

communities in movement / from enclaves of identity to bridges of cooperation

Communities in Movement is an artistic research project organized in collaboration with participating artists, researchers, centers and institutions associated with a diversity of practices and interests. The project takes its name from urban theorist and activist Stavros Stavrides, whose work captures the emergence of new expressions of social solidarity as found, for example, in the movement of the squares in Athens. Stavrides underscores communities in movement as the undoing of identitarian enclaves in support of connective thresholds, commoning practices, and networks of care. As he suggests, “Emancipation may thus be conceived not as the establishing of a new collective identity but rather as the establishing of the means to negotiate between emergent identities.” Reflecting upon and engaging with questions of emancipatory practices in light of contemporary forms of governmentality, the project queries historical and emergent forms of community, from the imagined to the symbolic, the micro to the temporary, the common to the uncommon, and aims to consider community as an ethical, aesthetic, and cultural embodiment of resistant togetherness – what Jean-Luc Nancy terms “the passionate sharing of singularities.” This includes reflecting upon the ways in which community, and collaborative expressions of being-in-common, is often based on forms of creative, critical and (alter-)institutional organizing: the establishment of common notions and independent structures that steer the fostering of community as the figuring of new worlds. While notions of community can easily be instrumentalized within more nationalistic, exclusionary initiatives, for the project community is followed as a *movement* toward a position of radical hospitality.

The project brings together working groups of contributing partners and guests in specific locations and contexts, to collaboratively rethink and nurture community through participatory research practices. This includes a consideration of (under)commoning, pirate care, self-organized governance and experimental pedagogies, as well as collaborations and compositions across human and nonhuman bodies, material objects and energetic forces. Such topics and approaches result in a range of creative manifestations that work at putting community in motion.

METHODS: RESEARCH IN MOVEMENT

The project adopts a speculative, emergent approach to research, where areas of concern and concentration are discovered along the way, through conversations and interactions between researchers and partner institutions. In this way, the project is performative in terms of capturing a process of working with and through difference, allowing for self-organized processes. Rather than a top-down approach, where the project is outlined, articulated and deployed, momentum and direction are found step-by-step, or “in the labyrinth” as Jan Masschelein maps as key to “poor pedagogies” – a learning by way of doing together. Communities in Movement is therefore articulated by putting research on the move, leading to what we may understand as “research in movement,” a poor methodology that allows for staying close to the living metabolism of space and time, situations and resources, successes and failures, the frustrations and desires shaping collaborative expression.

Some further notes on poor research methods:

- guided by grass-roots approach (we might call: research from below): where key topics, issues, questions and activities are developed together through interaction as well as by following what is urgent: through and with people and the fact of material – or what matters (it seemed important that the project perform community: as an ethics, creating the rules as we go)

- diffractive ethnography: to position research as an “entanglement” of human and nonhuman actants, accentuate participation over observation; “research conceived as assemblage” which helps ground itself in the specificities of place and people (as environment) while relating to what is off-site (the infrastructures that make the research possible)

- situated textures and ambient tonalities (affect: the “feelings of research”): to be in place with others, and to allow situated textures and ambient tonalities to influence the research (leading to an idea of embodied, lived knowledge: listening as care, responsiveness)

OVERVIEW OF CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF COMMUNITY / EXISTING MODELS:

- Roberto Esposito: community as what obliges us to the outside; it names a duty to others, and which makes freedom possible: it is through community, through the outside, that life-affirming growth is to be found (we realize ourselves through others); in turn, community is always defined by its opposite, immunity; immunity is the limit of community, it draws a line onto the outside, creating a tension, a politics, a border to what is in and what is out; to immunize is to shield from the contamination of an outside, the other: Esposito highlights for us the question of borders and bordering, identity.

- Jean-Luc Nancy: theoretical work arises from experiencing the end of communism (the radical left), and a subsequent emergence of new claims onto ethnic and national identities; Nancy makes a distinction between communion and community, where communion names the ways in which groups are called into being through a central figure or narrative; in contrast, community is pluralistic, shaped not by individual identities but by singularities; while communion puts us to work, as a project, as an identity, community is shaped by passion, whose narrative is always multiple, never-ending (what Nancy calls: literature). *The Inoperative Community* as Nancy terms it, is what interrupts the project of communion (community as what does not name itself as such.)

- carla bergman: brings community into the realm of practice, as praxis: she emphasizes cooperative models, where community is something one does – it is to be in community; community is not so much a noun, a name, or even place, it is rather performative, enacted, and bound to ethics; common notions as shared values and responsibilities toward others, that are also embedded in practices, and the ongoing transformations of being-in-community; they underpin a sense of moral commitment, while remaining fluid: common notions entail trust and a desire to work through conflict: to also build institutions of conviviality.

- Black panther party: “revolutionary inter-communalism” / which involved creating community service or “survival programs”; this included organizing medical clinics, lessons in self-defense and first aid, as well as a breakfast program for feeding children.

- commons, undercommons, and uncommons: research into community has also been informed by the ongoing discourses and projects related to commons and undercommons; the commons and commoning as vocabularies that disturb constructs of the private and the public – the commons as a form

of collectively organized, cooperative life (also emphasizing social value); and further, the undercommons as a concept that identifies how commoning may emerge in unlikely ways – the undercommons as a fugitive commons (following Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, and which we might find also in Avery Gordon’s deployment of the term “utopian margin” – a type of commons shaped by the runaway). These are terms and modalities that impact onto what it may mean to “be in common,” and which finally receives an additionally input through what Marisol de la Cadena terms “the uncommon” – which introduces an Indigenous view onto the commons: to see in the common a certain complexity, where what we hold in common is always populated by others – by what we may call: the other-other; by nonhuman, planetary, sacred beings and things: no longer a “uni-verse”, but rather, a “pluri-verse” emerges as key to thinking the common today.

Finally, the theoretical work of Stavros Stavrides has been an important reference (following involvement with the Movement of the Squares in Athens): as the mobilization of people with no formal agreement or management: putting into question “the border”:

- notion of “the threshold”: turning checkpoints into turning points, enclaves of identity into bridges of negotiation: “creating in-between spaces might mean creating spaces of encounter between identities, instead of spaces that correspond to specific identities.” (46): thresholds are always being crossed.

- he defines these turning points, these threshold spaces, according to the emergence of “polyrhythms”: which supplement regimented orders; polyrhythms help us link up across multiple contexts, multiple communities, to inhabit more than one time-signature.

- Common Space over Public Space: commoning practices as what supplements the administrative management of public space and the restrictive configurations of private space (a Third term)

- resituates constructs of identity (that often shape ideas of community) toward more emergent expressions: “emergent identities are identities to be learned”: captures the ethical dimension as key: as “ethical know-how” (embodied responsiveness)

- this leads to an idea or model of Thirdness: intersubjectivity and the cooperative model (power of people): which elsewhere Luce Irigaray would call *the way of love* (love as what names that form of people power, where we support each other in becoming something we are not-yet: community as nurturance.) (finds a reference in feminist consciousness-raising practices: as a safe space, a lab for empowerment, for study, as well as for enacting modes of organizing)



Questions of community often play out when it comes to issues of borders: as we've seen, community is the site and scene by which to work through how it is we may live together; this includes then a relation to citizenship – to think citizenship has been an undercurrent within the project: in what ways does community as movement impact onto conceptualizing citizenship? (movement itself is often what challenges understandings of community: community as static, as grounded in place, as bound to particular borders and bordering practices)

**Engin Isin as key thinker – “citizenship (as being-public, ways of being part of civil society) is grounded less in political affiliations and more in social behaviors: the performative enactments and gestures that work at engaging civil society.” For Isin, it is urgent today that attention be given to acts of citizenship in order to better appreciate the nature of contemporary geopolitical relations (where nation-states operate well beyond their borders: transnational detention practices); and where migration flows are evermore complex.

The research looks at shifting from a static understanding of community to a performative one:

To think community as a doing rather than a status; as a movement rather than a ground: to be in community, as something we carry and that carry us. Here we might appreciate a relation to artistic practices, as contributing to community as performative, as a praxis: community as an experimental lab.

THE EXTRA-CITIZEN as formation:

(supplemental perspectives – *a poetic dimension*)

- on being in community with the dead (memory: what we carry with us in terms of experience, knowledge, desire; the narratives and ancestral voices that haunt our way of being in the world; and maintaining a relation to the underworld, to a certain criminal ideal: to break the rules (civil disobedience, the hacker or pirate as extra-citizens)

- this includes being in dialogue with the notion of Artistic Citizenship (David Elliott, Marissa Silverman, Wayne Bowman, 2016): to think civic responsibility on the level of being-irresponsible (unique position): in what ways does community entail an artistic view, an artistic culture informed by rule-breaking?

- Becoming-Planetary: understanding oneself, and one's citizenship as bound to planetary others (the other-other); to speak of community or social engagement is to integrate ecologies of relations, that interrupt human exceptionalism (*wild law* – how to think citizenship as a planetary subject)

These extra-perspectives, which figure around the idea of the EXTRA-CITIZEN, what is in excess of community, contribute to the concepts of:

1. *more-than-social art* / a more-than-social which incorporates a certain elaborated view of what counts as “social” (by way human, nonhuman, inhuman connections: the planetary);

2. *less-than-public culture* / that ducks under appearance, performs a type of exit (an invisible citizen: affective politics, the potential of a vibrational commons)

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Notes on possible forms (February 2022)

INOPERATIVE THEATRE is posed as a creative vocabulary, one that supports a mode of performativity with others. It follows various lines of thinking and making that aim for secrecy, evasion, joy, a weak form, conviviality. This might be an aesthetics consisting of frictions and encounters manifested by way of coming-together, working through a necessarily unstable grouping of topics, an invitation to join, where relationality moves in and out of articulation, and even recognizability.

A destituent construct or tendency, where gathering is equally a dispersal, and composition is also fragmentation. Such a theatre (which is figured as a parallel scene, one that performs a type of occupation, wherever it emerges) exists in the moonlight, it is a lunar world constituted by the bright night, where vision is turned towards the moving shadows, the glow of faces, festivity, and where thought navigates by way of the stars, a cosmological ordering always close to magic. It is clear that the inoperative, in destituting ourselves, affords ways of collaborating that are never complete, never on the side of production. Slowness, distraction, being lazy, tender glances, passionate sharing, manic creativity, a doing that does, or that tends toward an impossible act, and which leads to an anonymous status, a state of making do and of falling in love. As Richard Gilman-Opalsky suggests, love is a public power that shifts from exchange to relational value, and which de-privatizes emotion. What I feel you also feel; we feel together the feelings of each other, independent and together.

There is also a resistance at play, one that dissuades the binding of one to the other; to interrupt the relational tendency toward the familiar and the like, so as to remain formless, on the side of illegibility, migrant, inoperative. Inoperative theatre is founded on friendship, as that which expresses intimacy without fusion.

A proximity, a tenderness, that is equally distant, separate, always open to the flows of time, a coming and going. Such a relational modality forms the ground for a general method or approach – a theatre directed toward the making of friends. A socially engaged art that is equally disengaged, general, and that is never only human. Something is put in the space, others move around, there is a built form, then the projection of material, voices also, discussing or presenting, with chairs from out of the backroom, a script perhaps, things, as someone exits, searching for drinks or fabric, all the while things continue, accumulate. Such dynamics draw us closer to a more-than-social art, where understandings of the social are never only communicable, or on the order of recognition; rather, other matters and entities become accomplices, partners in a craft that involves itself in an ecology of trash, the broken, ghosts, secret spaces, affection. A more-than-social position further suggests a less-than-relational figuring, where relationality is also obscure, masked, noisy, strange. Less-than-relational as what recognizes how others are not always there for one's recognition.

I take inoperative theatre not so much as a performative operation, rather, as a pedagogy: it is a pedagogical mode that works at keeping the conversation going, taking what happens as the basis for movement, articulation, grabbing hold of what comes, a certain momentum of joy and adventure that is also not without tears, an ambience of criticality. While performance begins, and aims for completion, as well as applause, pedagogy picks up where it left off, moving things along upon a wayward and probing course. If it searches for an ending it does so in order to multiply the narrative, giving the threads over to others, to be carried into other contexts and scenes (an expanding and wandering dramaturgy). Inoperative theatre as pedagogical expression is a poor form, a poor pedagogy which invites processes of co-learning or crafting, adventures in thinking together, an embodied coming-together that is ever so fragile and strong at the same time. It flees, it builds, it worlds, all the while tunneling, diffusing, engendering a scene that never fully shows itself.

Three threads, or itineraries of movement:

1. Radical Sympathy

Questions of interdependency and care have gained broader urgency within today's planetary environment. From the pressing need to work at post-carbon futures to the challenges surrounding our covid-19 realities, understandings of care-work and co-existence require ever-greater imagination and critical engagement. As cultural communities reorient their practices and educational institutions test out other methods in the context of lockdown, a new sense for solidarity and critical hope are gaining traction. This includes ways of attending to the politics of care, the systems of neoliberal extraction and their toxic projects, and the uneven power relations through which solidarity must work.

Radical Sympathy is put forward as a speculative framework with the aim of capturing methods and expressions of care and communal effort, as well as to theoretically reflect on sympathy as a position of caring-for. While sympathy may carry connotations of charity or suggest a position of being without obligation, as that which acts from a distance, the project underscores distance as what also enables forms of action and imagination. As Stephen Darwall argues, sympathy is a feeling or emotion that responds to an apparent threat or obstacle to another's well-being. In contrast to empathy, as feeling what others feel, sympathy is responsive and the basis for action. Jane Bennett further argues in *Influx and Efflux* how sympathy may move from personal compassion to impersonal force, from scenes of familiarity to broader relations. Sympathy, for Bennett, is understood as "currents" that exist in and outside of bodies, that flow as affective and resonant forces, and that figure across human and more-than-human, bodily and technical worlds. It is by way of sympathy that interconnectivity and interdependency are felt as well as made categorical, articulating a position of concern and collaboration especially beyond one's immediate familial or social circles.

From interpersonal care to rhythms of collaboration and resistance, in what ways might sympathy offer ways in which personal compassion and impersonal force can be deployed, lending to a disposition of solidarity? Can sympathy be reoriented as an approach to strangers, and which can lend to another perspective on community?

- how community is driven by acting on behalf of others (compassionate action)
- Jessica Benjamin's model of intersubjectivity: the Third (personal)
- Jane Bennett: currents of sympathy / "affective tonalities" across bodies (the impersonal)
- Planerarity (sympathy as what allows relating beyond relation: the unrecognizable)
- how listening performs as an active contributor (from sympathy to empathy and back)

Manifestations:

The Listening Biennial / creating a Biennial focused on listening as practice; positioning listening within the context of the arts (to experience and experiment with listening); furthermore, to create an institutional model based on listening: what is a listening institution? (structuring the Biennial as a decentered, cooperative organization):

*two editions; second edition (34 participating artists and 22 participating institutions and venues)

*integrating different modalities of presentation / different situations of listening

*to accent local conversations while nurturing transcultural and transnational exchange

The Listening Academy / to pose listening as a research framework (new listening methodologies)

*examples of methods: 1) somatic listening: listening with the body; 2) rhetorical listening: listening as mode of communication (diplomatic); 3) listening as witnessing: as what holds a time and space for acknowledgement; 4) wild listening: listening as cosmopoetical.



2. Destituent Power

The question of destituent (non)practices is posed as a framework for exploring approaches to creative work, as well as contextual, relational and situational research methods and activities. Following Giorgio Agamben's notion of "destituent power", as grounded in withdrawal, dispersal or weak form, and a sensibility of non-performance (or the interrupted project), we're interested to reflect upon in what ways the destituent may lend itself to conceptualizing new approaches to (non)practice. Might the destituent contribute to ways of doing that positively unsettle or stagger forms of life, that offer unlikely entry points or approaches to engaging contexts and situations, and that enable thinking otherwise about (political) subjectivity, citizenship, or agency? In what ways can the destituent contribute to addressing current urgencies and our general state of crisis and catastrophe? What becomes of the quest for visibilization from the perspective of the destituent, which is more aligned with inoperative forms, disappearance, non-work and evasion?

- Giorgio Agamben's theory which invites a rethinking of the political (idea of radical exit)
- a destituent formulation of community: the community that does not name itself (inoperative: that flees from the duty to belong)
- concept of Whatever: being such that it is; freed from "belonging" according to trait, or values; but rather, belonging in itself, or as such; Agamben relates this to love – to love someone for the fact of who they are, rather than what they represent; someone full of all their complexities and contradictions, etc.

Manifestations:

Destituent Labs /

*to upset the notion of the "exceptional" (Against Aesthetic Exceptionalism);

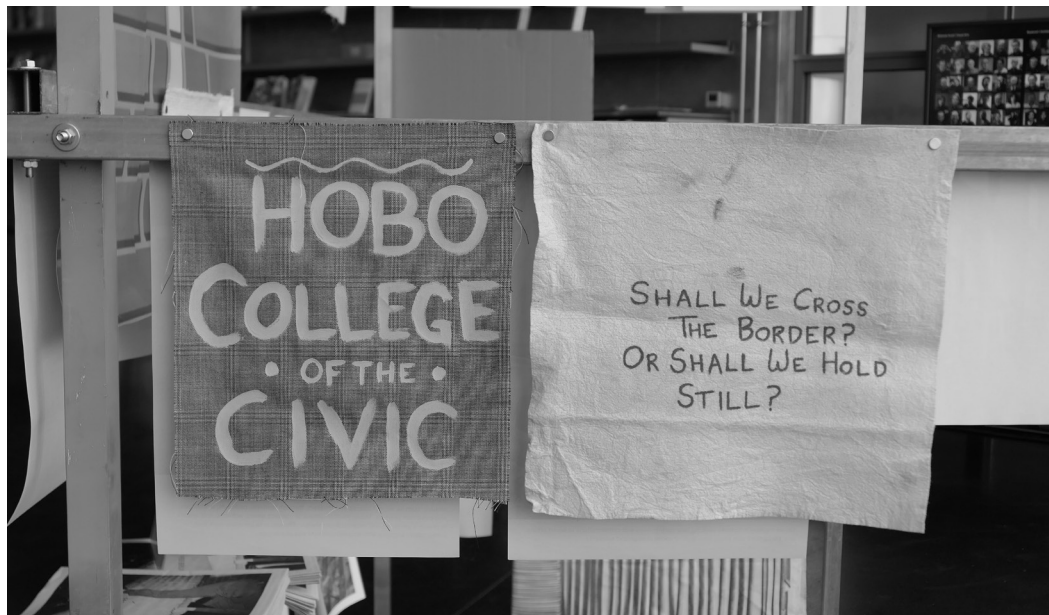
First session, September 26 - October 9, 2022 Bucharest / bringing a group of artists to explore in what ways the destituent can contribute to artistic practice: focus on radio, clubs in the city, jamming together (a formless form) with Anca Benera & Arnold Estefan, Daniela Custrin, Yota Ioannidou, Brandon LaBelle, María García Ruiz, Lise Skou, along with invited guests. Developed in collaboration with Quote-Unquote.

Second session, January 15 - 21, 2023 Berlin / relating to questions of the archive (the unofficial record), underground cultures, with Anaïs Florin, Adam Kraft, Brandon LaBelle in collaboration with Speculative Urban Futures.

Third session, May 16 - 17, 2023 London / in the context of the Department of Law – focusing on histories of anarchism, with Elena Loizidou, and participating scholars and practitioners, including Nathan Moore, Elin Eyborg Lund, Saul Newman, Julia Chrissyostalis, Christos Marneros, among others.

AdK installation: Free Berlin / within the context of an exhibition on National Socialism, and its impact onto architectural and urban planning policy (in Berlin); creating a supplemental display focusing on radical democracy and grass roots cultural initiatives in the city; including the publication Free Berlin (a smuggling operation: to bring into the exhibition a supplement, a secret agent)

Ghost Party / a project developed for the exhibition in Bergen; working at the destituent through the theme of "the ghost" (or, the living dead); thinking the destituent as a question of the body, of a form of subjectivity: to stagger the operations of performance; to inhabit a no-body: a whatever-form – the ghost as nothing (what might a destituent community be?)



3. Party Studies

What happens as soon as one enters the party? How does the party function as a social get together? Are there particular lessons we might take from the party in terms of approaching social life and the orientations of subjectivity?

Party Studies considers the party as a dynamic and complex expression. The party is posed as an experimental scene of togetherness where festivity, music, delirium, hospitality, aggression and intoxication are set loose as defining principles. As such, the party punctuates instances of passage, escape, bonding, and wreckage, moving from social ritual and ceremonial feasting to celebratory rupture; from small-scale get togethers to all-out raves, from weddings to birthdays, apartments to peripheral territories, parties are defining of sociality as transformational and transitional.

Party Studies unfolds as a series of publications, workshops and events. Central to the series is a consideration of the party as fundamentally a relational construct that enables as well as strains forms of sociability, where hospitality and the inhospitable, pain and pleasure interweave and intersect. In this sense, the common world that is a party is equally excessive, tending towards breakage, even violence, and the ache of the hangover. Defining a space of affinity, the party equally exceeds itself, giving way to an erotic intensity where relationality moves toward states of delirium. The party emerges as a critical and creative space for reworking the orders of the body, and is considered in its extreme as fueling a movement where good society is put on hold, the presentation of the self is disordered, and where expressions of bohemian life figure a world of passion and nocturnal knowledge.

- scene of experimental sociality: “the upside down world” (carnavalesque)
- issue of hospitality (a bringing together) & the inhospitable (where aggression is always nearby)
- what Georges Bataille terms “happy tears” (thinking the party as a scene of happy tears: where pain and pleasure are enmeshed: the party as “certain uncertainty”)
- the house party (the case of Budapest under communism and the Soviet regime): parties as scenes of survival (the circulation of information, keeping joy alive, sex as resistance)
- the case of Sala 603 (the open home; the making of extended family)

Manifestations:

The Autonomous Odyssey / relation to the home, as site for making family; and in relation to the imprisonment of President Lula: in what ways does the “polis,” as public site of politics, take place in the home (to go inside).

Workshop on Love / love as a public power (Gilman-Opalsky); against a “policy of misery” (Bolsanaro); to enact, to play, to script forms of love (theater as a site for nurturing other imaginaries, for recovery, and social ritual)

The Pirate Academy / bringing the party into the space of education; posed as “research festivals” (2021-22; eleven sessions on different themes, including: Party Studies, Common Space, Animsim, Listening, the Unfinished, to name a few);

*to conceptualize education as revelry, delirium, excess, where we may get carried away with ideas, materials, study; education as adventure – to make knowledge festive; includes focusing on horizontality, generosity, maintenance and care:

Paulo Feire: “teaching is an act of love”.





ON MONSTER ECOLOGIES – a contribution to thinking the future city (February 2023, Berlin seminar)

I want to speculate by way of the monster: the monster as the dialectical other, the rejected, the outcast, and which originates from within: the monster as an ambivalent figure, constituted by fear and desire, a fear-desire that manifests in all sorts of forms, constructs, expressions; the monster as a creative or decreative force always in excess of itself: and which, as I want to consider, keeps us close to the dead, or the undead.

I'm interested to follow the city as an ecology of strangers, one prone to encounter, interruption, disorder, and where No One, the outcast provides the basis for thinking the future by way of the monster: the outcast that turns back to face us, and that spirits relations with dirt, mutation, media augmentation, trans-species entanglements, money and the nonsovereign citizen.

I'm interested to move toward an "urban monster ecology": one that maintains a relation to "the negative" / knowing very well that one never overcomes death, to keep in touch with that which always interrupts progress, completion; that corrupts, that haunts.

An ecology that might capture the "creative city" as being deeply connected to the unconscious – a creative city in touch with the force of the imagination which is fundamentally "ungovernable": that which always moves to the outside, that is insolent.

A monster ecology which is also understood as a force of contagion, mutation: that deepens a relation not only to the more-than-human, but equally the inhuman: the unrecongizable, that places on hold what we understand as a person.

And which is also alive with the pleasure of the feast: to party with the dead, giving way to not only carnivalesque festivity, but attunement to ancestry – those that have come before us, and that may continue to speak: to contribute to the future city.

My speculative focus then is on living with the dead, the negative (where the body is pulled into the ground, into the roots: we might say – the dead grounds us); and where the city resounds with the missing, what is lost (emerging by way of acoustic

resonance, extra-sensory perception, sympathies gone too far: to hear beyond the visible); living with the dead leads to the "paganization" of community: to commune with the natural, the law of the cosmos (the dead as what returns to the earth: that requires a certain "ritualistic" attention, even magic); where place is always displaced in time (the dead pulls us backwards, out of (capitalistic) progress, linearity, growth: it may support forms of time travel); and where the ground, the roots also keep us close to the waters below – an oceanic underworld where one swims in a primary sap: the dead replenishes just as it unsettles and haunts the city: it is a source of shamanistic healing: within monster ecologies one trafficks across the rational and the irrational); one must learn how to read the signs – the dead leaves messages across the city (graffiti, nature-culture entanglements, acoustic resonances, circuits – where silence speaks, becomes a current for a range of connections, raw energy, techno-scientific spiritualism); a monster ecology is always close to trash, the discarded, rot, which act as protein for all types of manifestations, germinations, biochemical craft; monsters may be friends as well as enemies, family or strangers, it is never clear; we may therefore speak less of community and more of noncommunity: late night parties, sleepless gamers, precarious night workers, homeless migrants, manic drivers, lost children, guardian angels, pornographic cultures, undercommon zones, invisibilized bodies, stalkers and poets, pirate squatters, spiritual nomads, financial wizards; an ecology shaped by the return of the repressed: where former slaves, marooned subjects, runaway prisoners circulate, providing input onto urban plans; here we might think of the Uncity or Extra-Urban, or what Steve Pile calls Real Cities (following Lacan), the city as "phantasmagoria", turning the dump into a laboratory of fantasy, which shows that the future is never quite what we imagine it to be: and that also reminds us: to be careful what we wish for.

Monster ecologies rework notions of the city as an embodiment of civilization, progress and the realization of enlightenment, even an informed public citizenry; from trash dumps, impoverished homes, bug-infested kitchens, lonely cells to gated communities, dirty money, and playgrounds for the rich, monsters appear in different ways, figuring precisely an animality – a multi-species mutational urbanism – central to city life. Mapping urban futures by way of the monster may show another geography, an undergrowth to the growing urban density that

is also rich with hybridity, germination, trans-cultural feasting: less a posturbanism and more an alter-urbanism, where overwork, precarity, super-charged affective networks, cognitive capitalism, cultural mania, screen hypnotism, and algorithmic data streams bring us in touch with the zombie.

Monsters are fearsome, terrifying creatures; they are also our closest allies (our innermost entities). As such, they may allow for crafting other forms of inhabitation, ways of moving in the city, of following precisely where our fears and desires may lead. Here, following Steve Pile's understanding of the emotional-work underpinning urban existence, I might think of a form of Monster-Work: as the work one may do in contending with the monstrosity of the city. Monster-Work may be a fugitive form of collaboration, delirious cooperation, with all that is inhuman in the human, all that is never quite reliable or legible in the public life of the citizenry, all that is underpinning what we might understand the future to be. Monster-Work may also be captured as the work continually made in an effort to negotiate not so much with the living, in our ongoing social and political efforts as subjects, but more in contending with the dead; from all these memories that flood the city, that define the very ground on which we walk and build, dream and fight, to the material wastes that are our fellow urban dwellers, to the sense in which to speak of the future is to also speak of the end, my end, your end, our end – the monster or (echoing Richard Sennett) the “uses of monsters” may contribute to reconciling the fact of the negative, the end, as what is always supporting life in its most energetic and contagious manner.



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