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Visual Methods in Cultural Urban Studies

The emergence of cultural urban studies is in the 21st century a component of the global intellectual landscape. There are a few studies on cultural urban studies which reveal it as a new sub-discipline, but whilst it has a long tail, it also has a short body. In the historical perspective there are several studies on urban cultural studies in England and a few studies on cultural urban studies in Poland, but various emergences of this intellectual query can be seen from the beginning of the 20th century all over the world. Despite the inner differences, however, they transgress various disciplines which are interested in urban studies. Because of the ways cultural urban studies has developed, the distinctive differences are – firstly – the unavoidable articulations of theories of culture and – secondly – a question of methodology. In order to investigate the construction of cultural urban space, the sociologist's, urban geographer's, urban planner's and so on have carried out detailed studies on cultures. The contrast between the cultural attitudes presented by them was permanently noted. The divisions between concepts, theories and methods, which are already developed in cultural studies, manifest themselves also in their works. The articulation and re-articulation of methods within this subdiscipline is not only an act of intellectual history within discipline, but also a model of the negotiation of multiple methodologies and strategies of intellectual inventions. In many cases there is the constitutive difference between cultural urban studies and established disciplines such as sociology and history.

Urban cultural studies/cultural urban studies is an expanding discipline concerned with the viewing, hearing, experiencing and reading of urban space. The experience of city space is here both idiosyncratic and affective, empirical and analytical. Perhaps the most critical problem in cultural urban studies methodology is that of balancing the "typical" and the "idiosyncratic" sides of the equation. On the one hand, there is a danger of favouring the quantitative methods, on the other, there is a danger of favouring the art-based-methods. Clearly, any investigation into the uses of urban space must involve some interrogation of the accepted theory of culture. The explosion of city cultures hidden within "universal" theories of culture is not simply a reaction to technological, economic, and political changes in our world, but also a positive attempt to shape a new concept of culture and create the new methods in cultural urban studies.

The modernized, but still historically marked spaces of our cities produce plenty of images of urbanites and their cultural practices. Moreover, this explosion of city cultures is not only about centers of cultural production, but also about peripheral urbanization in typical middle size towns. This doesn't mean that each city could be viewed as a place of sovereign

cultural processes. For many of the artists and artivists these processes begin with the rethinking of national and urban history. Nevertheless, most cultural studies of the production of urban spaces and practices take into consideration urban space as a kind of visual space. On the cross-roads of urban culture and visual culture there are multiple methodological challenges and questions. There are also various present forms of answering these questions. The common goal in this field, however, is to rethink selected visual methods from the cultural urban studies viewpoint.

We see the continuum of engagement represented by visual methods. The most popular are methods of the visual representation and documentation (photography, film, architectural drawings, paintings) of urban spaces: iconic buildings and powerful symbols, urban life and everyday activities. Photography in particular has been used in many different ways in relation to the city with the intention to retrace what has remained of the past. As many authors suggest, photography documents historical examples of urban spaces which are especially important for architects, urban planners, historians and urban geographers. However, silmultaneous usages of micro- and macroscales in cultural studies suggest that there are several topics and approaches, e.g. a construction of urban memory. Urban scholars have worked with the visual representations of city spaces created by professional visual practitioners and amateurs for many reasons, but the main task today is creating international urban imaginary and constructing specific understanding of the urban, and urban cultures.

New models of community activity within the urban environment reinforces expectations formulated by urban cultural studies research addressed to visual methods. We think about such images which are not so much a representation of the city, but which are symptomatic of the processes of collective knowledge formation. The visibility of micro- and macro-social structures, movements and bottom up practices, their subordination to immaterial and different circuits of communication, often leads to a data-driven activism. The efficacy of this activism depends on the creators of crowdsourcing, and collective urban maps of traditional and emergent socio-cultural problems. Tools such as collective maps of cultural activities, and mapping as a visual method, interfere often with other methods: recording, photography, cartography. Merging digital and physical spaces through mobile communication networks reorders conceptual and public images of the city as a common space. Although this is a trend, it would be unjust not to point out that the cultural urban studies often question the criteria of the merging visual methods with these which concern the urban smellscapes and soundscapes. Urban cultures are constructed with images, colours, sounds, smells, tastes and haptic experiences.

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Visual Culture, Photography and the Urban: An Interpretive Framework

Abstract: This article offers a framework for understanding and reflecting upon the various ways that urban scholars have worked with visual representations of city spaces. It suggests that there are three main approaches: representing the urban, evoking the urban and performing the urban. The paper discusses the methodological implications of each of these.

Key words: photography, urban, visual culture, methodology

Introduction

There is of course an extraordinarily long, rich and complex history of visual representations of the city. From high art to popular culture, across urban-related professions to the mass media, urban places have been encountered and pictured by all sorts of visual practitioners. The material and affective qualities of urban environments have thus been mediated by many kinds of images, and in turn our engagement with the urban has been shaped by photographs, paintings, drawings, films, plans, maps, digital visualisations and videos of real and imagined cities, among many other visual forms.[1]

This short essay takes just one possible route through this complex intersection between visual culture and the urban. It focusses on one visual medium: photography. Photography is a useful medium to explore ways of conceptualising relations between the urban and visual media, because it has from its inception been used to picture cities; it is also a very widely-distributed technology, used in a vast range of contexts by diverse kinds of users. The essay also looks at one particular kind of 'visual practitioner': scholars, whether professional social scientists or not, who use or make images as ways of understanding what 'the urban' is. The essay offers a brief framework for approaching the range of ways in which

[1] See for example: M.C. Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments*, MIT Press, London 1994; E. Gordon, *The Urban Spectator: American Concept Cities from Kodak to Google*, Dartmouth College Press, Hanover, NH 2010; C. Lindner, *Globalization, Violence, and the Visual Culture of Cities*, Routledge, London 2010; A. Marcus, D. Neumann (eds.), *Visualizing the City*, Routledge, London 2007; S. McQuire, *The Media City: Media, Architecture and Urban Space*, Sage, London 2008; M. Nilsen (ed.), *Nineteenth-Century Photographs and Architecture*, Ashgate, Farnham 2013; J. Tormey, *Cities and Photography*, Routledge, London 2012.

urban scholars have engaged with photographic images as a means of interpreting, evoking and performing city spaces.

1. Representing the urban

How cities are represented in various visual media, from film to architectural drawings to photography to paintings, has been considered by a large literature from a range of disciplines. This scholarship, broadly speaking, focuses on how discourses about 'the urban' are both reflected in and re-articulated by visual images. The images themselves that are studied in this body of work are generally created by professional visual practitioners, such as architects, filmmakers, advertising or television companies, photographers or artists. A body of such work is taken and interpreted by the scholar to demonstrate how it represents a specific understanding of the urban.

Photography in particular has been used in many different ways in relation to the city. Some of the earliest photographic work showing city places appears highly descriptive: photography as a technology has very often been used as a means of objectively recording visual appearances. In the second half of the nineteenth century, for example, many urban development projects were documented by photographers who recorded both the old areas of the cities being demolished and the process of building the modern infrastructure that took their place. In Paris, Charles Marville was commissioned to record the streets destroyed to make way for Hausmann's boulevards; in Glasgow, Thomas Annan photographed the Gorbals before they were knocked down and rebuilt; anonymous photographers recorded the demolition of slums in Manchester, Leeds and countless other industrial cities across Europe and beyond. The use of cameras to record a changing urban landscape continues into the twentieth century, of course.

However, most scholars of urban photography would not argue that the camera is ever objective. While it may faithfully record the patterns of light that fall onto its chemicals or photovoltaic cells, a photographer pointed the camera at a particular place, controlled the camera's sensitivity and exposure to that light, developed the print or uploaded the file to a computer, perhaps edited the photograph somehow, before sending it on to various audiences to make their own interpretations of it. Indeed, Elizabeth Edwards has recently dissected in detail the documentary impulse animating the widespread amateur photography movement in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century England, arguing that their efforts to describe changing urban and rural landscapes were both driven by and constitutive of nationalist discourses of nostalgic anti-urbanism.[2] Thus their apparently descriptive work in fact also articulated a quite specific ideological position.

Hence, a recurrent theme in scholarly work on photographs as representations is the politics of that representation: how and what is pictured, by whom, and with what effects. There are many studies demonstrating that the work of representing urban spaces is by no means

[2] E. Edwards, *The Camera as Historian: Amateur Photographers and Historical Imagination, 1885–1918*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC 2012.

trivial. The work of representation always represents both an urban scene but also a social scene, both in what is pictured but also in how it is pictured and what relation is established with specific viewers by the formal components of the image. Many scholarly studies have therefore taken photographs of different urban places and explored how their content and symbolic references affirm or contest other discourses defining the urban. Jane Tormey's recent book discusses this at some length.[3]

It is also important to note that this critical engagement with the politics of representation has taken visual form too. Many scholars of the urban have felt that, given the power of images in representing cities, they should respond in kind, with photographs. Allan Pred, for example, in his discussions of modernity's emergence in Sweden, uses collaged images to demonstrate the complex intersections of new and existing architectural and social forms.[4] In a more contemporary vein, Yasser Elsheshtawy has written about Dubai and subtitled his book *Behind an Urban Spectacle*[5]; in it, he reproduces a few of the glossy marketing images through which Dubai visualises – and sells – itself to investors and tourists as a dazzling urban spectacle of sun, starchitecture and sand. But he also includes a chapter of his own photographs, black and white images of the migrant workers whose labour sustains Dubai's economy and whose residential and work spaces are invisible in the city's dominant imagery. Here images confront images: equally embedded in their relations with other forms of urban discourse, but suggesting very different versions of Dubai.

Thus, this approach to the visual representation of cities is valuable for its careful attention to images themselves, and for its critical capacity. In a world in which the urban – as well as the social and the economic – are increasingly represented visually, the interpretive tools offered by this approach are important and necessary.

However, this approach to visual materials is less effective in considering how specific images, or groups or genres of image, have specific effects with particular audiences in particular places and times. Its interpretation of what a photograph means tends to rely on a method drawn loosely from semiology and what I have elsewhere described as discourse analysis[6]: it is a method that relies on a close reading of the photograph and other texts, figuring out what elements in the photograph relate to what other elements in, say, policy documents or the mass media or novels or some other discursive form. As an approach, it has little to say on what Appadurai calls the 'social life of objects'[7]: how objects, let's say visual objects like a canvas, a photograph or a map, become embedded in circuits of social practice, and only have an effect in the context of that practice.[8] It is not particularly interested in how images are understood by lively audiences. Hence, efforts to counterpose critical

3 J. Tormey, *op. cit*.

4 A. Pred, *Recognizing European Modernities: A Montage of the Present*, Routledge, London 1995.

5 Y. Elsheshtawy, *Dubai: Behind an Urban Spectacle*, Routledge, London 2010.

6 G. Rose, *Visual Methodologies: Interpreting Visual Materials*, 3rd ed., Sage, London 2011.

7 A. Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1986.

8 G. Rose, *The Question of Method: Practice, Reflexivity and Critique in Visual Culture Studies*, [in:] I. Heywood, B. Sandywell (eds.), *The Handbook of Visual Culture*, Berg, Oxford 2012, pp. 542–558.

visual work to oppressive forms of representation often seem to assume that their criticality is self-evident: that photographing workers, for example, is inherently to assert the value of labour. Paradoxically, this ends up not so distinct from arguments that claim that the photograph speaks for itself, and is therefore somehow objective.

Finally, before moving on to other bodies of work that assert different relations between photography and the urban, it is important to mention a specific tradition of photographing the built urban environment that exists within the social sciences. Some urban scholars also use photographs in order to document change to the material urban landscape. Usually they are linked explicitly to a body of written urban scholarship, and their aim is to describe, visually and systematically, how a cityscape has changed over time.

An example of this kind of work is the project *Invincible Cities*, curated by Camile Jose Vergara and Howard Gillette.[9] Vergara has been taking photographs of the New York neighbourhood of Harlem for years, and they are now all on the project's website, along with photos of Camden, New Jersey, and Richmond, California. The photographs are organised by location (and also by building type), and it is therefore possible to search the site and find a series of photographs stretching over two decades or more of a particular building or view. These scholars do not claim that their photographs are a neutral record of urban change, however. They concur that photographs – like any other form of image – are never windows onto a real world. Photos are created in a specific context: in this case, debates among urban studies scholars about the nature of change in urban environments. This is evident in a number of ways in Vergara's project. The *Invincible Cities* website has a long essay by Vergara on the changes visible in his Harlem photographs; he is clear that his photos construct an interpretation of that change, which is driven by globalisation and its persistent inequalities. While that particular project leaves the precise link between the photographs taken and that interpretive framework unclear, there are other projects that have addressed that link more directly. Charles Suchar, for example, in his study of gentrification in Chicago, has developed the notion of a 'shooting script' as the bridge between the social-scientific concept of 'gentrification' and the photographs he takes as a record of its material manifestations in the landscape.[10] Scholars using photographs of urban places in this way, then, are not doing so naively. They understand their form of photography to be representational, and its representationality is articulated through explicit relations to other texts. In this case, the texts are those works of social science that offer concepts with which to understand change in urban built environments.

This body of social science work is perhaps not as exciting as some other forms of urban scholarship that engage with visual media. Its images are not often particularly visually exciting or even aesthetically attractive. But that is not their point. Their point is to work as a form of evidence for material change, a fuller and more detailed form of evidence than verbal description can provide. And as evidence, their epistemological status is subject to explicit discussion and clarification. This, I think, is very important for social scientists in-

[9] http://invinciblecities.camden.rutgers.edu/intro.html (accessed: 20.08.2013).

[10] C.S. Suchar, *Grounding Visual Sociology in Shooting Scripts*, "Qualitative Sociology" 1997, no. 20, pp. 33–55.

terested in using visual images. Simply saying 'our culture is visual now, so we need to take photographs' is not an adequate methodology, as this body of work demonstrates. The links between concepts, methodology, evidence and interpretation need just as much puzzling over when the evidence is visual as it does when the evidence is, say, an interview transcript or a policy document.

2. Evoking the urban

The previous section discussed a large body of work that is particularly focused on the representation of urban spaces. Clearly, there are many genres of photography that have been taken by urban scholars to be representational: documentary photography, photojournalism, art photography, and so on. Interpreting photographs, or other visual media, as representational is a methodological stance towards the image, not one driven by the image itself. Hence, as theoretical shifts create new methodological problematics, existing photographs can be interpreted differently – and photographs of city spaces can be created in ways that assert a different relation between the city and its imaging.

In recent years, two such shifts are evident to me. The first, which the next section will discuss, is the embedding of image-making and sharing in a wide range of everyday urban practices. The second, to be discussed now, is an approach to creating images of the urban has become more and more popular among scholars influenced by the move in urban theory towards a concern with the embodied experiencing of urban spaces. This is an interest in the experiential and the sensory aspects of the urban: urban spaces as felt through the skin, smelt through the nose, seen through the eyes. It has been driven by a number of shifts in contemporary social theory, including work on embodiment, the sensory and the affective. In this work, visual images are used as a means less to decode the *representation* of urban spaces by linking them to other discourses – whether visual or textual, popular or social-scientific – but rather to *evoke* their affective feel. The claim is made in this scholarship that images – usually photography and video – are especially effective ways to do this. Images are seen as a means to convey visual affects but also to hint at tactile, auditory and olfactory affects; and of course video can also carry sound affects. The work of Sarah Pink has been very influential here.[11]

This argument suggests that images are not always and only representational. For scholars using photographs and videos to evoke urban affect, indeed, images are more-than-representational. Photographs and videos can convey feelings, emotions, states of mind, affective states, sensual effects: and all these are important in understanding the lively and enchanted materialities of urban places.[12] These feelings and responses are difficult to ex-

[11] S. Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography*, 2nd ed., Sage, London 2009; *eadem*, *Multimodality, Multisensoriality and Ethnographic Knowing: Social Semiotics and the Phenomenology of Perception*, "Qualitative Research" 2011, no. 3 (11), pp. 261–276; *eadem* (ed.), *Advances in Visual Methodology*, Sage, London 2012.

[12] J. Bennett, *The Enchanted World of Modernity: Paracelsus, Kant, and Deleuze*, "Cultural Values" 1997, no. 1 (1), pp. 1–28.

press in words, but, according to these scholars, a photograph can evoke them. Photos are thus important analytical tools for scholars of urban affect.

Alongside this theoretical move towards an interest in the experiencing of urban spaces, there has been another shift of a different kind: the emergence of digital forms of creating, editing and distributing visual images. At the same time as urban scholars began to start thinking about urban places as affective fields or sensory landscapes, so digital cameras and websites for sharing photography and video like YouTube, Vimeo and Flickr have become pervasive. For some scholars, these two shifts are related. Mark Hansen, for example, argues that digital technologies necessarily entrain bodies – and are therefore affective – because bodies are the site through which digital data is processed.[13]

I prefer to keep the two shifts – the theoretical and the technological – analytically distinct. It is clearly the case that efforts to use photographs to evoke the sensory aspects of urban life continue to be made using 'analogue' technologies like disposable cameras and prints of photographs in journals. For example, Tim Edensor's writing in his book on derelict urban spaces is interspersed with his black and white photographs from those spaces: uncaptioned, they insert a powerful feeling of melancholy abandonment into his text as they show vacant buildings, the detritus of their past human occupation, and their slow succumbing to the plant life that is taking over these spaces.[14] The affective use of photographs depends more on theoretical orientation than ontological essence, it seems to me.

Nonetheless, it is also the case that digital technologies are enabling some urban scholars to experiment with new visual forms, and with new forms of distributing their work; and these new channels are allowing more scholars to use photographs for affective ends. The online distribution of photographs, for example (including online versions of print journals), allows urban scholars to work with colour photography in ways that has not until now been possible in an academic context. And the availability of cheap video editing software – as well as online distribution platforms – has made the making of videos much easier for social science scholars. Moreover, multimedia software and online platforms also allow for new forms of scholarly engagement with places. For example, Roderick Coover has discussed a number of examples of what he calls "digital panoramic environments".[15] Digital panoramic environments take a visual form that has historically been used to represent city landscapes – the panorama – and problematise its specific viewpoint by layering in other images, text and sounds. Exposition – the traditional academic voice – can thus be supplemented, as Coover says, with poetry and narrative, music and games, ambient sound and graphics. Clearly the multimodality enabled by such software technology allows the urban scholar to evoke more directly, perhaps, the colours and sounds and feel of urban spaces. Coover also argues that it dissolves the hegemony of the representational, as its explicit engagement with a range of forms of engaging with places makes the representational just one among

[13] M.B.N. Hansen, *New Philosophy for a New Media*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 2004.

[14] T. Edensor, *Industrial Ruins: Spaces, Aesthetics, and Materiality*, Berg, Oxford 2005.

[15] R. Coover, *The Digital Panorama and Cinemascapes*, [in:] T. Bartscherer, R. Coover (eds.), *Switching Codes: Thinking Through Digital Technology in the Humanties and the Arts*, Chicago University Press, Chicago 2011, pp. 199–217.

several epistemological possibilities, possibilities which also include the evocation of the more-than-representational.

These are important arguments which are radically different from the body of work discussed in the previous section. There is no engagement with notions of representation in this work; there is little interest in discursive contexts, or the histories of visual genres. The assertion that photographs are necessarily more-than-representational is an ontological claim about the nature of the photograph as a specific medium. As Roland Barthes so famously did many years ago, these scholars ask: what is the essence of photography[16]? And their answer is that "the visual has an explicitness and immediacy which delivers a multisensory impact".[17] This response suggests that looking at photos requires an aesthetic sensibility rather than a semiological/discourse-analytic one: a response that takes the form of a bodily and emotional stance rather than interpretive or hermeneutic work.

This essay is not the place to attempt to adjudicate between these very different approaches to photography. However, just as approaches to photographs as representational have their lacunae, so too do deployments of photographs as more-than-representational.

Of course, one issue for urban scholars turning to visual modes not only to create evidence but also, in effect, to convey their analysis, is that they require the sophisticated skills of a visual practitioner – and few have them, or have the time to develop them. Hence, the increasing interest in collaborating with artists and filmmakers to convey senses of urban place (and such collaborations are also welcomed by many visual artists seeking conceptual frameworks and indeed funded placements for their own work). To date, however, there has been little explicit reflection in the social sciences on this process of collaboration between two different fields of professional practice, and even less discussion about what might constitute a 'successful' collaboration. The criteria for such a 'success' are complex and differ between urban studies and fine art: what may be a successful project in one field may be illegible in another. Indeed, the whole question of how different spectators encounter more-than-representational images is not addressed in this move towards the visual evocation of affective urban spaces.

There is also the difficult question of how such academic work – work that engages with the non-representational by experimenting with what for academics are unconventional media – is evaluated by academic peers as 'social science'. There are two issues here. One is simply getting such experiments out to social science audiences so that they can be discussed widely. At the moment, most such experimental projects seem to be hosted on individual project websites; as far as I am aware, there are no sites that offer to host a range of different social-science-related projects and thus act as an online 'journal' for various multimedia projects (though the site photomediationsmachine.net has begun to act as such a site for more digital humanities-related work). And equally pressing, there is very little debate in the social sciences so far about how these experiments might be evaluated as social science.

[16] R. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, transl. R. Howard, Jonathan Cape, London 1982.

[17] S. Spencer, *Visual Research Methods in the Social Sciences: Awakening Visions*, Routledge, London 2011, p. 32.

What counts as a robust, significant online multimedia output? And how does that relate to the aesthetic response that images as evocations seem primarily to require?

A further question often addressed to scholars using more-than-representational images to evoke urban experience is how such work might be understood as 'critical' in some way. While scholars such as Nigel Thrift and Gernot Böhme have been arguing for some time that contemporary capitalism is itself investing heavily in the creation of affective brands, commodities and environments,[18] it is not clear that the visual evocation of such affects can in and of itself challenge that 'aesthetic economy', to use Böhme's phrase. Such a challenge, according to those persuaded by these arguments, is not simply a question of 'resisting' the affective in some way. Instead, it requires the twisting, refracting, mediating, multiplying of the affective. If the mission of social science is at least to question taken-for-granted forms of social organisation, however, more experimentation exploring effective forms of such multiplication are necessary.

3. Performing the urban

One thing shared by all the scholarship this essay has briefly reviewed so far is an overwhelming focus on images produced by what might be described as 'expert' visual practitioners. Most of this scholarship works with visual materials created by highly skilled artists, cartographers, architects, visualisers, photographers and filmmakers; some has certainly addressed amateur practice, but most has not.

However, certainly since the invention of relatively cheap cameras at the end of the nineteenth century, photography in particular has also been a field inhabited by vast numbers of relatively technically unskilled individuals, who have nonetheless created huge numbers of images. Some of these images have been taken by amateurs organised into film or camera clubs. Many other images taken in everyday situations are usually described as 'family photography', and many family photo collections also contain images of urban spaces taken on holidays and on family outings. And with the advent of digital cameras and cameraphones, the numbers of photographs of urban spaces now being taken has increased enormously. The emergence of digital forms of making, editing, storing, displaying and circulating into popular photographic practice in particular is the third area this essay addresses.

How might we think digital photography and the urban together? Again, this is not simply a question of new technologies driving a new relationship to the urban. For digital cameras participate in many different photographic practices, of course. They are used in photographic art practice. They are used as a means of documentation. The rise of 'citizen journalism' and the enthusiasm of the mass media for photographs taken not by profession-

[18] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics*, "Thesis Eleven" 1993, no. 1 (36), pp. 113–126; *idem*, *Contribution to the Critique of the Aesthetic Economy*, "Thesis Eleven" 2003, no. 1 (73), pp. 71–82; N. Thrift, *Lifeworld Inc – and What to Do about It*, "Environment and Planning D: Society and Space" 2011, no. 1 (29), pp. 5–26; *idem*, *The Insubstantial Pageant: Producing an Untoward Land*, "Cultural Geographies" 2012, no. 2 (19), pp. 141–168.

als after events have unfolded, but by amateur witnesses of events as they happened, has not dimmed. They can even be used, with apps and hardware attachments, to take sophisticated photographs and to make and edit videos and films. And in terms of family photography, there has been little change between what was done with analogue cameras and what is now done with digital cameras: photographs are still taken by family members, of other family members, for circulation and display primarily among members of that same family.

In terms of sketching a third analytical frame for thinking about the relation between photography and the urban, though, I want to focus on a specifically digital form of photography, and suggest a specific way in which it is related to the urban: by performing it. In particular, I want to focus on the imbrication of photographs in many forms of social networking. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Vine are all immensely popular sites and all are full of photos and videos, usually taken with cameraphones. Now, clearly the subject matter of these images is not often particularly 'urban'. However, their extensive use in urban spaces alongside other forms of online data – particularly various kinds of mapping apps – suggests that there may be an emerging imbrication of the photographic with the urban that deserves further scrutiny of a particular kind.

Geographers have paid attention for some time to the ways in which digital technologies are allowing popular and activist engagements with urban maps. They are interested in the ways that online maps can be used as means of enabling and organising different forms of place representation, by allowing photographs to be added to specific locations, for example. This has spawned discussions of "neogeography", defined as map-making that does not depend on the distinction between professional and amateur cartographers.[19] It has been suggested that these particular practices tend to be about competing claims to know the truth of what a place is really like, and are probably therefore best approached in terms of the first analytical frame presented in this essay: that of the politics of representing urban spaces.[20]

However, there is another way in which popular photography – especially cameraphone photography – and urban spaces can be thought of together, which concerns the everyday social practices through which urban life is performed. This approach draws on a body of work interested in social practice: in the routine doings, sayings and feelings through which so much of social life happens. A theoretical interest on the practices of urban life focusses on the specific modes of talk, comportment, sensibility and gesture that sustains city life. And it is clear that digital technologies that use images are increasingly integrated into those practices that perform the urban.

Digital technologies – especially smartphones – are becoming more and more central to the performance of urbanism, and particularly to ways of inhabiting urban spaces. These forms of inhabitation – of embodied practice, modes of comportment and sociability – are increasingly mediated by smartphones and specifically by the images that they carry. Here then we might think of cameraphones not as representing or even evoking the urban – though

[19] M.W. Wilson, M. Graham, *Neogeography and Volunteered Geographic Information: A Conversation with Michael Goodchild and Andrew Turner*, "Environment and Planning A" 2013, no. 1 (45), pp. 10–18.

[20] S. Elwood, A. Leszczynski, *New Spatial Media, New Knowledge Politics*, "Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers" 2013, no. 4 (38), pp. 544–559.

they can be seen to do these things too – but as enabling and mediating its performance. Given the frequent laments that online devices are diminishing public sociability, this may seen an unlikely possibility. And indeed, some uses of cameraphones may indeed contribute to a lack of attention to and engagement with the actual location of the cameraphone and its user. Many other forms, though, are about locating places, discussing places, arranging to meet in specific places, reviewing places and of course looking at photographs of, and photographing places.[21] In this situation, the locations and social relations that enact the urban are being constituted through a specifically digital medium, that of the social network, with its reliance on images, brief texts, comment boxes, 'likes' and reviews. This is a lively, networked urbanism, constantly refreshed, updated and renewed, its landscape configured by multiple users enacting a network, in large part by taking and distributing simple photos.

This is an emergent form of urban visual culture, and its parameters remain uncertain. It offers some significant challenges to social science methodologies, however, in its scale, its dynamism and its complex negotiation between material places and their mediation by the affordances of multiple digital networks. It suggests that the qualitative methods of semiology, discourse analysis and aesthetic sensibility required by approaching photographs either as representations or as evocations are inadequate: methods are needed that can deal with the sheer numbers of images involved in these online networks. Methods are also needed that can engage with the dynamics embedded in the software platforms that structure these sites, as Jean Burgess and Joshua Green point out in their study of YouTube.[22] Methods are needed that can engage with the social practices through which such mapping occurs; thus far, various versions of ethnographic participant observation have been deployed, but there are limits to how this method can engage with people distributed over distances, communicating via small screens.[23] Finally, methods are needed that can engage with the ways in which so many of these photos that perform the urban in this way are taken casually and looked at casually. They are the visual equivalent of the phatic forms of communication that Vincent Miller argues are typical of the internet more generally: "communications which have purely social (networking) and not informational or dialogic intents".[24] That is, these are images that do not convey meaning or expect engagement from their viewers: they are made simply to be used on a social networking site as a means of maintaining that social network. Neither the attentive interpretation required if an image is seen as a representation, nor the affective stance called for by approaching images as affective, are necessarily part of how these casually-created images are used to perform social relations. All this poses challenges to social scientists interested in studying photographs and urban visual culture;

[21] M. Graham, M. Zook, A. Boulton, *Augmented Reality in Urban Places: Contested Content and the Duplicity of Code*, "Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers" 2013, no. 3 (38), pp. 464–479.

[22] J. Burgess, J. Green, *YouTube: Online Video and Participatory Culture*, Polity, Cambridge 2009.

[23] R. Kitchin, J. Gleeson, M. Dodge, *Unfolding Mapping Practices: A New Epistemology for Cartography*, "Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers" 2013, no. 3 (38), pp. 480–496.

[24] V. Miller, *New Media, Networking and Phatic Culture*, "Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies" 2008, no. 4 (14), pp. 387–400.

it also suggests that there is more work to be done theorising the relation between the visual and the urban that is about neither representation nor evocation.

Conclusions

The relation between photography, or any other visual technology, and the urban, has never been a relation between two distinct and knowable entities, such that 'the camera' photographs 'the city'. The relation between these two is much messier than that. Photographs interpret the city for us, and as urban scholars we understand the work that they do through both theoretical and conceptual lenses. Clearly, there are many ways in which photography in particular intersects with urban spaces. This short essay has argued that photographs can be understood as having three main relations with the urban. They can represent urban places; they can evoke urban places; and they can perform urban places. Each of these relations invites a rather different methodological approach from social scientists interested in the mediation of urban spaces by visual technologies. Understood as representational devices, photographs require interpretation in order that their meaning be decoded; understood as evocative devices, photographs require an aesthetic sensibility in order that their affect can be experienced; and understood as performative devices, photographs require an engagement with the dynamic network of social practices that their creation and distribution enacts. What each approach shares, however, is a conviction that the photographic, the urban and the social-theoretical cannot be understood apart from one another.

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Neither West nor South: Colour and Vernacular Cosmopolitanism in Urban Poland[1]

Abstract: By exploring *the cliché* that socialist cities are 'grey', this paper seeks to employ the anthropology of colour for unravelling the peculiarities of the East European urban experience. By analyzing the oeuvre of Władysław Reymont, I show that greyness in Eastern Europe has a distinct lineage. It is not, like in the West, a colour poised between black and white, but the very opposite of red. I show how greyness emerged as the central trope for narrating Polish agrarian capitalism, and how after 1945 it was moved onto the urban turf. Greyness became salient because it captured the very essence of the contradictions of nascent urban Poland: a blend of freedom and oppression, equality and hierarchy, solemnity and joy. I describe these conflicting meanings of greyness and show how colour suddenly became the fulcrum of the struggle to generate an urban experience beyond capitalism and socialism that would be East European and cosmopolitan at the same time.

Key words: colour, communism, greyness, urbanization, capitalism, Eastern Europe, public space, everyday life, cosmopolitanism

Colour seems to be the "key symbol" for narrating urban change in the post-socialist world. Moscow, wrote Karl Schlögel, is the "scene of the transformation of the world's greyest capital city into a Babylon iridescent with colour; a place where time stands still and yet one of frentic acceleration".[2] In Beijing, according to Thomas Campanella, the "once dull field of concrete blocks" of the Tienanmen Square was "transformed into a dazzling expanse of pink granite trimmed with well-groomed lawn panels – an appropriate metaphor for China's metamorphosis from monochromatic Maoism to the polychromy of affluence and arrival".[3] Warsaw too, as David Crowley noted, is subject to the "alchemy of the market", peppered with new "attention-grabbing landmarks" whose "neon brightness and synthetic colour seem to render the socialist city, already fading away, all the more grey and habby".[4] In short, as Ivan Szelényi put it, the post-socialist world seems to be becoming "almost as

[1] I began working on this paper back in 2010, and a number of people read and commented on its many versions. I am grateful to them all; in particular I would like to thank Feike de Jong, Daniel Kalder, Jorge Lizardi Pollock, Ewa Rewers and AbdouMaliq Simone for their comments and encouragement. Needless to say, responsibility for all potential shortcomings is entirely mine.

[2] K. Schlögel, *Moscow*, Reaktion, London 2005, p. 7.

[3] T.J. Campanella, *The Concrete Dragon*, Princeton Architectural Press, Princeton 2008, p. 128.

[4] D. Crowley, *Warsaw*, Reaktion, London 2003, p. 100.

colorful as a Third World metropolis".[5] But what do these metaphors actually mean? Are post-socialist – and especially East European – cities really 'going South'[6]?

I wish to unravel this conundrum, and show the reasons why urban change is narrated in terms of colour. My intention is to tackle the specificity of the urban experience in East and Central Europe, and I will try to pin it down by employing the discussion on the geography of colour as developed in anthropological literature, and analyze the different, historically construed and embodied, ways of experiencing the urban landscape. Eastern European cities, I argue, are neither 'going South' nor 'lagging behind' the West, but rather have been treading their own largely idiosyncratic path to global urbanity. I show that both colour and greyness have a distinct lineage in Eastern Europe. I describe how greyness emerged as the central trope for narrating Polish capitalism, and how after 1945 it was moved onto urban turf. It became salient, because it captured the very contradictions of urbanizing Poland: a unique blend of freedom and oppression, equality and hierarchy, solemnity and joy. I describe these conflicting meanings and show how colour suddenly became the fulcrum of the struggle to generate an urban experience beyond capitalism and socialism – a mode of urban life that would be locally East European and cosmopolitan at the same time. It is *via* colour, I argue, that Polish working classes have been "worlding" their cities[7] – even today, when they paint Poland's modernist housing projects in gaudy colours (and in so doing incite condescending critique from high-brow commentators who, not unlike Goethe a few centuries ago, believe that fondness for colour is a mark of cultural and moral backwardness[8]).

Suffering the city

Colour is ubiquitous in narratives of urban life in Poland, past and present. The expression "grey reality" (szara rzeczywistość), denoting the grit and grime of everyday life, or "grey person" (szary człowiek), i.e. a nobody, a person alienated from both their workplace and/or community, are used extensively.[9] A group of intellectuals recalled the 1980s thus: "pigsty, grime, greyness, and overwhelming dejection … dreariness at home, the unremitting slog of daily life. You moved like a steamroller from Monday to Tuesday, from Tuesday to Wednesday". This involved the ordeal of canvassing the city for consumer goods, standing in long lines, and travelling by overcrowded buses. Everyday greyness was experienced

5 I. Szelényi, *Cities under Socialism – and After*, [in:] G. Andrusz, M. Harloe, I. Szelényi (eds.), *Cities after Socialism: Urban and Regional Change and Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies*, Blackwell, Cambridge, MA 1996, p. 312.

6 L. Elliott, D. Atkinson, *Going South: Why Britain Will Have a Third World Economy by 2014*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2012; J. Commaroff, J.L. Commaroff, *Theory from the South: Or How Euro-America Is Evolving Toward Africa*, Paradigm, London 2011.

7 A. Roy, A. Ong (eds.), *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*, Routledge, London 2011.

8 One pundit even coined the term "pastelosis" in order to denounce such practices; cf. F. Springer, *Wanna z kolumnadą*, Czarne, Wołowiec 2013.

9 For example here: E.C. Dunn, *Privatizing Poland*, Duke University Press, Ithaca 2004, p. 141.

as an alien "substance", an obstacle to meaningful existence: "I expected my life prospects to be the never-ending crawl through thick mud – you muddle on with your life, but you are constantly obstructed by this nasty grey matter, that mud in which the Napoleonic army trudging across Russia sunk".[10] There is a direct association of greyness and the industrial landscape in most West European languages. Victorian cities were by and large drab and inspid. By 1900, department stores with items produced thanks to synthetically obtained colour, and urban life, centered around collective consumption, and the neon lights gave a new colourful countenance to European cities. By 1900, "brightly colored trolleys cruised city streets from Glasgow to Budapest". At the same time industrial cities, no longer at the cutting edge of expansion, remained "grey, sad-looking cit[ies] – earth, sky and water blending into a leaden hue".[11] Thus, the standard argument about East European greyness, runs like this: the incapability of the socialist regimes to foster a thriving consumer culture in their presumably 'Fordist' cities (recall that the only colour tolerated by Ford was black) may seem to have been the main reason why socialist cities, especially by Westerners, are still perceived as grey. My argument is that the greyness in Poland is not, as in the West, a colour poised between white and black, or, in the urban context, a residual, or diluted, coal-like black – the nineteenth century symbol of progress and modernity – but if anything an equivalent of the colonial blue. Grey is the colour of death and absence, of non-existence and exploitation, and it is the opposite of red – the colour of blood and life. This is why it is ubiquitous in the vernacular narratives of "suffering the city".[12]

Colour, as Michael Taussig argued, is for the painter what style is for the writer; it is nature transformed into an object. Indigo, one of the key "spices" produced in the colonies, represented the "intense deep blue of the ocean in stormy weather"; it was, in other words, a commodified ocean – "that supreme entity which, of all the things in the world, at least can never be converted into a commodity". Desire for vivid colours became one of the key "motors that propelled Europe to take over the world". As an ersatz ocean, indigo is a part of nature, but as a commodity, it is a product of capitalism – one of the most impeccable examples of "manufactured" nature. It was not merely extracted but produced in a long and complicated formula. Hence, indigo both communicated the dazzling sensation of the non-European landscape and contained "a medley of history and horror, science and poetry". The "diabolic penetrative power of blueness" was enormous: coolies beating indigo would "spit blue for some time after work. An egg placed near a person working an indigo vat would, at the end of a day, be found to be altogether blue inside". Indigo, that "mother of all color" as Taussig called it, has hence become the colour of work (as in the blue jeans) and authority (as in army and police uniforms), and the horror stories it encapsulates provide the background for the English expression "feeling blue".[13]

[10] M. Zmarz-Koczanowicz, *Pokolenie '89*, Telewizja Polska 2002.

[11] A. Lees, L.H. Lees, *Cities and the Making of Modern Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008, p. 138.

[12] J. Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2008, p. 235.

[13] M.T. Taussig, *What Color Is the Sacred?*, Chicago University Press, Chicago 2009, pp. 5–8, 141–157.

Colour as spice

The "secret of color", according to Taussig, is that it is a stimulant germane to spices, drugs, perfumes and medicines. As with spice, colour is, as Taussig suggested, both 'authentic' and 'deceitful' – spices could both improve the taste of a dish and serve as a cover-up for foul ingredients, and by the same token gaudy clothes were often regarded as a mask for unpleasant bodily odour. For centuries dyestuffs (called initially dye-drugs) were imported to Europe in exchange for slaves and bullion. With the rise of the wool industry in Flanders, black replaced white as the European colour of mourning. It expressed the Christian notion that the afterlife was not a continuation of the stratified earthly existence but an egalitarian state wherein one was judged by their inner rather than outwardly worth. Black dress became the symbol of austerity, fraternity, European economic independence and a denouncement of 'Oriental' conspicuous consumption.[14] In Jacobinian France, for example, feudal distinctions were deemed obsolete and 'plain clothes' introduced. It was a rebellion against a society in which people were born into tied and divinely ordained stations. Instead they formed a horizontal community of fraterned and monochromatic citizens.[15] Black thus became radical, democratic and revolutionary, while colour, as evident in the word 'tainted', was increasingly perceived with a jaundiced eye as feudal, Oriental and hierarchical.

The heyday of the European colour-phobia came with the Industrial Revolution. Its "dark, colourless, acrid, evil-smelling" landscape was perhaps best captured by Lewis Mumford. In industrial cities "the prevailing color was black. Black clouds of smoke rolled out of the factory chimneys, and the railroad yards, which often cut clean into the town, mangling the very organism, spread soot and cinders everywhere". In this polluted environment, continued Mumford, "black clothes were only a protective coloration, not a form of mourning; the black stovepipe hat was almost a functional design – an assertive symbol of steam power". Black was indeed omnipresent: the black boots, the black coach or carriage, the black iron frame of the hearth, the black cooking pots and pans and stove. "Under such conditions", noted Mumford, "one must have all one's senses blunted in order to be happy". As a consequence, affluent urbanites started eating canned foods even when fresh foods were still available, because "they could no longer tell the difference". This "enfeeblement of elementary taste-discrimination extended to other departments than food: … the Pre-Raphaelites and the Impressionist painters were reviled by the bourgeoisie because their pure colors were thought 'unnatural' and 'inartistic'".[16]

It was in the context of nascent industrialization and colonial expansion that Goethe noted in his *Farben Lehre*: "men in the state of nature, uncivilized nations and children have a great fondness for colours in their utmost brightness … People of refinement seem to banish them altogether from their presence".[17] Once the industrial revolution made colourful

[14] J. Schneider, *Peacocks and Penguins: The Political Economy of European Cloth and Colors*, "American Ethnologist" 1978, no. 5 (3), pp. 413–447.
[15] D. Priestland, *The Red Flag*, Penguin, London 2009, p. 3.
[16] L. Mumford, *The City in History*, Harcourt, Brace & World, New York 1961, pp. 470–472.
[17] M.T. Taussig, *op. cit.*, p. 1, 11.

attire relatively cheap and attainable, the elite embraced the monochromatic style in order to demonstrate their contempt for the popular tastes, while the rank and file seized on what used to be an aristocratic cachet. The urbanization of blackness went thus hand in hand with the ruralization of colour. These are the origins of the phase 'local colour' – the 'real thing' (vide: colour's authenticity) that most ethnographers have been after since the nineteenth century. Yet, since urbanization was associated also with social mobility, as black broadcloth became the basic material for the street-wear of the urban elite, it too became the 'Sunday clothes' of the working classes. Victorian fashion became notorious for its dowdiness. It was, as Richard Sennett demonstrated, "the beginning of a *style* of dressing in which neutrality – that is, not standing out from others – was the immediate statement".[18]

Vampiric capitalism

Yet in Eastern Europe, and especially in Poland, I wish to argue, greyness has its own distinct lineage. In the Polish 'colour-scape', industrial cities were narrated neither as black nor grey, but as intensely colourful – not unlike cities in the South today. But the meaning of colour was altogether different. We can speak of "grey cities" only after 1945 – when Poland underwent the momentous makeover from a rural to an urban country. With that transformation, greyness was also urbanized. It was grey, and not some other colour or concept, that became the "key symbol" for narrating that transition, precisely because it could capture its very contradictions: the blend of empowerment and exploitation, equality and hierarchy. On the one hand, vestiges of 'bourgeois' urbanism, including colour as the mark of excess and class privilege, were being systematically removed from the landscape, and this new 'greyness' of cities was often experienced as something liberating. On the other hand, post-feudal social relations, previously key in the production of the 'grey' rural landscape, were grafted onto the urban realm, and public space became increasingly 'solemn'.[19] This in turn triggered a 'colour offensive' from the grassroots, embraced eventually by the authorities too, earmarked to lend a distinct socialist meaning to both colour and greyness, wherein colour was perceived not as bourgeois decorum but as a 'stimulant' essential for fostering a non-capitalist urban experience.

To understand this we need to delve into the archeology of colour in the region. "The city", as Steve Pile noted, "is the vampire's ideal home" because of its capacity to "suck the life out of people".[20] The work of Stanisław Reymont – the Nobel winning novelist – shows how capitalism's vampiric quality and colour were closely intertwined in Poland. His major books titled the *Promised Land* (1898), *The Peasants* (1904–1908), and *Vampire* (1911) form a distinct social theory of colours. In the first novel devoted to the making of the city of Łódź – a textile hub – Reymont described colour as a filmy, flowing substance and a move-

[18] R. Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man*, Faber and Faber, London 1993, p. 161.

[19] K. Pobłocki, *Urban Solemnity and Warped Public Space in Poland*, [in:] M. Moskalewicz, W. Przybylski (eds.), *Central European Companion to Political Ideas*, Central European University Press, Budapest 2014.

[20] S. Pile, *Real Cities: Modernity, Space and the Phantasmagorias of City Life*, Sage, London 2005, p. 97.

ment, the very link between textile mills, exploited workers, and the industrial city. The factory refuse "came pouring down in dirty streamlets, reddish or bluish or yellowish; and the flow of offscourings from the houses and the factories behind them was so abundant that they brimmed over the kennels … and deluged the foot-paths with a many-coloured flood". Such waste mixed in open sewers with "mire-befouled and dingy recesses" from shops and houses, producing a "mingled stench of filth and putridity, and the strong odours of herrings, rotting vegetables, or spirits". At the same time the factory sucked out colour, the élan, from workers: they seemed grey not because they wore black, but because exploitative labour made them sallow. The Sunday crowd in Łódź in fact tried to disguise their greyness by dressing up in gaudy clothes, parading on the city's main thoroughfare "with dazed, staring eyes, dimmed by the splendor which shone down on them, and in whose blaze that multitude of faces – chalk-white, sallow, leaden-coloured, clay-coloured, wizened, and bereft of blood – [had the] blood sucked out of them by the factory".[21]

While, unlike in the West, this Polish industrial city was colourful, the urban crowd was grey in both the East and the West – but for very different reasons. While Britain was by then a majority-urban country, Poland's industrial cities were small islands in an ocean of fundamentally agricultural society. The ontology of Polish capitalism was anchored in rural class relations, and this is why we need to shift our focus to the countryside, the vampires' true dominion. Reymont's monumental *The Peasants*, divided into four volumes, each devoted to one season, offers a compelling picture of how capitalist class relations and commodification of the land produced an uncanny grey landscape. Just as in the textile town, here too colour was productive, and was associated with spring and summer. Everything – colour, life, money and movement – was "ebbing out of [the] land". Autumn, however, was the interim stage, a season dominated by "chthonic voices", when the true, ghastly and vampiric face of reality came forth to haunt the villagers. The autumn greyness (szarugi jesienne) arrived as if "all things have been drowned in a grey turbid shimmer, through which only the dim outlines of the forest or the hamlet loomed, embroidered, as it were, on a ground of wet canvas". The rain "like scourges of ashen-gray hue, unceasingly beat upon the earth … making every blade of grass quiver, as in dire pain". This downpour took "all [the] colour out of [reality], quenched its tints, and plunged the world into twilight".[22] Greyness, unlike colonial colours, was not associated with sounds or movements,[23] but with stillness: "mute were the fields, dumb the hamlets, silent the woods. The houses dusky and colourless, seemed melting into and making one with the earth".[24] Grey was thus not like in the West an interim stage between white and black, but rather it was anti-colour, the very absence of life, sound and movement, the anti-matter of Polish agrarian capitalism. Grey was the colour of the forlorn, the repressed, making its appearance, like a vampire, only in the interstices of the capitalist word, serving as the reminder of histories of the wretched and exploited. Greyness was like the 'wet canvas' on which capitalism painted its colourful world. It was the very ontological basis for reality, and at the same time the life substance that capitalism preyed upon.

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21 W.S. Reymont, *The Promised Land*, Knopf, New York 1927, pp. 107, 112.

22 *Idem*, *The Peasants*, Knopf, New York 1924, p. 114.

23 M.T. Taussig, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–57.

24 W.S. Reymont, *The Peasants*, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

Urbanization of greyness

Once Poland became a majority-urban country, this ontology of greyness, exploitation and disenchantment, was urbanized too. Soon after Poland's cities were 'opened' to the rank-and-file in 1945, the urban landscape was that of a do-it-yourself eclecticism dictated not by whim but by the situation. Because the garment industry produced hardly any ready-to-wear clothing during the war, people wore what they could get hold of – old, meticulously maintained and substantially altered clothes. Also, the war had shattered the erstwhile sharp cultural rural-urban divide. This confusion of styles and colours was visible in the cityscape: many privately-owned shops flourished after the wartime austerity, and their displays 'screamed' with clamorous shop ads and commodities. Yet, virtually nobody wanted the return of the pre-1939 capitalist order. As a response to the grassroots moral economy, denouncing 'speculators and profiteers', demanding 'fair prices' and wide accessibility of staple goods, the so-called Battle Over Trade was launched. By 1955 over 100 000 private retail shops were liquidated, and replaced by co-operative and state-controlled retail franchises.[25] Because the new stores did not compete with one another, advertisements – the hallmark of the 'obtrusive', 'dazzling' and 'tawdry' capitalist street – gradually disappeared. The new socialist commercial aesthetic was subdued: a well-designed shop, a pundit argued, "represented the high culture of service and aesthetics of socialist trade",[26] and replaced, as Bolesław Bierut the president put it, "the chaos of shops, warehouses, and entertainment parlors", where "greed and land speculation overshadowed not only the city aesthetic but also the deeper meaning of urban life".[27] The capitalist differentiation and colour were gradually eclipsed by the socialist uniformity, equality and greyness.

This development was generally welcome. As the garment industry took off and started producing monochromatic attire, the urban crowd became increasingly uniform. Polish women quickly forsook colourful peasant kerchiefs, but not for bourgeois hats, the hallmarks of pre-war fashion, but rather embraced berets as emblems of a new, egalitarian, and socialist urban style.[28] Some activists even started wearing uniforms. One of them described the sense of liberation derived from this: "sometimes I furtively looked at myself in the mirror", he recalled, "and I couldn't get over how different I now appeared" from the former tattered farm-hand. His enthusiasm was absolutely genuine: "I didn't count the hours for work. I built [the city] as though I was building my own house".[29] Such a uniform turned him into a member of a "society of equals, all striving for the common good, which would bring

[25] P. Kenney, *Rebuilding Poland: Workers and Communists, 1945–1950*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 1997, pp. 194–196.

[26] D. Crowley, *Warsaw's Shops, Stalinism and the Thaw*, [in:] S.E. Reid, D. Crowley (eds.), *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe*, Berg, Oxford 2000, pp. 25–47.

[27] B. Brzostek, *Za progiem. Codzienność w przestrzeni publicznej Warszawy lat 1955–1970*, Trio, Warszawa 2007, p. 167.

[28] R. Marszałek, *Kino rzeczy znalezionych*, Słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk 2006, p. 148.

[29] K.A. Lebow, *Public Works, Private Lives: Youth Brigades in Nowa Huta in the 1950s*, "Contemporary European History" 2001, no. 10 (2), pp. 208, 211.

personal education and advancement, and it is no surprise he was taken with this vision".[30] Egalitarian greyness became the new idiom of the socialist city. Yet it was not only imposed from above by the oppressive authorities, as this is often maintained, but rather emerged through the co-operation between the communists and the working class, whose moral economy sought to exclude and even punish those who were perceived as enriching themselves at the expense of others and distinguishing themselves by conspicuous consumption.[31]

As a result of the struggles to wipe clean the remnants of bourgeois excess, the Polish urban space became increasingly opaque. Foreign visitors complained that it was impossible to 'read' these cities: the old sign-boards on shops, for example, were replaced by tiny, nondescript placards behind often steamed-up windows: "one literally had to stick one's head inside in order to make out if it was a grocery or a barber shop".[32] It was also increasingly difficult to 'read' the crowd and one's social standing from clothes – as it used to be before the war. As in Victorian Britain, in such a monochromatic landscape often minute details became highly pertinent for marking social distinction. In post-war Poland it was not fashion but individual behaviour in a uniform crowd that came to the centre stage. As the 'rotten' capitalist commerce was replaced by high-brow 'culture', soon masses of the new urbanites found themselves being tutored by the elite into 'proper' urban demeanour. Polish cities became increasingly 'solemn', as the historian Błażej Brzostek put it. He quoted an impression of antebellum Warsaw jotted down by a South European visitor: "is not good form here to whistle or sing in the street. People do not talk on the tram. Nobody laughs, nobody is joyful and nobody smiles. Even whores strut the streets puffed-up as if they were matrons".[33] Although somehow exaggerated, this captures the direction of post-war urban change. Soon greyness-as-liberation was challenged by the idea of greyness-as-solemnity, and the new urbanites, described by high-brow critics as 'hooligans', 'rabble', or even 'prostitutes' realized the emergent post-bourgeois urban space was hierarchically ordered and increasingly shaped by the tastes and sense of civility of the intelligentsia, that is, the former gentry. Thus the old social relations, and the greyness as exploitation as analyzed by Reymont, were translated to the newly urbanized society.

Fingerprints of post-capitalism

The new subdued urban aesthetic invited the "subconscious longing for strangeness which is channeled toward controlled amusements like theater, film and folk festivals, but also into various forms of escapism".[34] A grassroots embrace of colour was part and parcel of this. Its very first instance was the International Festival of Socialist Youth that took place in Warsaw in 1955 and in which 26 000 foreigners from 141 countries and all continents and some 140 000 Poles participated. For a fortnight, Warsaw turned, as one worker recalled,

30 D. Priestland, *op. cit.*, p. 305.
31 P. Kenney, *op. cit.*, p. 270.
32 B. Brzostek, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
33 *Ibidem*, p. 122.
34 Cz. Miłosz, *The Captive Mind*, Knopf, New York 1953, p. 63.

from a solemn and grey place into a "colorful and exotic city".[35] The atmosphere was so festive that a strange custom was formed in which foreigners met accidentally on the street were asked for autographs. On grey buildings artists put up colourful posters with slogans such as 'Let's dance!', 'We are merry!'. The authorities were absolutely taken aback by the way the youth actually acted upon these calls. "Where did our youngsters learn these horrid dances from?" – a party official pondered in a secret report. "Our activists kindly ask the youth not to dance in such a way, and sometimes this helps". In some cases it did not, and the 'recalcitrants' would be driven 20 to 30 kilometers out of the city, and walking back home was their punishment. In one of Warsaw's most central buildings a slogan in French, reading *baise-moi*, was displayed, and it literally enticed the youth to kiss one another. But many participants took it a step further. "Foreigners", wrote Brzostek, "visited Poles' private apartments in droves, and often contacts between the two groups proved to be very close indeed". "The number of Polish girls", wrote a French diplomat in a secret cable, "who had slept with young foreigners, especially of the black race, and got pregnant, was so large, that allegedly a separate clinic was open where they could get an abortion free of charge".[36] The festival that took place on the tenth anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing had a very strong anti-war and anti-imperialist message to convey. This was no 'escapism' but a cultural practice that was later on well captured in the slogan: 'make love not war'.

The festival articulated a strong grassroots desire for socialism to foster creativity and this was captured by the new 'colourfulness' and 'exoticism' of the city. But it also showed the emergent social cleavage between workers and intellectuals, and the two competing interpretations of 'colour' and 'greyness'. The festival came as the biggest shock for the young high-brow activists: "suddenly it turned out that it was possible to be progressive and at the same time enjoy life, wear colourful clothes and listen to jazz", recalled one of them. Many of them realized they had been overly solemn before: "we had been convinced that we were the happiest and the most cheerful youth in the world, but when confronted with foreigners and their demeanor, it turned out we were sulky and gloomy, extraordinarily stiff and tense … It had been totally unimaginable for us that one could kiss on the street … be relaxed, and wear colourful clothes". So far colourful attire had been the thing of the 'teddy-boys' (binikarze), a subculture of unruly 'hooligan' working-class metropolitan youth, whose trademark had been colourful and striped socks and gaudy ties. These, unsurprisingly, were to the festival like fish to water: unlike the activists, a journalist noted in a typically wry register, "the strangely dancing offshoots of the teddy-boys, decked up garishly like parrots, shook their buttocks like exhausted nags".[37]

The 'teddy-boys', with their extravagant clothes and pompadour hairdos, articulated what James Ferguson described as 'low', or working-class cosmopolitanism – an urban style committed to "celebrating the different and distant for its own sake".[38] Such grassroots cosmopolitanism, articulating the desire to live in a more exciting, equitable and free

[35] B. Brzostek, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
[36] *Ibidem*, p. 30.
[37] A. Krzywicki, *Poststalinowski karnawał radości*, Trio, Warszawa 2009, pp. 231, 283.
[38] J. Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1999, p. 225.

world has been generally overlooked in the analyses of the Polish working class that typically focus on the well-rehearsed themes of nationalism, Catholicism, anti-Semitism and the like. Yet, for decades such an ethos dominated east of the Iron Curtain. The teddy-boys were a minority, and most people distanced themselves from them, especially in that they were being constantly mocked by the official media. This, as Alexei Yurchak pointed out, paradoxically 'normalized' the infusion of Western cultural goods into the socialist reality: "by focusing its attacks on an isolated phenomenon, the state made the more common and less extreme manifestations of Western symbols and tastes appear even more natural and congruent with the identity of a good Soviet person".[39]

The vivid interest in all things Western was not, as it is often claimed, a form of cargo cult. Instead, it was essential for articulating an 'elsewhere' of socialism. Throughout the post-war period, Western music was increasingly popular, but very few understood or even cared about the lyrics. Many people decorated their rooms with photos of artists, foreign places, Western ads, or even collected empty beer cans or cigarette boxes on their bookshelves. The role of these colourful artefacts "was to link the here and now to an 'elsewhere'". This link "was simultaneously real (the objects were right here) and abstract (the 'elsewhere' to which they linked was imaginary)". They served as 'fingerprints' of this contingent reality and as a "promise of personal creativity and the possibility of creating a vibrant and shared world that was neither Soviet nor foreign", yet entirely congruent with communist ideology and its attempts to transcend capitalism.[40] Colour served exactly that role: it was a fingerprint from that "elsewhere", or, put differently, a stimulant that 'spiced up' the solemn 'grey' reality. Since 1989, greyness-as-liberation has practically vanished from urban life in Poland – but greyness-as-solemnity remains deeply entrenched. And these are the origins of the often noted (and often denounced as kitschy) grassroots urban practices that seek to revitalize "dead" urban space by painting it in gaudy colours. The recent revival of interest in modernist architecture and urban planning has been accompanied by a rediscovery of communist urban heritage and its egalitarian ethos. The throbbing oscillation between colour and greyness (and the radical shifts of meaning jump-started by it) that I described in this article represent the very taproot of the East European urban experience. This zigzag through historical possibilities is by no means over. It was Boris Groys who once noted that Western "post-modern taste is by no means as tolerant as it seems … [it] rejects everything universal, uniform, repetitive, geometrical, minimalist, ascetic, monotonous, boring … And of course, the post-modern sensibility strongly dislikes – and *must* dislike – the gray, monotonous, uninspiring look of communism". So, argued Groys, "what is the origin of this dominating post-modern taste for colorful diversity? … It is the taste *formed by* the contemporary market, and it is the taste *for* the market".[41]

By the same token, is not the penchant in urban studies for the colourful diversity of the Southern city informed by this secret homogeneity masked as ostensible pluralism?

[39] A. Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2006, p. 175.

[40] *Ibidem*, pp. 195, 197.

[41] B. Groys, *Art Power*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 2008, pp. 150–151.

Maybe *real* diversity can only be achieved under the auspices of greyness. It is time to pick up socialist urbanism from the rubbish heap of history. It could be full of surprises – and possibilities for the future.

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Memory of the City: New York 9/11/2013

Abstract: The article presents functional, spatial and symbolic transformations of New York City and its architecture after the terrorist attack of 9/11. Destroyed Twin Towers have been replaced by the new WTC One, highest building in the US. Its architecture is controversial, but according to author, it will soon became a new symbol of New York. 9/11 tragedy did not stop development of the city. Just contrary: New York's ambition is to become a model for cities in the 21st century, a resident-friendly and sustainable urban eco-system.

Key words: New York architecture, Twin Towers, WTC One

New York is the largest American metropolis and one of the main hubs of a network of global cities. It is a fascinating place, in particular its central district – Manhattan: a metaphor of modernity; abundant with iconic buildings and powerful symbols of urban life. Wojciech Kosiński argues that "the heart of the world" after Babylon, Jerusalem, Athens, Rome, Paris and London, has now moved to Manhattan.[1] The Author spent there the 12th anniversary of the 9/11 attack with his camera, with the intention to retrace what has remained of the event, and in particular to record the process of transformation of its cityscape, and the creation of its new spatial symbols.[2]

The two towers of the World Trade Center, built in the early 1970s (designed by the Japanese born American architect Minori Yamasaki), nicknamed the Twin Towers, were among the most prominent symbols of Manhattan. For their large scale, mighty form and double rhythm, they towered over the City, becoming the icon of New York, and by this gaining unusual power and importance. This is why the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 and the destruction of the WTC Towers was a shock for the entire civilised world. The image of the falling towers, repeated thousands of times on live TV, the transmission of which continued for hours,[3] was the first "global terrorist superproduction", and was particularly disturbing to everyone.[4]

1 W. Kosiński, *Serce świata – Manhattan*, "Czasopismo Techniczne Architektura" 2008, no. 3A, p. 100.

2 Photo essay: *New York 9/11/2013* was presented on 20 September 2013 during the panel *Urban Culture: Concepts and Activities*, organised under the 2nd Congress of the Polish Association of Cultural Studies in Kraków.

3 ABC broadcast the transmission of the attack non-stop for 91 hours, whilst CBS's breaking news continued with no interruption for 93 hours and 5 minutes.

4 T. Goban-Klas, *Media i terroryści. Czy zastraszą nas na śmierć?*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2009, p. 119.

But the tragedy of 9/11 most strongly affected the residents of New York. "The skyline, and the city, are changed forever. When the site is cleared, and the lost lives are counted, there will be a huge hole in the heart of New York and every New Yorker" – wrote Ada Louise Huxtable, a columnist of the "Wall Street Journal", a few days after the attack.[5] The scale of destruction was appalling: the entire big city superblock on an area of over 6 hectares fell in ruins reaching up to the sixth floor. Twelve years after this tragic event the site has been cleared and the lost lives counted, but the reconstruction of the destroyed quarter of the city has not yet been finished: the 9/11 Museum has not been opened yet and the construction of the Freedom Tower (later prosaically renamed WTC One) is still underway.

In consequence of the attack, the WTC area has become a sacred site: on the one hand, it is seen as the site of an unprecedented barbarity in our times, hallowed with the blood of nearly three thousand innocent victims and known as Ground Zero – which in military terminology means the epicentre of a nuclear attack; on the other hand, it is a place of commemoration of the heroic rescue operation and solidarity that the authorities, institutions and residents showed in the face of this tragedy. The efficient process of reconstruction was to symbolize the power of American democracy. In the aftermath of the events of the 11th of September, the WTC site became one of the most important public places in the US defining national identity.

In the above-mentioned article, dated 17 September 2001, Huxtable, quite prophetically wrote:

> There will be, and should be, passionate disagreement about replacing them at all. Rebuilding on this site requires serious consideration. There will be, and should be, calls for a memorial park, a public open space to serve as a permanent reminder of one the city's, and history's, worst catastrophes – a detestably man-made, as opposed to natural, disaster – and for the tribute to those who died needlessly and tragically in an act of unredeemed horror. And yet, one can almost predict what the New York process will be. This city can show its compassion, and its resolve, as it is doing now, but it is also a city incapable of the large, appropriate gesture in the public interest if it costs too much. That too, is something that can be debated. What are our values? How do we count the cost of those lives? Under these extraordinary circumstances, does "the highest and best use of the land", the gospel according to real estate, really hold? Traditionally, that has meant filling the land to the maximum permitted by law, for the greatest return, while ignoring every social and human factor. If the usual scenario is followed, the debate will lead to the "solution" in which principle is lost and an epic opportunity squandered.[6]

This was exactly the case with the reconstruction of the WTC. The winner of the international architecture competition for the reconstruction of the centre of Manhattan, announced in February 2003, was Daniel Libeskind, an architect of Polish-Jewish descent. Libeskind's original, innovative and highly symbolic vision, which culminated in the 1776 feet high Freedom Tower, expressive in form, gradually became increasingly distorted, and the architect was no longer employed in further design work, allegedly because of his lack of experi-

[5] A.L. Huxtable, *On Architecture: Collected Reflections on a Century of Change*, Walker and Company, New York 2008, p. 378.

[6] *Ibidem*, pp. 378–379.

Photo 1. Silhouette of the Twin Towers on snack delivery truck, Queens, NY. Photo: Author.

Photo 2. Art installation *Tribute in Light* seen from Brooklyn Promenade – 9.11.2013. Photo: Author.

ence in commercial projects. He was replaced by David Childs, the head of the international architecture company Skidmore, Owings and Merril, who belongs to the elite of American architects. He significantly remodelled and simplified the original design. The final blow to Libeskind's concept was in the spring of 2005, when the New York police stopped design work for security reasons. As a result of the police recommendations, the designs of the WTC complex structures were thoroughly revised, the construction was reinforced, the façade was hardened and security zones were built around the building. Paul Goldberger, a New York-based architecture critic, described the new WTC One design as "stunningly mediocre – an office tower on top of a bunker".[7]

In September 2006, architectural designs for the reconstruction of the following towers: the Second, the Third and the Fourth, were presented, designed by star architects: Norman Foster, Richard Rogers and Fumihiko Maki. Huxtable ironically dismissed them as "the disaster that has followed the tragedy", accusing the new buildings of be nothing more than "machines for making money". Their forms seem to be randomly selected, whilst stressing the most effective use of the building plots on which they have been planned. Huxtable also writes that they not only lack the lightness and the charm of Libeskind's original concept – *spiralling, crystalline towers* – but also as a result of political conflicts and clashes between officials, the balance between the overblown commercial part and other components of the concept aimed to commemorate the victims and to promote the values of a free and democratic society were completely lost.[8]

After 11 September, the entire Lower Manhattan area, home to the New York stock exchange, the Town Hall, courts, banks and global companies, has been considered a high risk zone and, fearing a future terrorist attack, surrounded with various safeguards and protections, built under the Lower Manhattan Security Initiative. Special security precautions will be installed in the WTC area. It is estimated that the 9/11 Museum will be visited by over two million people per year. A local police station will be open to ensure security, and all cars and coaches entering the garage complex will be thoroughly checked in the underground Vehicular Security Center. The possibility of the terrorist attack using a car bomb filled with home-made explosives raises the highest concerns of the police. This is why vehicle traffic will be banned from the entire area and streets neighbouring the WTC complex, like the area around the stock exchange on Wall Street. Details and effects of the construction of safeguards may be seen on the publicly displayed WTC Campus Security Plan.

The activities of the New York police are controversial: concerns are raised that the fortification of the urban space will result in a syndrome of fear, that the restrictions on access will hamper the operation of offices and trade, whilst troublesome and costly safeguards might turn out ineffective, considering the fact that terrorists constantly perfect their tactics and can use unconventional weapons for their attack, like the civil planes which were used on 11 September. Protests have also been raised as to the urban monitoring and other elec-

[7] P. Goldberger, *Up from Zero: Politics, Architecture and Rebuilding of New York*, Random House Trade Paperbacks, New York 2005, p. 266.

[8] A.L. Huxtable, *op. cit.*, pp. 397–400.

Photo 3. The National September 11 Memorial – Reflective Pool in the place where once the WTC Tower stood. Photo: Author.

Photo 4. 9/11 Anniversary Parade, Brooklyn, NY. Photo: Author.

tronic surveillance techniques of public places: for example activists of the Occupy Wall Street movement protesting against global financial institutions were watched *via* CCTV cameras by security officers of these institutions, who are working hand in hand with the police officers at the New York security centre, opened in 2009. "Wall Street's criminals have not been indicted or sent to jail because they have effectively become the police" – commented the female columnist of the radical magazine "CounterPunch".[9]

The central element of the urban complex replacing the destroyed WTC consists of the 9/11 Memorial designed by Michael Arad and Peter Walker. The main elements of the memorial are two large and deep pools built on the site of the foundations of the destroyed towers. Water cascades flow down the walls of the pools, with the names of all the victims of the attack cut out on the panels edging the pools. A park was also set up with white oaks seasonally changing colour. The finishing works at the 9/11 Museum designed by the Norwegian Snøhetta office, well known for its design of the Oslo Opera House, are still underway. The three-storey high entrance hall to the Museum will house two original buttresses which survived the catastrophe.

The city still pays tribute to the victims on every anniversary of 11 September, including calling a roll of honour and parades, but the ceremonies are becoming more and more unofficial every year. Instead, the tradition of meetings, charity campaigns and philanthropic deeds is growing. In this way, many American citizens commemorate the day in their own private way. However, according to the author, the most expressive symbol of remembrance of the 11th of September 2001 is the annual light show, which was held for the first time in 2002. It consists of several dozens searchlights, creating two light beams rising to the heaven near the site where the WTC once stood. The project, originally called *Towers of Light*, and later, under the pressure of the victims' families, renamed *Tribute in Light*, won the respect of the city's residents and since that time, every night on the anniversary of the attack, towers of light rise over the sky of New York, as a symbol of remembrance of the attack and its victims.

Contrary to frequently raised fears, neither the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001, nor the world financial crisis and the fall of Lehman Brothers in 2008, nor Hurricane Sandy, which destroyed the city piers in autumn 2012, have stopped the development of New York. Just the contrary: Lower Manhattan has presently become a fashionable and attractive place to live. With over a thousand shops and restaurants and millions of tourists, who come here every year, the district is alive around the clock, seven days a week. The entire city is developing: the number of residents is growing, and the population has recently exceeded a record eight million, the crime rate is shrinking and living standards are improving. New York's ambition is to "become a model for cities in the 21st century",[10] the "greenest" city in the US, a strongly urbanised, resident-friendly and sustainable urban eco-system. Paradoxically, its intensive density and a well-developed public transport system contribute to this. The US has become aware that the most environmentally-friendly and cost-efficient form

[9] P. Martens, *Wall Street Firms Spy on Protesters in Tax-funded Center*, "CounterPunch", 11.10.2011.

[10] M. Bloomberg and The City of New York, *PlaNYC: A Greener, Greater New York*, New York 2007, p. 11.

Photo 5. *NoGo* antiterrorist barrier, Wall Street, NY. Photo: Author.

Photo 6. WTC One: an office tower on top of a bunker. Photo: Author.

of development is high and dense mid-town architecture, whilst suburbs are the most environmentally wasteful, energy and natural resource consuming.[11] Under "A Greener, Greater New York" strategy, launched in 2007 with the 2030 perspective, a regeneration of the natural resources of the city was planned, including buildings, land, air and water, developing energy efficiency and public infrastructure, with commercial and residential development along infrastructure lines. A system of pedestrian and cycling routes, public promenades and parks, is also planned to surround Manhattan and will continue along the eastern banks of the East River. The city's competitiveness and attractiveness is planned to be improved, as well as residents' living standards: every New Yorker is expected to have access to a park and a public transport system within a five-minute walk.[12] Since 2005, every publicly-funded building has to meet at least LEED Silver certification standards (Hill 2012, p. 12). New York parks and green spaces already attract attention by their selection of greenery, typical of organic gardening: preference is given to native plants which do not need watering and special care, with prevailing grass and low ground cover plants, xerophytes and succulents.

The city's functional and spatial transformation can already be seen with the naked eye. Manhattan may be safely encircled by bike, city streets, plazas and parks are full of people, and water buses run along the East River. Docks and old harbour storage areas are being replaced by newly built, attractive riverside boulevards, accessible to the public, such as, for example, the recently opened East River Waterfront Esplanade in South Port, Lower Manhattan (SHoP Architects). Spectacular inner city parks are created, of which the most popular is Highline Park in Chelsea, set up on old supports of the municipal central railroad (Diller Scofidio + Renfro and James Corner Field Operations). Numerous public-private revitalisation projects and activities in the spirit of sustainable development are being undertaken. However, the city is still full of contrasts: new skyscrapers, museums, and stadiums are built in the middle of the crowded and noisy streets of the New York grid. Sometimes the streets are still full of holes and dirty, but shabby, post-industrial facades can hide luxury boutique stores, art galleries and lofts – everything is in constant movement and reconstruction. So-far, once neglected districts: Meatpacking, Williamsburg and Greenpoint, are gaining new functions and new residents. The big-city style of life has become fashionable among young people, but senior citizens also sell their suburban houses, and abandon their dearly tended gardens to move to small apartments in the central part of the city in order to benefit from the company of other people and the fascinating things on offer in this full of life, multicultural and multi-ethnic city.

But, as the New York sociologist Sharon Zukin has noted, the revitalisation projects are accompanied by the process of gentrification, so as a result areas which become fashionable and begin to fill with new galleries, cafes and shops, lose their past identity and authenticity, whilst their residents: craftsmen, shopkeepers, immigrants and poor artists are forced to leave and to give way to better-off residents who have come here to look for originality and authenticity. And, thus, these enclaves are becoming commercialised: small galleries and

[11] V. Chakrabarti, *A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for Urban America*, Metropolis Books, New York 2013, pp. 74–124.

[12] M. Bloomberg, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

Photo 7. Commercial advertisement using the image of the WTC One. On the left: "ghost bike" commemorating a cyclist killed in a crash. West Broadway, NY. Photo: Author.

Photo 8. Tower WTC One looming up from the Lower Manhattan skyline. Photo: Author.

boutiques are replaced by the network magazines of global companies, luxury restaurants and repetitive, retail banking and service points. According to the author, as a result of this cyclical process, "the city is losing its soul", which Zukin sees not as much in its diversified functional and spatial context, but rather in the ethnic diversity of its residents.[13]

Here and there in New York you can still spot the images of the Twin Towers: in the old photographs, on book covers, or on the sides of trucks; some police cars also bear this image, accompanied with the inscription: "we will never forget". Even the neon sign in Blue Note, the famous jazz club, repeats the characteristic silhouette. But life goes on – the stands with their tourist souvenirs sell postcards with many configurations of the Manhattan skyline: with old twin towers, stripped of the towers, with the alone WTC One or the entire complex of WTC towers, representing a view for which we will still have to wait many years.[14]

Meanwhile, the unfinished WTC One which towers over Lower Manhattan has already appeared on commercial billboards. The story known from the building of the Twin Towers repeats itself: the new WTC design is accused of being oversized and clumsy in terms of its architectural expression. These flaws are enhanced by its almost entire lack of detail, and its unnecessarily mono-functional use as an office building. Like before, the municipal authorities came to the rescue of the private developer, deciding to hire large amounts of office space at the WTC complex. However, as the previous experience shows, it can be expected that despite the critical opinions, the towers of the new World Trade Center will soon blend together with the city skyline and will create a new, powerful and generally accepted symbol of New York.

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[13] S. Zukin, *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2010, pp. 1–31.

[14] During the ten years which have passed since the destruction of the WTC, only one tower: WTC Seven has been rebuilt, and the 9/11 Memorial opened. The opening of the 9/11 Museum, the WTC One and WTC Four towers is planned in 2014. The date of completing the other WTC facilities is still not known.

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Keeping an Eye Open for Scents and Stenches. Reflections on Combining Smelling with Visual Data in Perspective of Anthropology of Waste

Abstract: The text deals with an issue of reading images as a way of perceiving the osmosphere. The author observes that eyesight might enhance other sensory modalities, provided that the eye no longer is isolated from natural interaction with the environment which has olfactory properties, but also audio and haptic. The analysis is related to two possibilities of reasoning about smells based on visual data. In the first case, the photograph appeals to the olfactory memory and serve as a tool to elicit a narration on scents from a person. In the second case, the use of the olfactory imagination seems to be necessary as a sort of subconscious for the hegemonic eye. The image an individual can see evokes internal representations, which should be taken into account when analysing and interpreting the urban space.

Key words: osmosphere, scents, urban space, anthropology of waste

To begin with, I should explain why I am concerned with documenting scents. It is due to my work as a researcher and lecturer, in which the relationship between the eye and the nose, although not of primary importance, is of substantial supplementary significance. The research I have thus far conducted, and the results of which I have published, pertain to the anthropology of waste and the sanitary culture of Warsaw.[1] The research has often entailed physical contact with waste, and necessitated illustrating my articles with photos of the scatological places to authenticate their stenches. Since filth produces intensive odours, I could empirically experience that urban space is indeed marked and segregated by smell, regardless of the code of the modern culture's obsession with hygiene. The city and cityscapes without scents would be devoid of identity, as was probably first noticed by Georg Simmel.[2]

[1] W.K. Pessel, *Antropologia nieczystości. Studia z historii kultury sanitarnej Warszawy*, Wydawnictwo Trio, Collegium Civitas, Warszawa 2010.

[2] G. Simmel, *The Sociology of Senses*, [in:] D. Frisby, M. Featherstone (eds.), *Simmel on Culture: Selected Essays*, Sage, London 1997.

Filth, smelling and cities

It is a different matter when it is a participant of the urban culture who tries to avoid recognising and diagnosing unpleasant smells. Social indifference towards waste is also dependent on the sensory circumstances, which are influenced by social and cultural factors. Filth does not necessarily need to bother people – it may go unnoticed by them, as long as it does not offend the sense of smell, or as long as it does not continuously and intensively excite it. We only react when something reeks under our very nose, which makes it impossible for us not to see it. Stench exposes the presence of particularly repulsive scatological places and refuse dumps. Stenches cause humans to react with disgust, because bad smells make us think of death, degradation, the decomposition of matter, or carrion. The power of stench is based on its ability to confuse, to immediately excite the senses, thus conquering the weakness of osmological cognition stemming from the changes in the customs of the European modern times.

Indifference to the osmosphere generated by waste, as was proven by the aforementioned Georg Simmel, was, and is, continuously deepened by the sensory deprivation inherent to the urban culture, understood as urbanisation as well as the formation of a big city mentality. One must, however, bear in mind the civilisation dimension of the indifference. In metropolises it brought about a cultural shift, which caused the city dwellers to cease their social resistance against the flushing of faeces down underground sewers and entrusting their waste to an arbitrary and communal cleansing system. Simmel classified the municipal infrastructure as an impersonal system of culture. Modernising cities have become the strongholds of reason and money, binding the intellect with monetary economy. The nature of city inhabitants' social knowledge is mental and abstract in character, but at a great expense to the senses. The city bombards the nervous system with numerous stimuli, thus desensitising it to outer visual, auditory, but also olfactory signals. So when it comes to scents in a city as big as Warsaw, the smells are either a part of a hidden dimension of culture, belonging to its silent language, or are perceived with anxiety and disgust when they force themselves upon the noses, when they prove too offensive. Such is the case with the underground passage under the Dmowskiego Roundabout in Warsaw: the nostrils of the people passing through it are overwhelmed by a mixture of odours from stalls with panini sandwiches and bakeries, combined with a scent of coffee from the nearby chain coffeehouse.

The small towers along the Poniatowskiego Bridge may have been refurbished and illuminated by the city magistrate during the bridge's latest general renovation, but it did not protect them from a quick restoration of an exceptionally unfavourable aura of smells. To put it briefly, the towers again serve as the city's nocturnal urinal, and often as a shelter to local packs of revellers. All this puts into question the thesis about the contemporary culture's developing aromatisation and the sense of smell giving way to the sense of sight. Such propositions do not seem to be entirely unfounded, but they are rather premature. True: scents are utilised for marketing purposes or to aestheticise public spaces. Perfumeries open their doors wide to attract customers with pleasant fragrances. Popular coffeehouses use reed diffusers to authenticise the freshness and quality of the coffee they brew. But all this takes

place in what might be called enclaves of cleanliness, spaces pleasing to the eye. In other places, by far not peripheral and neglected, but out of the majority's sight, as is the case with the Poniatowskiego Bridge, it is filth and stench that shamelessly prevail.

When I go to the Powiśle railway station in Warsaw, I am not accompanied by thoughts of the de-odourisation of public spaces as one of the basic dimensions of popular culture at the turn of the 21st century. I do, however, recollect the observations made by Mercier in his celebrated *Tableau de Paris*, published in 1791, which described the needy gathering near the elegant hedges of palaces. Besides, aromatisation, nowadays presented in the context of sanitary culture and urban customs as a matter of the times to come, is not a subject devoid of a rich cultural past. In Paris alone, between 1762 and 1853, several dozens of methods of disinfecting cesspools, or pit toilets, had been devised, most of which relied on strongly-fragranced plant extracts or essences. When in the 1870s Warsaw faeces were extracted from the modernised, hermetical cesspools located on the courtyards of tenement houses using the so called Berger Apparatus, which was manufactured under German licence, the cesspool cleaners would set up a device reminiscent of a censer on the sidewalk. It produced fragrant fumes, which neutralised the stench. The fumes allowed the bystanders to comfortably observe the device's operation and the work of the cleaners.

Employing very strong, oppressive scents in order to overcome other, unpleasant, smells, is a universally used mechanism, and in some respect dubious. Aromatisation can appear where there is a need to discreetly conceal the embarrassing sources of stench. This is something particularly noteworthy for researchers weary of the city's iconography as the seat of evil and ugliness, who are searching for new descriptive categories, thus classifying the sanitary culture's history of origin as exhausted topoi. As far as sanitation is concerned, empirical data can be more resistant, comprehensive, and lasting, than scientific categories.

Cross-disciplinary need for osmosphere

When the scent is strong enough, we can expect that it will be remembered and recollected, even in separation from the particular place in which it originated. If that specific sensation can be documented and achieved at all, we will certainly be forced to achieve it using vision and image. We cannot reflect upon the sense of smell and the perception of fragrances and stenches without recording them with modern media. If a researcher of urban culture and everyday life collects wedding invitations and flyers advertising escort agencies, and later usually converts them to a digital format, he could collect smells in the same way. Qualitative research methodology offers no ready solutions how to do it, and they are still to be developed. Of course, we could traditionally satisfy ourselves with survey notes, that is, exhaustive descriptions. The same approach could be adopted by field researchers of culture investigating various issues in general. Yet, more and more frequently, they use visual data: photos and films. Reading images as a way of reading the osmosphere should all the more so be taken into consideration and made a subject of research and experimentation. What is more, such an appreciation of the osmosphere would be in accordance with the post-modern

vision of culture. Already Michel Maffesoli expressed "street spectacles" in categories of "affinity parishes" and "an architectonic whole"[3]. Such a "materiality of being-together" is hard to imagine as something having its basis solely in the visual; it is based on multi-sensory communication. What is problematic, is how a theory aspiring to diagnose the empirical reality gives no direct suggestions as to how should researchers take into account, for example, the aromatic dimension of urban culture, or how should they describe smellscapes. Phil Macnaghten and John Urry acknowledge in their riveting book that "[the] geography of the nose has not been particularly developed within the western academy".[4]

I am conducting my current research in the area of the history of culture in Scandinavia, where I inevitably encounter progressive architecture, which decidedly breaks with the primacy of the visual. It grants the skin eyes, as in the title of Juhani Pallasmaa's essay.[5] Take the Copenhagen district of Ørestad, for example: some enjoy its forced ultra-modernity, others are intrigued by it, but, by integrating the structures with their natural environment, it dazzles us with tactile and olfactory sensations. On one of the housing project's blocks, a carpet of green descends in terraces from the roofs of the ordinary blocks of flats and flows down, leading the nose and feet to green spots and streamlets. Besides, students attending my workshops about Warsaw signal their weariness with modern culture's occulocentrism and their interest in other senses, which are being weakened by patterns of culture. I share this readiness to question the role of the eye as the only socially recognised sensory organ, and the reduction of the nose to a sensory relic, which is to perform only private functions and to serve only for a person's individual use. It is as if it was impossible to challenge Freud's ruling, which is in its essence evolutionistic, that a cultured, upright-walking human being is an individual who looks, whereas the sense of smell is animalistic, fit for a man walking an all fours, who remains outside culture and is controlled by instincts and sexual urges. It is no coincidence that in Richard Wagner's librettos the socially accepted relationships, particularly a typically bourgeois marriage, bear no mark of a scent, whereas strong odours always appear in some dangerous, erotic context.[6]

But of course, stressing the role of the sense of smell does not necessarily mean provoking an olfactory turn in cultural studies, parallel to the spatial turn, the interpretive turn, etc.[7] I do not intend to masquerade the laws of biology under a humanistic discourse in this essay. Physiological and neuropsychological facts are indisputable. To name some of the most striking ones: the optic nerve can transmit an incredible amount of information to the brain, whereas smell and other senses are not as functional; although humans possess several million cells responsible for discerning scents, only a fraction of the air flowing through the nasal cavity is subjected to osmological control; human beings are not macrosomatic

[3] M. Maffesoli, *The Time of the Tribes: The Decline of Individualism in Mass Society*, transl. D. Smith, Sage, London 1997, chap. 4: *Tribalism*.

[4] P. Macnaghten, J. Urry, *Contested Natures*, Sage, London 1998, p. 127.

[5] J. Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*, John Wiley and Sons, Hoboken 2012.

[6] A. Gilbert, *What the Nose Knows: The Science of Scent in Everyday Life*, Crown, New York 2008, p. 140.

[7] D. Bachmann-Medick, *Cultural Turns: Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften*, Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg 2006.

animals, i.e. that is, possessing a keen sense of smell allowing them to track scents like, for example, dogs do, whose sense of smell is 11,000 times more acute than that of an average human; we are subject to olfactory adaptation, which operates analogically to visual adaptation, otherwise called accommodation of the eye, observed when, for example, we leave a dark room and go into the sunlight.[8] The longer we smell a scent, the more neutral, or intangible, it becomes. Hence, Warsaw garbage men with whom I have spoken claimed that for them their garbage trucks do not reek, but if they do smell of anything, it is of a green apple-scented Wunder-Baum.

I believe that to consider the collection and visual documentation of scents, we would need to use the chance, proven by the ''white smocks'', that vision can successfully amplify our other sensory modalities. For this to succeed, we would need to cease socially isolating the eye from a natural interaction with the environment, which possesses olfactory, tactile, aural, and gustatory qualities. Sources of inspiration can also be found in social anthropology, as well as philosophy and criticism of architecture. Edmund Leach, in his essay titled *Taste and Smell*, points out the cultural consequences of synaesthetics on the example of the two senses. He stresses how sensory data overlap and interweave, creating an olfactory atmosphere in which man is immersed. As he writes:

> If I stroke a pussy in the dark I can feel where her nose begins and where her tail ends. But smell and tastes are not easily separable and segmentable in that sort of way. Without very special training it is hard to determine just where one taste or smell stimulus ends and another begins, and when tastes and smells overlie one another they merge to generate an atmosphere rather than an impression of a set of separable objects.[9]

At this particular point, I would like to remind you of the cinnamon shops described in *The Street of Crocodiles* by Bruno Schulz, which he conceived not only for their fragrance of spices, but also for their colourful quality, thus exploiting the correspondence of the senses and the translatability of the different senses' experiences. For the same reason, another culture text, the recently released *Imagine*, a Polish-Portuguese film directed by Andrzej Jakimowski, should be recognised as a very informative audiovisual treatise on the significance of the olfactory imagination and combining of sensual data. Disclosing the entire plot of the movie would be unforgivable, so I will reveal only the general premise. An instructor arrives at a renowned Lisbon clinic for the blind, headed by an eminent physician. Ian teaches the art of spatial orientation to the young patients using controversial methods that he employs himself, which include walking down busy streets without a cane. To the clinic's director, recognizing a cat or differentiating climbing flowers from all others by their smell, seems to be more of an artistic whim than a technique of spatial orientation. The blind in Jakimowski's film learn to look at the world and to see it with their imagination. To see with one's imagination, one only needs to create a mental representation of the object

[8] W. Ślęzak-Tazbir, M.S. Szczepański, *W miejskiej osmotece. Próba perspektywy osmologicznej w badaniach miejskich*, "Przegląd Humanistyczny" 2010, no. 3.

[9] E. Leach, *Taste and Smell*, [in:] S. Hugh-Jones, J. Laidlaw (eds.), *The Essential Edmund Leach*, New Haven–London 2000, vol. 2: *Culture and Human Nature*, p. 238.

actually existing without. Indeed, the same part of the brain responsible for vision is used by people who see and by the blind. They too interpret the world with images. But without imagination, sensitivity to scents, but also sounds and tactile stimuli, they cannot put the images together. Again, the olfactoric sphere becomes more like a subconscious of the vision, the smell successfully outpacing it.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a phenomenological philosopher, follows the same notions as Edmund Leach, an anthropologist. In his all-important philosophical tract, he stressed the interactional relationship between the perceiving subject and the world.[10] Only after walking barefoot, as the Finnish tend to do more often than us, on the creaking floor boards of a log cabin, can we truly sense the resinous scent of a cosy home; we can hear its smell. It is definitely worth noting, that in the Old Polish language smells were "heard".

Two methodical proposals

We arrive at a presumably valid question: how to functionalise what has been written here so far? How to translate it into precise methodological guidelines for utilising visual data in the case of recorded images, particularly photographs?

I see two possibilities of reasoning about smells based on visual data. I stress the circumstance that I do that from my specific point of view of researcher of sanitary culture. In the first case, the photograph would appeal to the olfactory memory and serve as a tool to elicit a narration on scents from a person. It would be required that the person looking at the picture would be its author or in someway a witness to the situation portrayed. In the second case, when the requirement could not be fulfilled, the use of olfactory imagination would be necessary. We thus recognise the sense of smell as a sort of subconscious for the hegemonic eye: the image we see evokes internal representations, which can be taken into account when analysing and interpreting the urban space. As Avery Gilbert, a smell scientist, says: biology equipped man with the abilities of synaesthesia and empathy, which only needs to be stimulated.[11]

In the first discussed case, the photo would serve as a tool for eliciting memories, a sort of support for the olfactory memory, exploiting the strong natural link between the sense of smell and human memory: olfactory receptors located in the nose transmit signals directly to the limbic system, which is responsible for emotions and storing memories. Hence, even the subtlest scent is unpleasant if it brings back unpleasant memories. Conversely, even the most trivial smells cause enthusiastic reactions if they are linked to some pleasant past experience. Olfactory memories, so named by Paul Rodaway in his *Sensuous Geographies: Body, Sense and Place*, are of particular importance for childhood memories, the recollection of homelands, places of residence, relationships, etc. On the same neuropsychological basis, revulsion operates as a cultural regulator of receptivity. With smell, as opposed to

[10] M. Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, transl. A. Lingis, ed. C. Lefort, Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1969.

[11] A. Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

other senses, the response is always swifter than the thought. That is why a response to a revolting stimulus is so sudden and automatic. In cultural studies' research, an individual's appeal to their olfactory memory seems particularly useful in the case of oral history. An outline of what Katarzyna Kuzko-Zwierz calls 'spatial sensualness' reveals the memories of Praga district's residents, which are collected by the employees of The Museum of Warsaw Praga. To illustrate: it is a recurring theme in recollections referring to the Wedel chocolate factory that the memories are emotionally charged; Praga residents would go on a stroll in the Skaryszewski Park to smell flowers, as well the scent of chocolate from the nearby factory. The factory still produces the characteristic scent of chocolate which envelops the neighbourhood. When the workers from the factory board the number 9 tram, the chocolate scent often lingers until the tram reaches the district of Ochota, well on the other side of the river.

In the latter of the mentioned cases, we would like to, in a sense, exploit the neurobiology of empathy for the needs of the humanities and social sciences. In other words, we would want to stimulate the olfactory imagination, shape the ability to create the mental representations of scents. All actions performed by others and observed by us, including the ones we read about or, more importantly, see on a screen or a photograph, are also performed by us, except we perform them in our minds. We also mentally reproduce the states observed in others. Laboratory researchers claim that this is the way mirror neurons manifest themselves. Only for the imitation of other people's behaviour are these neurons not responsible, because they are responsible primarily for human empathy: at the sight of someone breaking a rotten egg, we wince as if we were the ones sensing the smell.

A person with a vivid olfactory imagination and who is aware of the surrounding osmosphere can, thanks to empathy, create a mental representation of the scents by looking at a photo, without having directly witnessed the portrayed situation. Let us make a provocative assumption that the sense of vision is also an extension of smell, and not just of touch. Therefore, the eye discovers what is already known to the touch and the smell. When we ask someone to imagine a scent, the person will surely instinctively begin by loudly inhaling air through their nose. But while they smell the imaginary scents, their eyes will surely scan the imaginary surroundings, following the same paths they would follow if the situation was real. The eye discovers what the touch and the smell already see. At the same time, they are all integral elements of perception. Innate empathy allows humans to sympathise with someone else's olfactory situation upon perceiving its visual representation.

* * *

Years ago, surrealists chose to abandon rationalism and logical thinking in favour of the fantasy of inner associations. There is undoubtedly a surreal element in eliciting olfactoric memories with photos, or in appealing to the consciousness, empathy, and imagination, in order to reconstruct scents as if they were images, just as it seems surreal to teach the blind to walk without a cane and to find their way using the senses of smell, sound, and touch. Apparently, the art of the olfactory and the attempt to further the appreciation of the osmosphere together make Art.

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Marta Habdas

Przestrzeń jako film – architektura w perspektywie badań nad audiowizualnością

Space as a Film. Architecture in the Perspective of Audiovisual Studies

Abstract: Based on the BA thesis *Urban Spaces of Motion Pictures: Modern Architecture in the Perspective of Audiovisual Studies*, this paper explores the links between architecture and cinema. My goal is not only to show some theoretical concepts regarding this topic (including ones by Sergei Eisenstein, Walter Benjamin and Jean Baudrillard), but also, and primarily, to study the actual effect which the cinematic perception has on the field of modern architecture. Therefore, I analyse two projects of Rem Koolhaas (Embassy of the Netherlands in Berlin and ZKM in Karlsruhe) in the perspective of audiovisual studies. In my analyses, I examine such notions as "the narrativity of architecture" and "the architectural media screen", using some methodological tools borrowed from the field of film studies.

Key words: architecture, cinema, audiovisuality, Rem Koolhaas, cinematic perception

W słynnym filmie Billy'ego Wildera *Bulwar Zachodzącego Słońca* Joe (William Holden) i Betty (Nancy Olson) przechadzają się po filmowym atelier naśladującym scenerię Nowego Jorku. W pewnym momencie Betty mówi: „Spójrz na tę ulicę. Wszędzie tektura, wszystko jest tu na niby, to tylko lustra. A dla mnie to najwspanialsza ulica świata". To krótkie, lecz znaczące spostrzeżenie w doskonały sposób ukazuje napięcie pomiędzy realizmem i fikcyjnością filmowej przestrzeni architektonicznej. Znajduje się ona bowiem pomiędzy „bytem" i „niebytem", nie jest rzeczywista w sensie materialnym, a mimo to istnieje w naszej świadomości tak mocno, że może mieć na nas większy wpływ emocjonalny niż jakakolwiek inna. Oczywiście, taka zależność niesie ze sobą wiele implikacji przydatnych przy analizie filmów pod kątem przedstawianej w nich przestrzeni. Czy jednak wykracza ona poza sam kinowy ekran i pozwala także na refleksję nad „rzeczywistą" architekturą, a nie tylko jej obrazem?

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest próba udzielenia twierdzącej odpowiedzi na zadane powyżej pytanie. O zależnościach pomiędzy kinem i przestrzenią pisali tak słynni teoretycy jak Siergiej Eisenstein, Walter Benjamin czy Jean Baudrillard – i to właśnie ich rozważania stanowią teoretyczny punkt wyjścia dla mojego tekstu. Trudno jednak byłoby udzielić choćby na poły satysfakcjonującej odpowiedzi bez spojrzenia na konkretne przykłady praktyk architektonicznych, odnoszących się do zabiegów filmowych. Dlatego też zwieńczeniem mojego artykułu są analizy dwóch projektów jednego z najbardziej znanych i cenionych współcześnie architektów – Rema Koolhaasa. Oczywiście nie jest on jedynym z twórców

architektury, których pomysły bogate były w filmowe odniesienia – innych odnaleźć można zarówno wśród dekonstruktywistów (Bernard Tschumi, Daniel Libeskind[1]), dwudziestowiecznych utopistów (Constant Nieuwenhuys, Archigram, metabolizm), jak i postmodernistów (Robert Venturi) – ale to właśnie jego stosunek do sztuki filmowej wydaje się szczególnie znaczący. Holenderski architekt nie tylko inspirował się kinem, tworząc projekty swych budynków, ale także sam reżyserował, pisał scenariusze, występował w filmach, a na łamach „Haagse Post" publikował poświęcone sztuce filmowej teksty krytyczne. Nic dziwnego więc, że w jego twórczości praktycznej zauważyć można rozwinięcie teoretycznych wątków stanowiących trzon niniejszego tekstu – architekturę Koolhaasa odczytywać można wręcz jako dzieła quasi-filmowe, posługujące się kinowymi środkami wyrazu. Jak twierdzi bowiem sam architekt „(…) jest zadziwiająco mała różnica pomiędzy jedną działalnością, a drugą (architektura i film) (…) myślę, że sztuką scenarzysty jest tworzenie sekwencji epizodów, które budują suspens i łańcuch wydarzeń (…) najważniejszą częścią mojej pracy jest montaż, przestrzenny montaż"[2].

Punkty styku i podobieństwa

Na pierwszy rzut oka kino i architektura wydawać się mogą praktykami całkowicie odmiennymi. Film jest sztuką światła i ruchu, jego tworzywo jest ulotne i niedookreślone. Budynki natomiast wznoszone są z materiałów jak najbardziej trwałych, przez co na wiele lat pozostają unieruchomione w tym samym miejscu. Mimo to już w 1938 roku, w swym eseju *Montaż i architektura*, Sergiej Eisenstein pisał: „Victor Hugo nazywał średniowieczne katedry «księgami w kamieniu» (...). Akropol ateński ma równe prawo, by nazwać go doskonałym przykładem jednego z najstarszych filmów"[3]. By udowodnić to stwierdzenie, autor *Pancernika Potiomkina* cytuje obszerne ustępy z *Histoire de l'architecture* Auguste'a Choisy'ego, opisujące potencjalną wędrówkę odwiedzającej Akropol osoby i widziane wówczas przez nią obrazy. Eisenstein podkreśla, że gdy spojrzy się na ten opis okiem filmowca, analogie pomiędzy kinem a architekturą stają się oczywiste. Zauważyć można tu bowiem zarówno prototyp ujęcia filmowego, który ujawnia się przy każdym nowym widoku pojawiającym się przed oczami widza i niosącym z sobą unikalne wrażenie, jak i efekt montażowy uzyskiwany przez sekwencyjne następstwo i zestawienie dwóch „ujęć". Tak rozumiana architektura nabiera także pewnych cech mobilnych i czasowych: „zauważmy, że długość tych montażowych sekwencji zgodna jest z rytmem samego budynku: odległość z jednego punktu do drugiego jest długa i czas potrzebny na jej pokonanie koresponduje z ogólną wzniosłością"[4]. Kompozycja Akropolu jest doskonała – ważny jest tu nie tylko

1 W tym kontekście analizuje ich projekty, włączając w to także Rema Koolhaasa, Paweł Saramowicz. Zob. P. Saramowicz, *Film w architekturze (Tschumi, Koolhaas, Libeskind)*, „Kwartalnik Filmowy" 1999, nr 28.
2 M. Toy, „Architectural Design" 1995, nr 112, cyt. za: P. Saramowicz, *op. cit.*, s. 221–223.
3 S. Eisenstein, *Montage and Architecture*, „Assemblage" 1989, nr 10, s. 112.
4 *Ibidem*, s. 117.

kunszt architektoniczny poszczególnych budynków, ale także sekwencyjna ciągłość obrazów, które zobaczyć można podczas zwiedzania.

Eisensteinowskie podejście pozwala odczytywać architekturę jako film i skłania do redefinicji samego pojęcia kina. We wstępie do *Montażu i architektury* rosyjski filmowiec wyróżnia dwa rodzaje ścieżek, którymi poruszać się może percypujący podmiot. Pierwsza związana jest z ruchem rzeczywistym – odbiorca wędruje po przestrzeni, obserwując zjawiska toczące się wokół niego. Druga ma charakter ruchu pozornego – nieruchomy widz siedzący w kinowej sali swym spojrzeniem śledzi wyimaginowaną ścieżkę na ekranie. Powołując się na tę teorię, włoska teoretyczka wizualności Giuliana Bruno zauważa, że „w akcie oglądania filmów istnieje dynamika mobilności, nawet jeśli widz wydaje się być statyczny”[5]. Według niej, widz nie powinien być nazwany *voyeurem*, lecz *voy(ag)eurem*. Spojrzenie zostaje splecione z mobilnością, a podmiot odzyskuje swe ciało: „Percypowane dzięki nawykowi i taktylności, zarówno kino i architektura są kwestią dotyku. Haptyczna ścieżka obu tych przestrzennych praktyk dotyka fizycznego wymiaru”[6]. Kino zostaje więc przedefiniowane jako sztuka haptyczna, a odbywane dzięki niemu podróże stają się analogiczne do tych doświadczanych w przestrzeni „rzeczywistej”.

Rozmycie różnic pomiędzy przestrzenią mentalną, którą przypisać można kinu, i rzeczywistą, odnoszącą się do materialnego otoczenia człowieka, zauważyć można także w teoriach fińskiego architekta Juhaniego Pallasmaa, autora książki *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema*. Według niego zarówno kino, jak i architektura artykułują „przestrzeń przeżywaną”, która „jest zawsze kombinacją zewnętrznej przestrzeni i wewnętrznej przestrzeni mentalnej; rzeczywistości i mentalnej projekcji”[7]. Nasza przeszłość, pamięć, przeżycia rzutują na materialne środowisko, w którym żyjemy. Według Pallasmaa „przeżywana przestrzeń nie jest jednolita i bezwartościowa. Jedno i to samo wydarzenie – pocałunek czy morderstwo – jest całkowicie inną historią w zależności czy odbywa się w sypialni, łazience, bibliotece, windzie czy altanie”[8]. Dopiero kino daje nam ogląd tych sytuacji z dystansu, możliwość uświadomienia sobie emocji, które im towarzyszą, ale także odczuwania przestrzeni, które w niczym nie ustępuje tak zwanemu „realnemu” doświadczeniu. Zarówno dla Bruna, jak i dla Pallasmaa podział na „realne” i „konceptualne” traci tu zresztą swe znaczenie – percypowanie przestrzeni architektury i przestrzeni kina jest dla nich w gruncie rzeczy tożsame.

5 G. Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film*, Verso, New York 2002, s. 55.

6 *Idem*, *Site-seeing: Architecture and the Moving Image*, „Wide Angle” 1997, nr 19, s. 8–24, http://www.pitzer.edu/academics/faculty/lerner/wide_angle/19_4/194bruno.htm (data dostępu: 17.05.2014).

7 J. Pallasmaa, *Lived Space in Architecture and Cinema*, University of Calgary, http://www.ucalgary.ca/ev/designresearch/publications/insitu/copy/volume2/imprintable_architecture/Juhani_Pallasmaa/index.html (data dostępu: 28.05.2012).

8 *Ibidem*.

Nowa percepcja rzeczywistości. Montażowość, fragmentaryzacja, mobilność

„Już nie potrafię myśleć o tym, o czym pomyśleć bym chciał. Ruchome obrazki zajęły miejsce moich myśli”[9]. Te pochodzące z 1930 roku słowa Georges'a Duhamela Walter Benjamin cytuje w swym słynnym eseju *Dzieło sztuki w dobie reprodukcji technicznej*. Idealnie opisują one nowy sposób percepcji, jaki przyniosło z sobą kino. Dzięki sztuce filmowej możliwe stało się obserwowanie tych aspektów rzeczywistości, które wcześniej były niedostępne dla ludzkiego oka. Zbliżenia pozwoliły widzieć przedmioty i ludzi w gigantycznym powiększeniu, montaż umożliwił całkowicie nowe postrzeganie przestrzennych relacji, a elipsy i zmiany szybkości rozbiły stałe do tej pory zależności czasowe. Jak twierdzi Steven Shaviro: „kino jest jednocześnie formą percepcji i percypowanym materiałem, nowym sposobem stykania się z rzeczywistością, ale także pewną jej częścią widzianą po raz pierwszy”[10].

Słowa Duhamela opisują filmowy seans, podczas którego obrazy działają na widza na zasadzie szoku wrażeń, ale mogą być też odzwierciedleniem sytuacji, w której ten sam odbiorca wychodzi z sali kinowej wyposażony w nowy optyczny „bagaż”. Znamienny jest pewien lęk zawarty w tym cytacie (jak pisze Benjamin, Duhamel nienawidził kina), który świadczyć może o obawie przed utratą „wizualnej niewinności”. Benjamin twierdzi:

> Wobec niepomiernie zwiększonego niebezpieczeństwa, jakie w dzisiejszych czasach na każdym kroku zaziera nam w oczy, film stanowi najbardziej adekwatną mu formę sztuki. Potrzeba poddania się działaniu szoku idzie w parze z potrzebą dostosowania się człowieka do grożących mu niebezpieczeństw. Film odpowiada głębokim przemianom aparatu apercepcyjnego, przemianom, jakie w skali prywatnej egzystencji przeżywa każdy przechodzień wielkich miast, jakie w skali historycznej przeżywa każdy obywatel dzisiejszego państwa[11].

Kino wyposaża widza w nowe umiejętności percepcyjne, w tym możliwość „odbioru w stanie dystrakcji” niezbędnego w nowoczesnym mieście, którego fragmentaryczna przestrzeń, zgiełk, wielość bodźców i zwielokrotniona mobilność rozpraszają i atakują przechodniów.

Giuliana Bruno zauważa, że ten „kinowy” sposób percepcji ściśle powiązany jest także z innymi formami architektoniczno-przestrzennymi, które pojawiły się w XIX wieku. Pasaże, stacje kolejowe, centra handlowe, hale wystawowe i inne charakterystyczne dla tej epoki budynki – wszystkie były „miejscami przejazdu” (ang. *transit*), odwiedzanymi i oglądanymi w ruchu[12]. Każdy przechodzień stał się *flâneurem*, niezaangażowanym obserwatorem konsumującym wizualne produkty-fetysze. Ten konsumpcyjny aspekt dziewiętnastowiecz-

[9] G. Duhamel, *Scènes de la vie future*, Paris 1930, s. 52, cyt. za: W. Benjamin, *Twórca jako wytwórca*, przeł. J. Sikorski, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań 1975, s. 91.

[10] S. Shaviro, *The Cinematic Body*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1993, s. 41, cyt. za: D.B. Clarke (red.), *The Cinematic City*, , Routledge, London–New York 1997, s. 8.

[11] W. Benjamin, *op. cit.*, s. 104–105.

[12] Zob. G. Bruno, *Site-seeing...*, *op. cit.*

nej kultury popularnej podkreśla także Anne Friedberg: „Wizualna praktyka kupowania rozwinęła się w XIX wieku wraz z architekturą pasaży i domów handlowych, aranżacją towarów na wystawie oraz *mise-en-scène* witryn sklepowych, które ułatwiły i pobudziły działanie «uruchomionego spojrzenia», niezbędnego do przeglądania towarów w celach rozrywkowych”[13]. Takie „uruchomione spojrzenie” stało się prototypem spojrzenia kinowego, które z obrazu uczyniło produkt, prowadząc grę z „wyimaginowaną relacją pomiędzy patrzeniem a posiadaniem”[14]. Bruno i Friedberg zwracają też uwagę na rozwój kultury turystycznej, także „uruchamiający” spojrzenie i angażujący go w wizualną konsumpcję. Kino stało się punktem zbiegu wszystkich tych zjawisk, doskonałą maszyną, która zlepiając je wszystkie w jedno doświadczenie, wytworzyła nowy sposób oglądu rzeczywistości.

Nic więc dziwnego, że ani architektura, ani miasto nie mogą być już postrzegane tak jak kiedyś, tracą swą stałą, statyczną formę, przypominając bardziej film niż samą rzeczywistość. Proces ten dokonuje się tym szybciej, im więcej wokół „ruchomych obrazów”, a te od dawna obecne są już wszędzie – w przestrzeni prywatnej (obecność telewizora może wywoływać jeszcze silniejszy lęk przed „obrazami zastępującymi miejsce myśli”, by wspomnieć chociażby *Wideodrom* [1983] Davida Cronenberga), miejskiej, na ekranach urządzeń mobilnych. Przestrzeń staje się coraz bardziej „montażowa”, czy to ze względu na fizyczną obecność filmowych form, czy na sam wyuczony przez nie sposób patrzenia, czy na inne aspekty „miejskości”, takie jak ciągła mobilność ludzi i pojazdów. Z tej perspektywy słowa Benjamina o tym, że w filmie znaleźć można „najwłaściwszy ćwiczebny poligon” dla umiejętnego percypowania wywołujących szok innowacji nowoczesności stają się proroctwem jak najbardziej spełnionym. Trudno wyobrazić sobie bowiem nieprzyzwyczajoną do specyfiki „ruchomych obrazów” jednostkę, która mogłaby egzystować w nowoczesnym świecie.

„Filmowość” przestrzeni urbanistycznej

Kino „wykracza” więc poza sam ekran – jak pisze Jean Baudrillard: „kino nie przybiera żadnej wyjątkowej formy, lecz udziela ulicom i całemu otoczeniu swej mitycznej atmosfery (...)”[15]. Według autora *Ameryki*, by poznać sekret amerykańskiego miasta, nie należy zmierzać „od miasta ku ekranowi, lecz od ekranu ku miastu”[16]. To ekran jest podstawą, „matrycą” miast takich jak Los Angeles czy Las Vegas. W *Ameryce* Baudrillard stara się odnaleźć samą kulturową istotę Stanów Zjednoczonych, dla których kino zawsze było jednym z najistotniejszych punktów odniesienia. To jednak wcale nie Hollywood, Disneyland czy nawet sam w sobie przemysł filmowy są tutaj głównym czynnikiem: „Kina nie ma tam, gdzie nam się wydaje, a już z całą pewnością nie ma go w tłumnie odwiedzanych filiach

[13] A. Friedberg, *„…więc jestem”. Kupujący – widz i przeistoczenie poprzez zakupy*, przeł. B. Brzozowska, [w:] E. Rewers (red.), *Miasto w sztuce – sztuka miasta*, Universitas, Kraków 2010, s. 585.
[14] *Ibidem*, s. 586.
[15] J. Baudrillard, *Ameryka*, przeł. R. Lis, Sic!, Warszawa 2011, s. 70.
[16] *Ibidem*, s. 69–70.

Disneylandu (...)"[17]. Kino jest raczej „mentalną konfiguracją, globalną percepcją"[18], samą hiperrzeczywistością przestrzeni. Las Vegas jest tu oczywiście przykładem *par excellence*, miastem, które nie tylko wywołuje odczucie „bycia w filmie", ale samo zdaje się być tego świadome. Jak pisze Nathan Radke: „architektura [Las Vegas] bazuje na hollywoodzkich filmach, które bazują na historycznych erach"[19]. Las Vegas jest już wtórnym produktem przefiltrowania rzeczywistości przez film, synekdochą hiperrzeczywistości, a co za tym idzie – i całej Ameryki.

Czy jednak istotnie, tak jak chciałby Baudrillard, ten stan rzeczy jest charakterystyczny tylko dla Stanów Zjednoczonych? Czy „precesja zmienności, ekranu wobec rzeczywistości nie występuje na taką skalę w Europie, gdzie rzeczy zachowują najczęściej statyczną formę związaną z określonym terytorium i namacalną postać materii"[20]? Przyjęcie takiego wniosku kłóciłoby się z przykładami, które wybrałam, by zilustrować istnienie „filmowości" w przestrzeni. Nie pochodzą one bowiem z Ameryki, jakkolwiek zdarza im się czerpać inspiracje z jej filmowego dziedzictwa. Nawet gdyby „filmowość" przestrzeni urbanistycznej była „wynalazkiem" typowo amerykańskim, uważam, że jej doświadczenie uobecnia się globalnie, a jego symptomy są różnorakie – nie tylko percepcja samej przestrzeni upodabnia się do filmowego seansu, ale także zwielokrotniona reprezentacja miast „odrywa" je od ich materialnego, statycznego podłoża i zmienia w formacje dyskursywne, których „czytanie" możliwe jest nawet dla kogoś, kto nigdy ich nie odwiedzał.

Colin McArthur w eseju *Chinese Boxes and Russian Dolls: Tracking the Elusive Cinematic City* analizuje ten problem na przykładzie cytatu z kultowej powieści Alasdaira Graya *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (1981): „Glasgow jest wspaniałym miastem... – rzekł Thaw. – Pomyśl o Florencji, Paryżu, Londynie, Nowym Jorku. Nikt kto odwiedza je po raz pierwszy nie jest obcym, gdyż widział je już na obrazach, w powieściach, podręcznikach historycznych i filmach. Ale jeśli miasto nigdy nie zostało użyte przez artystę, nawet jego mieszkańcy żyją tam na niby"[21]. Jak zauważa sam McArthur, Thaw ma rację i myli się jednocześnie. Ma rację w tym, że formy wtórne wobec miasta, takie jak dzieła sztuki, kształtują jego odbiór, czyniąc je bliskim bez względu na brak naszej fizycznej obecności. Myli się, kładąc nacisk na działania typowo artystyczne. McArthur stwierdza, że słowem, którego tutaj brakuje, jest „dyskurs" – to, w jaki sposób konstruowany jest odbiór miast, nie zależy jedynie od jego artystycznych przedstawień, ale także od krążących wokół nich wypowiedzi, żartów, opinii, zdjęć, opisów prasowych i wszystkich kontekstów, w których się pojawiają. „Ruchome obrazy" mają szczególną moc wzmacniania dyskursów, gdyż potrafią najlepiej naśladować rzeczywistość (angażują bowiem wzrok – zmysł, któremu wierzymy najbardziej – ale w przeciwieństwie do malarstwa czy fotografii przywołują raczej teraźniej-

[17] *Ibidem*, s. 69.
[18] *Ibidem*, s. 68.
[19] N. Radke, *Simveillance in Hyperreal Las Vegas*, „International Journal of Baudrillard Studies" 2005, nr 2, t. 2, http://www.ubishops.ca/baudrillardstudies/vol2_2/radke.htm#_ednref32 (data dostępu: 27.05.2012).
[20] J. Baudrillard, *op. cit.*, s. 68.
[21] A. Gray, *Lanark: A Life in Four Books*, Polygon, Edinburgh 1981, s. 243, cyt. za: C. McArthur, *Chinese Boxes and Russian Dolls*. *Tracking the Elusive Cinematic City*, [w:] D.B. Clarke (red.), *op. cit*., s. 19.

szość niż przeszłość). Co równie istotne, kino jest praktyką, która nie narodziła się na łonie kultury elitarnej, lecz masowej. A w jej właśnie obrębie przepływ wymienionych form jest szczególnie wzmożony – w ten sposób kino tworzy obraz miast i architektury, który zdaje się poprzedzać samą rzeczywistość.

Narracyjność w architekturze: Ambasada Holandii w Berlinie (2003)

Czy architektura może być narracyjna? Wiele przykładów – od efektownych wizualnie projektów Gaudiego do radykalnych politycznie praktyk Superstudia i Archizoomu[22] – wskazuje na to, że odpowiedź jest jak najbardziej twierdząca. Sposób odbioru opowiadanych przez narracyjną architekturę historii jest jednak całkowicie inny niż w przypadku czytania tekstów pisanych. Czy można porównać go do percypowania działa filmowego? By odpowiedzieć na to pytanie, posłużę się przykładem budynku Ambasady Holandii w Berlinie, wplatając w jej analizę filmoznawcze teorie narracyjności. Skoro sam Koolhaas zaznacza, że tworzy swe projekty zgodnie z zasadami rządzącymi sztuką filmową, ośmielam się założyć, że możliwe jest rozpatrywanie jego działań przy użyciu specyficznie filmoznawczych narzędzi metodologicznych – pojęć, teorii czy też kinowych odniesień.

Najważniejszym elementem architektonicznym Koolhaasowskiej Ambasady jest dwustumetrowy zygzakowaty korytarz, na którym opiera się cały projekt budynku. Wiedzie on do wszystkich znajdujących się tu pomieszczeń i ciągnie się od wejścia głównego aż po sam szczyt. Wraz z pokonywaniem wyznaczonej przez niego trasy, użytkownik budynku obserwować może ciąg zmieniających się „środowisk" przestrzennych – poszczególne odcinki odróżniają się od siebie kolorystyką, oświetleniem czy teksturą wykorzystanych materiałów. Sam Koolhaas nazwał ten korytarz „trajektorią", co zwraca uwagę na jego mobilny aspekt. Dla holenderskiego architekta budynki nie są jedynie statycznymi bryłami, lecz także stymulatorami ruchu, zapraszającymi do podjęcia wędrówki – i to nie w formie nieangażującej przechadzki, lecz wypełnionej znaczeniami i emocjami „psychogeograficznej" podróży, w której relacje pomiędzy ciałem, ruchem i przestrzenią odczuwane są w wyjątkowo świadomy sposób.

Wprowadzenie przez Koolhaasa elementu wędrówki niesie z sobą także inne implikacje. Jedną z nich jest narratywizacja przestrzeni. Już sama w sobie koncepcja wędrowania zawiera pewien element narracyjności, i odwrotnie. Jak twierdzi Michel de Certeau: „Każda opowieść jest opowieścią o podróży – praktyką przestrzeni"[23]. David Bordwell i Kristin Thompson definiują narrację jako „łańcuch zdarzeń, powiązanych ze sobą relacją przyczynowo-skutkową, umiejscowionych w czasie i przestrzeni"[24]. Wędrówka, tak jak opowieść,

[22] Zob. N. Coates, *Narrative Architecture*, Wiley, Chichester 2012.

[23] M. de Certeau, *Wynaleźć codzienność. Sztuki działania*, przeł. K. Thiel-Jańczuk, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2008, s. 115.

[24] D. Bordwell, K. Thompson, *Film Art. Sztuka filmowa. Wprowadzenie*, przeł. B. Rosińska, Wydawnictwo Wojciech Marzec, Warszawa 2010, s. 85. W przytoczonym wydaniu pojęcie *narrative* zostało przetłumaczone jako „opowiadanie". Ja jednak używam go w znaczeniu „narracja".

rozwija się w czasie i przestrzeni, a także posiada pewne elementy przyczyno-skutkowe, nawet gdy objawiają się one dopiero po jej zakończeniu – w trakcie wspominania.

Konsekwencją wykorzystania elementu wędrówki jest również ewokowane przez Ambasadę odczucie „filmowości". Giuliana Bruno, odnosząc się do koncepcji Siergieja Eisensteina zawartych w *Montażu i architekturze*, zauważa, że filmowe doświadczenie przedstawić można jako podróżowanie w przestrzeni – „(nie)ruchoma odbiorczyni [filmu] wędruje wyimaginowaną ścieżką, przemierzając niezliczone miejsca i odcinki czasu. Jej fikcyjna nawigacja łączy odległe momenty i oddalone od siebie miejsca"[25]. Oprócz rozróżnienia na ruch pozorny (widz siedzący na sali kinowej) i rzeczywisty (poruszanie się w przestrzeni) oba doświadczenia są w gruncie rzeczy tożsame, gdyż budują w umyśle odbiorcy ciąg percypowanych obrazów. Połączenie narratywizacji i „filmowości" tworzy opowieść. W jaki jednak sposób jest ona odczytywana i dlaczego jest właśnie opowieścią filmową, a nie żadną inną?

Przytoczona przeze mnie definicja narracji Bordwella i Thompson, choć proponowana przez filmoznawców, nie odnosi się jedynie do filmu, ale także do każdej innej formy narracyjnej – jest koncepcyjnym punktem wyjścia, zapożyczonym przede wszystkim z badań literaturoznawczych. Co jednak sprawia, że daną narrację określić można jako specyficznie filmową? Francuski teoretyk kina Albert Laffay personifikuje pojęcie narracji, wprowadzając koncepcję „demonstratora obrazów". Jest to „przewodnik, którego przechwytujemy na tym, jak pokazuje nam obrazy, podobnie jak przewraca się kartki albumu"[26]. Kino, tak jak fotografia, odtwarza świat zewnętrzny. Tym samym, jak uważa Laffay[27], wyraża ono pewien nadmiar natury – nie każdy zarejestrowany przez kamerę element jest częścią opowiadanej historii. By w umyśle widza ukształtowała się fabuła, potrzebne są więc pewne wskazówki ukierunkowujące jego uwagę. Są to między innymi ruchy kamery, montaż, zbliżenia i inne formalne narzędzia. Według mnie, „demonstrator obrazów" istnieć może także w architekturze. To właśnie dzięki niemu, bezpośrednio dane elementy architektoniczne, zanurzone w chaosie nienarracyjnej przestrzeni, mogą przekształcić się w umyśle odbiorcy w fabułę. Bordwell zauważa, że „w filmie fabularnym narracja jest procesem, w którym filmowy sjużet i styl współdziałają we wskazywaniu i ukierunkowywaniu dokonywanej przez widza konstrukcji fabuły"[28]. *Sjużet*[29] jest pojęciem zapożyczonym od rosyjskich formalistów i oznacza wszystkie zdarzenia i informacje, które są zaprezentowane bezpośrednio na ekranie. Fabuła natomiast to całościowa historia konstruowana przez widza podczas kinowego seansu.

W projekcie Ambasady Holandii odpowiednikiem *sjużetu* jest nie tylko układ wszelkich elementów architektonicznych, ale także przestrzenny kontekst, w którym budynek został

[25] G. Bruno, *Public Intimacy: Architecture and the Visual Arts*, The MIT Press, Cambridge–London 2007, s. 19.
[26] A. Laffay, *Opowiadanie, świat i kino*, przeł. S. Kowalski, „Pamiętnik Literacki" 1975, nr 66, s. 198.
[27] Zob. *ibidem*, s. 178.
[28] D. Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison 1985, s. 53, cyt. za: A. Helman, J. Ostaszewski, *Historia myśli filmowej*, Słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk 2007, s. 318.
[29] Choć pojęcia te są zapożyczone z teorii literatury, na tyle często (i w nieco innym znaczeniu) są stosowane w filmoznawstwie, że można uznać je za część filmoznawczego aparatu metodologicznego.

umieszczony. Miejscem akcji jest Berlin – miasto, które według Koolhaasa samo w sobie posiada wyjątkowo silny aspekt narracyjny, tworzony między innymi przez nieobecny już, ale wciąż pełen znaczenia mur berliński[30]. Umieszczenie budynku w pobliżu rzeki Sprewy, którą można obserwować z jego okien, ma tworzyć w umyśle widza nieco bardziej szczegółową fabułę. Tutaj elementy scenerii takie jak rzeczne kanały i barki przywodzą na myśl krajobraz typowo holenderski. Można stwierdzić, że obrazy te tworzą zestawienie odpowiadające Eisensteinowskiemu montażowi antytez. Montaż ten polega na przeciwstawieniu sobie obrazów kontrastowych treściowo. Pejzaż berliński zmontowany z holenderskim krajobrazem podkreśla ich odmienność. Obecny tu „demonstrator obrazów" proponuje odbiorcy odczytywanie ich jako antytez, przywołując tym samym powszechne historyczne skojarzenia takie jak wojna (Niemcy) i pokój (Holandia). Montaż „niemieckości" i „holenderskości" zauważyć można także w innych elementach zewnętrza Ambasady. Występuje on nawet w samym jej rozplanowaniu. Budynek składa się bowiem z dwóch części – bloku w kształcie litery „L" i oszklonego sześcianu, w którym znajduje się „trajektoria". Blok jest odzwierciedleniem „niemieckiego porządku", spełnia bowiem berlińskie wymagania architektoniczne, według których budynki tworzyć muszą zamknięty ciąg. Z drugiej strony wolno stojący sześcian kontrastuje z tradycyjną architekturą Berlina, wyrażając tym samym „holenderską otwartość". Jak pisze Tom Porter: „Koolhaas postrzega zbliżanie się i wejście do budynku jako «wstęp», ruch przez niego i po nim jako rozwijającą się «fabułę», a także – jak w filmowej strukturze – podróż pełną «mini-kulminacji», wiodących do ostatecznego «punktu kulminacyjnego» lub *denouement*"[31]. Montaż antytez jest więc głównym środkiem stylistycznym „wstępu" narracji, określając miejsce akcji i układ zależności pomiędzy jej głównymi tematami, czyli „niemieckością" i „holenderskością".

Rozpoczęcie wędrówki „trajektorią" jest jednocześnie początkiem rozwinięcia narracji. Cała trasa to historia właściwa. *Sjużetem* są tu zarówno zmienne segmenty korytarza, jak i obrazy widziane zza oszklonych ścian. Poszczególne odcinki trasy zestawione są z sobą w „montażowy" sposób. Przejścia pomiędzy nimi traktować można jako cięcia, a sam fakt poruszania się po budynku sprawia, że percypowane są one w filmowy, sekwencyjny sposób. Zmienność koloru, światła, tekstury czy wymiaru wnętrz same w sobie nie tworzą jeszcze całościowej narracji, ale przywołują doświadczenie „filmowości", nacechowując przestrzeń mobilnością (rytmika zmian) i emocjami (wielość wrażeń). „Demonstrator obrazów" nieustannie odwraca jednak uwagę odbiorcy od wnętrza, nakierowując ją na przenikające do niego elementy miejskie. Ściany sześcianu to prostokątne szyby oddzielone od siebie pionowymi belkami, które niejako „kadrują" widziane przez nie miasto. Pierwszą „mini-kulminacją" narracji jest moment mijania wybudowanego w okresie nazistowskim budynku administracyjnego. Równolegle do jednej z jego kondygnacji umieszczony został

[30] W jednym ze swych esejów Koolhaas pisze: „Poza codzienną rutyną inspekcji – militarnej na Wschodzie i turystycznej na Zachodzie – czyli samego w sobie obszernego systemu rytualnego, mur był także «scenariuszem», z łatwością zacierającym różnice pomiędzy tragedią, komedią i melodramatem". R. Koolhaas, B. Mau, *S, M, L, XL*, The Monacelli Press, New York 1995, s. 222.

[31] T. Porter, *Archispeak: An Illustrated Guide to Architectural Terms*, Spon Press, London–New York 2004, s. 101.

odcinek „trajektorii". Wzrok poruszającego się odbiorcy kierowany jest więc w sposób analogiczny do poziomego ruchu kamery, a obraz skadrowany tak, aby widać było tylko część elewacji. W dokumentalnym filmie *Rem Koolhaas: A Kind of Architect* (2008) architekt stwierdza: „Trasa ciągnie się tak, jakby sama była kondygnacją tego [niegdyś nazistowskiego – dop. aut.] budynku, więc idąca nią osoba może spacerować równolegle z tym doświadczeniem"[32]. Owym doświadczeniem jest nazistowski okres w historii Niemiec, stanowiący pierwszą część fabuły. Następna część odpowiada czasom komunistycznym (Ambasada znajduje się na terenie byłego Berlina Wschodniego), a jej punktem kulminacyjnym jest widok na najwyższy budynek Berlina, czyli Fernsehturm – wieżę telewizyjną wybudowaną w latach 1965–1969. Element ten zaprojektowany został ze szczególną starannością – w elewacji Ambasady (tym razem nie szklanej, lecz zabudowanej) pozostawiono otwór, przez który idealnie widać metalową kulę z tarasem widokowym, będącą najbardziej charakterystycznym fragmentem wieży. W ten sposób wycinek zewnętrznej przestrzeni miejskiej zakomponowany został na kształt filmowego kadru. Zwieńczeniem „trajektorii" jest taras usytuowany na dachu budynku. Koniec trasy jest jednocześnie ostatecznym rozwiązaniem (*denouement*) fabuły. Odbiorca spojrzeć może teraz z lotu ptaka na całe otoczenie Ambasady. To, co wcześniej poddane zostało fragmentaryzacji (zarówno poprzez kadrowanie, jak i „montażowy" podział mijanych obrazów), teraz zobaczyć można w całości, dzięki czemu doświadczenie „filmowej podróży" zostaje domknięte. Historyczna narracja o Berlinie widzianym oczami obcego (Holendra) zostaje doprowadzona do ostatniego punktu na osi czasu – współczesności. Należy zauważyć, że widok z lotu ptaka jest perspektywą bardzo często wykorzystywaną przez kino. Giuliana Bruno uznaje nawet takie ujęcie, rozwijane między innymi we włoskim malarstwie wedutowym, za jeden z „prekinematograficznych" kodów wizualnych[33]. Wysuwa ona tym samym argument przeciwko traktowaniu filmowej przestrzeni jako odzwierciedlającej klasyczną perspektywę centralną. Według włoskiej teoretyczki, doświadczenie filmowe i doświadczenie architektoniczne są sobie bliskie, gdyż nie są jedynie wynikiem spojrzenia, ale także wrażeń cielesnych i mobilności.

Rem Koolhaas niewątpliwie posiada świadomość tej zależności. Jego budynki w niczym nie przypominają tych z *Idealnego miasta* Luciana Laurany (wykorzystującego perspektywę linearną obrazu przypisywaną niegdyś Piero della Francesce), w formie zbliżając się raczej do ekspresjonistycznej scenografii *Gabinetu doktora Caligari* (1920)[34]. Projekt Ambasady Holandii w Berlinie wykorzystuje bowiem typowo filmowe środki wyrazu, które „rozbijają" przestrzeń, czyniąc z niej raczej ciąg wrażeń niż homogeniczne doświadczenie jedności.

[32] *Rem Koolhaas: A Kind of Architect* [film], reż. M. Heidingsfelder, M. Tesch, C. Krumbiegel, I. Schosnig [DVD], New Video Group, New York 2010.

[33] Zob. G. Bruno, *Streetwalking on a Ruined Map: Cultural Theory and the City Films of Elvira Notari*, Princeton University Press, Princeton–Oxford 1993, s. 211.

[34] Rem Koolhaas, Madelon Vriesendorp, Zoe Zenghelis i Elia Zenghelis tworzyli nawet grupę architektoniczną, która swą nazwą nawiązywała do filmu Roberta Wienego – Dr. Caligari's Cabinet of Metropolitan Architecture. Była ona prototypem OMA.

Wykorzystanie ekranu w architekturze: niezrealizowany projekt Zentrum für Kunst und Mediatechnologie w Karlsruhe (1992)

W swej książce *S, M, L, XL* Rem Koolhaas pod hasłem *SCREEN* cytuje Shuhei Hosokawę:

> Jednym z najbardziej znanych obrazów współczesnego Tokio jest ogromny ekran na budynku Alty w Shinjuku. Prezentuje on nieskończony ciąg obrazów wziętych głównie z telewizyjnych newsów i reklam muzycznych. Obiecujące grupy rockowe i najnowsze płyty CD dla nastolatek figurują tu obowiązkowo... Nikt nie ogląda i nie zauważa nawet ich treści. Dla plemienia nastolatków wystarczy, że j e s t tam „wizualność", dla błyskotliwych technokratów, że j e s t „high-tech". Obecność takich urządzeń przypomina mi scenę z *Łowcy androidów*: obraz ogromnej kimono lady reklamującej sake na ścianie drapacza chmur w Los Angeles 2020 roku[35].

Ekrany są dziś wszędzie. Nie jest to stwierdzenie odkrywcze, ale na tyle znamienne, że warto je powtarzać. *Łowca androidów* (1982) Ridleya Scotta jest tu tekstem kluczowym – opisywany w powyższym cytacie gigantyczny ekran umieszczony został na całej fasadzie budynku, odbierając tym samym architekturze jej namacalną i statyczną powłokę. W niezrealizowanym projekcie Zentrum für Kunst und Mediatechnologie w Karlsruhe Rem Koolhaas wprowadził identyczne rozwiązanie. Jedna z elewacji zastąpiona została wielkim ekranem – „elektronicznym *billboardem*". W ten sposób architektoniczna substancjalność materiałów zastąpiona została tworzywem tak ulotnym jak zbiór elektronicznych danych. Sam Koolhaas tak opisuje projekt owego ekranu: „działania instytucji wyciekają z jego wnętrza i wyświetlane są w czasie rzeczywistym na przemian z informacjami reklamowymi, rozkładami kolejowymi, CNN itd. (...) W niektórych momentach pasażerowie IDZ [niemiecki wolniejszy ekwiwalent TGV – dop. aut.] jadący do Mediolanu widzą przebłyski tego spektaklu"[36].

Cytat ten zwraca uwagę na kolejny istotny aspekt Koolhaasowskiego projektu. ZKM usytuowany miał być na zbiegu komunikacyjnych „ścieżek" Karlsruhe, przy liniach i stacji kolejowej z jednej strony i pętli autostrady z drugiej. Komunikacja miejska zestawiona zostaje z komunikacją medialną, a połączenie to tworzy sieć ruchu i wizualnej konsumpcji. „Ruchome obrazy" są tutaj odpowiednikiem spojrzenia zza szyby samochodu czy pociągu. Według Anne Friedberg, miejska „automobilność" jest ściśle związana z kinową i telewizyjną wizualnością[37]. By podkreślić tę zależność, cytuje ona Paula Virilio: „To, co dzieje się na przedniej szybie samochodu, jest kinem w ścisłym znaczeniu tego słowa"[38]. Dostrze-

[35] S. Hosokawa, *Land of a Thousand Commercials*, [w:] J. Meijer, E. Tee (red.), *What a Wonderful World! Music Videos in Architecture*, Groninger Museum, Groninger 1990, cyt. za: R. Koolhaas, B. Mau, *op. cit.*, s. 1116–1124.

[36] R. Koolhaas, B. Mau, *op. cit.*, s. 696.

[37] Zob. A. Friedberg, *Urban Mobility and Cinematic Visuality: The Screens of Los Angeles: Endless Cinema or Private Telematics*, „Journal of Visual Culture" 2002, nr 1 (2).

[38] P. Virilio, *The Third Window*, [w:] *Global Television*, C. Schneider, B. Wallis (red.), The MIT Press, Cambridge 1988, s. 188, cyt. za: A. Friedberg, *op. cit.*, s. 185.

gając cały czas napięcie pomiędzy wyimaginowaną sferą „filmowości", która jest raczej odczuciem niż formą, a materialnością budowanych miejsc, Friedberg zauważa odbicie idei Virilia w strukturze kina samochodowego. Jest ono swoistą materializacją tego ulotnego wrażenia „oglądania filmu" przez szybę, którego z pewnością choć raz doświadczał każdy z pasażerów i kierowców. ZKM traktować można jako pewną wariację na temat kina samochodowego, w której wszystkie cechy *drive-in* są przerysowane, zwielokrotnione – ekran jest gigantyczny, wyświetlane na nim obrazy nie są niezależnymi formami narracyjnymi jak filmy, lecz przypominają raczej telewizyjny „strumień", a widzowie nie zatrzymują się nawet, by je oglądać, lecz tylko przejeżdżają, „konsumując" je kątem oka. Tak jak w cytacie Hosokawy o ekranie w Shinjuku – wystarczy, że „wizualność" j e s t.

Ekran ZKM jest wyrazem „czystej wizualności" – sama specyfika ruchomych obrazów zostaje tutaj wyzwolona z treści. Choć wiele ukazywanych na nim projekcji ma charakter informacyjny, prawdziwym jego przeznaczeniem jest śledzenie „uruchomionym spojrzeniem" (by znów posłużyć się pojęciem zaproponowanym przez Anne Friedberg) samych przebłysków – strzępów informacji i reklam. W paradoksalny sposób forma ta zbliża się do awangardowej idei „kina czystego". Alicja Helman tak opisuje jeden z filmów Henriego Chomette'a – jednego z głównych twórców tego nurtu: „*Refleksy światła i szybkości* łączą ujęcia czysto abstrakcyjne – błyszczące, bliżej nieokreślone przedmioty kuliste, grę świetlnych plam z efektami zdjęć miasta w ruchu przyspieszonym (...), w ostatniej partii pojawiają się nagłe zmiany kątów widzenia, odwrócone kadry, maksymalnie krótki cięty montaż"[39]. Celem „kina czystego" było wyzwolenie formy „ruchomych obrazów" – najważniejsze stawały się tu ich fragmentaryczność i dynamizm. Ekrany miejskie, choć w swym założeniu dalekie są od awangardy, prezentując najczęściej nastawione na masowego odbiorcę reklamowe treści, formalnie często zbliżają się do tak rozumianego kina. Koolhaas zauważa tę zależność i dlatego właśnie umieszcza tego rodzaju ekran na fasadzie placówki, której tematem przewodnim są związki sztuki, mediów i technologii. Punktem przecięcia i produktem wszystkich tych dziedzin działalności ludzkiej jest bowiem miasto, rozumiane jednak nie jako historycznie ukształtowana jednostka urbanistyczno-administracyjna, lecz jako postmodernistyczny kolaż obrazów, ruchu i światła[40], który sam w sobie staje się „wielkim ekranem" percypowanym w sposób bliski oglądaniu filmów.

Zakończenie

Jak widać próba spojrzenia na architekturę współczesną z filmoznawczego punktu widzenia nie jest jedynie metodologicznym eksperymentem, ale także sposobem wzbogacenia analizy otaczającej nas przestrzeni. Projekty Rema Koolhaasa zaliczane są często do

[39] A. Helman, *Awangarda we francuskim i niemieckim kinie niemym*, [w:] T. Lubelski, I. Sowińska, R. Syska (red.), *Historia kina*, t. 1: *Kino nieme*, Universitas, Kraków 2009, s. 767.

[40] Najsłynniejszą propozycję odczytywania miasta jako „tekstu", którego „informacyjną szatę" stanowią obrazy i nagromadzone w nim zjawiska, można odnaleźć w kultowym już dziele *Learning from Las Vegas* R. Venturiego, D.S. Brown i S. Izenoura, będącym swoistym manifestem architektury postmodernistycznej.

nurtu dekonstuktywistycznego, odrzucającego zarówno zasady klasycystycznej harmonii, jak i postulaty architektury modernistycznej, a w zamian proponującego dekonstrukcję zastanych wzorców i podkreślanie fragmentaryzacji współczesnej przestrzeni. Badanie ich w kontekście sztuki filmowej pomaga zauważyć, że wszystkie te dążenia nie są jedynie wyrazem artystycznego programu, ale także odzwierciedleniem zmian percepcyjnego aparatu człowieka. Codzienne doświadczenie przestrzeni nie jest wartością uniwersalną – zapewne inaczej wyglądało w pierwszej połowie XIX wieku niż pod koniec XX. Zmiany, które doprowadziły do wykształcenia naszego dzisiejszego sposobu „widzenia", w dużej mierze wiążą się z prymatem audiowizualnych mediów – stąd widoczne w analizującej te zależności architekturze dekonstruktywistycznej cechy takie jak montażowość czy negowanie statyczności i materialnej jednoznaczności brył (np. poprzez zastąpienie ściany ekranem, jak w przypadku ZKM).

Sztuka „ruchomych obrazów" jest więc oczywistym punktem odniesienia dla próby analizy współczesnej architektury i przestrzeni. Co więcej, ten punkt widzenia pozwala zauważyć, że nie tylko zasadne, ale wręcz niezbędne dla całkowitego rozumienia złożoności tych obszarów badawczych jest podejście transdyscyplinarne. Moim celem było spojrzenie na architekturę współczesną z filmoznawczego punktu widzenia, ale z pewnością także inne, pozornie niezwiązane z nią dyscypliny, zarówno humanistyczne, jak i ścisłe, miałyby tu wiele do dodania. Celem transdyscyplinarności jest utworzenie nowego pola badawczego, przekroczenie granic istniejących dyscyplin. Opis projektu takich badań odnaleźć można w książce Ewy Rewers *Post-polis. Wstęp do filozofii ponowoczesnego miasta*. Choć podkreśla ona, że „zarysowanie projektu nowej dyscypliny" nie jest przedmiotem jej książki, jednocześnie zadaje następujące pytanie: „Dlaczego – jak język, literatura czy prawo – nie jest miasto przedmiotem odrębnych studiów?". Zauważa także, że „skupianiu doświadczenia miasta w starannie delimitowanych miejscach i momentach historycznych towarzyszy (...) rozproszenie procesów jego poznawania, prowadzące ku wszelkim dyscyplinom, które znajdą na swoim gruncie wystarczający powód do stawiania pytań o nowy zespół pojęć i do rewizji starych, budujących niespójny obraz miasta"[41]. Ewa Rewers w swej książce odnosi się głównie do filozofii, ale ostatecznym celem jej rozważań jest stworzenie podstaw do całkowicie transdyscyplinarnych badań dotyczących miasta i szeroko pojmowanej „miejskości".

Próby rozszerzania pól badawczych prowadzą do redefiniowania starych pojęć, a tym samym są pierwszym krokiem ku konwergencji dyscyplin naukowych. Rozważania na temat miasta i architektury z punktu widzenia różnych dziedzin – choć w dalszym ciągu rozproszone – poprzez aktualizowanie terminologii i metodologii mogą przyczynić się do wytworzenia teorii tych badań, której – jak stwierdza Rewers – na razie brakuje, a jest niewątpliwie potrzebna. Zarówno architektura, jak i miasta zmierzają bowiem „w kierunkach, w których rozpoznanie stanowi wyzwanie dla wielu dyscyplin nauki"[42].

[41] E. Rewers, *Post-polis. Wstęp do filozofii ponowoczesnego miasta*, Universitas, Kraków 2005, s. 9.
[42] *Ibidem*, s. 5.

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Olja Triaška Stefanovič

„Former Spaces" (photo-essay)

Olja Triaška Stefanovič (1978) was born in Novi Sad, Serbia, lives and works in Bratislava, Slovakia. In 2007 she graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design at the Department of Photography and New Media in Bratislava, Slovakia.

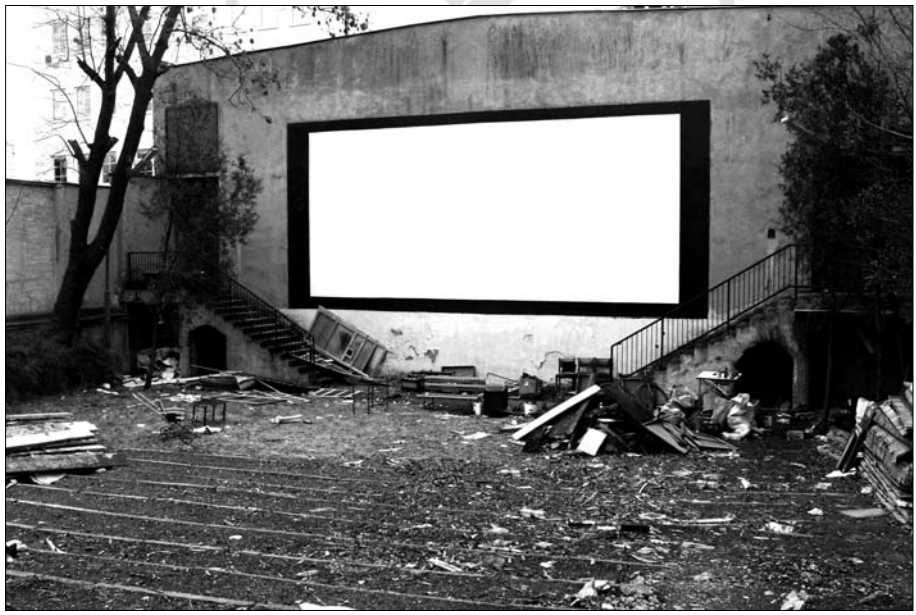
In her art practise she is focused on the relationship between photography and space, historical and sociological memory space, the disappearance of space, but also changes of its functionality and space simulation.

For last four years she works at the Department of Photography and New Media and this year finishing her doctoral studies of photography at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. She was presenting her work at many group and solo exhibitions in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Serbia, Spain, Germany.

FORMER SPACES

The cycle Former spaces was creating since 2004 until today. These places were shot at a time just before their demolition. These „lost city icons" are records images of a disappearing world. I documents them as abandoned, lonesome and neglected, as areas reminiscent of their faded glory.
I am looking for the places that can induce a feeling of nostalgia or melancholie.
Each one photographed space has its own story, their own cultural – political context under which the viewer can make their own interpretation. I searching for the places with its own identity. I am not interesting in its after transformation, but in the moment of death of that space. I am collecting the memories related to those lost places ... this is my personal photo album of a death spaces from Bratislava.

Former Spaces
2004–2012
Lightboxes
118x78 cm



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Nowe laboratorium kultury

Kwestie wzajemnych relacji oraz powiązania i oddziaływania na siebie sfer technologii i kultury stają się coraz istotniejszym przedmiotem refleksji kulturoznawców i medioznawców. Śledząc polskie publikacje z tej dziedziny z ostatnich lat, wypada zauważyć, że problematyka ta jest omawiana wielostronnie i w gruncie rzeczy odzwierciedla główne dylematy i pytania badawcze, istotne dla tak właśnie zarysowanej problematyki. Z pewnością jedną z bardziej wartościowych inicjatyw badawczych, które pojawiły się w Polsce w tym obszarze, jest Interdyscyplinarne Centrum Badawcze HAT (Humanities/Art/Technology) na Uniwersytecie im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu. Centrum zostało powołane w 2011 roku, a głównym jego celem – jak czytamy w deklaracji programowej HAT – „jest prowadzenie i inicjowanie nowatorskich projektów, które realizują ideę synergicznej współpracy pomiędzy specjalistami różnych dziedzin z zakresu nauki, technologii i sztuki". Tę ogólną ideę badacze starają się realizować poprzez wytyczenie kilku ścieżek programowych dookreślających i konkretyzujących działania oraz program Centrum. Wśród zgłoszonych projektów wyróżniają się między innymi programy: *Transnature Is Here*, *Performing Media*, *Primordial Communication: Symbiotic Future*. Celem tych projektów jest, jak się wydaje, wypracowanie nowego języka i sposobów interpretacji nowych sytuacji kulturowych, które w sposób nieuchronny ujawniają się dzięki coraz bardziej ekspansywnym technologiom i w dużej mierze muszą być postrzegane jako rezultat na nowo definiowanych procesów konwergencji mediów – ich istota tkwi (jak podkreślają twórcy tych projektów) w sprawczości, wykonawczości, interaktywności. Przekonanie o radykalności zmiany kulturowej, która dokonuje się na naszych oczach, wymusza niejako potrzebę wypracowania nowych języków opisu, które byłyby adekwatne wobec między innymi „doświadczenia komunikacji w sieci biologiczno-technologicznej". Tym samym przyjmuje się jako nieuchronne istnienie coraz bardziej pogłębiających się zależności między światami materii ożywionej i nieożywionej, które przekładają się na nowy rodzaj doświadczeń somatycznych, neuronalnych, technologicznych, fizycznych i biologicznych. Odkrywanie i oswajanie wskazanych wyżej relacji to jeden z czołowych postulatów formułowanych przez członków HAT Center, a jednym z pól, na których owe strategie się aktywizują, jest tak zwana cyberekologia, w obrębie której HAT eksponuje projekty artystyczne niekiedy radykalnie odmienne, posługujące się różnymi strategiami komunikacji kulturowej. Uwzględniają one między innymi fakt,

że współczesna zaawansowana technologia wchodzi w złożone relacje ze światem natury i ustanawia zarazem nowe typy powiązań między materią martwą i ożywioną. Współbieżność i swoista synergia między sferą praktyk artystycznych i dyskursami nauki to jedne z kluczowych i charakterystycznych postulatów formułowanych w poznańskim środowisku, postulatów, które zresztą obecne są w pracach i manifestach naukowców i artystów nowych mediów od dłuższego czasu. Wystarczy przypomnieć działalność Franka J. Maliny[1], amerykańskiego naukowca zajmującego się konstruowaniem rakiet, a później malarza, który w 1968 roku założył w Paryżu czasopismo „Leonardo", będące miejscem tworzenia szczególnych relacji między przedstawicielami nauki, technologii i sztuki. Projekt „Leonardo" po śmierci Franka J. Maliny w 1981 roku kontynuowany był przez jego syna Rogera F. Malinę i miał istotny wpływ na kształtowanie poglądów współczesnych artystów i teoretyków mediów elektronicznych. Działalność poznańskiego ośrodka wpisuje się zatem w utrwalony i ważny nurt współczesnej kultury, a łączenie refleksji naukowej z animowaniem twórczości artystycznej jest dość symptomatyczne.

W tym kontekście należy z pewnością wskazać na książkę *Sensorium*[2] doktor Agnieszki Jelewskiej, dyrektorki HAT Center. Książkę można uznać za rodzaj manifestu programowego i zarazem rodzaj przewodnika, który ukazuje najistotniejsze oraz symptomatyczne, zdaniem autorki, tropy współczesnej humanistyki. Tytułowe pojęcie, mające początek w siedemnastowiecznej nauce (określającej umysł jako organ mózgu), autorka rozumie w duchu filozofii Bruno Latoura jako nowe usytuowanie człowieka w „relacji z przedmiotami, obiektami, rzeczami, sytuacjami, nauką, technologią itp.". Nieco dalej rozwija tę myśl i stwierdza: „Sensorium jest byciem-w-sieciowym-stanie"[3]. Latouriańska teoria aktora-sieci (ANT), ze swymi antyesencjalizmem i instrumentalizmem, staje się zatem dla Jelewskiej kluczowym punktem odniesienia i pozwala jej przybliżyć się do złożonej materii współczesnych technologii medialnych oraz bazującej na niej sztuki. Umożliwia też radykalne przeformułowanie pojęcia „mediacji" (kluczowego dla refleksji nad kulturą „zmediatyzowaną"), które przestaje być odnoszone do wyraźnie rozgraniczanych sfer obiektów i podmiotów, a staje się raczej rodzajem „translacji" w sensie Latouriańskim. Tak pojmowana mediacja wpływa więc przede wszystkim na sferę dynamiki i relacyjności między owymi przedmiotami (nie przesądzając zarazem o ich statusie ontologicznym). „Translacja" staje się dla autorki tej książki podstawową kategorią poznawczą odnoszoną zarówno (jak widzimy) do sfery przedmiotowej, jak i poznawczej (metajęzykowej). Poznanie, interpretacja tak widzianego świata dokonuje się dzięki poszerzaniu oraz transformacji utrwalonych metod opisu i interpretacji – polegają one w pierwszej kolejności na „odkrywaniu i poszerzaniu modusów translacyjnych w nielinearnych poziomach czasowości"[4]. Uwaga powyższa

[1] Zob. Frank Malina On Line Archive, http://www.olats.org/pionniers/malina/malina.php (data dostępu: 3.09.2013). P. Zawojski, *Cyberkultura. Syntopia sztuki, nauki i technologii*, Wydawnictwo Poltext, Warszawa 2010, rozdz. 2.

[2] A. Jelewska, *Sensorium. Eseje o sztuce i technologii*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań 2012.

[3] *Ibidem*, s. 28.

[4] *Ibidem*, s. 30.

dotyczy przede wszystkim określonego projektu badań (szerzej: aktywności w sferze nauki i sztuki) i w tym sensie jest z jednej strony najwyraźniej postulatem czekającym chyba na pełniejszą realizację. Z drugiej strony można powiedzieć, że również omawiana książka podlega w znacznym stopniu wspomnianym wyżej regułom translacji i nielinearności, gdyż jawi się czytelnikowi jako swoista mapa, atlas zagadnień i pojęć współtworzących swoisty *modus operandi* zarysowanego projektu. Potwierdza to zresztą sama autorka w jednym z wywiadów, gdy odnosi się do opisywanej w *Sensorium* kwestii rezygnacji z tradycyjnej opozycji podmiot–przedmiot i stwierdza, że „wiąże się to z modelem sieciowym przyjętym w książce, który raczej nie rozdziela, ale raczej włącza, jest oparty na ruchu, który nie pozwala na operowanie zastygłymi definicjami i podziałami”[5]. A zaproponowana przez autorkę sieć (mapa) pojęć wygląda rzeczywiście interesująco i niewątpliwie inspirująco. I tak rozdziałem kluczowym dla całej pracy bez wątpienia jest rozdział 2 zatytułowany *Afektywne doznania.* Autorka przypomina, jak rozumiał to pojęcie Spinoza, James i wreszcie Guattari oraz Deleuze, by skoncentrować się na propozycji Briana Massumiego[6], który uwzględnia w granicach afektu pola pamięci, świadomości oraz cielesności, układając te elementy w swoiste mikrosekwencje. Agnieszka Jelewska oczywiście nie poprzestaje na tych konstatacjach i aplikuje pojęcie afektu do sfery doświadczeń medialnych, odnosząc się w szczególności do sztuki nowych mediów. Pierwsza ważna konstatacja, która się tutaj pojawia, mówi o tym, że afekt jest swoistym „interfejsem pomiędzy ciałem a środowiskiem wygenerowanym cyfrowo”[7]. Po drugie: afektywna percepcja dzieła może stać się, zdaniem Jelewskiej (która w tym punkcie swojego rozumowania odwołuje się do prac Marie-Luise Angerer), momentem zasadniczym w refleksji na temat kondycji człowieka. Innymi słowy pojawia się tu jako istotna perspektywa posthumanizmu i wywiera w dalszych partiach książki coraz bardziej widoczny wpływ na tok rozumowania autorki. W tym sensie można powiedzieć, że *Sensorium* jest książką ważną również z punktu widzenia dyskusji, która toczy się w środowisku akademickim na temat znaczenia tego nurtu w badaniach naukowych. Czy można zatem mówić o kolejnym zwrocie w nauce, a mianowicie o zwrocie afektywnym? Jelewska nie odpowiada jednoznacznie na to pytanie, a szkoda, bo odpowiedź mogłaby być intrygująca. W każdym razie traktuje afekt jako z jednej strony rodzaj rudymentarnego doświadczenia człowieka, a z drugiej jako pojęcie transdyscyplinarne, „rozpostarte między filozofią, nauką, technologią i humanistycznym namysłem”[8].

Sensorium to książka, która pomimo swoich skromnych rozmiarów zawiera – niekiedy w przesadnie skondensowanej formie – cały szereg jakże inspirujących i ważkich konstatacji i uwag, nabierających jakby nowych znaczeń w kontekście programu badawczego HAT Center. Omówiona zostaje zatem frapująca problematyka

[5] *Sztuka antropotechniczna. Wywiad z Agnieszką Jelewską przeprowadzony przez Monikę Włudzik i Witolda Wachowskiego*, „Avant” 2013, vol. 4, nr 2, s. 414.

[6] B. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual. Movement, Affect, Sensation (Post-Contemporary Interventions)*, Duke University Press, Durham–London 2002.

[7] A. Jelewska, *op. cit.*, s. 51.

[8] *Ibidem*, s. 56.

aktorstwa i sztuki kinestezyjnej – zarówno w perspektywie historycznej (z uwzględnieniem dorobku m.in. Edwarda Gordona Craiga, Wsiewołoda Meyerholda, Oskara Schlemmera i Tadeusza Kantora), jak i *stricte* współczesnej, wskazującej na pojęcie interfejsu somatycznego. I tutaj znowu autorka zatrzymuje się niestety w pół drogi i pozostawia czytelnikowi raczej lapidarnie zarysowany szkic niż pogłębione studium problemu. Takie podejście powodowane jest chyba przyjętym przez autorkę założeniem o „sieciowej" i „hipertekstowej" kompozycji książki – ten punkt widzenia jest oczywiście zrozumiały, lecz pojawia się też pytanie: czy można tak fundamentalne stwierdzenia pozostawiać w aż tak lapidarnym kształcie? Autorka z dużą rezerwą, a nawet ironią wyraża się o teoriach naukowych, wskazując, że przybierają one niejednokrotnie „postać samoregulujących się i samogenerujących się systemów". Mało tego – w ten sposób „stają się [one] niebezpieczną narkozą na rzeczywistość"[9]. Literalne akceptowanie tezy Lyotarda o śmierci wielkich narracji przy równoczesnym porzuceniu sądu Arystotelesa o niezbędności teorii w naszych próbach zrozumienia świata nie do końca raczej mieszczą się w granicach zarysowanych przez Latoura. To jest punkt ewidentnego sporu z autorką. Druga uwaga dotyczy kwestii dość ważnej, jeśli oceniać ją z punktu widzenia całości wywodu: chodzi o ocenę i opis funkcji performance'u w nowej sytuacji kulturowej, determinowanej w dużym stopniu przez nowe technologie cyfrowe. Agnieszka Jelewska zaledwie dotyka tego problemu. Wskazuje słusznie na pracę Steve'a Dixona *Digital Performance*[10], ale pozostawia u czytelnika w tym zakresie uczucie niedosytu. Biorąc pod uwagę główne wątki tematyczne książki, to wszak kwestia fundamentalna. Pomimo widocznych mankamentów książkę Agnieszki Jelewskiej traktować należy z pewnością jako rodzaj programu działania HAT Center i z tej perspektywy propozycje w niej zawarte wyglądają bardzo obiecująco. Być może w niedalekiej przyszłości HAT stanie się jednym z ważniejszych ośrodków badawczych polskiego kulturoznawstwa.

[9] *Ibidem*, s. 204.

[10] S. Dixon, *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theater, Dance, Performance Art, and Installation*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 2007.