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A Paper Tiger on Chestnut Lane:
The Significance of NIMBY Battles in Decaying Communities

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This article details a New England community's struggle over a halfway house placement. Through our interviews with community members, we found that they are prone to experience sharp feelings of moral cynicism and, to a lesser degree, feelings of fear and loathing toward halfway house residents. We also note how political figures sometimes use community residents' fear of the halfway houses and its inhabitants as a platform to commandeer political discourse. Our conclusions discuss how NIMBY ('not in my backyard') battles present important opportunities for communities in decline to control symbolically their own neighbourhoods.
Keywords: Corrections, Halfway House, Housing, NIMBY, Rehabilitation.

Introduction:

Social ecology (Park 1926) is a school of thought that emphasizes how certain manifest neighbourhood conditions (that is, broken windows, boarded up housing, and so on) coalesce to form predictable patterns of human interaction. This theory suggests that neighbourhoods in decay experience an economic downturn, a spiralling decay in quality of life including heightened crime and victimization rates. Such neighbourhoods are commonly disenfranchised, having limited control over the actions of other neighbourhood residents, politicians and the police (Kaylen and Pridemore 2013). Criminologists have shown there are myriad certain characteristics that manifest within such neighbourhoods. These include, but are not limited to abandoned housing, boarded up windows, graffiti, and open-air drug markets (Porter, Rader and Cossman 2012). Such neighbourhoods in decline are often viewed as society's 'dumping grounds', making suitable zones for locating undesirable facilities (Costanza, Kilburn and Vendetti-Koski 2013; Snowden and Pridemore 2013). Among the forms of undesirable facilities that can be placed in the neighbourhood are bars, mental health clinics, strip clubs and correctional facilities, such as jails or halfway houses.

While social ecology often uses aggregate conditions to explain neighbourhood deterioration, it seldom describes the shared experience of these people and their 'feelings' about their circumstances (Bruinsma, Pauwels, Weerman and Bernasco 2013). Much of this is due to the fact that social ecology was developed as an aggregate level theory to explain expanding crime victimization rates. Over many years, the trend in criminology has been to show that aggregate conditions associated with certain neighbourhoods is a predictor of conditions that influence crime, without taking behaviours of individuals into regard. Many aggregate level theorists recoil from committing the 'ecological fallacy', which refers to a mistake made when aggregate level conditions are used to describe individual behaviour (Kramer 1983).

The NIMBY ('not in my backyard') phenomenon is one that is largely defined by differing constructions of social reality made by people on alternate sides of a community issue. The term NIMBY first arose during the 1970s when environmental scholars were becoming aware of the use of several areas as dumping grounds for toxins and industrial waste (Dear 1992, McGurty 1997). The 1970s also saw changes in laws governing group homes and halfway houses that laid the foundation for NIMBY battles. Until that time, group homes and halfway houses were so uncommon that laws to regulate them were unnecessary. As the horrors of state run psychiatric institutions were exposed in the media, nearly all states passed laws mandating the creation of group homes for persons with mental illness and those with developmental disabilities (Szasz 1991). However, the passage of these laws did not mean that group homes and halfway houses were established without opposition.

In some cases, the laws themselves contained a built-in mechanism for community protests (Schonfeld 1984). In New York State, for example, the Padavan law requires that agencies seeking to purchase property to convert into group homes and halfway houses give notice to the city and get approval not from local zoning boards but from a special state hearing officer before the purchase is made. This extra level of scrutiny provided ample time for communities and their political representatives to mount a counteroffensive (Winerip 1994).

One controversial idea implied by all NIMBY battles is that neighbourhoods with affluent and non-minority residents will avoid suffering the burden of unwanted government or industrial use of community land use. Despite protests, state and local governments have used disenfranchised neighbourhoods for correctional purposes because of their lack of political voice. Prisons, halfway houses and community correctional facilities can also be placed in such politically powerless communities (Costanza, Kilburn and Vendetti-Koski 2013; Kilburn and Costanza 2011).

In this article, we report how residents of one New England town continue to adapt to the unwanted placement of halfway houses in their neighbourhoods. The people in this neighbourhood view the presence of the halfway houses as an imposition on their way of life. They lash out in myriad ways at governmental attempts to subsidize halfway houses in their neighbourhoods. We explore how these people behave in what they perceive as a decaying environment and show how community dynamics function in the midst of a classic NIMBY battle. The battle over halfway house placement, moreover, presents us with a unique set of conditions because each individual that tries to have a voice in the crisis defines their personal situation in their own unique way. We draw from several interviews to assess the feelings of residents and discover that sometimes when a town is in decay, residents (many who previously had not known one another) will cohere behind a common objective in an attempt to regain perceived control over their environment.

'Chestnut Lane'
Because we were asked by certain town representatives to keep our research anonymous, we use 'Chestnut Lane' as the pseudonym for the main street of a New England town. Its native

population is 89 percent white and mostly lower to middle class. Chestnut Lane itself has become a symbolic battlefield in a NIMBY struggle over the character of a community.

The community is located in a town with slightly over 25,000 residents. During the 1970s, a declining economy caused several problems to befall this community. With the closing of two factories that were integral to prosperity, there followed joblessness and the general social malaise that comes with it. Homelessness, addiction, alcoholism and street crime began to take root in the area. Many houses were left vacant and fell into disrepair. Later, the area was to experience an influx of federally subsided housing.

During this time of hardship, one of the ways that the town council attempted to alleviate their new financial burdens was to accept stipends allowing state-run transitional residences to enter the town. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the town began to deteriorate and de-gentrify. During the tech boom of the 1990s, the town saw its white-collar population relocating to different regions.

By 2000, there were six halfway houses in the town. The State departments in charge of corrections, and of health and addiction services funded most of these houses. Two of them were work-release houses, where former inmates could work at jobs in the community while returning to the home at night. The work-release houses were run by the state department of corrections to provide housing and to monitor the actions of ex-offenders leaving prison. The other houses specialized in housing drug offenders who were sentenced to a halfway house as an alternative to traditional prison.

During the time when halfway houses were being opened, the federal government also assisted several 'Section 8' (public assistance) tenants in migrating to the area to fill the numerous housing vacancies in the town. Although the new migrants were more plentiful than the residents of the halfway house, the impact of released offenders in the town seems to have affected the residents more than the migrant population. 'The poor people don't bother me any. They are plain people like everyone else', said Robert, a local Caucasian man of age 52, he added, 'These people from prison though, they're not like us'.

It is true that Chestnut Lane is located in a neighbourhood where crime and victimization were practically unheard of until the 1970s. A local political official described this town as an 'idyllic place during the 1950s: All the stores were open on Thursday and Friday nights. There were community dances. The Fire Department put on a dance and the Police would put on a dance at the armoury. There was a community centre. And the Elks had a big fair in their back yard and that was great place for the young people to get connected.' (Quote from Jacob, a former town councilman).

Other residents, however, when asked about the history of the town are hard pressed to remember a time when the town was like this. They are distraught over the halfway houses that they perceive as a blemish on the town's quality of life. 'My grandpa used to say this is a real bedrock town and when you see people... criminals... in here who don't have to work to pay rent or anything I suppose you know it's gone downhill' said Jared, a local man of age 32.

Relevant Literature

There are two relevant bodies of literature that we draw upon to examine the NIMBY battle being fought on Chestnut Lane. Social ecology is a theory of neighbourhoods and their experiences while in decline (Skogan 1990). Social constructionism is a theory of perception and how people define conditions around them (Burr 2003, 1998). Social ecology is important because it presents us with a unique set of variables that are specific to neighbourhoods in decline. Social constructionism is important because it deals with perceptions of reality and how people adapt to it.

Social Ecology Literature

Social ecology was first developed during the Depression by sociologists at the University of Chicago who were attempting to explain heightened crime rates in minority neighbourhoods (Park, Burgess and Mac Kenzie eds 1984). A central tenet of the early theory is that people are attracted to the central business district of the city for economic opportunity, but do not invest in the neighbourhood because they have ultimate ambitions of moving (Park 1936). As a result, the idea emerged that many inner-city neighbourhoods become improperly maintained because of transient residents who presumably do not care about the future of the neighbourhood (Harris and Ullman 1945).

These ideas were tempered through the years to account for the fact that many people were stuck in a socially disorganized environment and often financially unable to move out of those neighbourhoods (Wilson 1987, Sampson and Groves 1989). Such neighbourhoods can be defined by a gamut of conditions that include, but are not limited to: abandoned housing, broken windows, gang activity, graffiti, and abandoned cars. Social Disorganization Theory is often used to explain the interaction between certain neighbourhoods and inner-city crime rates, where the term 'inner-city' is often synonymous with minority and poor communities (Wilson 2012). In such communities, unemployment rates have been shown to be quite high, and educational attainment and social or economic status, by contrast, quite low (Andresen 2006).

While social ecology was meant to be a macro-level theory, there are many allusions to the idea that improper maintenance in such neighbourhoods is also coupled with attitudes that people have about conditions around them. Many criminologists, however, have refrained from discussing the attitudes and behaviours of individuals in such environments because it would mean committing the fallacy of making assumptions about people based on aggregate level data (Kawachi, Kennedy and Wilkinson 1999). However, implicit in the larger theory is that people in socially disorganized environments behave in a certain way.

Some social disorganization theorists (Barcan 2000, Stark 1987) suggest that prolonged residence in an area that is socially disorganized is essentially correlated with poor quality of life experiences. Some feel that residing in a disorganized neighbourhood, where everyone who could move away has done so, leads to feelings of anomie, hopelessness or a sense of 'moral cynicism.' According to Kubrin and Weitzer (2003: 380), 'Research indicates that neighbourhood disadvantage is linked to cynicism regarding legal norms . . . and to the emergence of street values that condone deviant behaviour . . . Additionally they document a

"code of honor" or "street code" that shapes residents' values and behavior, for instance, by encouraging a disputatious attitude and aggressive sanctions against individuals who show disrespect.'

What Kubrin and Weitzer (2003) and several others suggest is that people in such neighbourhoods lack collective efficacy. Coined by Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls (1997), the term collective efficacy refers to a dynamic mutual trust and support among neighbours built on the bonds they have with one another. People in neighbourhoods that have collective efficacy can work together to solve what they perceive as problems. In disorganized neighbourhoods, however, residents do not work together. It is possible that people in such neighbourhoods have become 'numb' about the conditions around them, therefore allowing further deterioration to happen. It is possible they do not care to stop the open-air drug markets, or the graffiti, or the crime, nor can they fix the abandoned housing or move the abandoned vehicles. It is also possible that people in such neighbourhoods think there is nothing that can be done about these issues. Thus, crime is allowed to run rampant in those areas where a community concerned about keeping it in check is absent. The present study, by contrast, finds that people in such neighbourhoods *do* care about certain things related to neighbourhood safety and quality of life issues.

Differing Constructions of Reality

To understand how life in such a neighbourhood relates to the NIMBY battle, one theory that is useful is social constructionism. Thomas & Thomas (1928: 572) first articulated the idea that '…situations are real in their meaning, only if men define them as such.' This idea is meant to express the myriad ways that individuals define and adapt to the world around them. The idea was later called social constructionism and is a micro-level theory that suggests that people behave in ways that are appropriately consistent with their definition of their environment.

Sociologists have long worked with the idea that multiple definitions combine into a holistic reality. Researchers such as Berger and Luckmann (1966) and Schütz (1967) sought to explain the ways that aggregates act based on shared discourse about individual perceptions. Later iterations of social constructionism would include symbolic interaction, ethnomethodology and phenomenology that placed the onus on perception above macro-level conditions in explaining human behaviour. While the epistemological tenets of social constructionism have rarely been used to explain aggregate patterns of behaviour such as crime rates, one can see how they would drive people who share geographic space to operate toward a commonly beneficial resolution to a problem. In an uncertain environment, people will work together to define normative boundaries.

Some social constructionists (Blumer 1936, Becker 1963) have pointed out the importance of shared discourse in predicting collective action. NIMBY battles represent the ability to turn shared dissatisfaction with the neighbourhood into efficacious political activism. Deseran (1978) suggested that community satisfaction could be understood as tri-dimensional. It consists of factual knowledge to provide the descriptive content, individual appraisal of a situation and salience to indicate the relevance of a circumstance to the actor.

Assuming that each community member understands the perception of their neighbourhood as a 'bad place', NIMBY battles allow avenues for neighbourhood residents to vent frustrations about their own perceived quality of life. They literally 'walk the middle ground' between the institution and the community with picket signs to assert their definition of the situation. Local politicians are cognizant of this sensitive situation and may interweave their own opinions on halfway houses into their political diatribe.

This article attempts to fill a gap in the current literature on social disorganization. Social ecology is useful in understanding the conditions that constitute a neighbourhood in decline. Social constructionism, on the other hand can account for definitions shared by residents in neighbourhoods in decline. Both, in turn, are important in understanding the many dimensions that are involved in any given NIMBY battle and especially one taking place in a disorganized neighbourhood. In such battles, there are groups of people that feel largely disenfranchised. Their experiences are not dissimilar to the experiences of civil rights protesters of the early 1960s. And like the physical conditions that spawned the civil rights riots in the 1960s, effects on definition are more pronounced when there is a struggle over control of the usage of space in an area where there is a perceived territoriality.

Data and Methods

We conducted our interviews with 48 respondents who lived in an area of town (near the main street) that was an ideal location for the placement of halfway houses. We used a snowball design asking local community leaders, such as the chief of police and local priests, where we might find people to interview. Some of the interviews were conducted at the community centre of a local church. Others were conducted directly out front of the halfway house during some of the many community protests that took place.

The majority of respondents (95 per cent) were Caucasian, however since this was the demographic of the town, we did not expect much minority participation in the interviews. Most of our respondents were males between the ages of 25 and 65. The ages used in the interviews in this article represent how old a person was at the time of the interview. The interviews were conducted between 1998 and 2008 and our respondents still keep in touch with us periodically. During the interviews, one of the authors of this paper maintained a residence near Chestnut Lane and developed a special knowledge of community events, places and rituals through daily interaction as a town resident.

The neighbourhood where the interviews were conducted had an urban centre with resources such as a hospital and local social service offices, an abundant supply of low-cost housing, and access to public transportation. We found that most of the residents had two main perceptions in common related to the declining condition of the neighbourhood: perceived failure of local economies and perceived neighbourhood image. The content of what these people said confirmed what Berger and Luckmann (1966) defined as 'intersubjective sedimentation', which is a particular form of symbolic understanding that arises when individuals share a common perceived biography.

Piat (2000) describes how NIMBY battles begin. They begin with residents of a neighbourhood seeking to maintain some kind of control over the area in which they live.

Thus, an unwanted establishment (for example, a halfway house) must be commonly perceived as a mechanism that will take away control of neighbourhood surroundings for residents. It makes sense that people who share the same neighbourhood also share an ideal view of where the neighbourhood is going and where it has been; and that is largely what we are interested in learning about. In addition, we sought to discover whether residents shared similar interests in the values of their homes and shared hopes of creating a relatively crime-free environment where neighbours trust each other. Finally, we wanted to explore whether a shared opposition to the placement of a halfway house was related to the basic need to feeling financially secure, free from crime and free from shame.

Economic Realities and Perceptions in a NIMBY Battle
As with any grassroots struggle, there is a dichotomy between perception and reality among participants in a NIMBY battle. A common perception is that halfway houses contribute to the economic decline of a neighbourhood. One of the most common themes among people who oppose the placement of the halfway house was some variant of: 'my property values will go down'. In reality, however this is not the case, as it was many other factors that contributed to the downfall of Chestnut Lane long before the halfway house arrived. Ironically enough, many of the residents that we interviewed seemed to promote the false causation of the economic demise of the area with the placement of halfway houses.

The residents appeared accurate in their perception of one disheartening reality of the NIMBY battle however. Sometimes, as opposed to fighting the placement of unwanted facilities by the state in their neighbourhood, economically privileged people simply leave. The residents of Chestnut Lane were no stranger to the phenomena of middle-class flight and perceived it as diminishing the quality of life in their neighbourhood: 'I've seen a couple of good people that were just adamant about getting out of town,' said Annie, a middle-aged Caucasian female resident, 'We're thinking about doing it too when we have enough money saved up'.

Interestingly, the less affluent people left behind on Chestnut Lane had a similar unpleasant reaction to residents of communities studied by sociologists in the 1960s and 1970s during the white flight era. During this time, schools were desegregating and more affluent whites left the inner city for the suburbs (Frailing and Harper 2010, Bankston and Caldas 2002). On Chestnut Lane most residents were not able to articulate how the flight of such affluent people would affect the greater economy (that is, the tax base of the neighbourhood) but they did see how it affected events and important things in their vernacular life.

Restaurant owners, architects, lawyers and doctors were all reported as leaving Chestnut Lane. At least three of the people that we interviewed seemed concerned that a young doctor was considering the possibility of family life in the local neighbourhood. 'All of the good ones [doctors] are leaving the area', said Martha, a local resident and a grandmother of three who would not reveal her age to us. She added, 'This must be the third doctor we've been through in about 10 years'. When we interviewed this doctor, Alex, he said, 'I did my residency here because I didn't mind working with people in need but we're [his wife and

him] getting to the point where my wife wants to have children and I just would not know about raising them here'.

Quite a few residents also complained about the closing down of 'good' local restaurants that had become neighbourhood fixtures over the years. 'I remember a place called Dino's,' said Ray a 76-year-old Caucasian male. 'My wife and I had our first date [there] in '62 [1962]. You could really get the best Italian food in town. Now it's closed down like everything else I suppose'.

When asked about the economic realities of NIMBY battles, most residents feel that the placement of halfway houses near their homes is coincident with lower property values. Although there is no proof of this being the case as of yet, the residents are convinced otherwise. There were at least six people we interviewed who were willing to sell their homes below market value if they could get rid of them. 'I'd move in a heartbeat if I could', said Ray, 'but who the heck is going to buy a house in this area?'

The reality is that low property values often coincide with poor tax bases, but also coincide with the effective delivery of public assistance in service to many people in an area. Eventually, this may translate into refurbishment in local economies. However, and with good reason, people seemed more concerned with the perceptions of everyday life and less with the larger long run social and economic issues.

As far as residents are concerned, the things that presented themselves as most important in life (that is, good schools, expensive homes, good restaurants, good medical care, and so on) are simply not to be found on Chestnut Lane anymore. One of the more interesting observations that was perhaps linked indirectly with the economy was that many residents felt the school system was failing. Despite having a high ranking on state placement tests, this theme resounded among residents. 'I told my son to leave town as soon as he graduated from college. He has his degree in education,' said Rodney, a local Caucasian man of 55. 'The local public school was swarming with Puerto Ricans' he continued, 'I told him if that's what you want to teach then go ahead and teach them, but if I were you I'd like to work in another town that treats the teachers better'. Here, the perpetual cycle of neighbourhood decay can be viewed as intergenerational. A young college graduate who might have otherwise been a valuable contributor to the local economy was encouraged to leave rather than have to contend with issues in a dilapidated environment.

Of course, the root of the local hardship truly lies at the closing of the town's main textile mills during the 1970s, and the halfway houses on Chestnut Lane represent a last-ditch effort by local government to stimulate a dying economy. But the residents do not see it that way. The most prominent perception among residents was that Chestnut Lane went from an affluent, upper-middle class suburban area to a decaying lower-middle class area when the halfway houses appeared on the scene, not before. 'As soon as they moved those halfway houses in, it was like the straw that broke the camel's back,' said Hugo. 'First the mill closes down, a couple years later your favourite stores are closing, your friends start moving out to different places . . . then the criminals come along. You just know the rest your life you're not going anywhere . . .'

Ironically, the halfway house subsidy plan was perceived by local business operators as weakening the local economy by eventually removing a few remaining healthy investors from the community. 'When they opened the work-release houses, my husband said you better think about getting a shotgun for your business . . .', said Angela, a Caucasian 46-year-old female and former greeting card shop owner. She added, 'sure enough . . . two weeks later the police caught some people trying to break into my store. There were just some local kids but I figured between them and the ex-convicts somebody was going to eventually do it again with me in there . . . so I decided to close shop a couple months later'. However, the problems were brewing on Chestnut Lane long before the halfway houses arrived. Whether it is important for residents to acknowledge and understand this is somewhat irrelevant.

Shared Symbolic Fears in the NIMBY Battle
So why do the people of Chestnut Lane recoil at the presence of the halfway house, even when socioeconomic conditions in the area have steadily declined and brought a number of other, arguably more pressing problems to the area? In the eyes of most residents, at the time that the state government was subsidizing halfway houses in the neighbourhood, Chestnut Lane went from prosperity to disrepair. While not directly contributing to the demise of the local economy, the halfway houses serve as a constant reminder of lost prosperity. As with most communities, on Chestnut Lane with the decline of the economy came an increase in both instrumental crimes and crimes of opportunity. Again, as with the declining economic value of the area, heightened crime and victimization activity was already taking root before the placement of the halfway houses. But from our interviews, we learned that there is perhaps no other better embodiment of increased criminal activity than a house full of ex-offenders. The house itself becomes a symbol to lash out at.

Chestnut Lane is far from being the affluent suburb it once was, but this is not the fault of the halfway houses or the ex-offenders in them; it is a symptom of a greater stagnant economy. In our interviews, we noticed that residents failed to acknowledge many of the other signs of economic hardship apparent in the neighbourhood. Graffiti mar the dreary area. Boarded up houses or houses with broken windows were not the norm, but they were becoming more visible at the time of our interviews. Residents clearly associate this with the halfway houses as if they were in denial about larger events.

What is perhaps most disconcerting is that in the process of incorporating the halfway houses into the shared NIMBY diatribe is that many neighbourhood residents have come to devalue the human rights of people in the halfway houses. It is easy to demonize ex-convicts and drug addicts, and the people of Chestnut Lane have taken all too readily to doing so.

There were several recurrent comments among residents we interviewed, including (but not limited to) these common themes:
1. people in the house 'look different'
2. many of them are 'drug users'
3. they are not 'like others' in the community

Many Caucasians that we interviewed highlighted the idea that people in the house 'look different'. Many of them were also quick to point out that most people who live in the work-

release houses are of Hispanic persuasion. From this we determined that shared symbolic fears about the halfway houses were more or less directly related to a common distaste that local white residents had toward the Puerto Rican community. Few interviewees specifically mentioned race as a factor, however it was apparent that some did not distinguish Puerto Rican citizens in the community and Puerto Ricans that lived in the halfway houses.

Part of this racial tension is undoubtedly due to the history of the community when during the 1970s an influx of Puerto Rican emigrants threatened to displace Caucasian workers from their factory jobs. While the closing of the factories means that immigrants no longer threatened workers in the area economically, Caucasian residents were quick to unite in their statements against the Hispanic population. One Caucasian man, age 41, stated, 'The complexion of the community changed and as far as I'm concerned, I think the biggest problem is the melding of the cultures. Just reluctance. . . It seems to me reluctance on the part of the Hispanic community to not integrate with the non-Hispanic community. There has been a flight — definitely. And real estate values have plummeted and they have not come back appreciably'.

Many of our interviewees expressed disgust at the site of halfway houses in the neighbourhood even though some of the halfway houses were better maintained than the homes of local residents. We heard stories about 'the strange men who sit on the front porch of the halfway house smoking cigarettes' and how they mostly frightened the residents. 'They just stand out there eyeing up the people, looking menacing and smoking cigarettes,' said Hannah, a 28-year-old Caucasian female, who added, 'They smoke them one after the other and then ash them in rusty old coffee cans'.

Halfway house residents are mostly minorities and they look vastly out of place on Chestnut Lane, and such appearances fit the criminal stereotype well in the minds of certain residents. Many of them have tattoos and wear ill-fitting clothes, most of which are donations. A local halfway house worker, John, a 35-year-old Caucasian man, said, 'The local residents glare at them with contentious looks. They [the halfway house residents] can't stand that. Sometimes local residents increase the speed at which they walk by the house . . . you can just tell that they are scared of these guys!'

A few parents we interviewed now tell their children not to go 'riding bikes past' or 'playing near' this house, and they have a good reason as far as they are concerned. Why not? The house is a habitat of multiple persons with criminal records. It is a halfway house. We are aware of concerns people have about the siting of halfway houses. Kilburn and Costanza (2011) highlight many stories of residents concerned about the presence of homes and their inhabitants altering the character of the neighbourhood. One story they note from the *Los Angeles Times* quotes a little girl stating 'Daddy won't let me play outside anymore. I don't want to play outside because of those crazy men' (Bailey 1985).

While the halfway house residents may not feel welcome and frequently suffer contentious glares, the men in this house are nevertheless grateful to be on Chestnut Lane. As one halfway house resident stated, 'After 28 days you start to clear up pretty much mentally and see the true picture . . . the counsellor I had there said, "I don't think you should go right back home. I don't think it's a good idea. I don't think you have your sober feet on the ground

yet. Let's see if I can go make arrangements at the halfway house. You can go and stay there".
I kind of resisted that. I can only say looking back on it, it was good for me. I just couldn't do
what I wanted'.

Many residents of that work-release house have come and gone, but rarely have these
residents caused a problem with the community. Local police we interviewed said that the
men in the house were not directly responsible for any major crimes in the area. The men
have not robbed any liquor stores in the vicinity. They have not burglarized houses or
committed motor vehicle theft. Sometimes they feel offended by the glares; and sometimes
those glares remind them that they are criminals in the eyes of society. Sometimes they even
regret that people look at them with the contentious glare. More so, one halfway house
resident interviewee told us, 'Any time you go and apply for a job and you check that
application, you see that little box that says "have you ever been convicted of a felony?" and
sometimes that's hard for people, really hard for people, man'.

Like all ex-offenders, the strangers on Chestnut Lane are feared and loathed by the
society that surrounds them. But like the citizens of Chestnut Lane, these men have a story to
tell that rarely escape the confines of the house. Many residents do not realize those 'strange'
men were not sent to the halfway house by coercion but voluntary admitted themselves to use
the resources available to them to re-strengthen their self-discipline and live a drug free life.
One resident, Paul, admitted himself to a halfway house after his wife discovered his alcohol
addiction. Soon after admittance, Paul began to see clearly and the true picture of the
problems his alcoholism caused.

The same can be said for individuals sent to a halfway house after a prison stay. Luis
was sent to a halfway house after a three-year sentence in prison. He credits the vocational
and educational programs for turning his life around. He said that being in those programs
allowed him to obtain and maintain a job, save money, and helped reduce his chances of
succumbing to his substance abuse problems. The halfway house, to Luis, was also a good
transitional place to help with the shift back to life in the community. Programs within and
surrounding a halfway house offer individuals resources and tools to help combat both
internal and external battle they may face.

Political Attempts to Commandeer the NIMBY Battle
One of the more distasteful aspects of the NIMBY battle that perhaps helps to fuel fear among
the local people are the voices of politicians who seek support of the local community. Such
politicians are often merchants of hate, starring up the local populace in fear and contempt. In
truth, it was the politicians who are the actual culprits in the NIMBY battle that is currently
being fought on Chestnut Lane. Allowing the state to place halfway houses and Section 8
housing near the area, the city council made the proverbial 'deal with the devil'. The influx of
new residents promised in the short run to resuscitate the local economy, but the new
demographic was not capable of sustaining the community.

Yet, while the town council did not originally oppose the moves by the social service
organizations developing the halfway houses, one local politician was quick to play on
sentimental issues. A local councilwoman, Penny, described another part of the problem as, 'a

loss of the local people . . . The ones outside the city; the ones that were there before the city people started moving outside the city. They're very much ingrained New England people for generations and generations. And they don't accept change. And they're ultra-conservative for the most part so…'

Political commandeering of the NIMBY battle over halfway houses is not unique to Chestnut Lane. In fact, Winerip (1994) describes a very similar situation in the NIMBY battle against a group home for persons with mental illness in New York State. In that case, the town's mayor used the aforementioned Padavan law to imply that a local agency had not meaningfully engaged with the community in seeking approval for a new group home and instead gone straight to the state hearing stage of the process. Though not true, the mayor used this claim to rally support against the proposed group home within the community. At a particularly contentious public hearing about the proposed group home, community members cited myriad reasons for their opposition to it, including concerns for their safety, the safety of their children, property values, school quality and even for the safety of potential residents. The mayor strongly supported residents' sentiments, even though in private talks with the local agency he had not opposed the site; he even expressed support for the notion that group homes serve better and more humanely persons with mental illness, though he noted that voters have long memories when it comes to support for such locations (Winerip 1994).

The mayor's support set the tone for nearly all the council members to voice their opposition to the proposed group home at that public hearing; the former mayor of the town implied that more affluent communities had not even been considered in the siting process, which added fuel to the fire (Winerip 1994). As was the case in Chestnut Lane, politicians in this small New York town proved eager to capitalize on public sentiment against the proposed group home.

Discussion

Our research offers some evidence that social dynamics of neighbourhoods often extend beyond what is visible on the surface. Physically, halfway houses usually appear different than residential houses in the neighbourhood. Among other differences, they usually have a sign in the front indicating the name of the facility and also more activity inside and around the house. But aside from the physical reality, people in the residential area often react with frustration and hostility to what they perceive as cultural and class identities and differences (Krase 2012b). Halfway houses, like many other institutional correctional facilities, exude stigmata that greatly influence the interpretation of space. Thus, residents can often see a well-kept halfway house and still define the territory as unsafe. Humans make an instant assessment of neighbourhoods based on what they first see (Krase 2012a).

A principal finding that emerged in our interviews is that both ex-convicts and political officials emerge as targets of fear and loathing during NIMBY battles. Despite the futile political manoeuvers to resuscitate the economy, the halfway houses remain on Chestnut Lane. Residents in the area still display a great deal of unhappiness about the local political landscape. During the years that followed, residents began to express their concern that the town council had indeed made a proverbial 'deal with the devil'. During our

interviews, most residents seemed inconsolable about the government allowance of halfway houses in their small town.

One of the questions that have been addressed a few times in NIMBY literature is whether there are any social policy solutions that will diminish fears and allay the concerns of residents. Castells (1983) notes that land use is a struggle over collective consumption. At the neighbourhood level, the quality of businesses and feelings of public safety are products of how these areas are defined by inhabitants of the city. Theoretically, people share a collective understanding of what a 'safe' and prosperous neighbourhood is supposed to look like, giving attention to the primary use of land around them. Knowing about the existence of a halfway house in any given area diminishes positive experiences associated with the consumption of neighbourhood-level goods and services, thus property values are greatly influenced by political decisions on land use.

Cowan (2003) suggests community meetings between sponsors of unwanted residences and community members to facilitate communication. She suggests open discourse between citizens and government as a remedy to NIMBY syndrome. Kilburn and Costanza (2011) also suggest transparency and discourse over NIMBY battles, advising that local government takes steps to inform residents of the economic good that may come of sponsoring halfway houses in an area. The authors discuss 'payment in lieu of taxes' (PILOT), claiming that monies received from the state can work to residents' advantage. The authors argue that instead of dealing with blight and abandonment, the city instead could receive large amounts of PILOT money to beautify and restore the area.

However, it is apparent from the content of our many interviews that the strong emotional feelings that people have about halfway houses in the neighbourhood may be too powerful for community meetings, or even state stipends, to overcome. The idea that 'beggars can't be choosers' adds insult to injury, but the label 'beggars' applies here to the residents of this disenfranchised community. While PILOT revenue has been appreciated by local government, it is apparent that residents in the area would prefer these formerly vacant houses to be filled up with 'productive citizens' as opposed ex-cons and substance addicts. Having a taxpayer with a steady job residing in the home is the ideal, and apparently not just any form of revenue is welcomed by residents in what they perceive as their town. When it comes to balancing a small city's budget, it is apparent from our interviews that government stipends have very little significance on the perceived safety or happiness felt by residents.

Part of the reason that residents continue to be so concerned about the placement of unwanted facilities, such as halfway houses in their communities, is because the emergence of such places in residential areas are a constant reminder of both the historic downfall of the economy, and an ongoing pattern of political disempowerment for the neighbourhood. The relationship between individual perception and the larger hand of the governmental system is intrinsically intertwined (Pardo 2012). By allowing the emergence of correctional facilities in residential areas, government is ignoring the interests of the neighbourhood and allowing the perceived process of decay to accrue. Residents feel they are being ignored and shun the legitimacy of government, widening the rift between government and residents.

Pardo (2012) points out that when government ignores small problems like crime, there is often a snowball effect. It was apparent in our interviews that political disenfranchisement becomes something that causes a great deal of resentment and alienation. Although many residents do not (or cannot) phrase their concerns articulately, the effects of political alienation leave neighbourhoods powerless to fight for quality of life issues.

Given Pardo's (2012) analysis of negligent government, one question that we must ask is: *are NIMBY battles worth fighting*? One thing is clear from our interviews: NIMBY battles bond residents in a powerful way. To us, the downside of that unification is not so much the misunderstanding of halfway houses but the unfair labelling of a group of people, many of whom are returning from prison to an already uncaring and cold community. On this note, we suggest an in depth study of the relationship between racism and NIMBY struggles for future research.

There are several other implications for future research that would provide a better understanding of the NIMBY battle. The region that we studied is racially mixed, as is the composition of the halfway house residents. Therefore, offering a simple reason of racism does not clearly explain this phenomenon. Additionally, there is no study that has produced data on whether halfway houses correlate with increases in crime. Nor has any study confirmed that the presence of halfway houses subsequently destroyed the economy of any financially solid town.

Another topic for future analysis would involve finding ways to close the schism between community and government created by unwanted land use. When describing the growth of halfway houses, residents make it clear that halfway houses are a constant source of anger, fear, and irritation on Chestnut Lane. As one resident put it, 'It [the placement of halfway houses] just grew and grew and grew. And it was not accepted in the community in the beginning. The problem is that there are too many. There are just too many. While I don't have any objection… personally, I'm supportive of that because I see the value of halfway houses. The thing that makes me angry is that the state has allowed the private sector to run around town buying up houses and plunking halfway houses in neighbourhoods that are inappropriate. And that causes white flight. And that's not fair. Put houses in [neighbouring towns]. They all have buses. They can bus people into town for the services they need. And I really get angry about that…and of course, you can't talk about it publicly. I mean political correctness has gotten to be totally absurd. People can't vent their distress about it except in generalized terms, because you offend one portion of the community or another'.

A final question to be pondered in future research might be an analysis of '*who leaves and who stays in a neighbourhood facing a NIMBY struggle?*' Our research would seem to indicate that there is a tipping point that usually involves the combination of fear and having one or more children. As one resident stated, 'I very much enjoyed the fact that even though it's a small town it's a lot like a city and you could walk everywhere. So I could walk my daughter to school. Which is good, I got a lot of exercise and it was great for my legs. I also got to ride my bike frequently. I got to walk to shops. But I could also walk to the drug dealers. Which I did not do though I could have. The real down side was the issue of safety for the children since we were on this third floor, letting them go out to play would require

being fairly permissive'. When pressed for detail, this resident stated that, 'I never actually saw the dealing going on but we knew it was going on'. He relocated with the justification of needing a safer environment for his children.

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'Meat Smells Like Corpses':
Sensory Perceptions in a Sicilian Urban Marketplace

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Based on in-depth ethnographic research, this article analyses how the tendency to sanitising urban spaces has affected the urban marketplace of La Pescheria, Catania, Sicily, and how this is reflected in the sensory experience of the space itself. Local authorities aim to render the market more appealing for a new clientele, mainly tourists and gastronomic experts. The reactions to this urban gentrification attempt are observable through the ethnography of people' sensory experience, which informs what kind of social order is maintained and/or contested within the market. Focusing on what is allowed to be experienced helps to unveil stratification of meanings, which demonstrate that bodily knowledge is deeply connected to space. The market is seen as a space under construction, in which cultural values are intertwined within the economic system. I examine accounts related to smell, touch and hearing as central arenas of contention in the marketplace. The shift in the direction of a more sanitised and secluded urban space encounters resistance and a smelly, noisy market can be understood as a space of disobedience, in which noise and smell become a statement against authority.
Keywords: Senses, Sicily, Food, Market, Cities.

Introduction

Catania is located on the oriental coast of Sicily, on the Mediterranean Sea. It is the second largest city of the region, with over one million inhabitants in the province and with 300,000 citizens residing in the municipality (ISTAT 2011). Like other European cities, Catania experienced great expansion due to increased urbanisation during the 20th century (Pagano 2007). As the urban population increased, the city centre became very congested and overrun with traffic. This was followed by several attempts of decentralisation through the creation of more suburban residential centres. Shopping areas underwent a similar transformation. In the last fifteen years neighbourhood markets, supermarkets and lately hypermarkets have mushroomed in the residential suburbs at the foothills of Mount Etna, where the majority of the province's population now lives.

The city centre kept its centrality for administrative purposes, but lost its importance as far as economic and financial activities were concerned (Comune di Catania 2008). However, the Piazza Duomo (Cathedral Square), built with the unique volcanic stone that is used both for the pavements and the buildings, is still the heart of Catania. The stark contrast of white marble and black volcanic stone characterises eastern Sicily's Baroque style. The Cathedral, designed by Gian Battista Vaccarini (Rio 1987), is Catania's most important church and it is dedicated to Sant'Agata (Saint Agatha),[1] the city's patron saint. *U' liotru*, the fountain of the elephant,[2] symbol of the city, is also located in Piazza Duomo.

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[1] Saint Agatha was one other first Christian female martyrs. Saint Agatha's is the most lively and heartfelt cult in Catania's religious life. Saint Agatha is believed to defend the city from volcanic eruptions. Each February, approximately one million people take part in her celebration: the whole city is transformed into a ceremony. Citizens and tourists crowd the streets and every urban neighbourhood joins the celebrations

[2] This fountain was also assembled by Gian Battista Vaccarini in 1736. This Italian architect, responsible for much of the town's extensive restorations after the 1693 earthquake, combined the

Piazza Duomo naturally channels the oblivious passer-by in the direction of La Pescheria, one of Catania's historical markets[3] (see Map on p. 34). From the square, the marketplace is not yet visible, as it is hidden by the Anemano's fountain.[4] However, when the wind blows it is difficult to avoid the smell of fish, especially during the warmer seasons. Walking in the direction of the fountain, one can hear the increasing noise of the market, made up mainly of voices, but also of the butcher's cleavers chopping through bones in the meat quarters, or the fishermen's scabbards slicing off the heads of tuna or swordfish. The noise, the smell and the general movement of people combine to indicate the presence of the market. This makes it impossible for a casual visitor to be in Catania without becoming aware of the market.

On approaching the market, one is mesmerized by an array of colours. On both sides, there are stalls with vegetables and fruit and one is immediately struck by the smells of the marketplace. It is easy to recognise the season from the predominant colour across the market stalls: during summer, piles of nectarines, peaches and apricots are displayed; oranges, mandarins and lemons dominate the scene in winter. If tasting is the enjoyment of the gaze (Le Breton 2007: 338), this is the visitor's first bite into a flavoursome market.

The present discussion is informed by ethnographic material collected during an 18-month fieldwork conducted between 2008 and 2009. It is further augmented by many subsequent visits to Catania and its marketplaces. The central purpose is to analyse the shift of Catania's historical market, La Pescheria,[5] from a place where most daily practices were left to the discretion of the stallholders, to a structure in which vendors deal with bureaucracy, taxes and rules, and which is managed mainly by the council. Like many other city dwellers, my informants describe La Pescheria as a market for the lower classes. During the interviews, many vendors referred to themselves and to the people of the market as *gente bassa* (low

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volcanic stone elephant, probably sculptured during the Roman era, with an Egyptian obelisk (Alfieri 2007). There are many legends about the elephant. Some people explained to me that it faces east to scare off the Turks; others that it symbolises protection from the threat of the volcano.

[3] Upon entering the city, signposts indicate the location of the two historical markets: *'mercati storici'* (historical markets) the sign reads, clearly visible on the way to town from the airport. It is not difficult to grasp the symbolic importance of these markets. La Pescheria and the *Fera du' Luni* are located in the city centre, about 500 meters from each other. In spite of their similarities, they encountered very different destinies. Whilst *La Pescheria* remained a 'traditional' market run by Sicilians and connected to what is regarded as 'traditional' food, the *Fera du' Luni* has incorporated new social actors such as immigrants from different countries, who have brought new elements also from a gastronomic point of view. *Fera du' Luni* is somehow more similar to other Italian urban markets, such as Piazza Vittorio in Rome or Porta Palazzo in Turin.

[4] This fountain was sculptured by Tito Angelini in 1867. Its name, *Funtana dill'acqua a linzolu* (the fountain of the sheet water), derives from an optical illusion whereby the water seems to flow onto the marble like a soft white sheet (Alfieri 2007). The official name of the fountain is Fontana dell'Amenano, Amenano being the name of an underground river flowing underneath the city centre. The river becomes visible under the fountain and draws the eye to the bowels of the city.

[5] 'Pescheria' generally means fish shop, but in Catania La Pescheria (*Piscaria* in the local dialect) identifies the fish market. In spite of its name, the market does not sell fish only, but all sorts of food.

people) or *popolino*,[6] a derogative way of designating the proletariat. Thus they refer to the mass of poor people who used to live in this rundown central city area and have now mostly relocated in the suburbs.

I argue that the local authority, specifically the municipality, is currently aiming to clean this urban space and make it more presentable for tourists and city dwellers; the aim is to render the market a safer, more appealing and entertaining destination. This transformation has been characterised by the standardisation of services and practices according to criteria set out by organizations such as the European Union, when they provided guidelines not based on local concepts such as tradition or proximity but on extra-territorial authority (Seremetakis 1994).[7]

The 'clean-up' operation (*ripulitura*, in the words of people in the market) is a clear attempt at urban gentrification. This process is apparent observing how the sensory experience of the market has been affected. According to Degen (2008), bodily knowledge reflects social changes and its analysis can shed light into the socio-cultural contexts of cities, contributing to a deeper understanding of order, power, and control. The marketplace experience is both synaesthetic and kinaesthetic, bringing senses and movement together. The moving subjects engage with a totality of smells, sounds, consistencies, textures and tastes that follows customers to their homes, into their kitchens and finally into their mouths. Le Breton (2007) argues that it would make little sense to isolate one of the senses, because the phenomenology of perception can only be holistic. He emphasises that it is not the senses that decipher the world, but each individual embedded in a specific history and culture. It is in this sensory *Weltanschaung* that I place the marketplace and its overwhelming combination of perceptions.

In the specificity of La Pescheria, the transition of the marketplace translates into a shift in what is considered a culturally appropriate bodily knowledge. Distance, standardisation and new hygienic standards convey a more private, secluded and 'safer' approach to food, which affects what is allowed to be perceived in an urban space. I will proceed firstly by briefly describing the methodology of this research, then I will examine why food marketplaces are still relevant in the discussion around urban contexts, highlighting their cultural and economic significance and their contribution in addressing issues related to public space. I also take into account approaches which argue that sensory experience is fundamental to an understanding of our relationship to places. I will then describe the market from the perspective of the sensory experience, drawing mainly on the reported experience of smells, touch, and hearing. These three senses have been chosen, because they were the most

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[6] Pardo (1996) reviews the literature on the definition of popolino in his book about morality in Naples, where the connotation was not as negative as in my fieldsite. See also Pardo (2012: 53n).

[7] A consistent body of anthropological and sociological literature focuses on the role of European Union regulations, perceived in juxtaposition to local traditions (Leitch 2003). The European Union has introduced a body of regulations concerning food labelling, food production and fisheries. Italy, as a European Member State is obliged to follow EU policies about food labelling and sustainable fishing. Catania's local municipality has been unable to impose these rules at La Pescheria, despite recurrent attempts. The reasons of this failure will not be discussed here.

contested during my ethnographic work at the market. The relationship between place and smell and the disgust for strong smells are investigated in the light of the contemporary tendency to sanitising public spaces and to removing death and decomposition from our daily urban life. As far as touch is concerned, the introduction of packaging, perceived as a barrier between buyers and food, speaks for the desire to move towards a more upmarket clientele, bringing in the concepts of privacy, seclusion and democratisation into the relationship to food. Noise is also addressed within this analysis. Practically and symbolically, it signifies disobedience and resistance toward authority and toward an imposed new order.

Ethnography of a Well-ordered Chaos
At first, La Pescheria appeared chaotic and impenetrable, an indistinct knot of colours, voices, smells; an overcrowded assemblage of stalls, foods, and people. Many ethnographers dealing with markets have reported a similar initial sensation. Black (2012: 34) depicts markets as 'contained chaos' and De La Pradelle (2006: 17) recounts her first impression of the market as an 'inextricable chaos: a labyrinth of densely crowded, narrow streets and squares, the pleasant jumble characterizing some stalls, products spread about in apparent disorder […]'. Similarly Bestor (2004: 52) borrows Geertz's expression of 'grooved channels' to delineate the intricate and complex systems of relationships within the marketplace.

Undoubtedly, such a context poses a methodological challenge to the ethnographer. In order to integrate the theoretical background and my methodology (Krase 2012), I chose to combine traditional ethnography with some more innovative approaches. Following Le Breton's call (2007) for examining the senses in their totality, I embraced a phenomenological perspective, in which the observation of space, movement and sensory interactions with the surrounding environment became vital.

In tandem with participant observation and in-depth open-ended interviews with buyers and traders, I also availed myself of techniques which could allow to broaden my perspective on the marketplace and its social dynamics. To capture the marketplace's visual layout, I did not take pictures but asked others to do so. It was useful to see the place with 'different eyes', from different perspectives, and this allowed me to check whether I had overlooked some aspects of the market organization.[8] I collaborated with architect Guido Robazza to create ad-hoc maps that would help to achieve a more detailed geographical representation of the market area. I also personally recorded the sound of the market; I strolled through it with a recording device, seeking to capture the vendors' hawks and cries and the noises in the different parts of the market. A visual anthropologist and a film-maker worked with me filming the marketplace and my interactions with vendors, buyers and fishermen. We also filmed ten interviews with regular customers in the market and followed them through by filming in their kitchens, whilst they were preparing and cooking the products bought at the

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[8] Three professional photographers agreed to shoot in the market: Athanasios Zacharopolous from Greece, Giuseppe D'Alia and Andrea Nucifora from Catania. Other friends visiting the city were encouraged to photograph La Pescheria while I was showing them around.

market. All this material greatly contributed to my analysis and was integrated into the writing up process.

Bestor (2004) describes the Tsukiji's market while warning the reader that the market is not fixed in time and space but rather changes constantly. He notes that this kind of description may seem to 'freeze the place in time' but, despite this inconvenience, he acknowledges the need to provide a sense of the market's spatial layout, in order to understand how '[t]ime and space […] significantly construct the social structure of the marketplace' (Bestor 2004: 55). I would like to exposit the market's 'well-ordered chaos' (De La Pradelle 2006: 17) and this can only be achieved through a detailed description of how space is used, occupied and structured.

Urban Markets and the Senses

Recent times have been marked by the increasing urbanisation of the world population and the never-ending industrialisation of food systems (Tscharntke et al. 2012), stimulating a greater interest in urban and food studies. A growing desire for more trustworthy sources of food has emerged in academic and public discourses (Counihan and Siniscalchi eds 2014). Food markets around the globe are undergoing radical changes (Téchoueyres 2007) and this is especially apparent in urban markets (Herzfeld 2006). Here, I address the market as a space under construction: 'a product of relations-between, relations which are necessarily embedded material practices' (Massey 2005: 9). Intending place as socially constructed, reproduced, lived and experienced (Lefebvre 1991) implies that 'place' is not just a location where things happen but is recognised in its own complexity. Current debate supports this view (Gupta and Ferguson eds 1997, Harvey 1985, Low and Lawrence-Zuniga eds 2003, Rodman 2003, Zukin 1995 and 2010).

According to Lebfevre (1991: 46), '[i]f space is produced, if there is a productive process, then we are dealing with history'. This history of space recalls a conceptualisation of time and space as formed by cumulative layers, in De Certeau's (1984:200) own wording by 'imbricated strata'. De Certeau (1984: 200) argues that these layers 'are available for analysis; they form a manageable surface'. From this perspective, places comprise stratifications of meanings hidden in spatial practices observable through ethnographic scrutiny. Rodman (2003:208) says that places are 'local and multiple', referring to them as 'polysemic'. These places 'bespeak people's practices, their history, their conflicts, their accomplishments' (Rodman 2003: 214). This connection between practice and place challenges a static and simplistic idea of place in favour of an analysis that takes into account multiple aspects, such as the subjective, yet cultural sensory perception of people.

Assuming that '[e]xchanges involve categories, classifications of intended results, commodities and relationships' (Davis 1992: 63), a continuous re-negotiation of social categories can be observed in the ever-changing urban scenarios. Public spaces change alongside political, economic and cultural transformations, becoming often territories of contestation and social divisions. The ability by social actors in the market to manoeuvre through social constraints is deeply connected to the performance of identity and the sense of place is intertwined with the creation of boundaries (Bestor 2004).

As it has been demonstrated by De La Pradelle (2006), markets offer a vantage point for challenging a common understanding of cultural values in an economic system. In the market, social relationships and economic transactions are combined in the daily interactions among people (Black 2005), whereby they exchange goods, ideas and values. The market is, thus, the perfect context in which to observe resistance to more rationalised use of public space. Social scientists who study the urban gentrification of cities often share this viewpoint (Herzfeld 2009, Zukin 2010). The socio-economic significance of markets in urban settings derives also from their ties to food production and food distribution networks. Studying a geographically located place in relation to the local territory and to the global food systems allows us to investigate the interactions between cultural values and material and economic situations (Bestor 2004).

Geertz (1979) showed how the market is structured according to general principles of social organization. Consequently, it is easy to understand his definition of the bazaar as 'a distinctive system of social relationships centring on the production and consumption of goods and services (that is, a particular kind of economy)' (Geertz 1979: 124). More recently, De La Pradelle's (2006) monograph about a Provençal market challenged the radical opposition of modern societies, where the rationality of the market prevails, to 'traditional societies, where the exchange of goods is always 'embedded' in the social relations of persons and groups (kinship, status hierarchy, domination and so on)' (De La Pradelle 2006: 2). This perspective followed the objection raised by Bird-David (1997: 471), against 'reproducing the master-division into wholly capitalist or wholly non-capitalist economy kinds'. These themes have recently originated debate in economics, as much as in the social sciences. The global recession which started in 2008 has fuelled a reconsideration of the long-established claim in economics, which reassured that 'everyone is rational and markets work perfectly' (Krugman 2009). As Harvey and Wachsmuth have noted '[a]t times of crises the irrationality of capitalism becomes plain to see' (Harvey et al. 2012: 264).

As much as we cannot divorce economy from cultural and social processes, it is not possible to dissociate knowledge from bodily perception (Serres 2008). Herzfeld (2001: 252) argues that 'the study of sensory symbolism forcefully reveals the hierarchies and stereotypes through which certain social groups are invested with moral and political authority and other groups disempowered and condemned.' This constitutes a fertile terrain of investigation in the social sciences (Chau 2008, Classen 1997, Geurts 2002). Attaching importance to the senses deprives the intellectual dimension of social life of its supremacy (Brant 2008, Chau 2008). In the case of La Pescheria, competence is acquired through the verbal interactions between seller and buyer, but it is also related to the 'social sensorium' (Chau 2008: 489). Stoller (1989) uses the expression 'tasteful ethnography' to emphasise that dealing with food means 'not only [to] investigate kinship, exchange, and symbolism, but also describe with literary vividness the smells, tastes, and textures of the land, the people, and the food.'(Stoller 1989: 29).

Nonetheless, places need to be investigated taking into account the sensory interaction between people and their environment. Place is indeed deeply interconnected with sensory perception and, in the market, it is essential to learn how to move in a 'sensorially rich social

space' (Chau 2008: 489). Degen (2004: 1) clearly explains that the ideologies behind urban regeneration 'aim to control disorder, impurity and exposure' by regulating what citizens are allowed to experience in a public space; she adds that 'sensuous geographies are important elements in the construction and maintenance of social order in place' (Degen 2008: 67).

'Meat Smells Like Corpses'

Smell has been often dismissed as an inferior sense (Bauman 1993, Classen et al 1994, Miller 1997), because it threatens 'the abstract and impersonal regime of modernity by virtue of its [...] boundary-transgressing propensities and its emotional potency' (Classen et al. 1994: 5). However, this sense more than others is associated with social order (Degen 2008), and is definitely 'a way of making sense of the world' (Bubandt 1998: 48). In some ethnographies it is the privileged sense, which together with taste, is seen as a marker of belonging and of difference (Walmsley 2005). Herzfeld (2001) provides the example of how exotic cooking smells can provoke strong reactions within neighbourhoods. In a recent article, Śliwa and Riach (2012) analyse smell to understand the political transition in Poland and connect the olfactory everyday experience to social distinction and stratification.

Places and smells are deeply interconnected (Brant 2008). When approaching La Pescheria market from a distance, its smell reaches one's nostrils well before one gets there. It is very common to hear people complaining about La Pescheria: 'The market stinks'; 'The smell of fish stays with you'; 'I cannot go there, the smell is too persistent'. Smell is a constant issue of contention at the market. Visitors often say that they do not like the smell of La Pescheria; it lingers in the area day and night, despite earnest attempts by the municipality to wash it out daily. It is a mix of water, meat and fish, as many trimmings end up on the pavement and during the hot season they start putrefying.

According to Bauman (1993), smells are invasive and they can be unsettling for a society obsessed with order. Urban interventions tend to 'clean' the public space of smells which could be considered unpleasant, such as the stench of fish. The most pertinent questions at this point would be, how does a smell that has been tolerated for centuries become unpleasant? And, what kind of changes does this reflect?

The following extract from my field-notes illustrates remarkably well how people's attitude towards smells has changed, especially among the younger generations.

> 'One day while I was chatting at Gaetano's vegetables stall, a woman, holding her little son's hand, approached him and asked "Gaeta could you keep an eye on him? He doesn't want to see the meat stalls going down via Pardo. He doesn't like the view. It is disgusting to him". The kid looked at me and explained "It is the smell of meat. It smells of corpses". I asked the 10-year old if he felt the same way every time he sees meat. "No", he replied, "in the supermarket it is different. It is different also at the butchery in via Umberto, where we live. It is cleaner. You don't see blood or big chunks of meat and there is no smell. That is disgusting. Have you seen the stalls here? With all the animals hanging"'.

The little boy referred to the whole chickens, the big beef quarters and the lamb legs hanging from the counters of the stalls in the via Gisira. While the sight of fish was never reported to me as repelling, things are different for meat; many people find the sight of blood and animals disgusting. The urban daily experience of meat happens in contexts, such as supermarkets, where customers are not exposed to sights, such as that of blood and offal, that are very often considered disgusting. People do not see the animal's shape and they do not see the animal alive.

According to my informants, attitudes toward the smell of meat changed in the 1990s, when supermarkets and hypermarkets became popular.[9] The market's butchers consider themselves as artisans of the art of butchery and they think that supermarket packaging prevents people from having the 'real' experience of meat. Antonio, one of the market's butchers, pointed out to me that the contemporary concept of butchery keeps the slaughtering process separated from the sale. It was, in fact, at the end of the 19th century that across Europe the slaughterhouses were moved outside city centres (Fitzgerald 2010). This move was justified by reasons of hygiene. The legislation about animal slaughtering constitutes an interesting example of how our ideas around these issues have been changing; as Herzfeld (2006: 131) points out, 'the progressive removal of "polluting" abattoirs to marginal spaces' belongs to a progressive rationalisation of public spaces.

Death is removed from sight through the de-localisation of the slaughterhouse but also through the display of meat that is already sliced, losing the resemblance of the animal shape. Vialles (1994) highlights that meat raises questions of taboos, especially concerning blood. She reminds us that '[t]he urban consumer is never, in terms of his daily alimentary experience, brought face to face with the animal. His steps take him no farther than the butcher's shop where he buys his meat.' (Vialles 1994: 28).

It seems that the exposure to death speaks against an idea of modernity, whereby, as Bauman (1993: 39) writes, '[o]ur world hides the secret of decomposition beneath its glittering surface, and decomposition is there because the inner energy of the emancipation drive, needed to keep the bubble inflated and impregnable, is all gone'.

The Urban Touch
A digression similar to Bauman's given above can be applied to touch. An ever-increasing distance between food and people has been introduced due to notions of hygiene. In Italian supermarkets, for instance, the customer is required to wear a plastic glove to handle produce even if vegetables and fruit are displayed in a market-like array. At La Pescheria, people are in the habit of touching produce in order to choose what they want. While the vendor is busy helping a customer, ladies approach the stall and start inspecting the wares on sale. Many of the buyers with whom I talked clearly explained that it is possible to assess the quality and the ripeness of the produce by touching it. For example Mrs La Rosa, one of the regular buyers, used both words and her hands to explain, 'It depends on what you want to eat and cook.

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[9] Catania is the European city with the second highest concentration of hypermarkets after Norway, including 650,000 sq. metres of shopping malls (Camarda 2008).

Let's take tomatoes. If you want to make tomato sauce, you need pulpy, soft, ripe tomatoes, but if you want to make a tomato salad you need greenish, harder ones. How can I know if I don't touch them? Oranges and lemons are the same. If you buy a soft lemon, the next day you throw it in the bin'.

At the market, a direct sensory relation with food is sought and more and more customers worry that they will no longer be able to touch their food before buying it if market vendors are forced to adopt and follow the new hygiene procedures introduced by the municipality. Vendors, on the other hand, are ambivalent towards hygiene regulations, especially when customers handle produce that are easy to perish. I quote again from my field-notes:

> 'A man, having approached Enrico's stall, started fingering kaki fruits (persimmons) to see whether they were ripe enough. "I would bite one if I were in your shoes. You squeeze them so much that if you do not buy them, I'm going to throw them away!" argued Enrico. The man answered in a very resolute tone saying, "This is a market, right? Am I in the wrong place by any chance?" Enrico, red in the face from anger, replies, "Yes, but this is not a self-service. You wait for me to finish, then you will be served". "I am not here to waste my money!", the man says, and adds, "Why should I come to the market if I cannot even touch the produce?". The exchange ends with the customer walking away.'

According to the vendors, the challenge is to be able to provide a 'modern' service without losing the directness of the market and without interfering too much with the experiential relationship to food. Enrico is alert to this situation and worries about this conflict. 'This', he says, 'is one of the reasons why this market is so different from a supermarket. You don't need to wear a plastic glove to touch a peach. I know it is not very hygienic, because your hands can be dirty and I don't want to buy the fruit you have touched . . .' According to La Pescheria's customers, a plastic wrap imposes a barrier between the senses and food. If supermarket-like packaging were to be introduced at the market, it would hinder this experience. Pre-wrapping is in fact almost totally absent from the market. As Mrs La Rosa states clearly, 'I like to come to the market because I can be close to what I buy. I can touch and smell before buying. I can feel what is good, what is ripe enough. I prefer this direct relationship with the produce. Much better than everything being wrapped in plastic.' Pre-wrapping would also impose a distance between the consumer and the products. As De Certeau (1984: 75) highlights, 'standardization, pre-wrapping, all the modern procedures in food preparation worry people', who doubt the quality of the products. There are constant suspicions that by imposing cleanliness and banishing dirt modern procedures introduce a new order. The order that is imposed on the market practice is indeed a new one, driven by different ideas of safety, control and purity. New regulations about hygiene introduce a dissonance in the pre-existent ordered system, which explains why any change in this matter was a major concern among vendors and buyers at La Pescheria.

Dirt avoidance is a process of tidying up by ensuring that the order in external physical events conforms to the structure of ideas. Rules on pollution impose order on

experience. They support the clarification of forms, and thus reduce dissonance (Douglas 1999: 111). Furthermore, a looser relationship to food and its de-materialization makes food identification more problematic in industrialised societies (Fischler 1988). This tendency is strongly opposed in the market and both buyers and vendors reject what they describe as 'fake food' (*cibo finto*) wrapped in plastic, preferring the 'real food' (*cibo vero*) on offer in the market. This resonates with Serres, when he writes that '[o]dourless frozen food for the spongy and obese, hidden under the cellophane so that no-one can touch or taste it - watch out the germs! […]' (2008: 186).

Voices Occupy Space

Orality is the aspect that most closely reflects the changes occurring in urban markets, and more in general in food commodification contexts. Recently, anthropologists have invited ethnographers not to be deaf to the sound of reality and to engage with it (Samuels et al 2010). At La Pescheria, vendors' voices occupy and dominate space, while buyers are allowed to answer back in a counterpoint of voices, noises and cries. As they step in the market, visitors can hear the vendors' voices shouting, 'One Euro, only one Euro'. Once they have, thus, drawn the attention of their potential customers', the sellers might add something more, to entice them to stop and engage in social interaction.

The synaesthetic experience of market has been the focus of Bonanzinga's work on the 'soundscapes'[10] of markets in Sicilian towns (2007). This way of celebrating the quality of the wares is called '*abbanniata, bbanniata, vanniata*' (Bonanzinga 2007: 92). *Abbanniare* (or *vanniare*) means 'to shout the wares', 'to announce what the vendor sells to the public', or simply 'to shout'. The *vanniata* indicates the vendor's cry to publicise his goods. According to Bonanzinga (2007:89), *imbonimento* means, literally, to make something good, to extol or glorify its qualities. The *imbonimento* could be translated as the 'sales pitch', which identifies who is selling what and is also used to catch people's attention. Sound is information (Serres 2008) and at La Pescheria shouting covers multiple functions: it can signal the presence of certain types of goods at the beginning of a new season, such as artichokes, figs and melons; it can praise the provenance of the produce and provide details about its production; and it can point out the quality of the wares. '*Troppu beddi sti caccocciuli*' (These artichokes are too beautiful), cries the young boy at the corner of the via Gisira; '*Boni, boni*' (Good, good!) shouts Enrico Caruso as he shows his fragrant Pachino melons;[11] '*Beddi, beddissimi*' (Beautiful, very beautiful!), screams Antonio Consoli pointing to his crates of perfectly ripe tomatoes.[12] The sales pitch involves visual and gustatory description of the products, for example '*Rosse, rosse queste fragole*' (Red, red these strawberries) or the mentioned *boni*,

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[10] The word 'soundscape' derives from Schafer (1994), indicating the totality of the acoustic environment.

[11] Pachino, a town in South-east Sicily in the Province of Syracuse, is renowned for its melon and tomato production.

[12] Sicily is one of the largest producers of tomatoes in Italy and indeed in Europe, and is famed for the high quality and variety of its tomatoes. According to the national statistics, 15,636 hectares of land is designated for tomato crops (ISTAT 2010).

beddi, and so on. One sensory code calls on others; the vendors' voices stimulate the eyes of the passers-by to notice the colours and the beauty of the produce, to pay attention to the smell or even to prefigure the taste of the red strawberries. The vendors themselves allude to the synaesthetic experience of their products.

Inside the market, the cries of the sellers intensify as they hawk their wares loudly. In Piazza Alonzo di Benedetto the fishermen occupy centre stage, orchestrating a dialogue with passers-by, challenging each other, and very often disparaging the competition. Each time a person slows down or his or her eyes pause a little longer on the fish on display, the fisherman extols loudly the characteristic of his wares. These announcements both point to the freshness of the goods on sale and include details that only the fishermen would know. Statements such as 'We fished it two hours ago!', 'We fished it in the Brucoli's area' remind the buyers that they would be buying directly from the source. The competition also revolves around the price and this is particularly true for seasonal fish. Apart from the playful prattle for the benefit of tourists and their cameras, the *vanniate* (cries) are targeted mainly at the local experts, since the fishermen use the Catanese name to refer to fish: '*puppo*, 10€' (squid, 10€), '*masculini,* 3€' (anchovies, 3€), '*saddi*, 4€' (sardines, 4€), and so on.

Recently, in Istanbul, a law forbade vendors from shouting in the street market. Stallholders opposed the ban by arguing that it affected their trade. They insisted that 'shouting is a long-standing market tradition dating back hundreds of years' (Allen 2012). In Weare, a small town in New Hampshire, the regulation for vendors at the farmer's market reads '[h]awking is not permitted (shouting prices or shouting about items for sale)' (Weare Summer Farmers Market 2012).

While in the historical Sicilian market shouting is considered 'normal', vendors in the monthly organic farmers' market in Catania do not promote their goods loudly. This difference can be related to the bourgeois desire for privacy and seclusion (Bailey 1996), which has tried to silence the world (Serres 2008). Noise belongs to the low (Bailey 1996) as much as smell (Miller 1997), and a smelly, noisy market can be understood as a statement against authority. Bailey claims that '[s]ilence [...] is the sound of authority — generational, patriarchal and formidably inscribed in the regimes of church and state' (1996: 54). It could be argued that the market constitutes a space of disobedience against a neoliberal order which sharpens social divisions and underscores the 'fabric of social difference' (Low and Smith 2006).

Conclusions

In this article I have argued in detail that the marketplace can be seen as a space under construction, in which the apparent chaos is organised according to a specific cultural ordering. I have examined the dynamics in a specific local market in connection to daily practices and bodily knowledge. I have argued that, assuming that people's relationship with the urban space is active, complex and multi-sensory, this complexity can be approached through a study of the sensory experience.

For centuries, markets have been quintessential public spaces (Degen 2008: 21) with their own rules of exclusion and inclusion (Low and Smith 2006). At La Pescheria these rules

have been renegotiated over the last twenty years. The analysis of how smells are perceived demonstrates an increasing fear and disgust toward meat, death and decomposition. The invasiveness of smells poses a threat to the established order and their removal from the public space implies a desire for odourless places (Howes 1991). Power is imposed on public places in 'keeping with the modern regime of olfactory silence' (Classen et al 1994: 161). 'While groups in the centre — politicians, businessmen — are characterized by a symbolic lack of scent, those on the periphery are classified as odorous' (Classen et al 1994: 161). Furthermore the tendency to prevent people from touching food on grounds of hygiene speaks the language of an individualistic neoliberal view (Harvey 2008) in which urban strangers are feared and bodies are separated and secluded from one another. In Mary Douglas's words: '[r]eflection on dirt involves reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death' (1966: 5). The local ideas about cleanliness, dirt and distance inform a distinctive social order; and yet recent regulations attempt to transform the market into a 'safer' place along the lines of the supermarket model, which embodies an idea of modernity where everything is clean, safe and controlled. Hypermarkets respond perfectly to these ideas of hygiene and health regulation. Together with fast food outlets, they are perceived as the rationalised context *par excellence* for food consumption. The hypermarket, O'Connor remarks, 'is an artificial, sanitised "public space" by excluding nearly all manifestations of collective life as well as those existential aspects of reality which are sequestered by an abstract systems of modernity' (2011: 3).

The shift of market organization toward a more formalised structure has provoked a change in what is allowed to be experienced in the urban space. This transformation has made the market a more private and secluded space where an active sensory interaction becomes more individualistic. Local authorities very often interfere with the culturally appropriate way of interacting with the material world as they endeavour to regulate the sensory experience. The rationalisation of the urban space involves an increasing control on how space is experienced. Specifically, the rationalisation of urban spaces and the commercial privatization associated with urban regeneration threaten the complex and multi-modal experiences offered by places like La Pescheria (Degen 2008). In the Italian context, however, there is 'a robust resistance to forms of political life and to civic values that are seen as intrusive and unmanageable' (Herzfeld 2009: 311-312). I would suggest that even in its renegotiation of modernity, tradition and nostalgia, the market still offers the potentiality of debate and disobedience. It allows space for irrationality and for active social participation in the public arena. This resistance is traceable through people's reactions to the new regulations. A direct relationship to food remains vital for people who shop in this market and, despite the contemporary drive towards homogenization of urban soundscapes (Adams et al 2006), La Pescheria's voices still resonate loud in Catania's public space and the vendors' cries are one of the many ways in which this local community strives to keep the boundaries of this place safe. As Bestor remarks, '[p]lace creates the perception of spatial (and social) fixity in the midst of processual fluidity' (2004: 18).

As a final remark, I would like to highlight that observing how urban space is constructed and used show us what kind of society we live in. At the moment we are

apparently extending the myth of our forever-young bodies to our cities and to our food. Death, ageing and decomposition are removed from sight. The aim seems to be to construct a clean, almost clinical and aseptic relationship to place; a relationship in which differences of age, gender and ethnicity struggle to find expression. The sensory geographies of cities can contribute to enrich the debate around these issues. I do not believe that there is a call for an anthropology of the senses, but I do believe that our ethnographies can benefit from a perspective that does not relegate the senses to the subjective but recognises their belonging to the social sphere and to the way we engage with the material world in the everyday practice.
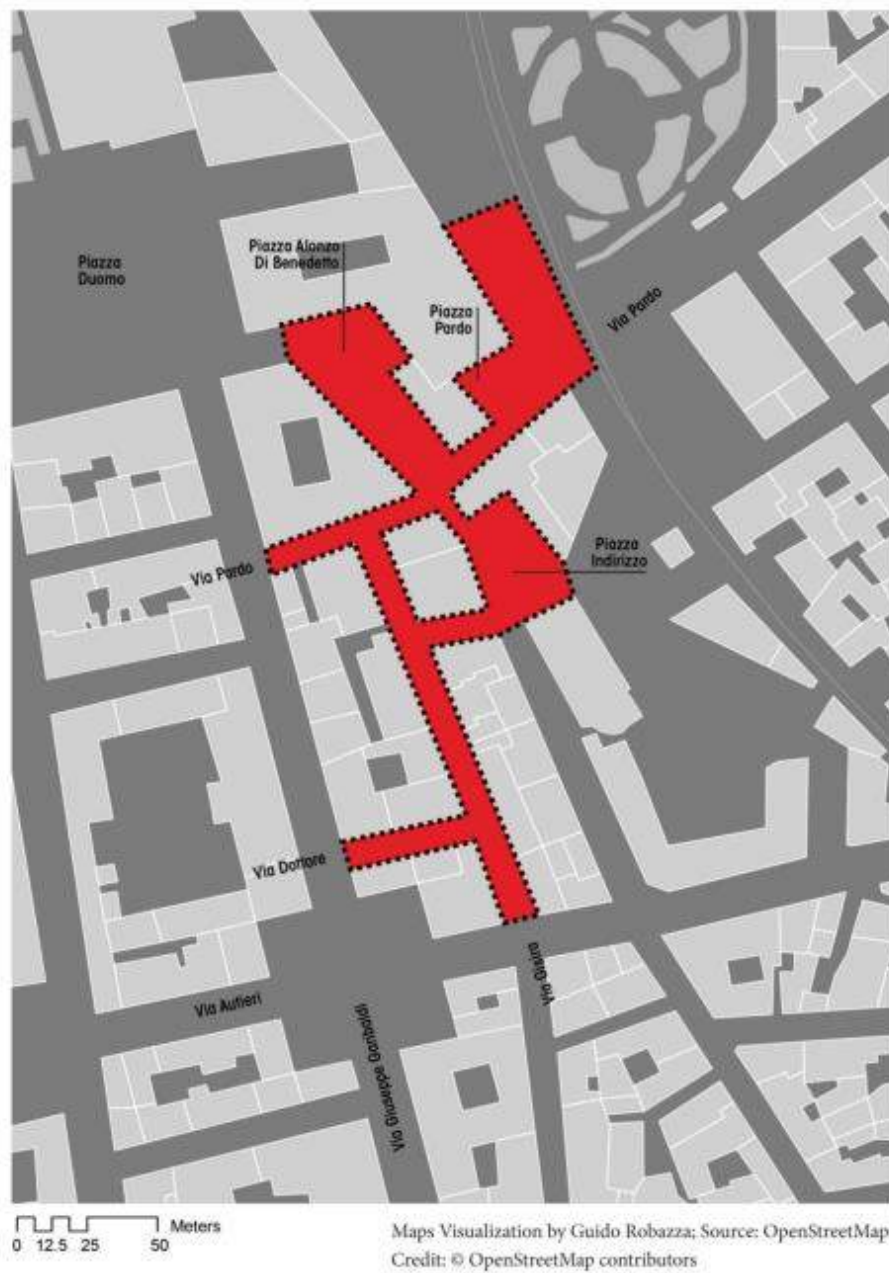
Map 1. The market area with Piazza Pardo and Piazza Alonzo di Benedetto highlighted.

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On The Critical Relationship Between Citizenship and Governance: The Case of Water Management in Italy [1]

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'*Extensive empirical research leads me to argue that instead,
a core goal of public policy should be to facilitate the development of institutions
that bring out the best in humans*'.
(Ostrom 2010: 665)

Over the past fifteen years, water management has been a highly problematic issue in Italy. With particular attention to the situation in Naples, this article addresses the sharp conflict that has emerged between citizens' politically-expressed will to keep water management under public control and the actions of Parliament and of various governments. The discussion looks at issues of legitimacy and the law, taking into account the effects of popular action that combines protest and legal action.
Keywords: Water Services, Public Good, Citizenship, Governance, Law.

Introduction

In the early 1930s two Americans, August A. Berle jr.[2] and Gardiner G. Means[3], concluded their outstanding study on *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* asserting that 'The future may see economic organism, now typified by the corporation, not only on an equal plane with the state, but possibly even superseding it as dominant form of social organization. The law of corporations, accordingly, might be well considered as a potential constitutional law for the new economic state, while business practice is increasingly assuming the aspect of economic statesmanship' (Berle and Means 1932: 357).

So, the question after the Great Depression of 1929 seemed to be, between the political organization of society and the economic one which would prevail? In the context of the current global financial crisis, this old question seems to have found a definitive answer in the predominance of economic organization; or, better, of economic organism, in the words of Berle and Means. I shall argue, however, that an alternative is still possible.

The case of water management in Italy will help to demonstrate that there exists in the country a kind of rationality regarding the use of such a common good as water that can at once constitute a form of resistance to the so-called economic rationality and become a fragment of a new, constituent power. In the discussion that follows I shall first outline the jurisprudence on the issue of water management in Italy; then, I shall briefly describe the

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[2] A member of the US President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Brain Trust.

[3] An influential economist who worked at Harvard.

Naples situation. The analysis will then move on to the theoretical issues brought out by the water problematic; in particular, I shall examine the difficult relationship between citizenship and the powers-that-be, the private vs public conundrum and the critical issue of the legitimacy of the Law.

A Historical Outline

Over the past twenty-five years, a process of privatization of the main economic activities has taken place in Italy. The biggest state-owned companies — ENEL (National Board or Electric Energy), IRI (Italian Institute for Industrial Reconstruction), ENI (National Board for Petrol), FS (State Railways), Telecom Italia (Italian Telecommunication Company) and Highways — have first been transformed from totally public entities into limited companies and have later been sold on the international financial market. The Italian State has only retained control of those companies — like ENI, ENEL and the State Railways — which were considered to be strategic for the country, while others have been liquidated, as in the case of IRI, or sold to private entrepreneurs, as in the cases of Telecom Italia and Highways.

In other words, the privatization process has involved public services which are synonymous with citizenship itself — electricity, gas, water, public transport and telecommunications. From a political perspective, the technical, legal and economic motivations for privatization were identified with the urgent need to repay a public debt that was too high in relation to GDP. Another argument in favour of privatization was that public activities which were highly monopolistic in nature needed to be liberalized especially because the public bodies that for a long time had managed them were deemed to be inefficient and excessively expensive.

The reorganization of water management began in the late 1980s, when specific legislation (law No 183/89) established some general principles for the conservation and protection of water resources within the general context of soil and environment protection. Five years later, in 1994, the Galli law[4] addressed the rules on the use and protection of the water resources establishing, once for all, their public nature. The Galli law established that the organization of water services should be based on the size of the natural water reservoirs and of their actual users, regardless of administrative and bureaucratic divisions. The underlying logic was that people who live in different municipalities, provinces or regions may well use water from the same reservoir delivered to them by the same aqueducts, and the organization of the service must reflect this reality. Accordingly, this law provided for the establishment of a new administrative body called 'Ambito Territoriale Ottimale' (Optimal Territorial Area; from now on, ATO) bringing together the local authorities in each territorial. Optimization referred to the administration rather than to the management of the reservoirs. Notably, the Galli law was approved by Parliament during the most intense phase of privatization of public services. However, the majority of local public services, including water, continued to be publicly managed.

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[4] This is Law No 36/94, named after Galli, the member of Italian Parliament who wrote most of the text of this law.

The process of streamlining the use of water resources prioritised the protection of the soil and the conservation of water and its sustainable use in environmental, economic and financial terms. Such streamlining imposed, first, the reform of local public management, which began with the 1990 Act, and, then, the gradual transformation of local public companies into joint stock companies, thus preparing, the application of the free market system at the local level (Marotta 2011). Following the reform of the Title 5 of the second part of Italian Constitution in 2001, the national Parliament is responsible for the protection of competition principles and has the power to decide how local public services should be managed, while the provision of such services continues to be devolved to local authorities. In particular, the responsibility for the management of water services continues to be devolved to ATO Authorities. At the beginning of the 21st century, however, the process of liberalization, deregulation and privatization came to involve local public services. Specifically, the *Legge Finanziaria* for 2002[5] ruled that local authorities, municipalities, provinces and ATOs must turn to the free market for all local public services. In the field of water management, this marked the beginning of an attempt to entrust the optimization of service management entirely to the market.

This gave rise at once to strong resistance across Italian society, involving people of different political orientation and leading to the national co-ordination of all the movements and committees against the privatization of water. In June 2005 these movements decided to organize themselves permanently into the 'Forum Italiano dei Movimenti per l'Acqua' (literally, Italian Water Movements Forum; from now on, the Forum).[6] The Forum met for the first time in Rome on 10 March 2006 and placed itself outside the traditional party systems. Its purpose is the defence of public water as a common good and, since its constitution, the Forum has remained strictly outside the traditional party system's *modus operandi.*

The aim of the various associations, committees and self-organized groups participating in the Forum is to fight the privatization of water first locally and, then, nationally and internationally in light of the principles of the Italian Constitution and of the laws of the State. The Forum has achieved recognition as a fully constitutional body both in terms of legality and in terms of procedures of democratic participation. The fight included peaceful demonstrations in the offices of local management agents, but also legal challenges in the competent Regional Administrative Courts and explicit requests for municipal, provincial and ATO authorities to stop attempting to privatize water. At a national level, the Forum's first action was to prepare the text of a popular bill on water management. Significantly, the popular bill was titled, 'Principles for the protection, government and public management of water and measures for the re-nationalization of water services'. Over a few months over 400,000 citizens signed the proposal,[7] which was officially presented to Parliament in 2007. The bill has not yet been discussed by Parliament.

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[5] This is the equivalent of the Chancellor's Autumn Budget.

[6] The Forum is made up by several organizations (see http://www.acquabenecomune.org/).

[7] 50,000 signatures are required by art. 71 of the Italian Constitution for Popular Bills.

In 2010, the Constitutional Court established that the Italian legislation can legitimately opt for free market principles for water resource management (Judgment No 325). As a consequence, the Forum's second national action was to request three referendums aimed at the abrogation of the rules approved by Parliament in support of the privatization of local public services, including water management.[8]

Initially, this second action consisted in collecting the necessary signatures to initiate the three referendums.[9] As in the case of the popular bill, this new initiative enjoyed strong popular support. In a few months, the promoters collected 1,400,000 signatures, almost three times the required amount.[10] The referendums addressed three questions. The first concerned the repeal of the law that forced local governments to turn to the market for the provision of all local public services; the second concerned the abolition of the specific rule on the choice of water services management; the third was related to the method of calculating the water service rates. In January 2011, the Constitutional Court, which rules on the eligibility of the referendum questions, rejected the second question and allowed the other two. In particular, the Constitutional Court approved the referendum for the repeal of the legislation on water services with specific reference to the criterion of 'adequate return on the invested capital' (Judgement No 26/2011). The Court made it clear that this referendum aimed at separating water management from the global logic of market profit.

The two referendums were held in June 2011. Citizens voted almost unanimously for the repeal of the existing legislation on the privatization of common goods. In spite of such an overwhelming result, two months later the Italian Parliament approved a law that strengthened the privatization of water management; that is, precisely the kind of legislation that the popular vote had asked to abolish (Decree No 138/2011).

At this point, the Forum started a determined legal fight in order to obtain the acknowledgement of the unconstitutionality of the new law from the Constitutional Court. As the legal appeal to the Constitutional Court concerning the new legislation could not be brought directly by the Forum, six Italian Regions — Apulia, Latium, Emilia Romagna, the Marches, Umbria and Sardinia — proceeded to do so claiming to have been discriminated in their prerogatives by the new law on local public services approved by central government and Italian parliament. In 2012, the Constitutional Court declared the new legislation constitutionally illegitimate, finding it in clear conflict with the popular will expressed in the referendum (Judgement No 199/2012).

Subsequently, the Forum started a campaign of 'civil obedience' and demanded that the popular vote expressed in the referendums of June 2011 should be respected. This campaign intended to make central government, parliament, regional governments, municipalities, the corporations that managed the water services and all public and private stakeholders respect the will of Italians and keep the management of water services public. In

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[8] The 1948 Italian Constitution contemplates abrogative referendums only.

[9] A fourth referendum proposed by the Idv party (literally, Italy of values) was rejected by the Constitutional Court.

[10] According to art. 75 of the Italian Constitution, 500,000 signatures are required.

addition to legal action, the campaign included exhibitions, conferences, meetings, media campaigns and the uninterrupted mail-bombing of MPs, cabinet ministers, local administrators and all those involved in making decisions about water. In particular, to ensure the respect of the result of the referendums on the adequate return on capital, the Forum and its experts wanted to make sure that users of water services would be able to calculate the cost net of the interests on the invested capital.

Interestingly, the Italian government disregarded the will of Italian citizens not only in respect to the public management of water; after the 2011 referendums, it also proceeded to allocate the responsibility for decisions on how to set water service fees to what, after some wrangling, became the 'Italian Regulatory Authority for Electricity, Gas and Water'. Confusion increased. On the one hand, the Authority had to deal with fully liberalized goods, such as gas and electricity; on the other, it had to develop ways to assess the costs and their fairness, as part of what was essentially a not yet liberalized public water service.

Regarding the regulation of water services, this contradiction is also identified in a recent judgement made by the Regional Administrative Court of Lombardy on water costs (Judgement No 779/2014), which emphasizes that the water service is of general financial interest. While employing its regulatory power, the Electricity, Gas and Water Authority opts for a view on the 'cost' of the capital invested that is in line with mainstream economic thought. In other words, in order to calculate water costs, the Authority refers to the economic principles of the prevailing free market theory.

The Situation in Naples

In application of the Galli Law, in 1997 Campania (the Naples Region) was divided into four ATOs meant to optimize the management of uptake services, feed, sewage, drainage and removal of wastewater with the aim of saving water, thus avoiding waste and reducing management costs. The Naples and Caserta provinces (and their 136 municipalities) were in the same ATO.[11] In November 2004, the ATO's Board decreed to privatise partially the water management service for more than three million people,[12] provoking the immediate reaction of the Civic Committees for the Defence of Water (an important part of the national Forum), led by a priest, father Alex Zanotelli. At first, the protesters were few. Gradually the opposition to the privatization of water management involved increasingly large parts of the so-called civil society. There were many demonstrations, some of which are described below. Some of the 136 municipalities argued for public management and lodged an appeal at the Regional Administrative Court against the ATO's decision.

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[11] The official denomination was, 'Ambito Territoriale Ottimale no. 2, Napoli-Volturno'. Later Caserta and its Province became part of a separate ATO. The two cities share the same water resources but have separate management systems.

[12] The agreement was that initially 40 per cent of the new company would be in private hands, the municipal authority retaining control of the remaining 60 per cent. It was also agreed that over the following two years the proportion in private hands would increase to 49 per cent. The finances of this deal are interesting. The ATO's total annual revenue was almost Euros 243,000,000. The private shareholders would pay Euros 200,000 for their 40 per cent of the company.

The most striking demonstrations took place in September 2005, near the deadline for private-companies' bids for water service management. The Civic Committees of Naples and Caserta organized events with stalls at the ATO's headquarters. Zanotelli asked Neapolitan citizens to display in their home, shop or office windows plastic bottles carrying the label, 'No to the privatization of water'. The real turning point came in the Autumn of 2005, when a large number of citizens gathered in the Assizes of Naples[13] decided to promote an Appeal against the privatization of the integrated water services in the ATO. The Appeal was nationally and internationally heralded by Riccardo Petrella[14] and Danielle Mitterrand.[15] It was signed, among others, by prestigious Italian economists, jurists, artists, intellectuals and representatives of the Civic Committees and movements for the defence of public water.[16] In a short time, a compact front developed. Originally generated by the Committees for public water and the active citizenship of large sections of the population, in time this movement came to include a large proportion of Campania's ruling-class. The text of the Appeal and some writings on the water issue were collected by in a volume titled, *Water Management and Fundamental Rights: A battle against privatization* (Lucarelli and Marotta 2006). This battle ended in January 2006, when the ATO's board decided to abolish the November 2004 decree on the privatization of water services. It seemed that in Naples a virtuous circle of public water management, in accordance with people's will had started. Yet this was not quite the case. Since then, while failing to implement privatization, the local political class have decided to give up and wait for the outcome of the Parliamentary debate on the reforms.

At the end of 2011, Naples chose to convert the municipal company Arin SpA (Neapolitan Water Resources Limited Company) into a completely public non-profit company named ABC (*Acqua Bene Comune*; literally, Water as a Common Good). In addition to the difficulties posed by the central government, there were technical difficulties related to existing legislation and the lack of previous experience in transforming a joint stock into a public non-profit company. This involved the transition from a body regulated by private law — the corporation — to one regulated by public law — the special company. This transition was key to preventing any form of privatization, guaranteeing the direct public management of water and keeping free market interests at bay. The key principle regulating public companies is to balance the budget as opposed to generating profit. This operation was

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[13] This is an independent assembly of citizens that meets at Palazzo Marigliano, an ancient palace in the city's historical centre

[14] This is the former President of the Water World Contract.

[15] This is François Mitterrand's widow, who was active on many environmental and human rights issues.

[16] The Appeal was signed by the economists Augusto Graziani, Massimo Marrelli, Riccardo Realfonzo and Emiliano Brancaccio; by the jurists, Luigi Ferrajoli, Umberto Allegretti and Gaetano Azzariti; by the Head of the Faculty of Education at the University of Naples Suor Orsola Benincasa, Lucio d'Alessandro, by the Head of the Faculty of Arts at University of Naples Federico II, Eugenio Mazzarella, by the Head of the Faculty of Economics, University of Naples Federico II, Achille Basile and by the Head of the Law Faculty of the Second University of Naples, Lorenzo Chieffi, together with several professors of law and economics.

made possible by the 2011 referendums and the subsequent abrogation of the legislation that obliged local government to turn to the market for water resource management.

However, the problems in Naples are not over. The Campania regional government is accused of maintaining control over large aqueducts with a view to selling them to private companies. Also in this case, the Civic Committees, assisted by their lawyers, have suggested legislative changes at a regional level, thus accepting to participate in the political debate among the members of different political parties in the Regional Board. However, the Regional Council recently approved a law that conflicts with the results of the 2011 referendums in so far as it invokes the respect of competition rules, prescribing submission of the water service to market laws. This law has been challenged through an appeal to the Constitutional Court.

Disconnected Governance and the Crisis of Legitimacy

In recent times the problem of water management in Italy has generated a sharp contrast between citizens and government, pointing to a tension 'between state morality, and community and individual moralities as they are encapsulated in the processes of government, bureaucracy and legislation' (Pardo 2000).

The results of the 2011 referendums and the following rulings of Constitutional Court gave Government and Parliament explicit legislative guidelines. It is also clear that any intervention concerning water management must take into account the fact that Italian citizens have clearly expressed their will: water management must be kept public, must not be subjected to the logic of profit and must be efficient. The people participating in the National Water Forum have expressed an alternative political will and viewpoint on the Law and its application; the committees, associations and activists of the Forum embody a morality and ethics now waiting to be converted into law in line with the Italian Constitution. We have seen that this political will is accepted in some jurisdictional quarters, such as the Constitutional Court, but is still not fully accepted by parliament and central government. Borrowing from Pardo and Prato (2011), I have therefore titled this section 'Disconnected Governance and the Crisis of Legitimacy'. Here, the relationship 'between those who have the power to make decisions and those who have [to live] with the practical effects of such decisions' does appear to be increasingly difficult (Pardo and Prato 2011: 3). It is indeed significant that the Forum has defined its fight as a campaign of 'civil obedience'.

Hannah Arendt wrote that 'Civil disobedience arises when a significant number of citizens have become convinced either that the normal channels of change no longer function, and grievances will not be heard or acted upon, or that, on the contrary, the government is about to change and has embarked upon and persist in modes of action whose legality and constitutionality are open to grave doubt' (1972: 74). For the Forum, disobedience to current laws is not 'civil disobedience'; it is obedience to a different kind of political choice, a choice highlighted by democratic participation recognized by the Constitution but cannot find the way to become law. It is as if Government and Parliament base their reasoning on the dominant economic theory, while the community lays claim to a morality and ethics unmistakably alternative to the laws of the free market.

In other words, in the classical Rousseauian view of general will (Rousseau 1782) as in the Weberian paradigm (Weber 1968), law-abiding implies citizens' voluntary submission to the Law. In the water management case, the majority of Italians have expressed their dissent; clearly, those in favour of public water management are not merely ideologically oriented against the free market; rather, their actions suggest a civic awareness that privatization can negatively influence people's quality of life and, perhaps more gravely, democratic citizenship itself. Against such a background, the attitude adopted by the Legislator comes across as authoritarian and patronizing. The fact, of course, remains that civic communities must be accorded the right to choose public or private water management.

The Public vs Private Issue

I would suggest that the opposition public vs private should be addressed from a juridical point of view and, most important, that rules must reflect society's needs and expectations.

Historically, in Italy water management was kept independent from the market through principles of Public Law. This has changed dramatically, as over the past twenty five years privatization and free market trends have been injected into the system. The opposition to privatization which I have outlined has generated the present debate on water intended as a common good and the heartfelt need to envisage regulation beyond the private/public opposition, tailoring the use of this resource best to fit the needs of the community.[17] However, the discussion has also brought forth strong criticism of inefficiency and corruption in public Italian administration in a situation in which the concept of national state has been weakened by globalization.

During the 1970s, Norberto Bobbio (1977) asserted that from a logical point of view there was no alternative to Public and Private Law and pointed out that, necessarily, relations of power are excluded from private law while private convenience and interests are excluded from public law. Therefore, it is not surprising that in relation to water and more generally to common goods this issue of public and private law has generated strong debate.

In the field of social sciences the distinction between public and private law was based on the idea that Private Law concerned individuals, their private interests and the relationships between equal citizens, while Public Law concerned relationships between entities of different status in the community. According to Bobbio, in the 1970s two opposite processes were taking place, the nationalization of the private sector and the privatization of the public sector. They are incompatible but also overlap. The first involves the subordination of private interests to collective interests, represented by the state which progressively invades and incorporates society; the second represents the revenge of private interests through the establishment of conglomerates which use public apparatuses to reach their goals (Bobbio 1988).

The case of water management is significant because the defence of public water has encouraged movements to intensify democratic participation. It is especially so because this kind of action has happened in Italy only for short periods of time and in specific cases, such

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[17] On this debate see Mattei (2011), Marella (2012) and Rodotà (2012).

as the referendums on divorce and abortion in the 1970s. The use of public law is an alternative to private and commercial law methods; it helps to avoid the negative results for the community when public and private values are turned upside down. This brings to mind the views of the Italian scholar Stefano Rodotà, according to whom common goods, such as water, must be seen as fundamental rights. This would generate a new institutional logic regarding common goods and, consequently, a substantial 'paradigm shift' in public and private law and in public and private property, whereby the definition of common good includes both goods which are essential for survival and goods which, for example, encourage the free development of the person, such as knowledge (Rodotà 2012: 120).

Some Diverse Viewpoints on Common Goods

A point of view different and alternative to the above is given by Elinor Ostrom in her book *Governing the Commons*, published in 1990 at the end of a forty-year research on the management of common goods. It is pointed out that in order to define a common good as a resource, or more precisely as a common-pool resource, we need to consider it as part of the economy because it binds the concept of common good to the potential benefits that may result from its use. A relationship is also implied, among the users, which is independent of the nature of the assets. In Elinor Ostrom's empirical research, the latter are of the most varied nature, from fishing grounds to water management, from the use of irrigation infrastructures to common forest areas. More recently, Elinor Ostrom and Charlotte Hess have given a short definition of common good as a resource shared among a group of people and subject to dilemmas, questions, controversies, doubts and social disputes (Hess and Ostrom 2007).

That the use of a certain good is the subject of discussion definitely places such a good in the field of institutional politics, whose goal is to find a solution to questions, controversies, doubts and social disputes, as opposed to leaning towards maximization of profit. As indicated by Ostrom's research, this, in turn, generates the need to conceive a series of rules that could be acceptable to all users — rules that promote equity, efficiency and sustainability and that can be identified in all successful cases of common goods management. It is worth noting that Ostrom's point is in line with the approach known as neo-institutionalism. Elinor Ostrom argued that the creation of new institutions is a great, difficult but worthy challenge for the social and juridical sciences (Ostrom 1990). As Dolšak et al. significantly point out, 'Human beings seem to have an intrinsic drive to organize, to build institutions, and to invent a new system of self-governance. Thus, even if institutions at the level of national government can indeed be nasty creatures, there are still hopes for the future' (2003: 349).

As Deflem explained, in a neo-institutionalist perspective 'the process of institutionalization is a cognitive, not a normative matter, whereby institutions are conceived as cognitive constructions that control human conduct even prior to any internationalization of sanctioning norms' (Deflem 2008: 148). So we need to envisage a new form of self-production of legal rules. This is a key challenge for juridical sociology. An application of Gunther Teubner's theoretical framework to the case of water management in Italy brings out a total incongruence between legal rules and social rules (Teubner 1987) involving critical issues of legitimacy of the Law (Pardo 2000).

Conclusion

The discussion of water management in Italy has highlighted how this specific sub-area of society is complicated by structural difficulties in the relationship between law and society. It has also highlighted the constitutional issues raised by the recent processes of privatization. In this scenario the action of social movements is a form of resistance, the resistance of social practices to the new economic regime of privatization. This resistance could produce a new 'civil constitution', in the sense that Teubner derives from David Sciulli (Sciulli 1992); that is, to protect, in Law, a logic alternative to the dominant tendency to turn into law a rationality based solely on economic maximization (Teubner 2008). In the area of water management the 'civil constitution' theorized by Teubner plays the traditional role of limiting the power of the political apparatus, at the same time giving the right to water an opportunity to emerge as a counter-institution in Italian society. This is possible, because as Teubner put it, 'In nation state contexts, for instance, the co-determination movement was successful in institutionalising social active citizen's rights in enterprises as well as in other social organizations' (2011: 206).

Thus, we can say that not only a private contract, as in the case of market-oriented sector, but also an organized collective action can produce new constitutional principles — as a constituent power — against mainstream (so-called) economic rationality. In conclusion, the economic organization of the market for the management of basic public services such as water which affect the quality of citizenship itself has apparently become the easiest way to deal with this problematic. Perhaps, not equally easily can we say that this is the best course of action. Given that the use of water is considered a fundamental right worldwide, is there an alternative to the opposition public vs private? Should water management be dealt with from an ideological or a practical viewpoint? What is to be considered more important: the popular will and citizen's interest in a good quality of life or the maximization of corporate profit? Can these needs somehow be combined?

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After the 125ᵗʰ Street Rezoning:
The Gentrification of Harlem's Main Street in the Bloomberg Years

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This article investigates the impact of the 2008 rezoning plan for 125ᵗʰ Street in Harlem on long-time residents and independent local businesses. It starts with a brief history of development at 125ᵗʰ Street from its beginnings as a popular commercial corridor in the 1910s and 1920s through the decay of the neighbourhood during the Great Depression and in the post-WWII years, to its renaissance in the late 1990s and 2000s. The paper then focuses on the Bloomberg years, and on the contentious decision-making process that led to the approval of a rezoning plan for 125ᵗʰ Street corridor in 2008. The plan is analysed in detail, followed by an assessment of its impact on neighbourhood character, on local retail and on housing affordability. I use data from the 2000-2010 Census, along with figures on rental values, business openings and closings, to illustrate the process of residential and commercial gentrification of the area during the years of Bloomberg. I demonstrate how, although the sweeping gentrification of the areas surrounding 125ᵗʰ Street had begun in the late 1990s, the pace of these transformations has accelerated tremendously after the 2008 rezoning.
Keywords: Rezoning, New York City, Gentrification, Displacement, Harlem, Michael Bloomberg, Amanda Burden, Harlem Renaissance.

Introduction

In April 2013, the Real Estate Board of New York launched a 'Harlem Open House Expo' in partnership with CHASE Manhattan, an event geared at 'potential buyers looking to get a peek at the hot Harlem real estate' (Real Estate Board of New York 2013; from now on, REBNY). Brokers from major real estate firms operating in Harlem hosted exclusive viewings of co-ops, condos and townhouses for sale. The listings included a brownstone at West 126th Street selling for 2.5 million US dollars and a 2-bedroom apartment at East 126th Street for 805 thousand US dollars. 'Harlem is Booming' was the title of an 8-page advertising supplement which appeared in the New York Times in 2010; it depicted Harlem as a hip and sophisticated neighbourhood for well-off newcomers, and enlisted the numerous luxury development projects taking place in the neighbourhood. These included a luxury condominium building with prices ranging from 509 thousand to 1.889 million US dollars, and luxury condos with panoramic rooftop terraces, bars and fitness centres. Sponsored by the largest realtors with ventures in the district, the NYT supplement celebrated the new wave of luxury development in Harlem, asking the readers, 'Are we witnessing a second Harlem Renaissance?' The answer was of course a sound yes, although the supplement gave the rather clear impression that what drove this renaissance, rather than a cultural and artistic awakening, was a wave of luxury real estate.

The neighbourhood that middle-class residents were fleeing in the 1960s and 1970s has emerged by the mid-2000s as one of New York City's real estate hotspots. Over the last decade, the swift pace of development has changed the face of the area around 125ᵗʰ Street, where luxury condos now dot a renewed landscape, while small businesses that had been around for decades have gradually surrendered to large corporate retailers. Although the commercial and residential gentrification of the areas surrounding 125ᵗʰ Street had been set in

motion since the late 1990s, it gained enormous momentum during the years of Bloomberg's mayoralty.

A Brief History of Harlem's *Main Street*

Laid out in the 1811 Commissioner's Plan for Manhattan (the 'grid plan'), 125th Street runs from the Hudson to the East River, crossing West, Central and East Harlem. After the completion of a subway stop at the corner with Broadway in 1904, 125th Street established itself as Harlem's central commercial corridor. In the 1920s and 1930s, it became the bustling focal point of the famous 'Harlem Renaissance', a moment of remarkable artistic and literary accomplishments for Black Americans. The Great Depression ended this moment of extraordinary cultural ferment and circumstances worsened after WWII, when 125th Street and the surrounding areas entered a phase of steep decline as middle-class Blacks started moving to outer boroughs, leaving only the poor and the unemployed in the neighbourhood. Meanwhile, discriminatory policies of most banks resulted in the rejection of mortgages for new constructions in Harlem as well as other African American communities in the city. During the 1960s and 1970s, the flight of middle-class residents to the suburbs was paralleled by the concentration of pockets of poverty in Harlem. The lack of habitable housing, soaring crime rates, racial tensions and a falling population contributed to make the neighbourhood more uninviting to investment; 125th street's fortune as a premiere commercial street declined dramatically. The famous Apollo Theatre shut down in 1976. Few bars and clubs remained open along the thoroughfare, while most storefronts were boarded-up or left vacant. In the early 1980s, the street saw modest signs of revival as Mayor Koch commissioned a 'Redevelopment Strategy for Central Harlem', which called for public-private investments in selected anchor areas around Harlem, especially along the 125th Street corridor. In the same years, the city began auctioning the City's in-rem properties back to private investors and non-profit organizations, in an attempt to foster private investment and opportunities for homeownership in the area. The auctions attracted mostly middle-income residents from other neighbourhoods who had the opportunity to purchase homes in the area for a relative bargain. Around the mid-1980s, Schaffer and Smith (1986) noted that certain activities in the housing markets of specific areas of Harlem, notably its western corridor, were enough pronounced to signal the onset of initial mild forms of gentrification. During the Giuliani years, the establishment in 1993 of a 125th Street Business Improvement District (BID) to promote local shopping along the strip paved the way for a gradual revitalization of Harlem's Main Street. However, the main catalyst for a new wave of commercial development at 125th street was the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone (UMEZ) legislation introduced in 1994 in Congress by Harlem Representative Charles Rangel, and backed by US President Clinton. Most of the UMEZ funds were used to encourage large corporate retailers to open activities along the strip (Maurrasse 2006). Among these, huge retail and entertainment complexes like Harlem USA, opened in 2000, and mixed-use office and retail developments like Harlem Centre and Gotham Plaza, both opened in 2002. Private investment followed suit. By the late 1990s, tenement-style dwellings and row houses around 125th Street and in Central and West Harlem started catalysing increasing numbers of affluent in-movers, mostly black and white

professionals from other parts of Manhattan, who could profit from the relatively low prices and the excellent transportation options of the area.

Rezoning 125th Street

In December 2003, the Department of City Planning (from now on, DCP) partnered with several city organizations, including the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to create a development framework to 'sustain the ongoing revitalization of 125th Street as a unique Manhattan Main Street, enhance its regional business district character and reinforce the street's premier arts, culture, and entertainment destination identity' (DCP 2007a).

The plan was crafted in a moment where the city was recovering from 9/11, Wall Street profits were rebounding, and the Manhattan property market was reaching record highs, creating momentum to push development to other parts of the island and the outer Boroughs.

An advisory committee of local stakeholders was included in the planning process, comprised of local businesses, civic groups, cultural institutions, and Community Boards (CBs) 9, 10 and 11. Key roles in crafting the proposal were also played by several business-oriented Harlem organizations, most of which would come to benefit directly from the rezoning of the area (Feltz 2008).

The 125th Study was based on zoning amendments to accommodate increasing pressures for commercial and residential development in the area by increasing allowable densities and encouraging mixed-use development along the entire length of the street, from the Harlem to the Hudson River. Like many other rezoning plans implemented by the DCP across the city in the years of Bloomberg,[1] it was based on the physical restructuring of a low-income but rapidly gentrifying community to encourage property investment and the influx of new, more affluent residents (Angotti 2008; Busà 2012, 2013). By the time the rezoning was on the drawing board, the neighbourhood around 125th Street was a predominantly low-income, predominantly black community, whose area median income equalled to less than one-third of the average median income of the city as a whole, and which was already under pressure from escalating housing prices, large development schemes by neighbouring Columbia University and extensive waves of foreclosures and bankruptcies of small businesses.

The proposal envisioned the rezoning of all blocks between 124th Street and 126th Street, from Second Avenue to Broadway. By increasing residential densities and fostering mixed-use development, the plan would allow for approximately 3,900 new apartments and 600,000 square feet of new office and retail space. At the same time, the proposal introduced height restrictions for all new developments at 290 feet in order to discourage out-of scale development in the area.

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[1] Under Michael Bloomberg, the DCP has adopted123 rezoning plans covering more than 11,500 blocks, or almost one third of the total urban land, in the decade 2002-2013.

The Process Behind the Plan

The DCP completed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in September 2007, stating that the immediate displacement of 71 small businesses and their 975 employees resulting from the rezoning would not constitute a significant adverse economic impact (DCP 2007c). Likewise, the indirect displacement of 500 residents in 190 units and the threat of demolition of some of the street's century-old buildings were not regarded as worth of particular consideration (Ibid.). The DCP certified its proposal as complete on October 1, 2007, thereby starting the seven-month Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) mandated by the City Charter. On December 5, 2007, Community Boards 9 and 11 (East and West Harlem) voted for conditional approval of the rezoning (that is, they approved the plan, provided certain modifications were made), while CB 10 (Central Harlem) issued a conditional disapproval, objecting to the projected indirect displacement of low-income residents from the rezoned area and expressing concern about the impacts of a forecasted overproduction of market-rate housing units (80 per cent market-rate against 20 per cent reserved as 'affordable' to low- and middle-income households) in a predominantly very low-income area. All three Community Boards agreed that the plan did not guarantee a sufficient amount of housing affordable to local residents, nor any provision to protect existing tenants from eviction. They also favoured the establishment of provisions aimed at retaining existing small businesses in the area.

But the role of Community Boards in New York City is merely advisory, and the City Planning Commission (CPC) approved the plan on March 10, 2008, giving the City Council 50 days to approve or reject the Commission's decision. On January 30, 2008, the Commission held a public hearing at the City College of New York at West 135th Street, in which residents, business owners and local community organizers attended to testify their overwhelming opposition to the rezoning (Morais 2008).

Before final approval was due on April 30, 2008, Councilwoman Inez Dickens, who represents the portion of 125th Street where the largest up-zoning was proposed, was holding the balance of power. Dickens is strongly tied to the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce and to its development arm, the Greater Harlem Housing Development Corporation, and is also active in the Harlem real estate business with her own firm (Buettner 2010). Dickens had promised that she would not approve the plan until she could extract some benefits for the local community. After negotiations with the board of the DCP, she came to an undisclosed agreement, and a modified version of the plan was presented to City Council for approval. The modified plan granted inclusionary zoning bonuses to encourage developers to set aside 46 percent of the newly produced housing units as 'affordable'. Broadly defined, inclusionary zoning is the provision of incentives to private developers in exchange for the commitment to include the construction of a percentage of affordable units as part of their development. New York has a voluntary program, which subsidizes development in the form of density bonuses or financial grants like the New York State's 421 — a tax abatement program. Before 2005, the density bonus was provided only in the highest-density residential areas of the City. The city expanded the program in 2005 for areas being rezoned to medium- and high-density residential uses and included the tool in the rezoning plan for Greenpoint-Williamsburg.

However, the standard of affordability of the units created is measured with respect to the Area Median Income (AMI) of New York City as a whole, which is invariably much higher than the median income of many working-class neighbourhoods like Harlem (see later, the sub-section on *Affordability of new housing and threats of displacement*).

On April 30, 2008, City Council gathered to decide whether to approve or reject the plan. One of the official arguments in support of the rezoning was that, if nothing was done, the lack of height restrictions and of affordable housing provisions within the existing 1961 zoning code would threaten the area's physical and social character. The modified version of the rezoning plan was eventually approved by an overwhelming majority of City Council members (47-2), in what became a tensed and emotionally charged session. The public, mostly comprised of black Harlem residents opposing the plan, shouted and booed Dickens from the public gallery. After Dickens' remarks were repeatedly disrupted, the police cleared the Council chamber of all spectators. As the session ended, she was escorted out of City Hall through a rear door (Rudish and Lombardi 2008). Council members Tony Avella and Charles Barron, the only two who voted against the rezoning, called it 'top down', and 'a sellout'. Barron protested: 'Ten to 12 years from now, they will see that the housing will not be affordable. This will be the wholesale sell-out of Harlem from river to river' (quoted in Chung 2008).

On the same day, benevolent press accounts listed the concessions that Dickens had managed to extract from the DCP, and boasted the large amount of affordable housing the rezoning would create. The *New York Post* wrote of an 'unprecedented 46 percent' of new housing units that would be reserved for low- and moderate-income families (Topousis 2008). Dickens claimed 'It's an inclusionary program never before done in the history of this great city […] With this rezoning, Harlem's historically indigenous cultural institutions will be protected' (quoted in Durkin 2008). Such enthusiasm was echoed by Mayor Bloomberg, who argued: 'Not only does the plan lay the foundation for economic growth on Harlem's Main Street, but also it preserves its noted brownstones and reinforces its arts and culture heritage' (quoted in Williams 2008a). According to the modified plan, 1,785 of 3,858 of the apartments planned for Harlem (46 per cent) would be indeed 'income-targeted', with 900 set aside for those earning 46 thousand US dollars or less a year for a family of four, and 200 for families earning a maximum of 30,750 dollars a year (Williams 2008a). Other revisions included height restrictions capping buildings at 195 feet, a 750 thousand dollars forgivable-loan program for businesses adversely affected by the plan, the creation of a local arts advisory board, and a 5.8 million dollars fund for capital improvements at Marcus Garvey Park (Durkin 2008).

The 125th Street Rezoning Plan in Detail
125th Street contains a variety of cultural, commercial and residential uses, and some of the most important cultural institutions of Harlem. The urban form varies broadly across the corridor, exhibiting several building types from small single-story retail stores, to large suburban-like megastores concentrated especially in its East end, to traditional four- to five-story tenement houses, to high-rise public housing projects at either end of the street, to rows

of brownstones along portions of 124th and 126th Streets (also comprised in the rezoning area). The rezoning establishes a new contextual 'Special District' for 125th Street that will affect 24 blocks between 124th and 126th Streets, from Broadway to Second Avenue, crossing through West, Central and East Harlem. It allows for denser and taller buildings in the area and introduces mixed-use developments in lots that were once zoned for commercial activity, but also imposes height restrictions that were not mentioned in the existing zoning regulations dating to 1961. To create new commercial space, much of which is unsuitable to large-scale retail because of the street's generally small lots, the rezoning increases the allowable commercial and residential densities. In all, the plan allows for approximately 3,900 new apartments and over 600,000 square feet of new office and retail space development that is expected to fill in the vacant lots and replace the one-story retail shops that line 125th street. In an effort to create a pleasant pedestrian experience, the rezoning aims to enhance 'ground floor retail continuity', and regulates uses located at the ground floor level in all new developments with frontage on 125th Street. These have to be 'active' uses that contribute to a vibrant pedestrian experience (retail, galleries, cafes, restaurants, movie theatres). 'Dead' uses (including bank and hotel lobbies, offices and residential uses) are prevented from fully occupying the ground floor of new developments along the strip; such uses are allowed only on the upper floors and can have only limited space for lobbies on the ground floor.

The plan also outlines a 'special arts and entertainment district' between Frederick Douglas Boulevard (8th Avenue) and Malcolm X Boulevard (Lenox Avenue), the area where major landmarks such as the Apollo and Victoria Theatres, the Blumstein Department Store and the Hotel Theresa are located. Here, new developments with a floor area of 60,000 square feet or more are required to dedicate five percent of their total floor area to arts- and entertainment-related uses such as museums, performance venues and restaurants. The proposal also includes regulations to enhance the streetscape by preventing shop owners from coating their storefronts with roll-down metal grates, and by allowing theatres to build distinctive marquee signs reminiscent of the old days of the Harlem Renaissance. An 'arts bonus', usually in the form of additional floor area, is available to developers in exchange for the provision of non-profit visual or performing arts spaces in their developments.

Criticism of the Plan
The 125th street rezoning plan has received vocal criticism from local residents, community advocacy groups, tenant organizations and local urban planning think-tanks. According to the DCP, the rezoning plan was the result of a substantial participatory process consisting of over 150 meetings held from 2003 to 2007 with 'stakeholders, property owners, residents and elected officials to discuss and refine the plan' (DCP 2007b). According to some commentators, however, the meetings repeatedly avoided to discuss topics that were crucial to local residents — particularly their fears that new zoning actions could result in the displacement of low-income households and small businesses, and their concerns that the projected housing units would be unaffordable to Harlem residents (Feltz 2008). Although criticism has targeted almost every aspect of the plan, most concerns have addressed the

plan's lack of effective affordable housing provisions, its potential for displacement of existing residents and businesses, and its potential impact on the physical character of the neighbourhood.

Affordability of New Housing and Threats of Displacement

The strongest opposition from residents and civic groups has addressed the lack of guarantees that new residential development will be within the reach of average Harlem residents.

The median incomes for the zip codes to be affected by the proposal were at approximately 22 thousand dollars in 2007 (Onboard 2007). Since the affordability standard of new developments at 125th Street is measured with respect to the AMI of New York City as a whole (71,300 dollars in 2007, Onboard 2007), most of the units that are described as 'affordable' will be way beyond the reach of existing residents. Despite the misleading assertion that 46 per cent of the produced units would be 'income targeted', by these measures only 5.18 per cent, or 200 units, out of a proposed 3,858, will be available to households whose annual incomes are of 30,750 dollars or less — the average Harlem resident. As mentioned earlier (see the sub-section, *The Process Behind the Plan*), these 'affordable units' should be produced thanks to inclusionary zoning bonuses. However, since New York's inclusionary zoning program is not mandatory, it is questionable how many of these 'affordable' units will ever be built. In booming times and in heated property markets, the majority of developers have generally chosen to opt out of these subsidies, in search of higher profits from market-rate units (see Pratt 2004).

In addition to worries around the affordability of new developments, concern has addressed the potential for displacement of existing residents as a result of new housing developments in the area. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) underestimated the displacement of Harlem's existing residents in its conclusion that only '500 residents in 190 units […] could be vulnerable to secondary displacement if rents rise as a result of the proposed action' (City of New York DCP 2008a: 1.0-6). According to calculations by CB 10, at least 2,077 currently occupied units will be directly impacted by the rezoning, in addition to the indirect impacts caused by the development.

The plan also allows for high-density mixed-use developments on lots that were once restricted to low-density commercial uses, encouraging the building of residential high-rises of a size never before seen along 125th Street. The expansion of luxury development of this scale threatens existing tenants because of the upward pressures in rental prices. Bailey (2008), a human rights activist and co-founder of the Harlem Tenants Council,[2] pointed to the increasing number of residents' complaints about landlords illegally doubling or tripling rents, harassing tenants and evicting people to make way for higher-income residents (Tucker 2008); she also referred to reports on family homelessness in New York City showing that Central Harlem ranked among the top 10 neighbourhoods in the city with the highest displacement rate (Henry 2005). She described the proposal as 'a plan that seeks to replace a

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[2] This is a tenant rights advocacy organization that is active in fighting the displacement of residents and businesses in the neighbourhood

working class community of color with an affluent white community' (quoted in Chaban 2008).

DCP director Amanda Burden played down the notion of widespread displacement, stating that 'over 90 percent' of the housing in the area was 'rent protected', including the neighbourhood's several large public housing complexes (quoted in Williams 2008b). However, the effectiveness of rent protection programs in the long run is questionable, as the heated housing market encourages landlords to opt out of subsidy programs and speed up the process of conversion of rent-protected units into market-rate apartments.

Impact on Independent Local Businesses
Local mom-and-pop stores owners expressed concern that the rezoning would force them to close, or to relocate out of the neighbourhood due to heightened competition from large national retailers or escalating rental prices.

In 2008, CB 11 (East Harlem) made several recommendations aimed at preserving small businesses in the neighbourhood. The board suggested the introduction of provisions that would require developers to reserve a space to host existing local businesses in their developments, and recommended measures to promote local hiring through bonuses in exchange for the commitment of new establishments to hire locals. Acknowledging the area's high rates of unemployment and underemployment, in 2007 the Municipal Art Society (MAS) recommended the introduction of job training programs for Harlem residents to ensure that locals may benefit directly from the new jobs created through the rezoning, and included other recommendations to preserve locally-owned retail in the strip.

In 2008, Central Harlem's CB 10 calculated that at least 71 small businesses would be directly forced to close as a result of the rezoning, leaving 975 workers without jobs. The Final Environmental Impact Statement issued in 2008 however considered these businesses of little economic and cultural value, as they did not 'contribute substantially to neighborhood character' (DCP 2008a: 1.0-13 and 1.0-11). The plan did not include provisions to protect small merchants other than the establishment of a 750 thousand dollars loan program for businesses that were adversely affected by the rezoning (10 thousand dollars per storeowner to help them relocate).[3] Other programs were launched in 2009 to lure new businesses to the area; in 2009, the UMEZ's '125th Street Pilot Retail Incentive Program' was launched to grant loans to established, non-franchise businesses seeking to expand along 125th Street, in order to offset the homologation of businesses along the corridor. The 1 million dollars 'Harlem Business Assistance Fund' was launched the same year to offset part of the expenses small businesses may incur in locating to 125th Street and its vicinity, reimbursing broker commissions paid in connection with new leases.

Despite these efforts, innumerable locally-owned businesses have left their locations along 125th Street since 2007. According to the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce,

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[3] Meanwhile, a staggering 5.8 million dollars were allocated for the beautification of Marcus Garvey Park, an initiative that no community group had ever requested or supported, but which was most probably intended to benefit the developers of several new luxury residential condominium buildings facing the park.

approximately one-third of businesses in Harlem closed between July 2008 and June 2009. This was not a merit of the national recession alone. As it will be demonstrated later in the sub-section on *Commercial Gentrification*, dozens small businesses were directly evicted by their landlords in order to take advantage of the higher building densities allowed under the new zoning and to make room for more profitable developments (Irwin 2009).

Impact on Neighbourhood Character

The plan was presented by the press as one of the most meticulously crafted initiatives to come out of the DCP under Chairwoman Amanda Burden. Burden herself argued in several occasions that she had spent more time working on the 125th Street proposal than she had on any other prior rezoning plan (Williams 2008b).

The plan promotes the development of 'building forms that are compatible with existing neighborhood character' (DCP 2008b). Under the previous 1961 zoning, there were no requirements for developments to respect the street line, allowing developments set back from the street that interrupted the fluidity of the pedestrian experience. Under the new zoning, bulk controls require all new development to provide street walls and setbacks for the upper portion of the buildings to reduce their visual impact from the street level. As already examined in the sub-section, *The 125th Street Rezoning Plan in Detail*, the plan incorporates other tools specifically intended to promote a vibrant and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian experience.

Despite these efforts, the community's reaction has been suspicious, as the increased allowable building densities (measured in FAR, or floor-to-area ratio, the maximum ratio of permitted floor area based on the area of a zoning lot) encourage the demolition of low-scale buildings in order to build taller ones. The modified plan set height restrictions of 190 feet, or about 20 stories, on the north side of 125th Street and of 160 feet, or about 15 stories, on the south side. City officials claimed this was necessary, as the old zoning regulations dating to 1961 did not incorporate any height limits. However, the old zoning contained implicit height restrictions that kept too tall buildings from being built, as it incorporated narrower limits to the allowable FAR. This is why most buildings along the corridor have remained predominantly low-scale for decades. The new zoning instead encourages the demolition of low-scale structures in order to build taller and more profitable ones — even with the new height limit (Angotti 2009).

The rezoning has also missed opportunities to incorporate measures to preserve buildings of historical significance in the area. Besides for two public libraries built in 1904 and 1914, no other historically significant buildings have been reviewed for landmark status designation during the planning process. The FEIS admitted that the rezoning 'could result in significant adverse impacts due to potential demolition of four Register-eligible resources on potential development sites, including: the former Harlem Savings Bank, the Marion Building, the Bishop Building and the Amsterdam News Building' (DCP 2008a: 3.23-2). The list of buildings of historic significance located at 125th Street that are not protected by local landmark laws however should also include the late Art Nouveau Blumstein's Department Store (completed in 1923), which was the site of Adam Clayton Powell's legendary 'Buy

Where You Can Work' campaign, and the glorious Victoria Theatre, which was hailed by the time of its opening in 1917 as one of the most beautiful theatres in the city.

The Real Estate Boom in Harlem during the Bloomberg Years

Since the early 2000s, the influx of new in-movers and the rising average incomes have consistently driven up prices in Harlem. It was the relative affordability of housing in Harlem in the early 2000s that hastened the gentrification of the neighbourhood in the years to follow. By 2006, the average sale price in Harlem had soared to 458 dollars per square foot (an almost 250 per cent jump compared to 1996). In 2007, Harlem average sale prices had already peaked to 713 thousand dollars (Corcoran Group 2007). At the zenith of the housing boom, prices of new residential condo units in Harlem had become comparable to those of other luxury developments in Manhattan, with prices ranging from 450 thousand to 650 thousand dollars for a one-bedroom, and from 675 thousand to 2.2 million dollars for a two-bedroom condo unit (Barnes 2007). The staggering costs of living in the neighbourhood made headlines:

> 'It is increasingly difficult to find a one-bedroom apartment rental for less than $1000 even on the outskirts of Harlem. On any given day you will find at least a dozen condominiums for sale in the New York Times for about $5 million' (Dessus et al. 2007)

The 2008-2010 recession brought a dramatic drop in real estate values in the neighbourhood. Foreclosures and bank takeovers increased steadily in Harlem, while stalled developments and fenced-off construction sites dominated 125th Street. However, the slump was short-lived, and median sale prices in Harlem rose again swiftly in 2010-2011. By 2011, the most luxurious condominium developments in Harlem commanded prices of over 715 dollars per square foot (Fusfeld 2011). Among these were developments like 5th on the Park, the Langston, the Lenox, the Lenox Grand, and the Dwyer — all of them offering luxury amenities like 24-hour concierges, gyms and landscaped roof gardens. By 2012, in the highly gentrified tract around 110th Street, home values had jumped 39 per cent compared to 2007 levels — the highest increase in all of Manhattan. Currently, the price per square foot for an apartment in the best areas of Harlem is nearly the same as in Chelsea and the upper West Side.

Residential Gentrification and Displacement in Harlem

Escalating housing prices are putting a severe strain on long time low- and middle-income Harlem residents. By 2008, the Harlem Tenants Council reported complaints by hundreds of Harlem tenants being displaced or threatened with eviction because of escalating rental prices, landlord harassment or expiring rent regulations (Bailey 2008).

As I have mentioned in the sub-section on *Affordability of New Housing and Threats of Displacement*, DCP Chair Burden mentioned the 'over 90 per cent' of existing rent-protected housing units in the neighbourhood (quoted in Williams 2008b) to reassure residents that their fears of displacement were unsubstantiated. It is true that subsidized

housing still makes a large share of the housing stock in Harlem.[4] However, with subsidy restrictions phasing out throughout the city, it is questionable whether a substantial number of low- and moderate-income families in Harlem will manage to remain in their gentrifying community in the coming years. Only in 2005, New York lost a record 5,518 rent-protected apartments whose landlords opted out of subsidy programs; nearly 80 percent of the units lost were in the South Bronx and especially in Harlem, where the landlords of three large housing complexes (Riverside Park Community, Schomburg Towers, and Metro North Houses) decided to opt out of the Mitchell-Lama program (Jones 2006). Most of the renters living in those units were low-income families of colour. In many cases, the weakening of rent regulation laws, combined with the overheated Harlem property market, has encouraged the proliferation of 'predatory equity' schemes, a form of real estate speculation whereby private equity firms purchase apartment buildings with rent-regulated units in gentrifying neighbourhoods and promise their investors very high returns that can only be achieved by aggressively driving out existing tenants — primarily through harassment or lack of maintenance.[5] Accounts of tenants displaced because of abusive landlords' tactics have increased as the Harlem real estate market boomed in the mid-2000s (Del Signore 2008, Lowery 2011). Another threat to subsidized housing is caused by landlord mismanagement or neglect. Sometimes landlords can keep their apartments in such bad conditions that tenants are forced out by city authorities because of structural damages or health hazards (see Chiaramonte 2007, Suh 2012). In the Bloomberg years, there have been innumerable outrageous cases of landlords' violations, including violations for not providing heat, hot water, maintenance and repairs to tenants in Harlem (Trymaine 2011).

Obviously, homeownership can be an effective antidote against displacement. In fact, in gentrifying neighbourhoods, homeowners generally may stand to benefit from the increase in home values. This is not the case of the majority of existing Harlem residents, however. According to the 2000 Census, 93.4 percent of Central Harlem (District 10) residents were renters, with a paltry 6.6 of homeowners. West Harlem (CD 9) had a 90.3 percent of renters and a 9.7 of homeowners. East Harlem (CD 11) had a 93.6 percent of renters and a 6.4 percent of homeowners (US Census 2000).[6] The reasons for the overall limited share of homeownership in Harlem can be attributed to a long history of redlining, which for decades has made it impossible for residents of black neighbourhoods to receive loans and mortgages by private banks.

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[4] In 2006, the districts of East, West and Central Harlem had a total of 145,368 housing units, of which 51,216 were designated as 'affordable' and reserved for people of moderate and low income. A further 24,207 were public housing projects for low-income households (Trotta 2006).

[5] Many landlords employ illegal tactics in an effort to drive rent-regulated tenants out. Often, they neglect maintenance works or intimidate tenants with unsubstantiated legal proceedings; over the last years, there have been innumerable cases of tenants being baselessly sued by their landlords for unpaid rent or for alleged illegal sublets (Morgenson 2008).

[6] Things did change, although not remarkably, by 2010, presumably as a result of the increase of recent purchases by new in-movers (US Census 2010).

The construction of new housing in the areas surrounding 125th Street so far has not even remotely made up for the amount of affordable units that are being lost because of recent development pressures. By the end of 2013, phase 1 of the East Harlem Media Entertainment and Cultural Center, a mixed-use megaproject at the corner of 3rd Avenue and East 125th Street unveiled in 2008, has produced 49 'affordable' units. These and the future units that will be produced as part of the project will be affordable to families earning between 35,450 and 106,350 dollars — an income that is beyond the reach of most Harlem residents. So far, these are the only 'affordable' units produced 'on site' at 125th Street since the rezoning was adopted in 2008.

Commercial Gentrification

The process of commercial gentrification of 125th Street, boosted by the new developments brought about by UMEZ funds in the late 1990s, has been steady since then, and only escalated during the Bloomberg years. In the early 2000s, as the rezoning plan was in the making, cases were reported of commercial rents along the thoroughfare soaring almost 500 per cent in the time of only one year (Boyd 2003). By 2005, average commercial rents along the corridor had become comparable to those of the rest of Manhattan — the average asking rent for retail space at 125th Street amounted to 90 dollars per square foot, compared to103 dollars per square foot for an average rent in Manhattan (REBNY 2005). After commercial rents peaked in 2007, however, an abrupt drop marked the onset of the national recession, which hit Harlem and other predominantly low-income neighbourhoods in the city particularly hard. In 2008 and 2009, Harlem's independent businesses experienced record bankruptcies and foreclosures, which by 2009 resulted in a 37 per cent store vacancy rate in some of Harlem's main shopping strips (Neighbourhood Retail Alliance 2009), and in a 16 per cent vacancy rate along certain sections of 125th Street (see Ryley 2009). In 2009, the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce documented over 638 ground floor businesses that had shut down in Harlem (Spitz 2009). Most of the boarded-up storefronts belonged to small businesses that had been in the neighbourhood for decades. Many of these businesses were forced to close because of the recession; others, unable to compete with large corporate retail, or confronted with a changing customer base in the gentrifying neighbourhood, had no other choice but to shut down (Hyra 2008: 104). At 125th Street, many were directly evicted by their landlords who took advantage of zoning changes and rushed to vacate lots to build taller, denser and more profitable buildings. The casualties include a number of stores that had become cultural fixtures and that had served the community for decades. In 2007, Sigfeld Group and Kimco Realty purchased a 50 million dollars 110-year-old building at 125th Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard with the intent of replacing it with a new mixed-use retail and office complex. The 16 tenants forced to move included soul food restaurant Manna's and the Bobby's Happy House music store (among the first African American-owned businesses in Harlem). Business owners were told they had six months to vacate their premises and were offered a paltry 5 thousand dollars for relocation costs (Mazor 2007). Several store owners left immediately, while Manna's and others filed a lawsuit against the developers and eventually managed to settle for a restitution of over 1 million dollars (Pruitt 2010) before

leaving the building by September 2008. In 2009, Manna's was eventually allowed to move back to its location and reopened its restaurant. As of 2013, Manna's was still there, while the rest of the building sits vacant, with most of the storefronts boarded up.

At East 125th Street, between 3rd and 2nd Avenues, the building of the East Harlem Media, Entertainment and Cultural Center also collided with the interests of existing long-time small businesses. In 2008, the city approved the huge mixed-use development and moved in court to condemn six acres of properties in preparation for the project. In 2009, half a dozen small businesses filed a lawsuit against the DCP's determination to make use of eminent domain for the benefit of private developers. Their lawsuit was dismissed on October 12, 2010.

Other casualties of rezoning-led development are to be seen all along 125th Street. The Boro Hotel, at 125th and 5th, has been slated for demolition in April 2008. Its first floor once hosted a small locally owned restaurant and jazz club called La Famille, opened in 1958 by two sisters who were among the first African American women to work at 125th Street (Moss 2008). Also the M&G Diner at West 125th Street, known in the neighbourhood for its extravagant marquee sign and its southern food, was sold in 2008 and now sits vacant and boarded up. The famous Record Shack across from the Apollo Theatre was shut down in 2007 after 35 years of activity after his lease was literally tripled by the landlord. After 73 years in Harlem, the world-famous Lenox Lounge at Lenox Avenue and 125th Street closed its doors on December 31, 2013 after the rent was doubled from 10 thousand to 20 thousand dollars per month (Moss 2013). The same year, more stores that had been around for decades, like Harlem Lanes, Hue-man Bookstore and MoBay Restaurant were forced to close due to escalating rents.

If in just a few years a large number of small businesses at 125th Street went out of business, the crisis was instead a golden opportunity for large corporate retailers. During the recession, chain stores heavily increased their presence along the strip (CUF 2008, 2010; Irwin 2009). These included Starbucks, which in 2008 opened its second 125th Street branch, and Applebee's, which in 2009 opened a new store at 125th Street between 5th and Lenox Avenues.

As the recession ended, average commercial rents along the 125th Street corridor climbed again. By the fall of 2011, they soared to 129 dollars per square foot (REBNY 2011). To put these numbers in perspective, average asking rents in Manhattan were at 112 dollars per square foot. Such prices are enabling only corporate retailers to settle in at 125th Street and the surrounding areas. Only in 2012, there was an 11.2 per cent rise in corporate retail in Harlem compared to 2011 — the biggest growth in new chain retail openings recorded in New York City that year (CUF 2012).

The effects of these transformations are striking. Today, 125th Street looks and feels just very much like other major commercial cross-town corridor in Manhattan and it is almost indistinguishable from 14th or 23rd Streets Downtown; Subway, McDonald's, Dunkin Donuts, H&M, CVS and CVS dominate the landscape. The homologating force of corporate retail's aesthetics is compromising the community's uniqueness and, according to some observers, even jeopardizing its potential as a tourist destination. In 2012, the executive director of the

Harlem Business Alliance told the *New York Daily News*: 'The risk of a homogenized, cookie-cutter landscape filled with chains is that we become less interesting: We're not there yet, but we're near the tipping point.' (Smith, quoted in Feiden 2012).

Conclusions

Under the administration of Bloomberg, the use of site-specific re-zoning plans has expanded the geographical scopes of property investment and development to neighbourhoods that were once disadvantaged or underserved, creating the material conditions (providing the legal and administrative framework) to make high-end development feasible and profitable.

In this article, we have explained how the 125th Street rezoning plan has acted as the catalyst of a massive wave of property development and as a blueprint for the gentrification of the neighbourhood around Harlem's 'Main Street'. The rezoning has unlocked development potential by encouraging the production of market-rate housing, prime retail and office space in a neighbourhood whose initial land values were relatively low, and where the expectations of returns from redevelopment were therefore particularly high.

While this rezoning has greatly benefited the development community, however, it has negatively affected the most vulnerable Harlemites. These are mostly low- to middle-income households and small independent businesses who are being priced out of their neighbourhood as a result of the new zoning regulations, or whose survival in the area is under threat. This article has shown how the rezoning action has coincided with the disappearance of small independent businesses and their substitution with large corporate retailers, and has reported evidence of luxury residential developments which includes very little or no housing units affordable to local residents.

Contrary to institutional narratives of a broad involvement of the affected communities in the planning processes, our account has shown how local residents felt they had any say in the making of the plan. Also the City's official narrative of a fine-grained, preservation-oriented approach to the 125th Street plan is disputable, as the increased allowable densities encourage the demolition of some of the street's historical landmarks and jeopardize the low-scale character of the historical corridor. Similarly, official narratives around the plan were centred on the promise that the rezoning would provide much needed affordable housing. Our calculations, however, have shown that only 200 out of a proposed 3,858 housing units will actually be within reach of the average Harlem residents, if they ever get built.

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The Final

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On 28 May 2011, the final of the European Football Champions League was played in London between Manchester United and Barcelona. The match was broadcast in every corner of the world. On Long Street, one of Cape Town's oldest and most popular streets, people of different races, social backgrounds, and from different parts of the city poured into the street to watch the final on the video screens in the bars. I took inspiration from Mikhail Bakhtin's study of poetry and novels (1973), considering Long Street as a chronotopic unit made up of a dual time-space dimension. I used the final as a pretext for observing Cape Town through the intersection of its inhabitants' memories with urban spaces. Choosing my interviewees from those who were on Long Street to watch the match on the evening of the final, I decided to create urban pathways that start from this street and branch off to the city's different areas. In this sense, the final will be taken as a pattern that connects the different life stories that crossed that evening on Long Street.

Keywords: Chronotope, Polyphony, South Africa, City, Road.

Introduction

It is rare for a work of literature not to include some variation on the theme of the road. Many works are built around the concept of the street and the meetings and adventures experienced 'on the road'. In the folkloristic novel the road is often used as a metaphor for life as a journey: 'The choice of a real itinerary equals the choice of "the path of life"' (Bakhtin 1981: 120).

The space of the road is filled by a meaning, which is vital and real and assumes an essential relationship with the protagonist's destiny. On the other hand, the road is also the place par excellence in which exceptional everyday events occur which are capable of changing one's destiny. On the road it is possible to break the tranquil repetitive nature of everyday life, of relationships organised within a specific structure of stable relations. On the road unexpected meetings can occur which change one's life.

Bakhtin saw the road as a literary chronotope, a space-time fusion. The road is, most importantly, the place where different lives converge with diverse ways of recounting the past and envisioning the future. I argue that in ethnographic research, we can observe a road (or any other urban place) and take it as a space-time fusion. Urban spaces take on a meaning when put into relationship with their inhabitants' memories. Likewise, memories can be understood through their projection on the urban spaces in which they take shape and evolve. In this article I observed Long Street, a central street in Cape Town (South Africa). Taking inspiration from a sports event (the Champions League final) broadcast on the street's television screens and watched by people from the city's different areas, and considering the street as an intersection of the experiences and memories of its regulars, I decided to explore Cape Town by interviewing the people who had decided to watch the event on Long Street. Taking Long Street as a starting point, I went back over my interviewees' life paths, trying to discover the events that led them to that evening, watching the final in this street. Though the interviews presented in this article are exclusively with people who were on Long Street on the evening of 28 May, I used the same method to conduct other interviews for my doctorate research, involving other Long Street regulars who were not watching the final that evening.

The Sreet of Differences

'I am buses, trains, and taxis. I am prejudice, bigotry and discrimination. I am urban South Africa'
Richard Rive (n.d.)*, Black writing in the back room of the District Six Museum*

'Cape Town is a racist city, Cape Town is not a racist city'
Sean Field, Renate Meyer, Felicity Swanson*, Imaging the City* (2007: 6)

'Tempo, spazio: necessità. Sorte, fortuna, casi: trappole della vita. Volete essere? C'è questo'
'Time, space: necessity. Fate, fortune, chance: life's traps. You want to exist? This is how it is'
Luigi Pirandello*, Uno nessuno e centomila* (1993 [1926]: 224)

Situated in the heart of Cape Town's Central Business District, Long Street is one of the oldest streets in the city, and has a reputation as 'a liberal, heterogeneous, or mixed space' (Tredoux and Dixon 2009: 765). Even during Apartheid it was considered a 'partially free' area, 'a place where the normal rules of Apartheid could be flouted' (Tredoux and Dixon 2009: 766) and where it was possible to break the physical, psychological and social boundaries imposed by the regime. In the post-Apartheid period Long Street was adopted as a symbol of the Rainbow Nation to present the city as a tourist destination and for advertising purposes. In particular, its burgeoning nightlife was viewed as a 'bohemian melting-pot for a mixture of people, cultures, activities and tastes: a site, par excellence, of contact and integration' (Tredoux, Dixon 2009: 766). The presence of people of different ethnic origins both from the city and from other parts of the world was celebrated as the triumph of the multiracial over the divisions of the past.

Nevertheless, the heterogeneity and the multicultural character of Long Street do not render it immune from the economic, social and psychological divisions of the past. Some of the more significant aspects, which conspire to keep alive the spectres of the past are the financial and social differences and social marginality inherited from Apartheid, which continue to impinge upon the least advantaged members of the population. In the article *Mapping the Multiple Contexts of Racial Isolation: The Case of Long Street* (2009) Colin Tredoux and John Dixon emphasised how forms of racial segregation in the post-Apartheid period can be found in situations in which people of different races share social spaces like a street or a bar. They noted how people of different races being on Long Street cannot necessarily be taken to mean that there are none of the social barriers that had marked South African society. They show how in this street there are also forms of racial isolation like the tendency for territories to form made up of people of the same skin colour, even inside nightclubs frequented by a mixed clientele.

I started my exploration of Long Street on the lower part of the street, which runs from the junction with Hans Strijdom Avenue and goes to Strand Street. This area is considered the business and financial heart of the city and is characterised by modern architecture, while the upper part of the street still retains its colonial-style houses.

The tall buildings on Lower Long Street were constructed in the 1960s, a period of strong economic growth and development for the city. These structures, with their gleaming marble and granite walls, house the headquarters of major national and international companies, banks and offices. Doormen stand guard over the grand entrances to these

buildings and check everyone who goes in or out, succeeding in making the chance passer-by feel like an outsider.

I recall the feeling of solitude that I felt when I used to pass through this part of the street, as I was not on Lower Long Street for work reasons, apart of course from being there to 'observe it'. On the mornings I spent on Lower Long Street I would witness everyday life run its course: the labourers with their yellow helmets who formed an orderly queue to collect their wages; the managers and white-collar workers, the Cape Times under their arms and briefcases in hand, already engaged in discussions as they headed for their offices; the liveried hotel porters who bowed their heads mechanically to acknowledge a guest's arrival. The glass doors on the ground floors of the offices, which opened at the swipe of a card, seemed to me harmonious cogs in some vast output-driven machine.

When Lower Long Street is empty, it is a scene of desolation; the voices that brought it to life during the day are replaced by a silence which is interrupted only by the mechanical sound of the traffic lights telling pedestrians they may cross or should stop, and by the occasional shouts of the tramps and vagrants who live in this area. This scene and these sounds made me think of the 'death' of a giant who breathed his last every day at sunset only to re-awaken the next morning. The workers who spent their days on Lower Long Street had left the street and were on their way home. In those hours, Upper Long Street started to fill with people who would spend their evenings there. Similar to a cinematic dissolve, when the lower part of the street dies, the upper part starts to come to life. From Strand Street it is already possible to see the twinkling of the lighted signs of the restaurants and bars and to hear in the distance the music mixed with the voices of the people who are starting to crowd the street.

Passing along Upper Long Street, the immediate sensation one has is of being welcomed. Unlike Lower Long Street, everything on Upper Long Street seems to be designed to attract the passer-by and the visitor. Many bars have tables on the sidewalk and sitting there, observing and interacting with the people on the street, you feel you are an integral part of it. Every evening, but particularly at the weekend, this part of the street becomes invaded by people who come from the different areas of the city and from other parts of the world. There are students who come from Rondebosch and Observatory and arrive by taxi or private car.

There are young people from the townships (former black residential areas) who have come to Long Street by minibus and will not return home before the next morning, when the first public transport leaves for Langa, Khayelithsa or Nyanga. Some wear pins and symbols, which extol the A.N.C. and give a clear indication of their ideological stance. Many of them are poor, often unemployed, and others have menial jobs. The tourists who stay in Long Street's bed & breakfasts usually move around in groups, discussing how to spend the evening under its porticos.

Upper Long Street is also somewhere you can find a job; many taxi drivers have found work on Long Street. Often, they come from other African countries. Lying in wait outside the busiest bars and clubs, Long Street's taxi drivers study their customers and, over time, can develop into 'spontaneous anthropologists', adept at spotting potential regular customers at

first sight. The singular character of Upper Long Street has its origin in the heterogeneous nature of the voices, which pass along it. Different needs, desires, and possibilities, different economic and social backgrounds all meet up and intersect here. At first I didn't know how I could represent the street through its complexity. A suggestion of how to do so came from a sports competition that was played thousands of miles away and that Long Street's regulars had long awaited.

The Wait and the Urban Chronotope

After six in the evening on 28 May 2011 it was no longer possible to find anywhere to sit in the bars and clubs on Long Street. A vast crowd of people from different areas of Cape Town had invaded the street with hats, caps and scarves bearing the emblems of Barcelona and Manchester United. The final of the Champions League was being played at Wembley Stadium in London, one of the year's most important sporting events, watched by millions of people all around the world.

In Cape Town people had been eagerly looking forward to the match for many weeks. The main English-language daily newspapers, such as the Cape Times and the Cape Argus, had carried articles featuring a technical analysis of the teams and predictions about the final result, taking over column inches in the opening pages normally reserved for news items and local politics. The flags and banners of the English and Catalan teams had begun to appear in windows and on balconies along Long Street. In the street's bars and nightclubs the people of Long Street had forecast the outcome of the match and the fate of those involved, and engaged in animated debate about the merits of the two teams and their individual players.

Observing the preparations for the match's broadcast and listening to the conversations of its regulars and their expectations for that event, I often wondered what kind of particular meaning Long Street's regulars would give to the final and how they would choose which team to support. Talking to the people on Long Street, I realised that many of them had no particular direct relationship to Barcelona or Manchester; most of them had been born and raised in South Africa. Many people I met were also not usually sports fans. They were not interested in football, but had chosen to support one of the teams. When I asked them why they chose one of the teams over the other, they often told me about episodes in their life in which they had gotten closer to one of the two teams for some reason or other. Talking with a coloured man who worked on Long Street as a merchandise unloader who had decided to support Manchester United, he explained that his father had been an admirer of one of the club's most famous players in the past. This is why he decided to support the team that evening.

Then I was talking to a man of Afrikaans origin who had gone to Spain on a work trip and had the chance to see Camp Nou (Barcelona's stadium). Though he had not managed to find a ticket to get into the match and so had seen the stadium only from the outside, that was enough for him to become a fan of Barcelona's team. As I was crossing the road a few days before the match I met a very young homeless guy called Chris who lived in Long Street. He managed to survive by begging and through minor scams generally perpetrated against tourists. I had met Chris a few weeks earlier in front of a bar on the street and he had quickly

told me his story. He was always in and out of youth detention, and in spite of the fact that he was only fifteen, his destiny already seemed clear, like that of the majority of young street kids on Long Street. That day Chris was wearing a Barcelona T-shirt a Spanish tourist had given him a few days earlier. Across the shoulders was printed the name of Lionel Messi, the popular Argentinian who plays for the Catalan team. He explained that he would definitely support Barcelona during the final.

As a result of these conversations I started to understand how the final, like other events that took place in the street, could be perceived by its regulars, placing them in relationship with private memories and personal experiences. All Long Street regulars came to the street with their private, individual temporalities made up of a series of episodes and events that they considered significant to varying degrees. Edward Casey saw places as gatherers of experiences. He wrote, 'Places .... gather experiences and histories, even languages and thoughts' (Casey 1993: 24). According to Casey, the power to gather stories should not be found in the power of individuals to project or reproduce their memories on a particular space and 'not even these subjects as they draw upon their bodily and perceptual powers' (Casey 1993: 24). This power 'belongs to place itself, and it is a power of gathering' (Casey 1993: 24). In the case of Long Street we can consider the street as a gatherer of the experiences and memories of my interviewees. My work's primary interest was in discovering how these memories had been formed. This is how I realised that I could take Long Street as an intersection of different types of temporality crossing, intersecting and overlapping in the street. Like Bakhtin I saw the street as a chronotope in which I could bring together quite different temporalities.

The word chronotope has its origins in physics, in particular in the theory of relativity, where it is used to render the idea of an intrinsic relationship between space and time. The concept was first used in the field of literature by Mikhail Mikhailovič Bakhtin in an essay written in 1937. By chronotope Bakhtin meant the 'the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature' (Bakhtin 1981: 84). It is used with precisely this meaning, as a category which allows for the indivisibility of time and space.

In the literary chronotope there is a fusion between spatial and temporal connotations into a whole, which has both meaning and concreteness. Time becomes 'dense and concrete' and becomes visible from an artistic point of view. Space becomes intensified and insinuates itself into the movement of time, of the interwoven effect and of history. The use of the spatial-temporal conjunction in the chronotope is thus a stratagem for rendering intelligible a human experience, which would otherwise be emptied of meaning. Literature makes use of the chronotope to represent the production of human meanings, which are the result of spatial-temporal fusion.

It is worth noting how the concept of the literary chronotope, as Bakhtin meant it, has influenced many ethnographic and social science studies in general focused on studying places. After a study of Sao Paulo focused on its polyphony, Massimo Canevacci (1996) compared the city to a literary text and its places to meaningful corpora that refer to those that Bakhtin had termed literary chronotopes. He wrote 'an urban neighbourhood can be seen,

read, and interpreted as a significant material, like a text written with montage (by people) in the time and contiguous space of a series of signs (buildings, signs, streets, doors)' (Canevacci 1996: 34). According to Canevacci, the city, like a novel, can be observed through the dual space-time dimension. Canevacci wrote, 'In a metropolitan context, the space-time indicators are merged into a new, tangible whole. On the one hand, time becomes visible, it becomes animate, it becomes flesh or wall, street, building; on the other hand, space becomes layered in history, it incorporates time, and collects the many plots of urban stories' (Canevacci 1996: 34). Observing the city as an urban chronotope, Canevacci discovered how each place of the city, even those that seemed the most anonymous, can be considered full of meaning if placed in relationship to human experience.

The cultural geographer Mireya Folch Serra (1990) noted how Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope can be useful in social research to help understand a point of view from the bottom up, that of regular people that she contrasts to that of urban planners. She noted that the concept of landscape, as intended by Bakhtin, takes on a different meaning than the usual one, and she clarified this distinction by explaining the differences between two different conceptions of landscape. The first suggests the 'manifestation of the built environment, the aesthetic of form and other spatial elements' (Folch Serra 1990: 256) and is meant as the 'product of social decisions legitimated by political authority' (Folch Serra 1990: 256). She noted how this first meaning was embraced by various schools of social science driven by an orientation to rationalisation and mathematisation in their tireless search for spatial order in human affairs in which spatial reality was considered separate from temporal reality. In the second sense of landscape, close to the meaning given it by Bakhtin, it is 'a repository of meanings that allow people to establish affective and imaginative responses to their surroundings and the social collective' (Folch Serra 1990: 258). Here landscape emerges from an encounter with the temporality of the individual who projects his or her personal, idiosyncratic temporality on spaces and attributes meaning to it. Folch Serra noted that this is how '(the landscape) becomes not only graphically visible in space but also narratively visible in time, in a field of discourse all attempting to account to human experience' (Folch Serra 1990: 258). It can be understood as a narrative platform that connects the dimension of space to that of time.

In her article 'Narrating the Road' (2012), Tatiana Argounova shows the influence of Bakhtin's ideas in her exploration of the road as an anthropological concept. Based on research that she conducted in Siberia, she drew a number of comparisons between the road and narrative, identifying their chronotopic dimension and their shared ability to connect both physical elements and cognitive emotional ones in a fluid, sequential way. If the narrative can be considered 'a story about things that take place over some period of time' (Argounova 2012: 194), and 'which has a sequence of events' (Argounova 2012: 194), likewise the road 'is the concept where spatial and temporal dimensions merge; at any one spatial location point on the road, there is only one temporal dimension, and walking along the road always relates to time – a step back is related to the past that took place a second ago and a step forward related to the immediate future' (Argounova 2012: 201). In this way 'the point in time' and 'the time' together create 'a spatial and temporal location' (Argounova 2012: 201).

Starting from these foundations I decided to observe Cape Town as an urban chronotope made up of the intersection between the temporalities of its regulars and the city's spaces. Taking Long Street as a spatial reference and the Champions League Final as a temporal reference, I asked my interviewees to go back over the most significant events in their lives in the city, taking inspiration from this event. I was inspired by Situation maps, the ideas of Guy Debord (1955), and the research method that Andrew Irving (2004, 2006) used on the relationship between HIV-positive individuals and the city's urban spaces. I asked my interviewees to identify urban spaces of the city that they considered significant as connected (directly or indirectly) to episodes in their lives. These areas were taken as mnemonic and emotional zones in which situations, emotions and particularly important memories could be evoked. I started my interviews by asking the interviewees to tell me how they spent the night of the final. I then asked them to tell me briefly about their experience in the city and to identify some places in it that had a particular significance for them. I then decided to go back to those places with them, taking pictures of the places and recording the interviews. The memory of the evening spent watching the final was thereby taken as a narrative pretext to go back over the most meaningful moments of their experience in Cape Town. This let me create urban pathways starting from Long Street and going through the whole city. Long Street was seen as an urban chronotope in which the different memories of the city's inhabitants intersected and overlapped each other.

Louis and his Return from London
With fifteen minutes to go till the kick-off, Long Street was deserted. Most people were crammed into the bars and clubs in front of the big screens showing the events in London. Only the homeless were drifting around the street; they seemed almost to be the guardians of a space which, without their presence, would have been abandoned. The public space of the street and the private space of the bars were two territories which confronted each other in a 'war of meanings'.

The former territory belonged to the street kids who knew its every nook and cranny; they knew the rules which governed it, even those which were invisible to passers-by, who were completely unaware of them; they knew the tricks through which it was possible to survive, and lived it as if it were their own. The latter belonged to the owners and managers of the bars and clubs who protected their space through their drink prices and the right to control admission. These two kingdoms seemed separate and unconnected; yet, in reality, they were interdependent and often in conflict with each other.

On the evening of the final I noted how some homeless people were trying to follow the match from outside the bar, engaged in a war of nerves with the security man who was trying to shoo them away. But as soon as he was distracted, they moved in close again. These people participated in the event by listening to the sounds and voices coming from the paying public with whom they were attempting to establish communication through hand gestures in order to ask about the score.

A few months later, I discovered that Louis too was a member of this group of 'spectators' who were excluded from the bars and clubs. Thirty-five-year-old Louis had

become homeless four years earlier and had found his new 'home' on Long Street. Unlike the majority of street dwellers on Long Street who were coloureds or blacks from other African countries, Louis was white of Afrikaans origin. The fact that he was the only white made things extremely difficult, but also offered some opportunities which Louis had learned to exploit.

One of these was the fact that he could easily camouflage himself among the customers, strike up a conversation with them and maybe get someone to buy him a drink, something to eat, or at least some cigarettes. His physical appearance was extremely important to Louis; in fact, during an interview he explained to me '*I have to look perfect in order to survive*'. I met Louis in a bar in Lower Long Street. He came to sit close to me and we started talking. At the beginning I did not understand he was a homeless person. Indeed his behaviour and his way of dressing did not give the impression of someone living in the street. What made being white difficult for him was trying to fit in with his new street companions. He said, 'Being white means you remain an outsider, even for these people. They're united, they have their own rules, I'm an outsider whose misfortune has led me to end up here. They often make fun of me behind my back. It's like a kind of revenge against whites in general; it's just that I'm the easiest target'.

Louis' fall from a 'middle-class' life to the street had its origins in Great Britain where he was living with a local girl who had helped him to emigrate there. Even though he was living there without a residence permit, Louis managed to find odd jobs and live happily with his partner. In his own words, 'I had escaped from a country in which they gave people work on the basis of their skin colour.... Like many whites my age I went to England to look for work.'

One day Louis and I decided to walk around without a specific goal and headed towards Cape Town Castle. When Louis saw the city's old port he remembered the day he was arrested by the police in another port in the UK and how this episode had conditioned his life. From this connection we can see how a specific space in the city can evoke 'other' spaces which are distant in terms of both time and space. It is useful to quote him at length:

> 'I had been in England, in London, for three years and my residence permit had already expired a long time before, but I didn't want to return to South Africa. Just thinking about going back made me feel ill; I loved London. The pent-up energy it released made me think that everything was possible; that here there was room for everyone. In London there was no distinction between blacks and whites; no-one was bothered about what colour you were. In South Africa I felt the pressure of the divisions between people; it is something within you, which hurts you, but in the end it becomes normal. The tension between people, the hate between people, the categories into which we are placed make prisoners of us, but we don't even realise it. When you leave, you understand that all that isn't normal, that outside you can be white without necessarily being hated. I was living a dream with my English girlfriend; everything was easy and everything seemed possible to me. One day we took some bloody boat to go to an island and

we had some hash with us. When we got off there were police with sniffer dogs who found the dope and arrested us. My girlfriend said the dope was hers, even though it wasn't true. She did it so I wouldn't get into trouble, but they'd already checked our documents and had discovered I was there illegally. Every time I think of that day I curse myself for being so stupid. I probably ruined my life for the sake of a little bit of dope. I remember when I got back to Cape Town I saw Long Street and I had the impression that I'd reached the end of my road. I don't really know how to explain it, but it's as if I'd seen that my life would end here. Strangely enough, I ended up living here, where I'd had this feeling. Long Street has become my home.'

Although Louis considers Long Street his home, the street itself rejects him and makes him feel like an outsider.

On the day of the final Louis was on Long Street as usual; he had not managed to get into any of the bars or clubs and was following the match from the street. He said, 'That evening I was supporting Manchester United, because in England I'd met a guy who supported them and out of solidarity I'd decided to do the same. Recalling the happy times I'd spent in England helped me get out of the hell where I'd ended up.'

A Township Girl

I met Xolewa in an internet café on Long Street where she went to check her email. When I asked where she was living, she said, '*In Khayelitsha. Do you still want to talk to me*?'. Khayelitsha is the largest township in Cape Town and the second-largest in South Africa after Soweto. Khayelitsha means 'new home' in the Xhosa language. The people who live in the township come mainly from different areas of South Africa, above all from the Eastern Cape. The migrants who arrive in Khayelitsha establish informal settlements, building their new houses, or rather shacks, here. During the Apartheid years the townships were dormitory areas where the blacks who formed part of the city's workforce were permitted to reside and to which they had to return in the evening.

In the post-Apartheid period the townships remained segregated areas of the city. Despite the recent improvements the government had made to these areas, a high level of crime and social marginality continued to plague the population of these urban areas. Nevertheless, the townships gave their inhabitants a sense of belonging and identification with the territory, which, in certain respects, was reassuring. Xolewa explained to me that for many young blacks heading into the city centre means entering a 'foreign territory', which for many years belonged to the whites and which, even now, is accessible only with difficulty. Many of these people considered Long Street a 'free zone', accessible to people of all races, but at the same time it was undiscovered territory. Xolewa explained to me how being black is linked to the way everyday life is lived in these areas. She said, 'The township is a world apart. People speak Xhosa rather than English; the community is more important than the individual; if you have a problem you don't rely on the police to solve it for you, but the village chief or, in other cases, a gangster. This is the blacks' place, which doesn't just mean

having black skin, but also living in a way which is incomprehensible to you whites.'

After the encounter in the internet café I stayed in touch with Xolewa and she agreed to have an interview. Listening to her story I discovered how, before going to live in Khayelitsha, she was living and studying in other areas of the city and that she considered this as a sort of multiple belonging. In the period when she was living in the centre of Cape Town she experienced isolation and exclusion. The young woman (27 years old) remembered an episode when she was studying in a school situated in Bo Kaap. Therefore, we decided to go to this district where we walked for a long time before we stopped in front of the school.

Click Language in Bo Kaap
Bo Kaap is a neighbourhood located on the slopes of Signal Hill, near the City Bowl District. The colourful houses and the steep streets that climb the hill give the area an unusual appearance, making it seem like a city within the city. From the hills of Bo Kaap the skyscrapers of the City Bowl just a few hundred metres away are clearly visible. But the architecture, colours and different sounds in this area give the visitor the impression they are entering a world which is miles away from the centre of Cape Town.

Bo Kaap is a multicultural neighbourhood, which under Apartheid was inhabited mainly by Malays. Today, it is a poor area, which can be equated to a township. When she lived in Cape Town Xolewa went to high school in this area. She told me that at high school the majority of pupils were coloureds, with very few blacks, but no whites at all. The relations between black and coloured students were conditioned by the social divisions inherited from Apartheid. She said:

> 'The coloured boys and girls felt superior to us and made fun of us, above all for our click language. They used to imitate us and that used to infuriate me. I put up with it at first and pretended not to notice, without allowing myself to be provoked, but my situation had left me intolerant. The fact was that I'd had to put up with so much in life, and had to put up with even more at home living with my aunt, meant that at school my patience was exhausted. I remember we were here at the back of the school and there was a group of boys and girls who were imitating me as I walked past. I look at them and turned to the biggest of them who was behaving as if he was the ringleader. I grabbed him by the neck and told him he'd better not make fun of me and my language, because it was my tradition and deserved respect.'

The Invisible Line
Xolewa linked the above episode, which had happened many years before, to the event of the final. Remembering the night spent in Long Street she recalled the difficult time spent in Bo Kaap. On the evening of the final, Xolewa too was in Long Street for the match. She had an African National Congress pin with her that she wore on the chest of her Barcelona T-shirt. Her pride in being black coexisted with that of being able to identify herself with an emblem that involved people from all over the planet. The Barcelona T-shirt opened a breach towards

the outside world, through which Xolewa might have the possibility to be part of the heterogeneous group which was filling Long Street.

Xolewa watched the match along with many of her friends, all black and all township dwellers. In the course of the evening Xolewa saw a coloured guy with whom she had been very good friends when she was at school. She had decided to disregard that he was coloured and had become really close to him. She recounted:

'After school each of us went our own way and people lost touch with each other. That evening, as often happens, there were a lot of people, both coloureds and blacks, in The Dubliner, but the coloureds were keeping to one side of the bar and the blacks to the other. It was like there was an invisible line across the floor, a barrier and unwritten borders which divided the bar in two. My friend came into the bar with a group of his friends; I found he'd changed, above all in the way he behaved. He looked like a white who was dressed in a certain way and behaved like someone posh. Our eyes met, I'm sure he recognised me, but he pretended not to have and turned in the opposite direction. This was a great disappointment for me, because we used to be friends and I'd placed my trust in him, but now he didn't want his friends to see that he was friends with a black girl.'

Xolewa described the distance between her and her friend and between the racial groups as an 'invisible line', an intangible barrier which continues to divide groups of humans in post-Apartheid Cape Town. But the space in itself is unable to explain the significance, which Xolewa attributes to this distance. It is the combination of her life experience with this space, which gives it meaning. The conjunction of time and space gives meaning to the distance; it is represented as an invisible line, which cannot be crossed.

Desmond's Angel

On the evening of the final Desmond wasn't supporting either of the teams. He had parked his taxi outside the Long Street Café and was waiting for a potential fare to come out so he could take them home. Desmond is a 45-year-old man. I met him in Long Street while he was waiting for customers in his taxi. He had migrated to South Africa from Zimbabwe, trying to escape from the economic crisis and the dictatorship of Robert Mugabe, arriving in Cape Town in 2008. At first he worked for a wholesaler company which delivered fruit to various businesses in the city, but in 2010 he started working as a taxi driver. Desmond told me about his life in South Africa and his difficult relationship with the local population, 'particularly with the blacks'.

He explained to me that immigrants 'are viewed as a threat by black South Africans because we work hard and employers prefer us to the local population. The blacks here are lazy and expect to be paid even when they don't do anything'. Although Desmond has never been a victim of violence he lives in a state of constant fear. An incident in a township when he was forced to buy drinks for all the regulars and attacks on his fellow taxi drivers have convinced him to keep himself to himself and to avoid opening up to the local population.

Desmond is waiting until he has enough money to go back to his own country, because

he is convinced that what happened in his country is about to happen in South Africa; that is, that the blacks will seize the land from the whites, unleashing 'a reign of terror just like the one at home'. The rumours already circulating in Samora Machel (the township where he lives) that they are 'just waiting for the old man (Nelson Mandela) to die, then all hell will break loose' have already convinced Desmond that South Africa is about to relive what happened in Zimbabwe.

He told me that on the evening of the final he had managed to take some English tourists back to their hotel. When he asked them the final score he made it clear to them that he was disappointed their team had lost. He had told them he supported Manchester United because one way of keeping hold of a customer is to show that you are friendly and obliging, especially with tourists. That evening, half of Long Street was celebrating and the other half was in mourning over the result of the final. Desmond felt that if he were able to win over a customer like that he would be able to return to Zimbabwe sooner.

Working as a taxi driver in Cape Town is considered a dangerous job, especially during the night shift. It is quite normal for taxi drivers to be robbed, especially in the townships. 'Choosing the wrong client or venturing into dangerous areas could mean losing your life.' Desmond applies two basic criteria when choosing his customers: the first is observation (of the person and how they behave) and the second is trusting in an inner guide, which Desmond claims is an angel who 'has been protecting me and giving me advice since the day I set out from my country to come to South Africa.' He says,

> 'When I'm not sure whether to take a customer or not I trust my inner guide. He's been helping me through since I set out on my journey. When I left home I didn't have enough money to get to Cape Town. However, I decided to take the risk in any case, planning to stop in various places along the way where I would find work. I crossed the border into Botswana and arrived at the capital from where my plan was to move on to South Africa. I met nine guys who were heading for Cape Town. Six of them decided to cross the border at 6 o'clock, while I joined the other three who intended to leave at 9. This choice enabled me to reach the city. In fact, I found out later that the six who left before me were captured at the border and arrested. Right from the moment I decided to leave home, I've felt a strange power inside me, a kind of unusual instinct, which guides my decisions. I think it's an angel. When I had to choose between the first and the second group I had no hesitation. Guided by my angel, I chose the second, and it's him who tells me whether to pick up a customer or not.'

With Desmond I headed to Khayelitsha where he went shortly after he arrived in Cape Town and he recalled his first impressions of the city:

> 'When I arrived here I thought I was going mad. I had spent 10 days in the Hillbrow area of Johannesburg at the house of a friend from Zimbabwe. It was hell on earth. At night we could hear people screaming, gunshots and sirens. It's a place inhabited only by criminals. I don't think there's a single ordinary worker in the whole neighbourhood. I said to myself: I can't live like this, and I decided to

get out. Then I came here to Cape Town, but things have not improved much. The initial period, above all, before my wife arrived, was terrible. The first thing I saw when I woke up was the roof of my shack. The alarm rang and I saw the tin roof and said to myself: No, it can't be true, another day has begun, and I hoped it wasn't true, that I was still in Zimbabwe. I couldn't stand being on my own anymore and I thought I'd go mad. Every evening I'd go to phone my wife to find out how the children were, and she'd ask me how I was, and I'd tell her 'fine', but it wasn't true. I didn't want her to know I felt wretched and I couldn't stand it anymore. I picked up my first customer on Long Street. I didn't know how much to charge for the journey and didn't have a clear idea of the distance between one part of the city and another. A lot of tourists ask you not to turn on the meter and to agree a fare, but I would never do it. When I met Michael he asked me how much I wanted to take him to Claremont, which normally costs 80-90 Rand. I didn't know how much it should be, and thinking that if I asked too much I'd lose the fare, I told him 30. He looked at me in amazement and I think he must have been frightened because he was getting out of the taxi again, so I thought I must have asked him too much and said 20. He looked at me strangely and got in. He didn't say a word the whole trip and when I dropped him at this house he told me that taxi drivers normally charged him 80 Rand and gave me 70. I gave him my card and he became my first regular customer.'

After this customer, Desmond had many regular customers, including myself. I spent many days in Cape Town with him and we went through many of its areas. I discovered with him how one could live in a city while always having one's mind elsewhere. Desmond lives in Cape Town and Zimbabwe at the same time. He is perpetually outside of and in the city.

Conclusion

Noeleen Murray (2007) uses the expression 'lines of desires' to describe the complex plot of 'memories and desires (but) also fear and forgetting' which reach across the urban spaces of South African cities in the post-Apartheid time. According to the author's perspective, the 'lines of desires' do not follow a linear and uniform pathway but are ambiguously interlaced and juxtaposed. This analogy seems particularly appropriate to the case of Long Street where the 'lines' of memory, desire and hope are intersected and never converge into a single direction (Murray 2007: 12). In Long Street, there was a convergence of different ways of reconstructing the past, envisioning the future, and building the world. These perspectives on the world intersected like independent lines in a single space to form a whole. Long Street is made up of each of these lines, but can be reduced to none of them.

In this article I decided to observe Long Street through its dual space-time dimension. It was taken as an urban chronotope made up of the intersection of the temporalities of its regulars with the city's urban spaces. Folch Serra noted how in Bakhtin the landscape 'becomes not only graphically visible in space but also narratively visible in time, in a field of discourse all attempting to account to human experience' (Folch Serra 1990: 258). It can be

understood as a narrative platform that connects the dimension of space to that of time. She writes, 'Mikhail Bakhtin reminds us to resist the Hegelian trap of separating time and space, and, as a time-space aggregate becomes a complete and inseparable entity.' Keeping in mind the landscape's chronotopic dimension, we can imagine a kind of ethnographic observation of the city that spans different space-time perspectives and can produce a 'different way of seeing time and space together, the vertical and the horizontal dimensions of being in the world.' (Soja in Folch Serra 1990: 256).

We could add that the very concept of the chronotope and its application to studying social phenomena inherently contains the conditions for discovering polyphony. Each individual can attribute a specific meaning to the place by putting it in relationship to a particular event, whether present, past or imagined, or his or her personal experience. A road, a square or an abandoned alley can take on different meanings when related to particular human experiences, like an important encounter, a traumatic event or the memory of a loved one. The landscape is never a bearer of a single meaning. On the contrary, landscapes can be regarded as repositories of polyphony and heteroglossia: places where social, historical and geographical conditions allow different voices to express themselves differently than they would under any other conditions. The landscape 'speaks' through the different individuals that question it, challenge it and project their own memories and desires onto it. This work observed and explored Long Street as a chronotopic unit. Tatiana Argounova has noted how the street's chronotopic dimension can be recognized in its analogy to the narrative. She wrote, 'I argue that a road is chronotopical through and through because each point on it corresponds to a certain time and certain location in space and because narratives about roads take us back to a certain time and certain location in space.' (Argounova 2012: 201). We could add that the street's chronotopic dimension can be understood in its ability to embrace many narratives. Bakhtin called chronotopes the place 'where the knots of narrative are tied and untied' (Bakhtin 1981: 250). The chronotope is conceived as the interweaving of different narrative forms that tie to different space-time intersections. Walking down Long Street with its regulars and exploring how they had attributed a specific meaning to it the evening of the final through their particular personal experiences, I started to conceive the street as a space/time 'knot' in which countless narratives intertwined.

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DISCUSSIONS AND COMMENTS

Forum

'Urban Anthropology'

This Forum on 'Urban Anthropology', started last year in *Urbanities* (Vol. 3 No. 2, 2013: 79-132), stimulated several scholars to contribute their reflections and comments. Below, in alphabetical order, those that have reached us in time for publication in the present issue.

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The detailed essay by Giuliana Prato and Italo Pardo on the history and development of urban anthropology (2013) raises important theoretical and methodological questions regarding disciplinary divides and influences, research contexts and foci. I suppose I am commenting from the position of someone who occupies the blurred space between disciplines: theoretically influenced by sociology, methodologically inspired by anthropology and substantively located in social policy. I would like to offer my reflections and brief comments on a particular cross-disciplinary influence highlighted by Prato and Pardo and to contribute to debates on whether the sociological distinction between urban and rural life remains as salient in an era of globablisation and international migration. I suggest that studying 'community' *(Gemeinschaft)* within the context of 'society' *(Gesellschaft)* has the capacity to illuminate processes of social continuity as well as social change. Community can be understood as multiple and overlapping forms of belonging (Ahmed 2011) and thus can be used to explain different forms of belonging in the modern world (Delanty 2003). My main argument here is that using community as a lens to understand how and to what people construct belonging — in urban as well as rural settings — highlights social continuity as well as social change. Further, how people experience belonging has significance in relation to how they see themselves in temporal as well as spatial contexts.

Conceptually, community is characterised by ambiguity, although it is broadly considered to be a positive feature of social and institutional life (Crow 2002a). Community studies characterise a range of academic disciplines and community is also a feature in UK policy circles, evidenced by New Labour's 'Community Cohesion' project and the Conservative-led Coalition 'Big Society' initiative. Focusing on community allows us to contextualise individual agency and social relations and processes within wider contexts (Crow 2002b). The discourse underpinning community is often one of loss: modernity and social change are seen as destroying community (Delanty 2003) and this leads to an idealisation of the past. Nostalgia too is a feature of community rhetoric and imagined community (Anderson 1983, 2006) can provide a sense of belonging to multi-dimensional communities and social continuity within the context of social change.

Community can refer to places, networks and identities and there is a reinforcing relationship between these different representations. Traditionally, research on community as place has involved studies which occur in particular locations and has historically focused on specific problems (Gillies and Edwards 2006). Networks, or relational belongings (May 2013), are also an important part of community and can be explored through focusing on social interaction (Amit and Rapport 2002). Identity is also significant in discussions of community and there is a relationship between identity and belonging, place and networks (Anthias 2008).

Examining how people experience and construct belonging to places, networks and identities through ethnographic and life-story methods allows us to gain knowledge of the social and material circumstances of their lives. Significantly, it is studying the intersection, or interplay between these different representations of community which has the capacity to illuminate social continuity in multiple settings. In summary then, community represents an ideal and an often imagined rural past. Because of this it is often presented as a panacea to the problems associated with modernity — or society — located in urban settings. However, exploring how people belong and to what they belong can illuminate the contexts in which peoples' lives are lived and processes of social continuity as well as social change.

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Prato and Pardo's piece (2013) is an excellent and useful introduction to the field of urban anthropology, as other commentaries have already noted. It is especially useful for someone like me, who came to urban anthropology indirectly, after many years of straddling the divide between scholarly and practical development anthropology. Having first worked on forced displacement and resettlement caused by development projects in rural areas, I was drawn to cities by the recent rapid urban growth in developing countries. As developing countries become majority urban, their cities confront new problems, including the disruptions caused by initiatives to improve infrastructure and neighbourhoods. These efforts include new roads, rail, bridges, watershed preservation and responses to climate change, as well as urban renewal to 'upgrade' slums and gentrification. These changes virtually always displace and relocate at least some of the people who live in the affected areas. Scholars and practitioners have shown that displacement and relocation disproportionately affect poorer groups and that the process of forced relocation disrupts economic and social ties with often disastrous results (Cernea 2000, Koenig 2009).

Just as anthropology itself began in rural areas and only later came to cities, so too did international development practice. This is especially true for development-caused forced relocation and resettlement, where international safeguard policies to mitigate the worst effects of displacement were formulated largely to avoid the negative effects of dam construction on rural people living in relatively isolated areas. The essential focus of many of these policies is reconstituting the land-based assets of rural residents so they can re-establish natural resource-based livelihoods. In urban areas, however, most people live from activities that depend upon other kinds of assets, including skills, social networks and technology. Existing policies are not always sufficient to reconstitute their lives and livelihoods.

Those who want to address the negative effects of urban forced displacement and resettlement need to understand not only how people live in cities but also how cities work. As in other fields of development practice, anthropology and its local focus offer the possibility to correct some of the blind spots of existing policy. As Prato and Pardo show, urban anthropology links the macro-processes of urban change to the lived experiences of urban residents. An anthropology of the city as well as the knowledge gleaned from anthropology in cities are both key to conceptualizing the impacts of urban displacement and relocation.

While the strength of anthropology remains ethnographic analyses of individual cases, good policy depends on accurate generalization based on comparative analyses of urban experiences internationally, within and between developed and developing countries. As developing countries build new infrastructure to improve cities, they are undertaking processes, including displacement and resettlement, that have occurred in similar, if not identical form, in developed countries. In the U.S., anthropologists began to carry out problem-oriented work in cities following new urban policies linked to the U.S. War on

Poverty (Silverman 2005: 307). This included the impacts of urban renewal, which began earlier, in the 1950s and 1960s, with predictably negative results for many relocatees. Yet those working on forced relocation in developing countries today rarely turn to developed countries to learn from their experiences. Indeed, just as Prato and Pardo note how urban anthropology grew somewhat independently in Europe, the United States and elsewhere, so too has international development practice grown separately from concerns about similar social issues in the global North. In contrast to policy makers in international organizations, who must focus on developing countries, scholars can carry out comparative analyses to outline common urban social processes, regional differences and city particularities.

Scholarly comparative analyses can also build on knowledge of the deep past. While the macro-processes of urban change today are linked to the growth of global capitalism, capitalism is not the only economic force that has led to the growth of cities or to forced movements of people. Archaeologists have shown that people were obliged to relocate to cities among the Inka as well as in ancient Anatolia (Morris 2008, Stone 2008). Indeed, archaeologists have pursued an anthropology of the city even longer than have socio-cultural anthropologists, looking at patterns of planning, growth, and long-term change (Smith ed. 2003, Marcus and Sabloff eds 2008). Thus comparative analysis of many topics, not just urban forced resettlement, would be enriched by systematic comparison of historical and archaeological materials to contemporary ethnographies.

The insights from urban anthropology facilitate practitioners' understanding of the effects of coercion. In rural areas, displaced residents often express shock at leaving the places where their families have lived and their ancestors are buried, but displaced urban residents do so less often. Although some people subjected to urban renewal have expressed strong place attachment (see, for example, Fullilove 2004), today's urban displaced often include significant numbers of recent migrants. Urban residents voluntarily change their place of residence to take up new economic opportunities or show changing social status. However, even for people willing to move voluntarily in their own interests, a coerced move is quite different. The coercion itself compromises the ability of the relocated to reconstitute the social networks that underpin economic, social and psychological well-being.

In spite of the problems that usually accompany forced displacement, evidence shows that some people can use the new resources, especially monetary compensation, to create substantially better lives. When urban residents are forcibly relocated during strong economic times, a greater number may be able to benefit than when forced relocation occurs during an economic downtown. To keep pressure on international organizations to implement and maintain strong safeguard policies for the forcibly resettled, development practitioners have not often looked closely at those individuals or groups who do well. Nevertheless, scholarly approaches can and should do so. Theoretically important in themselves, these findings may also suggest how to improve strategies for the less well off, building on what enterprising individuals have already found effective.

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In their essay recently published this Journal (2013) Giuliana Prato and Italo Pardo have offered a useful summary of what urban anthropology is all about, explaining its origin and current diverse outlook. Since Eastern Europe falls outside their scope, I provide here information about my research in Budapest, Hungary. Because current urban anthropological concerns throughout the region are diverse with many national strands complicating the picture from Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovenia (see, for example, Kürti and Skalnik eds 2009, Mihailescu 2009, Soukupová 2010). Since I came to study that city as an American PhD researcher my subsequent publications reflect mostly Euro-American anthropology, but since I have been living now in Hungary for two decades, both teaching and researching, I also know how my colleagues in Hungary approached the subject of urban studies. However,

I do not wish to discuss the entire gamut of Hungarian studies related to urbanity here for that would require a separate and substantial treatment on its own (see Kürti 2003). Instead, I want to explain my own urban by providing a few ideas concerning my fieldwork experiences in Hungary.

While the term urban anthropology (*városantropológia*) currently is in vogue in Hungary, other terms such as 'settlement study' (*településkutatás*) and urban sociology have been also utilized to make them distinctly up-to-date and different from the more traditional rural or village studies (*falukutatás*) or ethnography (*néprajz*). This exciting tradition evolved from a mixture of urban sociology, regional or urban geography, and urban planning with a strong foundation in history and peasant ethnography connected to the names of such pioneers as Robert Braun, Tibor Mendöl and Ferenc Erdei. Ethnographers of the twentieth-century have studied the so-called Hungarian agro-towns (Cegléd, Debrecen, Hódmezővásárhely, Kiskunhalas, Szeged, and so on) which are of considerable size in Hungary (ranging between 50,000 and 100,000 people), with their usual mixture of various classes, diverse economic, industrial, religious and educational institutions (Hofer, Kisbán and Kaposvári eds 1974). Smaller towns also have their 'own' ethnographers as well, but many of these studies do not discuss anthropological (or urban anthropological) issues *per se* but remain within the confines of standard local ethnographies about the changing nature of peasant society. Already in the 1980s, some keen-eyed ethnographer-folklorists turned their attention to 'ethnographies of towns' but only scratched the surface of what anthropologists have been doing in urban environments in the West and, what is more important, investigated how could traditional ethnographic practice evolve into full-fledged urban anthropology (Fejős and Niedermüller 1983; Niedermüller 1984a, 1984b). Aside from a few attempts to grasp the new possibilities of research in urban context (Gergely 1993, Letenyei 2004), most of the recent work published in Hungary under the heading urban anthropology are either translations of Western, mostly English, urban studies or continue to be produced in the traditional ethnographic-folkloristic style (see, for example, Jelinek, Bodnár, Czirfuszand and Gyimesi eds 2013). Granted, both are necessary, especially for lower-level university teaching, but neither can stand for real urban anthropology (Prato and Pardo, 2013, discuss current concerns). However, it must be emphasized that many recent studies are conducted in an urban environment, population and institutions — for example, ethnic enclaves, migrant camps, or hospitals — without them being labelled urban anthropology or relating to theoretical orientation(s) of that area (Lázár and Pikó eds 2012). While in history, sociology and geography new trends have been the order of the day, ethnography has not developed along the same lines and, sadly, in cultural anthropology there is no specialized degree program in urban anthropology although some of the program allow urban-centred research to be included in its orientation.

As part of my doctoral dissertation I decided to study Budapest, Hungary's capital of two millions (Kürti 2002a). This was not without the influence of John W. Cole at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst) who was especially pleased because of my choice. There were two main reasons for his decision to support my fieldwork. For one, American and British anthropological interest in Eastern Europe concentrated on villages, an orientation

that is still the hallmark of social anthropological studies. The US and British anthropologists who embarked upon anthropological fieldwork in Hungary (P. Bell, C. Hann, S. Gal, E. Huseby-Darvas, M. Sozan, I. Vasary) all studied the countryside and published unique village monographs. Finally, here was somebody who wanted to conduct research in an urban area, in Hungary, in 1985, and that really pleased my advisors. Importantly, John Cole's previous doctoral students conducted fieldwork in Transylvania to study the changing rural landscape of Ceausescu's Romania. In the early 1980s, Cole entered a furious debate with some Hungarian scholars including anthropologists as to the actual Romanianization plan of ethnic communities in Romania, and received a good amount of criticism of his, and his students', pro-Romanian perspective on that issue. The possibility of someone studying in Hungary and producing a PhD dissertation on a Hungarian topic surely came as a blessing to him and his programme.

To me, studying Budapest anthropologically seemed ideal at that time, and I believe it is an ideal research even today. Hungary's capital was already at its peak population boom with two million residents, now it is somewhat below that figure, but most of the outer districts, and some blocks of the notorious eighth, were dilapidated exuding the feeling of either the inter-war or the 1950s Stalinization periods. The 21st district of Csepel was a perfect choice to select for a fieldwork site (Kürti 2002b). It has been expanding both in its size and industry with a heterogeneous labour-force, its connection to downtown Budapest was ensured via tram. However, the district, with several high-schools, churches and large housing complexes, managed to avoid anthropologists before. It was not only ideal, but remained a *terra incognita* and there was a lot to be done. In the 1980s, it was still referred by its residents as Red Csepel, an epithet preserved from the 1920s and 1930s, mostly because of the working-class movement. Since WWI, Csepel was Hungary's number one factory town, thanks to the skilful Jewish entrepreneur, Manfred Weiss, who established his steel-mill there. Csepel became even more marked as a hotbed of industrial movement after 1945 as the Stalinist state magnified its symbolic power. By World War II, Csepel's population increased to 65,000, most working in the district's several factories. After the war, Stalinist political economy brought dramatic changes to workers and to Hungarian industry as a whole. Consequently, factories were nationalized and state control was established throughout the economy and as I was able to witness, through central control, mass housing projects and the implementation of Stakhanovism (a work-competition to speed up industrial output), Csepel became a 'model' socialist city (Kürti 1990).

Following the reorganization in the post-Stalinist era, the original Weiss factories were incorporated into a 'socialist trust' employing more than 40,000, most commuters from the countryside who were offered cheap housing in one of the apartment complexes. In 1968, the New Economic Mechanism was introduced to reverse the crisis caused by Hungary's re-entry into the capitalist world-system and the deficiencies of a centrally planned economy. By the late 1970s, it was evident that the 'reforms' could not buttress the serious of external economic shocks (primary associated with the high oil prices) and their internal ramifications. After a wave of political turbulence, the Csepel factories were facing yet another transformation: the trust was eliminated completely and independent production units were created under a new system of

company executive council (*vállalati tanács*). By the time I arrived, talk about socialist economy was passé and most people mentioned second economy as the real force to be reckoned with. Studying both the formal and the informal but legal second economy was a real challenge; youth spent more and more time in the factories and obviously earned more money. Some of my young informants were asking about the best and latest VCRs they should buy!

Complex organizations create complex and highly structured bureaucracies that offer anthropologists new possibilities to study inner-workings of institutions. At one of the company executive meeting I was able to sit through, I noticed how personal conflicts were solved through hours of negotiations. Surprising happenings also occurred. As usual for anthropological fieldwork method I was ready to take notes of the discussions taking place. In no time, one of the managing directors came informing me that I should not bother. My initial reaction must have shocked him because he immediately explained that I will receive complete written minutes of the meeting the next day. This is not something one gets while conducting participant observation in a village setting. Photographic fieldwork techniques were also lot more challenging than I expected. Although I had some previous uneasy situation with my camera, especially in Romania but also in Hungary, factory management asserted the no-photography-rule inside the factory gates. No people, no machines, not even seemingly innocent bystanders in an alley-way were considered proper subjects by my guides (Kürti 1999). Industrial plants were considered, after all, military installations as most industries in state socialist societies were considered as such. What this entailed was that the foreign anthropologist's technological violation of the workplace added a considerable distance between natives (them) and outsiders (me). Such a limitation was no more present during the mid-to-late 1990s when I returned for a follow-up fieldwork.

By 1985, when I first arrived to conduct my research, Csepel's population reached 90,000, and Csepelers faced yet another crisis period. The leadership, for its part, was desirous of finding ways to cope with the declining workforce in metallurgy and boost production by initiating various new forms of second economy activities. To alleviate the shrinking workforce new labourers were hired, many of them unskilled Roma from the countryside. Although there were Roma migrants living in rather squalid conditions in Csepel, new ones were not really welcomed. Interethnic strife and rivalry became vicious and open. The situation further deteriorated as high politics became overtly nationalistic.

One fundamental aspect of urban fieldwork is that anthropologists are able to witness how industries are facing and responding to challenges both from national as well as international players. As I found out from living in Csepel, local and national politics often clash in multi-ethnic working-class urban neighbourhoods suddenly with unexpected results. In the intervening months, these critical issues, taken together with international economic instability, contributed to the escalation of a crisis that catalysed the situation at hand. On October 23 1989, Hungary declared itself to be a Republic; a multi-party system was legalized and free elections took place on 25 March 1990; the socialist (formerly communist) party lost its monopoly in the industrial enterprises; joint ventures between Hungary and the West began to proliferate in an attempt to invigorate the country's sluggish economic performance.

Such a transformation of Csepel's sense of itself was accomplished in incremental stages that invariably reshaped not only the town's self-image but also workers' own consciousness of themselves. Local political processes followed immediately and communist leaders had to react accordingly. Until the mid-1980s, there was in Hungary a single minor political opposition to the socialist government known as the 'democratic opposition,' a loose coalition of two factions often identified as including the 'urbanists' and the 'populists'. Strange as it may sound to urban anthropologists, that intellectual disparity, dating back to the 1930s, refers to the tension between a more conservative political stance with regard to Hungary's external relations, and a more liberal one. For their part, the populists stress the importance of the country's history and culture as a mobilizing force and advocate a more gradual integration into a privatized, Western-style market economy. On the contrary, the 'urbanites' have advocated a liberal, Western orientation that emphasizes civil liberties, stronger political and cultural ties to the West, and complete free-market liberalization.

The political economic turmoil has caused not only a complete rearrangement of party politics locally, but wreaked havoc in the industrial structure of the entire country. This has been reported by others as well, but I was able to participate in the very process of industrial closures, factory sales and massive unemployment that followed in their wake. Many of my young informants in the city of Csepel lost their jobs and were searching for other possibilities to earn money. Disillusioned and without any institutional support, kids on the streets joined far-right organisations and took up occupations outside their skills. It was not a pretty picture for sure, but it was the reality of the 1990s in most of the industrial cities of Hungary (Kürti 1998). In the cultural sphere the mindless international popular culture exacerbated some of the national issues that I also reported on earlier (Kürti 2011). Such a manipulated political field soon made its way to Csepel working-class neighbourhoods and the once proud 'red heritage' slowly was fading out from conversations. By the late 1990s, when I conducted the last phase of my Csepel study, the new left-liberal party was barely making a dent in the political tapestry of the district. It is not surprising then that by 2010 a right-wing mayor was elected backed up by a majority of right-wing councilmen on the local council.

Conducting fieldwork in an industrial area of a city involves many institutions that are far from local. From day one, my fieldwork took an interesting turn as I had to navigate between different institutions, both political and civic that transgressed district boundaries. Contributing to the existing hierarchical politics that went up to ministerial level, was the heterogeneity and size of various offices and agencies that seemed chaotic at first, but became more and more manageable as my fieldwork progressed. One of the factories I studied was the Machine-Tool Factory, the other the Non-Ferrous Metal Works, both with large constituency of labour force and extensive export capabilities. Both factories were truly global, an aspect that also ramified into various local civic events and symbolic actions. In 1986 for instance, Mikhail Gorbachev visited Csepel; less than ten years later, an American group of executives came, but I saw even African businessmen trying to secure a deal with the local government bent on privatizing various state factories. By the mid-1990s, several Chinese shops, restaurants and laundries opened together with Turkish (Arab) fast-food places. Extended networks are also an everyday reality that one has to face with. Although my

target group was the younger generation, to study them alone was impossible; soon parents, grandparents and distant relatives were brought in and the original sample was expanding day by day. Focussing on, say, only political socialization, which was my first and foremost topic, did not last long, young informants drew me into their leisure activities which revealed their different personalities. Networks, as I found out, reached well beyond the immediately observable. I also came to notice very soon that while most of my informants were 'city-kids', their parents and grandparents had strong linkages all across the region and well beyond that, and relatives sometimes visited from far-away villages.

Opposed to my Csepel study, I also embarked upon another research area that concern a comparative study of national and local level cultural processes, such as nationalism, symbolic politics, education and youth culture, by engaging both with 'locals' in large cities, such as Budapest, as well as a smaller towns, like Lajosmizse (population 10,000) or Ladánybene (population 1600). The latter two are neighbours actually; Ladánybene grew out from its larger neighbour at the beginning of the 20th century. This process is a unique aspect of modernization and urbanization: the splitting of areas from agro-industrial centres. In this case, a distant farming area split off from the agro-town forming a new independent town on its own. Local politics and economic differences as well as religious infighting all contributed to such bifurcation. I have been able to untangle such processes with great difficulty, requiring not only in-depth interviews with extended families split between the two settlements but also arduous archival research (Kürti 2004). This community development study also gave me a fantastic possibility to study not only urban and rural interaction but national as well as international ones as well. I have published an analysis about the creation of a Western venture in Lajosmizse when at the beginning of the 1990s a Swiss meat-packing plant opened in the town (Kürti 2009).

In comparison to research in such small regional towns, conducting fieldwork in Csepel thought me numerous aspects of community life that one cannot witness in agro-towns or peasant villages, not on such magnificent scale and complexity for sure. I have learned about large housing construction deals that were really ugly and witnessed how from one minute to the next a cultural institution could be destroyed by powerful party bosses. I have even seen a court case of a toxic dump, but also was involved with a family feud and tried to help as much as I could. Not only bureaucracy, hierarchy and population density, but crime, corruption and vandalism are also part of the city life that one cannot find, certainly not on such scale, in rural smaller settlements. The size and multifariousness of the urban milieu really require anthropologists to manage many things at once, and to be able to organize their life accordingly.

Edmund Leach once noted that social anthropology is packed with frustrations, and, surely, this could be a proper motto for the urban anthropology of East Europe, a region sandwiched between the prestigious anthropology of the Mediterranean and Western Europe, and a subfield which is a minuscule part of the anthropology of Europe. This hiatus should be countered for the simple reason that research conducted on Eastern Europe has the potential, while contributing to the more general anthropology of Europe, to offer excellent glimpses into societies both planned and unplanned, and provide ethnographies which replicate neither those

written about Third or Fourth World nor those describing Western states. The accounts of what went on in existing socialist countries, how they have been transformed and how anthropologists have been able to record and analyse them belong to the very core of the discipline's epistemological make up. Anthropologists studying first hand urban processes of state socialist legacies — the anthropology of socialism and post-socialism to use the phrase fashioned by Chris Hann — could be extremely valuable for various issues within the anthropological enterprise, not the least urban anthropology. Unfortunately, despite the many excellent recent studies published, it is obvious that the region has remained marginal in mainstream anthropology (see Kürti and Sklanik 2009). Urgently, we need more sound analyses that can redress this problem.

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Just a few comments and reflections to add to this Forum. Twenty years ago I joined an interdisciplinary research team working on port cities. It was mostly composed of historians, and my role was to approach the topic from an anthropological perspective. Most of the information we worked with derived from written historical sources and reports and documents relating to port agencies, ports and urban planning. We were far from the field in chronological and spatial terms. It was quite a challenge, yet one similar in some respects to those experienced by those who built this subfield.

As I started this project, I was familiar with the historical dimension thanks to my doctoral work on a classic subject: Northwest Coast Indians as seen as by Eighteenth Century

Explorers. So I knew how to talk with dead 'informants' and to approach a field that was 'far away' in more than one sense. Moreover, living in Madrid, 'ports' as an anthropological subject were for me as exotic as the Eighteenth Century Northwest Coast of North America. I was born and lived most of my life far from the sea.

Nevertheless, as the work progressed, I realized that there was a huge divide in the field; namely, between those who *make* the port — stevedores, sailors, ship officers, port authorities, administrators and so on — and those who *study* it. Port agencies, managers and administrators were not interested in the heritage of the city, they just wanted to run an efficient and profitable node of commerce and distribution. Old buildings were useful as long as they had some economic function. Sometimes, heritage buildings were torn down in order to make room for a shopping mall or a five-star hotel. Once aware of this division, I realized that ports and port cities were not only strategic, vantage points for dealing with the transformations related to urbanization and globalization; they were an excellent topic to apply, develop or challenge what we know about 'urban anthropology'.

What did I learn dealing with port cities? It seemed to me that most of the cross-disciplinary influences Giuliana Prato and Italo Pardo so clearly show in their essay (2013) are related to a historical moment. By the end of the nineteenth century cities were entering a new modern configuration and the then new social sciences defined that moment particularly well. The bias when we carry out our fieldwork is not just ethnocentrism, there are also methodological and theoretical problems. We should be aware of the way that both theory and our own understanding of the field may be inadequate to address current problems. An example, to put it simply: the Chicago School of Urban Ecology naturalized a moral dimension in their theoretical orientations. Most of the scholars of that School dealing with Chicago were concerned with social problems and with the future of the city. It is not my intent to criticize their moral grounds, yet cities are not moral creatures with 'ordinary' neighbourhoods and not so 'ordinary' slums or ghettos. The clash of different class moralities were a paramount field of contention in port cities, at least from the middle of the nineteenth century to the first third of the twentieth. Why impose our moral reading over those we find in the field? Today this Chicago School-style moral reading of urban life is still present, too present I would dare say, in many of my American colleagues' work. Good urban ethnographies do not need that dimension to be enlightening or useful from an activist point of view.

The city, as seen by Nestor Garcia Canclini in 1990, is approached on a very specific level of observation. He writes, 'The anthropologist arrives in the city by foot, the sociologist by car and via the main highway, the communication specialist by plane. Each registers what he or she can and constructs a distinct and, therefore partial vision. There is a fourth perspective, that of the historian, which is acquired not by entering but rather by leaving the city, moving from its old center toward the contemporary margins. But the current center of the city is no longer in the past.' (Garcia Canclini 1995: 4).

There is another concern, well outlined by Prato and Pardo and (2013), which I would like to stress. Entering the city on foot, that is, by means of an ethnographically grounded approach, we should be mindful of the peculiarities of the cross-disciplinary and early

anthropological influences that have shaped our practice, as well as of the hype surrounding the newness and innovative character of the city in an increasingly globalized world. A critical approach is needed. As I have mentioned, cities are not constituted by moral narratives but by individuals. Cities are not smart themselves. Cities are made efficient or better organized, as human artefacts — by human action. Theorization arising from fieldwork is the backbone of our work and facilitates the dialogue anthropologists could maintain with other disciplines which also deal with the city. Nevertheless, we should be well aware of the specificities of theories and perspectives born in precise moments and how this corpus was shaped by places and concrete problems.

'Urban Anthropology' is no longer a 'poor man's Anthropology', to use A.P. Cohen's (1986: 15) expression. It has become one of the more dynamic and promising areas of Anthropology, both because of the relevance of the city and of the urban transformation fuelled by globalization, and because of its ability to engage ethnographically with the complex, global world we live in. For once, urban anthropologists or just anthropologists doing research in urban settings seem to be in the right place at the right time. Cities and the urbanization processes related to globalization are arguably two of the defining forces transforming the world.

One final point, the essay written by Prato and Pardo (2013) deals mostly with the 'urban anthropology' produced in English-speaking world. As other commentators have pointed out, there are other traditions or ways of dealing with the city inside the anthropological discipline. In the case I am more familiar with, there is a tradition, well acquainted with the French, British and American anthropological traditions, but nurtured by Latin American and Spanish History and academic traditions. In this increasingly globalized world we should try to open up a debate as much as possible. There is a lot to share out there.

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Giuliana Prato and Italo Pardo's exhaustive account on the developments of Urban Anthropology as a field of research (2013) accurately show the complexity of carrying out ethnography in urban contexts, both in terms of identifying the research subject and developing a specific methodology.

The definition of what is to be considered an urban environment (usually as opposed to rural areas) proved as well to be a complicated issue, bringing to a head the implications of an heritage left by 'classical Anthropology', which often tended to consider small groups of people as a closed system, and treated them as representative of much wider realities.

What particularly caught my attention in Prato and Pardo's essay is an evident tension between the study of micro- and macro-processes which, though not often made explicit, seems to have always been latent in the discipline. The implications of studies about globalization and transnational movements pose the issue of reconsidering the urban context as a whole. Suburbs and neighbourhoods, as well as whole cities and extended metropolitan areas, cannot be considered as closed and self-legitimating groups of people, neither as limited spaces of significations, they need to be understood as poles of a transcultural and transnational continuum which operates at multiple levels. The tension between micro and macro, which probably has caused the arousal of a feeling of inadequacy towards the means and methodologies of the anthropological research, has been possibly the reason that led to the temptation of considering such processes as separated from each other, and not as constantly interrelated. On the other hand, as the authors report, the attempt to provide a holistic understanding of the many processes at play have often produced superficial ethnographic accounts.

Furthermore, and here I agree with the authors, I consider the traditional anthropological methodology to be the most fitting for the study of urban environments (Pezzi 2013). If it is true that one of the core aims of the discipline is to 'translate' cultures into an intelligible broader discourse, participant observation and interviews are the best ways to put the points of view of the citizens into their own context and to comprehend how their sets of values, moralities and identities cohabit and are (re)negotiated in a specific reality. Not only is Urban Anthropology an anthropology of the city, but to my understanding it is also an anthropology of how people inhabit their social space. I do consider the city to be a place that constitutes both the significant and the signification of peculiar social interactions and modalities of the existence.

Secondly, interdisciplinary tools could come in handy when trying to grasp the complexity of the interaction of micro- and macro-processes in a specific area, as well as the dynamics which might lead to the creations of different behavioural patterns and how they are perceived in a fast changing environment. Having assumed that the anthropological methods are a definitive plus-value, dialogue with other social sciences (but not only) could help with providing a more in depth analysis of the available data. On the other hand, having accessibility to a wider range of information, particularly on the quantitative side, could lead to the tempting exercise of getting engaged in comparative efforts, which should be carefully undertaken.

For what concerns my personal interest and engagement with tourism anthropology applied to urban environments, I do believe that an anthropology of the city offers a variety of tools and ideas which helps understanding the consequence of tourism development in urban contexts, a phenomenon which has known a great expansion in the latest years, even in areas which would not be considered to have tourism appeal in the classic sense.

Tourism and urban change are two phenomena which are often interrelated, since the first tends to shape up the ways in which an environment is signified, as well as the modalities in which its inhabitants (and tourists) do interact with it, with all the consequent social and cultural implications.

Since tourism became a mass phenomenon that interests more or less every area of the world, to consider its impact on the studied reality on the basis of urban anthropology could help to understand processes of social and spatial stratification better, as well as the impact on economic practices, that is, those which originate or are influenced by the existence of a tourism market in a spatially restricted area. On the other hand, researches like the study by McKean (1989) on how tourism in Bali has changed power relations, access to wealth and social stratification on the island, clearly show that urban and urbanized environments are often the result of transnational and transcultural forces which cannot, and should not, be considered as independent from the area in which they operate.

A study of urban contexts based on the dialogue with other disciplines, as well as with other fields within the anthropological research, with their methodologies and approaches, shall definitely help individuating what makes changes possible in urban environments and how do they affect people's lives. Prato and Pardo provided us with an excellent account of the developments and current achievements of the discipline, which will surely stimulate further discussions and serve as an indispensable tool for anyone approaching Urban Anthropology in the future.

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Peripheral Observations as a Source of Innovation[1]

Each fieldwork project has its own soundtrack of background noise. Anthropologists record some of this soundtrack in their field notes, and integrate a few snippets into their articles and books, but many interesting observations remain unpublished.

Here I would like to make the case for dedicating precious space in a peer-reviewed journal such as *Urbanities* to peripheral observations. While the idea of a periphery is associated with the expansion of knowledge, here I would like to make the more ambitious argument that the proposed section has the potential of being a source of innovation. Tentatively titled 'Choice Notes', I envision this section to be a source of innovation at three levels: the discipline, individual practitioners, and their tools. Firstly, at the level of the discipline, sharing peripheral observations imply a new ethic of transparency with regards to field notes. Secondly, scholars might encounter in the proposed section descriptions of marginalized categories of people or experiences that they would like to explore further. Thirdly, some contributions to 'Choice Notes' might introduce new concepts for organizing our observations in the field.

For these innovations to manifest themselves, it is not enough for a peer-reviewed journal to feature a section dedicated to peripheral observations. The mechanisms of including (and excluding) potential contributions, the reach and professional status of their authors and the structure of the discipline are all important factors (Silverstein 2012). However, this broader context is outside the scope of this essay. Instead, I would like to address potential reservations to the proposed section, and then share an example of a peripheral observation, a short description of an unplanned visit to a rabbit exhibit in Potsdam, Germany. I then conclude with some reflections on the innovations that a section dedicated to peripheral observations might yield at the level of the discipline, its practitioners and their tools.

Addressing Possible Criticism

Firstly, some might argue that the proposed section would feature impaired fieldwork techniques by distracted urban anthropologists whose peripheral observations would capture seemingly interesting, but unfocused and poorly researched experiences. Anthropology journals have the difficult and necessarily exclusionist task of enforcing high standards in keeping with the discipline's mission, which is, to follow Didier Fassin, making 'sense of the world that subjects create by relating it to larger structures and events' (Fassin 2014: 53). Peripheral observations do not meet this standard.

Secondly, contributors to the forum would presume themselves to be original and creative, yet their observations would likely overlap with the main research interests of other anthropologists. In the context of the pre-existing body of scholarship, the forum's selection would likely be trite, misleading or both.

Thirdly, a section dedicated to interesting asides would derive its academic prestige by association, rather than merit. Contributors to this section would be riding on the coattails of hard-working scholars whose full-length articles establish the journal's reputation.

These reservations do not offer sufficient grounds for dismissing 'Choice Notes.' Firstly, while the contributions to this forum would be vulnerable to the charge that they represent poor research, the editors would select submissions that distinguish themselves by the quality of the writing, so that the published material would serve students and inspire scholars. Secondly, when the peripheral observations would tread on the terrain of other scholars, the authors and/or editors would acknowledge this fact, pointing to the areas of overlap. Thirdly, to ensure fairness, the editors could include in the introduction a statement that clearly sets apart the scholarly merit of full-length articles from the scholarly merit of peripheral observations to the advantage of the former.

Lastly, whether subject to editorial and/or peer review, I propose that contributions to 'Choice Notes' should be evaluated on the basis of whether they touch upon one or more aspects of the city. As I define it, the city has three key aspects. Firstly, the city is an emergent phenomenon, an outcome of many actions and interactions. Secondly, the city as a setting is a causal factor, shaping feelings, thoughts and actions. Thirdly, the city is an idea, a representation and an object of reflection that informs and is informed by people's concern with their place in the world (Touval 2011: 43).

An Example of a Peripheral Observation

Below is a potential submission to 'Choice Notes.' I do not presume that it is exemplary. I recorded the experience and my reflections on its possible significance, but I have not integrated this text into any of my scholarly writings. In retrospect, it exemplifies the vulnerability of individual peripheral observations:

July 1995. Just outside the Potsdam train station, I see a sign on a telephone pole with a colour photograph of rabbits and an arrow. I am familiar with the word Ausstellung, or exhibit, but the world Kaninchen, or rabbit, is an amusing novelty. I follow the arrow, first under a railroad bridge, and then, next to a canal, down a staircase, to a ticket booth where I pay the five-Marks admission fee.

Fibrous plastic sheets protect the cages from the sun, yet let in a gentle breeze. The ventilation tempers the smell of straw and rabbit pellets; the air inside the exhibit space is fresh, calm and bucolic. The exhibit conjures a rural past, leaping back and away from the twentieth century with its two world wars and the division of Germany into east and west, to a time when Potsdam was about Prussia and its rulers, and many political divisions cut across Germany. Situated near Potsdam's city centre, right next to its busy train station, the exhibit implies that Potsdam oversees the geographic regions from which the rabbits originate, positioning the city as an important centre of trade and commerce.

As my eyes adjust to the shade, the most stunning rabbits come into view. I did not know that rabbits could reach the size of large household cats. I dutifully read each label, and then stare to my heart's content. The names of some rabbit breeds — Sachsengold, Mecklenburger Schecken and Thüringer — invoke specific regions in Germany. Anticipating the public's curiosity concerning the names of breeds which do not contain a geographic reference, the organizers included the rabbits' place of origins on the labels, matching specific breeds of rabbit to different parts of Germany, much like cheese or wine. I speculate that participation in the rabbit exhibit could lead some breeders to consider their breed in relations to other breeds. More generally, the exhibit could serve as a place where people would consider their regional identity and the meanings that others attribute to it. Some visitors might discover gaps between their community's self-conception and others' perceptions of their identity, gaps that are productive of additional layers of self-referential commentary.

The rabbits look at me sleepily; they do not mirror back surprise, delight or astonishment. Some have eerie folds and strikingly colourful fur: blue, black, red and purple. A few have long feet, while others are as small as hamsters. They are fantasies of uniqueness, furry ambassadors whose pedigreed claim to purity suggests long-standing regional peculiarities. Are the regional differences as dramatic as the differences between the breeds of rabbit? At what point do breeds that have their origins in other parts of the world become local, German, breeds? What does it mean to be German? As an anthropologist, I doubt that the exhibit's rhetoric of speciation has any purchase in geography. Saxony, Mecklenburg and Thuringia are not isolated islands. The roads that crisscross these lands had ferried trade and ideas since Roman times, bastardizing everything in their wake: ploughs, crops, lexicons, coins and people.

Admittedly, my peripheral experience and reflections at the rabbit exhibit touch on the main research focus of other scholars who have written about Potsdam and its history, the anthropology of farming, agriculture, animal husbandry, animal exhibits, zoos, collections, museums and tourism. My contribution calls for more extensive fieldwork and a thorough familiarity with this scholarly literature. Nevertheless, I believe that urban anthropology has much to gain from curating and publishing short descriptions of peripheral experiences from the field.

Firstly, contributions to 'Choice Notes' might encourage the sharing of field notes. Currently, the discipline does not incentivize us to make our field notes available to other scholars. The proposed section is a step in the right direction: Setting an example of sharing notes from the field. This example points to an alternative horizon in which there would be more transparency with respect to the evidence that we collect in the field than there is today. This, in turn, could bring anthropologists to collaborate with each other across skillsets, giving rise to a division of labour, and perhaps careful succession planning with respect to particular field sites.

Secondly, at the level of the individual scholar, innovation is often couched in moral terms as an effort to document, and thus somehow liberate, marginalized people and experiences. Peripheral observations that would focus on previously ignored categories of people and or spheres of activity would help this effort.

Lastly, the urban setting is rich with peripheral experiences that are difficult to capture, let alone verbalize. 'Choice Notes' would acknowledge the difficulty of managing the relationship between background and foreground, with contributors drawing on the notion of a periphery for the purpose of either carefully delimiting or problematizing the boundaries of specific research projects. Following the former approach, some authors would invoke the ideal of holism in a manner that is consistent with current practices, such as demonstrated by Italo Pardo's work 'as a participant observer' (Prato and Pardo 2013: 96). Pardo '"followed" his informants in their dealings within and without the neighbourhood, thus providing an in-depth, articulated understanding of the ways in which local people relate to the wider social, economic and political system…' (96). Authors who would follow the latter approach, and problematize the boundaries of specific research projects, might sacrifice holism's aesthetic and analytical logic of completeness for the purpose of innovating our conceptual toolbox. Acknowledging the allure of distraction as a feature of both urban anthropology and, more generally, city life, the authors of these peripheral observations would conjure new metaphors for describing and expressing the urban experience.

To conclude, a section dedicated to peripheral observations might lead to innovation at three levels: the discipline, individual practitioners, and their tools. It could become a creative space for launching the '…generative first steps in the emergence of … new developments of … expertise, and new modifications of … conduct and its generative principles' (Ness 2011: 83). But would the proposed section deliver on this promise? This depends on the broader context. Each 'journal and its publication program…' is '…an institutional nodal point in a complex disciplinary conversation…' (Silverstein 2012: 575). The disciplinary conversation may or may not shift in favour of paying more attention to peripheral observations and their innovative potential. Yet as I argue here, the peripheral observations in our field notes are assets that we could play to our individual and collective advantage, making urban anthropology the richer for it.

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COMPLETED DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

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Social Life and Moral Economies in Danish Cooperative Housing: Community, Property and Value

This thesis examines how contemporary cooperative housing in Copenhagen is lived in and imagined — and the tensions that arrive from the paradoxes that such housing incarnates. The thesis is based on fifteen months of ethnographic fieldwork carried out in 2008-2009 in eight selected housing cooperatives in Copenhagen. The ethnography is drawn from the perspective of current occupants but these narratives are also contextualized by histories of welfare, urban regeneration, gentrification and social and cooperative housing provision in Denmark, with a detailed account of recent changes accompanying the neoliberalisation of national government and municipal administration. The effects of these changes are accentuated by the global financial crisis of 2008 and its continuing aftermath. As the thesis demonstrates, the home and cooperative are caught at the nexus of apparently opposing values of investment maximization and long-term social reproduction, and the thesis allows informants' voices to puzzle through these contradictions. The thesis captures the processes through which economic and political issues of great significance to individuals and families are negotiated and managed collectively. One of the main contributions of the thesis is the notion of collective housing as a symbolic and concrete commons in the nation and the local collective.

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Watts, Our Town: 'Nothing about us without us, is for us'. An Auto-Ethnographic Account of Life in Watts, Los Angeles, CA

This dissertation explores the popular and scholarly representation and construction of Watts — a 2.5 mile inner-city neighbourhood of Los Angeles — vis-à-vis an auto-ethnographic

account of life in Watts. Identified as a Black urban ghetto, Watts has a long-standing history of marginalization in which residents encounter limited access to basic resources (for example, education, work, health) that perpetuate poverty in the community. Urban ghettos have been characterized as spaces densely inhabited by minority groups who live in deprived conditions that perpetuate social and health disparities. Such dominant narratives have obfuscated the lived experiences of discrimination in these spaces. For this reason one of the most severe and intensely studied race riot in L.A. history — the 1965-Watts Revolt — is largely misunderstood. It has become a trope from which scholarship and popular media aim to represent the people from Watts in its totality. Thus, the community's future is threatened by disappearing community participation and gentrification projects that may not aim to displace the residents, but may do so inadvertently. In this dissertation, I demonstrate that despite dual legacies of cultural inheritance and survival, over the past 50 years, Watts has been misrepresented as a powerless community. This auto-ethnography engages the following methodological tools: postcolonial, critical race and feminist theories of representation and identity formations; a review of historical and social science literature on Watts and 'ghettos' in general; interviews and archival research in Watts; and my own experience as a lifetime resident of Watts. In addition, I critically examine the persistent reductive representation of Watts as a poverty-stricken backward community, addressing how such representations have impacted residents and their identity. The auto-ethnographic methodological and analytical approach of my research addresses the limitations of historical and contemporary scholarship conceptualizing Watts, its residents, and the idea of the urban ghetto.

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Planting Roots, Making Place: An Ethnography of Young Men in Port Vila, Vanuatu

This thesis is about an organised group or 'squad' of young men in Port Vila, the capital of the Pacific Islands nation-state of Vanuatu, and their practices of place making in the rapidly developing context of 'town'. The young men who are the subject of this research are second-generation migrants and thus first-generation born and raised 'urbanites'. Based on twenty months of fieldwork, this thesis examines how these young men are transforming Freswota Community — the residential area in which they live — from a place with no shared and

relevant social meaning into a place imbued with greater collective significance. First, I demonstrate how these young men experience themselves as 'unplaced', a condition which entails two aspects. They are displaced from the social structure and kinship systems within which their parents previously ordered their lives and from which they have drawn their social identity. Additionally, the young men experience themselves as marginalised from the formal education and employment structures of town. Following this, I show that it is through practices of place making, which they refer to as 'planting roots', that these young men are emplacing themselves in the Freswota area. 'Planting roots' includes such processes as developing their own shared history, naming roads, building topogeny and developing their own community social structure and social order. I argue that these processes are leading to the emergence of a new phenomenon: primary town emplacement. By coming into relationship with Freswota land, these young men are not only transforming it from virtual no-place into some place, they are also transforming themselves from 'unplaced' persons into emplaced 'Freswota men'. I conclude that this is generating a new locative identity: it is now the Freswota community rather than their parents' home island places that is emerging as their primary location of belonging and the source both of their sense of self and their social identification. A central aim of this thesis is to draw attention to the positive and creative ways in which unemployed young men, usually criticised and stigmatised as delinquents in newly and rapidly urbanising contexts, are actively engaged in developing their community and their relationships in order to live more viable and socially productive lives.

Dr Daniela Kraemer *is a research fellow in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Toronto. She obtained her PhD in Anthropology from the London School of Economics in 2013. Daniela's research focuses on under-educated and under-employed young men and how they develop community in Port Vila, Vanuatu. Daniela writes about social relationships with non-kin, development of youth councils and community social infrastructure, building of shared experiences through reggae music and marijuana, urban activism, how mobile phone practices are influencing transformations in gender relationships, and how young people are transforming a place with no shared and relevant social meaning into an urban place imbued with greater collective significance. Daniela is currently preparing several articles for publication.*

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Mapping the Inhabited Urban Built Environment: The Socio-Spatial Significance of the Material Presence of Boundaries through Time

This thesis develops a comparative methodology and research practice enabling the interpretive social study of urban built environments (cross-culturally and diachronically). Its contribution to comparative urbanism is framed specifically as a method for studying the socio-spatial significance of the material presence of the composition of urban form (conceptualised as boundaries) to the interactional process of human inhabitation. This

perspective results from formulating a theoretical and conceptual rejoinder to questioning the nature of the role of the built environment as emergent from the human process of inhabiting the world and the functioning of urban life and development. On that basis an empirically operational method (BLT, Boundary Line Type mapping) for the conceptual remapping and analysis of ground level spatial data on the urban built environment (city plans) is devised, so the comparative socio-spatial study of cities from this perspective through time and across geographical areas and societies or cultures becomes enabled.

This foundational development of a research process and ontology is informed by a material adaptation of a critical realist philosophy of science. The practical and technical implications of executing the mapping process on spatial data of varying nature (archaeological, historical, historically reconstructive, and contemporary maps) are comprehensively worked through. The comparative functional ability of the method is demonstrated by exemplifying two case studies, the cities of Chunchucmil (Mexico, Classic Maya) and Winchester (UK, 16th, 19th and 21st century), on the basis of which two test cases are taken forward for preliminary visualisation and analysis with the aid of Geographical Information System (GIS) techniques. The findings confirm its potential, replicating common expectations about contemporary urban life as well as laying a novel foundation for insights into Winchester's historical development and Chunchucmil's archaeology, from which future research and development can burgeon. These are expected to contribute significantly to the deeper understanding of urban life and urbanisation across past and present urban traditions and provide an improved appreciation of urban alternatives which could inform planning and urban design in the long term.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Michael Goddard (ed.) (2010). *Villagers and the City. Melanesian Experiences of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.* Sean Kingston Publishing.

With this edited volume, Michael Goddard, a long time researcher of urban Papua New Guinea, shifts our anthropological gaze from its previous focus on rural Melanesian areas, to every day life in Papua New Guinea's capital Port Moresby, or 'Moresby'. Since much of the limited anthropological work on Moresby was conducted between 1960 and 1990, this volume is a welcome showcase of contemporary research in this city.

For many anthropologists researching Melanesia, cities like Moresby, Port Vila, and Honiara are, as Goddard remarks in the Introduction, not at all "alien and threatening transit point[s] on their way to and from the 'field'" (5). Indeed Goddard emphatically stresses the point that Moresby, home to more than 50 per cent of the countries' population, should be more widely acknowledged by both anthropologists and Papua New Guineans as a "real PNG" (5). As Goddard and the other contributors make clear, people's experiences in Moresby are defined by cosmopolitanism and diversity, and there is no sense denying it for a nostalgic view of an 'authentic' PNG. Goddard additionally urges us to acknowledge that Moresby cannot be reduced to an image of squatters and crime.

Three of the seven contributions to this volume, including the Introduction, are by Goddard himself. His first substantive

chapter concerns the Motu-Koita, the original landowners of the area of Moresby. The chapter focuses on the loss of Motu-Koita land to PNG migrants to the area. Through discussion of the native lands commission, a committee set up to reclaim or obtain compensation for land loss, Goddard not only tells the history of Motu-Koita relationship with Moresby as it has developed around them, but also reflects on the invention of this history. Goddard shows how the winners of the land claim, not the Moto-Koita, are rewriting the history of the place by shifting their previously marginal status in the local history to one where they are the original inhabitants of the area.

Goddard's second chapter compares PNG marriage practices in the rural areas to ideas about marriage in Moresby. In the city, bride price continues to be a defining characteristic of formal marriage, and cash bride price payments are categorically distinguished from other monetary transactions. Goddard demonstrates that tensions arise as people negotiate economic relationships through its exchange or lack of exchange.

In her contribution, Deborah Van Heekeren focuses on Vula'a villagers who live 110 km east of Moresby. She discusses Vula'a moral attitudes surrounding their economic and commercial relationships with people living in town. Van Heekeren writes that Vula'a villagers are concerned less with economic development and more with the differing values between town and village economies. Her main point is that both capitalism (influenced by individualism) and gift exchange (influenced by

communal morality) carry their own set of moral values and standards of behaviour.

Masahiro Umezaki's chapter examines the informal and formal economic activities of highland migrants in Moresby. His aim is to understand migrants' survival strategies in town. He concludes that households engaged in the informal economic sector have a higher income level than households where residents are employed in the formal sector. Umezaki writes that people in both the informal and formal economies still maintain kinship relationships and depend on these for food and other resources.

Keith Barber also looks at the livelihood of migrants in Moresby, specifically the 33 per cent of unemployed residents. Like Umezaki, Barber shows that it is not as individuals that people in Moresby survive, but as members of households, and as networks of households within which formal and informal incomes are shared. Kinship patterns and village modes of organisation continue in the urban context.

Lastly, Denis Crowdy writes about musicians performing in Moresby hotels and clubs. Crowdy shows how musicians manage their access to the 'infrastructure' of performance, which includes transport and borrowing equipment and musical instruments. Like Umezaki and Barber, he focuses on the importance of informal social networks for a person's livelihood.

Villagers and the City successfully demonstrates the diversity of peoples' experiences living in Moresby. However, as all the contributions, except Crowdy's, focus on the experiences of PNG migrants, one of the volume's gaps is the experience of people born and who have grown up in

Moresby; the urban dwellers who have diminished relationships with village people and their lifestyles. This gap particularly stands out as Goddard himself notes in the Introduction that many Moresby residents who are villagers living in the city, referred to as migrants, are not migrants at all, but were born and have grown up in Moresby and therefore have a very different experience of urban living.

Additionally, while the chapters in the volume all consider important and interesting urban issues such as work in the informal and formal economies, transforming kinship relationships, managing money in the city, urban households, and negotiating tensions and differences between town and village, a greater analysis of the 'city' itself would have increased the volume's contribution to the emerging anthropology of urban Melanesia.

The strength of this volume therefore is its contribution to the limited literature available on Moresby; the questions it inspires for further research on Melanesian cities, and the interest it ignites for an engagement with an anthropological analysis of the Melanesian city itself.

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Marcio Goldman (2013). *How Democracy Works. An Ethnographic Theory of Politics*. Canon Pyon: Lightning Sources.

Marcio Goldman's book does not make an easy read, which in this case positively testifies to a complex and very well written book. Originally published in Portuguese

in 2006, its publication in English will bring to a wider audience one important text that can be read in relation with a brilliant group of investigations about the anthropology *of* politics, or *antropologia da politica*, produced in Brazil.

The book seeks to explain how democracy works. Focusing on a dialogue between native theories and the interpretations of the ethnographer, the discussion aims at generating an ethnographic theory of politics. Goldman elaborates a matrix of intelligibility to provide a better understanding of our own political system and of democracy as part of what he calls 'Western political Systems'.

The book analyses politics in Ilhéus, a city South of Bahia. The analysis is centred on the involvement on different relations that can be address as political among a group of people belonging to the Black movement and who are part of a Terreiro (adepts of the Candomblé). This is explained by Goldman's trajectory that involved the study of Candomblé, the production of Lévy-Bruhl and, then, politics. Goldman's book shows that it is not necessary to study politicians, political parties or movements to address politics.

On the one hand, Goldman looks at theories of social representation. As he is doing ethnography of his own society he is careful to treat ideas, beliefs, practices and actions in a critical way. He also addressed the complexities and differences that exist in this society. This is one of the most important points of the book because he shows the distinct ways in which politics is lived, understood and constructed by different actors. On the other hand, and related to this, he engages in what he calls

becoming-native (see Prologue and pp. 8-9) to address the central issues from the natives' point of view.

Criticizing the substantivist and formalist theories of politics and in line with mainstream anthropology of politics, Goldman says he has 'sought to avoid conceiving politics as a specific domain or process, objectively definable from the outside. On the contrary, it was an attempt to investigate phenomena related to that which, from a native point of view, is considered as political' (p. 19). This does not mean, as he clarifies, that we must become imprisoned by local explanations. What can be defined as political, he argues, is always so in relation to the agents' lived experiences. For Goldman anthropology should carefully avoid approaches made in negative terms and, he maintains, a true anthropology of politics denies the central distinction between the central and the peripheral.

This perspective allows Goldman to widen the range of analysis to include a group of people who are not dedicated to politics. The principal activity of the Afro-Block is musical; and yet they are involved in politics in many ways. Goldman intention was to take their ideas about politics as seriously as their ideas on music or religion.

While examining politics over a period of fifteen years, the text does not follow a chronological order. There are many flashbacks. This style of writing keeps the reader's attention and also brings out the complexity of social relations and processes, which of course do not follow a linear path.

'The history of the Afro-cultural Centre remained at the heart of the

relationship between the black movement and local government for at least ten years' (p. 145). This centrality allows Goldman to start the book in 2002, with the inauguration of the Centre (the books analyse the period 1992-2004). He investigates the negotiations around the centre, campaign events, how changes are promised and negotiated and the groups relationships with politicians are some of the topics that allow Goldman to show the complexity of the political processes under investigation and their relationship with 'other spheres' of life.

Avoiding stereotyping political practices of actors thorough categories such as clientelism, ignorance and so on, the analysis of multiple situations helps us to understand the way in which support is gained, how politicians build alliances or move to a different political party and how groups and individuals vote. This also allows Goldman to analyse the difference between working for someone and voting for him, and the importance of a 'conscientious vote'. At the same time, focusing on the actors' moral values, he looks at the different ways in which people conceptualise politics (for example, as something worth doing or as something dirty) and the obligations involved in political relations. It is important to note the concept of segmentarity which allows Goldman to explain political support and alliances on different levels.

As the book deals with everyday relations among actors in a neighbourhood, the territory is relevant. It is especially important because the analysis deals with a *Terreiro* and with groups settled locally. Here, the space controlled by different groups is the object of dispute and negotiation; particularly between the black movement leaders and politicians. The territories in which events occur are therefore important; for example, in which neighbourhood a meeting or a presentation of a politician occurs *talks* about the relationship between the politician and the leader of the group. The debate about the site where the carnival, marches and meetings are to take place and where the Memorial of Black Culture of Ilheus would be located play a key role in establishing political relations.

As Goldman says, 'It is irrelevant to argue about what a true democracy really is, or whether this or that particular State (Brazil, for example) is democratic or not. The issue, rather, is one of trying to confer a degree of intelligibility to processes found in national societies which are organized, at least partially, along democratic principles' (p. 159). This is what this complex and interesting book shows.

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Kuchler, Susanne, Kurti, Laszlo and Elkadi, Hisham (eds) (2011). *Every Day's a Festival. Diversity on Show*. Sean Kingston Publishing.

This book, edited by Susanne Kuchler, Laszlo Kurti and Hisham Elkadi, is an interesting and rich collection on the shifting role of urban festivals in contemporary Europe and, to some extent, in India. The book engages with ongoing changes in European urban fabrics with respect to the increasing visibility and

diversification of public spectacles, which are witnessing innovative forms of professionalisation, of marketisation as well as of mass consumption.

The analysis develops from the consideration that the existing literature has been more concerned with general assumptions about what festivals 'aim at' – that is, about the institutional intentions underpinning the organisation of these events – than with a comparative analysis of the culture of performance. In this respect, the contributions aim at developing a micro analysis of festivals by engaging with the meanings that these events hold in relation to community identity politics (Patel, Lozanovska, Kuchler and Lo Conte), to contested social spaces (Elkadi), to the construction of a specific cultural heritage (Stroe) and to notions of belonging (Beynon).

In the Introduction, the editors make two important and interrelated points. Firstly, they argue there has been a recent move in the meanings of festivals from the traditional function of forging collective forms of remembrance to transcending everyday reality. They note that what is today remembered through public performances is much less important to festival organizers than the investment they actively make in the material cultural aspects of the festival and in the financial and infrastructural dimensions of 'festivisation'. In this line, the editors refer to an emerging 'culture of forgetting' which underpins the public role of contemporary celebrations. Secondly, the editors place their analysis of festivals in the context of the increasing diversity that characterizes urban contexts, and argue the need to consider how the diversity of

festivals' producers is translated into the diversity of consumers across gender, class, ethnicity and religion. This recognition leads the editors to crucial reflections on the limits underpinning straightforward interpretations of festivals as harbingers of group solidarity. Indeed, the Introduction and several chapters (Patel, Elkadi, Hernandez Sanchez) point out the dialectics of inclusionist and exclusionist logics that respectively enhance or hinder people's participation and sense of belonging in festivals, and they stress the need to explore how public celebrations both produce and reflect possible forms of ghettoization.

The book is divided into three parts. In the first one contributors explore how the display of contemporary forms of diversity through urban festivals marks a change with respect to past forms of public performances. Of particular interest is the analysis developed by Laszlo Kurti on the post-Soviet Hungarian politics of village festivals. Kurti provides insights on how the progressive obliteration of socialist state festivals in Europeanizing Hungary was replaced by a culture of festivals centered upon a celebrative, and ambivalent, engagement with new religious life, with the reawakening ethno-national sentiments and with the emerging culture of democratic citizenship.

The second part delves into the analysis of how the politics of contemporary festivals talks to the construction and consumption of urban spaces. This part offers a fruitful comparison between, on the one hand, the case-study developed by Elkadi on the role of festivals in Belfast aiming at bridging conflictual identities and contested forms

of access to public spaces and, on the other, the analysis of Kuchler and Lo Conte on the apparently more tension-free and unifying function of London festivals, which is argued to enhance a unity of spirit across different urban neighbourhoods.

The third part aims at moving beyond the analysis of the institutional dimension of festivals to explore also their informal and autonomous expressions. In this light, the work of Hernandez Sanchez provides an additional perspective on the much debated role of festivals in both reflecting and constructing ethnic diversity in urban Europe.

Overall, the book provides us with timely insights on the changes that have occurred in festivals' organisation, meanings and practices in contemporary urban spaces. At the same time, however, two important issues remain at the margins of the analysis, despite the editors' recognition of their relevance. The first is to do with the relation between contemporary festivals and the politics of memory. While the editors claim that there is a decreasing importance of community 'remembrance' at the level of festival organisation and management, only minor reflections are developed – particularly in the Introduction – on how this strategy is received at the level of consumption: that is by those who participate in the festivals. Given the rich ethnographies included in the volume, it would have been useful to include, in the Introduction, a more comprehensive reflection on whether the decreasing importance ascribed by festival organizers to the 'memory work' of public events is effectively met among festival participants, and on how people's engagement with festivals reflects

processes of remembering and forgetting. Recent studies in this field have shown how 'festivisation' in contemporary cities can become a setting for contested memories, which in turn reflect sometimes conflicting identities across ethnicity, caste, sexual orientation or religion.

This brings us to a second consideration; the use, that is, of the concept 'diversity' as an analytical framework. While the editors argue for the need to unpack the ways in which festivals both produce and reflect competing projects of identity, the concept of 'diversity' remains somewhat undertheorised. The editors could have perhaps engaged in a more critical way with recent debates emerging in socio-anthropological as well as geographical literature on the role of religious festivals in diasporic contexts like European, Asian or American cities and on the role of immigration and of increasing ethnic/religious pluralism in the process. Secondly, as ethnicity and migration emerge as a focal point in some of the chapters, it would have been worth engaging with recent debates on growing diversity in European cities; one among many being related to the concept of 'superdiversity'. This would have enhanced the claim of the necessity to locate shifting cultures of festivals within the analysis of 'new' diversity in Europe.

Nevertheless, this remains a timely and interesting collection. It will be of interest not only to scholars and students working in the fields of urban planning, political culture, migration and religion (among others) but also to practitioners and policy makers working in the fields of

urban planning, migration, religion and public culture.

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Manos Spyridakis (2013). *The liminal worker. An ethnography of work, unemployment and precariousness in contemporary Greece.* Farnham: Ashgate.

This monograph deals with the lived experience of labour, employment, as well as job insecurity and precariousness through an anthropological perspective. Manos Spyridakis introduces the notion of 'liminality' in order to describe and interpret the current regime of labour relations in the context of 'late modernity or postmodernity' as he characteristically puts it. The new type of labour relations relate to the transition from an 'affluent society' to another, post-Keynesian one, whose dominant features are the constantly increasing insecurity, precariousness and dispossession. To support empirically his argument, the author uses ethnographic case material from three Greek workplaces: the Keranis tobacco industry (Chapter 3), the shipbuilding zone of Perama (Chapter 4) and the banking sector (Chapter 5).

In the first two sections of his study, Spyridakis explains how the classical concept of liminality, as suggested by Victor Turner, may become an extremely useful tool in understanding contemporary labour relations. In the post-industrial society, precariousness is based primarily on a gradual deterioration of labour relations, leading an important portion of 'white collars' employees to proletarianization. This process is realized

through flexibility and 'flexicurity' policies; both redefine labour conditions and division by creating liminal employees, forced to experience a median between a 'before' and an uncertain 'after', going into somewhat uncertain, nomadic and precarious employment conditions altering their status and their social and work identity.

By placing the above process in the wider context of neoliberalism's political economy, Spyridakis poses as central query the renegotiation of the relationship between free market and the concept of rational choice in the field of labour. Moreover, he argues that social reproduction does not follow only economic specific rules but also a variety of incentives which lead to a variety of social practices. In this way through ethnographic examples he attempts to demonstrate that workers adopt attitudes and behaviours that constitute social phenomena mediated, as identified by Marcel Mauss, by specific social, political, economic and cultural dimensions. Spyridakis therefore engages in reviewing the notion of 'rational person' claiming it to be a social construction based on formalist type abstractions and stereotyped patterns of behaviour.

The Keranis and Perama ethnographies, which have informed other studies by Spyridakis, are used to understand how people manage the loss of employment and precarious labour relations through the activation of social networks and the pursuit of their own social reproduction. In the case of the Keranis tobacco industry both the organizational culture of the company and the informal social relationships within the workplace were functioning as the broader

social context within which the loss of employment is not merely an economic event for redundant workers but also the loss of one's own social space. However, the intertwining of economic and social levels allows the activation of social networks in the search for new employment, which tends to be occasional, informal and of low-status and with minimal social protection.

On the other hand, employment precariousness in the shipbuilding zone of Perama – a result of 'post-industrial modernization,' as the author calls it using the official term – leads workers to searching informal labour relations, which to a great extent deal with the distribution of information on employment through social networks. Thus, actors make use, in Goffman's terms, of the 'gimmicks' they know in trying to cope with the existing framework of labour relations. Finally the ethnography from the banking sector, which also has informed other studies of the author, is used here to demonstrate that the concept of liminality also applies to cases where workers have not lost their jobs. Specifically, in the current conditions of labour market flexibility and deregulation, Spyridakis deals with the attempt to discipline workers through specific policies, whereby differences of opinion with the bosses' create the conditions for harassment, intimidation and possible job loss. Ethnographic research reveals that, although they seem to obey the existing organizational principles, workers try, in fact, to adjust them to their own needs. In this sense, they manage their 'liminal' condition in a way to allows them to avoid losing their job and, at the same time, get on with the organization.

From the analysis of these different ethnographic cases, the author concludes (Chapter 6) that, although actors inadvertently form part of a framework of alternating uncertain labour regimes and forced destabilization, they do not passively accept this condition but try to adapt to the continuously changing conditions through the activation of a social political and cultural capital.

Spyridakis' monograph is in many ways an interesting ethnographic project. Although based on past field research, the analysis review of the material in the light of the concept of liminality offers a new perspective, especially in the context of the current economic crisis. In this respect, this is both an interesting experiment of archival ethnography and an up-to-date ethnographic approach to the economic crisis in Greece, especially in the urban space of Athens and the Piraeus, where the crisis is experienced more acutely than in the countryside. In this monograph Spyridakis suggests an analysis of the labour insecurity produced by the economic crisis from an anthropological perspective that looks at economic phenomena as total social phenomena. In such a perspective, people are not passive recipients of centralized political and economic decisions, but they adjust their actions by capitalizing their social and cultural experience, proving that they operate beyond the level of 'production factor' as conventional economic theory demands. To a certain extent, this might help to explain Greek society's resistance to the economic crisis.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Conference of the Commission on Urban Anthropology

The Global Financial Crisis and the Moral Economy: Local Impacts and Opportunities

Venue & Date: Brooklyn College, CUNY
Brooklyn, New York, June 18-20, 2015

Sponsors
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Conference Outline
Both individuals and groups in local urban settings have been impacted by global economic forces, international regulations, and flows of capital and people. The global financial crisis has also created scenarios that directly bear on urban research methods and theory. For example, in Europe, the local effects of the crisis have been exacerbated by the imposition of the Maastricht parameters among most of the countries that have adopted the Euro. There as elsewhere, such as in the USA, the crisis has dramatically impacted on neighbourhoods, provoking catastrophic housing and job losses and, as a by-product, setting in motion dynamic urban social processes such as the relatively peaceful "Occupy Wall Street" movement as well as bloody street demonstrations in Greece.

By and large, governments have failed to constructively meet the complex challenges posed by these global phenomena, thus raising critical issues of both legitimacy and legitimation. The current crisis has apparently established the supremacy of economics over politics. Comparative ethnographic analyses can document in detail local effects of this crisis such as unemployment, informal employment, foreclosures, homelessness, bankruptcy, suicide and crime. It can also bring to light how local cultures are coping with this situation.

Urban Anthropologists and other Social Scientists have studied in depth the empirical realities of the widening gap between the distribution of rights and access to them, and the attendant processes of societal inclusion and exclusion. A major task of this Conference will be to reflect on how this affects ordinary people. Urban ethnographers have demonstrated the moral and cultural complexity of individual action, highlighting the social value of individual and local community action.

Through ethnographically-based analyses, this Conference will bring together 20 to 30 scholars to explore these complex

issues in Western and non-Western settings, Specifically, the Conference will discuss how legal, semi-legal and illegal actions draw on community resources to defy global and state power. Ethnographically-based analysis has an important contribution to make to our understanding of how all institutions in urban neighbourhoods are changing as a result of the global financial crisis and that these transformations demonstrate the complex effects of economic decline.

For further details and updates, see: www.urban.anthroweb.net

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IUAES Inter-congress 2015:

Re-imagining Anthropological and Sociological Boundaries

Thammasat University, Bangkok,
15-17 July 2015
http://socanth.tu.ac.th/iuaes2015

Panels convened under the auspices of the Commission on Urban Anthropology:

P1-02 Fear, or Better Fear Not: Challenges in Data Collection
http://socanth.tu.ac.th/iuaes2015/2014/10/p1-02-fear-or-better-fear-not-challenges-in-data-collection/
Convenors: Marcello Mollica and Kayhan Delibas

P1-07 Migration and Urbanization: the Role of Ethnicity in the Contemporary World
http://socanth.tu.ac.th/iuaes2015/2014/10/p1-07-migration-and-urbanization-the-role-of-ethnicity-in-the-contemporary-world/
Convenor: Talbot Rogers

P2-01 Decline of Small Towns and Growth of Megacities: an Universal Phenomenon?
http://socanth.tu.ac.th/iuaes2015/2014/10/p2-01-decline-of-small-towns-and-growth-of-megacities-an-universal-phenomenon/
Convenor: Sumita Chaudhuri

P7-07 Underground Scenes and Practices in Urban Life and Beyond
(Commission on Urban Anthropology and proposed Commission on Anthropology of Music, Dance and Related Practices)
http://socanth.tu.ac.th/iuaes2015/2014/10/p7-06-underground-scenes-and-practices-in-urban-life-and-beyond/
Convenor: Rajko Mursic

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