal justice.

A 'collaborative potential for emancipation' can be perceived as a real value of this study. The em-

bedded role of the researcher aids to the reshaping of places and encouraging novel, democratic networks within criminally controlled territories.

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Esposito De Vita, G. (2018) How to Reclaim Mafia-Controlled Territory? An Emancipatory Experience in Southern Italy. In S. Knierbein and T. Viderman (eds.) *Public Space Unbound. Urban Emancipation and the Post-Political Condition*. London: Routledge, pp. 54-68.





# HYBRIDIZING OWNERSHIP OF PUBLIC SPACE

Framings of Urban Emancipation in Crisis-Ridden Thessaloniki  
| Evangelia Athanassiou,  
Charis Christodoulou, Matina Kapsali  
and Maria Karagianni

*“Partnerships between different agents promote public space as a space of citizenship, engagement, empowerment and culture.” (p. 262)*

*„While there is no visible transfer of public space property yet, such enterprises of civic engagement and participation point towards the creation of a new paradigm which departs from the traditional model of municipally owned and man- aged public spaces towards an embodied kind of ownership.” (p. 263)*

## OWNERSHIP

public space

## PRIVATIZATION

exclusion

by Teresa Tonndorf | The text by E. Athanassiou et al. is about the possibilities new hybrid forms of ‘ownership’ bring for the emancipation in Thessaloniki in times of the crisis. The authors differentiate between ‘property’ and ‘ownership’, ‘ownership’ meaning the socio-political attributes and relational conditions of the property, while ‘property’ is referred to as the material ‘object’. In the text the authors examine whether the concept of ‘ownership’ can build a bridge between property and emancipation in the production of public space. Understanding ownership in a relational way, its hybridization means the blurring of the public/private binary in public space production due to the involvement of multiple actors.

During the crisis in Greece, the private sector took part of the municipality’s responsibility in public space, thus relativizing its authority. This happened without a change in property, resulting in a hybrid form of ownership, which emphasized the value-production features of public space. In addition, to refurbishing the city’s image in order to attract tourism and overcome the crisis, the municipality increased its investment in public space, focusing predominantly on prominent areas. The example of the What’s up Park, a former public space redevelopment and maintained by a private company, shows how hybrid ownership can re-grant accessibility to a certain public space to the ‘citizens’. However, it also revealed the possibility to use public space as a tool for value production and exclusion of undesirable users.

Moreover, the volunteering sector gained importance with the municipality engaging ‘active citizens’ to ‘take ownership’ of public space, by maintaining and surveilling it. While this results in pride and responsibility, it also excludes those who are not defined as ‘citizens’. Later responses to the crisis offered a new institutional framing and were based on Thessaloniki’s Preliminary Resilience Assistant (PRA), which identifies “co-ownership” of public space as a discovery area, ‘co-ownership’ meaning the management, maintenance and programming of spaces without a

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Unfolding an invisible social dimension: p. 40



change in property structures. The PRA recognized the activities of two initiatives on Thessaloniki's New Waterfront, who maintain, clean, promote and thus take ownership of this officially municipally managed space, as a case of unofficial 'co-ownership'. However, the revitalization of this space resulted in its depoliticization. In the case of Kipos-City as a resource project, the transformation of a municipally owned plot into a garden during a process involving an interesting mix of top-down and bottom-up dynamics, resulted in a 'shared' rather than public space with an excluding symbolism. The idea behind the Iasonidou Street Park, another example presented in the text, was to transform a seemingly public unused plot into a neighborhood park by crowd-sourcing creativity and action on public space 'from below'. However, both attempts failed, possibly because of the missing inclusion in the primary stages of the project.

The processes presented in the text, show a model of 'ownership' of public space that includes citizens and the private sector, resulting in a more democratic management. However, the political possibility of such processes of active citizenship, can only be expressed if these processes of hybridization move beyond private property rights, exclusionary acts and hegemonic perceptions. Possibilities to overcome the public/private divide may be reframed in an argumentative rather than a consensual way, making alternative and emancipatory urban futures possible.

*by Virginia Lui | Ownership of public space is not static but relational. When public space is understood in relational and processual terms, rather than as fixed terrains, 'emancipation' is performed. Emancipation is understood as the materialization of radical democratic politics. This article examines how ownership can be mobilized and hybridized to form blurred spaces of both public and private coexistence. It then goes to question whether emancipation of public space takes form when hybridization occurs. Ownership hybridization is a process which goes against neoliberal forms of property ownership,*

and instead encompasses a variety of ownership models or parties, each with particular roles in 'owning', maintaining or renegotiating public space.

Case study 1: The park was used by drug users up until the 'I love my city' campaign, which engaged volunteers to manage their neighbourhood and take 'ownership' of the space. There is a need to "focus on the antagonisms and heterogeneities that cut through neoliberal political projects" (Athanasioiu et al. 2018, p.262). In the case studies, new agents, NGO's and publics reconsider their role as urban actors undertaking new or broader responsibilities and initiatives. Mixed ownership formats that incorporate formal institutions, citizen initiatives, NGO's and private companies create a hybrid ownership of public space.

This new paradigm allows for more flexible ownership structures and functions and management of public space. It implies a more participatory process of public space management where citizens are empowered to actively engage, envision and drive these spaces, thus leading to a democratic process of place making. The downsides however include the exclusion of non-active participants, tactics of surveillance, disputes over managerial, legal or administrative issues, categorization of those who take part in terms of 'roles', competitiveness between other public spaces and neighborhoods, citizens becoming over-identified with a particular neighborhood or sparking of gentrification processes. The case studies given act more as "depoliticized underpinning of the neoliberal politics of competitiveness, attractiveness and safety, rather than emancipatory practices" (Athanasioiu et al. 2018, p.263-264).

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Athanasioiu, E. et al. (2018) Hybridizing 'Ownership' of Public Space. Framings of Urban Emancipation in Crisis-Ridden Thessaloniki. In S. Knierbein and T. Videman (eds.) Public Space Unbound. Urban Emancipation and the Post-Political Condition. London: Routledge, pp. 251-265.



# PUBLIC SPACE ACTIVISM IN UNSTABLE CONTEXTS

Emancipation From Beirut's Postmemory  
| Christine Mady

*" In divided societies, various social structures affect spatial practices, which could lead to differentiation, discrimination and exclusion. These divides could be entrenched over generations, affecting ways of being, of giving meaning and value to things and relations, and in styles of expression " (p. 191)*

## TRANSFORMATION

public space

## NARRATIVE

collective memory

by Jana Alaraj | Beirut is a city that has survived 15 years of civil war, that has left an immense destruction to the cities social, economical and urban fabric creating a fragmented society. The paper discusses the role of postconflict narratives in Lebanon's capital Beirut and its effect on public space and investigates how public spaces become reconstituted within such contexts. Through looking at NAHNOO's work, an organization which succeeded in reopening Beirut's largest urban park, Horsh Beirut, after a closure of about 40 years since the civil war's outbreak in 1975. NAHNOO contributed to the emancipation of Horsh (or forest) Beirut by dismantling post-memory, which is affecting people's socio-spatial practices and contributing to deepening war-generated divides.

### Important notes

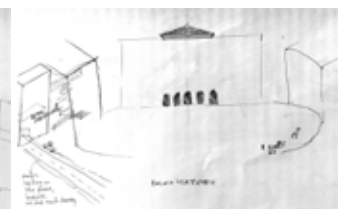
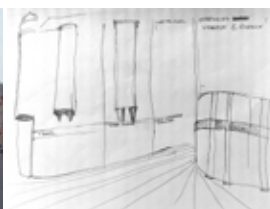
Instability can generate uncertainty about public spaces. Unmitigated fear of public spaces could limit social practices to small communal spaces lacking in diversity, marking the end of public life. In unstable contexts, 'the management of co-existence' in shared space requires an understanding of social relations and learning different ways of thinking and organizing as well as an understanding of the range of everyday life practices. Empowering people in divided societies could begin by defining "how other people do things and what they are encouraged to value" (Healey 2006: 112).

*„In divided societies, various social structures affect spatial practices, which could lead to differentiation, discrimination and exclusion. These divides could be entrenched over generations, affecting "ways of being, of giving meaning and value to things and relations, and in styles of expression"*

One intangible consideration is the mnemonic role of public spaces as memory containers, and their meanings for different users. In spaces that

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A mosaic of everyday life: p. 48  
The Space Researchers: p. 60



are trapped in between the past imbued with the war in the present, liberating these spaces from postmemories becomes essential.

The shaping of space is an instrument for the shaping of memory. Collective memories are formed through the experiences of different groups of people within urban spaces (Larkin 2012).

In prolonged conflict situations such as war, several generations are involved; their memories and postmemories might affect their spatial practices. Christine Mady cites Marianne Hirsch and Craig Larkin to assert: "While collective memories refer to past experiences of several people, postmemory according to Hirsch is an inherited form of memory that forges both mnemonic bonds to the past... and repressive binds with the present. Postmemory is not personally experienced but socially felt and is often used to affirm identities, traditions or even assert continuity" (Mady 2018, p. 192).

by *Viktoriya Tudzharova* | In unstable contexts fear is often produced, as well as social homogeneous areas, where there is political control. After a hard time of political conflicts it is important that public spaces become activated and diversified. For the reconstitution of public life it is important that people return to their rhythm of everyday life and integrate public space to it, in order to preserve social vitality. Furthermore, to reinstate shared spaces an understanding of social relations is needed. Mady points out on public spaces as mnemonic tools, because while shaping the space there is a following process of shaping the memory, as per the research of Michael Hebbert. She throws light on the way the post-war generation is creating its practices more from postwar narratives than from its own experience with mnemonic public spaces. The author suggests that referring collective memories to public spaces should establish a shared sense

of belonging based on their own experience with space rather than developing an understanding through the inherited postmemory narratives which leads to a division in the everyday city life.

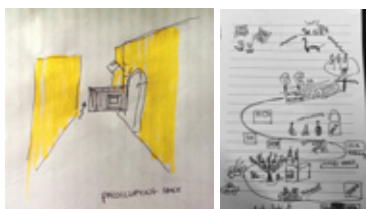
Throughout the chapter there is an introduction to the Lebanese context, where Beirut was divided in the Christian east and the Muslim west. It is referred to the historical and geographical context of eradication of the public spaces, especially at the Horsh Beirut, the green area, which served as a buffer zone between the two conflicting parts of the city. This historical and political context of the places predefined the complete demolition of the public space for a long time. As a conclusion, this part underlined a disparity between public-less spaces that are created by the authorities and other spaces used by the people of the city.

The author introduces the NAHNOO organization, which started from a student group at the public Lebanese university and strives to achieve equality and build stronger connections within the society. The programs manager at NAHNOO indicates the aim of the platform for self-development and civic engagement, which should contribute to a participatory local governance.

The organization NAHNOO has a significant role in activating the Horsh Beirut forest. Through continuous work and actions they gradually implemented Horsh's reinstating as a place of everyday life.

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Mady, C. (2018) Public Space Activism in Unstable Contexts: Emancipation From Beirut's Postmemory. In S. Knierbein and T. Videman (eds.) Public Space Unbound. Urban Emancipation and the Post-Political Condition. London: Routledge, pp.189-206.





# PROJECTS

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# DEVELOPING EXPLORATIVE PEDAGOGY

| Tihomir Viderman

Our explorative research has aimed to introduce into research on urban morphology ethics that is mindful of lived, cultural, as well as social and material differences in urban space. This endeavour has set new methodological challenges to include and reflect on own positionality and bodily experience regarding the researched urban space. Drawing from the tradition of critical pedagogy and theories on action-based relational space, we have approached the situated research of urban morphology as what Schurr and Strüver (2016) call a 'multi-sensory process'. Such a research approach combines the rational notions of inquiry into social, cultural and political aspects of the material production of space with the intuitive and explorative engagement with emotional and affective geographies. As suggested by Schurr and Strüver (2016) we have invited an experimentation with a variety of different approaches and combinations of methods, while asking for the body to be utilized as an important research instrument for absorbing everyday life. We started from the premise that the construction of methods needs to be interwoven with the studied socio-spatial context and the involved local communities. The chosen approach encompasses open-end-research, learning processes at all sides during ethnographic research; the integration of contingency, undogmatic forms of doing urban research; and a curiosity and respect for the everyday routines of urban dwellers and their everyday spaces (Highmore 2006, Lefebvre 2014). Method, in this respect, can be seen as "a form of communication that the researcher adopts when she [or he] makes contact with a research object" (Highmore 2006: 3). By experimenting with new forms of the production of knowledge and (re-)presentation we have aimed to reflect on those realities which are not presented or under-represented in the previous studies of urban morphologies. The seminar Innovative perspectives on urban morphology: A relational-material approach investigated new methodologies for exploring urban morphology, while simultaneously conceptualising the relationship between the body and built urban fabric.

**Unfolding an invisible social dimension.** This approach to space consisted of a profound reflection on own professional and cultural differences, learning that both normative stances regarding preferred ideal-type urban fabric are largely dependent on previous experiences. And in turn, our knowledge of space shapes our practices of everyday life as well as professional engagement with lived space. This approach therefore promotes an analysis as a precondition for conceptualizing and undertaking any action. The group set out to engage with everyday life by putting emphasis on subjective personal experiences and individual 'conversations'. With limited resources and time they created in public space meaningful moments which allowed for learning about different realities and the researcher's role in building bridges between them.

**A mosaic of everyday life.** This research group undertook an approach rather reminiscent of the currently widespread epistemology of performative urbanism. Starting from the concerns about marginalization practices, as well as gendered and ethnic disparities in the use of urban parks, they decided to engage with the users of park by means of game. The choice fell on bocce as a practice that is already present in Vienna's park, yet still perceived as peculiar to certain ethnic and age groups. The game allowed for critically engaging with own knowledge of space as well as for creating a lived learning environment, which produced the capacity to reaffirm a diverse, inclusive and engaging public space. The game eventually grew into a space of emancipation for its designers, where they reflected on the own biases and normative standpoints regarding the park, as well as broader issues of performative strategies and tactics.

**Affective morphology.** The affective notation of a diary was used as a means for confronting own biases towards the square in front of Franz Josefs Bahnhof. Through an almost unnoticeable presence at the square the researchers have deliberately collected knowledge based on bodily reactions and feelings, thus providing insights into morphology of

the square beyond what is openly visible or present in visual and discursive representations of the square. By spending a significant amount of time in the square, they have learnt about a plurality of relations and practices of everyday life. This work shows that perception of a place is largely dependent on knowledge from spatial practices and bodily experiences as well as an extent to which a researcher immerses into everyday life at the researched place.

**The space researchers.** This project, which was developed prior to the seminar, aims at developing a microscale change within a large housing estate at Vienna's periphery. The researchers developed a visual representation of possible space (a project of the park) to inspire a social process of co-creation of shared space with the local community. They engaged in a continuous cooperation with the local youth centre, both for developing the project as well as towards its implementation. They did not only invite local community to contribute everyday knowledge about the particular context, but have actually engaged them to jointly change the urban realities. Aiming to materialize the project, the researchers have inevitably also engaged with interlinked issues of regulation, provision, spatial needs and claims.





## UNFOLDING AN INVISIBLE SOCIAL DIMENSION

of urban morphology | Jana Alaraj,  
Virginia Lui, Jonathan Spaldan Paljor,  
Viktoriya Tudzharova

*Dealing with this project the question we ask ourselves is: What is urban morphology? What are its various forms and how do we examine these instances? Does taking a route through the city help define the potential of what is meant by urban morphology? How can it reveal a city's cultural, social and spatial relation dynamics? What can we understand from going through the city in one direction? What do we perceive when going back the same way?*

**Jonathan:** Thinking about the intangible elements present in urban morphologies and how they manifest through the physical nature of bodies within the city, we look at the city of Vienna by examining the plasticity of the social environment around us and how our bodies conform or confront various boundaries present within the morphology of a city.

**Jana:** We look at public spaces as the arena for everyday routines, practices and unintended or intended encounters. It serves as the basis for the exploration of the sociality of urban societies. And therefore we try to unfold an invisible social dimension of urban morphology within them by looking at our own subjective experiences within these spaces as migrants in Vienna.

**Jonathan:** We asked ourselves, how can we as people imbued with cultural, political, social, experiential and bodily subjectivities understand Vienna? The process involved a dialogue between embodied memories of what had been ingrained in us through our past experiences and our varied cultural backgrounds and then reflecting on the interactions as individuals and as a group.

**Virginia:** Like anyone who goes through the process of migration and integration, we bring with us our own cultural and social subjectivities



to new spaces with their own set of cultural and social norms. We experience multiple points of collision before we sensitise ourselves to the norms of a new territory. Sooner or later, we ask ourselves: What did we bring to the city? And contrastingly... What did we leave behind?

**Viktoriya:** Through analyzing this experience from the city of Vienna we also sensitized ourselves towards our everyday life. As a result our perception of space also changed when we thoughtfully went out into public space. Coming from different cultural backgrounds how do we all take part in creating city's life?

**Jonathan:** The city as we see it is essentially a conglomeration of overlapping, intertwining simultaneity of routines. With each individual contributing to smaller collectives as well as larger wholes of the social morphological structure of a city. The city in some form retains an identity of what social behaviours are most prevalent and these surface as an acceptable social norm within which individuals function and therefore the redundancies of such a norm stand out by creating disruptions in its surroundings as well as in the individuals producing them. Therefore to test the nature of such norms we use an examination of our own routines as a point of departure.

**Viktoriya:** By focussing on routines, we were able to pinpoint the flows we had in our actions that gave us comfort and a certain level of safety. As routines are always culturally conditioned customary practices, every migrant experiences a disruption of their routine when arriving in a new country. We began by collecting our own experiential routinised narratives as arrivals in Vienna. We wanted to use our narratives to better understand 'what is a routine?' and 'what is a disruption?' and how do our migration narratives have deeper political meanings in space? So we asked ourselves, how do we visualise migration by using our diverse culturally tempered routines in a seemingly 'homogenised' city?

**Jonathan:** We therefore tried to identify different instances since our arrival in Vienna by reflecting on events that somehow surprised us either through certain conflicts, unusual reactions or simple observations.

**Viktoriya:** For instance, I would always thank the bus driver whenever I got off the bus from the front. It was something that I would do without thinking. Especially as I would always get off at the front door since it took me a while to realize that the buttons in the buses were for opening the door rather than warning the bus driver to stop at the next stop.

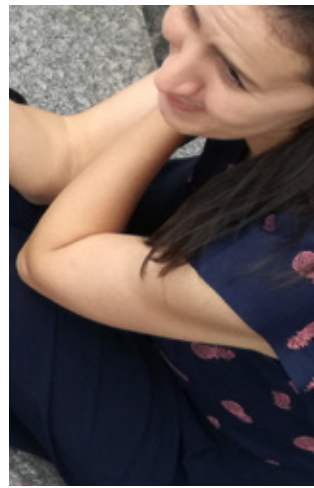


**Jana:** For me it had to do a lot with walkability in the city. When you can comfortably walk the streets of a city, learn to navigate it, engage with it, and understand it on foot, you form a bond with it. This is not the case where I come from. Walkability infrastructure is not that good and many obstacles can be found on your way. But in Vienna, I definitely appreciate getting the chance to walk long distances comfortably. It even changed the way I navigate myself in my own city when I travel back home and I look at the city from another perspective, for example, I usually walk very fast in the city [back in my home country] because I want to avoid all kinds of inconveniences and disturbances.

**Virginia:** When the routines that a migrant brings to a city clashes with the culturally conditioned routinised practices of the city, a point of collision occurs. This causes a disruption in the routines which in effect causes discomfort and the feeling of unsafety. Locals, who are accustomed to the routinised practices of the city, may feel irritated by your cultural ignorance while you may only just be starting to sensitise yourself to the social norms of your new home. While we adapt to our social surroundings, we also let go a small part of our routines or identities that we brought with us when we arrived.

**Viktoriya:** Since arriving in Vienna, I realized that I stopped drinking as much alcohol as I did back at home in Bulgaria. This was probably because I have a lack of self-confidence when I know that I can only trust myself in emergency situations. And in the city where I live alone, I feel some kind of responsibility towards myself. So if I sometimes drink a lot, it would always be outside of Vienna.

**Jonathan:** For myself I felt much more comfortable living in Vienna compared to Singapore where I had lived for the last four years. Public scrutiny is much more severe and had an influence on my daily routines when arriving in Vienna. Arriving from such a situation I found my mental state to be more cautious of making mistakes. Public transport was one of the first things I encountered where there was a stark difference, much of the usage is based on trust, where people are allowed to walk freely in and out without having to validate their ticket at the beginning of every use, and was a little surprised by how little enforcement is implemented. Life on the metro is also very lively and active in Vienna with people eating drinking and at times even smoking at stations even though it is not allowed. Although at first I kept from doing these things I became more relaxed myself knowing that other people did it regularly and slowly became accustomed to consuming food or alcohol on the train.



**Viktoriya:** So throughout our research process, we constantly discussed our reflections and shared our experiences of the city. I told you how I see people in Bulgaria and how they behave distinctly when something “exciting” happens on the streets or in public space. If people see that someone is acting inappropriately or if they notice something they would recognize as an immoral action, they would always start commenting and state their own opinions about it.

**Jana:** So when you shared this I also recalled an event that I had seen concerning the public in Vienna reacting to an incident on the street which involved a police car suddenly arriving at a scene of commotion and people suddenly stopped moving. When the police car drove away, everything resumed again as if nothing had happened.

**Virginia:** One of the actions we performed included sitting on Viennese bike racks. Each action generated different responses and sometimes they even conflicted with our experiences in our home countries. We tried to walk at the same speed as Jana did back in Palestine. Although Jana did it mostly to avoid disruptions like verbal harassment from men, in Vienna, we created more attention instead.

**Viktoriya:** Thus we discovered how speed changes depending on your context and the social norms. While performing our home country routines, we were experiencing them variously in spaces loaded with different speeds of movement - the same way we were producing different interactions with other people when we changed our pace. People were also creating their own space when they were in a rush and engaged with their own routines. So in public spaces of transition, we noticed a certain avoidance as an attitude towards our actions.

**Viktoriya:** What happened when we reformed our routines? One of the things that we did was sit on the bike racks. We sat there for a while and some people also followed. Through our actions and bodily occupation in this space, we changed the space's dynamics.

**Virginia:** To act is to activate our political agency.

**Jonathan:** Our approach relies on a reflective process, as individuals as well as a research group to consciously examine our perspective on experiences within the city, where our past experiences become ballast for investigating a specific condition. A conscious injection of past routines



also sensitized us to our surroundings by causing us to become more self-conscious by once again disrupting the routines which at first may have been disruptions in themselves.

**Jana:** To establish a material relational approach and a moment of enquiry with the space, and the dynamics of the city, we integrated a different rhythm of practice from our left behind routines into public space. We therefore decided to take a socio-cultural practice popular in the Levant region which is the smoking of the Shisha. The Shisha is a water pipe that is commonly smoked in public spaces to socialize and observe the public. We used the action of smoking the Shisha as an instrument to perform our urban action and to interact with the 'spaces', 'inhabitants' and 'users' and create a new layer of appropriation into the rhythms of practices in the spaces we were present in, not expecting or knowing what we would encounter. But this time our perception of the spatial dynamics would be shaped by the action we would perform and its outcomes.

**Jonathan:** Our journey of inquiry took place through the same route we had taken in the first visit as part of the urban morphology group walk. With a conscious decision to go back the same way,

we wanted to experience urban morphology as a process and create spaces of interaction and unexpected encounters in the lived spaces of everyday life.

**Viktoriya:** What observations did you make while doing your group action, how did you reflect on your surroundings?

**Jana:** We started of at Franz Josef Bahnhof, it was windy, so we chose our spot on the stairs overseeing the square carefully. Behind us was a man smoking a cigarette. In front of us a loud group. It seemed like they were drunk and the music they were playing was loud. We started setting up the Shisha. At first, I suspected that we would create tension with this group with the presence of the shisha, but a few minutes later it seemed like nothing was wrong. Each one of us was busy with his/her own activity until a group of six policemen showed up encircled the loud group in front of us and asked them to turn off the music and leave. The power dynamics in the space suddenly changed, thus tension was raised but we observed carefully and we continued our action and kept an eye on the policemen. However in my mind, the question was, are we going to be the next ones to be kicked away from that space?... although the police didn't pay much attention to us.

**Viktoriya:** In this case, were we as individuals subconsciously attracting people's attention or was our action arousing the attention? What were our bodies communicating while reperforming the routines and were we trying to get more attention from the public than before?

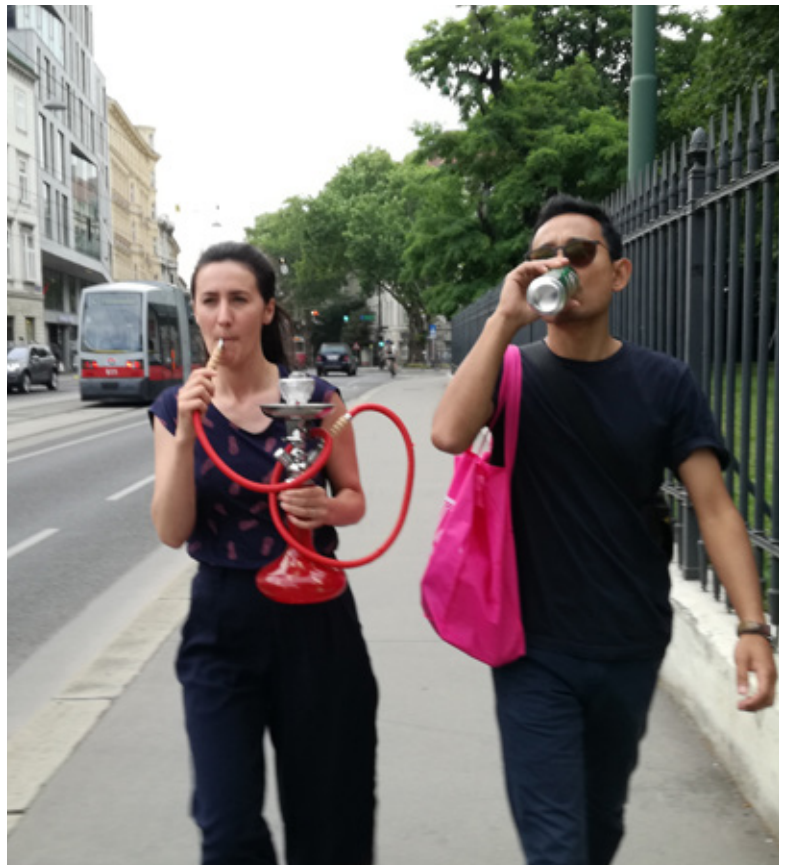
**Virginia:** By consciously reperforming our routines, we make the decision to activate our political agency. This time we do it purposefully and therefore we act out politically rather than through ignorance. In this case, what our bodies, language and attitude communicates asks for a particular kind of attention from the public - an attention that is politically, culturally and socially instilled.

**Jonathan:** Some of the other interesting locations that we experienced were in the Goldenes Quartier, which is an exclusive shopping area in the First District, and Stadt Park which is the city's main park. These spaces were especially interesting due to the contrasting social perception of these spaces, where one is an exclusive space for the socially affluent while the other is an open space for the public. Therefore these spaces inherently contain connotations towards social etiquette and behaviour even though both are spaces open to the public.

**Viktoriya:** How did it feel like for you Jonathan and Virginia to reperform Jana's routine? How do our cultural backgrounds influence our everyday routines in the city of Vienna and do we reflect distinctly on them?

**Virginia:** For sure. I think there are certain social norms that we take with us from certain cultures and cities and sometimes people are able to identify particular routines with particular cultures. On top of this, we also add another layer of personal subjectivity to our routines that perhaps reveals our character and personality.

**Jonathan:** The act of reflection therefore allows us to consciously observe specific conditions as individuals and becomes a point of collision to



understand varied perspectives among group members.

**Virginia:** To us, smoking shisha is a social activity that brings people together. Although it was not in our cultural practice to smoke shisha and that we probably looked somewhat out of place with this object, being in a group and with someone who was experienced validated our action. Through our performance, we borrowed an existing cultural ritual and reinstated it by walking through the streets of Vienna, testing out different locations and observing others reactions towards us. To me, it was about visualising migration and cultural-practices, about temporary space ownership and bringing back something we had left behind as migrants.

**Jonathan:** As I recounted earlier, my experience in Singapore had conditioned me to somewhat stricter social scrutiny and therefore the act of smoking a Shisha seemed somewhat discomfoting as I felt it was something socially disruptive. Yet as we were going through the process it became more natural as I realized that although it garnered attention from passers by, people



were not disturbed by the act and seemed to be simply curious. Also knowing that the police did not intervene at the first location provided support that we were not doing anything that was unacceptable.

**Viktoriya:** While using material artifacts we intensified our relation to a certain space and experienced how its political, social and cultural value also changed our interaction with people within this space.

**Jana:** The development of this material relational strategy using an unconventional object (the waterpipe -Shisha) and our bodies to approach public space, provided us with the opportunity to critically reflect on our roles as main actors in unfolding invisible social contingencies and dimensions and investigating space and spatial dynamics in the city of Vienna.

**Viktoriya:** And then brought our own lived subjective experiences with urban morphology back to theory.

**Virginia:** This image from Madonna's music video with a young man holding and smoking a shisha on the streets reflects the adoption of this cultural practice into pop culture. In Vienna, Jana

reflects on the shisha being a symbol of social status and wealth as seen in the many fancy restaurants offering shisha for 50€ or more. This is not the first time we see cultural practices being engulfed by markets of neo liberal capitalism.

**Jonathan:** Cultural adoption in some ways does provide a point of entry for cultural acceptance or at least relatability. Our own experience with the Shisha showed that people were not alarmed by it as I assume that they understood that there are certain practices that have either migrated or appropriated in a manner that there is a potential for its integration into the present routines of the city.

**Viktoriya:** We approached urban morphology through looking into our own subjectivities, bodily experiences and the accompanying artifacts we brought with us. In this, we developed a sensitivity towards ourselves, our past experiences and what is culturally and socially ingrained in us. How we understand relational space is something that is fluid and dependent on the many seemingly invisible social and material contingencies in space.





# A MOSAIC OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Märzpark | Katrin Hofer,  
Clara Rosc, Teresa Tonndorf

*Our student project took place in Märzpark ("Marchpark"). We tried to capture some parts of a mosaic of everyday life in this park. In doing so, our main question was what image Märzpark users have of their park.*

From the beginning, we wanted to do our project on parks as we found them a really interesting topic to work with in the context of urban morphology, as parks are multidimensional spaces difficult to get to know in all of their facets.

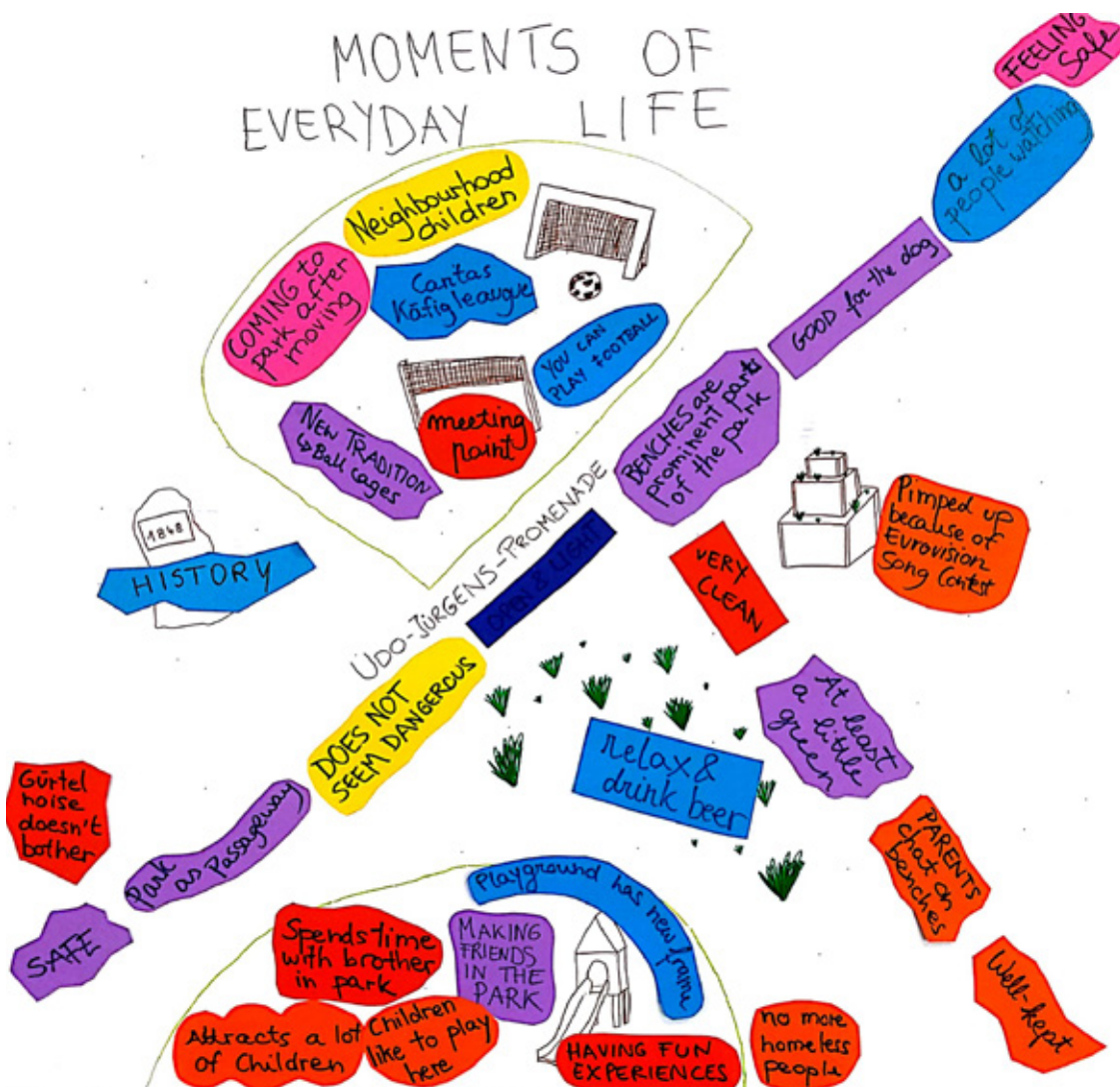
What is also interesting about parks, is that they present meeting points and consumption free spaces that are accessible at all times. We hoped that our research would allow us to understand one park. Our initial idea was to focus on gender issues as they present an everyday topic in our lives. So, of course, we had to think of which park to do our research on.

**Why Märzpark? | Märzpark in the 15th district soon crossed our mind and caught our attention as Katrin lives near by and I grew up in the area.**

Katrin: I had a really bad image of the park in my mind because of the experience I had there last summer. When I thought about Märzpark, it was just this big promenade where men sit all day eying the women passing by.

Clara: Growing up close to Märzpark, I pretty much only experienced the park walking by it on the way from the metro from time to time. Interestingly, I shared Katrin's impression of the park of not being a pleasant place, however, this image mostly resulted from the bad reputation it had in my environment. It was a place I never went to play at as a kid and I wouldn't have wanted to hang out at as a teenager. A couple of weeks ago, for example, my sister, who came to visit my parents, asked us what park she could go to with her infant, saying "I know, not Märzpark, what park is the nicest around here?"

We thought, creating a mosaic of Märzpark would therefore allow us to challenge our initial image of the Märzpark.



**Why Sports?** | We decided on playing some kind of sports to get in touch with people more easily. Also, we thought, a possible language barrier wouldn't be that present doing sports. Our sport of choice became bocce as it doesn't have complex rules and pretty much everyone can play it – you don't have to have certain skills or be physically fit. This is also why we thought we would feel comfortable with it. A big part of bocce is waiting for your next turn, so it would be natural to have a chat, also bocce being a popular game in countries like Croatia, Montenegro

and Bosnia, might also be attracting more people. As playing bocce in a Viennese park is rather unusual to observe, we hoped to draw some attention on us.

**Purpose of Research** | With our research, we hoped to be able to explore the urban morphology of an essential meeting place and thus discover the rhythms of everyday life in the park we chose. The aim of our research was to get a nuanced image of



the park. We wanted to challenge our own perspectives which were one-sided in the beginning and generalised the park itself. We wanted to capture the perceptions and practices of the park users to shed light on some pieces of the huge mosaic that is the Märzpark.

**Research Process** | Playing bocce in the park, we tried to interact with the people spending time there. In the beginning, we were able to attract attention of the park users as we had hoped and were watched by many, however, over time this feeling got less and less. After each day at the park, we would write our memory protocols (feelings, thoughts, observation, memories), not talking about our experiences beforehand to not influence each other.

**Experiencing the Park** | We started going to the park and playing bocce on different occasions. The first time, we didn't actively speak to people to involve them in the game as we were interested whether people would come talk to us, how we would feel playing bocce in the park and how the reactions in general would be. There were a lot of reactions to us playing bocce there, which led to us thinking

this could be a good method to help us engage with people.

A little shift in our feelings towards the park can be observed: In the beginning, the fear of being eyed at and a lot of insecurity about the approach were present. Also, it was unusual for us to try to attract attention while playing sports. First, we felt a little bit like outsiders, but we enjoyed the ambience. After the first few times in the park, it felt more natural to be there, especially as people started to recognize and greet us. We got more comfortable to ask people to join us and in general felt more at ease in the park. In the end, we felt as if we had become a 'part' of the park.

**Everyday Stories** | Being in the park many times, playing bocce, we encountered several people. Most of them come to the park every day and know each other. While the majority lives close by, some also come to the park from further away to be able to meet up with friends or acquaintances. Us playing in the park seemed to evoke some kind of associations for some, like of an elderly woman thinking back to a family day in the Prater with her (now grown up) son playing a similar game. We also had a lengthy conversation with a man on gender issues

in Austria and Turkey, without bringing up the topic ourselves. The conversation starter was that he pointed out how it wouldn't be possible in Turkey for young women like us to be talking to him as a man in a park. Women's suppression seemed to be an important topic for him.

**Shift in Methodology** | At this point, we didn't tell the people we were playing bocce with, that we were conducting research. Soon, we realized that this approach might not be very ethical, especially if we wanted to ask them about their image of the park. We noticed that we wouldn't feel comfortable playing bocce while telling them about our project, but neither first playing bocce and afterwards asking them about the park. This is why we decided to make a cut and instead go into the field talking to people about how they perceive the park and how they would present the park to our colleagues who haven't been in the park yet (image of the park). As we wanted to record them showing us the park or at least record their voice, it was not so easy to find people who agreed on that.

**Obstacles** | In our project, we frequently encountered difficulties: First of all, we felt a kind of language barrier in the park. Sometimes we were able to overcome it using google translator or non-verbal communication, but other times, it was quite hard to explain our project. We felt that our research would have needed a lot more time to be able to capture a more nuanced picture as it involves human contact so much. Maybe the mentioning of university when talking to people evoked some kind of dissociation, even if we weren't able to observe this right away. Even though we chose bocce because of its easy rules, some might have worried about not being good enough at it or not answering our questions sufficiently or as we expected them to. Another issue could be our role as young women in this: Maybe some men were unsure of whether they could approach us?

#### Facts and Figures | 15th district

Vienna's 15th district is rather small but very densely populated. It disposes over less than 10% of green space, a third of which are the garden plots of the Schmelz. This means, that the few open green spaces available are very important (such as the Märzpark). 47% of its inhabitants are foreign born. The district has the fewest cars per person in Vienna and is also the youngest district. The average annual revenue of its inhabitants with only 16 766 Euros (80% of the average viennese annual revenue) makes it the poorest of Vienna's districts.

#### Facts and Figures | Historical Outline

Where the park is today, in 1782, the Schmelzer Friedhof was opened, which was the biggest communal cemetery at the time. Even the revolutionists of the March revolution were buried here, which would later give the park its name. In 1908 the cemetery use was completely abandoned as there was no more need for it because of the central cemetery in Simmering. In 1928 it opened as Märzpark and in 1958 the adjacent Stadthalle, a concert and event hall, was opened. The installation of an underground garage underneath the park happened in the same year (2004) as the remodeling of the park to how it is now.

*The different narratives of the park that we captured form part of the park's morphology. We recognized a plurality of different layers, some of which were overlapping, some of which were hidden and harder to uncover. The different users narratives make up pieces of a mosaic which give the Märzpark its urban form. In a way, we captured snapshots of everyday life that coin the park's morphology at certain moments in time. The image of the park that park users have is diverse and multifaceted, meanings ascribed by users to certain processes shed light on space and spatial practices.*



## AFFECTIVE MORPHOLOGY

Franz-Josefs-Bahnhof. Journal as a method of perceiving space | Elisa Avellini, Tamara Bajic, Milica Ugrinov

*Writing a journal was used as a method of correspondence with the space. Everything that happens is written; this was then a trigger for later thinking. It allowed an analysis of the whole space, people and activities. The method was based on continuous presence in the chosen space as long and as often as possible. There is a clear setting of the urban experiment: no time frame or schedule was defined, the form was free. The journal was written In situ (on spot) which implies a close connection to the topic of urban morphology.*

**Milica:** Day one of my planned visits to the location, determined to be there. I sat down on the steps. I don't know what to expect. Yesterday, when the decision about the project was reached, I felt quite exalted. I might even have been anxious a little. Now I'm cool about it. It's a beautiful day and it's nice out in the sun. How much I love spring. There are no blooming trees here. Nothing indicates it's spring, but you know it is, you can tell by the sun. A construction worker sat down next to me, approximately two meters away. I think he's on his break. Here come two more. Different company, different uniforms:

These guys sat down right behind me, again two meters away. They are surrounding me...or am I the intruder? I was checking out the space for a while more, and then headed to my lectures. I wanted to stay more. Then I bumped Tamara. We laughed. It was like 'Changing of the shifts'.

**Tamara:** I finished lecture and I am going through Boku building to Billa because I'm tired and I want to eat something. While I was recording a video for my friend I met Milica. She was just on FJ station and she told me she sat and drank coffee and saw a bunch of workers who were having a lunch break. Got out of the Billa and there are



two seats attached to the asphalt. They are not a part of McDonalds. There are also chairs on the tram station. No one is sitting on the benches. I just walked passed two policemen.

I think when it is really sunny it is not possible to sit on the square because it is on the sunny side and it is so warm, although the wind is pretty strong. I don't have the desire to sit in the McD part because I didn't buy anything, and also I don't want to go and sit on the stairs. So I'll go to the tram station bench.

This place is very noisy. So many cars and the noise is stronger than the McD part. I think I have to go and hide from the sun. I hear kids screaming and laughing, I think they are from the kindergarten. I wonder where they go and play. The location is good for the parents because it is connected well, but for the kids? Not so much. The only park is the "little Paris", but it is not exactly kids friendly.

**Milica:** I seldom see children here. Actually, what I've noticed is that there are no children here, at all. And there's a kindergarten right here, on the first floor. How strange.

I grew up on a boulevard. I was afraid of nothing, neither the traffic, the homeless nor the local gangs. Plus, I was entirely free to do as I pleased. And I loved that a lot. Lurking around dark alleys.

I was so lonely yesterday, so I was trying to come up with stuff to do to get away from the feeling. Thus, I ended up working late. I couldn't make myself come here. I was afraid that coming here would make me feel more lonely.

A police officer is talking to a beggar. The man was sleeping on a bench and the officer woke him, but didn't make him leave. Might there be a law in this highly-organized country, stipulating that you can sit on bench, but not sleep? Incredible. Who'd have thought. It's allowed to blink, I hope. However, blink frequently. Should you slow down, a police officer might think that you're sleeping. Sleep can not be allowed by this uniformed representative of the law. Someone has to allow stuff, lay down the rules. Sit properly, straighten your back, do not hold your head, it isn't likely to fall off.

I haven't slept enough and I'm aggravated. I have reflected more on this sleeping guy. Is there anything more peaceful than sleep? How could he bother anyone, hurt or insult anyone? He was in his fetal position. Now, he's sitting, like all the good folks do. Everything is alright. Maybe the reason his behavior has been considered disorderly is because peacefulness is not an option.

The steps. Me and the blue collars. The sun is scorching. The atmosphere really reminds one of urban design handbook examples. Everyone is in motion, and some places look like focal points. On the other hand, social inequality is obvious here. To put it bluntly, the scene on the stairs looks like separated gravel of different granulation: the homeless are sitting on the steps, the yuppies are running up and down from top to bottom moving through groups of people sitting on the steps. The costumes are impeccable, and the choreography is rehearsed to perfection. No mixing whatsoever.

I find it surprising that I've never stumbled upon this place before during my four-year stay in Vienna. Except once, back in February, but that didn't go all that well.

**Tamara:** I mostly sat inside or outside McD. This was the place where I felt most at ease and secured. I had a good position to observe, and at the same time I was not so exposed as on the stairs. There I sat only two or three times and each time I was approached by someone.

**Milica:** At the beginning, every day I decided again and again to seat at the stairs. I considered that position more suitable for me and for the experiment. During the time, it became my routine. I changed the position just a few times because of weather conditions.

Today, Tamara and I were supposed to sit on the steps together. Because of rain, we changed the

plan and went into McDonalds. I'd always choose the stairs because, for me, McDonald's isn't public enough. In the sense of private versus public. Having spent a few hours indoors, I think I was wrong. There is interaction between people, just as if we were in a public place. A sort of an American instant agora. There is also an old lady with strange behavior here whom Tamara noticed and monitors.

**Tamara:** Rain is falling. The square is empty like the rain washed away all the people who sit here without any purpose and waste time drinking beer and eating kebabs and cheeseburgers. Even the traffic is slowed down. Trams are waiting longer, moving slower, not honking so much... or it just feels like that.

I met Milica at McD, we are talking about different methods of looking at space. And the lady a have noticed few days ago is also here, eating fish burger and collecting newspapers. Milica says she never noticed her until now and she never would if I didn't mention it. The lady is getting closer to us, Milica thinks it is a man! I think the lady is tripping because now not just one but two persons are looking at her and writing things down. We are going to make her paranoia even worse. Milica said she feels uncomfortable watching the lady and her behavior, sitting down, standing up, cleaning tables etc.

Mr. Pidgeon is also here, and Milica was surprised. She was obviously never at McD.

**Milica:** Pigeons...I'm sitting on a bench under a tree. The steps are still wet from yesterday's rain. This is a completely new angle for me. The geometry of this space is such that I am on a pedestrian island. Admittedly a wider one, shaped like a triangle. An island shaped by traffic. Cars and trams float by, following their predetermined trajectories forming a small, artificial, urban island. It's windy, this island of mine. And noisy. One truck at idle on one side, a tram on the

second, cars on the third. And on the island - two trees, two benches, an ice cream stand and a few passengers waiting to board.

The wind is awfully strong, as if in a storm. There goes the siren (unusual for Vienna) - a howling sound like a call. To sail away, to sail away. And the sun. Now everything is beautifully saturated again. 'The Sky Through the Trees'. Pigeons approached me. They are walking around me. They're so funny bobbing their heads... They are keeping me company. Two pigeon blue pigeons. They are so much fun. Nobody likes them, they call them flying rats. I don't like them either; I don't like when they fly into my personal space. But these two pigeons are cool, they are not aggressive. And what is a city square without pigeons anyway? It doesn't work. They are some sort of fowl street furniture. I'm raising the anchor and leaving.

I am sitting and thinking about a series I watched yesterday. It is called *Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*. It is about a girl who is a Jewish housewife living in New York City in 1958 and she wants to become a stand up comedienne. In one of the episodes she is walking through Washington Square Park and she comes across a group of people, mostly women led by Jane Jacobs. They are there to protest the urban renewal plans of Robert Moses to demolish the park and make a highway. This was a true event whose opposition to the project made Jacobs a local hero. Jane makes a speech in which she says that it is time for people to understand that the cities are more than buildings and streets and that people make up a city.

**Tamara:** I mostly visited the square in the afternoon. It was convenient to "drop by" after or before the lectures. But one night I missed my last tram and I was walking home with a friend and we passed by the FJ station. I was not scared, but it was not so pleasant feeling either. It was strange looking at this big empty space. It had no



character. In that moment I thought about how people definitely give some spaces true meaning and purpose.

**Milica:** This space has two significant features. One of them is the truth and the other one a lie. The truth is that this space is in the service of the railway station and the entire urban setting with human presence is in accordance. The drinkers, the police officers, the fast food restaurants, the supermarkets, McDonald's, the heavy traffic and even the flowers. The design follows function. As for the lie, this huge building is pretending to be a shopping center but it's not. It's lying that it's offering you various facilities and contents, but it doesn't offer you anything. Expectations not met.

**Tamara:** The last day and I am late. Milica was already on the stairs, sitting and writing. I brought my laptop with me to do a Skype interview with Tihomir and to present what we did until this point today. We are on the stairs, having a smoke. I am sleepy and cannot concentrate on anything. Coffee in McD it is.





While talking with Tihomir I saw the old lady walking in. She sat at the table next to the window. At one point she turned to us and smiled right as Tihomir asked us what our experience from all of this is. She is, definitely. And Mr. Pigeon and cigarette man and postmen, policemen, crowds in front of Billa on Sundays. For me, the experience are the people I have noticed and their relationship with this place. Depending on who occupied it, the square was sometimes relaxing, sometimes dangerous, smelly, dirty, busy, family oriented, nice place for eating an ice cream. Sometimes it was annoying to come here, sometimes it was rewarding. I feel like I know a little more about Vienna in general, although every 'Bezirk' has a story of its own.

Personally, I would not come here to hang out or drink coffee with friends. Just two blocks away, there are much prettier places. This is a place to do your shopping, chores, travel, and switch trams.

**Milica:** The last day of my scheduled visits here. I'm observing. I'm observing and trying to come to some kind of conclusion on the spot. Everything is still busy and moving, moving by. Intersecting trajectories of people and roads. Maybe I could say that I know this place much better than others. Much better than many other city landscapes. But I don't find it close. I feel neither joy, nor fulfillment, nor pleasure. More of a void, like when something is coming to an end. As if it is the end.

6.6.2018 – A letter from Elisa to Milica and Tamara

## *Dear Milica and Tamara,*

*I tried to develop my thoughts on your journals by writing a sort of journal myself. I divided the following text into three sections: the first one looks at the very first days of your stay in the square, the second one looks at the development of your experience during mid-May, the third one looks at your final days in the square. I tried underline some aspects of your affection to the morphology of the square which I think have emerged from my reading.*

### *Late April*

*The study onsite is about to start and it looks like Milica is starting to fear she might not fit in that place. She is sitting on the steps of the square. She is feeling as the “intruder” while sitting on the steps. This feeling becomes even stronger when she acknowledges that those steps have a meaning for the workers who gather there. However, since the people gathering on the steps are construction workers, she is feeling a sense of familiarity, remembering her own experience in a construction site as an engineer. Somehow, I feel like the steps are starting to be part of Milica’s past experience and memory. Now she needs to go but if she did not have a lecture she would have stayed more: being there allows good memories from the past (and I think from a different country) to emerge, right from those steps.*

*In order to begin her stay in the square, Tamara decides to enter Billa first and buy something to eat. She then decides to sit on the tram station benches. Since she has not bought anything from McDonalds she would feel uncomfortable sitting at their tables outside. The noise of the traffic is affecting her stay, together with the strong sun from which she cannot find a good shelter. She decides to walk around the square: the sun and the noise are making it difficult for her to keep staying in the same spot. She would rather walk and look at all the shops in the square.*

*The following day, a group of teenagers at the McDonalds captures her attention. They are spending their time there and she is curious of the dynamics within the group. Maybe it reminds her of her teenager years? A few days later, she is once again in the square and still sitting at the McDonalds. If for Milica the steps are starting to feel a reassuring spot, for Tamara the McDonalds is. The stairs are not a good place for her, especially if she is there alone. She feels more comfortable at the McDonalds, where she can “hide” a bit if she wants to. One day has passed, and she is sitting once again in the McDonalds, consuming something. She feels the need to draw what she is observing: a worker of the McDonalds cleaning the tables.*

*Only a day later, Milica is in the square and decides to sit on the steps again. I think that for her the steps are a good point of observation as well as of controlling the area. Even though, a few days back, sitting on the steps made her recall pleasant memories, I think that she is not completely comfortable with spending a lot of time in the square. Better to choose a good spot from where to have a reassuring look at all possible “threats”. I think that to her one of the “threats” is the fact that the big glazed building standing on the square has always failed her expectations. She keeps relating it to a shopping centre, then realising every time that it is not. She knows that the Donau canal is very close to the square but she cannot find any traces of that proximity, nothing to indicate a connection with the water.*

### *Mid May*

*Tamara is sitting once again at McDonalds, eating. She is sitting at "her table". At this point she recognises McDonalds as a safe and comfortable space, where she could spend some of her time. She is changing her view of the square towards a more positive opinion. After all, "her table" is a good spot for drinking coffee and doing some work, or maybe chatting with a friend. The trees in the square make her feel in a protected space.*

*She is starting to notice people who are habitu  of the square and of McDonalds in particular. I think that this process of recognising people who are familiar with the place is helping her feeling at ease there. She has realized that her attention keeps focusing on the people in this square rather than the features of the space, but she cannot help it. She starts looking at what happens on the steps. She is not going there, but she is watching from her safe spot at McDonalds. She wishes Milica was there with her: maybe together they could have sat on the steps...*

*The following day Milica has changed her usual spot on the steps. Now she is sitting in the McDonalds, waiting for Tamara. Today it is raining and they are sitting indoor. Even though she thought that sitting inside the McDonalds would not be a good spot compared to the steps, by the end of her stay she has changed her way of looking at it. Maybe the McDonalds is not just a private space in the dynamics of the square..*

*Tamara is quite surprised in realizing that Milica has never noticed the people she has been keeping observing in and out of the McDonalds. They now separate. As she continues her observation, she feels like the pace of the square is becoming slower and slower. Maybe as the McDonalds is becoming more and more familiar she is starting to notice smaller details and this affects her perception of time.*

*Now the rain has stopped and Milica can change spot. She is sitting on a bench under a tree and she has the impression of being on an "island". This island is different from the one she lives in (the second district): this island is surrounded by traffic instead of water. Nevertheless, this feeling of "isolation" is not bothering her but it is strengthening her connection with the square: the island-Franz Josef Bahnhof is now a bit more like the island-second district. No matter how strong the wind is, how noisy the cars are, the island she is sitting in is becoming a safer place than before. Still, there is an unresolved space in the island: the glazed building, standing there like a whale ashore. It is difficult to keep concentrating on the whale. The attention of Milica is now on much smaller things: a couple of pigeons, "flying details" of the square, that is contributing to making her feel at home in this island of traffic.*

### *Late May*

*The following Sunday Tamara is in the square again and she can feel a division in the square. On one side, the people gathering around Billa are making her feel unsafe. On the other side, different group of people sitting on the steps are communicating to her a safer atmosphere. She is not feeling like staying. She can sense some "tension" in the air and even her spot at McDonalds is not safe enough for her to decide to stay. This is not the first time she is feeling the necessity to leave the square. A few weeks before, she felt the need to leave to place as soon as she arrived.*

*After one day, her feeling of discomfort in the square seems to grow and she is starting to feel bad about it. Anyhow, she cannot change it: she needs to leave the square and go home.*

*One day later and Tamara has changed spot in the square! She is now sitting on the steps and I think she is*

enjoying it. She is starting to notice some details that she has missed till this point, like the numerous bikes in the square. She is looking at people working in the square. It is like a choreography: workers from the post office going in and out of the shop.

Tamara writes again of her experience in the square a couple of days later. I am not sure where she is sitting in the square this time, she does not say that. However, her short journal of the day captures my attention. I also recently watched the same tv series she is writing about. I feel a bit closer to her and to the square even if I am in another city and for some reason I can almost picture her sitting (on the steps? Or maybe at her “safe spot” at McDonalds?).

It is Tamara last day of her journal. She keeps stressing how central observing the people in the square has been for her during this study. Through her observation of people, she could understand a bit better their relationship with the physical, morphological aspects of the square. However, I think that her affection to the morphology of the square has been very diverse, according to the different people she has found every time.

After one day, Milica spends her last day in the square too. The rain has not let her stay for too long in the square. She feels the need to come to some conclusion. Maybe some design considerations? She thinks that the space does not have enough trees or green space. But is it really the point of this study? She starts feeling uncomfortable again, like the first days of her study. She feels the need to leave the space. However, I can see from her writing that behind her discomfort there is something more. I think she is a bit sad of leaving the “island” and its “whale” that keeps watching over the flows of people passing by.

I think I can see a change also in the picture we took at the beginning and at the one Milica took at the very end of her journal. The point of view from where the pictures are taken is quite different. In April, she took a picture from the top of the square. In May it looks like Milica did not want to represent the square as a whole, acknowledging a different dimension of the square by looking at “partial” (but maybe at that point more familiar) pictures of the square. Whether in April we had the necessity of climbing up the escalator to capture the whole space of the square from the top, in May she felt comfortable taking a picture representing a detail of the square, like the kiosks.

Reading the journals Tamara and Milica sent me, I had the chance to immerse myself in their perception of the square. Through their words, I could “see” their uncertainties, apprehension, comfort while doing their fieldwork. The journals have produced an emphatic response from my side, making me better understand their relationship with the place. In doing so, my own perception of the place has changed. The short and compressed memories I had of the time I physically spent there, have now started to mix with their experiences and personal memories. Sharing small glimpses of their own stories and seeing how they were related to their experience of the square had a big impact on my reading. This has shaped my own (virtual) experience of the very same square they physically experienced.

Yours sincerely

Elisa



## THE SPACE RESEARCHERS

| Alexander Hauff,  
Emilie Wöllauer Montoya,  
Miriam Kühler

*Our Project deals with the ACTiN Park, a playground in Vienna's periphery, which is heavily used by the youth. There are two aspects to the project, on one side the physical frame and the other on the legal framework, which work together to empower youth in public space.*

The physical frame is an innovative piece of playground equipment. It is a permanent metal structure, which serves as the basis for various equipment modules which can be attached and detached as needed. In this way, the frame can react flexibly to the changing needs of the youth who use it.

On the other side is a critique of the regulations governing public spaces. Through this project it became apparent how strict the current regulations are, and the detrimental effect they have on public spaces. In order to make more successful public spaces of higher quality, the regulations need to be relaxed, in order to make more spontaneous and innovative solutions possible.

Our project takes place on Vienna's periphery, in the 22nd district. Separated from the historical centre by the Danube, the district is characterized by its varied structure. The UN City, agricultural fields, traditional villages, and large scale housing projects are all present in the district.

Our project area is situated at the heart of a neighbourhood of social housing blocks from the 70s. It is a park surrounded by three schools, the youth centre, and the aforementioned blocks. For this reason the park is a hotspot for the youth, at times attracting over 200 youth in a single evening.



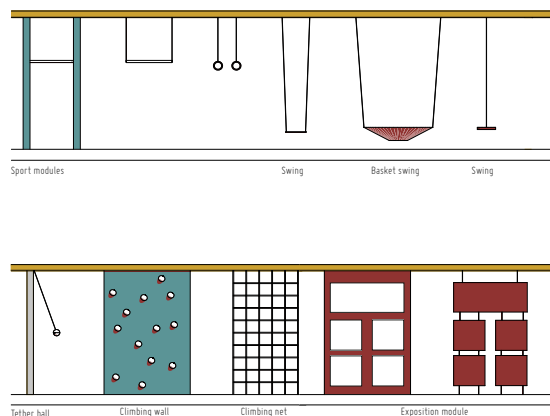
The ACTiN Park is special due to the history behind its creation. Originally a schoolyard, fenced off to everyone else, it was opened up 20 years ago to solve a lack of public space for the youth in the area. This was accompanied by a participative process to redesign the park. Now the park is a so-called 'multiple use' space, being shared between the school, the local youth centre, and the surrounding neighbourhood. The park is furthermore special due to the constant supervisions and management by the youth centre, which is always looking out for the youth.

This shared structure has its drawbacks however. Due to the mixed legal management across four different city magistrate departments, it is difficult to implement any changes to the park.

The success of the park can be largely attributed to the efforts of the youth centre, which fights for the interests of the youth with regards to the park. Due to the complicated bureaucracy however, this can be a challenge. The youth centre gets around this however, by taking advantage of grey areas and splitting responsibilities in order to implement their own informal solutions. One example of this is their creation of a series of wood pallet lounges to solve a lack of seating after their attempts to get seating through official channels failed. The popularity of these wooden



Possible modules





benches show the success that this informal approach leads to.

An essential part of our project is the participative approach we took early on. Here, this meant we had to talk with the youth. Together with the youth centre we developed a series of workshops through which we got to know the youth better, and learned about how they use and perceive the park. An important concept during this phase was that of 'the space researchers' meaning, we represented researchers, out to learn about this space, while the youth are the 'space experts' who teach us.

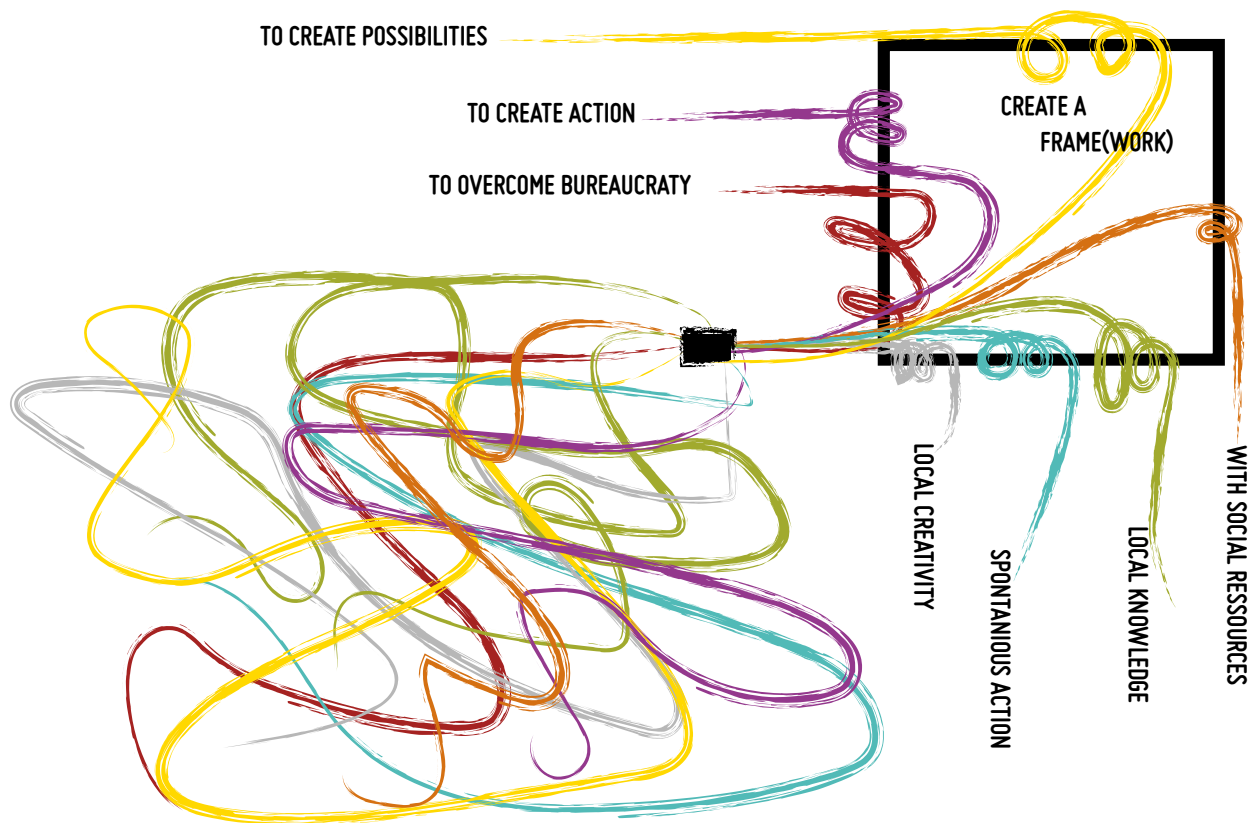
These youth workshops were a challenge, as the youth require a different approach as adults. Out of the workshops we held with the youth, we learned that all parts of the park are heavily used except for one area: a square with three climbing poles. None of the youth were even aware of the purpose of these three poles. As this area is unused and also large, with 140m<sup>2</sup>, we decided it would be the perfect place to implement an intervention. The concept is based on multiple ideas, however the core of it is based on empowering youth, and easing the bureaucracy surrounding public spaces.

Public spaces for the youth have to be designed

differently, as the youth use and perceive these differently. The project works with the spontaneous action and creativity of the youth giving them a frame to express themselves. The result of the participatory process and resulting concept is 'The Frame.'

This frame is a basic structure consisting solely of tubes, anchored into the ground. The frame however gains life through the modules which are attached to it. This is the power of the frame, in that the fixed structure is flexible in the possibilities it creates. Various modules can be attached onto the frame, or removed and repositioned. As needs change, the frame changes with it.

All sorts of modules can be built for the frame. Possible modules are climbing walls, swings, benches, or sports equipment. The idea however, is that the youth centre and the youth can also design and build new modules, which they can then attach. In this way the frame continuously adapts, without heavy construction being necessary. Once they are put together, the modules simply need to be attached to the frame, and old modules stored. With traditional equipment, the entire piece of equipment would need to be disposed, and new equipment set up. The frame gets around this through the use of these modules, and allows quick changes.



A challenge for the frame is the set of laws governing playgrounds, which exist due to liability and safety issues. These included for example regulations on fall heights, ground padding and buffer zones around moving elements like swings. The frame deals with this challenge, by differentiating between formal and informal modules. Formal modules follow a strict manual, to ensure they follow regulations and can be left unattended on the frame, as they are deemed 'safe.' Informal modules can also be mounted however, only when a youth worker is present. This allows more flexibility while dealing with liability issues.

Over the course of this project it has become apparent that too much focus is laid on issues of safety and liability when dealing with public

spaces. While safety is important, the regulations resulting from this ideology have gone overboard, and get in the way of creating innovative attractive public spaces. The youth centre's DIY solutions, such as the benches and temporary volleyball nets, show that informal, less 'regulated' approaches can be very successful, without causing damage. Indeed the benches are the most loved aspect of the park. For this reason, it is important, that there be more flexibility when dealing with public space, especially regarding the use of informal or locally driven solutions.





# PORTO EXPERIENCED

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# PORTO EXPERIENCED

| Tihomir Viderman

Participants of the Porto Intensive Workshop were invited to produce new knowledge on Porto's urban morphology. Faced with the challenge to produce scientifically sound knowledge about a new context within a span of only few days, TU Wien's participants used this opportunity to reflect on own sense of the familiar and unfamiliar. This endeavour was embedded in an embodied epistemological account of urban morphology and called for a multi-sensory exploration of urban space. While the entire stay in Porto has shaped both our experiences and representations of space that we have produced, a structured exploration of the city was condensed into one day. Using both local and transnational contacts I curated a dense day during which we got to know several knowledgeable locals and their varied spaces. We embarked on the tour at noon, finishing after midnight. Our moving through the city included multiple travels by metro as well as covering various distances on foot at various paces in different dynamics. We met the local actors in different settings, in the range from enclosed protected spaces to central public spaces. We moved through space with them, we were also stationary, either standing or sitting. The day included a plurality of bodily rhythms and (affective) situations, of which many have gone undocumented. In this sense we worked only with snapshots of our spatial practices and bodily experiences. Following Schurr and Strüver's (2016) methodological considerations, we sought to include all our senses in making research, to immerse into the researched space with the whole body, soaking up smells, sounds, moods, and paying attention to own feelings and in particular those insights which are difficult to

articulate through visual or discursive representations. We challenged ourselves to step out of the professionally determined discursive domain and seek out what Setha Low conceptualizes as 'embodied space'. Each documented situation, regardless whether occurring as part of a scheduled, if not curated performance, or unpredictably emerging without plan, has been reflected on as "the location where human experience, consciousness and political subjectivity take on material and spatial form" (2017: 94-95).

Based on the insights from the curated day and reflecting on bodily experiences of a plurality of scheduled and unplanned encounters, we have produced snapshots of everyday life in Porto. These snapshots prioritized affective dimensions of experienced situations over narrated contents. Instead of systematizing often contradictory pieces of rationalized information about urban transformations, we aimed at a notation of and reflection on embodied relations with research subjects, paying particular attention to own bodily experiences and spatial practices. The focus was not on narratives that were presented, but rather on how and where they were told, including bodily dispositions, movements and encounters, shared affects and feelings, perceived relations between human and non-human bodies and objects, as well as what was implied but not articulated. In order to document affective notions of space, the researchers were invited to document their observations, insights, experiences and reflections using methods they felt most comfortable with. This work systematically, albeit intuitively, explored how knowledge is produced in embodied space, with regard to bodily experiences, bodily rhythms, previous embodied

knowledge as well as perceived and lived differences. The body at the heart of considerations of urban morphology influenced the way meaningful space is understood. It was not only the subject of inquiry but affective relations have extended into the work space of the research group at the hostel, and has been modulated into the drawings and texts that the research group produced.

In the first step, during the first workshop's week, instead of developing a linear narrative, a rather heterogeneous material was collected and printed on cards to use for engaging other workshop participants in an open-end exchange on Porto's spaces. Their participation revolved around seemingly simple tasks of searching through the cards and looking for countable information, as for example collecting cards with the highest number of squares or people. The way how the workshop participants were invited to immerse in the complex content of the cards was meant to recreate the way people immerse in the city: at first it can be a rather ordinary goal of finding the shortest route between the two addresses, or to a shop. On the way a passer-by is presented with a vast range of complex information and experiences ready to be engaged with. What she will make of it depends on bodily experience and knowledge. This exercise was also meant to be a reflection on the task to meaningfully engage with urban morphology of an unknown city. Each card presented itself with a plurality of possible meanings and options. Some event participants genuinely engaged into space of the cards, drawing even quite abstract relations, as for example offering a card with a panoramic view of the city as the highest number of squares, for all the grid windows and building shapes, or the card "I can't compete against rich Danes, French and Germans coming to the city and buying real estate". The participatory event, however, was also met with criticism, which was chiefly directed at the fact that no clearly understandable or applicable information was presented. This feedback shows

an extent to which the study of urban morphology has been removed from embodied relations in order to extract precise information within rigidly demarcated time frames.

In the second step, during the second workshop's week, some students joined other research groups and applied experience-based methodology to expand the inventory of the approaches that are based on visual analysis and behavioural methodologies. At the same time the remainder of the group supported by a local student systematized the collected heterogeneous material in the process of co-writing. A significant work has been invested to analyse, discuss and reflect on the cards with the goal of developing a narrative which would be more linear and easy to grasp, yet equally respectful of a variety of bodily experiences modulated into the cards. A local student who joined the group contributed clearly localized perspective on Porto's spatial qualities, which was at the same time informative and critical. His tacit knowledge drew on the personal experience of living in the city and contributed an insightful perspective on the relation among symbols of power in central public space. His observation focused on the topological relation between São Bento train station (built at the place of the demolished Convent of São Bento da Avé Maria) and Porto's cathedral up on the hill at the other end of the axis. This knowledge was added to the text as a qualitative information. It also inspired the rhythm markings, which were introduced into the text's structure as a playful means of reflecting on rhythmic consonances and dissonances during research work. The rhythm markings were implemented in the text while sitting on the stairs of the train station. São Bento.

# PLAY WITH EXPERIENCES

WEEK 1, EPUM Workshop |

Elisabeth Arnold, Pedram Dersch,  
Alexander Hauff, Isidora Šobot,  
Milica Ugrinov, Emilie Wöllauer Montoya

*The first week in Porto was coined by manifold experiences we made, both in the academic setting of the workshop and in the city. We got to know our colleagues from the partner universities in Porto, London, Rome and Nicosia, heard about the different approaches to urban morphology and started with our own explorations of Porto's downtown.*

Each team prepared two presentations on the application of their respective approaches to the city: one in the middle of the week and one final. We started by not only researching behind the screen, but went outside to get a feeling for Porto. On Tuesday our tutor Tihomir arranged meetings with people from Porto. We visited an alternative art gallery, walked through the centre with a housing activist and had drinks with a local artist. These people gave us enormous insights on the problems and developments the city faces and all had differing opinions on these. For the first presentation we shared these experiences with our colleagues. For the final presentation we wanted to give the audience the impression of how many experiences we made and what we learned from these and - most importantly - that everyone has made different experiences. We produced over one hundred small cards with text, graphics, paintings or pictures, each one representing specific embodied experiences we had made through out our week, and wanted our audience to interact with those. We prepared a game with a certain method of interaction. Our audience was asked to count elements (e.g. circles) on these cards and the one with the most wins the round. People were interacting with the cards and a finding of the game was, that everyone experienced/counted differently. Some approached in a reserved manner, irritated by the unusual setting of the "presentation", others reacted excited. We noticed students playing with the cards who haven't been taking up the word in the previous presentations, others could not identify with the rather "disordered" pile of information. Everyone made a different experience, which was part of our message for the audience: The way we are shaped by our material and social surroundings determines our experiences, perceptions and actions. The playful manner of presenting was chosen in order to leave behind the common format of narrating one single storyline and foster personal reflection on our actions and experiences. Therefore, this reflective attitude is a very important starting point for researching the city, its fabric and last but not least the people and interactions that shape it.





**BEFORE MIRA** | <http://miragaleries.net>

On the more depressed zone of the city of Porto, Campanhã, two galleries were born that have Photography as main protagonist and that occupy two of the eleven warehouses in the Street of Mirafior. An overview of the archives locates its construction between 1901 and 1927 that served the commerce done through Campanhã train station. The storage of wine, the manufacture of fishing nets, office supplies and others, have seen the decadence brought about by new routes and new means of transportation.

Most of the abandoned warehouses looked doomed to collapse. It was its size (about 200 square meters), its height, the granite walls and the majestic doors that led photographers Manuela Matos Monteiro and João Lafuente to acquire two warehouses that are nowadays two galleries: Espaço MIRA and MIRA FORUM. One of the concerns was to recover both places respecting its plot and materials of origin and are now considered examples of a successful rehabilitation. The initiative of the two photographers has contaminated others wills and, at the moment, the eleven warehouses are occupied mostly to people related to the arts.

**MIRA FORUM**

MIRA FORUM gallery is the second warehouse on Mirafior street with the number 155. It is an interdisciplinary place that, for the great diversity of supply, has been assumed as a cultural center in Campanhã. Exhibitions, talks and book launches, conferences, debates and gatherings, photographic journeys, concerts, plays or dance shows are some of the activities that highlight the gallery. Besides its programatic range, MIRA FORUM strives to establish close relations with the community and its institutions.

**MIRA FORUM in numbers**

70 exhibitions  
44 talks  
40 book releases  
37 music concerts

5 EDITIONS OF MIRA MOBILE PRIZE (a international contest that promotes mobile photography)

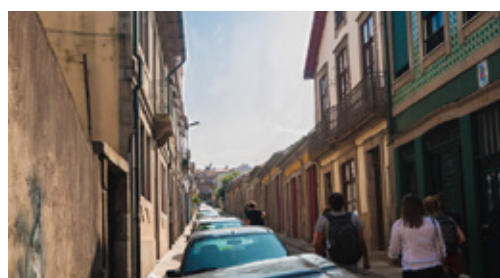
Mirafior Street, nº 155, 4300 - 334, Porto - Portugal  
(+351) 929 113 431 / [miraforum@miragaleries.net](mailto:miraforum@miragaleries.net)  
Tuesday - Saturday 15:00 to 19:00

I call that day yesterday. This is because when I began to think of him as a Day, he had already happened yesterday. And at this point every measurement of the flow of time ceases. We will continue without chronology. I say that the Day happened yesterday, although there are two days between that yesterday and today. Maybe I want to keep it close, to keep it fresh; to conserve it in formalin ... no way! He's already stuck there where he is, so I can climb the branches of his experiences as a monkey. I have decided, I will only mention what is important. What matters to me. And the monkey is smart, he knows what is important!

Sećam se (naravno da se sećam šta je bilo juče): prvi deo dana proveden na faksu – gomila različitih informacija, predavača, publike, pristupa, ličnosti... Ali, ja kviska stavljam na drugu polovinu. Prvo da šacnem jedan deo, pa da ga seciram do detalja. Odakle mi sad ovaj medicinski rečnik? Prvo formalin, pa sad uzorci tkiva... (a kako to paše uz temu, nemam pojma, nećemo na silu, boli me glava). Evo ipak ima paralela, bljutavo patetična, ali nametljiva: grad kao organ – mozak. (Ako može pluća grada - parkovi, srce grada – centar, krvotok – saobraćajna mreža... može valjda i mozak). I sad uzmi mozak i napravi jedan 2d ili 3d model. Pa šta onda znaš o njegovom funkcionisanju? Znaš li šta taj mozak misli, šta planira, čega se seća, čega se doseća, šta je zaboravio, potisnuo...

## The warehouses

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# THE PINEAPPLE STORY

## STORY BEHIND THE EXPERIENCE- PINEAPPLE AT MIRA FORUM

4.9.2018. / 4PM

Pineapple was waiting for us at Campanha. We were late and that made us oblivious to our surroundings. When we hurriedly arrived there, Tihomir wanted to present a gift to our host so he rushed into the store. Many were there but our Pineapple stood out. We picked it and passed it along to Emi. She took good care of it. She introduced it to the MIRA gallery. There, we were welcomed by Manuela. She opened the door of her gallery to us, students from Vienna. When she saw the Pineapple, she was happy and grateful. Her eyes sparkled. Our Pineapple friend helped us to open her heart. She thought it was very special and decided to treat it as a piece of art. The gallery space was empty and only one small table was inside. Manuela placed the Pineapple on the table and an art piece was born. That made me feel happy and like I belong to the space I have yet to see. We left the Pineapple carefully positioned, for the other visitors to see. Manuela continued to speak with a sparkle in her eye and walked us through the gallery. She talked about the history of MIRA in much detail, passionately pointing out at all the elements of its development. Her storytelling in combination with morphology of the gallery took us through the portal into another dimension. She treated us like friends and even let us go behind the visitor's area. In the backyard we talked informally and she let us ask everything we wanted to know. She talked about the activities in the gallery and then about the plants she carefully chose for her small garden. Her friendliness and enthusiasm were captivating and made me stop feeling like a stranger to this place. We had wine and cookies to celebrate this interesting visit. On our way out, we passed by our Pineapple friend and returned to reality. When we went out, we could notice the real Campanha. We walked slowly towards our next meeting.

## The Warehouses

P I N E A P P L E S   A N D   S T E P S

After buying a pineapple from the fruit stand on the corner, we went into a small street which immediately veered to the left. Here I was represented with a beautiful view! On the left there were again buildings in the traditional style, though not as tall as in the city center. The stretch of road, paved in uneven cobblestone and straight as an arrow, had a slight incline, But on the right was a row of beautiful buildings, identical in form and style but not in color, their roofs mirroring the slightly sloped terrains like a subtle staircase. This colorful row of stepped buildings was the warehouses.

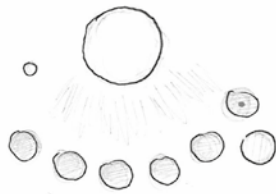
I recall (of course I remember what was yesterday!): the first part of the day spent in the seminar room at the university – an overflow of information, lecturers, audiences, approaches, figures... But I'm put my Kvisko on the second half of the day<sup>1</sup>. First I shall scrutinize one part, so I'll dissect it to the last detail. How did I now get to this medical vocabulary? First formalin, and now tissue samples... How this fits the topic, I have no clue. We will not force it, my head hurts. However, there are parallels, blatantly pathetic, but intrusive: the city as an organ - the brain. If we think of parks as lungs of the city, the center as the heart of the city, the traffic network as the bloodstream... then, maybe, also the brain... And now take the brain and make a model. So, what can you figure out about its functioning by looking at the model? Do you know what this brain thinks, what it plans, what it remembers, what it achieves, what it has forgotten, suppressed...

1 Kvisko is part of popular culture in former Yugoslavia, a joker that contestants could win in a TV quiz show and exchange to double their score.



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zu Besuch  
bei Manuela

Ja zovem taj dan juče. Kada sam počela da razmišljam o njemu kao danu, on se desio juče. I tu prestaje svako merenje protoka vremena. Dalje ćemo bez hronologije. Tvrdim da je taj dan za mene još uvek juče, iako je između mene i juče prošao još jedan ceo dan. Možda ja želim da ga držim blizu, da bude i dalje svež; da ga konzerviram u formalinu... ma kakvi! On je već zaglavljen tu gde jeste, pa mogu da se pentram po granama događaja kao majmun. Odlučila sam, spomenuću samo ono što je važno. Ono što je meni važno. A majmun je pametan, on zna šta je važno!



## Happy and engaged with the city, its fabric and materialities

Manuela and her husband installed the photography gallery Mira. She curated the meeting in a formal manner and wanted her stories to be heard and felt by everyone. The way she told the stories was very enthusiastic and positive. The gallery was installed in a very poor part of the town, that other people refer to as a 'No-Go Area'. She was proud of this fact, because they are including and supporting the area and having good connections. The material in the gallery was very thoughtfully chosen, as it relates to Portugal and Porto with the stone walls, cork roof and grapes in the garden.

Manuela was not relating the stories to the big changes of the city, as she was focused a lot on her own actions. She has made the experience that it is possible to change the city with an attitude of optimism and a strong will. She sees fabric as something that can be changed in this way.

She is influenced by many dimensions of materiality and includes those in her own actions (designing space) and reproducing experiences that she has made throughout her life.

Manuela even posted our visit in the gallery on Facebook and used our researchers interest in her actions, to reproduce her experiences.

*Zu Besuch bei Manuela.*

### **Manuelas Farbe**

Sie strahlt mit ihrem ganzen Körper Eleganz und Zufriedenheit aus. Eine Art von Zufriedenheit, die ich bewundere. Sie wirkt gepflegt und stilvoll, und wenn sie spricht ist es fließend und es passt alles zusammen. Es ist, als ob ihre Farbe auf die Räume um sie herum abfärbt. Solange ich in den Räumen bin habe ich das Gefühl auch zufrieden zu sein, ich will eigentlich gar nicht weitergehen.

I onda se pojavi dvorište gospođe Manuela u senci vinove loze, taj čarobni intimni prostor u Portu u koji su kročila i naša stopala. Rekla bih da je tamo sve stvarno, da tamo sve raste i buja – i grožđe, i koncerti, i izložbe, nove knjige, nastaju studije, studenti, umetnici, umetnička dela, ideje, ljudi. Tu je sve stvarno. Raste. Može da se opipa, kao da je materijalno. Osetim opet da je granit pod mojim dlanovima na onim zidovima, neujednačenim površinama koji tek u milisekundama zasvetle; onaj svetložuti kamen boje divljih mačaka koji je tamo bio stvaran, dok nije bilo svega drugog, dok nije ni bilo fotografije, dok nije izmišljena. Ti zidovi bez fotografija kao eksponata, ti prazni granitni zidovi sa vidljivom teksturom uokviravaju moje sećanje na jučerašnji dan. Drže ga tamo zaštićeno.



## The Warehouses

B I G   A N D   G R A Y

Getting out of the wide tram / metro car I was greeted by a large gray station with more platforms than São Bento. It had the feeling more of being an industrial station rather than a passenger station. Getting out of the station there was a mismatch in my eyes between the large station with its huge square and the smaller more town-like buildings on the surrounding streets more in Porto's traditional style.

### *Pretend*

I enter the street and stand in front of an old house. At first glance, it seems to me like one of many we've seen in the center. It catches my eye because I've just been in the renovated rooms of the gallery, where even the raw stone walls seem neat. Only after a few steps to the side, as my attention already lies with the paving stones of the way, someone begins to point to the house. I stop and look back. It is only then that I realize that it is just a façade, held in place by a few support beams from behind. Where, in my imagination, everyday life was just going on in old apartments, rubble and vegetation are beginning to recapture the space. It seems to me that I have been cheated in some way. The road is suddenly different.



## The Warehouses

GRANITE, WOOD & CORK

We were greeted by Manuela, who runs the art gallery with her husband. We were ushered in through a very short narrow hallway. The wall on the left large granite blocks, the wall on the right smooth and painted white, it immediately opened into a larger, but not too large, elongated intimate room. The room was deceptively simple, showing off the original structure of granite blocks and a ceiling of wood and cork. The sliding doors behind us were the old massive wooden door.

## The Warehouses

M A N U E L A

Manuela herself was a wondrous woman. A small well dressed woman, in a black dress and Lila jacket, roughly in her 50s Manuela talked with a passion about every part of the gallery. Whether it be the granite walls uncovered during the renovation, the patio covered in grape vines which grew at astonishing speed, or the large white door which could divide the first gallery in different configurations, Manuela was proud of all of it, explaining every detail of the institution she brought to life. At the end of our time with her, our hostess brought us a shot glass of port wine and small cookies as a parting gift.

And then the courtyard of Mrs. Manuela appears in the shade of the grapevine, a magic intimate space in Porto, in which we set our feet. I would say that everything is real, that everything grows there - grapes, concerts, exhibitions, books, studies, students, artists, works of art, ideas, people. There is everything growing. It can be touched, as if it was material. I feel again the granite under my palms on those walls, its uneven surfaces that light up in milliseconds; its pale yellow color of wild cats. It was real there, before there was nothing else, before photography was even invented. These walls without photographs as exhibits, these empty granite walls with visible texture make my memories of yesterday's Day.



Manuela Matos Monteiro

Direção bei MIRA artes performativas  
 Direção bei MIRA FORUM  
 Direção bei Espaço MIRA  
 Author bei Porto Editora  
 Professora bei Ministério da Educação (Portugal)  
 Hat als Vereadora bei Câmara Municipal do Porto gearbeitet  
 Wohnt in Porto  
 Aus Porto  
 Von 2.208 Personen abonniert  
 Verwaltet Espaço MIRA, MIRA FORUM und MIRA artes performativas

Fotos

Freunde · 1 gemeinsame/r Freund/in

Manuela Matos Monteiro hat ein Album geteilt.  
 5. September um 23:47 · 🌐

Um abacaxi no MIRA  
 Übersetzung anzeigen

Manuela Matos Monteiro ist hier: MIRA FORUM.  
 5. September um 23:29

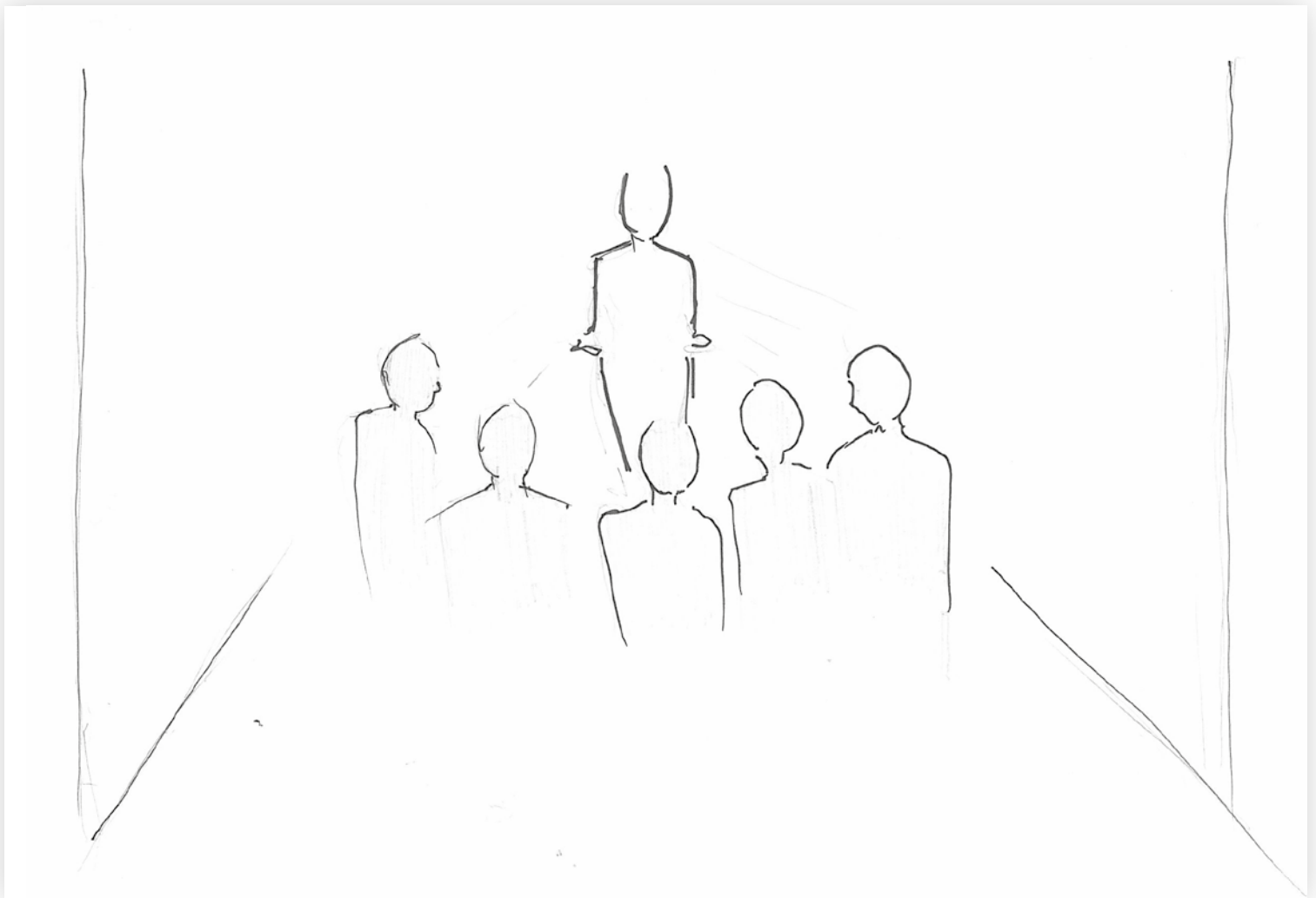
Um grupo de estudantes de mestrado de Viena de Austria acompanhados pelo professor Tihomir, está na FEUP em formação durante cerca de 10 dias. No seu segundo dia de estadia no Porto, vieram a MIRAfor para conhecer as galerias: os armazéns reabilitados e os projetos das 3 galerias.  
 Conversamos muito até porque o pálio convida a contar. Admiraram a ramada, o limoeiro e as cheirosas ervas. Provaram pela primeira vez vinho do Porto e gostaram muito.  
 Trouxeram um abacaxi que logo encontrou lugar num pinto.  
 Uma visita boa e contente.

Du und 21 weitere Personen  
 1 Mal geteilt

Gefällt mir  
 Kommentieren

### ***Plätze, die sich riechen lassen.***

Im Moment, als ich die Galerie betrete fällt mir sofort der eigene Geruch auf. Es ist etwas, das ich nicht sofort identifizieren kann. Erst, als ich höre, dass es sich um Kork handelt, beginnt der Geruch in meinem Kopf zu einem Bild zu werden. Durch die Beschreibung des Materials von Manuela beginne ich dem Geruch positive Assoziationen zuzuschreiben, er wird zum typischen Geruch, der für Portos Traditionen steht. Er bewirkt, dass ich mich sofort wohl fühle und gibt dem Raum eine ganz spezielle Atmosphäre. Beim Betreten der Veranda wandert beim Blick sofort auf die begrünte Pergola, auf der riesige Weinranken wachsen, die einen angenehmen Schatten werfen. Der Geruch der Weintrauben fällt mir deshalb so stark auf, weil ich mit meinen Gedanken noch beim Kork der Räume war, und er erinnert mich an den Garten meiner Eltern. Ich genieße es, angenehme Gerüche haben mir gefehlt.

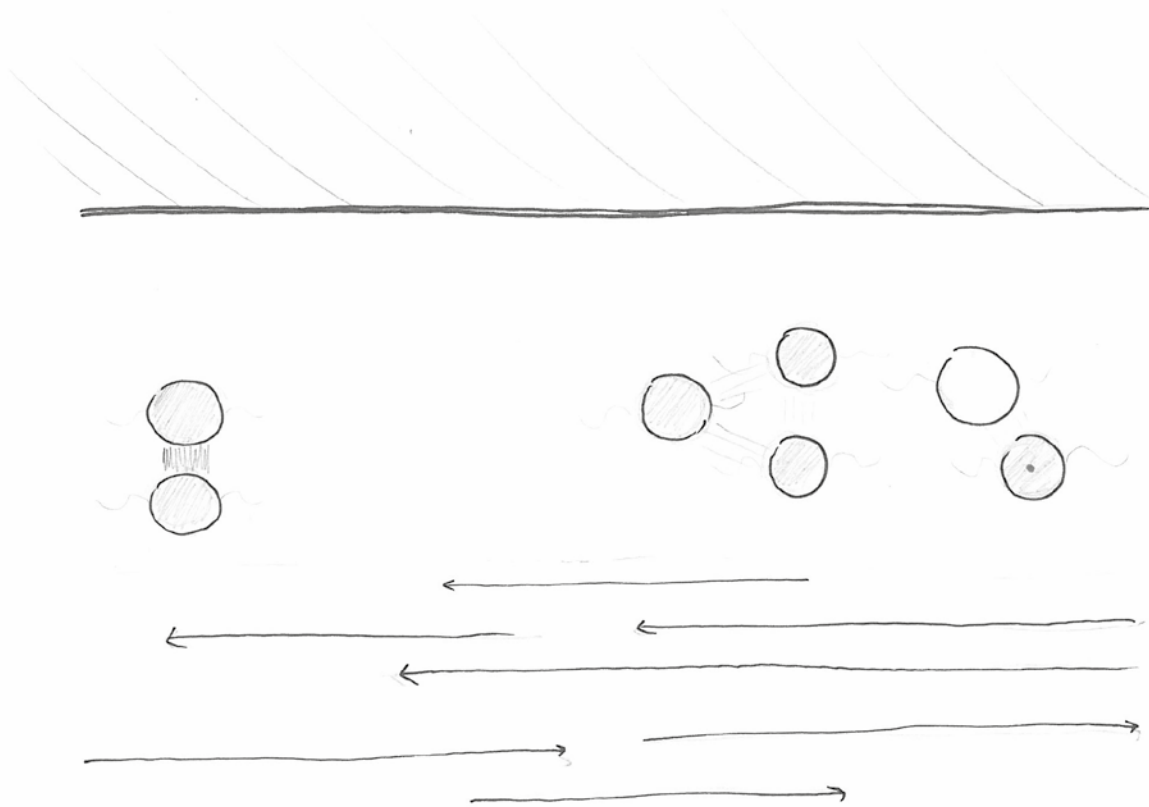


I gospođa Manuela je birala slobodu da provodi svoje vreme kako želi i živi po svom. Njoj to stvarno dobro ide. To je žena koje ispuni tri hangara galerije svojom energijom. Bila je impresivna cela ta poseta. Iako je delovala kao spontana, ipak je unapred režirana: kostimi, facijalna ekspresija, mizanscen... sve ujednačeno i ponovljeno toliko puta, do perfekcije, ali još uvek u tom performansu ima (životne) radosti i (umetničkog) žara. Jedan divan komad grada smo mi kao grupa studenata dobili na tacni.

*Von A nach B*

### **Ein bisschen schneller sein**

Wir haben ein bestimmtes Ziel und möchten am Weg dahin nicht zu viel Zeit verlieren. Die Straßen sind mal mehr, mal weniger gefüllt mit anderen Menschen, neben uns verlaufen Straßen. Autos und Busse fahren an uns vorbei. Es ist nicht möglich als geschlossene Gruppe zu gehen und ich bin ein bisschen genervt, dass wir so lange brauchen. Unsere Tempos sind unterschiedlich, um sich auszutauschen oder sich nicht zu verlieren muss ich an fast jeder Ecke warten. Wir beginnen Rhythmen zu singen und mit schnellem Schritt die Schnelligkeit zu erhöhen. Es erinnert mich ein bisschen an eine Entenfamilie. Immer wieder reißt die Kette ab.



Von A nach B

# Urban Intermezzo

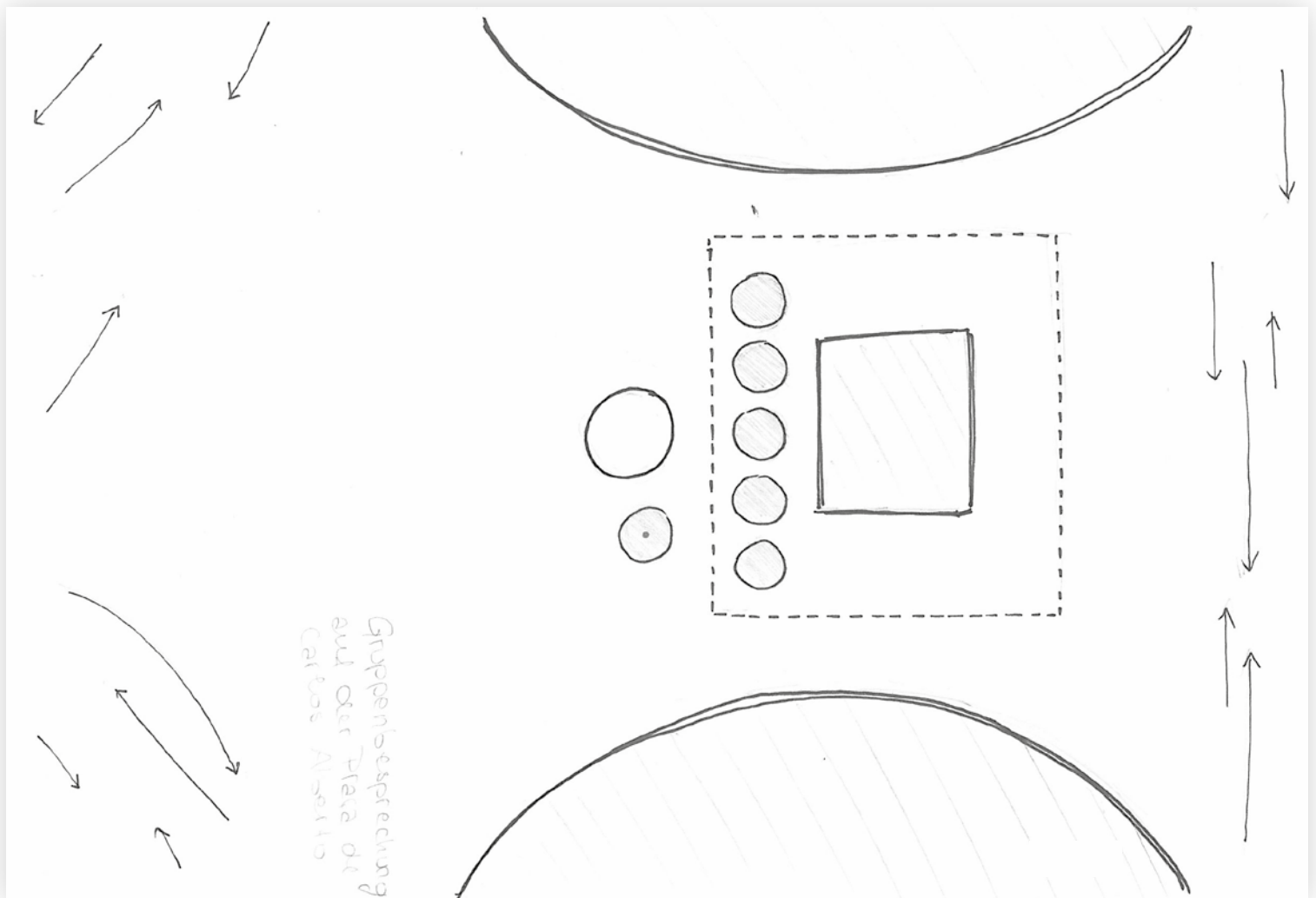
C E N T E R S T A G E   P O R T O

It was surreal to be at the Praça de Carlos Alberto. It was a classroom situation, but at the center of a beautiful square, surrounded by quaint traditional buildings, and paved in a pattern of white and black granite tiles radiating from the monument at its center, on which we were seated. At that moment we and our discourse were the center of the urban stage, and the city across the plaza our indifferent audience.

## *Besprechung auf der Praça de Carlos Alberto*

### **Zwischendurch-Besprechung**

Wir näher uns dem Platz und wollen uns hinsetzen, um ein bisschen über das letzte Treffen und unsere Ideen zu reflektieren. Ich suche nach Gras, auf das wir uns setzen können. Nach dem Tag in der Stadt sehne ich mich nach dem Grünen. Doch es gibt kein Stück Rasen, das zugänglich wäre, nur eingezäuntes Buschwerk. Ein Teil der Gruppe setzt sich an die Kante einer Statue, die Sitzfläche bietet. Mir ist es lieber meine Beine auszustrecken und setze mich auf den Boden. So kann ich in anderen sehen und muss mich nicht vorbeugen. Wir diskutieren, viel vom Rundherum bekomme ich nicht mit, viel zu konzentriert bin ich dafür.



## OUR HOMELESS FRIEND

### STORY BEHIND THE EXPERIENCE: OUR HOMELESS FRIEND

4.9.2018. / 6:30PM

Our team was heading to a meeting at Carlos Alberto square. In the search for a place to sit, with a little hesitation, we sat right in front of the statue, in such arrangement that Alex decided to take a proper photo of us. Soon after we dug into our conversation, an unexpected guest appeared. This homeless man politely asked us to move our stuff so he could sit right next to us. Suddenly our sitting configuration had to be changed, but after all he almost seemed to participate in dynamics of our team. Shortly after, he decided to move on to his next stop. He sat next to a young girl that was sitting on the bench, but he wasn't welcomed there. When she walked away, he sadly moved on in the search for another friend but everyone turned him down. The bench was empty. Our homeless friend decided it was time to go. I felt sad as the image of him was slowly fading away.



## Conditions to feel like a part of something

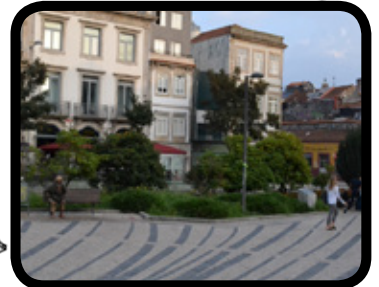
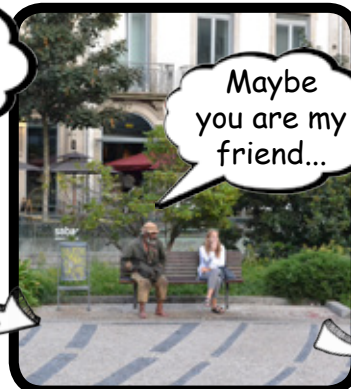
We went to a nice square in the city centre to have a talk as a group. The square Carlos Alberto is a respectable, beautifully decorated place, which invites people to pass and to sit down and spend time. We sat down at the base of a statue. We were discussing our approach and the main finding we made was that we have to include ourselves into the research that we do. At the same point of time we were starting to act in this way, as we were stopping to make misleading

judgments. We felt like a part of it. We were in a nice part of the city and occupying space that we were invited to occupy.

However, the conditions that we found were relevant in order to make this experience. If we were in a dirty or poorer areas we might have felt differently about the space and would not have made this experience.

The scene of late afternoon. We sit on the square, five of us on the monument's base and two opposite from us. No matter how awkward it might sound, we sit in the shape of some sort of a circle. Immersed in the debate, we confront our opinions, but we do not understand each other. The balloon which had inflated in the gallery blew out. We need a new helium.

# OUR HOMELESS FRIEND

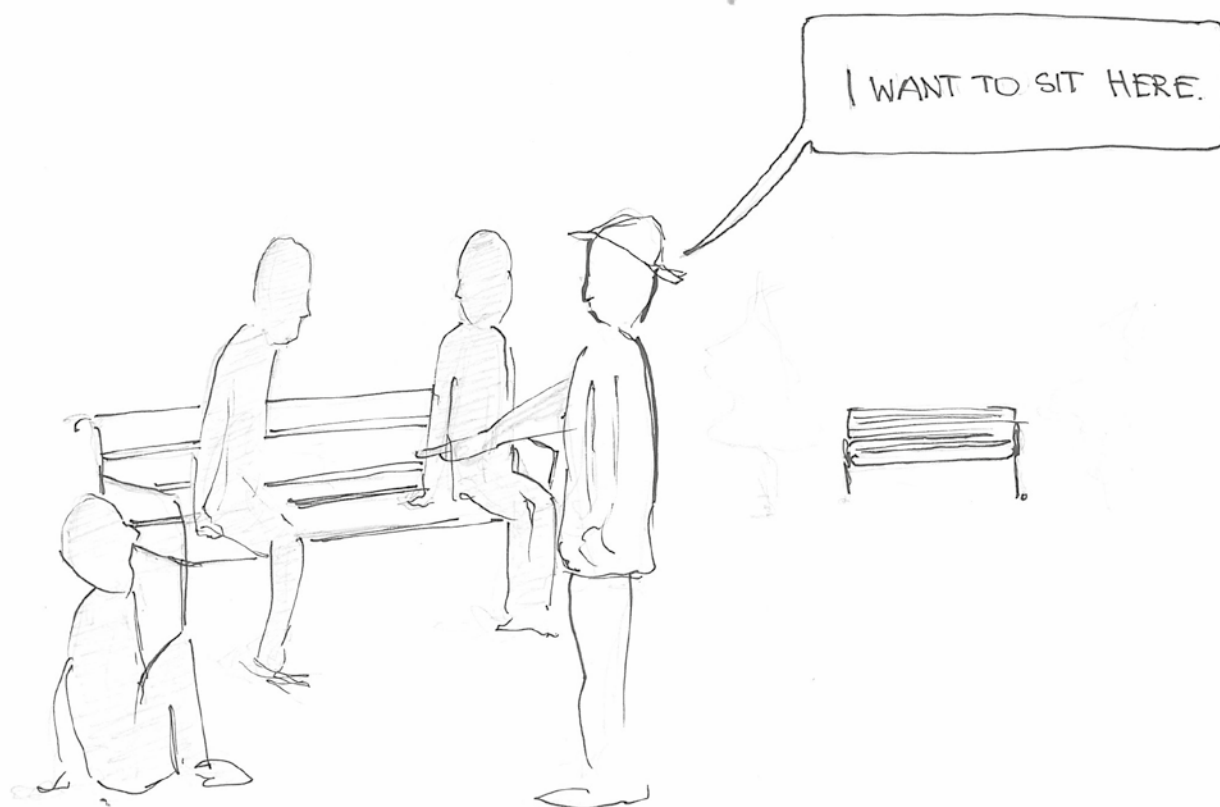


2012: 290

2018: 800

Ana lives in a 500 years old building in a flat with a wonderful large living room. Since 2012 she has been paying €290 a month. However, her flat would nowadays go for €800 a month. This is why her landlord would like to see her go.

Ana je kasnila. Gužva, saobraćaj, posao, distance... In medias res je počela da priča, bez uvoda, predstavljanja, protokola. Njoj je telefon stalno zvonio, ali se nije javljala, 4 ili 5 puta, to ju je uznemiravalo. Da ga nema, ne bi zvonio. Ali može li se živeti u gradu bez mobilnog?! Jedna brza tura po gradskom jezgru u ciklama-boje patikama za trčanje, dugo i prijateljsko pozdravljanje za rastanak. Obojila je naše popodne u (pomalo-vrišteću) ciklama boju i nesebično podelila sa nama mnogo priča o tome šta se dešava iza gradskih fasada. Iza kulisa.



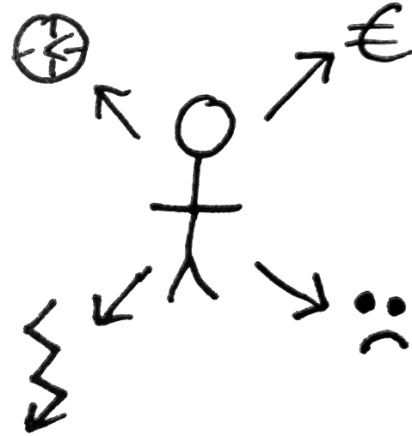
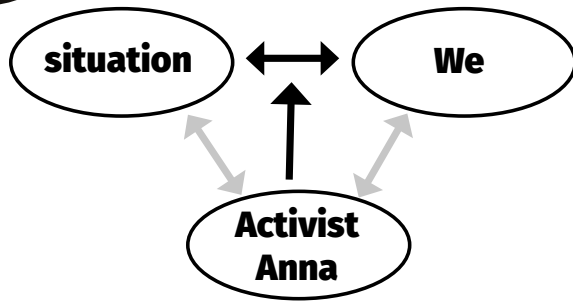


## Urban Intermezzo

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cena kasnog popodneva. Sedimo svi na trgu, petoro nas na postamentu spomenika i dvoje preko puta nas. Uprkos tome kako zvuči, sedimo u formi neke ćoškaste kružnice. Uneseni u debatu, iznosimo svoja mišljenja, ali se međusobno ne razumemo. Balon koji je naduvan u galeriji se izduvao. Treba nam novi helijum.



The activist Anna acted reserved towards us. At the same time she was talking to us about the problems that the Porto people face because of the recent changes, we were also a part of this problem. It felt like if she was not distincting us from the situation, and rather looking at the connection. As we stayed at a hostel that was established not even two years ago and came by airplane. Her activities as an activist are also very challenging.

## Personal Struggle

M E E T I N G   A N N A

Arriving in pink trainers and a hot pink t-shirt Anna radiated positivity and a fast energy. She spoke fast and with energy when explaining to us the troubles plaguing Porto and her personal struggle in this situation, often engaging us individually as she would tell her story and lead us from the wide thoroughfares into Porto's more twisted narrow streets.

*Ein Spaziergang mit Ana.*

### **Ana wird überall gleichzeitig gebraucht**

Ich erkenne Ana nicht nur an ihrem pinken T-Shirt, sondern an ihrem schnellem Schritt und suchendem Blick. Sie wirkt dynamisch, ihre Sportschuhe passen zu ihrem Oberteil, deshalb fallen sie mir sofort auf. Auch ihre Art zu reden gibt mir das Gefühl, dass sie immer in Bewegung ist. Immer wieder beginnt ihr Handy zu vibrieren, immer wieder drückt sie ab. Ich höre ihr zu und denke daran, sie nicht zu lange aufhalten zu wollen. Wir beginnen zu gehen und die Gruppe teilt sich in den schmalen Gassen auf und geht in kleinen Gruppen. Ich versuche zuzuhören, was Ana sagt, oft kommt jemand entgegen und ich muss ausweichen und falle zurück. Nach einer Zeit beginne ich entspannt in einigem Abstand zu gehen und denke über die Ausschnitte von Informationen nach, die ich gehört habe. Die Häuser sehen anders aus, wenn ich an Wörter wie „eviction“ denke, die renovierten Fassaden werden zu Resultaten verwerflicher Spekulation. Es kommt mir so vor, als würde die Stadt ein Kampf sein, in der jedes Detail polarisiert, und Ana mitten drin.

## **The material relation between the activist Anna and us**

We met the busy and energetic woman Anna on a square in the city centre. She started talking to us about the issues that the city faces, like rising rents, evictions and problematic changes.

A paradox occurred. She was sharing the most personal information, but her attitude towards us was reserved. Even when she pointed out that she herself is part of the affected group, she did never embody as a victim. Rather she presented herself as a person, who is capable of facing the situation. The way she moved through the city with us she was acting intuitive, not committing to a certain narrative or route she want to cover.

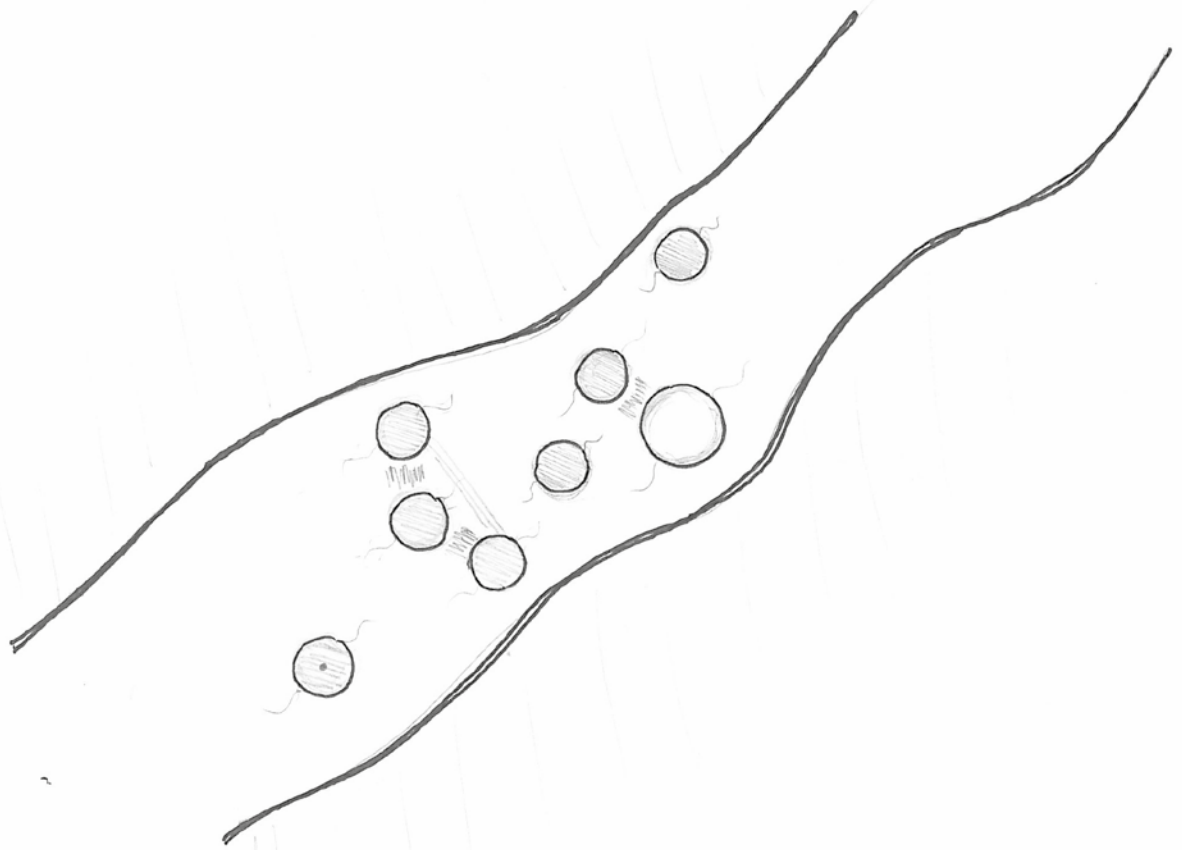
We walked through the narrow, crowded streets of the city, which made it difficult to mutually interact, and even when approaching her by trying to find points that make it possible for her to relate with us and our views, she kept this reserved position towards us.

However, when we in the dialogue reflected on our own position in this dynamic (Airbnb/ housing



market), she also did. For a moment she left the role of the activist and talked about her own actions, that are part of the whole city development, that she also criticizes. It felt like if she was also relating us to the situation, as we are also part of the issues. So she might not be distincting our material influence from her personal struggle.

She already had another appointment after our walk and when she said goodbye relatively quick, she suggested in a polite manner to maybe meet up another time.



Ein Spaziergang  
Ana

# 22.000 houses

with potential to be rehabilitated for housing

(Ana)

But the layout of renovated buildings will inevitably be different from the original, in order to fit the demands of Airbnb and service economy.



## Personal Struggle

### T W I S T I N G   S T R E E T S

Porto's twisted narrow streets are fascinating. At the later hour, the creeping twilight gave these steep a slightly gloomy character, accented by the abandoned buildings lining its sides. Only the recurring appearance of recently renovated buildings, with smooth signs and glistening clean tiles cut through the gloom in a peculiar way, as if they didn't quite belong. We followed Anna along these cobblestone streets until the sky slowly darkened and we were lead up a lively hilltop. Straight ahead continued the cobblestone road, to our left lay a green lawn, people enjoying the evening as Porto stretched out beneath them. To the right a wall of buildings, light flowing out of their windows, and bathing the side-walk diners of the many ground-level establishments. Conversing here in the electric atmosphere, it was slowly time for Anna to leave, who kindly recommended us a place to eat, and offered to take us out on the weekend, before she made herself on her way.

# EVICTED FROM PORTO

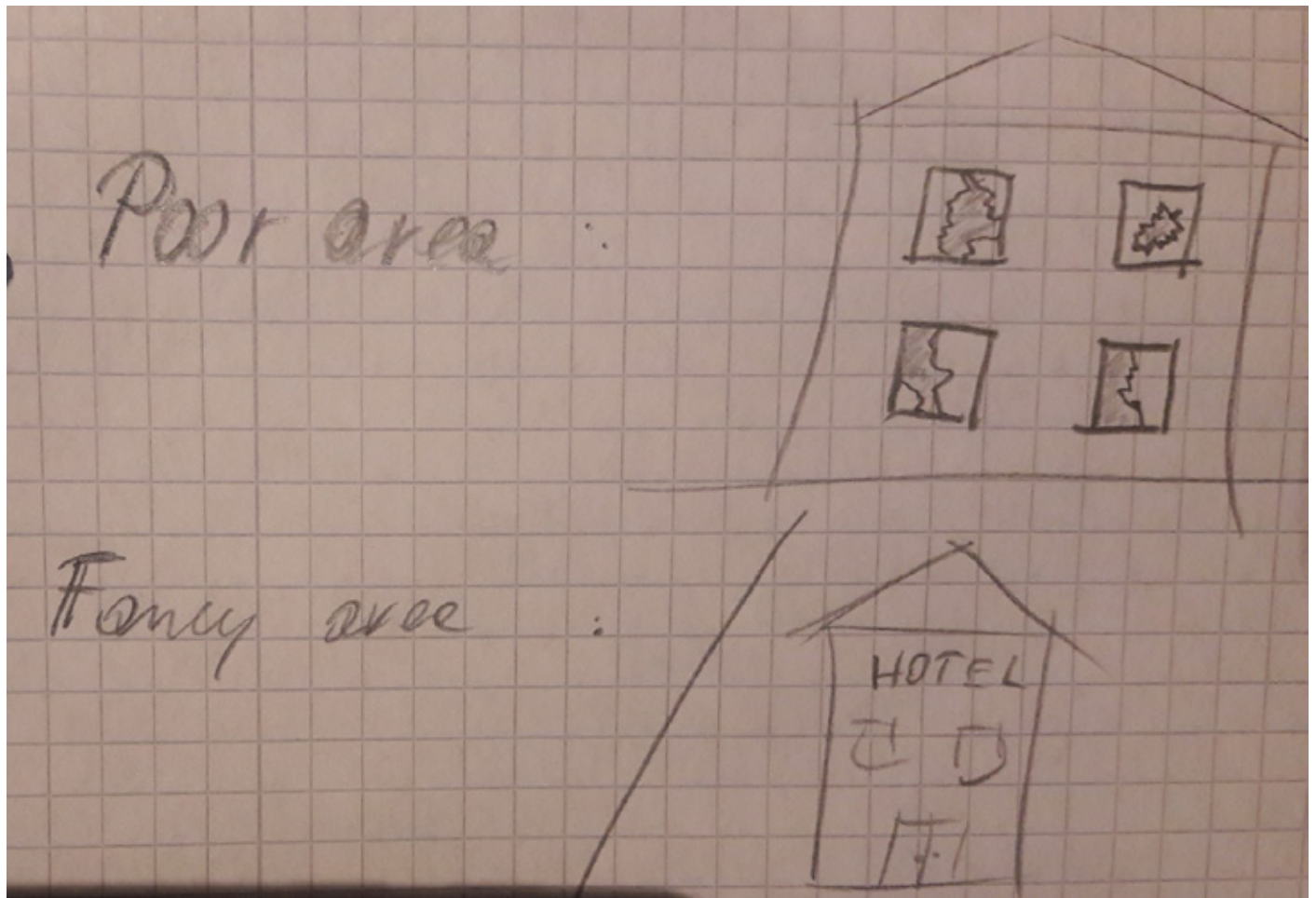
**STORY BEHIND THE EXPERIENCE: HIDDEN MESSAGES OF PORTO'S EVICTIONS**  
4.9.2018. / 7PM

Ana's walk was very dynamic. We started from the Carlos Alberto square and passed by Jardim do Cordoaria while she was talking about the issue of eviction and rent increase in Porto. Her talk and our walk had very little in common. It is when we reached the historical center, that she showed us a street where her points became real. We continued to walk downhill passing by buildings that were either completely empty or completely renovated. I thought that identity of Porto was in serious danger in one of the busiest area of the city. Residential buildings were often abandoned or bought by companies who transformed them into short term rental apartments. The impact of entrepreneurial activities was visible. In the same manner, we continue our walk while each of us could only sporadically hear some elements of Ana's storytelling because of the dynamics and intuitive route she decided for us to take. We ended our walk at another static public space, Jardim das Virtudes, where we again became passive observers of the city's skyline.

## PERSONAL • STRUGGLE

Personal Struggle





She was late, Ana. The crowd, traffic, job, distance... In medias res, she started to talk. Without an introduction, outline, protocol. Her phone was ringing constantly, but she did not answer, 4 or 5 times. It disturbed her. If she had not had it, it would have not rung. But can you live in a city without a cellphone?! One quick tour though the city core in the colors of cyclamens with running shoes, long and friendly greeting for the departure. She painted our afternoons in (slightly-screaming) cyclamen color and unselfishly shared with us a lot of stories about what is happening behind the city facades. Behind the scene.

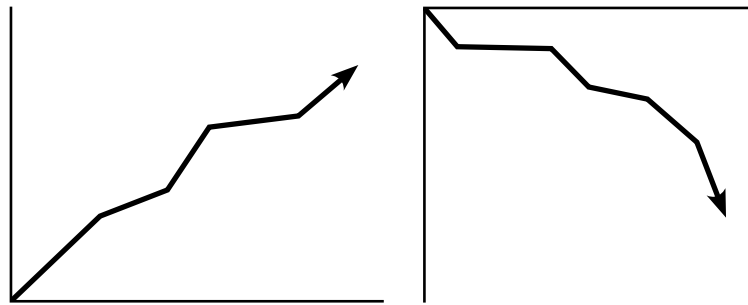
*Ein Spaziergang mit Ana.*

### **Ana wird überall gleichzeitig gebraucht**

Ich erkenne Ana nicht nur an ihrem pinken T-Shirt, sondern an ihrem schnellem Schritt und suchendem Blick. Sie wirkt dynamisch, ihre Sportschuhe passen zu ihrem Oberteil, deshalb fallen sie mir sofort auf. Auch ihre Art zu reden gibt mir das Gefühl, dass sie immer in Bewegung ist. Immer wieder beginnt ihr Handy zu vibrieren, immer wieder drückt sie ab. Ich höre ihr zu und denke daran, sie nicht zu lange aufhalten zu wollen. Wir beginnen zu gehen und die Gruppe teilt sich in den schmalen Gassen auf und geht in kleinen Gruppen. Ich versuche zuzuhören, was Ana sagt, oft kommt jemand entgegen und ich muss ausweichen und falle zurück. Nach einer Zeit beginne ich entspannt in einigem Abstand zu gehen und denke über die Ausschnitte von Informationen nach, die ich gehört habe. Die Häuser sehen anders aus, wenn ich an Wörter wie „eviction“ denke, die renovierten Fassaden werden zu Resultaten verwerflicher Spekulation. Es kommt mir so vor, als würde die Stadt ein Kampf sein, in der jedes Detail polarisiert, und Ana mitten drin.







The narrative of growth (tourism, real estate value, livability, employment) has somehow always been followed by the narrative of decline (residents, affordability, livability, prospects)

Večera je bila jedini deo dana u kom nije bilo ni P od Projekta. To je ona tišina jednako važna kao ton u muzici.

Otrcano?

Da.

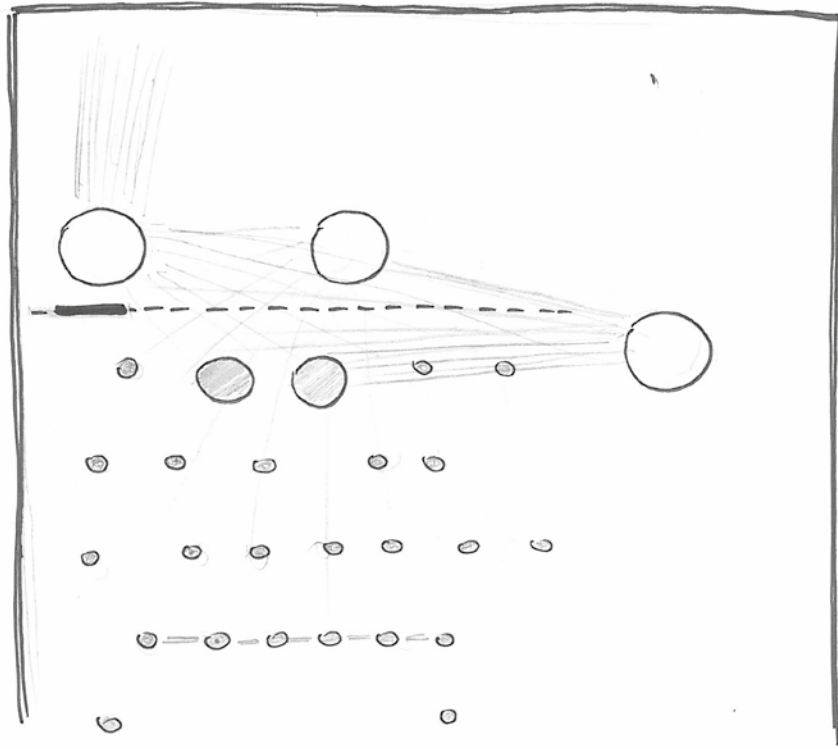
Seci.

And how am all of a sudden climbing the branches, when in my head, I have already attributed a metaphor to Porto? Porto's spaces appear to me like a pool. Upright ceramics, the proportion of houses and empty space surrounding them: one can swim and jump and dive - everything is ticking like a clock. But yesterday Porto was not a swimming pool. It has spread in all the different directions.



# EVICTED FROM PORTO





Eine Präse  
mit Com

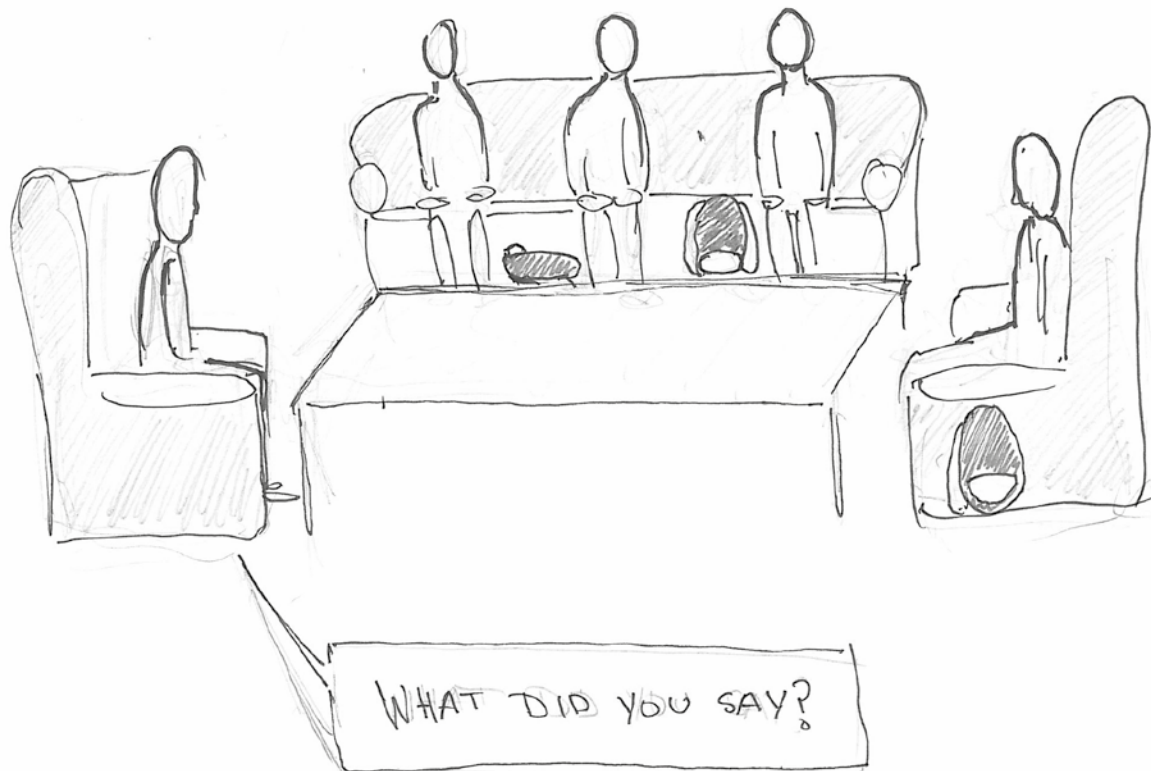




A kako se ja sad to odjednom penjem po granama, kad je Porto u mojoj glavi već dobio svoju metaforu? Prostori Porta meni liče na bazen. Vertikalno keramika, proporcija zgrada i praznog prostora oko njega, može i da se pliva i da se skače i da se roni – sve štima. Ali juče Porto nije bio bazen, on se razgranao na sve strane.

### ***Ein Raum der mir das Gefühl gibt, dass ich das Problem bin***

An der Tür zum Hotel mache ich mir gar keine Sorgen darüber, dass wir nicht dem gewöhnlichen Dresscode entsprechen, aber im 17. Stock angekommen sind die Räume plötzlich so beengend, dass schon allein die Größe der Gruppe wie ein Störfaktor wirkt. Eine Dame steht am Eingang, die uns in ihrer schwarz-weißen Uniform und hohen Schuhen mustert. Wir werden an einen Tisch verwiesen, der zu groß ist, um in der Gruppe zu kommunizieren, ohne dass man unpassend laut spricht. Ich sitze auf der zu breiten Couch und fühle mich unwohl, eher geduldet als willkommen. Vor mir auf dem Tisch liegen große Bildbände zur Unterhaltung, damit wir nicht miteinander reden müssen. Es vergehen Minuten, niemand kommt, wir fühlen uns unsicher. Dann beschließen zu gehen. In diesem Moment verändert sich die Situation: auf einmal habe ich das Gefühl unhöflich zu sein. Die edlen Materialien und die niedrige Decke erzeugen in mir die Empfindung, dass ich das Problem bin. Beim Gehen schaue ich der Empfangsdame nicht ins Gesicht.





## Happy with the changes of the city. But why?

We were supposed to meet the two men Diogo and Thiago in a rooftop bar. We left the bar, before they came, because the place was not welcoming. So we sat down at the outside area of a bar.

Diogo and Thiago were very approachable when talking about the city. Diogo was inviting us to go out and telling us about the great things about Porto. They also did not relate us, and our material relation to Porto, to themselves. When asking them about the changes in the recent years they pointed out two things. First, that the rents have risen a lot, and second, that the city has become safer, and renovated in a very short period of time.

They mentioned very few negative issues and were rather proud of their hometown. We were also not talking to them in a certain role, however they were mostly talking to us and answering our questions. As we were trying to research the city somehow. When asking them questions on certain parts of the city they were drawing negative connotated pictures of the past and their narrative was accompanied by many stories of such experiences.

The two have made experiences that left them with a bad picture of the past and the recent changes were not problematic for them. Furthermore, they were positive about meeting us and talking about the city in a positive manner.

We sit on the street, at two tables in front of the café's window. At least we try to fit around the two joined tables, but there is not enough room for all of us. I mean, on the street or at the table or both. The sound comes from two sides. One source of sound is the voice of friend Diogo coming from the right, and the other is the traffic noise that hits us from the left. On the left is a friend of the friend's friend Tiago. We do not hear his voice at all. He speaks silently, and the bus behind his back is bassing too loudly. We ask Tiago to repeat, to speak louder, we strive to hear, but we still do not hear it. We see only his smile and we hear our own laughter that echoes in the street as if good company had fun. The left side is constant; at regular intervals, a drumming bus arriving, stopping at the station, drumming, leaving. Too frequently for Tiago and for all of us.

# No Cellphone

## MINIATURE HOTEL

At around 10PM we arrived at the hotel, a tall gray building on a patterned cobblestone street, and next to a large gray cement car park. As we walked up the stairs, my head came inches from the thick metal roof covering the walkway. Nearing the entrance and able to peer in, we were greeted by a luxuriously furnished hotel, sparkling floors, uniformed staff and soft lush looking seating. Combined with the low ceilings of this 60's era cement building, it felt like being at miniature luxury hotel.



# arab spring porto summer

Thiago links the events of arab spring to an increase in tourism during portugues summers

A friend's friend Diogo told us when leaving that he would like to stay in touch, but he does not have a cellphone. Simply doesn't. He uses e-mail and we can write. How brave must one be, not to have a cellphone in the modern world we live in? Yes, he is deliberately not available at any moment, but he remains firmly in touch with the world and people. He is distinctly a social being. And he is dedicated to his interlocutor. He thinks of the very moment with his friends as something most valuable. Hardly something more important could occur so that he should be available. How have we all subjected ourselves to a round o'clock availability? The phone is the only thing from which we hardly separate at any time 24/7/365. And Diogo does not have it. I would say that he chose a way of life that treats freedom and time and intimacy as a great treasure. And that delighted me.



# No Cellphone

H I G H E N D

Our destination was the bar on the hotel's 17th floor. After asking the staff, the young bellboy, with cleanly cut hair and a distinctive red uniform, opened the elevator for us and let us on into the bar. The high end bar on the hotel's upper floors radiated luxury and formality. Although some people were in street clothes, we, the 6 students and tutor, stood out sorely among the elegantly dressed people drinking wine. We, in street clothes, carrying backpacks and cameras clearly did not belong, and there was no intention to make us feel welcome. We left.



*Ein Glas Wein mit Diogo & Thiago*  
**Spätabendliche Scherze**

Es ist spät, als wir uns mit Diogo und Thiago treffen. Wir bestellen Getränke und versuchen so gut wie möglich um den kleinen Tisch Platz zu finden. Es ist ein Platz, an dem normalerweise fünf Personen gemütlich sitzen können. Wir fädeln uns zu neunt dicht an einander auf. Wir sind hier, um die beiden kennenzulernen, aber der Straßenlärm ist störend und meine Aufmerksamkeit schweift manchmal ab. Ich bin müde und muss mich bemühen, Diogo akustisch zu verstehen. Er erzählt viel, unterhält uns mit seinen Scherzen. Er ist es, der das Meiste redet. Jeder kann ihn sehen, er ist einer von zwei Personen, die wirklich in die Runde blicken können. Thiago redet sehr leise, ich muss mich sogar vorbeugen, um ihn anzusehen. Er spricht wenig und ich beuge mich selten vor. Es fühlt sich an, als wenn es ein Treffen von Freunden wäre, vielleicht von Freunden von Freunden, und das ist es ja auch. Deshalb finde ich es in Ordnung, nicht immer aktiv zuzuhören, sondern mich auch mit anderen zu unterhalten.

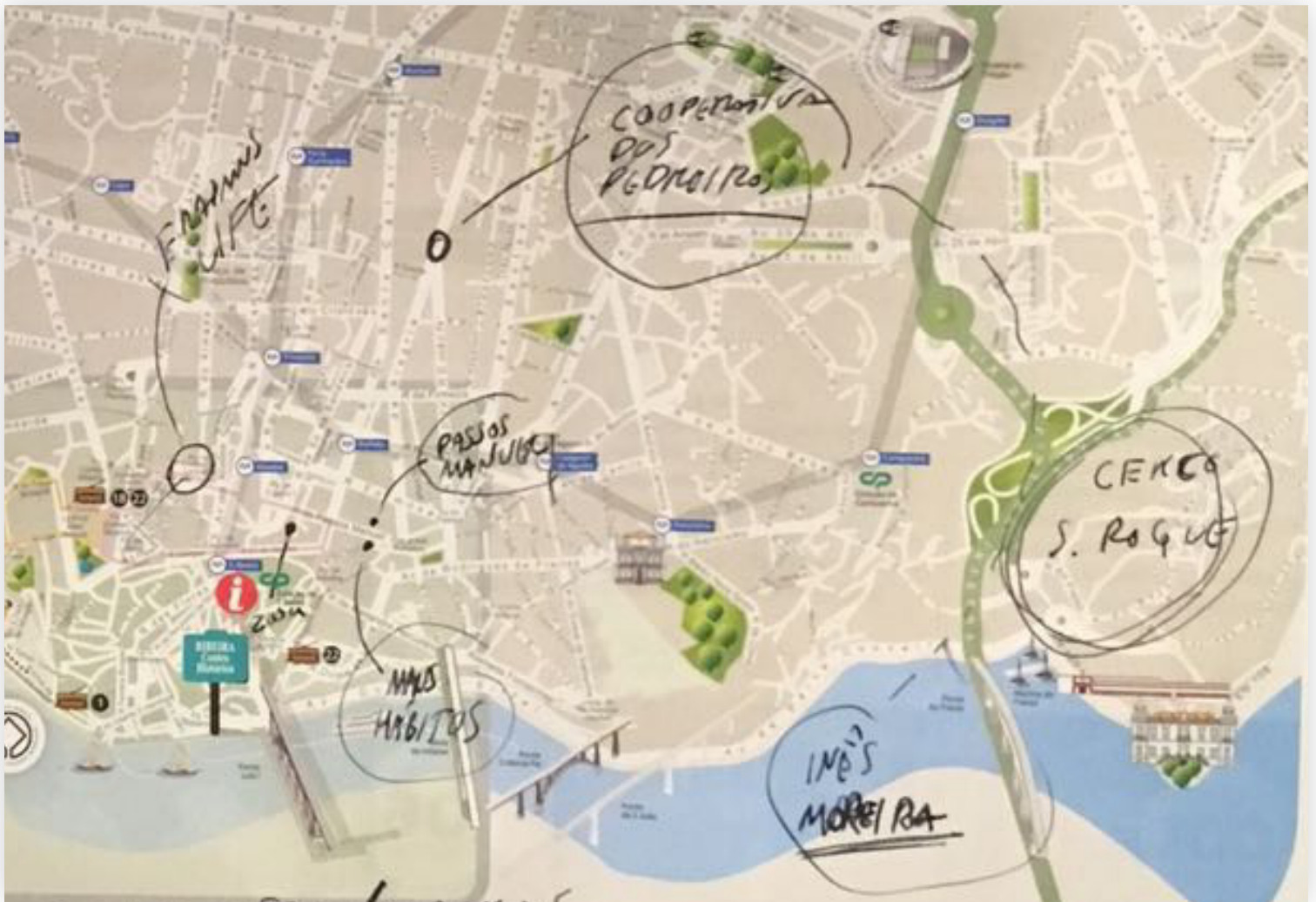
## between institution and **trash**

Diogo shared with us his positive outlook of the arts scene in Porto as dynamically developing between institutions of high culture and trash. In spite of the fact that arts is largely institutionalized, it is still concerned and actively involved in vertical linkages. One evening in Casa da Musica, the next in an alternative space of Sismógrafo. Jonathan, a guy of African origin, grew up in *ilhas* in the eastern part of city, with deprived living conditions leaving visible marks on his body, but has become a successful artist.

# arcadia

Both, tourist sector and activists have an image of the city as a romantic Arcadia, which however is long gone and cannot be recreated. (Diogo)



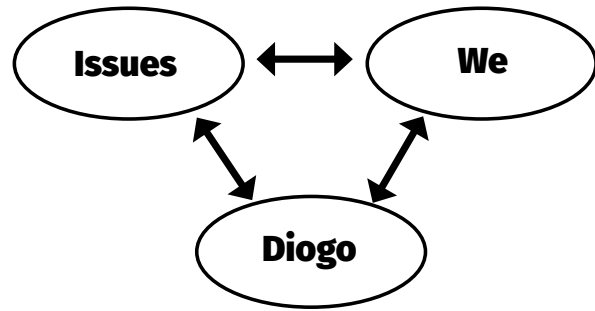
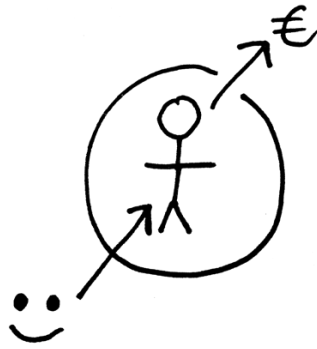


The right side is much more variable. We hear about artists, festivals, movies, personalities, biographies. We are listening about political events, constants and changes. Changes in space and time. About the left and right, the city authorities, the intentions, the relations within the neighborhoods, between the neighborhood and the whole of the city, the city and other cities, town and country, city and the world. About Colonies, Power, Dominance, Courage, Unkindness. About years, dates, facts. About postcolonial time, heritage, relatives, roots, relationships. Some personal histories have been revealed in sequences spontaneously and unobtrusively. The chiller the night, the hotter the topics. There is also debate about power, the true political power and real domination, the power that is ingrained in the city, the power that is immanent to the city. And we crumble about it (without ambition to crush it). And Diogo is drawing points, arrows, lines, words on the map... This map is like a sheet of paper full of information, it is a folder for a story, a folder as a pad, a support. Objective as much is necessary and personal enough. Diogo draws, adding information. These are materials for us and for the days to come.

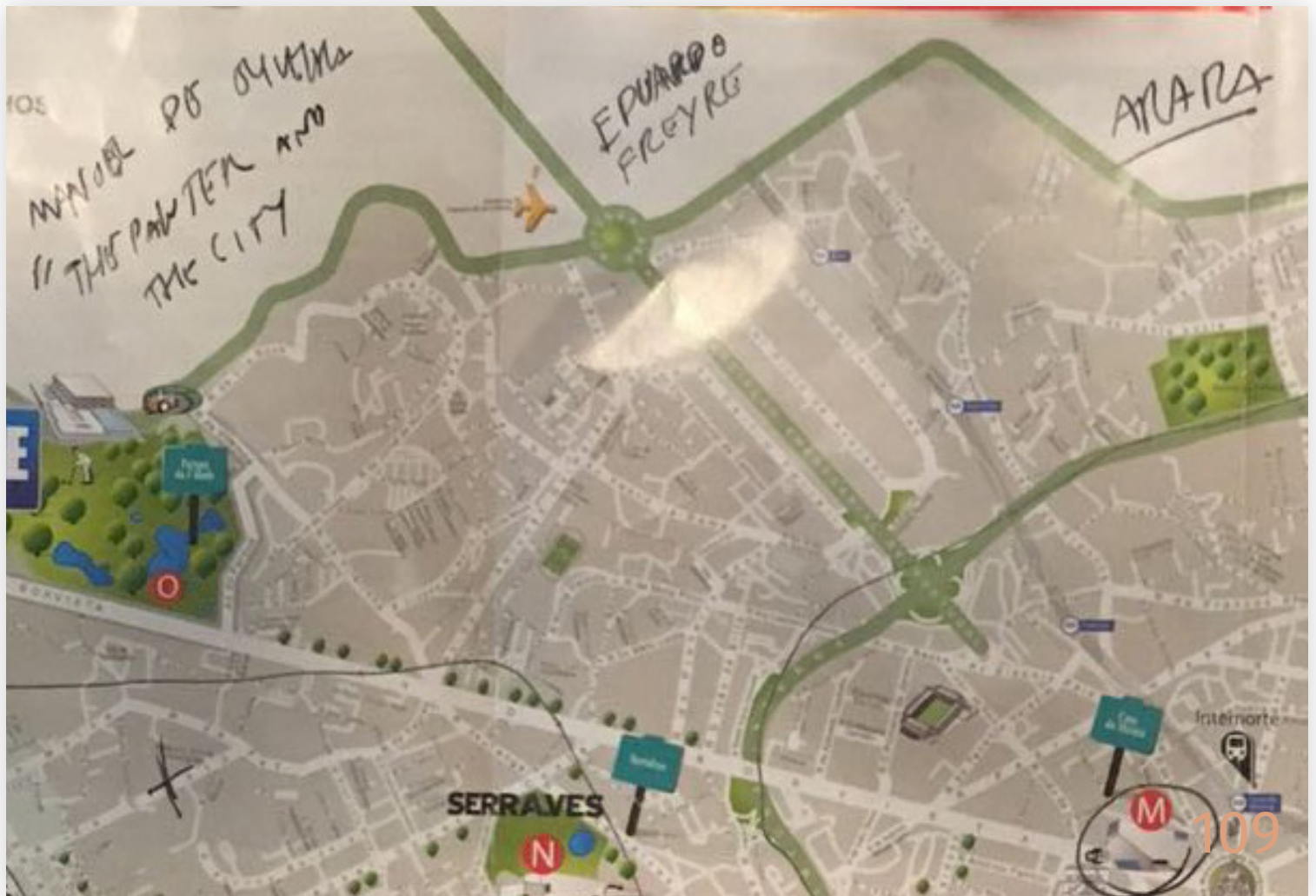
> accessibility **TO LIVE**  
< accessibility **to visit**

10 years ago Diogo used not to go to the old town. He was sure he would be assaulted. No wonder that once you make place attractive to live, that it has also become attractive to visit.

Leva strana je konstantna; u pravilnim razmacima brundajući autobus dolazi, brunda na stanici, odlazi. Prečesto i preglasno i za Tiago i za sve nas. Desna strana je mnogo raznovrsnija. Slušamo o umetnicima, festivalima, filmovima, ličnostima, biografijama. Slušamo o političkim dešavanjima, konstantama i promenama. Promenama u prostoru i vremenu. O levima i desnima, gradskim vlastima, intencijama, odnosu kvartova i celine grada, grada i drugih gradova, grada i države, grada i sveta. O kolonijama, vlasti, prevlasti, bezvlasti, nevlasti. O godinama, datumima, činjenicama. O postkolonijalnom vremenu, nasleđu, rođacima, korenima, vezama. Neke lične istorije nam se otkrivaju u sekvencama spontano i nenametljivo. Sve hladnija je noć, a teme sve vrelije. Priča se i o moći, onoj pravoj političkoj stvarnoj moći i dominaciji, moći koja je gradu kao kamen temeljac, moći koja je gradu imanentna pa i mi o njoj ovde pomalo drobimo (bez ambicije da je zdrobimo). I prijatelj Diogo nam na karti upisuje tačke, strelice, linije, reči... Ta je mapa kao list papira puna informacija, ta je mapa kao podloga za jednu priču, mapa kao podmetač, podržać. Potrebno objektivna i dovoljno lična. Diogoo šara, dodaje, puni. Ima materijala za nas i za dane koji tek dolaze.



Diogo was approaching us in a very friendly way and really wanted to help us to have positive experiences in Porto. He wanted us to have a good impression of his hometown. He did not connect us to the issues the city faces with us as people who are also visiting the city. He is only affected by the changes of Porto by the rents, which have risen.



*Ein Versuch die Bibliothek zu konsultieren.*

### **Hinter dem Tresen**

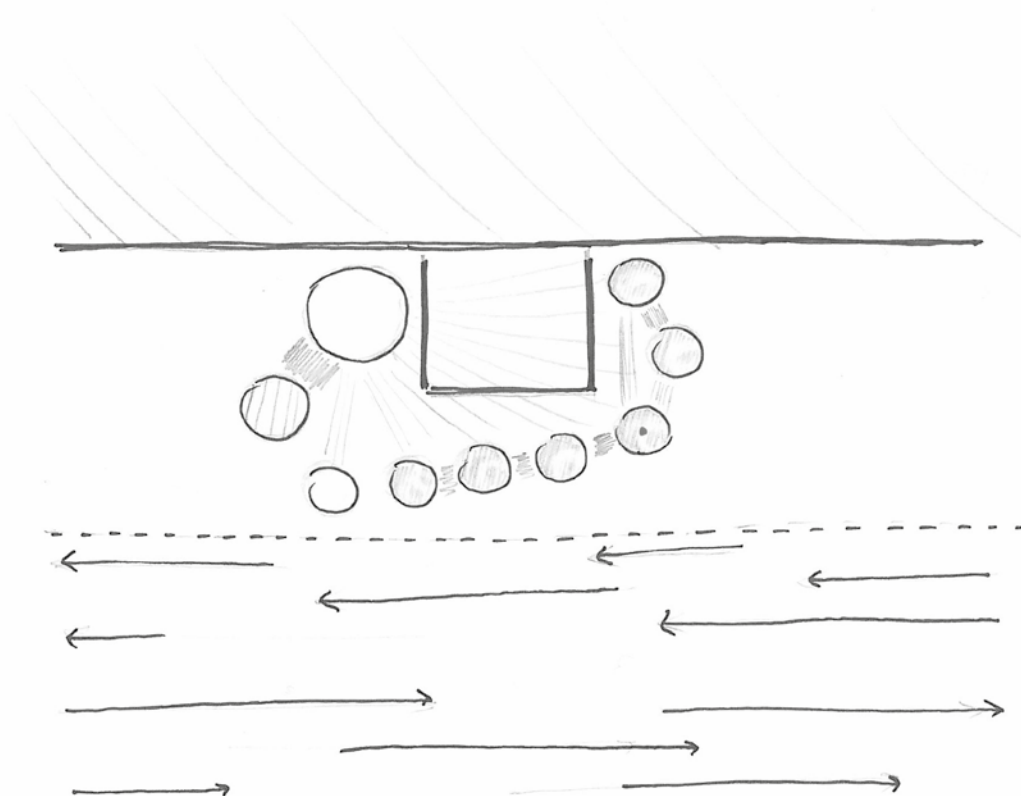
Wir haben einigen Weg hinter uns gebracht, um in die öffentliche Bibliothek der Fakultät für Architektur zu kommen. Dort suchen und finden wir ein bestimmtes Buch. Im Saal darf man nicht sprechen, das Buch darf nicht mitgenommen werden. Stören wollen wir niemanden, also sprechen wir ab, für eine Weile im Vorraum bleiben zu können. Der Bibliothekar ist freundlich, wir kommunizieren eine bisschen auf Spanisch und er bemüht sich und zieht sich dann in den großen Leseraum zurück. Hinter einem hohen Tresen steht eine Dame. Sie hat einen kritischen Blick und mustert uns schon beim Hereinkommen von oben bis unten. Es gibt keine Tische, Stühle oder genug Platz um uns zu setzen. Deshalb versammeln wir uns um einen zweiten Tresen, aus dem Weg für neue Besucher, und beginnen einige Aspekte über das Buch zu besprechen. Tihomir übernimmt das Wort und wir drängen uns um ihn und versuchen nicht zu laut zu sein. Nach einigen Minuten macht sich die Dame hinter dem Tresen bemerkbar. Sie setzt ein freundliches Gesicht auf, klingt aber schroff in dem, was sie sagt. Unsere Anwesenheit scheint sie zu stören, das sagt ihre Wortwahl, Tonlage und Körpersprache. Wir fühlen uns nicht mehr wohl und verlassen die Bibliothek. Sie bleibt hinter dem Tresen und behält den Eingang im Auge.

## No Cellphone

V I N O & V I N Y L

We met Diogo and his friend in front of the hotel and continued to a sort of vinyl bar no more than a five-minute walk. The bar was minimalistly but very deliberately designed. Black roofs, large LED filament style bulbs and a wall mounted menu which in its look and content was designed with an 80's USA in mind, the bar gave off a strong retro 80's and had a relaxed, artistic-retro feel. What stood out however, was strong emphasis on vinyl records. The bar's large show window proudly displayed a record player and some selected records, the front door immediately lead to a 'listening corner' with a mini record player and headphones, and the bar's shelves were more stacked vinyl than drinks. Upon arriving we quickly ordered wine and beer, I decided to try vino verde to the surprise of our local hosts, who commented on it's typically bitter taste. Once we picked out drinks, the 9 of us squeezed around two tables outside, pressed against the window.

Sedimo na ulici, odnosno u bašti kafea, odnosno pokušavamo da sednemo oko spojenih stolova u bašti kafea, ali nema dovoljno mesta za sve nas. Dakle, na ulici ili za stolom ili i jedno i drugo. Zvuk dolazi sa dve strane. Jedan izvor zvuka je glas prijatelja Diogo koji dolazi sa desna, a drugi je buka saobraćaja koji nas zaglušuje sa leva. Sa leva je i prijateljevog prijatelja prijatelj Tiago. Njegov glas ne čujemo uopšte. On priča tiho, a autobus iza njegovih leđa basira suviše glasno. Tražimo od Tiaga da ponovi, da priča glasnije, naprežemo se ali ga i dalje ne čujemo. Vidimo samo njegov osmeh i čujemo sopstveni smeh koji odzvanja ulicom onako kao kad se dobro društvo sklopi.





Prijatelj prijatelj Diogo nam je na rastanku rekao da bi voleo da ostanemo u kontaktu, ali da on nema mobilni telefon. Koristi e-mail i da možemo da se pišemo. Jednostavno nema. Koliko treba da budeš hrabar čovek, pa da u savremenom svetu u kom živimo nemaš mobilni? Da, on namerno nije u svakom momentu dostupan, ali je i dalje u čvrstoj vezi sa svetom i ljudima; izrazito je društveno biće. I posvećen je sagovorniku, ne misli da može biti nešto važnije u tom trenutku dok se druži, da bi morao da bude dostupan. Kako smo mi ljudi pristali na to da uvek budemo dostupni? Telefon je jedini predmet od kog se ne odvajamo ni trenutka 24/7/365, pa u krug. A prijatelj Diogo ga nema. Rekla bih da je on birao način života koji tretira i slobodu i vreme i intimu kao veliku dragocenost. I to me je oduševilo.

## No Cellphone

D I O G O   A N D   T H I A G O

Diogo is a lively very friendly man, who is a friend of a friend of Tihomir's. He is a born and bred 'Portuense' and is active as an artist in the city. He does not own a cell phone. He brought along his friend Thiago who is an urbanist, and who he thought could also give us insights into the city. Thiago is a tall thin man, smartly dressed and relatively quiet. At times when he would speak, a bus would pass by and wait, engine rumbling, right next to our table, drowning out Thiago's quite voice. Drinks in hand, with Diogo, Thiago and Tihomir at one end of the semi circle we formed pressed against the wall, the night turned into a series of lively conversations to multiple topics, alternating between highly informative discussions and intense laughter. Before we knew it, it was 12:30AM at night and time to start making our way home. We arrived at roughly 1:30AM to the hostel.



And what about marking all these places on the city map? How can one flatten and simplify something as fantastic as the city? Like this: take a city, put it in a cast, and using that model reproduce that city as many times as you wish. You get a 3D model. Then you can project it onto a plain surface. Fold it, put it into pocket and it will help you get where you want. Yes, it's worth it, indeed! I admit, the map can also be a great piece of design. When going to visit someone, you can wrap a gift into a city, or just spread a city out for dinner instead of a tablecloth. But can one understand what city is by just reading a map? The spectrum of colors, all the slim and all the thick lines, then the elegance of the shape ... and its characteristic folding along fine-tuned seams. Sometimes the map refuses to be folded. Turn it on the other side. Reverse. First fold in half... All this has a lot of charm, I admit. Charm is not to be understood, but to be charmed!



## Porto Planning Department

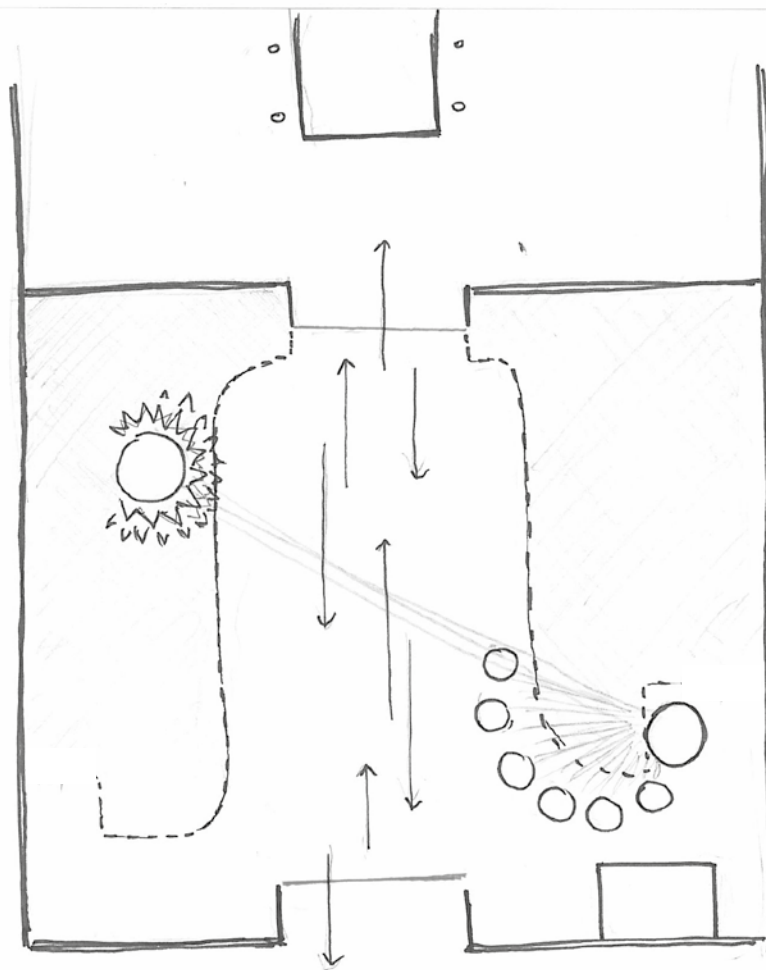
T H A T ' S M E !

Despite being more muted during his presentation, the city planner from Porto lit up when talking to me. Not only did he answer my initial questions, but he explained and showed me other facets of the Porto's city government with a smile. Whenever he wasn't sure if I understood his Portuguese, he would stop and ask or automatically use synonyms or switch to English for a few words. I could tell he was very proud of what he does, even showing me an article on a he designed, which was recently passed. The title picture of the article showed half the back of a man, sitting in front of a computer. He just pointed at this picture and with a smile on his face told me: that's me!

Sa radošću shvatamo (ili potvrđujemo ono što već znamo) da nije važno ako Tiago ili Manuela ili Ana ili Diago ili bilo koje drugo biće misli različito o Portu. U stvari, ne da nije važno, nego je upravo jako važno da svi oni misle različito. I da svako od nas ima pravo da odabere pasuse i uzme smislove, da složi slojeve onako kako razume ili kako oseća. Ja ih slažem upravo ovako i nadam se da neću pasti na niske grane.

A da označimo sva ta mesta na mapi grada? Jasno je odakle potreba da se spljošti i uprosti nešto tako fantastično kao što je grad? Ovako – uzmem jedan grad, pa ga ubacim u tečni gips, uzmem odlivak i onda mogu da reprodukujem taj grad koliko god puta hoću. Imam 3d maketu. Pa je onda spljekam na a puta b. Savijem, stavim u džep i pomaže mi da stignem gde god hoću. To вреди, itekako!!!! Priznajem, mapa može biti i odlično dizajnirana. Kad idem u goste upakujem poklon u neki grad, ili je prostrem (mapu) za večeru umesto stolnjaka. A razume li se šta je grad prosto čitanjem mape? Spektar boja, i sve vitke i sve debele linije, pa onda elegancija oblika... pa ono karakteristično lepezasto slaganje po šavovima. Neće lepo da se složi. Na drugu stranu. Obrnuto. Prvo na pola... Sve to ima mnogo šarma, priznajem. Šarm i nije da se razume, već da se bude šarmiran!

It's good when the events are so dense as on yesterday's Day. When I close my eyes, I see the (moving) images of the events being squeezed (juxtaposed). And how they radiate meanings. Paradoxically it breaks the laws of physics, it is all kinetic and potential at the same time!



Ein Versuch  
 eine Bibliothek  
 zu konzipieren

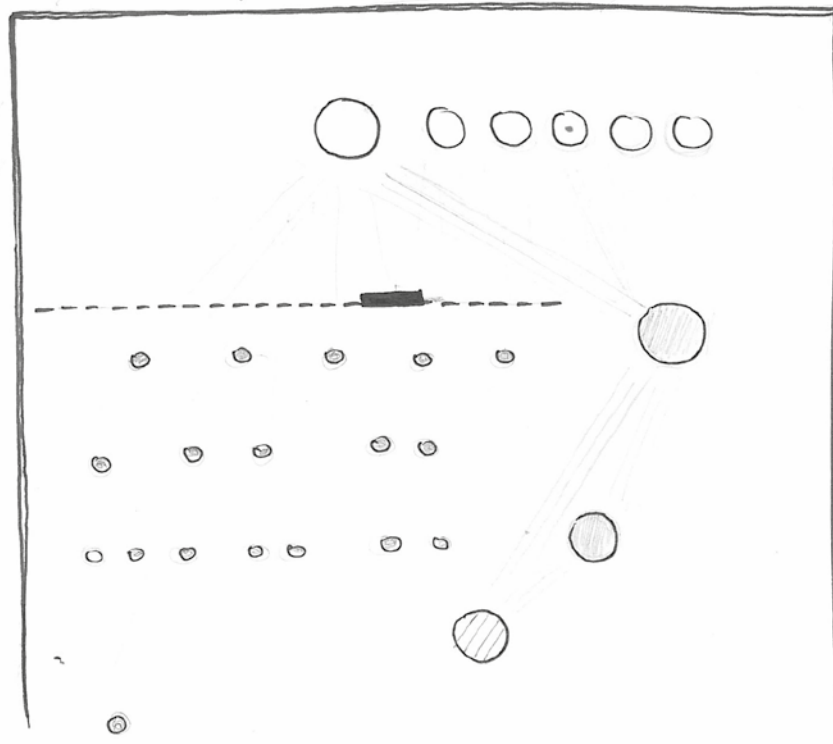
## On Inclusive Planning

LIKE THE CHANCELLOR

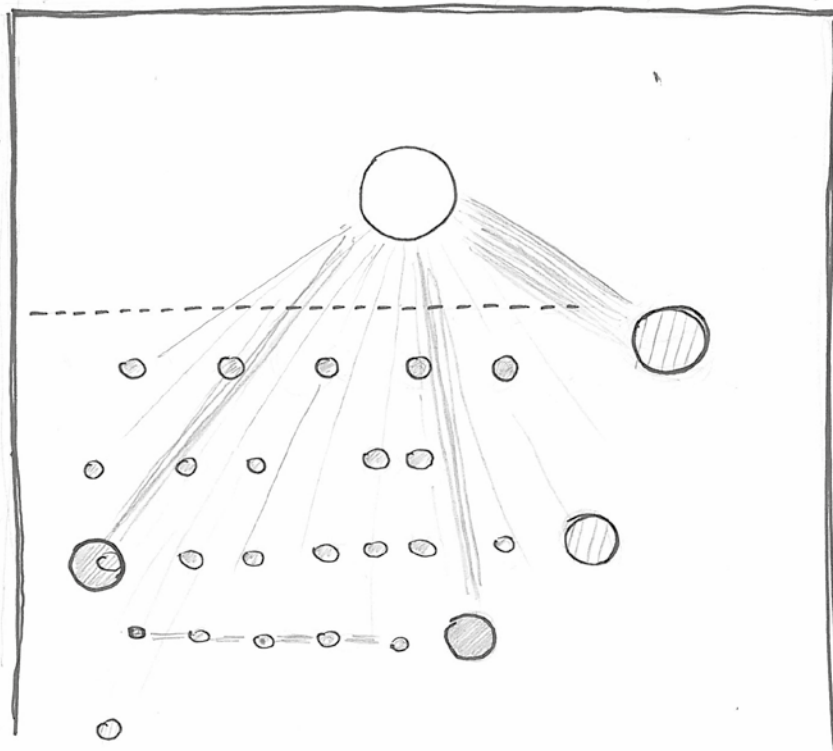
I must admit I have never partaken directly in a stakeholders' meeting or public planning event, however the structure and 'atmosphere' of the different workshops' forms left a strong impression on me. In Porto's 'debate sessions' on the next PDM masterplan, one speaker at a time stands at a glass-like podium, four large flags hanging next to them, the EU and Portuguese flags clearly visible. They talk at a group of people, instead of *with* them, many middle-aged dressed formally, and sitting in rows of identical black chairs. It is more Chancellor giving a press release, flags in the background, and journalists down below in the foreground, than a discussion among interested equals.

# i can't compete

Nicole from the movement „Direito a cidade“ cannot compete against rich Danes, French and Germans coming to the city and buying real estate.



Unsere schiefen  
Präsenta



*Nicole trägt vor.*

### **Roter Faden**

Nicole hat eine große Brille auf und ist ganz schwarz angezogen. Sie ist blass und hat rotes Haar. Von weitem wirkt sie wie Mitte Zwanzig, als ich von Nahem mit ihr spreche kann ich ihre Haut und Augen genauer sehen, sie wirkt älter. Ihr Englisch ist sehr gut, man kann kaum ihren Portugiesischen Akzent hören. Sie setzt sich einfach hin, in die Mitte der ersten Reihe, sie gegen die ganze Gruppe. Sie liest, wirkt aber nicht so, als würde sie lesen. Ich kann sie mir gut vorstellen als Rednerin auf politischen Veranstaltungen. Alles, was sie sagt wirkt gut argumentiert, da ist dieser rote Faden, dem man gut folgen kann. Bestimmt besetzt sie eine wichtige Rolle in ihrer Bewegung.



# FRINGE ZONES

## EXPERIENCE OF IT'S BOUNDARIES

WEEK 2, EPUM Workshop |

Elisabeth Arnold, Pedram Dersch

*The project's aim was the exploration of experienced boundaries in spaces and by this means making an addition to knowledge obtained by traditional morphological analysis. It is centred on an understanding of embodied dimensions of boundaries and how they divide, connect and shape the urban space.*

*The method was to walk along the projected boundaries of the fringe belt and to document, deconstruct and systemize the bodily experience.*

The goal of the project week was to work together with other approaches to urban morphology in order to combine knowledge that can be generated by the very different methods of looking at the urban space. Within one group, the relational-material approach was meant to work together with the historical-geographical approach, that focuses on defining morphological regions and fringe belts in the urban space.

So-called fringe belts are zones of the city that emerged within different stages of urban development. Institutional buildings or open spaces like parks would be placed on the limits of the residential zone, as they would be in need of land. As the city grew those areas were surrounded by additional residential zones. The formerly peripheral situation is by special buildings turned into a central one. The results were isles within the dense urban context, that differ from the residential areas around them.

The historical-geographical morphological approach defines those fringe zones and other morphological zones as precisely as possible. The start point for our part of work was to explore, whether the drawn boundaries of the limits of those zones are relevant in everyday life experience too. Within a chosen fringe zone, we explored the different kind of boundaries we could find.

During the walk through the zone, we focused on the personal reception of those boundaries, posing questions like:

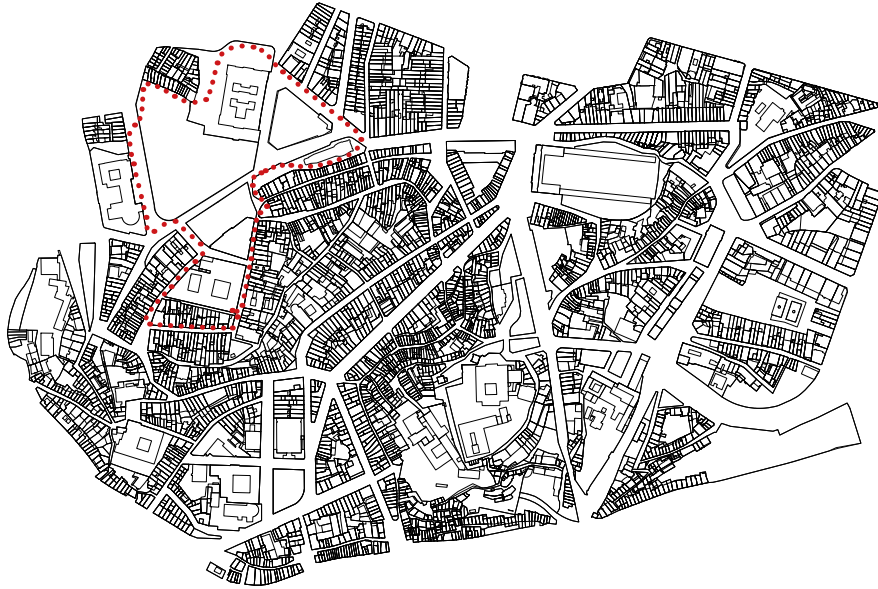
What kind of boundaries do we see and experience?

What is a boundary like?

How are materialities shaping it?

What kind of power is inscribed in them?

We analyzed and systemized our impressions. We divided the boundaries experienced in the chosen fringe belt into two main types: Boundaries that emerge by the materiality of the urban space and those who are created by lived practices in space.



## **boundaries that emerge by materiality**

different use of materials  
volumes

## **dynamic boundaries as lived space**

dynamic in time  
ambiguous boundaries  
extended boundaries

*Materialities, their volumes and arrangements are structuring spaces and fragmenting functions of space. Nevertheless, boundaries are neither strictly linear nor exclusively related to physical obstacles, but they can shift in reaction to time patterns and spatial practices. Rather than limiting the meaning of boundaries to static lines to be drawn, it is crucial to acknowledge their fundamental character as products of social, cultural and political practices.*

**Examples of Porto's city center |** By means of certain examples from the area in Porto's city center – within the fringe belt – we want to illustrate the kind of boundaries we could experience and identify. We would like to show boundaries created by different use of materials and certain volumes or elements in space. Further, in „dynamic boundaries as lived space“, we will give you an example of the role of times of the day, ambiguous boundaries which depend on the perspective taken and boundaries that form zones for themselves.



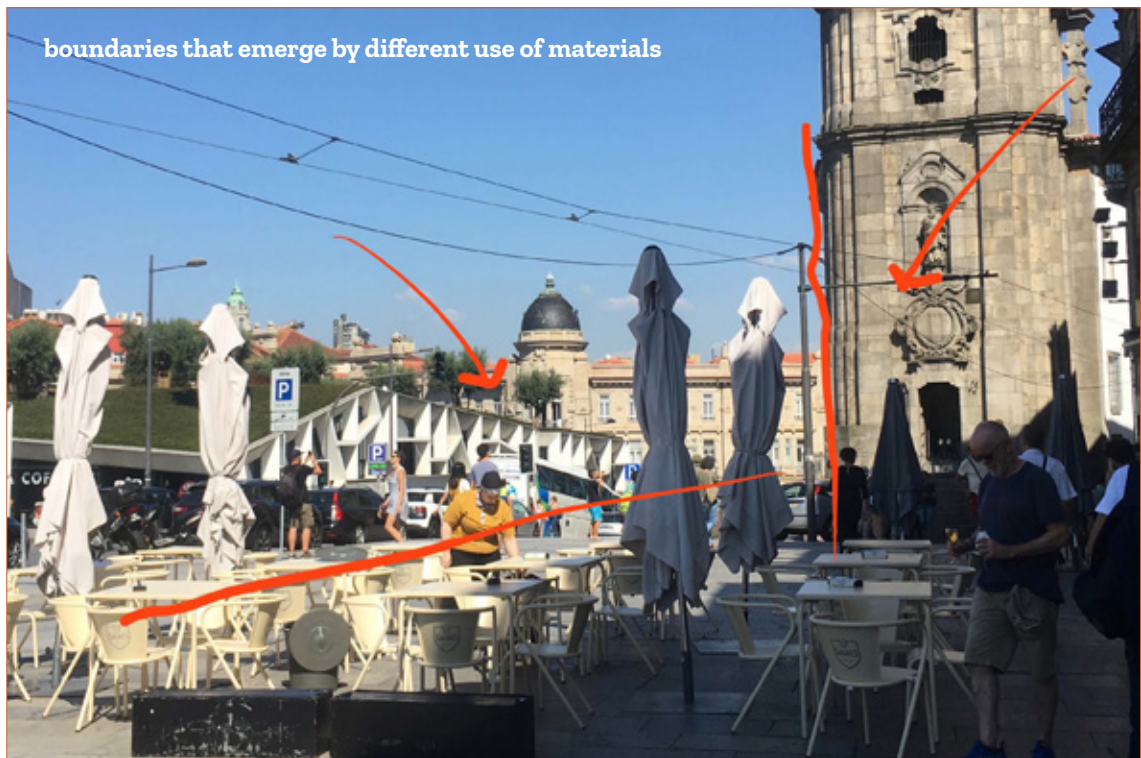
boundaries that emerge by different use of materials



#### EXAMPLES: BOUNDARIES THAT EMERGE BY MATERIALITY

Materials like fences are structuring the space, as they are instructing people how to use spaces and also restricting certain actions. In the example of Jardim de Oliveiras it is possible to analyze the use of implicit power, as the focus lies on instructing people to consume at the praça.

The different use of materials on both sides of a sidewalk and the positioning of certain uses (like parking spots) create a feeling of non-continuity. The massive monastery is built out of stone. By drawing this rough stone pieces into the streets, the presence of the monastery feels even more dominant, pushing the border between it and the residential buildings close to their façades. Due to the positioning of the cars, this feeling gets reinforced.



### EXAMPLES: BOUNDARIES THAT EMERGE BY MATERIALITY

The contrast of the used materials in old and new architectural structures between Praça de Lisboa and Torre dos Clérigos gives us an instant impression of rupture. The street between the two façades therefore seems even more like a separation between the two sides.

Big major buildings with giant walls, doors and windows represent a certain message of power and stability and can divide spaces. By generating such a huge contrast to surrounding residential typologies, they give the impression of non-negotiable power. The great volume of such a building even has a fragmenting effect on the function of a space.

Sight axis between dominant visible elements create a sense of continuity of space and can therefore overcome other boundaries. The axis builds a feeling of common bond in the area in between. At the same time, through the physical configuration of these representative volumes, the structure of the city consolidates power relations.

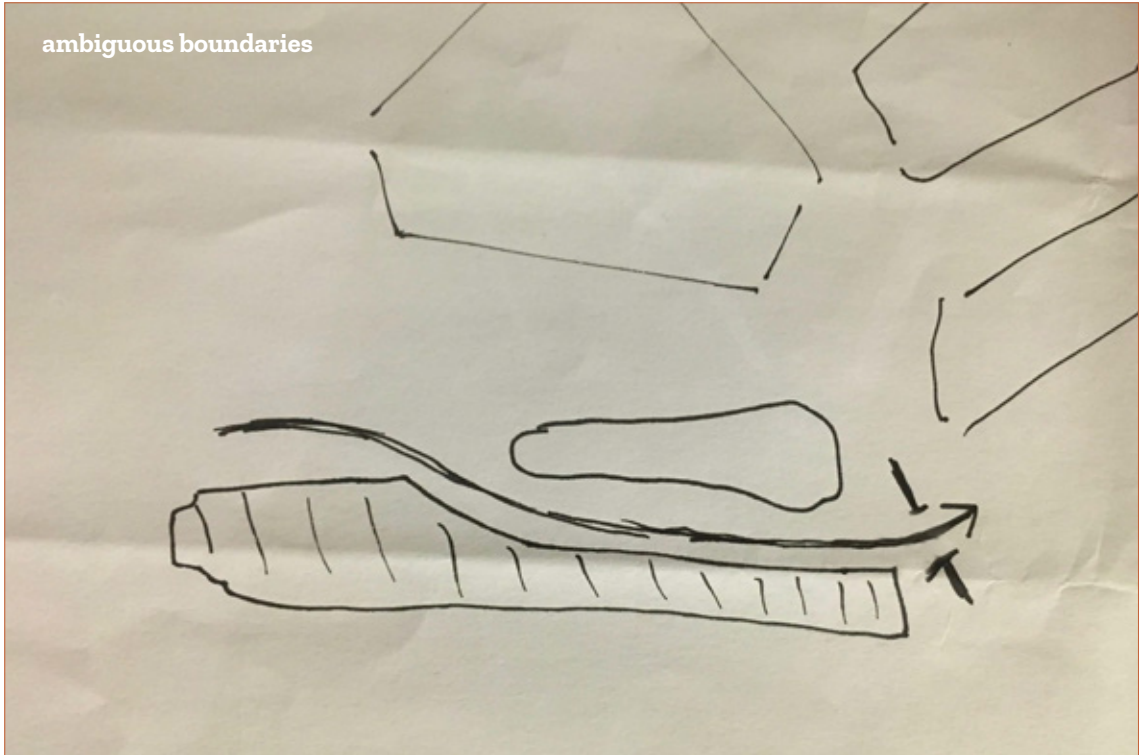
boundaries that stretch by visibility of dominant volumes



boundaries that emerge by volumes



ambiguous boundaries



#### EXAMPLES: DYNAMIC BOUNDARIES AS LIVED SPACE

By the fact that Cafe's spread into open space new boundaries are created, that cannot be read through mere typology. Streetside seating transforms parts of the space next to Portos old university building into semi-private zones. A linear boundary expands to an area: a fringe within a fringe.

Dynamics of people can be experienced as dividing and unifying at the same point of time. A street can be dividing, if it is a major thoroughfare, for pedestrians, but connecting for cars. Pedestrian streets can also unify city parts when walking past them. However, when crossing such a pedestrian flow it acts as a barrier, which structures the space. So, even flows of people can act as a boundary and the perspective is relevant for perceiving a boundary.

Dynamics, whether it is pedestrian or car movement, are specific to a time of the day. What at some time can be a empty place can turn into a barrier of a current of people during the rushhour. Boundaries can therefore be seen as flexible over time.

extended boundaries



boundaries  
dynamic in time



Porto Rua das Flores,  
Monday,  
03.09.2018, 13:30h



# COMBINED APPROACHES TO URBAN MORPHOLOGY:

## UNCOVER THE TRUTH!

WEEK 2, EPUM Workshop |

Isidora Šobot

*The aim of the project was rather an experiment of viewing the same location through the lense of three different approaches.*

*We began with a plan but relational-material approach proved that no 2D planning is enough when it comes to planning of space.*

**# Processual -Typological approach**

**# Space Syntax**

**# Relational-Material approach**

*What happens when these processes work together? Do they merge? Or do they clash?*

In this project, our goal was to make an experiment and see how these approaches can be combined and what results will be obtained in the end. We chose one location- an area surrounding Sao Bento train station and did our analysis.

Processual – Typological approach confirmed existing axes and poles and elaborated how Porto's historical center transformed through time by maintaining the persistent territorial routes and developing characteristic building typologies.

Space Syntax team performed software analysis of the area partially based on the count of people using particular “gates” of the streets that showed in which percentage streets are expected to be used according to calculated visibility and accessibility and within a certain radius of movement.

Relational-material approach used knowledge of the specific location gained through experience during several visits in different times of the day. When I went to the location, I was able to see that Rua de Arnaldo Gama was not one path as we assumed by reading maps, but actually one street with two paths- a higher and a lower level. After careful observation, I realized that not only this topography influences the use of the paths, but that there is also a difference in who uses which of the paths. Analysis showed that people with more knowledge of the space choose a better route and actually the only route that leads towards the Dom Luís I Bridge. People who visited the location for the first time, usually in order to get from Batalha square to the famous bridge, would always choose the upper path that naturally continues on the path leading from the square, only to discover that it is suddenly interrupted. Locals, or the people who already had the experience of visiting this location, knew that the lower part of the street continues further.

**This showed two things:**

- we cannot make opinions about the space based only on one type of analysis;
- experiencing the location and embodying the space gives us a valuable perception of current settings and its potentials and possibilities.

When we joined our observations and results, three teams concluded that this example nicely shows how our approaches can be combined when doing analysis of a certain area. Our results can actually be used as layers that in the end provide a complete picture- through analysis, knowledge and experience of the city.

## EXPERIENCING VISIBILITY

LOCATION: RUA DE ARNALDO GAMA, BATALHA PORTO



### VISIBILITY ANALYSIS

It shows that the software calculated that if we stand at the beginning point of Rua de Arnaldo Gama, we will see the whole street as one path (which is not the real situation)



### INTUITIVE CHOICE OF PATHS ACCORDING TO VISIBILITY/KNOWLEDGE

- People who visit the location for the first time - choose a path that follows the imagined line of a “tourist walk” from Batalha funicular towards the Dom Luís I Bridge; a path that suddenly ends (a house stands in the way), which makes them go back and choose the path down below.
- People who live there or have already used the street before - know the upper part is a “dead end” and immediately choose the lower part of the street in order to proceed towards the bridge.



- • • **LOCALS** - choose the path according to the experience/ knowledge of space
- • • **VISITORS** - choose paths according to visibility



What we see on a map doesn't always match with what we experience at the location.

Relational-material approach provides us the knowledge as a catalyst for a better understanding of space.

- *Empirical framework*
- *Embodied space*
- *Each person perceives the same public space DIFFERENTLY*
- *Public spaces are SHAPED BY the people*

- *Focuses on human EXPERIENCE*
- *KNOWLEDGE of space shapes our interaction with it*

### RELATIONAL-MATERIAL APPROACH

# ODE TO SÃO BENTO

## THE RHYTHM OF THE CITY

WEEK 2, EPUM Workshop,  
based on the research results  
from the WEEK 1 work. |  
Jorge Afonso, Alexander Hauff,  
Milica Ugrinov, Emilie Wöllauer Montoya

I call him yesterday, that day. Just as I started to think of him, he was gone, he left yesterday. And the stream of time stops. *São Bento.*

Although the stream of time froze, we go on. *São Bento.*

Two days go by, and that day to me is still yesterday. Maybe I want to keep him close, keep him fresh, even conserve him in formaldehyde... no! He's already stuck there where he is, I can climb through the branches of his experience like a monkey. This is because when I began to think of him as a Day, he had already happened yesterday. And at this point every measurement of the stream ceases. *São Bento.*

I have decided, I will only mention what is important. What matters to me. And the monkey is smart, he knows what's important! *São Bento.*

The events are so dense on yesterday's day. *São Bento.*

which I call yesterday. *São Bento.*

I see the images of these events being squeezed and radiating meanings. A paradox! *São Bento.* It breaks the laws of physics, it's all kinetic and potential, all at the same time!

Getting out of the metro we are greeted by a large gray station with more platforms than *São Bento.* It had more of an industrial feeling than that of a passenger station.

We are late though, and that makes us oblivious to our surroundings. *São Bento.* Short on time and in a rush, we search for a present for our host. *São Bento.* There it is, a pineapple. She takes it, eyes sparkling. Our host sees its beauty, and the pineapple becomes a star, a work of art, standing solo, a table all to itself. *São Bento.* This gift came from us, we belong now to this place.

We are ushered in through a very short narrow hallway. *São Bento.*

The wall on the left large granite blocks, the wall on the right smooth and painted white, it immediately opened into a larger, elongated intimate room. I notice a smell, which I'm told is cork. Through Manuela's words I place it in Porto's traditions. **São Bento.**

The sliding doors behind us are the old massive wooden doors. Behind the gallery is a patio, where huge vines grow and cast a pleasant shade. The sudden smell of grapes strikes me because it reminds me of my parents' garden. I enjoy it, pleasant smells. **São Bento.**  
I missed.

Up and Down. **São Bento.**

The time is going quickly. **São Bento.**

Not so much when compared to the runners. **São Bento.**

But quickly enough to the drivers. **São Bento.**

The car driven by impatient driver splits the site.

**São Bento.**

On one side the heaven, on the other, maybe the hell. People prefer **São Bento** he saint who has created the rule ora et labora. But I prefer hell. In there, without sits, without shadows, I find, recognize, know myself, I hear the sound of cars, the sound of bell, the birds, the few birds, singing. It is true, if the true exists, I prefer hell. Although I am not the only one. People prefer to go up and down every time, unconscious, like Sisyphus. What did they do to deserve this? Did they deserve this kind of punishment? Maybe. I don't really know! I only know myself, I suppose to! For sure, I am feeling, I am existing in one place that does not exist at all. My loneliness, in this lonely place, makes me conscious of my incounsiouness during the day. The absurdity of life has its meaningful expression here, in this site, this dantesque place.

A maker of pictures, a curator of art, our host and her husband are the keepers of this place. The product of their minds' work, it's not the money to them, it's the passion. **São Bento.**

Manuela she's called, our wondrous host, small and majestic in a black and lila, her presence is huge, the size of three warehouses. Her passion, it radiates, you feel it, it penetrates, deep into your bones. Her words are so careful, exact precise, carefully chosen, her voice smooth and calming. She tells us a story, of a beautiful accident, the dream came to life, they let it loose and ran side by side. The neighbors and the ties with them! They were there, they arrived, at first separate, but now partners. Campanha and Manuela. You can feel it, the pride, in every stone and vine, in every word she says about this dream, the place she built. She shows us the stones, the vines, the roof of cork, every action every view, of this tour of her place. I don't want to leave, we must come back.

It's a fine delicate performance, like a play of glass. **São Bento.**

Yet it all seems so natural, spontaneous.

Costumes, expressions, the stage and setting, this performance. It was not deceit, but a gesture of kindness it was a curated experience! This was not new, it was practiced before, perfect to the last detail, like a fine glass sculpture. It was beautiful, it was perfection. **São Bento.**

And in this beauty and in this perfection, was passion, glistening through the glass. The story of this place,

of the city she lived in. A slice of the city, served on a tray, perfectly presented. **São Bento.**

When she speaks, the stream of her words flows together. It's as if their colour rubs off on the spaces

around her. **São Bento.**

As long as I'm in the rooms, I feel like I'm happy too, I do not want to leave.

I leave the espaço, and see a house. It seems old, now falling appart, yet surely it was a wonder, back in its day. **São Bento.**

Yet I step to the side, and then I see. It's just a facade it's just a veil, there's nothing behind.

Keep the rhythm he says! *São Bento*.  
We're in a rush. *São Bento*.  
we're late and running along. *São Bento*.  
Cars and busses, they leave us behind. Our  
rhythms, our tempos, each has his own. *São  
Bento*.  
we can't keep together, and the group falls apart.  
We reach a corner, a stop, a pause, we're back  
together. We start off again. *São Bento*.  
but our rhythms our tempos, they are each his  
own. *São Bento*.  
and again we fall apart. *São Bento*.

The sun is still up but not so high. We learned so  
much we need to discuss. A place to sit, to rest,  
to talk, to congregate. This would be perfect. *São  
Bento*.

To sit in the green is what I long for. Yet there is  
no grass, just stones and shrub, surrounded by  
fence. We see a monument. *São Bento*.  
to an event of the past, its pedestal will have to  
do. It's an impromptu bench. We spread around,  
half on the bench, half on the ground. *São Bento*.  
I sit on the floor. *São Bento*.  
and stretch my legs. This square, now a  
classroom. People come and go, take pictures of  
us and our 'bench'. This is the urban stage. *São  
Bento*.

We are at its center. *São Bento*.  
and our indifferent audience, the city, waits  
across the square. *São Bento*.

It is an interesting sight, a picture is taken. *São  
Bento*.

Unannounced a man appears. He is a man with  
no home. He comes to us and gestures, he wants  
a place on our bench. We oblige and he joins  
us. Eventually he leaves, and looks for another  
bench. *São Bento*.

He finds one, yet there he is not welcome. *São  
Bento*.

Its occupant leaves, and he stays there alone on  
this bench. *São Bento*.

Again he tries, and again the same. It saddens me  
as his image slowly fades away.

Wearing bright pink, Anna stands out. She is  
positive and rushed, very energetic. *São Bento*.  
You can feel it in the speed with which she talks.  
*São Bento*.

In the energy she gives off as she talks. *São  
Bento*.

She has a part to play you see, this struggle she is  
fighting, its also hers. *São Bento*.

She is not alone she says, others are also in  
danger. *São Bento*.

She talks to the group, but often we talk one by  
one as she tells her story. She talks of eviction,  
of rents of losing her home. It's a paradox. *São  
Bento*.

So bright and energetic yet her outlook so  
negative. *São Bento*.

She is part of the struggle, yet she is not a victim.  
She is a fighter, she is prepared, she will face the  
situation.

Ana walks in a dynamic way. *São Bento*.

She moves through the city, not following a plan.  
*São Bento*.

The plan was there, but she doesn't need it. It's  
an instinct. As our conversation flows the route  
adapts. *São Bento*.

We leave Praça Carlos Alberto and pass by Jardim  
de Cordoaria as she talks about Porto and her  
struggles. *São Bento*.

Her talk and our walk have little in common, only  
when we reach the historical center, do these  
points become real. *São Bento*.

The twisted narrow streets are fascinating. At the  
later hour, the creeping twilight gives these steep  
streets a slightly gloomy character, accented by  
the abandoned buildings lining their sides. *São  
Bento*.

The recurring appearance of recently renovated  
buildings, with smooth signs and glistening clean  
tiles cut through the gloom in a peculiar way, as if  
they didn't quite belong. *São Bento*.

These streets she says. **São Bento.**  
She knows. **São Bento.**  
She knows their struggle, and these buildings are the signs. **São Bento.**  
A patchwork of buildings old, empty and glistening new, all side by side. The identity of Porto itself is in danger I think, it's so close to the core, where the streams of money flow. **São Bento.**  
As she tells her story, it's hard to keep up. Our rhythms don't match, the group falls apart, spread rejoins. **São Bento.**  
All of us hear different pieces of the story. **São Bento.**

Our goal is to meet in a room above the city. A palace of sorts, luxury streams out of every wall, chair and table. We, six students and a teacher, do not belong. A man in red opens the elevator, and leads us into the room. **São Bento.**  
People drink wine, and peer over the city. Old books and ornaments line the walls. We don't feel welcome. **São Bento.**  
We sit at a table, it's difficult to talk. The table is too big. We wait for our host, but he doesn't appear. As time passes our unease grows. We discuss what to do, we don't belong, we leave, and meet somewhere else.

Diogo is his name, he says. I repeat Diego. No, it's Diogo with two o's, he replies. Diegoo then it is! Diegoo is a friend of a friend. He's a 'Portuense' a child of this city, he works in the world of art. He does not own a cell phone. He's not alone however. He brings a friend, Thiago he's called. **São Bento.**

Diegoo wants to show us the places in the city. But he needs a map. **São Bento.**  
We have a map, it is for tourists. It shows shopping and other places for which we don't care. **São Bento.**  
Diegoo takes out his pen, a fountain pen, ink

flowing, and with jerky letters, labels new points on the map. It is a reprogramming of sorts, an analogue overwriting. Diegoo draws points, arrows, lines, words on the map. **São Bento.**  
The map transforms into a sheet full of meaningful information, it is a folder for a story, a folder as a pad, a support. **São Bento.**  
Diegoo draws, adding information. **São Bento.**  
Clubs, bars, restaurants, important buildings. **São Bento.**  
He mentions Cunha. It's a Porto classic he says, one of those 1970's restaurants. He says the booths are really cosy, it's a personal favourite. Also Maus Hábitos. Is a special place. It's the penthouse of a garage. It's a must. Sounds nice. Maybe we should go. **São Bento.**

[The bar is minimalistic but very deliberately designed. **São Bento.**  
Black roof. **São Bento.**  
Large old style bulbs and a wall mounted menu with an 80s USA vibe. We sit on the street. **São Bento.**  
At two tables in front of the café's window. The sound comes from two sources, one is the sound of the voice of Diegoo, and the other is the traffic noise that hits us, in a constant, regular intervals. **São Bento.**  
We do not hear Tiago's voice at all. We ask him to repeat, to speak louder, we strive to hear, but we still do not hear him. We see only his smile and we hear our own laughter which echoes down the street. Before we knew it, it's past midnight and time to go home. ] *extended version*

We hear about artists. **São Bento.**  
About festivals. **São Bento.**  
About movies. **São Bento.**  
About personalities. **São Bento.**  
About biographies, about politics and constants and changes. **São Bento.**  
Changes in space and time. **São Bento.**  
About the left and right, about the city authorities. **São Bento.**



About the intentions, and on relations. *São Bento*.  
Between neighborhoods. *São Bento*.  
Between the neighborhood and the city. *São Bento*.  
Between cities themselves. *São Bento*.  
City and country, city and the world. *São Bento*.  
About Colonies. *São Bento*.  
About Power. *São Bento*.  
On Dominance and Courage, and Unkindness. *São Bento*.  
About years. *São Bento*.  
About dates, and about facts. *São Bento*.  
About postcolonial time. *São Bento*.  
About heritage and relatives, roots and relationships. *São Bento*.  
Personal histories have been revealed. *São Bento*.  
There is a debate about power. *São Bento*.  
The true political power. *São Bento*.  
And real domination. *São Bento*.  
The power that is ingrained in the city. *São Bento*.  
The power that is immanent to the city. *São Bento*.  
And we pick at it without ambition to crush it. *São Bento*.

Diego does not own a cell phone. He wants to stay in touch, but he does not have a cellphone. He simply doesn't. He uses e-mail and we can write. How brave must one be, not to have a cellphone in the modern world we live in? Yes, he is deliberately not available at any moment, but he remains firmly in touch with the world and people. *São Bento*.  
He is distinctly a social being. He treats moments with his friends as something most valuable. How have we all subjected ourselves to a round o'clock availability? The phone is the only thing from which we hardly separate at any time. And Diego does not have it. *São Bento*.  
I would say that he chose a way of life that treats freedom and time and intimacy as a great treasure. *São Bento*.

And what about marking all these places on the city map? How can one just flatten and simplify something as fantastic as the city? Like this: take a city, put it in a cast, and reproduce that city as many times as you wish. You get a 3D model. Then you project it on a flat surface. Fold it, put it in your pocket and it will help you go where you want to go. Yes, it's worth it indeed! When visiting someone, you take this city, wrap a present with it, or spread it out for dinner like a tablecloth. Sometimes the city refuses to be folded. You try, you turn it on the other side, flip it. You first fold in half... All this has its charm, I admit. The spectrum of colors, all the thin and thick lines, and then the elegance of the shape... and the unavoidable folds, those fine seams.



*“And what about marking all these places on the city map? How can one just flatten and simplify something as fantastic as the city? Like this: take a city, put it in a cast, and reproduce that city as many times as you wish. You get a 3D model. Then you project it on a flat surface. Fold it, put it in your pocket and it will help you go where you want to go. Yes, it’s worth it indeed! When visiting someone, you take this city, wrap a present with it, or spread it out for dinner like a tablecloth. Sometimes the city refuses to be folded. You try, you turn it on the other side, flip it. You first fold in half.. All this has it’s charm, I admit. The spectrum of colors, all the thin and thick lines, and then the elegance of the shape... and the unavoidable folds, those fine seams.”*

*[extract from ‘Ode to São Bento’, to be read on page 98 of this reader]*

