

Urban intervention, street art and public space

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Street Art & Urban Creativity
International Research Topic

“I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me”: essays on a cartography of affections in/of the city

Paula Guerra

Abstract

The city has long been used as a framework to understand the profound changes which the urban tissue has continuously suffered. In the late 19th century and throughout the 20th century the core issues concerning social-urban contexts were the binding power of the city, its capacity to bring individuals together, or, symmetrically, the way it broke off community allegiance, the new oppositions between centre and periphery, and the marginalization of sectors of the city. What we experience today is in part the extension of this process: pouring from a set of principles which guide late capitalism, our age has likewise reified certain principles of city life and urban intervention (such as the complex notion of “need”) and made them into monolithic interpretations of urban communities. Going in part against this idea, and drawing from the situationist ideas of *psychogeographie*/ *sociogeographie* and *dérive* as well as defending the need to educate individuals to take on their rights to the city, in this work we seek to synthesize an investigation-action project undertaken in 2012 with local inhabitants of the Sé Bairro in Porto (Portugal). With it, we seek to argue that individual cartographies serve as a tool for empowering young residents to take on their communities as part of their lives, expressing a familiar and everyday context through visual and sound symbolism.

Keywords: city planning, territorial stigmatization, *dérive*, right to the city, affective cartographies

1. Glorification of the city *dérive*

Implicit in the analysis presented here is the contention that the large city is integrated neither by virtue of its citizens' sharing a common “social world” nor by the formal instruments of an anomic “mass society”. How, then, is it integrated? To some extent, it is not; that is, value consensus is less likely to exist in larger than in smaller communities. Rather than unanimity, there is “multinimity”. (Fischer, 1975, p. 1337)

The project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [*I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me*] (FLUP/ INV3248), integrated into the general framework of “INOV – Urban Polycentrism, dynamics of innovation and knowledge”¹, focused on understanding the various ways in which symbolic and cultural expressions could shape the urban tissue, as well as how creativity could serve as a participatory tool. It was organized in the context of the Open Call “Manobras Porto” [Porto Manoeuvres], which was undertaken by several cultural and scientific agents of the city. (Alvelos, 2013, p. 22).

The project sought to capture certain visions of the city through the privileged lens of the social actors which frequently experience it, simultaneously giving a chance to these individuals to express their own sense of what Porto is or should be. Embedded in this, lies the idea of the situationist *dérive* – the uncertain wandering through the city, through space, through the streets – which makes a path through the city out of interests, desires and fears of the population (cf. Figure 1). This was done in our work in two aspects: through visual recordings using a photovoice approach, and through audio recording, seeking to expose the various soundscapes of the city. In this paper we will be focusing more explicitly in the visual component of the project, giving way to the young residents of the city – perhaps the ones with least political voice, and more socially invisible – to showcase their everyday-lives. The participants were selected intentionally by their location in the Porto historical centre – that is, their living in Sé² - their age (16-25 years), as well as their pattern of social-cultural inhabiting of the city (their social-cultural origins, whether or not they are old or new residents, etc). The sample was gathered through cultural and recreational associations, as well as through privileged informants in the streets. This ethnographic incursion sought to give visibility to the perceptions and representations of spaces in a strategy directed towards self-bounded communities and their identity-defining spaces – while simultaneously seeking to promote in the individuals their similarities and their community bonds.

1 The project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [*I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me*] (FLUP/ INV3248), was integrated into the general framework of “INOV – Urban Polycentrism, dynamics of innovation and knowledge” and was organized by the Institute of Sociology – University of Porto (IS-UP), Centre for the Study of Geography and Territorial Planning (CEGOT) and Porto Lazer (CMP) and took place between the 1st of July and 20th of October 2012 under the coordination of Paula Guerra. It was organized in the context of the Open Call “Manobras no Porto” [Porto in Manoeuvres], which was undertaken by several cultural and scientific agents of the city. As stated in their book: “the Manobras no Porto was a vast cycle of ideas, events and expressions that flourished in Porto’s Historical Centre throughout 2011 and 2012. The project stemmed from the belief that the inhabitants and visitors to the Historical Centre are themselves social, cultural and creative agents – and that an investigation of them could lead to the discovery and the rooting of new models for living, regenerating and connecting with the City’s multiple everyday-lives. In a context where the most diverse studies have pointed out how the creative dimension works as an asset towards urban development, Manobras nonetheless sought to transcend a strictly economical reading of this: development is simultaneously a process woven onto narrative, anthropological, geographical and emotional fields. From within these fields, a proposition of a cultural nature of urban individuals may grow effective roots beyond its immediate resonance in space and time. While it is true that the most varied cultural events have managed to project the cities that host them and therefore generate economic impact, studies on viability have systematically forewarned a weak impact throughout and beyond the length of these events.” (Alvelos, 2013, p. 25). We thank in this chapter the participation of the following junior investigators in recollecting photographs and sounds, as well as in assembling the exposition: Daniela Oliveira, Filipa Cavadas, Francisca Mesquita, Frederico Babo, Rita Araújo, Rodrigo Nicolau de Almeida and Tiago Teles Santos.

2 The ‘Sé’ parish in Porto is so named due to the “Sé” Cathedral near it. Built in the XII century in a romanic style and suffering various changes over time, it is the center of Porto, as the city grew around it over the centuries. As of the Law nº11-A/2013, the Sé parish was integrated in the Union of Parishes of Cedofeita, Santo Ildefonso, Sé, Miragaia, São Nicolau and Vitória. It provides a key insight into the life of the city and its history – due to its association with marginalized activities such as drug trafficking and prostitution from the 80s onwards, it has suffered a progressive degradation and social stigmatization.



Figures 1 - Images of the social space of young people from Sé through their jumping into the Douro river, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [*I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me*] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.

Towards this latter end, we sought to produce a coherent identity to the project, which could be felt as binding, and one which was indicative of the Porto historical centre (Figures 2 and 3). We created a logo which served as an image of affection and belonging, as well as an identity brand which served as unifying mark of the project. The question of street allegiance and neighbourhood – which is vaguely alluded to in the logo – was chosen as motif due to the participants strong bonds to their own location not only on a national, regional and municipal level, but also on a microterritorial level, with the formation of very small “affective communities” (Fortuna, 2012).

Parallel to these processes of internal cohesion, it is of our interest to look at levels of exclusion, namely in their relation to disqualified territories, like the Sé parish. The economic transformations of the late 20th century, in particular, brought with them multiple ways in which the social question was changed – increased precarity, uncertainty, dissemination of poverty, widespread unemployment, among others (Castel, 1995). The impact this had in city life and urban structures, or rather, in the processes of exclusion associated to them, was remarkable. We face urban structures with a certain complexity, polycentric, marked by development and expansion of enterprises with multiples uses – and as the capital tends towards greater accumulation, so the city becomes a progressively more dualistic space in itself (Guerra, 2012). The tendency of these inequalities, in what concerns us, is to create “dead spaces” in the city, that is, spaces which were subjected to profound dynamics of territorial stigmatization (Wacquant, 2002). These tend to crystallize in forms of urban and social segregation of their individuals which are not only habitation, but cultural, and symbolic (Hamnet, 1997) – and yet, these same residents provide in themselves alternative

ways to conceptualize their life and their belongings (Guerra, 2002). These processes interest us, in so far as they are strictly related to the myriad of movements which bring people into Sé, and likewise how this tends to lead the residents to have less political voice. In turn these are followed by greater selection-segregation processes, in specific in certain social categories, such as youth, who are at times excluded from school, work, job and the dominant culture (Paugam, 2003). With this in mind, our central theme could not be clearer: to give voice to these individuals.



Figures 2 - Logo and branding of the project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me], Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figure 3 - Badge of the project participants, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.

This chapter will be structured as follows: first, we will present a general approach of the core theoretical issue at stake here as well as the context of affective cartographies in the city; second, we will provide the presentation of the methodological framework which guided the project; thirdly, we will have the confrontation with the actual cartographies and the way they were appropriated in public space; and finally, we shall elicit a brief evaluation of this *derive* into the world of the young residents of Sé as a first step towards an effective right to the city. In designing such a *psychogeography* – or rather, a *sociogeography* (Santos, Marques & Guerra, 2014) – we place the living city as the core of the series of dynamics of segregation, polarization, disqualification and exclusion, which are lived in the city of Porto and in general in the contemporary urban tissue.

2. Towards a right to the city

In periods of social and economic change it is usual for big cities to be put in the position of “accused”. (...) this “accusation” [of its integrative power] that is pointed towards them is probably rooted in an old social imaginary, of which Babel is one of the first expressions: Babel is the perfect archetype of the great city that gathers men in an emancipatory project in relation to God and Nature. The building of Babel was possible because men had an absolute means of communication – “the same tongue and the same words” – and a new technology – “the bricks were their stones, the mortar was their cement” (Ascher, 1998, p. 141).

We stand today in a context where urban interventions often stress the need for individuals to feel integrated in the city, for them to have housing, a job, cultural networks, strong ties and to be able to have a sense of alterity. All of these complex dimensions often tend to be conflated into a single and at times reified motto: “Everyone should have a right to the city”. This phrase – one of the most well-known slogans of the fight towards an active citizenship in the city in the last 50 years – echoes the idea that all individuals should have space to live in the city, in all its various meanings. It traces its history back to Henri Lefebvre’s homonymous “Right to the City” (1968), where it was birthed with a political as well as social agenda, seeking to establish the core identity of the city-dweller, as well as to promote his active engagement with the city (Lefebvre, 1968/1972). However, over the course of these years, the vagueness (or perceived vagueness) of the concept has at times turned it into more of a discursive tool than a conceptual framework towards which one should aspire (Souza, 2010). This brings us to two central questions: first, what are the main characteristics of the city of today? And second, what rights do we entail when we say that individuals should have a “right to the city”?

Far from the industrial revolution, and its debates over the loss of community (Durkheim, 1997; Tonnies, 1957; Wirth, 1938; Simmel, 1987) or the rural-urban distinction (Redfield, 1954; Sorokin, 1969; Weber, 1966), the 20th century evolution of the city led it to become central stages of social and cultural transformation of individuals as well as ideas. The tensions between globalization and local culture are of particular notice when we address the current context of cities such as Porto, with a traditional role as community-building spaces, which has continued into late modernity in ever more complex ways (Guerra, 2012a, 2012b). The pressure exerted over cities (often by the municipal power) to become what Molz called “homogenous heterogeneity” (2011, p. 39) – that is, the tendency for big cities to be ‘different’ in the same ways, with cultural, religious and social attractions which at times resemble one another – can in part be felt in economic and cultural terms, as housing, local development policies, as well as land price speculation drive complicated motions and movements of population in the heart of the cities (Guerra, 2003). These processes are intricately tied to globalization, and produce specific configurations, in a context where downtown areas turn into contradictory spaces which mix identities and localism with anonymity and disappearance (Guerra, 2003, 2002) and where tourism imparts specific looks and transforms the city in a process of continuous feedback (Urry, 2002).

This process is likewise tied to the appearance of active forces of globalization which have pushed the identity focus of the city into flows. Namely, as Appadurai (2004) notes, ethnoscaples, mediascaples, technoscaples, finanscaples and ideoscaples collectively work to produce a social imaginary in which individuals are no longer simply citizens, but belong to wider systems of meaning. As such, both the potential and the risk for communities and individuals in cities is expanded (Appadurai, 1990), and brings new challenges for urban policy and intervention.

We sought to focus on the city as it is appropriated by youth, in their belongings and filiations to the urban tissue, regardless of their status as students or workers. This factor stems from various reasons: the repeated waves of moral panic associated to youth and their (sub)cultures, tribes and groups, in acts of delinquency and vandalism; the fact that one's condition as inhabitant comes more than anything else from the importance of the house to human realization; that housing is in many cases more than just lodgings, implying a certain emotional association and the creation of bonds of security, mystery and pleasure with one's home. All of these make the young a privileged demographic in the city, intensely focused by the social spheres of the city, highly free in their appropriation of the urban space, and at the same time deeply rooted in their homes.

As we have noted, our approach focused on the Sé neighbourhood [Portuguese: *bairro*], at the heart of a city with a long history of social and urban stigmatization. Sé is in practice the “backdoor” of touristic Porto, a place of informal economy, commercial traffic, dealing of narcotics, and (illegal) fluxes of immigrant people. It is a community space strongly marked by a closing and disqualification left by Porto's history.

Insofar as the construction of a self and a personality is related to one's home, this can be seen as a sort of second body (Guerra, 2003). We can at times speak of individuals who are lodged somewhere, but who do not inhabit that place. To inhabit a place is in certain ways to be that place, to allow it to change and be changed by the self, as well as for it to be a location where the social actor exerts power – in short, it means to turn a house into a home. This home can likewise be seen as part of an individual's personal and collective project, taking us back into the contexts and groups of which the individual is a part of. More and more, the home is today a space where people map out the complexity of everyday life, organizing family, kinship and community life, while at the same time it is the place where individuals project their emotions, values, rituals and tastes. In short: the home is the “beating heart” of an individual's experience of the city.

Knowing that the entity which we call “neighbourhood” is not the natural framework in which individuals experience the city, it is nonetheless a crucial matrix to analyse the individual experience of their own homes and of the ties that are formed there. We can think of these as three levels of everyday life: the city, the neighbourhood and the home, complement and complete each other. As such, the crisis of urban life is first and foremost the disaggregation of home and city, where the home becomes more and more a space of fragmentation and precarity. And it is in this context that we should turn to other social realities in an effort to understand, learn and help them in realizing their potential for expression.

Taking from Harvey, the right to the city is “far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city.” (Harvey, 2008, p. 23). In Lefebvre, it arises as a critique of a certain mechanistic view of the city as a space for collective consensus or for conflict, realizing that it is not only in the production systems but also in everyday life that the structures of power are reproduced: in the overarching individualism, in the mystification of objects, in the alienation of work and needs, the individual separates himself from his productive value, but also from his life-space (Lefebvre, 1968/1972). The author emphasized precisely that the city is not reducible to its size, to its population density, or to its urban concentration, nor is it merely a space of cultural or economic expression, but that it is rather a space of human interaction and social-political construction (Lefebvre, 1970). The right to the city is then, in a more specific way, the right not only to space in the city, to economic participation, to cultural expression (though all of these are crucial), but first and foremost the right to have a voice in the city (Lefebvre, 1968/1972). As such, it follows that there is potential for urban life in all individuals, and that the city ought to be collectively constructed.



Figures 4 - Marks of belonging and affection, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.

However, the way in which social space is produced is equally of issue here, as it becomes clear that a social-urban intervention cannot peer into the living space of all individuals in the same way (as, for all purposes, the space is not constructed in the same way). The issue here becomes the boundaries of the “objective space”, the “subjective space”, and what may come as a synthesis of the two (Lefebvre, 1981). In Lefebvre’s terminology, in his monumental “The Production of Space” (1981), these are the conflicts between *le perçu* – that is, urban space as it is perceived by individuals in social relations – *le conçu* – space as it is understood by cartographers, geographers and urban planners – and *le vécu* – the “thirdspace” which aggregates individuals’ memories, ideas, thoughts, symbols and which can be accessed, for example, through artistic expression. This notion of thirdspace proved tremendously influential in conceiving the interstitial locations which are not objectively found but which are “concrete abstractions” – or better yet, through Thomas’ pragmatic lens, offer themselves as real due to their effects (Thomas & Thomas, 1928).

Moreover, drawing from Soja (1989, 1996, 2000), this thirdspace – in many ways analogous to Foucault’s (1971) concept of *heterotopia*, or “space of otherness” – is what is marked by *spatiality*, and is in a way constructed and reconstructed in accordance to the other spaces of the city. Unlike Foucault, however, Soja sought to conceive the thirdspace as including all otherness and selfness into a single notion. This means that it cannot simply be seen as a mental conception, but rather as a glimpse to the transformative power of the city – by integrating individual expectations, it produces a sort of “imaginary city”). Soja – much like Harvey, Castells and others – also emphasizes the role that ideology and structure play in the creation of city and city-dwellers, noting that today’s cities are a product of 20th century politics and ideas as much as they are a result of individual reproduction of everyday life (Soja, 2000). Moreover: to see this thirdspace through the eyes of the individuals who experience the city is also to have a privileged access to their understanding of the world as situated in a given social position.

The distinction between spaces beckons us to look at the city from its intrinsic logic (Löw, 2012), seeking to unravel the way in which individuals conceive the city and create expectations of it, seeing it and hearing it in from their own social position, through their age and sense of identity. Seeking to unravel the many cities inside Porto, we turn towards some of the more radical and controversial views of the city: the International Situationist.

Though problematic in many of its assumptions – as was criticized at some point by their own leader, they tended towards a drunken glorification of obscurity (Debord, 2003) – Situationism emphasized the need to see the city as more than its linear structure, claiming the need to subvert traditional capitalist structuring of the city and exchange it for more fluid urbanist thought – the notion of *unitary urbanism* (Chhtcheglov, 1957). The idea of multiple *psychogeographies*, which obey a certain path taken through the city (a *derive*), seek to give voice to the individuals of a city, through a description of their personal vision and, later, a reconstruction of the city according to these principles (Coverley, 2006). One such way – and the one we chose – is to capture a certain “view” of the city, which likewise follows another radical principle of the situationists: the *détournement*, that is, the turning of dominant symbolic expressions against the city as a form of protest (Debord & Wolman, 1956). As we shall see, the transformative power of the individual who captures his personal view of the city, is strongly subversive, transforming what it observes into socially situated icons.



Figures 5 - Sociability and interactions Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 6 - Positions and demarcations Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.

In short, we can now answer fully the two questions originally posed. On one side, we have a profoundly transformed city, the complexity of which requires us to look at the neighbourhoods and the homes to provide sufficient detail in our analysis; on the other side, the right to the city is first and foremost a right to participate actively in the city, and to transform it whilst being transformed by it. It stems from these two core ideas that in advocating the right to the city in such a context as Sé, we should choose to give voice to the individuals in their relation to their street, their neighbourhood and their homes, seeking to understand their belongings, while at the same time promoting their visions of the city as marked by specificity. The construction of a symbolic lexicon which identifies the imagery and reference values of its inhabitants becomes crucial in this. These semiotic properties are not in any case new, and have been frequently pointed out as something immanent in cities (Ledrut, 1986) and which structure individual lives in a double hermeneutic. This is the same as saying that the meanings which we produce to a city influence the way in which we experience it, while these experiences in turn structure the meaning we make of it. This is, in short, the core issue at the heart of the cartography of affections which we will present here.

3. Processes, captures and interactions

“In fact, these two cities [that of men and of God] are entangled together in this world, and intermixed until the last judgment effects their separation” (St. Augustine, *Civita Dei*, 1913: 46)

To fully experience the city, one needs to actively engage in it, which requires a social pattern of reference in terms of rights and duties – a social identity. Erving Goffman distinguishes between two such types: the *virtual* social identity, built through a sum of the information gathered in interaction as to what makes the “self” – physical aspects, reputation, ways of talking, ways of dressing, etc, and *actual* social identity, that is, that which is constructed by authentic and personal traits of the individual (Goffman, 1982). It is precisely in the interstices – where the social view of the individual does not match his own self-perception with great friction – that stigma comes to exist. Built around the more negative aspects of social identity, these moments of interactional contrast slowly turn themselves into marks of disqualification and exclusion, as well as become associated with stereotypes (Guerra, 2003). Our starting point was the ritual interaction of the streets of Sé, by its residents, where we sought to find an arena of meaning, belonging and affection towards the lived city, as well as place where stigma is resisted and questioned in multiple ways. As our *exergue* seeks to make clear, these processes which elicit are profoundly marked on one side by the profound dualisms which they carry, and on the other, by their inseparability – they are part of the same continuum.

In this respect, we should note the tendency for these young people to engage in various discursive strategies in regards to the streets. Looking at their description of the social spaces of Porto, there is a strong feeling of a need to “defend” the locations, especially noting how some of the “ruas” [streets] in case (for instance, Rua Escura, Rua do Miradouro, Travessa de São Sebastião, Rua da Banharia) belong to a somewhat marginalized area of the downtown centre, and seeing as how certain symbolic associations tend to form in these spaces. In particular, we can find some of the coping strategies proposed by Wacquant (1998, 2002) – from an elaboration of microdifferences or lateral denigration (“I wouldn’t recommend the location as old people and junkies are always nagging young people”, Patrícia³, 23 years, Rua do Miradouro) a retreat into private or family life (“I like being here as it is where my friends and family are – I don’t much care for the rest”, Joana, 24 years, Rua da Banharia), to a defence of neighbourhood life (“I like living here because here people are humble, simple and overall nice”, Bárbara, 22 years, Rua do Miradouro). Alongside these, we can find numerous mentions to both positive and negative aspects, whilst one thing does stand out: younger people tend to privilege their individual life, claiming the importance of family, friends and their place of birth as crucial marks, whilst older individuals stress more often the role of the community, the importance of other residents and the social perception of the street. This likewise brings into relevance the fourth line of our analysis: the *self*.

³ All names presented here and forthwith are fictitious so as to protect the identity of the social actors.



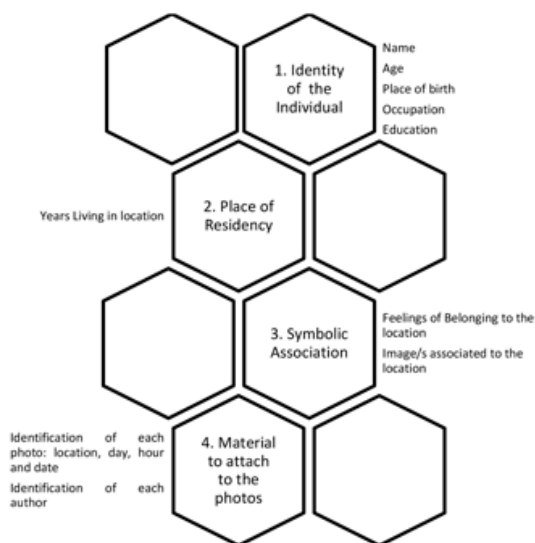
Figures 7 - Information gathering process, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.

Our incursion in these territories attempted to be ethnographic. The challenge of this involved a transgression of what is regularly thought as the classical techniques of information gathering and recollection in the social sciences: on one side, it elicited the shunning from attempts to “measure” social reality, while at the same time seeking to capture the “thick description” (to borrow Geertz’ term, 2008) of urban reality in the form of signs, discourse and sounds which escape classical social theory (Cohen, 1993). The ethnographic focus drives us to focus on the micro-sociology, on the senses, the plurality, and the difference; in the words of Machado Pais, this path means to “cosy oneself to the warmth of understanding, shunning away from the icy peaks of explanation which, insensitive to the plurality of the lived, raise barriers between phenomena which in all truth bear reciprocal relations.” (Pais, 2002, p. 32). In the interstices of everyday-life, the lived, the social, their multiple and invisible *arts de faire* (Certeau, 1980), ethnographic research can in a way activate the senses of the investigator by directly stimulating him in interpreting the people in action, their social networks, their discourses and interactions and their participation in everyday activities of ritual, essays and aesthetic, rather than drawing from secondary sources (Cohen, 1993). Traditionally, for sociologists, ethnography has also meant to participate actively in the everyday lives of analysed groups – though in recent times, it has come to serve as a sort of “umbrella term” that encompasses most qualitative methodologies, such as direct and/or participant observation, but also interviews, life stories, focus groups, videographic and or photographic document analysis – in short, all instruments which analyse the daily body life of the social actors. The arts and music in particular seem to be in perfect syntony with ethnography: “much like music, ethnography is an interpretative practice: it requires participation and improvisation; its presentation invites a multiplicity of meanings as well as self-reflection.” (Grazian, 2004, p. 206).

Our ethnographic approach counted with the help of students from the 1st and 2nd cycle of studies of Sociology of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto⁴, which both helped in the ethnography, communicating with the social actors and helping them in having a clearer idea of what was expected of them, as well as in producing reflections on the role of the city as a place of identity in contemporaneity. Their role as mediators allowed a closer connection to the social actors, especially given the proximity in ages in some participants and students. These students were also responsible for the cataloguing of the photos, as well as helping in administering them in their respective social contexts. Social relegation – to which we have already alluded, and which has also been called “territorial stigmatization” – is a mark of such spaces as Sé, which works by an urban concentration of situations which involve discredited social groups, excluded from work and the consumption society. The need to look at this situation as a social and global phenomenon – as we have done – should not however forgo a more municipal and regional focus. In fact, looking at the housing policies in Porto, namely those of rehousing, as well as the intervention of public and private organisms with action in this domain, one can see how practices of socio-spatial segregation work by “jamming” local policy drawn by the population (Bourdieu, 1999). In the case of Porto, as Fonseca Ferreira (1994) notes, the “transplantation” of population from ground level houses to vertical buildings, tearing apart crucial relations such as neighbour ties and replacing them with anonymity, as well as setting them in the periphery of the city, tends to lead to a fast physical and social degradation, the constitution of ghettos, closed enclaves, and “exiled neighbourhoods”. These are essentially “holes” in the urban and social fabric: we can see in the media representations that they are often blamed for criminality, drug dealing and urban insecurity. To actively engage in ethnography in these spaces provides not only a relevant challenge to the investigator, but also an epistemological challenge to the notions frequently associated to them (Cohen, 1972).

The visual recollection was done through a photovoice approach, stressing the importance of participatory art in these youth contexts. Social actors were given a photographic camera and told to capture specific everyday moments of their lives which they considered particularly meaningful, which they thought particularly indicative of their way of life or which reminded them of their place of residency in any way – in sum, they were told to capture photos which in some way meant “Porto” for them (Appleyard, 1973). The choice of this sort of method, a modern classic of urban intervention, is aligned with the critique which has often been directed towards the monist statistical and geographic information (population, activities, networks of transportation): that there seems to be a “fear” of cognitive methodologies, perhaps due to a need to establish social life as distinct from individual-psychological experiences of it, but which leads to the neglect of socio-emotional functions, desires and aspirations, as pointed out by Eppler and Burkhard (2004).

4 Under the Bologna process, the 1st cycle of studies corresponds generally to a BA, attributing in the case of Sociology 180 ECTS. The 2nd cycle corresponds to an MA, and attributes 120 ECTS.



1. Monuments, heritage and toponymy
2. Music, inscriptions in space, graffiti and tags
3. Localism and belongings (street, house, door and window house, pets)
4. Periphery and city relegation
5. Youth identity marks
6. Lived-space and economic dynamism
7. Social space of the street and neighbourhood
8. Porto, Portugal, football and local, regional and national identities
9. Multiculturalism and new values
10. Tourism and the discovery of Sé

Figure 8 - Guidelines for incursions of the young residents in the Porto Historical Centre

It is in this context that the more interesting structures arose: in particular, we can find 10 key themes that encompass most photographs, from most frequent to less frequent themes, (to which we will return in the next section): Looking for instance at figure 6 we can see how these themes appear at times in multiple photos: at the same time the groups of young residents form in a peer association which is part of their identity as youths in a dynamic city, they are involved in the neighbourhood life, and at the same time the presence of city landmarks points to the ways in which this heritage is appropriated by them. We can likewise identify that these themes are in tune with our three dimensions of analysis (the city, the neighbourhood and the home), with equal importance to the individual as sources of meaning to their lives.

This matter of affections and belongings of young people, culminated in an intervention in the public space which confronted the “real” space with the individual representation, in an interplay between the real and the represented, placing the image next to the object it represents (for instance, putting the image of the shop front next to the shop front). This moment sought to intervene directly in the city, in a way, drawing each individual’s city – in the uses that each people makes of them, at times creating interesting contrasts between multiple individuals. Through this, there was an attempt to transform reality through the creation of “noise”, in giving value to something routinely and indifferent, and individuating objects (*the door becomes that door*). Concurrently, we edited the soundtracks of the everyday lives in an electronic format (*podcast*) on a website⁵. Through the recollection of nearly 500 photographs and 50 sound blocks, we sought to put the project title and motto in practice: I come from Porto and I bring a Porto in me.

4. The symbols of life

“Life, my dear, is illegible. It appears and disappears as goes. There is no mind that breaks it apart: it comes in the language of nothing, birthed in the body as the day, as if the day and the life of the individual were parallel fabrics.” (Tavares, 2011, p. 373).

From what we have said it follows that we see the construction of the social world as inseparable from the representations of the actors who participate in it, and who produce and reproduce incessantly the cultural values of a given time-space setting. Recognizing the bonds between the reflexive structures present in young people and their surroundings, as well as the varying geometries of that relationship, seems like a good starting point to attempt a definition of what can accurately be described as an axiom of micro-sociology. In this section, we will

⁵ This refers to the website of “Rádio Manobras”: <http://radiomanobras.pt/>

attempt just that: to present the photographs captured by young people in their own personal space, and to produce a thematic approach of the senses, affections and belongings they develop towards it. Reacting against a supposedly homogenous vision of their social world, these young residents present a diversity, a complexity, and at times a resistance against standardization, that produces its own version of normality and is filled with affection and symbolism.

It is likewise important to mention the growing relevance which images have had in the last decades, which stems from a rising number of optical, visual and audiovisual apparatuses which profoundly change the way we think and represent the world (Pais, Carvalho & Gusmão, 2008). While some important fields of investigation such as anthropology, and to a less degree sociology, have taken these resources as bases of investigation, these have for all purposes been considered marginal (Campos, 2011a; Pink, 2006). Effectively, this sort of logocentric⁶ approach to writing has only recently started to erode, due to the aforementioned processes (Campos, 2011b).



Figures 9 - Monuments, heritage and toponymy, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim”/[I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.

Images – in the wider sense of the word, encompassing not only the physical or virtual representation, but also what is represented – are in their essence profoundly polysemic, having various semiotic layers. As the line promoted by Barthes (2009) and Eco (1970) emphasizes, visual cues are at the heart of the way in which individuals interpret social life – and likewise, studies such as those done by Hebdige (1979) have emphasized the way in which subcultural life is markedly expressed through vision. For instance, taking the case of punk, the image lay at the heart of the movement, from the way that individual dressed to graphic objects such as fanzines, disc covers

⁶ We take this term to its meaning in the framework of Derrida’s analysis, that is, meaning a system which makes itself knowable only through a *logos* – a reified belief which serves as transcendental signified of a given set of assumptions. In Campos (2011b) this role is taken by writing, in opposition to image and sound, in analytical terms.

and demo tapes (Triggs, 2010). These objects, generally produced through a DIY *ethos*, sought at the same time to defy the dominant semiotic discourse, and to produce its own alternatives. This eventually led to it being “swallowed” by the cultural industries, with a certain “domestication” of its visual and audiovisual aesthetics (Guerra & Quintela, 2014). These processes are not innocent: they are the result of our living in what has been called an ocularcentric society (Jenks, 1995) and they accurately demonstrate the relevance taken by images. This is on its essence the transition to a new “visual culture” which stems from the expansion of technology and visual languages, taking a specific role as a “primordial form of intercultural contact” (Campos, 2011a, p. 37).

Images are in a way also a profoundly contextual feature. They exist to an individual only in certain moments, and in certain ways. Drawing from Schütz (1996) understanding, the image exists in a given *lebenswelt* (life-world) and is always the intention of an individual (that is, there must always be an individual to capture the image; otherwise, though the object may stay, there is no image of it). Far from a principle of causality, and taking the *verstehen* approach, as well as a semiotic framework – to interpret ourselves the sense of social reality – we took to analysing 500 photographs, identifying the key themes in the life-worlds of our social actors.

In this, we could see that the most frequent theme was (1) **heritage, monuments and toponymy** (Figure 9). The Sé cathedral is particularly relevant, serving as the toponymous identification of the neighbourhood, and as a source of pride for the individuals. That this sort of object should be the most frequently depicted by the youths we contacted should tell us something of the importance that such landmarks have for individuals in general, and perhaps for inhabitants of relegated areas in specific. The heritage is crucial in terms of how the young residents of Sé position themselves: their relation to the city through a central landmark connects them not only to the “mainstream city”, but also to the individuals which inhabit it. At the same time, this concern with heritage also has deep roots in a transitional understanding of the city: how monuments are a legacy from the past which ought to be preserved for future generations. This is crucial in working against the social relegation to which the neighbourhood is subjected – in short, the Sé works as a sort of bridge to a socially inclusive city.

The second most important theme in terms of photographic presence was (2) **music and the inscriptions in space, such as graffiti and tags** (Figure 10). This fact, directed towards integrating the individual in an imaginary community (Appadurai, 1990) is hardly surprising: the role that youth cultures have come to assume as axes of structuring the social life of individuals in the city grants them a transversal nature (Guerra, 2010), as common factors beyond the structure of the neighbourhood. As we can see in Figure 4, the individuals identify these marks with the city, select them as part of their everyday-life, and integrate them as theirs as much as they do their street, their house or their room.

At the same time, in a tangent, a different theme tackles the issue of the self: (3) **localism and belongings** (Figure 11), in what is more personal and unique (their objects, their doors, their pets, their room). If youth cultures serve as measures of unity, these come as marks of specificity, individualism and distinction (Pais, 2003). They are, in short, something which marks the personality of the individual. This dualism – youth culture and individual – are two ends of the same process of constructing the self: on one side, that which binds youth together (and in a way sets them apart from the rest of society), and on the other that which makes them individuals.

Fourthly, **we can see (4) the image of the periphery and of social relegation** (Figure 12), of the abandonment of spaces and buildings which are left behind. These images correspond in part to the vision of the city as a space of abandonment, and relate to the situation of relegation suffered by the individuals. By emphasizing them, the social actors aim to show their realities, sometimes with critique and others with affection, so as to show in the reality that surrounds them what there is of more crude and ugly. This can point us to a very clear form of agency, where the social actors attempt to direct us to the reality in question.

The themes which appear in fifth (**youth identity marks** – Figure 13) more directly towards the ways in which youth experiences these cultures and their personalities echo this idea of an hybridism with imaginary peers. Fashion, in the form of clothing, footwear (mostly sneakers), jeans, various artifacts, as much as selfies, are ways to denote a collective identity of youth (as far as that is possible) and come off as a common theme in nearly all photos (Feixa, 1999). From here we pass into an understanding of the **lived space and the economic dynamism of the space** (Figure 14), more specifically, the images of (6) the **street commerce and economy, with neighbourhood grocery shops** and professional retail professions.

At the same time there appear images of (7) **neighbourhood sociability and leisure** (Figure 15), and even objects of entertainment or public decoration (plants, flowers). These themes serve as two aspects of the same reality: the relationship which the individual establishes with the neighbourhood life. As we can see, despite having today less importance than the “self”, community ties of vicinity continue to be felt as important, and their traditions and practices are actively reproduced by the young residents. Whether in terms of the economic and commercial structures, or leisure practices, this tendency towards reproduction seems to us a very keen aspect of the social reality in question.

From here, the **three final themes** direct us to the city as a whole: (8) local, regional and national identities, in the form of symbols and spaces which bind the residents to Porto and Portugal (Figure 16); (9) images of immigration, multiculturalism, differences and new values, new clothes, new food, in short, the transition between a closed city culture and an openness towards globalized values; (10) and the images of tourism, of sightseeing, as well as the more naturalistic aspects of the city such as the river, the sky, clouds and distorted or onirically iconic images. Whereas the first point us to institutions such as the Porto Football Club, which bring together strong identities in the city, the second are better represented by ethnic stores which have started to appear in the historic centre of Porto, and which coexist with the autochthonous residents. The last thematic axis, perhaps the more elusive, are those which send us to a level which transcends the city, more accurately represented by fluxes and transition, change, and the “outside world” (Feixa, 2014).



Figures 10 - Music, inscriptions in space, graffiti and tags, Source: ProPorto e trago um Porto em mim”[I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 11 - Localism and belongings, Source: Project "Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim"[I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 12 - Periphery and city relegation, Source: Project "Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim"[I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



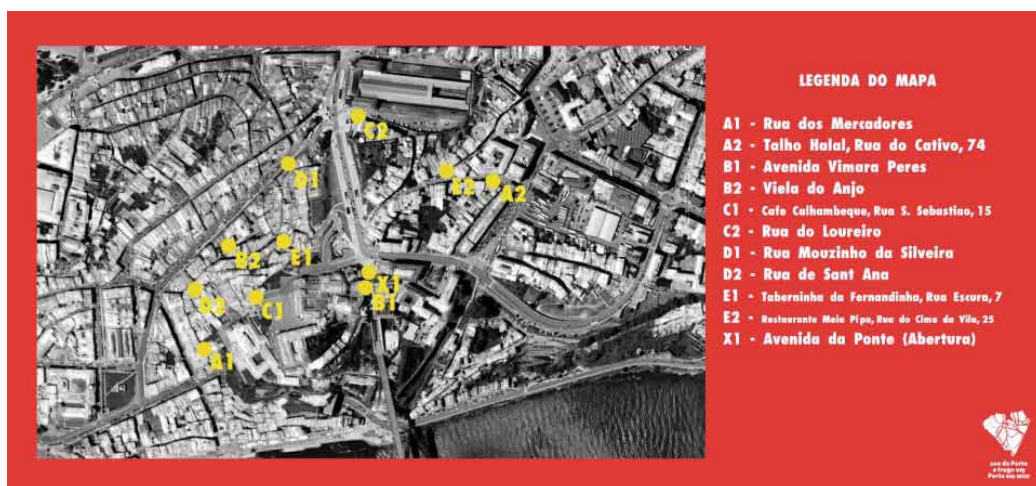
Figures 13 - Youth identity marks, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim”[*I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me*] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 14 - Lived-space and economic dynamism, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim”[I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 17 - Main poster for the project and exposition poster for the promotion of the soundtracks, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a *Porto in me*] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 18 - Map of the location where the exposition took place, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a *Porto in me*] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 15 - Social space of the street and neighbourhood, Source: Project
"Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim"[*I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me*] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 16 - Porto, Portugal, football and local, regional and national identities, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e traço um Porto em mim”[I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 19 - Assembling the show, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.



Figures 20 - The “I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me” in the walls, Source: Project “Sou do Porto e trago um Porto em mim” [I come from Porto and bring a Porto in me] (FLUP/ INV3248) | 2012.

A factor becomes, soon clear: the concerns of the individuals, shown in the number of appearances in youth portrayals, end up echoing our levels of analysis, as well as Schütz's notions, with some important nuances. The *ego* starts to understand social reality having himself and his conscience as an interpretative matrix, conceiving of his peer group (real or imagined), and then establishes relations with the immediate space, the neighbourhood, the city, and even with supra-city structures. This movement echoes the distinctions of *lebenswelten* made by the Austrian author when he speaks of the *umwelt* (the right-now world of fellow people), from the *mitwelt* of themes 5 and 10, that is, the world of contemporary people, ideas and places which are not geographically adjacent. Moreover, the crucial factor that tops their concerns relates to the two diachronic axes of his typology (the *vorwelt* in what concerns the past and the *folgewelt* in what concerns the future): the "Sé" cathedral, which serves as a unitary mark of their collective history, and a "glue" to their various experiences (Wagner, 1979).

It follows from what we have said here that we stand in front of an intersubjective object, constantly interpreted by the young residents of the Sé neighbourhood. If the construction of world begins with this taking of consciousness of an object – as Husserl would have it – then it is only through these individual worlds that we may seek to access each person's lifeworld, and through it, to give them a true right to the city (see Rogers, 2000)

5. The moments, the path and its people

"Path: a patch of terrain over which you walk on foot. The road differs from the path not only because it is travelled by car, but also due to being only a line that connects a point to another. The road has no direction in itself; it has only the two point which it connects. The path is an homage to the space, however. Each part of it has a direction, and invites us to pause. The street is the devaluing of space, the latter which is seen today as nothing more than encumbrance of man and a waste of time." (Kundera, 2012, p. 167)

After identifying the paths, the moments, the people and the meaningful objects which the youth of our approach identified, we are dawning on a conclusion – forever left unfinished – of such a project as this. As we have previously mentioned, the project included a soundtrack collection which, for the purpose of this article we will not treat. Let us focus on the photographs – and in particular, in the exposition where they were shown from September 28th to October 7th in 2012, in the public space of the Porto Historic Centre and the Sé neighbourhood in particular (cf. Figure 17). Our focus was to show the photographs of the residents which we had contacted, producing an intervention which confronted real and representational space (or in Lefebvre's term, *le perçu* and *le vécu*), in the ways which we previously described.

This unraveling of paths in and through the city sought to address the objectives raised by Manobras Porto⁷ which included, but were not limited to "taking back the city", to giving a voice to the citizens without discrimination, to recognize the economic, cultural, social and technical potential of the territories, and, conclusively, to "create conditions for the flourishing of an idea of a City as a work in progress, inclusive and unending" (Alvelos, 2013, p. 50). We cannot but recognize a good dose of goodwill and a certain excessive ambition in these objectives, in an intensive project which, after two years, completely vanished. However, noting the potential of these goals as guidelines towards which an individual should direct their beliefs, we can attest in our project the success of some of them. In fact, we can see in the discourse of the social actors the sort of filiation and belonging which the project sought to bring to life.

7 Cf. Among others, the Making of Call of Manobras Porto 2012 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yq7H7yd0rW8&feature=youtu.be>; Their facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/manobrasporto>; <https://www.facebook.com/manobrasporto#!/radiomanobras>; And the archive of the project <http://www.museudoresgate.org/passa-pra-ca/>

Tazul, 25 years old, Rua do Loureiro: "I like Portugal more than Porto or Spain and Italy"

Marcela, 14 years old, Travessa S. Sebastião: "I like everything about it here. I want to be here forever"

João, 16 years old, Rua da Banharia: "Banharia is my home, and some home"

Joana Cardoso, 24 years old, Rua da Banharia: "I like being here since it is where my family is"

Fabio, 25 years old, Rua Senhora das Verdades: "I like living here, I was accustomed to it, I don't know anywhere else, and here everyone knows each other"

Cristiano, 16 years old, Rua dos Pelames: "I really like living here. I have all my friends here."

Ana, 19 years old, Rua da Banharia: "It's a pretty and quiet zone. People all know each other, and they help one another"

Catarina, 15 years old, Rua da Ponte Nova: "I have all my friends here – it would be weird not to live here, I would feel odd"

Paulo, 15 years old, Rua Escura: "I really like living here, I don't want to go anywhere else. I'm proud to live in Sé. I'm happy here. The problem is that the houses are closed, they took people from here and now we have no one"

What did happen during the exposition? The young residents and their families went on a tour of the space which had their representations next to them. The presence of the media enhanced the importance of the moment, and in the complex everyday-lives of these youths, with their happiness and sadness, giving back to the Sé a normalcy which had long been missing. This singular moment, which sought to try and help mend the gap, both physical and socio-cultural, representational and practical, which put on one side the inhabitants of Porto and on the other the inhabitants of Sé, was made smaller. The residents of Sé were given in part the tools to take back their right to the city, and despite their status as economic, cultural, habitational and symbolic dominated people, they were able to trace a path of their own: in short, to show inside the world, to catharsise the emotion of belonging to the city, to build their own Porto and to show it onto others (see Januchta-Szostak, 2010).

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