For Lynda and Lynne

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CONTENTS

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    The University of Chicago Press fo
(1997), pp. 89, 120, 225.

    Every effort has been made to trace
inadvertently overlooked the publishe
arrangement at the first opportunity.

INTRODUC

Cities have become extraordinar
generalize. We can no longer eve
think of particular sites or mome
life, New York as Manhattan, Ca
cities now sprawl across many mil
composition, derelict areas, parks
tres, parking areas, warehouses,
now lives in cities. Thirteen mega
10 million: Tokyo, São Paolo, Ne
bay, Los Angeles, Buenos Aires, S
and Osaka.

The city is everywhere and in e
is a chain of metropolitan areas
munication (airports and airway
and motorways, teleports and in
the urban? Is it the town, the vill
to a limited degree. The footprint
the form of city commuters, tou
urbanization of lifestyles. The trad
countryside has been perforated.

Yet we still name cities and t
Londoner today might dispute w
but swears that the city does not
as Reading and Slough. Similarly,
Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague
its parts for Deyan Sudjic, who in

the Hague . . . are still distinct cities, even if they are only half an hour apart' (1992: 296). Then there are cities that are involved in the life of adjacent settlements. Sudjic, again, on Paris is certain that it is 'wrong to see the five Parisian new towns as distinct entities in their own right. Rather, they are essential parts of the city itself. They could not exist without the network of motorways, airports, and above all metro lines that constitutes Paris just as much as the picturesque crust of masonry buildings of Haussmann and his predecessors' (p. 296). We could say the same about the string of settlements radiating from, and sustaining, the megalopolis in the South, be it Seoul, Mumbai, Beijing or Rio de Janeiro.

Urban sprawl and the urbanization of social life thus do not negate the idea of cities as distinct spatial formations or imaginaries. The history of the naming of places plays a critical role here. The place called London, for example, has been fashioned and refashioned through commentaries, recollections, memories and erasures, and in a variety of media – monumental, official and vernacular, newspapers and magazines, guides and maps, photographs, films, newsreels and novels, street-level conversations and tales. The naming, of course, is highly selective, giving us London as the signature of empire, of crowded streets, art galleries, pubs, and people from around the world, of silent trains, well-trimmed suburban gardens, terraced houses. But somehow the fragments do come together into an enduring picture of London as a busy gateway to the world, a cosmopolis that is also homely.

What makes the city a spatial formation? Steve Pile (1999) identifies three aspects that distinguish cities as spaces: their density as concentrations of people, things, institutions and architectural forms; the heterogeneity of life they juxtapose in close proximity; and their siting of various networks of communication and flow across and beyond the city. Pile agrees with Doreen Massey that the 'spatiality' of the city – its density and juxtaposition of difference – has distinctive, generative effects. Massey explains that what makes 'spatial configurations generative' are the intense social effects resulting from 'dense networks of interaction' within them (1999: 160). Some of these effects are those emphasized by the great urbanists of the twentieth century, including social detachment as a way of coping with crowds (Simmel 1950), civic association beyond family and kinship (Mumford 1938), attachment to artefact, distancing from nature and tolerance of difference (Wirth 1938), and withdrawal from active citizenship into self-preservation (Sennett 1977). The 'citiness' of cities seems to matter, although it is debatable how far spatial propinquity remains a central feature of the sprawling and globally connected city.

The possibility of recognizing cities as spatial formations gives us a legitimate object of analysis. But how should we read them to make

and include actor network theory (Dosse 1998), some of the work on digitally inspired subjectivities (Hayles 1999), and approaches which emphasize the transhuman aspects of nature (Haraway 1997; Whatmore 2002).

In turn, this means that we want to conceive cities as virtualities (Rajchman 1999a, 2000; Deleuze 1994). That is, we understand the trajectory of cities not as being instanciated through replications of the present, but as a set of potentials which contain unpredictable elements as a result of the co-evolution of problems and solutions. Each urban moment can spark performative improvisations which are unforeseen and unforeseeable. This is not a naive vitalism, but it is a politics of hope. This does not mean an unbridled optimism for the future, but rather, a firm belief in the actualities of change that can arise from the unexpected reaction to the vagaries of urban life, the novel organizations that can arise, and, in general, the invention of new spaces of the political (Agamben 1999; Varela 1999).

For us, one of the crucial outcomes of this new thinking – some of which exists outside of the conventional urban literature – is that it is based around distinctive ways of showing up space and place. In particular, this has meant the struggle to name neglected spatialities and invent new ones, which, in turn, can help us to repopulate cities, only too often stripped bare by the rush to produce theoretical order. This new thinking attempts to do 'theory' in a different way, through, for example, the use of hybrid, in-between figures such as the actant or cyborg, designed to connect that which has been held apart, and thereby reveal the diverse urban worlds that have been edited out of contention. This work of naming has involved the invention of all manner of strange mappings – the network, the fluid, the blank figure – which pose a challenge to our conception of the conceptions of cities.

In short, the approach we pursue in this book is one which strives to be close to the phenomenality of practices, without relapsing into a romanticism of the everyday, and of action for itself. Necessarily then, we accept that urban practices are in many ways disciplined, but we also believe that these practices constantly exceed that disciplinary envelope. Each urban encounter is a theatre of promise in a play of power. Injecting this sense of the virtual and agonistic (Mouffe 2000) into urban theory allows us, at the very least, to move on from a politics based on nostalgia for a lost past of tightly knit and spatially compact urban communities – which still so often crops up in writings on the good city – to something different.

What we want most from the book is to make a contribution towards this new kind of urbanism. We see the book as a kind of staging post

towards a different practice of u
rather than the human, the dista
displaced rather than the placec
reflexive. What we also want is f
diagram of how to understand th
city that we offer, nor do we des

Our task has not been easy for
of description. Often we do not s
everyday life of the city legible; so
is a problem of epistemology. W
Much of the new urbanism is bas
tion cannot always be a substitu
short book of this kind, there is a
material and sites. So, for examp
issues of gender, race and the e
North which we have had in m
since we see the main aim of this
that can be applied in a variety
explored by others (and ourselve

The chapters of the book theref
of urban life. In chapter 1 we mark
some of the key metaphors deplo
transitivity, porosity, rhythm an
critique and extension of the new
propinquity. By reworking this n
multiple forms that community n
not be encompassed by old-styl
peated face-to-face interaction. In
of propinquity. However, we mo
of the urban economy. We argue
what drives economic competition
tion of the correct form of spatia

In chapters 4, 5 and 6, we rede
of uncertainty and as a political a
we build towards a transhuman a
of the city as a machinic assemb
institutionalizes, flow. At the same
the city with all those entities tha
approach. In chapter 5 we contin
how we might understand power
particular we examine the rise of
and how they fix and regulate

emphasis on proximity, we reinstate the role of the city as a resource rather than a cause. The final chapter continues with the theme of urban disempowerment and empowerment by focusing on the potentiality of democracy. In contrast to appeals for a return to a city built on negotiated consensus, we argue for the crucial role of disagreement and conflict, but within a framework of universal rights designed to build disciplines of empowerment.

1 THE LI
THE E\
CITY

Introduction

In this chapter we begin our expl
the urban. We ask how we can
losing sight of their extraordinar
mations of the urban practices
essentialist reading, since we do i
the city allow it to be theorized i
to another urbanism that emphas
and everyday practices, and wl
phenomenological patterns. Follov
remarkable photojournal of cont
view from the 'oligopticon' – vant
the surfaces of cities.

This chapter draws out the cen
the everyday. We identify three me
in the organization and vitality of
and footprint effects. These are si
flânerie, rhythmanalysis and urbai
we conclude that this urbanism
flow, human interaction and pr
effort in the rest of the book to d
based on the instituted, transhun
life.

The New Urbanism in Context

Ambitiously, the great American urban theorists of the early twentieth century – Patrick Geddes, Lewis Mumford, Louis Wirth – sought to generalize cities at different stages in history as holistic systems. They tended to see the city as an organism. Underneath the clamour, clutter, confusion and disorder of city life was felt to lie a certain organic integrity. The city was considered a spatially bounded entity, embodying a particular way of life (fast, civic, anonymous), with a distinct internal spatial and social division of labour, a particular relation with the countryside, nation and the 'outside' world, and an evolutionary linearity (civilization and progress). They wanted to theorize the city as a sociospatial system with its own internal dynamic. Thus, for example, Mumford felt it right to develop a typology of cities: 'Tyrannopolis', with its parasitism and gangster dictators; 'Megalopolis', with its greed, dissociation and barbarism; and 'Nekropolis', with its looting and primitivism following war, famine and disease. Mumford's treatment of each type as an organic system is striking.

Regardless of whether cities through the ages can be seen in this way, contemporary cities are certainly not systems with their own internal coherence. The city's boundaries have become far too permeable and stretched, both geographically and socially, for it to be theorized as a whole. The city has no completeness, no centre, no fixed parts. Instead, it is an amalgam of often disjointed processes and social heterogeneity, a place of near and far connections, a concatenation of rhythms; always edging in new directions. This is the aspect of cities that needs to be captured and explained, without any corresponding desire to reduce the varied phenomena to any essence or systemic integrity.

In the last fifteen years, urban theory has moved a considerable way towards recognizing the varied and plural nature of urban life. Most of the major contemporary urbanists, including Manuel Castells, David Harvey, Saskia Sassen, Edward Soja, Richard Sennett, Mike Davis and Michael Dear, acknowledge the inadequacy of one positionality on the city. They note the juxtaposition of high-value added activities with new kinds of informed activity, the co-presence of different classes, social groups, ethnies and cultures, the stark contrast between riches and creativity and abject poverty, and the multiple temporalities and spatialities of different urban livelihoods. It is, however, fair to say that while they get to the complex spirit of the urban, the tendency to generalize from prevalent phenomena or driving processes remains strong.

There is, however, another tradition that has studiously avoided such generalization, attempting to grasp the significant banality of everyday

life in the city. Everyday life has
for example, it incorporates 'dail
material practices, the 'everyday'
condition, and 'everydayness', u
force running through everything,
"living"' (Seigworth 2000: 246)
cities manifest everyday life is a q
surrealists, and later, the situationi
non-conventional urban itinerarie
musings (Sadler 1998). It also ma
a meditative walker in the depth
urban sites of mass consumerism
the same impulse in Michel de C
as the 'overflowing of the comm
techniques' (p. 5) as the 'grammar
174).

Underlying this urbanism of t
grasp a phenomenality that cann
tion alone. In part, this arises fror
an immanent force, 'an excess t
world in isolation, but from the
(Seigworth 2000: 240). How is s
to be grasped? For Seigworth, 'in
philosophy of everyday life must
merely its immediacy . . . but life
nonhuman, inorganic/incorporea
banal/intense everydayness' (2000:
into the intermesh between flesh
fixtures and flows, emotions and
and what out? Then, it needs to
cognition, venturing into the rea
intimation. But, here too, the task
sure that the latter take us into th
simply making empty gestures?

One possibility is the use of met
In the rest of this chapter we d
tradition of everyday urbanism. T
spatial and temporal openness of
as a place of manifold *rhythms*,
multiple experiences of time and s
prints: imprints from the past, the
links beyond the city.

The Flâneur and Transitivity

Walter Benjamin's speculative philosophy, 'at its strongest moments does not seek truth in completeness, but in the neglected detail and the small nuance' (Caygill 1998: 152). This is most evident in his studies of the cities he roamed: Paris, Naples, Marseilles, Berlin and Moscow. Benjamin used the term transitivity to grasp the city as a place of intermingling and improvisation, resulting from its porosity to the past as well as varied spatial influences.

The term dances into play in the 1924 flâneur's tale of Naples, with Benjamin clearly overwhelmed by the city's theatricality, its passion for improvisation, its ironies. Naples visibly shows off its transitivity through the priest publicly harangued for indecent offences, but still able to stop to bless a wedding procession; the Baedeker guide that is of no help in finding architectural sites or the trails of the underworld; and the play of opportunity in a busy piazza, where a gentleman negotiates a fee with an overweight lady to pick up the fan she has dropped. 'Porosity is the inexhaustible law of the life of this city, reappearing everywhere', including how 'building and action inter-penetrate in the courtyards, arcades and stairways . . . to become a theatre of new, unforeseen constellations. The stamp of the definitive is avoided' (Benjamin 1997: 171, 169).

Transitivity/porosity is what allows the city to continually fashion and refashion itself. While it is particularly marked in Naples as a series of street-level improvisations, Benjamin is clear about its relevance for all cities. In the case of Moscow in the 1920s, he writes of the transitivity of a new socialism, based on the co-presence of the state bureaucratic machinery and the silent improvisations of individuals involved in informal trade and barter. The city's transitivity is manifest in the juxtaposition of a new monumental architecture against the mats and boxes laid out on pavements by the city's thousands of hawkers trying to sell whatever they can. Transitivity in both cities has radically different effects, but in both cases the concept encapsulates the city as everyday process, mobilized by flesh and stone in interaction.

What are the tools with which transitivity can be grasped? To begin, Michael Sheringham claims that the 'latent principle of mutability' that drives urban life requires a 'corresponding mobility on the part of the witness'. Traditional tools based on maps, description, emulation, distillation of essence are of little use. Enter the reflexive walker, the flâneur, who, through sensory, emotional and perceptual immersion in the passages of the city, engages in a 'two-way encounter between

Box 1.1   Rodinsky as psychogeographer

'Rodinsky was an artist in the tradition of Tom Phillips or the Surrealists, a re-maker of found objects. He bent the maps to fit his notion of how London *should* be – as if he was describing it for the first time. Maps were prompts rather than definitive statements. If a particular page [of the London A–Z] took his fancy, Rodinsky would attack its margins with a red biro. Other districts – Enfield, Stanmore, Willesden, Chingford, Hendon, Purley, Crystal Palace, Surbiton, Tooting Bec, Wimbledon, Richmond, Eltham, Peckham Rye – were of no interest to him and they were ignored. He was a taxonomist, breaking down the overwhelming mass of information into categories that excited his attention: prisons, asylums, burial grounds, children's homes, hospitals. These markings became a projected autobiography, a Dickensian fable of abandonment, destitution, and incarceration. This is how Rodinsky reads the world: a wilderness of unknowing, punctuated by dark places. Reservoirs of pain that solicit the heat of his red nib. His system of classification was shaped around privileged buildings that operated as colonies of the damned, institutions with strictly enforced rules of conduct, gulags of the disappeared. . . .

'What was his system? If buildings were singled out with no red track leading to them, did that mean they were significant but unvisited? Did the lines that tread strange routes represent journeys undertaken by bus or on foot? Arsenal football ground is ringed, but otherwise left alone. While Mare street is favoured with a red route that culminates in a triumphal circuit of Clapham Ponds. Has Thistlewaite Road been highlighted in honour of Harold Pinter (who lived there as a young man)? Was there a connection, some acquaintance or relative, shared by Pinter and Rodinsky? . . .

'In the suburbs, Rodinsky concentrates on "Jews' Hospitals" and "Jews' Burial Grounds", as if underwriting his own future; anticipating the routes that would finally carry him away from Princelet Street. . . . Here were the sites where the narrative of a lost life might be found: Heneage Street (the synagogue where Rodinsky was last seen, attending a Kiddush), Tower House in Fieldgate Street, Cheshire Street, Hawksmoor's Christ Church, the Brady Street burial ground. Islands where time was held within vessels of memory.

'I decided that the only way to make sense of Rodinsky's doctored maps was to walk his red lines . . .'

From Iain Sinclair, *Dark Lanthorns: Rodinsky's A–Z*, Goldmark, Uppingham, 1999, pp. 10–14.

If you want to 'discover' New Yo
the South Bronx where breakdan
rival gangs. Or stroll down Ninth
and one can still feel the electric
some of the anarchy that a street
mixing, mingling, with all kinds
go to Brighton Beach, where the
borscht and wearing 1950s' Am
Bath Beach, where the young bloo
their silkiest shirts. Travel to the
the Latinos, and elderly Jews o
they'd all come out of a single cri
1998: 80)

There can be no doubt that su
mate secrets of a city. But, the sec
of particular parts of the city. The
because the accounts are from dis
never been gender neutral, for exa
male, often loaded with sensual
buildings, as sexually arousing o
female body or femininity). Wome
ive gaze, as Angela McRobbie not

it was partly through the various
domestic sphere, into the househ
internalized world of the sexualize
that modernity allowed itself to e
as a space of white, male, reason
some strata of young middle-class
out the regulatory social work of
visiting, their services were quickly
ing the great infrastructures of sta
privilege which allowed this mino
in short be understood without tak
many women and girls who were t
for whom the city was a place of w
territory' and who travelled about
some new found freedom, but as p
How else did working women thr
run errands for their masters and
ure and enjoyment, and indeed e
their homes, but by walking about
(1999: 36–7)

Transitivity based on the experience of women going about their daily business does not feature. This said, we can find a current of 'flâneuse' writing. Deborah Parsons, for example, shows in her study of women writing about Paris and London between 1880 and 1940 that the flâneuse works in the details of particular sites with a 'gender-related city consciousness' (2000: 7). This includes an empirical knowledge of the city's grounded particularities, and through this, an exploration of being a woman in a city that is 'frequently enabling, sometimes difficult, always irresistible, providing spaces in which these women can explore their identities and their writerly voices' (p. 228). The 'city is always kept in interplay with a focus on the particular life that takes place within them' (p. 223). Gender matters in quite significant ways then, in accounts of urban transitivity, depending on who is observing or being observed.

Another problem with flânerie is whether the transitivity of the contemporary city based on endless spread and multiple connections is best grasped through wandering/wondering. How useful, for example, is the flâneur's knowledge in revealing the porosity of urban life associated with travel, such as the effects of large-scale daily population change? Consider this observation on London by Nick Barley:

> The 100 million airborne arrivals who descend on London each year are equal to almost twice the population of Britain. Travel on this scale now makes it impossible to characterise cities as stable entities. They're no longer simply geographical locations but urban contexts adapting themselves to constant flux. As much as it is a collection of buildings, a city is a shifting set of conceptual possibilities, robust enough to expand and contract on demand without losing its essential identity. . . .When one of London's airports is in fact in Cambridge, with kilometres of rolling countryside in between, the city has become more a territory for the imagination than one with a measurable physicality. (2000: 13)

The flâneur's poetic of knowing is not sufficient. The city's transitivity needs to be grasped through other means. Some of these can draw on now routine technologies of knowing, historical guides and photographs charting change over time, imaginaries which illustrate the city in motion (such as airborne video-shots), and books or films displaying the city's global connections (tales of diaspora cultures or a city's global food chain). We have gone a long way towards developing tools that are at one remove from the street and which no longer depend alone on the insight and tools of the knowledgeable flâneur (Featherstone 1998), as the two examples reveal in box 1.2.

Box 1.2   An alternativ

Wanderers and everyday trave
cities, without the diagnostic th
travels, and the observations
mark the city's spaces in quite
telling effect. Look how an a
play through Sikivu Hutchinso
largely poor, and female, moto

Riding the bus in L.A. is a par
mode of looking, seeing, hearing
line' of automobility even as i
this parallel city skirt the edge
asynchrony to the virtual city be
women who wait with their pac
stores, check-cashing places, da
New Haven, the bus is a city of
color form the backbone of bus
L.A. The Lincoln Institute of L
5 percent of trips in the United
Yet this figure does not adequat
munities of color, where women
throughout the day for trips to
the homes of friends and relative
journeys through the city is the
108). . . .

Driving past the MTA bus st
'they', the riding public, are invi
to the otherworldly economy of
observation that 'nobody' walks
streetcar, to be car-less in L.A.
unenviably intimate knowledge
city's streets, of the grinding c
transfer point. (2000: 117)

Then, there are other vernac
knowledge of the city itself. The
often with a sense of place that d
imaginary than from the locality
sider the porosity of London via

Tanty's excursions in Harrow Road in Samuel Selvon's novel *The Lonely Londoners* (1956):

> Well Tanty used to shop in this grocer every Saturday morning. It does be like a jam-session there when all the . . . housewives does go to buy, and Tanty in the lead. They getting on just as if they in the market-place back home: 'Yes child, as I was telling you, she did lose the baby . . . half-pound saltfish please, the dry codfish . . . yes as I was telling you . . . and two pounds rice, please, and half-pound red beans, no, not that one, that one in the bag in the corner . . . (p. 78)

> She used to get into big oldtalk with the attendants, paying no mind to people waiting in the queue. 'If I know Montego Bay!' she say. 'Why I was born there, when I was a little girl I used to bathe in the sea where all those filmstars does go. . . . Why I come to London? Is a long story, child, it would take up too much time, and people standing in the queue waiting. But I mind my nephew from when he a little boy, and he there here in London, he have a work in a factory. . .' (p. 80, cited in Akbur 2000: 70)

Riad Akbur (2000) comments that Selvon's protagonists fail to access the real London, but this is to miss the point that Tanty's London is as real as in any other account, grasping, as it does, the stretched and perforated sense of place of millions of immigrants, who identify a city, and their experiences in it, through their local–global geographies.

Rhythms and Rhythmanalysis

Like Benjamin, Henri Lefebvre observed that cities rely on relations of immediacy – on the 'music of the city' that needs to be 'discovered by reflection' (1996: 227, 101). Looking from a window above a crossroads in the centre of Paris, Lefebvre notes the multiple speeds and movements: people crossing the street, cars stopping and accelerating, crowds of people pursuing different aims, the mingling of noises and smells. He adds, 'to this inexorable rhythm which at night hardly abates, are superimposed other, less intense, slower rhythms: children going off to school, a few very noisy piercing calls, cries of morning recognition. Then, around 9.30, according to a schedule which hardly ever varies . . . the arrival of shoppers, closely followed by tourists' (p. 221). He notes that the rhythms

nascent police authority helped by the arrival of street lighting. This opened up the night to the new rhythms of revellers, itinerants and tramps, as the once sole occupants of the street (criminals and prostitutes) were pushed into the shadows. Then, as life in the street at night became more complex, new opening and closing times emerged. As industrialization progressed, work-time extended into the night, with people busy in the utilities, factories, hospitals, presses, market halls, warehouses and police stations. Later, the night without curfew laws, replete with new forms of bourgeois and proletarian entertainment linked to industrialization, saw new efforts to regulate its rhythms (licensing laws, codes of public behaviour). As the comings and goings of the night came under increasing control and public moralizing, new demons of the night emerged: into the twentieth century, the night in Paris, London and Berlin became recast as the time of the underworld, spies and patrols, outcasts and vagabonds; the 'abnormal'.

Little of all this appears in 'big picture' urban theory, where much of urban life is left out. For example, strangely, the everyday rhythms of domestic life have rarely counted as part of the urban, as though the city stopped at the doorstep of the home. But domestic life is now woven routinely into the urban 'public realm'. How else are we to interpret the rise of home-working and teleshopping, and 'public' involvement through the consumption of goods, television, the internet and the growing exposure of domestic life in chat shows and fly-on-the wall television? The rhythms of the home are as much part of city life as, say, the movements of traffic, office life, or interaction in the open spaces of a city. Its rhythms, too, need incorporating into an everyday sociology of the city.

But, how to grasp the rhythms of the city? Lefebvre invoked 'rhythmanalysis', practised at a 'spectral' distance. If the reflexive wanderer reads the city from within and with a certain poetic sensibility, 'spectral analysis' contemplates the rhythms of a city from a more detached vantage point. According to Lefebvre, the elevated and closed window, for example:

> offers views that are more than spectacles. Perspectives which are mentally prolonged so that the implication of this spectacle carries its explanation. ... Opacity and horizons, obstacles and perspectives are implicated, for they become complicated, imbricate themselves to the point of allowing the Unknown, the giant city, to be perceived or guessed at. (1996: 224)

The window allows the city to be read from a certain height and distance so that the comings and goings can be perceived in combination. The window is thus both a real site to view varied rhythms juxtaposed

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Box 1.3   Freud's letter from Rome

'My dear ones

On the Piazza Colonna behind which I am staying, as you know, several thousand people congregate every night. The evening air is really delicious; in Rome wind is hardly known. Behind the column is a stand for a military band which plays there every night, and on the roof of a house at the other end of the piazza there is a screen on which a *società Italiana* projects lantern slides. They are actually advertisements, but to beguile the public these are interspersed with pictures of landscapes, Negroes of the Congo, glacier ascents and so on. But since these wouldn't be enough, the boredom is interrupted by short cinematographic performances for the sake of which the old children (your father included) suffer quietly the advertisements and monotonous photographs. They are stingy with these tidbits, however, so I have had to look at the same thing over and over again. When I turn to go I detect a certain tension in the attentive crowd [*der Menge aufmerksam*], which makes me look again, and sure enough a new performance has begun, and so I stay on. Until 9 pm I usually remain spellbound [*so der Zauber zu wirken*]; then I begin to feel too lonely in the crowd, so I return to my room to write to you all after having ordered a fresh bottle of water. The others who promenade in couples or *undici, dodici* stay on as long as the music and lantern slides last.

'In one corner of the piazza another of those awful advertisements keeps flashing on and off. I think it is called Fermentine. When I was in Genoa two years ago with your aunt it was called Tot; it was some kind of stomach medicine and really unbearable. Fermentine, on the other hand, doesn't seem to disturb the people. In so far as their companions make it possible, they stand in such a way that they can listen to what is being said behind them while seeing what is going on in front, thus getting their full share. Of course there are lots of small children among them, of whom many a woman would say that they ought to have been in bed long ago. Foreigners and natives mix in the most natural way. The clients of the restaurant behind the column and of the confectioner's on one side of the piazza enjoy themselves too; there are wicker chairs to be had near the music, and the townspeople like sitting on the stone balustrade round the monument. I am not sure at the moment

whether I haven't forgotten a
so big. Through the middle of i
it is in fact an enlargement) with
but they don't do any harm, f
vehicle's way and the drivers d
to run people over. When the
even those who haven't listene
are heard in the otherwise qui
this noise is caused by a numb
less like the herald of Maratho
with the evening editions, in th
they are putting an end to an
they have an accident to offer,
feel masters of the situation. I k
of them every day for five *cent*
must say that there is never an
interest an intelligent foreigner.
a commotion, all the boys rush
have to be afraid that somethi
back again. The women in this
excepted); the women of Rome,
when they are ugly, and not m

'I can hear the music plainl
cannot see the pictures. Just no

Fond greetings, Your Papa'

From Sigmund Freud, *The Letters*
ed. E. L. Freud, Basic Books, New

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strategy of 'not directing one's noti
taining the same evenly suspended
hears'. . . . But the fundamental sig
to define a state of receptivity in t
with the spoken free association o
state in which one could redistribut
be shut out, so that everything wou
the risk of schizophrenic overload.

Freud's is, of course, only one possi
of the city, but the essential poi
divorced from an analytic method.

Urban Footprints and Namings

Let us, however, continue our exploration of central urban metaphors. If rhythm, defined as 'localized time' and 'temporalized place' (Lefebvre 1996: 227), registers the daily tempo of the city, the metaphor of footprint overcomes an idea of the city as a contained space. Cities are, of course, demarcated, through planning and architectural rules and through transport and communications networks within and beyond the city. But the spatial and temporal porosity of the city also opens it to footprints from the past and contemporary links elsewhere. City spaces are always exposed, including the 'gated' communities that try everything possible to shut themselves off, but are still crossed by the fumes of the city, and the nightly escape of younger residents looking for entertainment in the city's more lively areas.

Similarly, the present is crossed by influences from the past. A vivid example is Doreen Massey's description of how in Mexico City the Square of the Three Cultures juxtaposes the ruins of an Aztec pyramid, a baroque Roman Catholic church, and contemporary buildings in the International Style, to reveal the 'elements of the three major cultures which have gone in to making this place' (1999: 100). Each stratum of the urban archaeology brings 'an intricate and active system of interconnections' across the globe, such that, 'when "the Spanish" met "the Aztecs" both were already complex products of hybrid histories' (p. 110). For Massey this 'multiplicity of histories that is the spatial' (2000: 231) permeates movement in space too. It is not confined to historical footprints in a situated place. The car journey, for example, involves a complex 'simultaneity of trajectories', composed of the practices and thoughts of those travelling, the histories of the places crossed, the trajectories of the places left, now getting by without you. The city is full of these footprints of simultaneity, loaded with spatiotemporal tramlines.

What difference does it make to acknowledge these urban footprints? First, it helps to discard the idea of the city as an ordered and segregated pattern of mobility, helping in turn to see myriad other trails of mobility in the city (commuters, shoppers, tourists, children, the homeless, but also sewers and foxes). This allows a vision of the city as spatially stretched patterns of communication, bringing distant sites into contact (maybe through visits to family and friends), but also separating adjacent spaces (as with neighbours with little in common with each other). These tracks allow the city to be known. We negotiate the city through used tracks and construct imaginaries around them of the known city. This is one way in which a city, with all its complexity, size and change, is named.

through architecture and neighborhoods, through art and clothing and music, through daily activities and forms of entertainment, as well as through the mass media' (p. 12).

Cities take shape through a plethora of 'fixed namings'. The challenge of reading the city thus also lies in the study of the devices through which cities are named. The most obvious ones are tourist maps and city guides which select particular routes and historical reconstructions to frame cities as attractive places. A similar scripting is evident in the aestheticization of city centres through design, in shopping malls, marinas, recreation sites. But, as Jane Jacobs notes in her study of aboriginal expression in contemporary Australian cities, aestheticization also 'operates as the logic of many more modest urban transformations such as streetscaping, place making, and community arts projects. Some of these transformations assist in the selling of cities, but some may be addressing alternate agendas such as building identity or facilitating political formations among severely marginalized groups' (1998: 274).

Cities are named through a variety of means, and in ways which confirm or subvert stereotypes. Either way, the naming contributes to city identification. The history of the local media can be read in these terms. In chronicling local events, a narrative of the city is constructed, and over the years the city comes to be memorialized in detail. This street, that pub, that corner, that personality, become known, and through their collective naming we see others and other parts of the city. The city becomes accessible, and through the places named in the chronicles it becomes a spatial formation.

And when the media includes architectural critics commenting on the changing physical landscape – as Lewis Mumford did for the *New Yorker* on new developments in the 1930s – the city takes shape through these landmarks in the imaginary too. The cityscape is made known. Through Mumford's commentary New Yorkers came to see a city of skyscrapers and debated whether 'amid such a mass of new and almost new buildings, one has a fresh sense of shame over all this misapplied energy and wasted magnificence' (1998: 85). Now the city, through selective descriptions of the built environment, is given both history and memory, and a basis from which public opinion can praise or condemn.

The city, lastly, is scripted also in a literal sense, through its urban art forms. These include not only events in galleries and other closed spaces, but also open spaces used for artistic expression (concerts in parks, rap in the streets, ethnic festivals and parades) and the urban fabric itself used as canvass (murals, graffiti). The city is the medium itself shouting its stories directly. Take the example of urban graffiti marking particularly strong feelings of urban life in particular cities. In New York, for

A Basic Ontology

In this chapter we have begun to look at the difference it makes to visualize the city as a process, without the pretence of total sight or generalization. We have reconstructed the tradition of everyday urbanism as one way of knowing the multiplex city. We have explored the potential of sensory metaphors which capture the transitivity and rhythm of urban life and also allow the city to be named in some way. We have suggested, however, that this urbanism balances on metaphors that lack methodological clarity.

In the rest of the book we want to open this tradition to other ways of knowing the everyday city by grounding it in an understanding of the structured and unstructured regularities of urban life. We consider the tradition as it stands to be flawed in three respects. First, the theoretical edifice rests on metaphors which imply an unlimited ebb and flow to urban life. This needs to be questioned. We have begun to see how urban life is placed by lines of mobility and travel and by namings and imaginaries. The city's rhythms are not free to roam where they will. Cities, as we suggest in chapter 4, also provide the machinery through which rhythms are directed, from traffic lights which regulate the temporality and pace of life, to rules of planning which 'instruct' the city in given directions (such as where and when shopping can take place). Similarly, we argue in chapter 5 that the city is heavily regulated by bureaucracy and other formal and informal institutions. Striating openness and flow are a whole series of rules, conventions and institutions of regulation and control. The city thus needs to be seen as an institutionalized practice, a systematized network, in an expanded everyday urbanism.

Second, the tradition of everyday urbanism is marked by a certain humanism, evident in the powers of reflexive wanderers and rhythmanalysts, the emphasis on human-centred aspects of urban life, and, as we show in the next chapter, the desire for face-to-face-contact and urban community. Yet much of city life (chapter 4) is about the machine-like circulation of bodies, talk and objects, as well as the presence and regulation of trans-human and inorganic life (from rats to sewers). The new urbanism needs to recognize the engineering of certainty through varied technologies of regulation (such as traffic signs, postal rules, waste management).

The third flaw is the strong sense of cities as places of proximate links, despite the references to spatial and temporal porosity. Time and again, the city is stressed as a site of localized flows and contact networks. Our argument, in chapters 2 and 3, is that so extensive have the city's connections become as a result of the growth of fast communications, global

flows, and linkage into national a
the city needs theorization as a s
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knowing, not as simply a passive r
second is their consideration of o
sciousness. The third is that 'feeli
as crucial to apprehension. The f
serial advance' (Whitehead 1978:
different forms knotted together. F
is a becoming of continuity, but no
1978: 35). And finally, and mos

'prehensions' (ideas about the world) can be constantly built. More and more can be put into the world (and this cannot be reliably forecast since so much of the activity of prehension is virtual). For example, consider the invention of the colour mauve by William Perkin in 1856. What mauve 'promised was a new way of looking at the world' (Garfield 2000: 69). The wide availability of the colour added a new visual register to the city streets as it was used in new fashions, quickly followed by colours like magenta (in 1859), and a host of colours which previously had had to be produced in arduous ways from natural products and which could now be produced artificially (such as madder and indigo). The new dyes quite literally coloured the urban world in new ways. What is clear, then, we hope, is that the ontology outlined below is an open one. It does not trade in notions of a fixed theoretical framework, or in definitive once-and-for-all results; there is no one account of a single urban thing but rather a generative multiplicity of divergent and discontinuous lines of flight with their own spaces and times.

So what exists in cities? How can we hold on to their potential and variety? At the most basic level, we can talk of *life*, teeming bare life, a being-together of existences. In taking this stance, we are trying to point in three directions. The first of these is to simply state that the city is an ecology made up of many species, not just the human, which live at faster or slower rates, gather in greater or lesser intensities, inhabit the city's earth, air and water multiply. Then, second, it is to signal that much of what goes on in cities is centred around the practice of biopolitics, the practice of engineering the body and the senses – and life more generally – so as to produce governable subjects. Power penetrates subjects' very bodies and forms of life. In other words, life is at the centre of all the calculations made about cities. And, third, it is to signal that the senses are a crucial element of urban life. Cities cast spells over the senses, spells which are increasingly engineered by the state and business. And mention of the senses in turn points to that whole realm of human life which is outside consciousness – consciousness is, after all, only one kind of mental process. These are all the reflexes and automatisms which make up the city's 'unconscious', and which account for the bulk of its activity. This is the constant push of habitual consciousness and the dance of gestural, somatic communication, which writers like Walter Benjamin and, later, Michael Taussig tried to show up, and which can be found in nearly every urban encounter:

If, for instance, one comes upon two staunch friends unexpectedly meeting for the first time in many months, and one chances to hear their initial words of surprise, greeting and pleasure, one may readily notice, if one

pays close enough attention, a t
beneath the explicit denotative me
fall of the voices in a sort of musi
each other. Each voice, each side
melody while adding its own infle
other in turn – the two singing t
another, rediscovering a common
quires only a slight shift in focus
carrying the bulk of communicatio
meanings of the actual words ride
on the surface of the sea. (Abram

For now, it is a moot point whet
urban pack of late – such as info
ghosts in the machine – or wheth
terms, because all life involves a
What seems more important is to a
a becoming.

We argue that this push comes
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particular spaces and times, as a c
in these networks relate to one ano
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description. The metaphor of the
since it can conjure up a vision of
circulate through fixed channels r
like flows (Urry 2000; Latour 19
While these networks are clearl
certain issues, ground the world
contain within themselves – or thr
or both – the *potentiality* to beco
diverge, or fold, on to others. Net
from Cartesian space and Aristot
'I don't like points. *Faire le point*
not the line that is between the tv
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interwoven with other networks.
which we conveniently describe a
fact aggregates of numerous subje
ous networks. At any time, a 'su
switching in and out of particular
fling between particular spaces an

But this sense of a kaleidoscopic urban world, crammed full with hybrid networks going about their business, enables us to see, at the same time, the importance of *encounter*. Networks cannot be sealed off from the world, they are always in collision with other networks: touching, fighting, engaging, cooperating, parasitizing, ignoring – the variations are almost endless. In other words, encounter, and the reaction to it, is a formative element in the urban world. So places, for example, are best thought of not so much as enduring sites but as *moments of encounter*, not so much as 'presents', fixed in space and time, but as variable events; twists and fluxes of interrelation. Even when the intent is to hold places stiff and motionless, caught in a cat's cradle of networks that are out to quell unpredictability, success is rare, and then only for a while. Grand porticos and columns framing imperial triumphs become theme parks. Areas of wealth and influence become slums.

All this may seem abstract and diffuse, difficult to get a hold of because, like all ontologies, it only describes the bare bones of thereness. But, hopefully, we have given some sense of how rich we think such an ontology might prove. For in this ontology, cities cannot be reduced to one. They are truly multiple. They exceed, always exceed. Cities are machines of consumption? Yes, but never just that. Cities are artefacts of the state? Yes, but never just that. Cities are generators of patriarchy? Yes, but never just that. The next chapter continues this argument.

2   PROPI
FLOW

Introduction

The emphasis at the end of the la
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fixed in space. The conclusion to
of these issues might be concrete
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The Nostalgic City

A good many of the stories of modern urban life, and especially the most popular stories of writers like Georg Simmel or Walter Benjamin, tell a story of an authentic city held together by face-to-face interaction whose coherence is now gone. If the authentic city exists, it is as a mere shadow of itself, one that serves only to underline what has been lost. In the great accounts of history, the modern city is more loss than gain.

In the classic stories of Simmel and Benjamin, the blows to the city authentic come from four different directions, though all of them arise from the ever-increasing circulation and exchange of commodities. First, there is money. Confirming Marx's diagnosis, money is understood as a kind of cultural acid, a corrosive force that erodes sociability by spearheading commodification. More and more modern life is turned into a problem of 'mere' calculation. Simmel summed up this view in his observation that 'the complete heartlessness of money is reflected in our social culture, which is itself determined by money' (1990: 346). As everything becomes expressible in terms of 'mere money', so quality becomes quantity. Colour and difference is leached out of the world by this 'fraternisation of impossibilities' (Marx 1964: 169). And personal relationships are also subject to the 'growing indifference of money' (Simmel 1990: 444): increasingly they are only able to work through the limited expression allowed by the cash nexus. Thus, under the twisted ambitions of a money economy, the very quality of experience decays.

The second blow is a more general process of 'thingification'. The culture of things takes over from the culture of human beings. The increasingly autonomous movement of things threatens what it is to be human: 'the pessimism with which the majority of more profound thinkers seem to view the contemporary state of culture has its foundation in the ever-wider yawning abyss between the culture of things and that of human beings' (Simmel, cited in Frisby 1991: 89). Not all is negative, however. Neither Simmel nor Benjamin takes a simplistic anti-technological stance. They both regard technology as a new body for both humanity and nature, and the city is 'the technological site of human habitation, the place where the collision of technology and human tradition is most marked' (Caygill 1998: 131). But the new speculative possibilities of technology are continually reduced by the commodity to something much less than ought to be possible; the new home that the city might become is replaced by an alienated visual spectacle.

The third blow is the constant speed-up of life, leading to a dissolution of forms. The whirl of life in modernity uproots values, subverts fixed

conclusions. In particular, there
modern culture: social relations
intimate contact:

> the ease of transport to the furthe
> with regard to contact'; the 'histo
> ships to spatially and temporally
> more sensitive to the shocks and
> immediate proximity and contact
> cited in Frisby 1991: 77)

Then one more blow: the rise
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a general 'shattering of tradition
ence. This reorganization can be
liquidation of cultural heritage.
uniqueness as properties of wo
transformation of the structure
drives, which can constitute a ne
ization can be interpreted more o
set of dreams and possibilities, as
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> extends our comprehension of the
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> taverns and our metropolitan st
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> hopelessly. Then came film and
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> close-up, space expands, with sl
> encouragement of a snapshot doe
> any case was visible: it reveals er
> subject. (Benjamin, cited in Caygi

On a number of different levels,
tance is thereby redefined.

The upshot of these four blows
or is in danger of going downhil
urban experience that is at issue.
social and cultural empty, then i

Let us just take one example
Benjamin's notion of shock. Fo

condition of overstimulation, a mass of stimuli so numerous that they can be neither meaningless nor meaningful. The reaction to this condition is essentially neurasthenic, consisting of overstimulated and tired nerves. And, in turn, this leads to a set of coping behaviours such as blasé attitudes. Benjamin's variant of this argument is a case in point. His understanding of modern experience was neurological. Thus he

> wanted to investigate the 'faithfulness' of Freud's hypothesis, that consciousness parries shock by preventing it from penetrating deep enough to leave a permanent trace on memory, by applying it to 'situations far removed from those which Freud had in mind'. Freud was concerned with war neurosis, the trauma of 'shell shock' and catastrophic accident that plagued soldiers in World War I. Benjamin claimed that this battlefield consequence of shock had become 'the norm' in modern life. Perceptions that once occurred as conscious reflections were now the source of shock impulses which consciousness must parry. (Buck-Morss 2000: 104)

Various means were available to the subject to organize this new experience. First among these was the creation of new means of tactile appropriation of the city, aided by the existence of new media like film which were both new sources of shock and new means of adjusting to such experience.

These kinds of accounts have become a constant refrain in the literature on the modern city, shored up by the kind of humanism that we outlined in the last chapter. Bolstered by constant cross-referencing, they have created a self-contained narrative of decline. It is not that we necessarily disagree with this narrative. How could we? On the whole, so little serious confirmatory empirical work has ever been done that we simply cannot know whether it holds. But we can certainly raise serious objections.

To start with, there is the little matter of money. A number of recent writers have disputed outright the depiction of money as a corrosive and culturally barren force (see Zelizer 1994; Dodd 1994; Leyshon and Thrift 1997; Thrift and Leyshon 1999; Furnham and Argyle 1998), an impersonal denominator which 'once it invades the realm of personal relations . . . inevitably bends these relations in the direction of instrumental rationality' (Zelizer 1994: 11). Instead they see a world of multiple monetary networks which depend on quite different monetary *practices*:

> different networks of social relations and systems of meaning mark modern money, introducing controls, restrictions and distinctions that are as influential as the rationing of primitive money. Multiple monies in the modern world may not be as visibly identifiable as the shells, coins, brass rods or stones of primitive communities, but their invisible boundaries

work just as well. How else, for i
tribute or a donation, a wage fro
a salary? How do we identify
miums? Then, there are quantitat
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becomes indecipherable. (Zelizer

The practices which produce ar
highly variable over space and
monies are circulating under the

Then there is the little matter
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theoretical days. For example, a
and non-humans, subjects and ob
sets defined by similar types of
hybrid networks that involve 'flo
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trations' (Latour 1993). Thus p
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97). And things have assumed a
empirical level too. For example,
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lives of persons who control (or
14). Some things are clearly con
sequences (Stallybrass 1998) – bu
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all objects in the commodity for
can be diverted over time' (Wei
that we need to think of things i
at the limit, we can grant them t
of wider human/non-human net
make on their users (for example
jects in their own right (Pickerin

Then there is the little matter
this is a world of ever-accelerati
tion. But it does not bear up to

have shown that the case is too often exaggerated to the point of carica-
ture (see, for instance, Thrift 1995, 1996b; May and Thrift 2001). To
begin with, it proceeds from gestural historical accounts which rarely
concede that alternative readings are possible and therefore never at-
tempt to establish any countervailing evidence. Then, it usually depends
on a pervasive technological determinism which reads the characteristics
of objects off on to cultures, as though all that was happening was the
cultural mirroring of the fast getting faster. Other cultural practices which
do not fit the model are elided. And, finally, it proceeds out of a funda-
mentally linear view of change which takes the fastest examples as typ-
ical of the future, cannot take in the construction of new pockets of
slowness, cannot understand that spatial variation does not take place
around a mean but is itself constitutive, and does not therefore detect
that whereas certain networks may be fast, such networks are usually
very narrow and pass the majority by. As Benjamin recognized, great
care therefore needs to be taken, since the adoption of this perspective
can lead to either a nostalgic anti-technological perspective or a pro-
technological affirmation, or even celebration (Caygill 1998). In fact, the
effects of technological speed-up can be baleful (see Shenk 1998), but
they can also be positive (see, for example, Thrift 2000c).

One more little matter needs to be addressed. And that is the rise of
mass media. Since Simmel and Benjamin's day the mass media have
become general on a scale that even they might not have foreseen: they
now provide a comprehensive ambient ecology. So, for example, both
DeNora (2000) and McCarthy (2001), point to the large number of
ways in which recorded music and television, respectively, now variously
inhabit urban spaces and times, often marking them only very faintly
with their presence – but still there, even so. Un-remarkable. Every-day.
As the media have become more general, so their effects have become
more differentiated and more complex, as well as more powerful. It is no
longer possible to think of the mass media as one superordinate thing.
There are many different kinds of site-specific media being produced for
and by many different kinds of audience. The mass media both link and
fragment and their influence on cities cannot be reduced to either a
capitalist phantasmagoria of images, or a speculative extension of experi-
ence (Burgin 1998; Donald 1999). They represent a very broad range
of engagements, a statement which is underlined by the fact that 'place-
based media must always interact with the unpredictability of user tra-
jectories and local systems' (McCarthy 2001: 113). In other words,
everyday localities in which the media are sited do not constitute simply
variations on a global theme (for example, network ideologies). They
cross and complicate in ways which are themselves constructive.

Near and Far

These little matters should at least
theories of, for example, a capita
In particular, they suggest we nee
the global and the local show up
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city and the city through propinc

Commentators on the city ve
placement of thick 'local' face-to-
communities by thinner interactio
communities (see box 2.1). The
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economy results, therefore, in a pr
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For us, these kinds of narrativ
are simply too simple. For exam
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Second, they are rooted in a hun
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lated humanity shorn of the mo

Box 2.1   The geography of the face

For Simmel the 'mask of rationality' in cities defaced instincts and emotions, and restricted communications interaction to the informational equivalent of exchange value (Taussig 2000). That this thesis is, to put it but mildly, overwrought can be demonstrated by asking the question 'what is "face-to-face" communication?' Such a simple question turns out to be much more complex than might be thought, but that very complexity makes it difficult to accept Simmel's point of view.

For us, in large part, the city is made up of faces coming into and out of view. The face is clearly the most important element of the body's communicative apparatuses, containing, as it does, the eyes (and especially the cues provided by eye movement and blinking), the nose (smell is a potent social indicator), the mouth (which is both a visual cue and of course the means of vocalization), the forty-two muscles of the face, and the skin (with its capacity to blush and otherwise indicate bodily states). The face is clearly a rich communicative environment which, along with gesture – with which it is closely implicated (McNeil 1992) – is the chief indicator of affect and spontaneous expression (Ekman 1992). It is clearly foolish to argue that the range of signals and information provided by face-to-face communication can ever be fully substituted.

But we need to be careful to differentiate between the importance of face-to-face communication and the necessity of close contact. To begin with, we have the ability to read the face, and the body more generally, from surprisingly long distances. For example, a smile can be seen from up to eighty feet, a finger raised in anger from the same distance, and a shout can be heard from a hundred feet. As importantly, the face is increasingly mobile. A face can be seen on a television screen, on a video or film, on an advertising hoarding, and so on. As videophones appear, so the distanced face will sink into mundane practice.

But there are, even so, clear limits – according to the task in hand. Thus:

> all the technology in the world does not – at least yet and maybe never – replace face-to-face contact when it comes to brainstorming, inspiring passion, or enabling many kinds of serendipitous discovery. A study of geographically dispersed new product development

teams found that team memb
would have preferred to have
porting more channels and m
to use. Fax is fine for one-way
asynchronous, and relatively
capital letters are 'shocking' an
munications that require no vi
subtlety in body language is ne
tion is the richest, multi-chan
senses, is interactive and imme

Even so, the face has never k
is, for example, evidence to s
face relies on the invention of t
in humans, essential equipmen
result of the evolution of han
teeth outward so they can clo
. . . But our teeth lie within the
ons. We manufacture better
evolved original grip positior
(McNeil 1992: 20).

So Simmel was wrong – but
increasingly, bodies can now k
a point where voice recogniti
And we are reaching a point
becoming surprisingly accurat
tems like the Facial Action (
Rosenberg 1997), and the vari
tems' which are already 75 j
these systems are able to infer
and various kinds of psychop
be able to simulate certain a
functions. The city will theref
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new incarnation of the flâneu

the effectivity of space no room;
leaves it no latitude; its history i
the spaces that are possible in the
Space becomes a dependent varia
any serious role in the flourishin

In other words, we have to be careful – and that care takes three forms. First of all, as we argued in chapter 1, the need to theorize without generalizing. Too often, writings about the city have taken hold of one process and presumed that it will become general, thus blotting out other forms of life. For example, commodification is assumed to be a remorseless process, a process which must end in a cultural meltdown. So shopping malls become the battleships of capitalism, bludgeoning consumers into unconsciousness. Or take the example of information technology, which, again, is very often assumed to be a linear process ending in cultural apocalypse. So the internet becomes the haunt of no-brainers, leaking their consciousness into the digital aether. Yet recent ethnographies of shopping malls and information technology not only show that such depictions are exaggerations which chronically underestimate the skilled response of consumers, but, more importantly, show just how variegated the response to such processes can be, to the point where the whole notion of process needs to be retheorized as something more open.

Then we need to be careful about space. There are many different kinds of space, not just one, and the smallest spatialities can also have the largest social consequences. The different kinds of spaces are legion: there are, to name but a few, continuous, planar regions that emphasize exclusiveness and borders; there-and-back again networks; fluid spaces that emphasize interaction and proliferate; more than one place at once spaces that mix up proximity and distance, and so on (Thrift and Olds 1996). And these spaces make a difference. For example, recent work in anthropology has been able to show the way in which these spaces are constructed and interfere with each other. Such spaces can express the chief tenets of a culture in the merest strip of interaction (Linde-Larsson 1998). Thus Weiss catalogues the minutest spatial traceries of Haya culture: the placement of a meal and the position of cooked food and of those who eat it all have a clear and coherent spatial and temporal integrity. 'A Haya household can define itself as a *place* only through its ability to control the relation of what is inside with what lies outside, and the passage that must take place between these positions' (Weiss 1996: 110). This work of definition takes place in all sorts of registers, from sight (being able to be seen, or not) to all kinds of other forms of tactility.

Then there is one more reason to be careful. And that is the matter of novelty. The city, through its complexity and certainty, allows for unexpected juxtapositions at all kinds of levels – the meeting in the street, the rich and poor areas cheek by jowl, the lack of control of public spaces, and so on. All kinds of forces may conspire to nullify these juxtapositions – greater and greater surveillance, the growth of programmed slips

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remains that the city, through the
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how open the city can be to pos
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Distanciated Communities

In order to provide some substan
quity and flow, let us move to the
Because it has proved perhaps o
topics in the urban literature, a
both because it has never been sat
able to stand for so much.

Why has community held suc
literature? There are, we think, f
history of community has been l
whose members move together a
dependency (Buck-Morss 2000). T
able to exist precisely because of
ication. The community is therefo
meaning is unmediated. Then ag
past. As tradition, memory plays
under the weight of its legacy. It f
ably 'local'. Messages pass from h
gatherings. And there is one mor
precisely because these kinds of c
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This, then, is a community of b
space, one slot in time. And it is
hard not to see in this literature
which has bypassed the actual hist
symptoms of the present.

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