Chapter 6
City of Beats: Analysing Flânerie as a Practice for Living the Physical Space

Silvia Torsi
University of Trento, Italy

ABSTRACT

The flâneur is the urban vagabond in search of experiences and inspirations from serendipitously exploring a city environment. This construct is put beside post-modern stances about the suburban areas built and populated after the Second World War industrialization, along with considerations about ecological psychology, cultural materialism, and sound theory. The main concept is to provide those places with a communication level that would be pleasant to discover while wandering without a destination. Therefore, it is desirable to conceive a meta-design tool able to incorporate creativity, ownership, and conviviality.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter intends to refer to the field of urban informatics (Foth, 2011) and lays at the intersection of urbanistics, anthropology, and social sciences in order to inform Global Positioning System (GPS) such as Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) for the design of novel design concepts related to urban strolling. It is first important to question time and space as fixed categories. This is a distortion of the modern way of life brought by industrialization and rational segmenting of the urban settings according to the work requirements of the large cities.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-1744-3.ch006
Accordingly, here the concept of *flânerie* is explored as an important dimension coming from many fields but here focused on research in architecture (e.g., Careri & Colafranceschi, 2002) and ICT, in particular the area of psychology called Spatial Reasoning (e.g., Montello & Freyenschuh, 2005). Time and space provide both structure and contents for living. We perceive time flowing and movement across space as a constituent part of our reasoning (Torsi, 2013). The feeling of time and space dynamically, continuously, and cyclically relates to our consciousness, previous knowledge, memory, and delayed intentions (Damasio, 2010). It is the self that negotiates across those dimensions by weighting, comparing, modeling, and expanding them. The anthropological paradigm of Cultural Materialism (e.g., Price, 1982) describes how and when material conditions mutate as they offer novel chances for cognition, culture, and societal challenges.

This is the case of ICT, especially when incorporated into Social Media (Sui & Goodchild, 2011). What do those recent material changes bring in terms of ways to experience the environment? It is possible to start from ecologies of artifacts, densities of tools and representations around an individual, or his relationships (e.g., Jung et al., 2008). We can interpret these in terms of *ecological niches* (Gibson, 2014): self-contained communities related by artifacts and representations, immersed in a context. How can ICT enhance the experience of place and time? How can the chances for self-disclosure, networking, and collective identities be increased? How can we find novel ways in which to incorporate visual art, narratives, music, or digital media into the culture of a community? How can we relate urban strolling to the identity of a neighborhood?
Related Content

New Fruition Possibilities for the Historical Archive of Architectural Drawings in Rome
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/new-fruition-possibilities-for-the-historical-archive-of-architectural-drawings-in-rome/214392?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/new-fruition-possibilities-for-the-historical-archive-of-architectural-drawings-in-rome/214392?camid=4v1a)

Using Advanced Approaches in Urban Design Researches: A Mutation from 3D Digital Models to Virtual Reality
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/using-advanced-approaches-in-urban-design-researches/133432?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/using-advanced-approaches-in-urban-design-researches/133432?camid=4v1a)
The Landscape Cultural Construction: A Recognition of the Roman Tradition
www.igi-global.com/chapter/the-landscape-cultural-construction/133434?camid=4v1a

Management and Valorization of Cultural Heritage in the Framework of Environmental Ethics
António dos Santos Queirós (2019). *Analysis, Conservation, and Restoration of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage* (pp. 110-128).
www.igi-global.com/chapter/management-and-valorization-of-cultural-heritage-in-the-framework-of-environmental-ethics/214381?camid=4v1a